

BIBLE STUDIES.

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

VOLUME 18.

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EDITORIAL.

We welcome old and new contributors to our study of the Second Letter to the Corinthians. It is indeed pleasing to receive so many papers from overseas. Some of the latter have come by air-mail, at considerable expense to the senders. We appreciate this gesture from our beloved brethren. Letters expressing love to the students in the British Isles have also been received. We reciprocate in sending our love. We trust that much edification in the will of our God with regard to His collective people on earth may accrue from our studies.

May we once more ask correspondents to assist editors and printers by writing on one side of the paper, only, and in leaving an ample margin ?

Papers on related studies not particularly dealt with in the Syllabus, will be welcomed. An effort should be made to express thoughts as concisely as possible, as we are still faced with heavy printing costs. *Jas. M.*

THE SECOND LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS.

Chapter 1.

From Atherton. —From internal evidence it appears that the Second Epistle of Paul to Corinth was written from a city of Macedonia, and was sent by the hand of Titus and another brother [? Two]. According to secular information this city was probably Philippi, and the brother who accompanied Titus was probably Luke.

After a greeting to the saints there is a doxology to the Father of mercies, and God of all comfort. Then there follows a discussion on the comfort which God affords. The apostle had been distressed over the Corinthian saints, and had expected when he arrived at Troas to find Titus with a report of their condition. Not finding Titus there, he became more anxious, and went over to Macedonia to meet him, and finding him he was greatly relieved and comforted to know their state, and their longing, and zeal, and mourning for him. No doubt this caused him to bless God for this comfort. What a delightful view we have of the humility and self-abnegation of the great Apostle, as he speaks of the things which happened to him as being for others' comfort and salvation! The comfort he obtained from God was not solely for his own relief, but that he might be able to comfort those who were in any affliction. He endured sufferings as his Master before him had done. (See also Colossians 1. 24 and 2 Timothy 2. 10).

The affliction which befell them in Asia seems to have direct reference to the riot at Ephesus (Acts 19.). The apostle and his companions had been in such grave danger that they were weighed down exceedingly and despaired even of life. But the Apostle had learned to trust in God who was not only able to deliver from death, but whose limitless power is such that He is able to raise even from the dead.

The deliverance from *so great a death* was considered by some to have reference to the spiritual deliverance from eternal death. Others took the view that the greatness of the deliverance alone is before the mind of the Apostle.

We questioned what is meant by "the gift" (v. 11). Some thought that it had reference to the material gift of the saints for the poor at Jerusalem. It was also thought that a spiritual gift was in view, namely, that of their deliverance. How precious to contemplate that the supplications of the saints played such a valuable part, that God heard and answered and delivered! Thus we would be encouraged to help in others' difficulties by praying for them.

The Apostle goes on to emphasize his absolute sincerity of purpose. He was neither double-tongued, nor double-minded. The Corinthians presumably had doubted the Apostle's constancy; that here was a man who said, and did not. But although the Apostle had purposed to visit them, as he said, his intention had been overruled by God, and this he later shews was for their good because he would have reproved them, and caused them sorrow, had he come. Writing then of the Son of God, he says that in Him is the "Yea," and through Him "the Amen" to all the promises of God. The word "Amen" is derived from an Hebrew word, which means "to establish," or "make firm." Hence we see that whatever God promised, it was in His Son that such promises were affirmed and through Him they were also established.

The term, "the day of the Lord Jesus" (v. 14) was thought to refer to the present time and this is in agreement with its use in 1 Corinthians 5. 5, "that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."

Reg. C. Jones, G. A. Jones.

From Crowborough.—In the introduction to the title, Paul links with himself * Timothy our brother. Timothy is also associated with Paul in the introduction of five other Epistles. Why he is so in this Epistle may be because Timothy had been to Corinth and had been acquainted with them, and his name and influence may have served in some degree to confirm what Paul wished to say. Also Paul would be desirous of letting it be known that he regarded the young man, Timothy, well qualified for the great work which lay before him. Here is a great lesson for young brethren, to take heed to, and endeavour to imitate, the good example of Timothy. Paul was desirous that this letter should be read by *all* the saints, which were in the whole of Achaia. Achaia, in the largest sense, included the whole of Greece. Achaia, proper, was the province of which Corinth was the capital.

Divine comfort has been experienced and its result is divine joy. Paul refers to God as the "God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." * Here it was mentioned that in the Old Testament, God was referred to as the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob, the God who had made a promise to them, but now it is, "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," the One in whom God's promise is fulfilled. He refers to God as the Father of mercies. This, we find, is a Hebrew mode of expression, where a noun performs the place of an adjective, and the phrase is synonymous with, "merciful Father," but the expression has somewhat more force than the phrase "merciful Father." The word father was used often to denote the author or source of anything. Thus we may say that mercy proceeds from God; He is the source of it, and it is His nature to impart it. It was Paul's delight to trace all his comforts and mercies to God; and we, too, have sufficient reason to do the same and regard God as the source of true comfort.

Verse 12. The manner of their lives in "holiness and sincerity of God," stands opposed to all double-mindedness and deceitfulness, which things belong to this world. The testimony of Paul's conscience was one of uprightness and integrity and was therefore of great value in his defence of his conduct to the Corinthians.

In this chapter we must not fail to see how the Apostle brings before us the Person of our Lord Jesus, through whom is the "Amen." He **and** his fellow labourers had presented Christ, the Son of God, as the Truth, not a character of fickleness and changeableness, not one thing this moment, and another at the next, but He is "the same yesterday and to-day, and for ever." Christ **was** the Apostle's example, "the faithful and true Witness," who could say, "to this end have I been born, and to this end am I come into the world, that **I** should bear witness unto the truth" (John 18. 37). **J. H. B.**

From Melbourne. —Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus, the Man in the glory, for His name is reversed to that whereby men knew Him. It was Jesus Christ, it now is Christ Jesus, a risen and glorified Saviour. Notice that the saints were a together people, the church of God at Corinth with all the saints throughout Achaia (Greece). After Paul's departure men rose up and spoke perverse things and drew disciples after them (Acts 20. 80) with sad results, groups standing apart irrespective of what the word of God directs.

Grace and peace. Peace means to bring into unity, a binding together. How needful is this unifying in our days. The God of all comfort is able to meet **with** every circumstance, and is ready for every emergency. Paul's sufferings were raised to a very high level, for he suffered for Christ's sake, which is quite different from being buffeted for one's faults (1 Peter 2. 20). Oh that we all shared in the sufferings of Christ, then would we know the power of His resurrection! Verses 9 and 10 give the threefold deliverance of the believer. We had the sentence (R. V. M.) of death in us and were delivered, "and will deliver"; this takes place daily; and lastly, our hope is set in God that He will also yet deliver us— in a coming day.

It would seem that the saints at Corinth had not a large place in their hearts for the Apostle, but nevertheless he did not show fickleness in his behaviour toward them, but waited on God that in His good time he would come to them in person. How the Apostle loved these saints! He was as a nurse to them, though some **said** of him that "his bodily presence is weak, and his speech of no account" (2 Corinthians 10. 10). God worketh all things together for good, beloved, for are we not the richer for having this second epistle included for the church's teaching? Perhaps it would never have been written had he not spared them and used his authority to destruction. **S.**

Stoope.

From **Brantford, Canada.** —The first thing we discussed was whether the Church of God included all the saints in Achaia (verse 1). The Spirit of God localizes the place as being "at Corinth." Romans 16. **1** shows too that there was a Church in Cenchreae, the seaport of Corinth, in the same Province of Achaia.

Three suggestions were put forth with regard to v. 8, namely that it refers to (1) Paul's fighting with beasts at Ephesus, or to (2) a disease he contracted somewhere in his travels through Asia, or to (8) his being stoned at Lystra. Whatever it was, according to verses 10 and 11, it seemed still to be going on, which might lead us to the conclusion that our second suggestion is probably correct.

We compared Paul's account of behaviour in the world (v. 12) with behaviour in the House of God. The two sides of behaviour were thus brought before us.

Most of us believed that "the day of our Lord Jesus" referred to the present day (v. 14), much in the same sense as 1 Corinthians 5. 5.

We enjoyed the truths of verses 19 and 20, which remind us that our Lord is the "Amen" to all God's promises, giving us strong encouragement to trust fully in all God's promises, unto the glory of God. **R. Drake, A. Sproul.**

EXTRACTS.

From Kirkintilloch. —In verse 3, it is thought, may be found the secret of Paul's steadfastness in all his adversities. There are only three occasions in the New Testament where we read these words, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ephesians 1. 3, 1 Peter 1. 3, 2 Corinthians 1. 8). The truth presented by these three scriptures is that every good gift, which comes from the Father, is given to man through the Son.

Paul realised from experience that he could never have fully known true comfort through Christ, unless he had known the sufferings of Christ. It is acceptable with God when we endure patiently trials and difficulties (see 1 Peter 2. 20), and to those who so suffer, the comfort of God comes with greater power.

The Apostle gloried in the testimony of his conscience (v. 12). He could say, at a later date, "I have lived before God in all good conscience until this day" (Acts 23. 1).

Verses 19 and 20 show that in Christ is the beginning (the yea), and end (the amen) of the purposes of God. In a past eternity, the beginnings of these same purposes were accepted by the Lord Jesus Christ (see Isaiah 6. 8), and many of the promises of God have been fulfilled by His death, burial and resurrection.

Paul speaks about the glory of God being through us and this, we believe, is the effect of these promises on us. What God desires of us is that we should praise His Name (see Psalm 29. 2). We think, however, that not until the Son has yielded up the kingdom to His Father, and not until heaven and earth have fled away, can it be truly said, "Wherefore also through Him is the Amen." [A].

Wm. Whitelaw.

From Toronto. —Paul was constituted an Apostle of the Anointed Saviour, of which calling he was never ashamed. We also have our various callings (see 1948 Bible Studies, pages 22 and 23). As our example, let us *consider* the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, even Jesus, who was *faithful* unto Him that appointed Him (Hebrews 3. 1-3).

We note in verse three, two of the characteristics of our Heavenly Father. He is the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort. We understand these are not synonymous terms; the Father of mercies (compassions) is in connection with our failings; the God of all comfort is a term used in connection with the encouragement we receive in our trials **and** afflictions.

E. N., H. W. W.

From Bradford, Leeds and Halifax. —Paul's spirit seemed burdened at the time of writing this letter, partly through an affliction he had experienced in Asia (the nature of which seemed difficult to ascertain), and also because of the tension produced in his spirit concerning the report which Titus was to bring to him concerning the condition of the church at Corinth (2 Corinthians 2. 13). In the midst of his various trials he seems to have a new experience of God as the God of all comfort, which would qualify him to be a true comforter to all who may be called upon to pass through similar experiences (2 Corinthians 1. 4).

His request that the saints should support him in prayer (v. 11) suggests that the ministry of the church should be mutual and co-operative in its character, and that we all have a responsibility to God in this respect (1 Samuel 12. 23), and to his appointed servants in the proclamation of the Gospel (Ephesians 6. 18, 19).

William G. Henderson, Frank Canning.

From Kilmarnock. —In all the Apostle Paul's letters to Churches of God his greetings are very similar, viz., "Grace to you and *peace* from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." He had known much of the "unmerited favour" of God in his sufferings for Christ and he desired that the saints should experience it likewise. Paul had suffered much in Asia, previously, almost unto death, but he had learned not to trust in himself, but in God who raiseth the dead, and they could help by their prayers. This shows the responsibility and privilege saints have in praying for the Lord's servants.

It would seem from verse 15 Paul had purposed to come to Corinth, but he had changed his mind. However he points out that although men **may** alter their purposes, God's promises all remain firm, for He hath " confirmed us, " . . . " anointed us, " " sealed us, " and given " the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts " (see verses 21, 22 Roth.).

A. G. S.

From Glasgow.—The second epistle to the saints in Corinth, though related to the first, is very different from it, and deals largely with the effects of the first epistle. The stern correctives administered therein produced reaction, and it is this reaction the Apostle writes of in his second epistle.

After his greeting, the Apostle goes on to glorify God for the comfort he has received in affliction. The familiar form of " Blessed **be** the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ " is again used. It **may be** taken to mean, " Praise **be** to " or " **Speak** well of, " etc., and **we** do well to note that the praise is ascribed to God as the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ and not directly to Christ Himself.

Verses 12-24 **take** us into the reasons for the epistle. The Apostle was proud of the Corinthian saints for they were the fruit of his labours for the Lord, and he supposed that they were equally proud of him, as the builder and planter of their assembly. Accordingly in this reciprocal esteem he was not minded to visit them, until the effects of his first epistle had been **made** known to him. The real reason for Paul's not visiting them is given in verse 23. He desired to spare them from further castigation and from further expression of their carnality. He **feared** open dissension between himself and them with, possibly, much heated argument that Satan would gain an advantage over them (chapter 2. 11). In view of this situation the wisdom of the Apostle in postponing his visit is clearly seen. **J. J. P.**

From London, S. E.—The introduction to the second epistle would suggest that what had occurred **at** Corinth (as recorded in the first epistle) was well known to all in the district, known as Achaia. Timothy had rejoined Paul. He had been sent (1 Corinthians 4. 17) to **put** them in remembrance and had perhaps left before the first epistle had **arrived**, and his report **may** have so disturbed Paul that the second epistle was written. [See N. T., 1908, p. 282. —S. B.]

Some thought the " comfort " experienced **by** Paul was the hope of the Lord's coming, and the glory which follows (cp. 1 Peter 4. 13), **a future** reward. Some thought the troubles in Asia were connected with those **at** Ephesus, perhaps through Demetrius' actions. Others suggested it **may** have been a very serious illness. Paul's trust was in God which raiseth the **dead**, who delivered us and will deliver and will also still deliver, **a** past, present, and future deliverance. Prayers also for others help God to work deliverance for them. There are things that God will do only when **we** pray.

We noticed in verses 18-22 three things, namely, **God** is faithful, the preaching of the Lord **Jesus Christ** and the indwelling **Spirit**. He then explains further and says he had **a** solemn witness, even God Himself. He told them that they stood in faith, and not under his government, **but** under Him in whom they believed.

H. J. Owles.

From Cardiff.—Attention is drawn to the **fact** that 1 Corinthians opens with " Paul . . . an apostle of Jesus Christ " (ministry on earth) and that this second epistle (R. V.) changes to " of Christ Jesus " (ministry in heaven). Paul was an apostle in both aspects, and, as such, recognised that his position was governed entirely **by** the will of God. [See B. S., 1948, p. 8]

Oh that this might **be** the controlling influence in the lives of each one of us—that **we may** acknowledge that our position, in everyday life and in the Church of God, is ruled **by** the will of God, the sovereign Lord of all **1** After **but** two **brief** introductory verses Paul then bursts out into **a** song of praise which seems to run

as a golden thread through the remainder of the chapter—"Blessed be God, even the Father" (A. V.).

As Paul suffered, God comforted, *through* Christ (verse 5). When God comforts He encourages and strengthens. What Paul had purposed in his desire to re-visit Corinth, he had purposed "in the Spirit" and, *not* "according to the flesh." Yet if they chose to think of him as a fickle man—there was one emphatic "YES"—one unalterable fixity about him, and that was his preaching of "The Son of God, Jesus Christ"—In *Him* was God's "yea," and the "Amen" to all God's promises.

H. R. Dodge.

From Hamilton, **Ont.**—This second epistle speaks of comfort. So we have this word, "He that comforteth the lowly, even God, comforted us" (7. 6), and "we ourselves are comforted of God" (1. 4).

Paul had known trials and afflictions which he describes as the sufferings of Christ. He knew what it was to be hated of men and suffer bodily pains, of which he enumerates many, in 2 Corinthians 11., and writes "beside those things that are without, there is that which presseth upon me daily, anxiety for all the churches." Having been afflicted and comforted, he is able to comfort them also.

Our thoughts dwelt on the Lord Jesus in all His affliction. Realizing somewhat of what He endured, we can find comfort in Christ. The Holy Spirit was given as the Comforter, so that we can say, like the Psalmist, "This is my comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me" (Psalm 119. 50). Romans 15. 4 reminds us that "through comfort of the scriptures we might have hope," and 1 Thessalonians 4. 18 directs, "Comfort one another with these words."

L. Mercer, P. Thomas.

From Paisley and Barrhead.—"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ...", are words arresting in their form, and, in their setting, we believe should form the pattern of our language to God in worship. "Blessed" is derived from two words in the original Greek, meaning "well" (*eu*), and "word" (*logos*); hence the word "eulogy." Paul did not begin **by** blessing or speaking well of the Corinthians. We speak much of the Fatherhood of God, even in relation to His only-begotten Son, who ever exhibited all the desired traits of filial affection and obedience, and is thus an ensample to us.

A further striking phrase is that He gave us "the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." The *earnest* is a token given, as was the custom in Corinth, in anticipation of the fulness that should follow. The Spirit, then, is given to us while in the body, as an earnest of the incorruptible, and undefiled inheritance that shall be ours when what is mortal shall **be** swallowed **up** of life.

David L. Baird.

From Cowdenbeath. —In concluding his first epistle to the Corinthian saints, Paul informed them of his intentions to visit the city (1 Corinthians 16. 5), which intentions it would seem had not been realised up to the time of writing the second letter. Paul was now in Macedonia (2 Corinthians 9. 4), a year or so after the writing of the first epistle (2 Corinthians 9. 2). In this same province the Apostle had experienced much affliction, yet he was one that overflowed with joy (2 Corinthians 7. 4). In the midst of such affliction he had experienced true comfort by the coining of Titus from Corinth who informed him of their longing, mourning and zeal for him so that he rejoiced yet more (2 Corinthians 7. 7).

Paul and his companions were encouraged through their experience to set their hope in the God of all comfort for future deliverances, but were conscious also of the effect of suppliant saints, acknowledging that the Divine gift of deliverance from so great a death was the result of their so helping in prayer on their behalf; and what thanks ascended to God as a result!

It will be noted that the route outlined in 2 Corinthians 1. 16 is somewhat different from that outlined in 1 Corinthians 16. 5, 6. We are of the mind that the journeying, as recorded in the second epistle, was the Apostle's original plan of his

purposed visit to Achaia. Because of the condition of things at Corinth he had been unable to undertake a visit at that time. It would seem that some of the saints in Corinth knew of this original plan and were charging Paul with fickleness, as a man unstable in his ways, because he now purposed otherwise. The Apostle's seeming failure to fulfil his promise, however, had not been to please his own ends.

Robert Ross.

From **Knocknacloy**. —We as believers should know this comfort which Paul speaks of, so that **we may be** able to comfort them which are in trouble. The lesson for us to-day is, that **we** must have our trust more in God. Then **we** shall experience more of the true comfort of God and shall **be** able to comfort any in distress with true comfort.

It is good to **be** reminded that "**by** faith ye stand" (verse 24). **We** can only see the Lord **by** faith, and **by** faith **we** enter into the Holies, on a Lordly morning, to offer **up** our praises to God for His gift, His only begotten Son.

George Thompson.

THE ALTAR OF BURNT OFFERING.

In a recent letter from Winnipeg our esteemed brother **J. M.** writes—"It has often been and still is somewhat of a difficulty to **me** how this altar constructed of acacia wood and overlaid with copper could withstand the vehemence of the fire that burnt the carcass, say of a bullock. There **may** have been some secret in the construction that is not explained to **us**, or it **may be** explained in the fact that the **altar** fire was divine fire (Leviticus 9. 24) and that it consumed only what was intended to **be** consumed."

This is a difficulty that has puzzled many of us **at** times and the following suggestion towards its solution **may be** of interest to our Bible students.

We are not given full details of the construction of the Tabernacle and its furniture, and many difficulties arise to distract the artist and model maker. There are for instance practically no details given for the construction of the Laver, and the usual pictures are probably far from the original. What **J. M.** says of the Copper Altar is true of most of our difficulties—"there **may** have been some **secret** in the construction that is not explained to us."

What is the secret in the construction of the Copper Altar? Altars are mentioned throughout the Old Testament Scriptures from Genesis onwards. Usually their construction is taken for granted, **but** the following scriptures—Deuteronomy 27. 5, Joshua 8. 30, 31, 1 Kings 18. 32—suggest they were usually built of stones. In Exodus 20. 22-26 instructions are given for the building of altars of earth or unhewn stones on which burnt offerings and **peace** offerings were to **be** sacrificed. It is difficult to understand why instructions should **be** given for an entirely different **type** of altar so soon after (Exodus 27.).

But let us suppose the instructions of Exodus 20. and 27. are complementary. Will this resolve our difficulties? The altar in Exodus 27. was to **be made** "hollow," verse 8; it **may** well have been the intention that this "hollow" **was** to be filled with earth or unhewn stones which would thus **be** held together **by** the boards forming an outside case. Such an arrangement seems so sensible and practical as to **be** its own commendation. Exodus 27. **will** not now fundamentally alter the usual and well established form of altar construction; **it** provides for the **furniture to be used** with it. The seeming contradiction between Exodus 20. and 27. is thus removed.

We shall find too, that the difficulties connected with the Copper Altar are also removed. The copper covered boards will no longer **be** in direct contact with the intense heat of the fire. The fire would **be** laid on the "hearth of the **altar**" (Leviticus 6. 9), that is on **top** of the stones, and as stone is a **bad** conductor of heat the boards would not **be** harmed.

The position **and purpose** of the grating of network of brass or copper also becomes clear. It was to be round the outside of the case under a surrounding ledge half-way **up** the side and probably extending below the bottom of the case; the rings were to **be placed at** the four corners (**i. e.**, the four top corners) immediately under the ledge. The relation of the staves to the rings is now plain. The purpose of the "grating" (**a** word only used in connection with the Copper Altar) would **be** (1) to protect the case from kicking beasts, (2) to provide an air draught for the fire.

There is one piece of confirmatory evidence. Josephus says of the altar of Herod's temple that it was built of stone "without any iron tool" (Wars **5. 5, 6**) and in C. Apion **1. 22** he quotes a writer of an earlier **day**—"a square altar, not **made** of hewn stone, **but** composed of white stones gathered together, having each side twenty cubits long, and in altitude ten cubits." The reference is **to** Alexander's time, **but** there is no reason to doubt that it is the same altar as was **set** on its base **by** Zerubbabel and his company. Ezra **3. 3**. The dimensions are the same **as** for the altar of Solomon's Temple and Ezra **3. 3** suggests they were simply re-building the altar that had fallen into ruin. The particulars of the Brazen Altar in **2** Chronicles, therefore, would appear to relate to the brass or copper casing only. **S. B.**

COMMENTS.

(A). Kirkintilloch.

Conybeare and Howson give an interesting translation (adopting Lachmann's reading) of **2** Corinthians **1. 20**—"For all the promises of God have in Him the **yea** [which seals their truth]; wherefore also through Him the Amen [which acknowledges their fulfilment] is uttered to the praise of God **by** our voice."

The translations in the **A. V.** and the **R. V.** differ considerably. The **A. V.** suggests in Him is the **yea and** the Amen, a double affirmative of **all** God's promises being fulfilled in Him. **But** the **R. V.** suggests that the Corinthians, uttering the Amen (see **1** Corinthians **14. 16**) had given assent that **all** promises were fulfilled in Him. The "**yea**" refers to His fulfilment of the promises, and the "Amen" to the response of the saints in Corinth. Perhaps the "through us" means through those three preachers, Paul, Silvanus and Timothy. Here then appears the order: God **made** promises which were fulfilled **by** our Lord Jesus Christ, whom the apostles proclaimed **as** the fulfiller thereof. To this the Corinthians said "Amen," thus glorifying God. **Jas. M.**

R. V. and **R. S. V.** translate same **text** as **C.** and **H. R. S. V.** gives, "**For all** the promises of God find their **Yes** in Him. That is why we **utter** the Amen through Him, to the glory of God. —**S. B.**

Questions from **Bradford, Leeds and Halifax.** —**2** Corinthians **1. 1**. Were there any other Assemblies in Achaia, besides Corinth, and can their names **be** given?

Answer. —We must define Achaia. Generally speaking Achaia was a Roman province (with a ruling proconsul, Acts **18. 12**), south of Thessaly, and nearly co-extensive with modern Greece. From Romans **16. 1** we know there was a Church of God in Cenchreae, the seaport of Corinth, which is in Achaia. Certain dwellers in Athens were won for Christ (Acts **17. 32-34**). Athens is probably **50** miles **by** sea, or **100** **by** road from Corinth, hence we **judge** a Church **may** have been planted at Athens. The two letters to the Thessalonians were written from Corinth (about **50** to **52** A. D.). With this in mind please compare **1** Thessalonians **1. 8** and **2** Thessalonians **1. 4**. In the former it would appear that **Paul** is considering Achaia **as** a district, grouping **it** with Macedonia, another district to the north. In the latter, the Apostle is linking with himself the Churches of God (**we** suggest in Achaia) in his glorying. **Again** in the salutation in **2** Corinthians **1. 1** the words "with **all** the saints which are in the **whole** of Achaia" would suggest groups of saints in addition to those in "the Church of God which is **at** Corinth." **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.

It seems many years since we were first interested in the great fly-wheel of a gas-engine. Little did we realize its use then through lack of knowledge. Perhaps, from the mechanical side, we know little even yet. But its function interests us to-day in the re-reading of the chapter before us in the second Epistle to Corinth, and the papers thereon. What a steadying effect on the thrust of power, or on the even tick of time, has the balance wheel! It has a modulating and restraining effect, and yet does not retard the transmission of power. It assists the flow of power in an even measure, and tends to eliminate jerks and jolts, starts and stops.

We would apply the principle to our subject. Local circumstances in the Church of God in Corinth and in the experiences of the Apostle Paul are used to bring out, through the Holy Spirit's guidance, the need for this great composite attribute of " Balance. "

We are not able in the space at our disposal, nor even in our competence, to argue, whether the Apostle is referring in this chapter to a short and sorrowful visit, made by himself to Corinth, of which we have no record in the Acts of the Apostles. And we know that much has been written by devout students of the Word, as to the " lost " epistles to the Corinthian Church (*e. g.*, one before 1 Corinthians 5. 9, and one between 1 and 2 Corinthians). But it sufficeth us that by Divine providence we have two letters in the canon of Scripture, which teach Divine principles, based, as they are, on the selected events and circumstances that arose in that church.

The " balance " in this second chapter is striking, and brings us to a consideration of what Peter in his second epistle calls the " divine nature. " This " divine nature " emanates from " divine power, " and comes to us " through the knowledge of Him " (see 2 Peter 1. 3-4). The power is far above any human power, and the scope of its giving covers " all things that pertain unto life and godliness. " In brief, it provides for all our needs for our life as children of God in our sojourn here. It is rich in " precious and exceeding great promises. " All this is apprehended by " the knowledge of Him. " Well might Paul then thank God who " always " and " in every place " made manifest, through him, the " savour of

His knowledge. " Let us then, as elsewhere expressed by the Apostle, pray " that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, becoming conformed unto His death. "

Returning to the " balance " here displayed, we note how the Apostle was righteously firm where sin was involved, and the integrity of God's House was at stake. Sorrow might be caused to the Corinthians or to himself, but the honour of God's heritage must not be lowered nor tarnished. Yet behind it all was a tender love that caused anguish of heart, as the tear drops fell on the page. Thus when the punishment for wrong-doing satisfied the requirements, Paul writes that they should not only desist from punishment, but that they " forgive him and comfort him. " and " confirm your love toward him. " Let no advantage be gained over us by Satan.

How necessary these instructions are at all times ! For amidst the diversity of gifts in that, or in any other, Church of God, there is a need for " balance "—that the one gifted legally may guide, and the one gifted with the greatest of all gifts, love, may moderate, both in the fear of the Lord. Study further these seven great attributes in 2 Peter 1. that ye may add " on your part " culminating in love.

⁴⁴ Put on therefore, as God's elect, holy and beloved, a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving each other, if any man have a complaint against any; even as the Lord forgave you, so also do ye: and above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness. "*Jas, M,*

THE SECOND LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS.

Chapter 2.

From Kirkintilloch.—Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians, with its many reproofs and corrections, might give the impression that Paul was a hard man, and severe in his judgments, but the opening verses of chapter 2. of this second epistle show us the character of the man who was behind the pen. The words of Proverbs 27. 6: " Faithful are the wounds of a friend, " are exemplified in Paul, for, behind those words of rebuke which he wrote to them, he had much affliction and anguish of heart. This, no doubt, is the experience of a genuine shepherd of God's people, and Paul's words flowed out from heart-distress and anguish and many tears, because of their spiritual condition. His life was so intimately bound up with theirs, that their spiritual condition affected him, either for joy or for grief.

Comparing chapter 2. with chapter 7. of this epistle, we can safely conclude that the man referred to in them is the man of 1 Corinthians 5., who was put away from among them.

In the first epistle, chapter 16. verses 1-3, Paul writes of "the collection for the saints" at Jerusalem. In 2 Corinthians 8. 10 and 9. 2 he says that their collection had been prepared " a year past. " This fixes the time between the writing of the first and second epistles at about a year. Therefore the man who was put away, was away for about a year, for the saints in Corinth were obedient to Paul's instructions in his first letter (2 Corinthians 2. 9).

But now Paul writes, " Sufficient to such a one is this punishment. " Sufficient, not by reason of the time he had been away, but because of his manifest repentance and sorrow. The punishment of being put away was not imposed upon the erring brother by a few in the assembly, but by the greater part (Gr.).

So real was the man's repentance now, and his sorrow, that there was the danger of him being swallowed up with his overmuch sorrow. This man's spiritual restoration would be greatly hindered if there was no place of repentance for him in the hearts of his brethren. To confirm their love towards him, would be to receive him back amongst them, and their love for the erring brother, which had hitherto been restrained, should now be stretched out to him.

It **is** a device of Satan to foster **an** unforgiving spirit among us, which will not welcome back one who **is** repentant of his wrong. It **is** also Satan's device to implant **in** the hearts of erring ones **an** undue **sense** of self-disappointment and that there is no repentance for such. **We** are therefore not ignorant of Satan's devices **in** this respect.

Paul came to Troas for the gospel of Christ. Here he had expected to meet Titus, who was returning from Corinth, and to hear from him news of the assembly; but the burden of anxiety for the Corinthian assembly lay so heavily upon Paul, that, when he did not find Titus, he had no relief for his spirit, and could not settle there to labour for the Lord. Even though the work was opening up in Troas, Paul took his leave of the brethren there, and went forth into Macedonia, that is, in the direction of Corinth [1]. This **is** perhaps a confession of failure on his part, but he writes it for the benefit of the Corinthians, that they might know the anxiety he was having on their account. When he **came** into Macedonia, he was greatly comforted by meeting Titus, and hearing such good news about Corinth (see chapter 7. 5-8).

God's portion from the faithful testimony of **His** servants **is** not affected by men's attitude towards them. God will be glorified in the salvation of men, or in their condemnation, for, in those who receive the message, and in those who reject it, Paul says, "**We** are a sweet savour of Christ unto God. "

We had difficulty in deciding whether the sweet savour of Christ was in the proclamation of the Gospel message, or is it **in** the person who bears witness to Christ? [2]

The word "sweet savour" in verse 15, and the word "savour" in verse 16, are two different Greek words. In the former, the perfume of Christ **is** always sweet to God, but in the latter the odour of Christ to some persons **is** hateful. They cannot bear the odour of Christ in the Christian, and in the case of such, it **is** an odour from death unto death. But to others, the Christian **is** a savour of life unto life.

The significance of these words should not be lost to **us**. The life and testimony of God's servants **in** this world have far-reaching and eternal results; and **what man is** sufficient for these things ?

*H. King**

From Bradford, Halifax and Leeds. —The apostle **in** this chapter **exemplifies** the character of Christ **in** a very marked way by **his** longsuffering attitude towards the rebellious minority in the Church at Corinth. **He is** not willing, nay, rather he **seems** to have decided not to come to bring sorrow upon them by personally acting in discipline toward those who had not been exercised by his first epistle, and possibly, a previous visit to Corinth (verses 1-3). Obviously the fallen brother mentioned **in** 1 Corinthians 5. had by this time repented of his sin (verse 7), and upon his giving evidence of his repentance, the apostle now appeals to the assembly to welcome him back with a true Christlike spirit, that **is**, in a spirit of loving forgiveness. This should be done **as soon as possible in** order that the fallen brother may not be sidetracked by Satan, through their coldness of heart, perhaps into thinking that he was beyond the reach of Divine mercy. It would **seem** that the apostle advocates three steps towards the brother's restoration. The first step should be "forgiveness," which, however, by itself could be cold and formal. Together with this, the saints should strengthen him by their personal and warm-hearted fellowship, which **seems to be** the **meaning** of true comfort in verse 7. Finally, they should confirm their love to him by ratifying or making authoritative (as the original word states), by a public act, that **he** was now restored, and thus frustrating the purposes or desires of the Evil One. Then the Apostle, by means of a double military metaphor (in verse 14) sets forth the victorious power of Christ over the life of the individual Christian by constraining him to become a willing bondsman to the glory of his Lord **and** Master, Jesus Christ,

and shows **by the** figure of the incense-bearer that such a **life** would have a double **effect** on those who **came** within the sphere of his influence. To those who would recognise the sovereignty of the Lord **Jesus** would **be given life**, but to the disobedient, death would **be** the inevitable end of a Christ-rejecting **life**.

W. G. Henderson, F. Canning.

From Kilmarnock. —From verse **4** we learn that the Apostle's first letter to the saints at Corinth **was** written "out of much affliction and anguish of heart... with many tears." There **was a** sinning one in the Assembly, and there were many things needing correction, but it **was** out of love for them and for the Lord's honour that he wrote, and not for fault-finding. When there **is** any disorder in a Church of God, it **is** the responsibility of the overseers to seek to put matters right, and while the discipline may **cause** offence to some*, it **is** for the welfare of the saints and the honour of the Lord. Had the saints **as a whole** not forgiven the repentant man, there **was** the possibility of him being overcome with excessive sorrow, and thus Satan would have gained an advantage over them. The purpose of **all** discipline should be the restoration of the one who had sinned.

Apparently **Paul** refers in verse 12 to the time **we** read of in Acts 20. **6, etc.** [3]. He was disappointed at not finding Titus at Troas, and passed on into Macedonia. He evidently found this to be the leading of the Spirit and he could rejoice that Christ **was** being made known through him in every place, and whether they who heard believed and were saved, or disbelieved and perished, he was **a** sweet savour of Christ unto God. Although he **was** the great Apostle of the Gentiles, yet he realised his own insufficiency and relied on God's help. This **is** the secret of **all successful** Gospel work.

A. G. S.

EXTRACTS.

From Toronto. —In his efforts, in his first letter, to bring home to the saints in Corinth the **full** extent of their wrong, the apostle had more than merely **pricked** their consciences. They experienced sorrow of **a** godly sort. This so affected **Paul**, that, to pave the way for his forth-coming visit to them, he penned those loving and almost soothing words in verses **1-4**, which must have been **a relief** to the ears of the saints.

We concluded that the opening of **a door** " in the Lord " **was** the manifestation of the Spirit's work in leading them to Troas to plant an assembly there [4]. From Acts **20. 7** it appears that there **was a** considerable number already gathered together in this city, in assembly capacity.

The thought in **1 Corinthians 2. 13** seems to be that **Paul** had no relaxing of tension. **His** spirit **was** troubled, and it appears that the Spirit **was** thus preparing him for the immediate severing of ties in answer to the **call** to " come over into Macedonia and help us " [see Remarks **3** and **4**]. Verses **16** and **17** seem like **a** climax, in which the Apostle **speaks** of the **sweet smell** of the knowledge of the saving power of the Lord **Jesus** Christ. Surely in the midst of **a** putrifying, godless world, **we** should **be as a** sweet savour of Christ unto God, **as** standing betwixt the living and the dead.

N. K.

From Melbourne. —The opening verses of chapter **2**, indicate the sorrow of heart the Apostle felt, for truly he had **a** real shepherd care for **all** the flock. And so **at** Troas he **is** cast down pending Titus' arrival, hope mingling with fear **lest** a condition should develop in Corinth that would render **all** his labours among them in vain. Reproof **is** not palatable to any, but **it is** sometimes necessary, **as** it was in this case. **But** now he **is** writing that they should forgive this wayward brother, and receive him back into their midst, on the clear evidence of his repentance. Wisdom in those who have the rule **is** very necessary (see James 1. 5).

How delightful to read that these Corinthian **saints** were **made** sorry, after a godly sort, and proved themselves to be pure in the matter! Let **us** beware of Satan's devices and refrain from lending our **ears** to a whispering **campaign** about a saint's indiscretions, and from adopting an over-righteous attitude, and from a spirit of indifference. Verses 12-13 reveal the Apostle's heart of love, yearning over his spiritual charges at Corinth, even when a door **was** opened to him at Troas. But **see** him meekly take his place at the prayer meeting, **and** hear the outpourings of his heart **as** he thanks God who always led him **in** triumph in Christ, a sweet savour of Christ to them, a lovely example to the flock.

S. Stoop.

From Glasgow. —In this chapter the great care which **the** Apostle had for the Corinthian saints **is** clearly seen. Although his first letter had grieved them by its severe corrections, we **are** informed in this chapter that the force of the first epistle was not without purpose. The Apostle desired to prove them, whether they had grown sufficiently to learn the need of subjection to the will of God, **as** spoken by **His** servant; moreover he was hoping that his letter would remove the disorders that existed so that he might come to them with joy and not with sorrow.

Verses 5-11 present to us the restoration of one who had brought on himself the judgment of the Church. It would appear that the disciplinary action taken **in** 1 Corinthians **5**. had had the desired effect, and the brother put away had so repented of his misdeeds that the way was open for the Church to confirm their love towards him, to receive him again, and to gain a victory over Satan. The Adversary **is** ever on the alert to place obstacles **in** the way of God's saints and to cause error and dissension among them.

J. J. P.

From Hamilton, Ont. —We noticed what a far-reaching effect **sin** had, not only in hindering the progress of the assembly, but also on the preaching of **the** gospel (verses 12-13). Paul's writings **seem** to be his most powerful weapon (**see** 2 Corinthians 10. 10). This weapon was first used to bring about a repentant condition in the church, and now he **is** using it again to comfort and assure them of his love so that they would be looking for his coming with joy. It **is** only when we are in a good spiritual condition that **we** can look forward to Christ's return with real joy.

Having assured the Corinthians of his love for them, he now asks them in turn to comfort and confirm their love to the one who had sinned.

The king in Matthew 18. 21-35 **is** a type of the Father. In Christ **we** have been completely forgiven, and yet how easy it **is** for us to find fault with another, and how seldom do we truly "forgive him and comfort him" (verse 7)! The other outstanding reason why we should forgive our brother **is** "that no advantage may be gained over us by Satan" (verse 11).

A. Davidson.

From Brantford. —Here we **see** the spirit of the man who wrote the epistle; and the words of the writer, "**Be** ye imitators of me, even **as** I also **am** of Christ," take on a new meaning. **He** loved them and sought to show **his** love for them in writing the first epistle, that they "might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you." Now there was no need to go with a rod, in keeping with Proverbs 13. 24, but he could go "in love and a spirit of gentleness" (1 Corinthians 4. 21). Divine order has been shown so far, let it continue that Satan gain no advantage, so that all things would be in order for Paul's return to them.

The apostle wrote in all sincerity (verse 17), bringing before them the true word of God and manifesting the character of God, consistent in all **His** attributes, both in judgment and in mercy. How unlike some he **was**, who were men-pleasers, who handled the word of God deceitfully (**see** 2 Corinthians 4. 2)!

G. Soper, J. McLeman,

From Birkenhead. —The **man** described as "**such a one**" in verse 6, we judge refers to a definite case, namely, the **man** mentioned in 1 Corinthians 5. 12. The **man's name** is not mentioned. This would indicate a thought of love. Furthermore, we see that Paul was prepared to forgive "in the person of" Christ (2 Corinthians 2. 10). This should be our attitude in such cases, when the person shows repentance (Galatians 6. 1).

Two factors were pulling at **Paul's** heart when he was at Troas, (1) an open door "in the Lord," and (2) deep concern for the saints in Corinth. The latter must be dealt with, because it would have far-reaching effects upon the Church of God in Corinth and upon the Fellowship as a whole.

Two **classes** of persons are brought before us in verses 14-16. "To the one a savour from death unto death" (verse 16), was thought to apply to believers, who through faith in Christ were dead unto the world. "To the other a savour from life unto life" was deemed the unbeliever, once dead in trespasses and sins, who may have life in Christ and seek to "live" constantly in the enjoyment of the same.

R. B. Williams, P. K.

From Cowdenbeath. —Paul's instruction in verses 5-11 is very important as it provides us with a Divine precedent for receiving again into the Fellowship erring ones who are truly repentant.

A work had been opened up by God for Paul in Troas, but, burdened with anxiety for the Corinthians, he could not exploit it. He left Troas and went into Macedonia where he hoped to meet Titus and learn how the Corinthians had reacted to his letter. Paul depended upon Divine leading and guiding in his service and his experience was one of ' > being always led in triumph in Christ; Wherever Paul and his companions went they spread the savour of the knowledge of Christ. Paul is seen in two companies here, first among them "that are being saved" and; then among "them that are perishing." In both cases God derived a sweet savour of Christ from the message Paul preached. The message he preached to the saved savoured of death (see Colossians 2. 20, 3. 5, and Romans 6. 11). To the perishing Paul preached a message of life. A message which, if they believed it, was unto eternal life. As Paul thinks of the wonderful message entrusted to him he exclaims, "Who is sufficient for these things?" No mercenary spirit led Paul and his companions to engage in such a service. Paul received his message from God and delivered it faithfully, conscious that he was doing it in the sight of God, and the message which he delivered in sincerity was of Christ.

James K. D. Johnston.

From Atherton. —It is generally* accepted that the person referred to in verses 5-11 is this same incestuous person who is spoken of in 1 Corinthians 5. Some difficulties with regard to this interpretation were raised. (1) The treatment here seems lenient, considering that the man had probably taken the woman to wife while her lawful husband was alive. (2) It would appear that the Corinthian saints had not fully carried out the commands of the Apostle, the word "sufficient" indicates this. (8) The punishment had not received the full co-operation of the Church, but only by "the many." However it was felt that the Apostle's words could not refer to any other person, and that the word "sufficient" surely indicated that the Apostle realised the man had suffered enough. The Church in Corinth apparently had no intention of receiving him back into the assembly, or possibly they had never considered the matter of restoration. It was possible that there might have been some in the assembly who did not see eye to eye with the severity of the judgment.

Whether the thanksgiving (verse 14) arises from the preaching of the gospel at Troas, or from the good news brought by Titus, is not clear. It was felt that the words "in the person of Christ" (verse 10) indicated that the Apostle ever acted with the realization before him that Christ was present.

If we keep to the order **in** verses 14-16 then the words "from death unto death " apply to " them that are being saved, " and the words " from **life unto life** " to " them that are perishing. " The " sweet savour of Christ unto God " would remind us of the sweet savour offerings, and thus the thought may rightly be conveyed of the Apostle and **his** co-workers laying themselves on the altar of Divine service. Others thought that "from death unto death" applied to those who refuse the gospel message, and " from **life** unto life " applied to those who accept the Lord **as** Saviour.

D. H. Butler, G. Sankey,

From London. —The Apostle has no intention of making sad those who had made him glad. He **is** broken down before them, and his sorrow manifests the love he had for them. It **is** to be compared in some measure with the love that the Lord had for the people of Jerusalem when **He** wept over that city. With all his shedding of tears, the Apostle **is** no weakling, for he tells them, later, of his trials and sufferings (chapters 11. and 12.).

A great lesson **is** contained in this portion (verses 5-11). It may happen that **a** brother who has sinned may become truly repentant, but through lack of discernment on their part, the church may continue to treat him harshly and finally drive him away. Punishment **is** intended to bring **an** offender to true repentance. The Apostle, **in** verse 13, found no rest **in** his spirit because he found not Titus, his brother. This verse reveals how even Paul was largely dependent on the help of **a** brother. To-day it is the same. Many **a** man **is** encouraged by his brother, and many **a** man **is** helped by a godly wife.

Our relationship Godward **is** that of the sacrifices of old, which sent their incense heavenward. Our relationship manward **is** vital, for we are the pointers to heaven or to hell. This **is** a great responsibility, and, **as** Paul says, " Who **is** sufficient for these things ? " The answer is " our sufficiency **is** from God " (3. 5).

The word " corrupting " (verse 17) may mean " adulterating " or " making merchandise of. " To-day many quote the word of God to justify their own actions. The Apostle states clearly his position in that he used the Word to speak of Christ. Paul's strength lay in his nearness to Christ. **He** shows that we **are** so identified with Christ that we are living witnesses of God on this earth, and by heeding or refusing our message, **men** seal their lot for eternity.

R. F. Robertson.

From Cardiff. —Some thought that Paul was not exercising his apostolic authority in verse 10, and difficulty **was** encountered over the rendering of the word " person " [5]. The figure presented in verses 14-16 **is** the Roman conqueror riding in state and triumph. Incense was burnt on such occasions and the savour would **fill** the town. Such was the savour of Paul and his fellow-workers. The linking up of verse 15-16 was difficult **as** some thought that the order of presentation was reversed in verse 16, i. e., the " savour from **life** unto **life** " was in " them that are being saved. " Greek commentaries revealed that **a** chiasmus was **a** possibility. Others thought that the order should not be reversed, thinking that the words " them that are perishing " and not " perished, " left the possibility of the persons yet being saved. Thus the Christless life **is** replaced by the fuller **life** in Christ. The saved know the saving from the state of being dead in trespasses and sins, to the state of being crucified daily. Help would **be** appreciated please [6].

P. B., E. S. T.

From Broxburn. —" But **if** any hath caused sorrow. " **We** know this brother had caused **a** great deal of sorrow to the Lord, to **Paul**, and to the saints at Corinth, although at first the Corinthians also were in error, for they **had** condoned this brother's evil deed. Later, however, they saw their mistake **and** the evil of this brother's conduct, and repented and obeyed Paul. The happy result was that the **man** repented of **his** sin. It **is** most important to **emphasize** that **sin, in** whatever form in an assembly, **causes** grief **and** sorrow. Discipline, too, **causes** sorrow

and **grief** to the **saints**, and to those who have the responsibility of dealing with these matters. It **is** imperative that all discipline should **be** enforced in the spirit of meekness, and with **a** view to restoring the erring saint. The Corinthians had been very slow to act, in putting away the brother; now they were equally slow in receiving back, into the assembly, the repentant brother.

The Adversary Satan **is** mentioned here in verse **11**, **as** he **is** also mentioned in **1** Corinthians **5**. It **was** abundantly clear to Paul that Satan's purpose **was** to thwart the purpose of God. Satan took advantage in causing the man to sin, then, on account of his sin, he **was** delivered into Satan's power for the destruction of the flesh.

It **is** both interesting and edifying to compare the difference between the chastening of the sons of the Lord, **as** recorded in Hebrews 12. **5-7**, and the delivering to Satan in **1** Corinthians **5. 5** and **1** Timothy **1. 20**.

It **was** noted that when **we** come to the Book of the Revelation there **is** no mention of any church at Troas. Yet when **we** refer to Acts **20. 6-7**, we find that there were Christians there who **came** together to break bread. Therefore, **we** conclude that at one time there must have been an assembly of God at Troas. However, the assembly there evidently did not continue very long, for **we** see that when John wrote the letters to the seven churches in Asia, the assembly in Troas had ceased to exist [7].

Verses 14-17. When the gospel **is** preached there **is** something God receives, although **a** sinner may never be saved. To those who believe and accept, it **is** life unto life and God **is** glorified. To those who **reject**, it **is** death unto death. The **same** sweet incense which the liberated captives enjoyed was **a** savour of death to those who were doomed. **We** have not to **be** like **a** dishonest retailer, who, dealing in small quantities of goods, sometimes sells an inferior article, thus defrauding his customers. Some lay hold upon some pet theory, or some small portion of the word of God, and put it out in very small quantities, and fail to declare the whole counsel of God. Our duty **is** clear, to declare all the Word of God.

John McGregor.

From Crowborough. —Knowledge of the mind and will of God brings responsibility. Paul's teaching **was** that all judgment **was** with the end in view of forgiveness and restoration **if** the sinner showed **a** penitent spirit. **We** saw that under law **a** fornicator **was** to be stoned to death immediately. The grace of God **is** manifest that under grace, **if** and when the person showed **a** repentant spirit he **was** to be forgiven, but only in the light of the cross of Christ. **B. V. F.**

THE SECOND LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS.

Chapter 1.

From Willington Quay. —Fellowship with Christ in sufferings **is** not without its recompense in the present time. It **is** obvious that Paul and the saints in Corinth learned much through sufferings, about which they might have known little otherwise; suffering or tribulation has its objective (see Romans 5. 3-5), Philippians **3. 10, 11**). Comfort and joy are the present reward for suffering for righteousness' **sake**. Paul's experience in Asia would also bring out the principle of Divine working, that God's power **is** perfected in human weakness—for "my power **is** made perfect in weakness" (2 Corinthians 12. 9). Though not actively participating with Paul in his sufferings, the saints could have fellowship with him, helping together **by** supplication on his behalf, and also in thanksgiving for his deliverance.

J. R., Jun.

REMARKS.

[1] **Kirkintilloch.** —Most of our correspondents agree that the door opened to Paul " in the Lord " **was** in Troas, **thus** raising the question **as** to whether Paul acted aright **in** moving on to Macedonia. **One** commentator suggests **an** alternative view that when Paul came to Troas he saw **an open door to Corinth**, but did not enter. It is generally held that the open door **was** in Troas. —*Jas. M.*

[2] Conybeare and Howson's translation of verse 14 " and [God] by **me** sends forth the knowledge of Him, **a** stream of fragrant **incense** " (*osme*, from **ozo**=to smell) would suggest that the proclamation of the Gospel **was** the odour. But in verse 15—"we are a sweet-savour (*euodia*, *ew*=well, *ozo*—to smell) of Christ. " Here it is the person. —*Jas. M.*

[3] **Kilmarnock.** —With this location I agree. Some of our contributors place this journey to Troas at Acts 16. 8-11, when Paul heard the cry to Macedonia, *i. e.* in his second missionary journey. —*Jas. M.*

[4] **Toronto.** —This may be so; but in his second journey Paul had already been to Troas (Acts 16. 8), and on the outward trip of his third journey, that **is**, on the occasion of 2 Corinthians 2. 13, he awaited there for **a** short period, the arrival of Titus, and later he returns *via* Troas (Acts 20. 4-12). —*Jas. M.*

[5] **Cardiff.** —" Person " **is** shown in R. V. M, **as** " presence. " Latin Vulgate has " in persona Christi, " and Luther has " in Christ's stead. " The fornicator had to be put away " in the name of the Lord Jesus " (1 Corinthians 5. 4). Here the forgiveness **is** exercised " before the **face** " or "in the presence " of Christ. The Greek word, *prosopon* (from *pros*=towards, and *opo*=the eye) is used, denoting " countenance, " " face, " or " appearance. " In chapter 3. 7, **13, 18** the same word **is** translated " face, " but in chapter 1. 11 (persons), 2. **10** (person). —*Jas. M.*

[6] **Cardiff.** —The comment of Peter (in 2 Peter 3. 16) concerning certain of brother Paul's writings—" wherein **are** some things hard to be understood " —would apply to verses 14-16 of 2 Corinthians 2. Almost abruptly in verse **14** Paul breaks into an exclamation of thanks, after **a** recording of events in the previous two verses. This thanks **is** due to the wonderful relief from anxiety that Paul experienced on the meeting with Titus in Macedonia, when the latter told of the longing and mourning and zeal of the Corinthians for the Apostle. It **is** not until chapter 7. **6-7** that we **get** this explanation.

The picture apparently that underlies verse **14** **is** the returning triumphal procession of **a** victorious general from his campaigns. Primarily many of the vanquished would follow in his train, but later, included in this train were also the general's subordinates. Thus those who were led in triumph were not so led to humiliate them. Rather they were there to **add** to the glory of the leader. This thought of being made **a** display **is** also seen in 1 Corinthians 4. **9**. Associated with the triumphal procession was the burning of incense. So the **idea** **is** carried on, and the Apostle likens the speaking of the knowledge of Christ to **a** **sweet** savour, rising as burning incense. Verse **14** **is** **a** triumphant verse, for it almost commences with " at every time " (always) and ends with " in every place. "

In verse **15** those who had previously been instrumental in spreading the incense of the knowledge of Him, become themselves **a** sweet savour to-day of Christ unto God. This is possible to us, who, meditating upon and proclaiming the sweet message, find our garments and our persons savouring of the sweetness of the indwelling Christ. This is ever so unto God, even **if** many men may not appreciate this sweetness. Difficulty now arises in interpreting the relation between verse **15** and verse 16. Our contributor speaks of **a** " chiasmus " here. **A** chiasmus is described by an eminent authority **as** " cross-fashion. " When the terms in the second of two parallel phrases reverse the order of those in the first

to which they correspond. If the two phrases are written, one below the other, **and** lines drawn between the corresponding terms, these lines make the Greek letter chi, a diagonal cross. **We can** illustrate it from our verses: —

⁴⁴ in them that are being saved "	X	" to the one a savour from death unto death "
" in them that are perishing "		" to the other a savour from life unto life "

There **is** no question of the savour **of** Christ losing any of its sweetness unto God, but " **in** them that are perishing " it **is** " a savour from death " ending in death. See also 1 Corinthians 1. 18 in this connexion.

We are not dogmatic in this interpretation. It **is** but a suggestion. —*Jas. M.*

We must, of course, have some evidence for reversing the order. When the writer is normally very logical, as Paul is, we would expect the order to be uncrossed. The savour of the Gospel to them that are perishing is not a savour unto death, for its object is their lives. My judgment is that the Apostle is teaching that those who manifest life in Christ will be used as a savour of life unto sinners, and those Christians who have life will show the savour of death with regard to all things wherein Satan might have influence. —*A. T. D.*

[7] **Broxburn.** —This is questionable. A glance at a good map of Asia Minor, showing the position of the seven churches in relation to Patmos, will show why. They form a complete circuit on good Roman roads in the order given. Troas was " off the map " so far as Patmos was concerned. —*S. B.*

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Question **from** Kirkintilloch. —Why does it say **in** verse 6, " the many, " **and** verse 5 says, " you all. " Did not all **in** the assembly unite **in** putting away **the wicked man** ?

Answer. —Does **it** actually say **in** verse 5 "to you all, " without the last phrase **being** qualified ? I do not think so. " In part " qualifies " you all " **and** does not **mean** (I suggest) **that** all had been pained " to some degree, " but **it means that** " practically all " (i. e., numerically) had been pained. The other part **had** supported the wrong-doer, and, **in** heart, would **be in** opposition to his being put away. Concerning this section Paul **was** much perturbed.

This interpretation would agree with verse 6—" punishment... inflicted by **the** many (R. V. M. —"the more" or "the majority"). **Of** course, **the** incestuous **man** was put away despite the views of this opposing section. —*Jas. M.*

Question **from** London. —Is the short stay of Paul **in** Troas, and the **subsequent** journey into Macedonia **in** Acts 20. 2, the identical incident **as in** 2 Corinthians 2. 12?

Question **from** Glasgow. —Is **it** possible to locate, **in** the record of the **Acts**, the visit to Macedonia referred to **in** chapter 1. 16 and chapter 2. 13 ?

Answer to both. —Luke gives very little detail of this journey from Ephesus to Troas and then to Macedonia (Philippi) **in** Acts 20. 1-2. The Apostle fills **in** more of the picture, particularly **with** regard to **his** own feelings and experiences, **in the** letter we are studying. **We** judge 2 Corinthians 2. 13 and 2 Corinthians 7. 5-7 deal with **this** journey (so briefly mentioned **in** Acts 20. 1). While **at** Philippi (the **main** town of Macedonia) **it is** thought he wrote this second letter, **and sent it** to Corinth by the hands of Titus and two others (2 Corinthians 8. 16-22).

Question from Glasgow. —In what sense were the Apostle and his co-workers a sweet savour of Christ unto God? Has Philippians 2. 17 any bearing on this point?

Answer. —Those who in verse 14 had spread abroad the savour of His knowledge now in verse 15 have become themselves "a sweet savour of Christ." This is Old Testament language, and perhaps the aspect of the meal offering (one of the Levitical sweet savour offerings) as applied to the life of the child of God may be indicated. —*Jas. M.*

ANSWERS AND NOTES.

Mr. Miller has communicated the following notes on various items: —

(1) The day of the Lord Jesus is the present day. Note how Paul speaks of the spirit of the sinning brother being saved in the day of the Lord Jesus in consequence of the destruction of the flesh (1 Corinthians 5. 5). This salvation of the spirit of the man was effected, as see 2 Corinthians 2. 5-11. The saving of the spirit was *not* to take place "in the day of Christ," which is yet future and is when the Lord comes for the Church (see Philippians 1. 10; 2. 16. Note the words "unto the day of Christ").

The "day of the Lord" begins at the coming of the Lord to earth (1 Thessalonians 5. 2), and continues unto the Great White Throne (2 Peter 3. 10). Note the force of "in the which," that is in the day of the Lord, which is more than 1,000 years in extent.

(2) 2 Corinthians 1. 1. —Concerning the order of the names "Christ Jesus" and "Jesus Christ," Paul is the only New Testament writer who uses the name "Christ Jesus." The others write of "Christ" and "Jesus Christ." If you consult the Englishman's Greek New Testament you will see that certain authorities doubt the use of "Apostle of Jesus Christ" in every Pauline letter where it is used in the Authorised Version save in Titus. The Revised Version has altered 2 Corinthians 1. 1 from "Jesus Christ" to "Christ Jesus." The Authorised Version invariably gives "Jesus Christ" as to Paul's apostleship. The significance of what is involved in "Jesus Christ" and "Christ Jesus" requires spiritual perception to arrive at the reason for the change in the arrangement of the names, but the arrangement of the names seems to view the Lord from two points of view. "Jesus Christ" seems to describe Jesus (the Man) to be the Christ, the Anointed of God, whereas "Christ Jesus" seems to show that the Christ, the Son of the living God, became and was the Man, Jesus. The characteristic preposition "through" is that associated with Jesus Christ, but "in" is the preposition connected with Christ Jesus. If Paul is an Apostle of Christ Jesus, then it seems to me it must be connected with the fact that he was not called to the apostleship until after the Lord's resurrection—he was born out of due time.

(3) Concerning Paul's visits, 2 Corinthians 1. 16 and 2 Corinthians 2. 13. The visit in these two scriptures is seen in Acts 19. 21, 20. 1, and he went as far as Greece, where he stayed three months (verses 2, 3). He returned again through Macedonia (verse 3), and came back again to Troas (verse 6), sailing from Philippi (verse 6). This journey was from Troas (2 Corinthians 2. 12) through Macedonia, to Greece, and back again the same way through Macedonia.

(4) Concerning 2 Corinthians 2. 15, "We are a sweet savour of Christ unto God", and as to whether there is any connexion with Philippians 2. 17.

Of old the priests who were anointed with the sweet-smelling oil were a sweet savour as they moved about in their priestly robes. The Apostles who were anointed of God (2 Corinthians 1. 21) to perform the priestly service of preaching the Gospel (Romans 15. 16) were a sweet savour of Christ unto God because they made manifest the knowledge of God in Christ in every place. Everywhere else the foul smelling evils of corrupt doctrine and practice was to be felt. Philippians 2. 17 is the drink offering, not the sweet anointing offerings. Paul is speaking here of being poured out in service for saints, not the thought of spreading abroad the savour of the knowledge of God.

(5) Concerning the question as to why the Apostle writes "the many" in 2 Corinthians 2. 6 and "you all" in 2 Corinthians 2. 5.

A similar use is made of *pleionon* in 2 Corinthians 4. 15, where quite evidently the Apostle is not thinking of "the many" who render thanksgiving in contrast to a fewer number who do not. It is simply that in both cases he views many persons taking action to one of their number who had erred, and in the other case many persons giving thanks; "your" and "many" of 2 Corinthians 4. 15 are not contrasted, but are indicative of the same people. "You all," "the many" of 2 Corinthians 2. 5-6, and "ye" of verse 7 mean the same people.

(6) A question from London asks for Scriptural support for the exercise of internal discipline.

See 2 Thessalonians 3. 6-15, where admonition is to be applied as a corrective in the form of withdrawing from a brother who walks disorderly. In Titus 1. 10 certain were to be silenced who were vain talkers and deceivers. These show forms of internal discipline which do not go the length of expulsion.

(7) Concerning 2 Corinthians 15-16.

I have dealt with this matter under article (4) above. Paul views himself and his fellow-workers as being led along by God in a triumphal march in Christ. He spread the sweet savour of Christ in the tidings he brought, and the songs he sang (the verb here comes from *thriambos*, which was a hymn to Bacchus). As the message came to men, it also rose to God, and was well-pleasing to God whatever its effect, whether men received it and were saved, or rejected it and perished. But note that besides it being a sweet savour to God whatever its results in the hearers, it was to the perishing (not to God) a savour of death unto death, and to the saved, of life unto life. That is, in Paul's message the perishing smelt the savour of death, with a worse death in front, whilst the saved smelt the savour of life with a more abundant life in view.

We appreciate the kindly help from our beloved brother Miller, and we pray for rich blessing on his ministry in Northern America. —*Jas. M.*

NOTE

A welcome is extended to an ever widening circle of contributors. We ask your gracious indulgence for any paper omitted. This is only done when the paper has arrived in Editors' hands after MSS. have gone to the printers. Space is so limited that only in exceptional cases can we carry forward papers on one month's subject to the next month (*e. g.*, when papers come from overseas).

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.

In a Bible study that is conducted through the medium of writing, it is surprising how much we learn of each other. True, the personal touch and physical contact are missing, but characteristics of writers, and styles of writing, manifest themselves on the written page.

The early verses of our chapter deal with epistles of commendation. The latter word literally means a " placing together, " and denotes the introduction of one person to another, in which the former is represented as "worthy. " Although this is the only occurrence of the phrase " epistles of commendation " in the Scriptures, yet we have a few specimens in the New Testament, which might well act as precedents, rather than that we should use a printed letter (as some folks do), or revert to stereotyped phraseology.

* The whole Epistle to Philemon is a letter of commendation, more lengthy than other scriptural specimens. Yet into it many precious lessons are packed, although the primary object of the writing was to commend the erstwhile erring slave, Onesimus, now restored, back to the brother he had wronged, and to the assembly in his home. What wondrous reconciliatory love is enjoined in it! What teaching—that all the past debt should be laid to the writer's account (verse 18), and that the welcome that would be heartily accorded to the Apostle as Philemon's partner, should be given to the bearer of the letter (verse 17)! Truly this is a striking pictorial illustration of what Christ does for every erring man before His Father, God.

In 1 Corinthians 16. 10-11 young Timothy is commended to the Church of God in Corinth. In brief powerful strokes the young man's character and capabilities are described, and an appeal to the saints is given to welcome him, **and** to send him forward in peace.

In 2 Corinthians 8. 22-24 we have the Apostle's glowing commendation to Titus and his companions. Note carefully the qualities in them that call for commendation, and the subsequent request that the Corinthians should confirm their love towards them. This is a commendation that rings with sincerity.

A letter of commendation that is out of the usual kind is found in Acts 15. 22-27. Here specially gifted men, Judas and Silas, are being chosen for a particularly difficult task. The letter they bore gave the Apostles' directions, under the Holy Spirit, **but** it was supported by men that had " hazarded their lives for the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. "

Sweet, too, is the commendation to Achaia of Apollos, whom that worthy couple, Priscilla **and** Aquila, had taught " the way of God more carefully "

(see Acts 18. 27). A personal note of knowledge is struck by the aged Apostle John as he commends Demetrius (3 John 12). Very affectionate, too, is the word concerning Phoebe in Romans 16. 1.

It is easy to remember her qualities thus. Her name means the " Shining-One, " whose life radiated light in a dark cesspool of the East. She was a " sister. " What a fountain of comfort is in that word! We read that " a friend loveth at all times, and a brother (or sister) is born for adversity " (Proverbs 17. 17). She was a " servant of the church, " a " saint, " and a " succourer of many. " What a rich commendation !

These are references to written letters of commendation, rich in precedent. The Apostle Paul goes a little further in the matter of the Church of God in Corinth. They themselves, were the letter, written on the Apostle's heart, and on their own hearts also, a veritable " Epistle of Christ. " Someone has paraphrased it thus, " What Christ by the Spirit of God has written on your hearts is written on our heart, as a commendation to all men. "

Your contributions, beloved fellow-students, from far and near, are very precious to us, and weld a link of love among the Churches of God.

Jas. Martin,

THE SECOND LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS.

Chapter 3.

From Cardiff—It is very clear from verse 3 of this chapter that letters of commendation were used by the early churches (Acts 18. 27 and Romans 16. 1 and 2). But Paul was not in need of one, for the church in Corinth was his epistle setting forth in its life and testimony the mind and heart of the apostle and the things he taught—an epistle " known and read of all men. " As such they became an epistle of Christ manifesting to others that from the heart they were entering into and enjoying the blessings and privileges of an eternal relationship with God that was secured in the new covenant.

A comparison of the old and new covenants shows the surpassing glory of the latter; The old covenant, with all that it involved for the Israelite, was a ministration of death. The commandment which was unto life they found to be unto death (Romans 7. 10). It was the " law of sin and of death " (Romans 8. 2), and when an Israelite despised it he died without compassion on the word of two or three witnesses. Yet that covenant was not without its glory albeit it was an evanescent glory, and Moses veiled himself so that the people should not realise that it was but transient. The new covenant, however, has to do with the person of Christ, and is based upon the value and efficacy of His blood. Those who find themselves, through faith, within the compass of the new covenant know that they are justified from all things from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses. How readily we grasp therefore that the new covenant, resplendent with the divine grace and mercy that were manifested to the full at Calvary, surpasses the old in permanent, undimmed glory and excellence!

This truth gave the apostle a great measure of confidence. He longed that the glory of the new covenant might be seen by others of his kinsmen according to the flesh. To them as they listened to the Law in their synagogues it was as if the veil that hid the glory of the old covenant had not been lifted, though that veil was done away in Christ at the cross. In fact now, as then, except they turn unto the Lord their spiritual perception is veiled by unbelief and hardness of heart.

Martin Follett.

From Birkenhead. —The apostle did not need a note of commendation. He was known and read of all men. One other letter of commendation is that found in Acts 18. 27, in connection with Apollos, and we remember that Phoebe was commended to Rome (Romans 16. 1). It is quite evident from these scriptures that the sending of letters of commendation was the usual practice in these early days.

A record of what is mentioned in verse 7 is found in Exodus 34. 29. When Moses came down the Mount he veiled his face, till after he had spoken to the people, because he did not want them to see that the old covenant was passing away [A]. The glory which we have under the new covenant is an inward glory that passeth not away.

In verse 7 we read of the ministration of death. The things that were enjoined under the old covenant brought death to the disobedient one. Yet we note that they came in glory, which was an expression of the mind of heaven. We have something better by the things written on our hearts, and these also came in glory.

This word "minister" (verse 6) is the same as the word "deacon." It was a very lofty service and the Apostle realised that his sufficiency for this great work came from God. In 2 Corinthians 6. 3 to 10 we find the high standard of one who was a minister or deacon.

There is a contrast in this chapter between the old and the new covenants. The glory of God which accompanied the giving of the old covenant was a passing glory, but the glory of the new covenant is something which we can constantly enjoy and enter into (see Colossians 1. 11). "Reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord" (verse 18) means, we suggest, that which is seen in the face of the child of God as a result of the change which has taken place through redemption. Verse 17 brings before us the Deity of the Holy Spirit, "The Lord is the Spirit."

Roy Hyland, P. K.

From Glasgow. —This chapter opens with a continuation of the Apostle's defence of himself and his associate preachers. The conversion of sinners is adduced as the greatest evidence of his divine call to apostleship. No documentary evidence was equal to the manifest working of the Holy Spirit through Paul and his co-workers. There is a suggestion in verse 1 that certain false teachers were arriving in Corinth, furnished with written credentials, granted presumably by the leaders of the Judaist movement. But Paul was not of these. His commendation was written in the hearts of saved Corinthians.

Though the old covenant was given to Israel under the reflection of God's glory in the face of Moses, the new covenant has been brought to us by Christ Himself. It was preached as "the gospel of the glory of the blessed God." There was no reflected glory about the Lord Jesus, but He was, rather, the effulgence of God's glory, the very image of His substance.

Accordingly, those enlightened under the life-giving influence of Christ have greater boldness in their proclamation of their salvation. The glory of the Gospel does not blind their feeble eyes as did the glory of Moses' face. The dimness of the past is overcome by the light of Him who is the Light of the world. All those who are now indwelt by the Spirit of Christ, and brought into the open light and full liberty of the Gospel dispensation, do now, by faith, behold the unveiled glory of the Lord Jesus, in whom the law is fulfilled, and all the divine perfections displayed and exalted.

J. J. P.

EXTRACTS.

From Hamilton, Canada. —While Paul needed no letter of commendation to or from the Corinthians, because he had them on his heart, he strikes an arresting note in verse 2 with the statement: "Ye are our epistle, . . . known and read of all men." Can it truly be said of us that we are "epistles of Christ"? The Spirit of God has indelibly written, on our hearts, not the ten commandments, but the "Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus." So then as the things that accompany salvation are given effect to in the life, the Christian indeed becomes a living epistle. It was thought that the term "Our Epistle," referred to individuals in Corinth, while the term **an Epistle of Christ" seems to imply the Church in Corinth [E].

In Psalm **40. 8**, we hear the Lord saying, in prophetic language, " Thy law is within my heart "; Psalm **37. 31** also bears this out, " the law of his God is in his heart, " and we know well the righteous life He led on this earth consistent with the law and will of God. Similarly, in our case, the law of God, having full control of our hearts, will result in a righteous life making manifest that we are of God (**1 John 3. 10**).

The old covenant was given to Israel from Mount Sinai with glory. We suggest, the glory fading from Moses' face speaks of the glory of the old covenant fading to the point of being abolished, due to the failure of the people of Israel to hold to God's will. The glory of the new covenant will never pass away, because its foundation is God's faithfulness and not man's faithfulness, (see **2 Timothy 2. 13**).
J. Young, N. MacKay.

From Cowdenbeath. —The depreciation by others of the Apostle's person comes out clearly in this Epistle (see, for example, chapter 10. 10). In chapter **3**, Paul defends firstly his position, and secondly his ministrations. Paul asserts that self-commendation is not his object, and says that if the Corinthians were led to doubt this, then let them ask themselves whether he needed, as did some (possibly his adversaries), letters of commendation. They themselves, as his converts, were such a letter to all; their story was so impressed on his heart, that they were known and acknowledged by all. They were a letter, not written with lifeless ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not written as the Law on tables of stone, but on impressionable human hearts (**Proverbs 3. 3**).

Having then the hope that the glory of the new covenant will be abiding and unsurpassable, the Apostle proclaimed it without reservation or concealment, not as Moses, with veiled face. To the one who turns to the Lord there is liberty, freedom from the veil which confines the sight to a Law which binds; but where the Spirit is, there is freedom from bondage, freedom to obey the promptings of the indwelling Spirit.
David McLelland,

From Kirkintilloch. —Under God's leading, Paul and others had been mightily used of the Holy Spirit in Corinth. What a commendation they had, especially to the saints in Corinth! Therefore there was no need for letters of commendation in their case.

Some thought that the reason why the Children of Israel could not look upon Moses' face was because of the hardness of their hearts, this being until this very day (verse 14). We would like some help on this [see A].

There should be nothing veiled or hidden about the minister of the new covenant, as Jesus, the Mediator, said of Himself, " I have spoken openly to the world; . . . and in secret spake I nothing " (**John 18. 20**). Paul also says, " For I shrank not from declaring unto you the whole counsel of God " (**Acts 20. 27**). It is possible for us to have veiled faces, as Christians, and not reflect the glory of Christ. We must, therefore, have this openness and sincerity about us, much as had Peter and John, when others beheld their boldness and took knowledge that they had been with Jesus (**Acts 4. 13**) (see also **2 Timothy 1. 8**). The entrance of His word giveth light. To keep reflecting the glory of God we must continue to read and meditate in His word, for in this way only can the glory of Christ shine in our hearts, transforming us from glory to glory.
William Ure.

From Bradford; Leeds and Halifax. —In speaking of epistles, the Apostle uses the metaphor in reference to the Corinthians. It was stated that a letter is a reminder of distance, and also that it is often indicative of a person's character. God has sent a love-letter to this world through His Son (see **Hebrews 1. 2**), and He desires that by its means, all believers should outwardly manifest to the world the character of the One who intends them to be His living epistles, read and known of all men (cp. **1 Peter 2. 9**). This brings **Paul** to his main subject,

namely the superior excellence of the new covenant over the old. In time past, God's law was written externally on stone, but now in the new covenant he bestows a new principle of life within the believer's heart, and this, though ministered by God's servants, is the exclusive work of the Holy Spirit (cp. Hebrews 8. 10). The superior glory of the new covenant is based upon the superior greatness of our Lord Jesus Christ over Moses. He then describes the old covenant by its greatest effects, namely that of death and condemnation, and sets forth its temporary character in contrast to the permanent effects and glory that are made possible by the new covenant. All believers looking at the glory of our blessed Lord in the mirror of his word (see 1 Corinthians 13. 12) unconsciously reflect that glory, and as we abide in that condition, the Holy Spirit will progressively mould us in the same likeness as our blessed and glorious Lord [B].

W. G. Henderson, F. Canning,

From Kilmarnock. —In the last verse of chapter 2. R. V. M., Paul says " we are n o t . . . making merchandise of the word of God, " but in saying this he is not commending himself or his fellow-labourers. He rather points out the work that God was pleased to do through them in the salvation of many in Corinth, and in calling them into the Fellowship of His Son (1 Corinthians 1. 9). They were unable to do this of themselves, but it was God who made them sufficient as ministers of the new covenant. This is the spirit all should have who preach the Gospel or minister to the saints (see 2 Corinthians 10. 18). The Scribes and Pharisees sat in Moses' seat and knew the law, but the veil was upon their hearts, and they failed to see that " Christ is the end of the law unto righteousness to every one that believeth " (Romans 10. 4).

From verse 18 we understand that the more the child of God comes to God's Word and is enlightened by the Spirit, the more he will reflect the glory of the Lord. Does the Apostle, in verse 16, refer to Israel as a nation? We think this refers to the time yet future when Christ shall come and set up His Kingdom on earth (see Hebrews 8. 8-12) [C].

A. G. S.

From Broxburn. —" Written in our hearts " (verse 2). The saints at Corinth had, through the Apostle's ministry, been reached with the gospel; their faith was known of all men; these were the things that were written indelibly upon Paul's inmost heart and affection, and would remain with him all his lifetime and in eternity also.

" For the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life " (verse 6). It takes the Spirit of God to bring life to the letter of the Word. If the Christ of the Scriptures is divorced from the Word of God, the writings become lifeless. This was where Israel failed. They were the custodians of the oracles of God, and yet with it all, apart from life given by the Spirit of God, these oracles were only ritual to the natural man. But some could see beyond the material things, even in that far-off day, and beheld Christ.

John McGregor.

From London, S. E. —In verse 3 there seems to be an allusion to the tables of stone written upon by the finger of God (Exodus 31. 18). The saints in Corinth were declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by the Apostle, written not with ink and pen, but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tables of stone, but in the fleshly tables of the heart. Figuratively speaking, the names of the converts were graven on Paul's heart as the names of the twelve tribes of Israel were written on the breastplate of the High Priest in remembrance of the people for whom he ministered.

Verses 7-10. With the giving of the law there were manifestations of glory. Moses' face shone when he came down from the mount, and the children of Israel could not look upon it, but it was a glory that soon faded, and a veil was upon the hearts of the Israelites because of their wickedness, and they were unable to understand the things which the law foreshadowed, even a ministration of righteousness which is by faith, for the just shall live by faith.

Verses 11-16. The Apostle now passes on to show the surpassing glory of the new covenant. He himself had received such a great revelation on his way to Damascus, and the veil had been removed from his heart, and his great desire was to see the veil lifted from the hearts of his own country-men (Romans 10. 1). The glory of the new covenant is the hope spoken of in verse 12—a life of resurrection.

E. C. Leamy.

From **Willington Quay**. —As Moses brought down from the mount to the children of Israel the Word of God, written upon tables of stone, so Paul brought the Word of God to the Corinthian saints, written upon his heart. We wondered, in view of the reference made by the Lord Jesus Christ to his casting out devils, by the finger of God (Luke 11. 20), whether the words written upon the tables of stone were written by the Spirit of God. We thought of instances in the Scriptures when the glory of God was seen in the face of a person. The glory of God was seen in the face of Moses, and on the Mount of Transfiguration, when the Lord was transfigured before Peter, James and John, His face did shine as the sun (Matthew 17. 2). It was suggested that Stephen reflected the glory of God when, standing before the multitude, he looked steadfastly into heaven and saw the glory of God.

There would appear to be a double meaning in verse 18; that of reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, and also that of beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord [D]. So are we transformed into the same image from glory to glory (see Romans 8. 29).

KM.

From **Knocknacloy**. —The Apostle did not claim any credit for the wonderful work wrought in the hearts of the Corinthians (see, in this connexion, 1 Corinthians 3. 6, 10, and 1 Corinthians 9. 1), but gave all the glory and honour to God. He puts before the Corinthians the all-sufficiency of God, who had met his own great need in the words, " My grace is sufficient for thee " (2 Corinthians 12. 9). The Corinthians reflected as a mirror the glory of the Lord. Let us not fashion ourselves according to our former lusts, in the time of our ignorance (1 Peter 1. 14), but let the Holy Spirit transform us day by day into the image of the Lord, looking ahead to that glad day when we shall be transformed into those glorious bodies like unto His own.

William Woods, George Thompson.

From **Crowborough**. —The Apostle is very careful not to assume too much to himself, for immediately he ascribes all glory to God, and at the same time answers the question he had asked in the previous chapter, " Who is sufficient for these things ? " The hard hearts of men had been broken down, and sons of wrath had become children of God through the agency of ministers, in God's hand, working stupendous wonders of grace! Only the great God of heaven is sufficient for these things.

So great and surpassing is the glory of God's grace, in the face of Jesus Christ, that even the huge weight of the whole world's sin cannot stay its flow. What a privilege is ours to-day to behold with unveiled face the unfathomable love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord! The old covenant never brought forth such evidence as the Gospel. We, as God's people, enter not an earthly sanctuary, but by faith a sanctuary in the heavens. So we also beholding with the eye of faith the person and glory of Christ, are ourselves transfigured, step by step, into " His likeness "; the body of flesh being transformed hereafter to be fashioned like unto " His glorious body. "

D. N. B.

From **Paisley and Barrhead**.—The law was a *passing* expedient in God's ways with men. It *came* with glory, but the new covenant, in contrast, *shall be* (i. e., in continuity) with exceeding glory. This is the surpassing glory seen in Christ.

Since Paul's ministry of the gospel concerned "that which remaineth," he could use great boldness of speech. We ought to use a like boldness, for our ministry is of a nature which far excels that of Moses. According to Exodus 34., after he had spoken to Jehovah, Moses addressed the people with unveiled face, which shone as a result of his communion with the God of Glory. But this reflected glory must needs grow dim and fade. Hence, after speaking to the people, Moses had to "put a veil upon his face" lest they should see the receding of this glory. It would appear that God was not glorified in the fact that there must be a diminishing of the brightness—and that through the weakness of the flesh. But contrariwise, we, having beheld the "glory as of the only begotten from the Father" should be transfigured "into the same image, from glory to glory." The words "from glory to glory" suggest the limitless, blissful delights which will be ours as we apprehend more of Him.

We emphasize that what Israel were forbidden to look steadfastly upon was "*the end*" of that which was *passing away*. Although God the Son left the glory which He had with the Father, His incarnation and work of redemption brought added glory, if we may so speak, to the divine Name. He restored that which He took not away, and when Satan and the spiritual hosts of wickedness were ranging themselves for their dreadful onslaught upon Him, we hear Him say with calm dignity to His dismayed few: "Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in Him; and God shall glorify Him in Himself, and straightway shall He glorify Him."

Israel are still blinded by the veil of unbelief, which has obscured "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." They failed to apprehend the purpose of the passing phase of the law, and they still fail to see its fulfilment in Christ, the effulgence of God's glory. *David L. Baird.*

From **Atherton**.—Discussion was raised relative to the terms of the new covenant, as to whether it is entirely conditional, and what are the principal differences between the old and the new covenants. Some thought that the new covenant is wholly conditional. In the initial stage all the redeemed are covered by the blood of Christ, but we must remember that when the Lord spake of the new covenant, He spoke to His disciples, who were a nucleus of the Kingdom, in which realm the conditions of the covenant were to be kept. The terms of the old covenant were not brought into being until after the redemption and baptism of Israel. Similarly the new covenant cannot have any effect except upon those who are willing to respond to its claim—those who are known as the people of God. Again, relative to the old covenant, God contemplated no believer apart from Israel. It was a "Holy Nation." This is just as true to-day. One noticeable fact is that both covenants were brought into being by blood.

Several thoughts were expressed on the terms "the Lord" and "the Spirit" (verses 16-18). Some thought that the expression "the Spirit" as used in verse 17 refers to the Lord's own spirit, indicating His specific person and work. The other view was that this refers only to the Holy Spirit of God [F].

J. Bullock, G. Sankey.

REMARKS.

[A] Birkenhead and Kirkintilloch. —It is interesting to compare the A. V. and the R. V. rendering of Exodus 34. 88—and read what follows. The adverbs "till" in A. V., and "when" in R. V., give different meanings. It is stated that the R. V. agrees with the Hebrew and the Septuagint. This is also in agreement with 2 Corinthians, 2. 7 and 13. In verse 7 the glory was such that they *could* not gaze on Moses' face; and verse 13, the veil over Moses' face was placed so that they *should* not look upon the end of the passing glory. The two reasons are quite consistent. The R. V. of Exodus 34. 32-35 shows that as God's Messenger, Moses' face shone as he came from God's presence, and still unveiled he gave the commandments to Israel. Then he put a veil over his face, until he returned to the Lord's presence, when he again removed the veil before the Lord. This process is repeated in verse 35. This is in agreement with 2 Corinthians 3. 13. The people must not see the fading glory.

The A. V. in verse 14 has "but their minds were blinded"; the R. V. preferring "hardened," which is according to the original meaning of the verb. 2 Corinthians 4. 4 has "blinded," which seems the closer meaning. Their perceptions seem to have been numbed, and even to-day, they are blind to what has happened.

Jas. M.

[B] Bradford, Leeds and Halifax. —Verse 18—⁴⁴ reflecting as a mirror, "seems a continuation of the picture of Moses removing the veil in the presence of the Lord, and thus capturing so much Divine glory that his face shone. Whether the R. V. M. would suggest our friends' thought—looking at the glory of the Lord in the mirror of His word—I am not sure. The metaphor of the mirror in 1 Corinthians 13. 12 is different from its use here.

Jas. M.

[C] Kilmarnock. —There is no pronoun in the Greek, "it" being understood in the verb. "It" in the R. V. would seem to refer to their heart. Because of no pronoun being used, the R. V. M. is also allowable. I would judge, respectfully considering our aged friend's opinion, that this applies to any son of Israel turning to the Lord, at any time, between then and Christ's advent.

Jas. M.

[D] Willington Quay. —Whatever be the correct meaning, whether it be the believer reflecting from the up-turned face the glory of the Lord, or beholding that glory in a mirror (some suggest the word of God), it is evident in both cases that the reflexion implies a reality that is reflected.

Jas. M.

[E] Hamilton, Canada. —It is not clear to me that this can be deduced from verses 2 and 3, but the metaphor seems to spread itself. The church of God in Corinth is itself a letter; this letter is written on Paul's heart; it is also written on the hearts of the Corinthians. Certain points are clear. The Apostle indicates that he and his fellows have something better than ordinary letters of commendation, they have the Corinthians themselves, bound to the apostles by love and affection, discernible to all men. And this covenant is not written with pen on a transient surface, but by the Spirit of God on redeemed hearts, for ever.

Jas. M.

[F] Atherton. —The same Greek words, "Kurios," for Lord, "Pneuma" for Spirit, are used throughout these verses 16-18. I think we would all clearly see that "the Lord" of verse 16 is Christ. Some have used the phrase "the Lord is the Spirit" to prove both the Deity of the Holy Spirit and to support the truth of the Trinity. These truths do not appear to be questioned here. If "the Spirit" means "the Holy Spirit" here, Paul is not saying that the Lord and the Holy Spirit are essentially One, but that they are One in action, and in purpose. To receive One is to receive the Other. On the other hand, it may mean simply as it is written, that to turn to Christ and receive Him means receiving His Spirit. Others may give more light on this difficult portion.

Jas. M.

NOTE.

We regret failing to include a paper from Birkenhead for January, and one each from Willington Quay and Broxburn for February.

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 objects of study may be varied, but we desire to concentrate on that aspect of acquiring knowledge by the student of God's Word, that will strengthen him for the battle. For there is a perpetual warfare to be waged against the world, and against Amalek (the flesh), and against the great Adversary. And it may be said of this warfare, as of that against death itself, " there is no discharge in that war " (Ecclesiastes 8. 8).

Twice in the chapter of our study, the Apostle writes, " For this cause... *we faint not* " (verses 1 and 16). The word " faint " signifies " to turn out badly " or " to cave in. " We are supplied with an impressive list of the possible causes that, with other men, would have spelt defeat. Read them carefully in 2 Corinthians 4. 8-11; 6. 4-10; 11. 23-30. Still the Apostle says, " We faint not. " What were the sources, then, of his confidence ?

In verse 1 he is glorying in the wonderful ministry committed to his care, coupled with a recollection of the day when he obtained mercy (for " obtained " is in the aorist tense). Let us pause here. Do we value, in anything like an adequate measure, the " gospel of the glory of Christ, " and the " illumination " radiating therefrom ? Do we commend ourselves " by the manifestation of the truth, " " to every man's conscience, " in the solemnity of being always " in the sight of God " ? These are the sources of the Apostle's triumph, which, despite all the set-backs, caused him to write, " Therefore... we faint not. "

At verse 7 the tone of the Apostle's writing is lowered. For there is another vision of the matter, from the human level. This precious treasure is housed in vessels of clay. What frailty is here envisaged ! How easily marred may the vessel be, even in the hand of the Potter (see Jeremiah 18. 4) ! But thank God for the mollifying, moulding hands of Him, who is able to " make it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it " ! Sad indeed if the vessel becomes so hardened and useless that in the breaking thereof it becomes " a potter's vessel, that cannot be made whole again ! " (Jeremiah 19. 10-11).

Five illustrations in verses 8-10 contrast the treasure and the vessel. In verse 8 two difficulties arise from the position the Apostle takes up; and triumphantly he concludes that though he be greatly hampered, he is not hemmed in: and though he be in much difficulty he is not in despair.

The two troubles of verse 9 are brought on by his opponents. Although **pursued**, or **persecuted by** them, he is not left behind in the enemies' hands; nor **even** when thrown down in a bout, is he destroyed. The fifth illustration deals with an entirely different aspect. It has to do with a sharing in "the dying of **Jesus** " **and** "the life also of Jesus." How, with this aspect of a weakly mortal frame, **can** he again boast, and rightly boast, "Wherefore we faint not" ? (verse 16). Two more attributes, closely allied, sustain him here; his faith (verses 13-15) and his hope (verses 16-18). In another epistle (Hebrews 11. 1) **we** are instructed that faith is that which gives substance to the things hoped for. It is the foundation of the realisation of our hopes. In legal terms, faith is the "title-deeds" to our possessions.

Many Old Testament illustrations leap to the memory, of **men** being encouraged not to faint. "Hear, O Israel, ye draw nigh this day unto battle against your enemies: let not your heart faint; fear not, nor tremble... for the LORD your God is **He** that goeth with you... to save you" (Deuteronomy 20. 3-4).

Of Gideon and his three hundred men it is written that they were "faint, yet pursuing" (Judges 8. 4). Jonah was wise when he prayed, "When my soul fainted within me, I remembered the LORD..." (Jonah 2. 7). Solomon wrote, "If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small" (Proverbs 24. 10). In the sad possibility of that state of fear overtaking us, at any time, let us recall Isaiah's words, "Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard? the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary;... He giveth power to the faint;... they that wait upon the LORD*... shall walk, and NOT FAINT" (Isaiah 40. 28-31).

Remember also, as we change the metaphor, there is a reaping season to those who FAINT NOT (Galatians 6. 9). *Jas. M.*

THE SECOND LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS.

Chapter 3.

From Melbourne. —Verse 2. —"Ye are our epistle." This would seem to apply to the Corinthians both as individuals and as a together-people in the church of God at Corinth. **Men** may read the assembly, **but** the reading **can be marred by** one or more sinning **in** that assembly. Christ is often **judged** by what **men see in us and** hear from us. "Keep the door of **my** lips" (Psalm 141. 3, 4). We are responsible, in a measure, for the goodwill of the King of glory towards aliens in the far country.

The ministration of death came **in** glory. The letters engraven on stones were brought down from Mount Sinai by Moses, whose **face** shone. This glory was transitory and fading, **but** the glory of the new covenant is lasting **and** abiding. Manward, Moses had to cover his face; Godward, he **was** without the covering. There is no need for **us**, under the new covenant, to wear a veil when speaking to men of God's plan of salvation through Christ's atoning work at Calvary. The glory of the new never fades. The glory of the old seen in Moses' face was a reflection, but the glory of the new covenant is seen in the face of Jesus Christ.

Verse 14. What is done away in Christ, is it the covenant or veil? [8]

As we believers in the Lord Jesus behold, as in a mirror, without any veil, the glory of the Lord, we are transformed into the same image that we behold and progress from glory to glory. We could also be as a mirror before men, reflecting the glory of the Lord. Again the mirror could be the Scriptures, the Word of God. *S. Stoope.*

THE SECOND LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS.

Chapter 4.

From Cowdenbeath. —As a minister of the gospel Paul discharged his responsibility, conscious of the greatness of the honour conferred on him, and ever mindful of his own unworthy state when Divine mercy reached him (1 Timothy 1. 12, 13). He was careful to see that neither in his associations, nor his walk, nor his handling of the Word of God, anything was permitted that might hinder the message. Satan has provided a veil to prevent the light penetrating the darkened minds of the perishing. We can liken such ones unto people living in houses with drawn blinds, whilst outside there is shining the glorious light of the sun of which they are unaware.

When the Spirit of God came upon the scene in the beginning, all was darkness. Light was needed, and God said, "Let there be light," and light shone "out of" the darkness. It is even so with the new creation. God has shined *in* our hearts not only that we ourselves should be enlightened, but that the light might shine out unto others, so that unto them might be imparted the knowledge of God's glory. In the life of our blessed Lord a very full manifestation of God's glory was given unto men. In His face such glory is still to be seen. It is made possible for men on earth to see such glory through those who behold His face, and who, becoming transformed into His image, manifest His glory.

The gospel ministry, which is likened unto a treasure, is seen in contrast to the valueless vessel in which it is deposited. The man himself is nothing. The message is everything. Paul was a vessel chosen by God (Acts 9. 15). Yet he was not immune from suffering, but rather do we see in him a man who experienced distress of body and mind to an extraordinary degree. This but served to show the weakness of the vessel and, in contrast, the exceeding greatness of God's power which wrought through him. In the weak, toiling body of the apostle there was to be seen a wonderful likeness to the Lord Jesus. Paul could not refrain from speaking, and suffering was no deterrent to him. He would continue to proclaim the gospel although it should mean death to him. What if it did? Resurrection awaited him. If he is not spared to meet them in Corinth, he shall meet them in heaven and shall be presented with them.

The contrasts in verse 17 are very outstanding between the words employed. Affliction and glory, light and weight, moment and eternal [1]. How Paul could have such an outlook is explained in verse 18. His vision was not filled with temporarily-seen things, but with the unseen things that are eternal.

Jas. Bowman,

From Broxburn. —The treasure is in earthen vessels, that is in men, emptied of self and fit and ready for the Master's use. God does not demand education in those who proclaim the message although He may use for His glory all gifts, humbly consecrated to His service. We were reminded of Gideon and his three hundred men with their empty pitchers with the torches within them; and by them the LORD wrought a great victory for Israel. The measure in which we die daily will correspondingly be the measure in which we live.

The great object of Paul's life was that Christ should be seen in him. In verse 18 he quotes from Psalm 116. 10. Paul here associates himself with the Psalmist who describes his own experience of being delivered from death, and who says, "I love the LORD, because He hath heard my voice and my supplications," and again in the eighth verse, "Thou hast delivered my soul from death, . . . I will walk before the LORD in the land of the living." *Henry Dyer.*

From Willington **Quay**. —There is much in chapter 4. that compares and contrasts with chapter 3.

The glory of the old covenant was hidden from the Children of Israel because of the veil on Moses' face. In chapter 4. the glory of God revealed in the new covenant was hidden from those that were perishing, by a veil, not on Paul's face, but on their own heart. Paul did not conceal his message by walking in craftiness or handling the Word of God deceitfully. There was nothing secret about his preaching; he manifested the truth. It was the evil one that put the veil on the heart, blinding their thoughts and filling their souls with darkness. But, as God by His Word caused light to shine out of darkness in creation, so does the Word of God to-day, in the Gospel, bring light and understanding to the heart—the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

In chapter 3. we read of the glory of the Lord the Spirit reflected in the face of His ministers (chapter 3. verse 18). In chapter 4. verse 6, we read of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Paul speaks of being transformed into the same image: —Christ is the image of God.

We thought the treasure (verse 7) spoke of the ministry of the gospel of Christ (cf. Ephesians 3. 8, Colossians 1. 27) [2]. There is no intrinsic worth in the vessel; it cannot add to the glory of the message, but it can detract from it. We note the Name, *Jesus*, as relating to His earthly walk. By having fellowship with Christ's suffering, Paul sought to know also the power of His resurrection (Philippians 3. 10). He knew that, as Jesus had been raised from the dead, so would he also be raised, with the saints, to be found alongside Christ in glory, and it was to this end he laboured. We compared verse 14 with Ephesians 5. 27, Colossians 1. 28.

The outworking of death in the flesh brought with it decay as to the outward man; while the inward man, the new man, was renewed day by day—see Colossians 3. 10,
J. B., *Jnr.*

From Knocknacloy. —Paul, having accepted Christ as his Saviour, the veil was lifted from his heart, and being a chosen vessel unto God (Acts 9. 15), and having obtained mercy, he was now engaged in this service of setting forth the unsearchable riches of Christ, through the Gospel. Therefore he did not faint nor lose heart; he also renounced disgraceful underhanded ways, nor did he tamper with God's Word. He commended himself in the sight of God to every man's conscience by the open statement of the truth. Paul had a lovely life behind his preaching, for he was reflecting, as a mirror, some of the glory of the Lord. This should also be true of us, if the "light of the gospel of the glory of Christ" is to dawn upon those with whom we live. Paul did not set forth himself or other men, but, as he says in 1 Corinthians 2. 2, "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified." See also Peter's declaration in Acts 4. 12.

The inward man is mentioned three times in the New Testament: Romans 7. 22, 2 Corinthians 4. 16, Ephesians 3. 16. The inward man is that which is born of the Spirit, "the new man, which after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth" (Ephesians 4. 24). In 2 Corinthians 4. 16 the inward man is contemplated in relation to the outward man, the physical man (not the old man—the flesh). It is good to know that although these bodies of ours as we get on in years become weak and frail, yet this cannot hinder the progress of the renewing of the inward man by the application of the written or spoken Word of God. Paul refers to the light affliction which is but for a moment as preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison. Please read in this connexion, Romans 8. 18, and 1 Peter 1. 3, 7, and 5. 10.

Herbert Thompson.

EXTRACTS.

From Paisley and Barrhead. —The almighty, creative God, who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness, " shined in Paul's heart, giving " the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. " To have gazed at His blessed face was to have seen something of the heart of this glorious God. Still sustaining the thought of the gospel light and glory, the Apostle links with it the fact of the frailty of the human body, the vessel which should carry the light. Perhaps the figure is that of Gideon's earthen pitchers, comparatively valueless and mean, but carrying the glorious torch which cannot be extinguished by the enemy, the god of this age. Many of God's best men have dwelt in a frail earthly tabernacle, but all such, being conscious of its frailty, have been cast upon the exhaustless resources of God. Our stay in this tabernacle is beset by transient sufferings which we endure now and which are powerfully contrasted with the exceeding and eternal weight of glory in a beautifully built-up series of antitheses (verses 17-18).

In Paul's words, " Always bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our body, " the emphasis is not on the death of Jesus (the Man), but on those sufferings which culminated in His death. His dying exposes the awfulness of sin, and should strip His servants of all vain glory. Thus, fellowship with Him in His dying will entail the mortifying of the deeds of the flesh, and thus the life of Jesus will be made manifest.

David L. Baird.

From Bradford, Leeds and Halifax. —The Apostle, in this chapter, continues the theme of chapter 3., namely, the ministry of the New Covenant, and sets forth certain results of that ministry. He contrasts his past life in Judaism, which was characterised by secret and shameful practices, cunning ways, and adulteration of the Word of God, with his present manner of life, by making known the truth of God, and presenting it to the conscience of all men, with a view to obtaining God's acceptance of his ministry. He then takes up the metaphor of the veil (cp. 2 Corinthians 3. 14 to 16), and applies it to the natural state of man's heart, that is, ignorance of God's character and ways (Ephesians 4. 18). This condition is due to the operation of Satan, as the " god of this age, " the one who receives the homage of every unregenerate man. It is his object to make the hearts of such hard and rebellious against God. His chief object in doing this is to blind men to the true glory and character of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. In contrast to Satanic pretensions to become Lord of this world (Isaiah 14. 13, 14), the burden of the Gospel is " *Christ Jesus is Lord.* "

We then saw that the principle of " the life of Jesus " being manifested through us was dependent upon death to our self-life. This truth was first enunciated by our blessed Lord in reference to His death being the means through which God will bring forth an abundant harvest of saved souls (see John 12. 24 to 26). The name of Jesus is mentioned no less than nine times in this chapter, emphasising His character as a Man on earth suffering in service for God, and thus becoming the pattern Servant for all the Lord's people.

Frank Canning.

From Atherton. —The Apostle **had a** very high conception indeed of the great trust committed to him. He could write elsewhere, " *I glorify my ministry " (Romans 11. 13). The very fact that he had been called to such a work was to him a source of great strength. He had deep exercise of heart that he might fulfil this ministry in all purity and sincerity. The grand theme of the Apostle was, " *Christ Jesus is Lord.* "

" This treasure " (verse 7), involving, we suggest, (1) the knowledge of the glory of God, (2) the light of Divine testimony, and (8) the ministry of the New Covenant, was seen in earthen vessels. The illustration of the earthen vessel is taken from the fact that eastern kings put their treasures of gold and silver in earthenware vessels.

Then the Apostle goes on to enumerate their sufferings—"Always bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus. " This word " dying " literally means " deadness, " or " the state of a corpse. " It involves dying daily, haying in oneself the sentence of death, or the very symptoms of death. A dual application is presented in the passage, (1) his sufferings and afflictions, so like those of the crucified One, and (2) the subduing of the old man, crucified, though not dead.

Perhaps the words of Psalm **116**, verses 8 to 10, and not merely the citation from it, were before the Apostle as he wrote. " The life also of Jesus " (verses 10-11) was thought by some to refer to the Lord's present life in heaven. The thought in the verses is progressive, the dying of Jesus, and the life also of Jesus. Thus we have identification with the Lord's death and resurrected life. See also Romans 6. 9 to 11. Others took the view that it was the life of Jesus in His sojourn on the earth, laying stress on the use of the name, *' Jesus. " It is the example of the life of Jesus on the earth which we are to follow [3],

Verse 14—" Shall raise up us also with Jesus. " This has to do with a present raising, and not to the coming of the Lord to the air. The thought in the verse is that the same mighty power which raised up the Lord Jesus from the dead is at our disposal to empower us to live the resurrected life in Christ Jesus (see Philippians 3. 10 and 11) [4]. " The renewal of the inward man " day by day was considered to be conditional, not being the experience of every believer. Colossians 3. 10 was raised as presenting a possible difficulty, but it was stated that this and kindred scriptures present the Godward viewpoint—the " New man is being renewed unto knowledge, " but we realise that in practical outworking this is oftentimes not the case [5].

J. Bullock, G. A. Jones.

From **Toronto**. —The contrasts between the New and Old Covenants show how favourably we have been dealt with, in this new dispensation. The New Covenant was enacted for both Jews and Gentiles alike, but the latter, accepting the wonderful gift of eternal life, have grasped the benefits more readily than the once chosen people of God. But when a Jew accepts the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour, the self-imposed veil that shrouded his appreciation of all the many spiritual blessings offered to him, is removed, and the many blessings become his.

K. S., R. M.

From Melbourne. —The " gospel " mentioned in verse 8 is " the gospel of the glory of Christ " (verse 4), and the Apostle, as a faithful minister thereof, was following in the steps of the One who was called " The faithful witness " (Revelation 1. 5). When we preach the gospel we are up against builded minds, for men's minds are veiled by the god of this world (age), the devil, who not only blinds, but speaks all languages. But the Lord uses the earthen vessel, into which has shone the light, to proclaim, as a herald, the message. May the hand that holds the torch not be seen. We are not the treasure, the treasure is Christ Jesus as Lord.

The Apostle and his companions were pressed on every side, yet not straitened because the power within them was greater than the power outside.

" For Jesus' sake " (verses **5 and 11**), what lovely words ! How much in our work and walk **is done** for Jesus' sake ? If **we** keep in mind what **He** has done for our sakes, it will help us **to go and do** much for Jesus' sake. Verse **16**. The terms " outward **man** " and " inward **man** " appear to **be** linked with the flesh **and** the mind. Is the " outward **man** " of **2 Corinthians 4. 16** identical with " the old **man** " of **Ephesians 4. 22**, the " inward **man** " as the **new man** of **Ephesians 4. 24** ? [6].

How encouraging to think that our light affliction, for Jesus' sake, though only for the shortest space of time, is **adding**, ever adding, to that weight of glory for eternal times ! Our sufferings **and** reproach for Jesus' sake accumulate tremendous interest.

S. Stoope.

From Kilmarnock. —It should **be** the aim of those who preach the gospel to endeavour **to** rouse the consciences of the hearers. Alas ! how true it is, that **to many** the gospel is veiled. This is the work of the great Adversary, **Satan**, **and** although **the** gospel gives glorious light, it needs the Spirit of God to enlighten the darkened mind. The Apostle likens " the knowledge of the glory of God " to **a** treasure which God has implanted in our mortal bodies, **and** He desires that **we** should let the light shine so that the life of Jesus **may be** manifest in our bodies. **We judge** that the troubles mentioned in verses **8 and 9** were of a spiritual nature, **and affected** his spirit, in contrast to those narrated in chapter **11. 28**, etc., which **affected** his body. **But even** though he **met** with those trials **yet** he was not faint-hearted, **and** while the outward **man** was decaying, or corrupting, the inward **man** was **being renewed day by day**. Is this renewing **an** unconditional thing, or is it **just as** the believer feeds on the Word **and** grows in grace that he is being renewed ? [7].

A. G. S.

From Brantford. —The great God who said, " Let there **be** light; **and** there was light, " has shone into these poor hearts of ours in the person of His dear Son; **but** this treasure is in earthen vessels **and**, perhaps, before our light will shine before **men**, **we may need** trials so that there might come " forth **a** vessel for the finer " (**Proverbs 25. 4**). How like the broken pitchers of Gideon's **men** must **we** become, that our wills **may be** broken before God, **and** that **men may** see our good works **and** glorify our Father who is in Heaven (see **Matthew 5. 16**) ! **We need to be** vessels " unto honour, sanctified, **meet** for the Master's use " (**2 Timothy 2. 21**). There must **be** **a** dying daily before **we** know **a** daily walking with Christ, **and** before He will **be** manifest in these mortal bodies.

There is " **a** salvation ready to **be** revealed in the last time. Wherein **ye** greatly rejoice, though now for **a** little while, if **need be**, **ye** have **been** put to **grief** in manifold temptations, that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold that perisheth though it is proved **by** fire, might **be** found unto praise **and** glory **and** honour **at** the revelation of Jesus Christ " (**1 Peter 1. 5-7**).

C. Reid, O. Burbridge.

From Kirkintilloch. —The Apostle was so convinced of his own insufficiency for this glory that he realised he **needed** mercy to enable him to carry on in his labours. The more mercy **we** receive from the Lord, the more profitable will **be** our ministration of glory. There appears to have **been** some who were misusing the Scriptures, walking **in** craftiness (see **Galatians 2. 4 and Ephesians 4. 14**). **Many** times in the **New Testament** we read of false brethren, **but** the Apostle emphasises that it was **by** " manifesting **the** truth " that he commended himself to every man's conscience. This is **a** very important lesson, namely, that **we can** reach the hearts of **men** through their consciences. The Apostle also contrasts the message with the messenger. **He** says that the treasure is everything, while the vessel is of very little value. The Gospel is God's power, **and we can** add nothing **to** it. **We** thought of Gideon **and** the breaking of the pitchers so that

the light might be seen, and it was suggested that verses 10 and 11 recorded the daily experience of the Apostle. We were of divided opinion regarding this portion, some thinking it was entirely a spiritual experience, while others thought that physical sufferings were envisaged.

The message of verse 12 is that Paul's life was to be sacrificed in order that the saints might be blessed. Verse 18 shows us the faithful way in which the Apostle always spoke his message, and it is a lesson we do well to heed, that we speak that which we receive and which we believe. This, perhaps, is the reason for his faithfulness, the knowledge that there was a coming day when he, and those with him, would be presented before the Lord Jesus through the power of God (compare Ephesians 5. 27).

As men looked on Paul's outward appearance, they must have thought his body to be almost dead, due to the scars and bruises of his sufferings. Such a picture was not of the true man, for his inward man was being revived daily. He was a continual victor through grace. Here in verse 18 we have the secret of the contrasts drawn by the Apostle. By faith he turns away from the things which are only for a season, realising that the real issues of his experience are the unseen, eternal realities.

Wm. Whitelaw.

From **Crowborough**.—There are many, still in nature's darkness, to whom, the gospel has no appeal because the great Adversary, the Devil himself, is blinding their eyes to the glory of the gospel. Light, however small, will dispel the darkness, and no darkness, however gross, will put out the light of a small candle. But the light which radiates from the gospel is unsurpassed in glory because it is associated with the person of Christ, from whom shines forth the glory of God. There is no glory in those who minister this message of glory save the reflection of its working in their hearts, making known that the glory of God is only to be revealed in the face of the Saviour, anointed and sent forth by God. The Apostle sums up this ministry as a "treasure," and no man can assess its value. In contra-distinction, the vessel containing the treasure is shewn in its true perspective. It is of the earth, which has been cursed by God, and only brings in sharp relief the great God who chooses to use such a vessel to His purpose and glory.

The roughness of the road, the trials by the way, the days of adversity, all left their mark on the servant of the Lord, but as men beheld him, they saw that the world had been crucified to him, and he to the world. He had taken his place with the One whom the world had done to death, and now displayed that his life was linked with the risen Christ. The verdict of the world stands unchanged, and they who would seek to stand where the Lord Jesus stood will find that they will be condemned as the Master was. Their self-abnegation means death for them, but their faithfulness means life, in its true sense, as spiritual life for the saints. Looking back at his experiences, which had proved so trying, he tries to assess them in the light of the great reward. The long weary years of affliction when viewed in the light of eternity were passed as a moment. Here is the true assessment of all earthly things. The great things, as reckoned by men, become small, while the little service we do for the Lord, despised by men, yet honoured by God, finds that reward which is beyond assessment.

** S. Swift*

From **Glasgow**.—The Apostle proceeds in this chapter to state that being charged with this great ministry of the Gospel, his appreciation of its importance, together with his sense of duty, negated any tendency to faint. In view of the opposition and difficulties of the work, many ministers might have given up. But Paul was so conscious of the divine importance of the Gospel, that no opposition was ever too much for him. He looked not at the things which were seen, but rather at the eternal things which remained unseen. He viewed his afflictions as the pathway to glory. It would seem that this chapter is nearly

all parenthesis. Verse 1 states " We faint not, " and from verse 2 to 15 we have many observations on the ministry, but not till verse 16 does the Apostle resume his explanation of " We faint not. " From verse 16 to the end he unfolds the secret of his great endurance. He took no notice of his persecutions, but firmly fixed his eye on the coming glory which he would enjoy when his days of service were over. "Our light affliction, which is for the moment" should be viewed against chapter 11. 25-33. He realised that the Master would reward him in very much greater proportion than the trials he endured.

The Apostle's preaching could stand examination in every detail. There was nothing sinister about it, but, rather, its truth was manifest and could be seen by any man of clear conscience. Once a person has given ear to the message and received the Lord Jesus as his Saviour, he is beyond the Adversary's reach. Accordingly, Satan's action (verse 4) is shewn to us here as a screening action, so that he may prevent souls from hearing the life-giving message and from beholding the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ. Paul viewed his own sufferings in the light that they were to him analogous to the putting to death of Jesus, and no doubt Paul felt gratified that he could walk as closely in the footsteps of the Master. He was encouraged also by the knowledge that, no matter what befell him, *1 He which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also with Jesus. " Wherefore he fainted not.

J. J. P.

From Cardiff. —Paul's reference to the obtaining of mercy was possibly a recollection of the Damascus road scene. The blinding of men's thoughts by Satan is a striking expression, when viewed in conjunction with the later words of the Apostle John in 1 John 5. 19. Paul could plainly see the continual warfare being waged with spiritual forces of evil which form a kingdom of darkness, under " the prince of this world. " He rejoiced, therefore, in the knowledge of the grand theme, " Christ Jesus as Lord. " This blindness deprives men of the glorious illumination which always accompanies the gospel of grace.

This treasure, " this ministry, " with all its splendour is, however, obscured by the physical conditions, and no-one is more conscious of this than the Apostle, of whom they said, " His bodily presence is weak. " He saw in this incapacity, however, only a working out of God's will in order to exhibit to all " that the power may be of God. " He can accept cheerfully what is physically a living death because its issue is a spiritual life for those to whom he ministers.

K. Berrisford.

From Ilford. —What a wonderful thought that we have obtained mercy. The word used here indicates that we were guilty, and our only means of salvation was mercy from God through the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Having obtained mercy, the renouncing of things previously occupying us, should automatically be put into operation. The use of the word " dawn " in verse 4 is very interesting. Dawn refers to the first glimmer of light. It is this that the Devil would keep the unbelieving from seeing, knowing full well that once true dawn has begun to break, the full light of day will follow. The devotion of Paul to his Master, and the realisation of his responsibility to his fellow creatures, is a wonderful example to us. We can well take to heart the words of Paul, " Be ye imitators of me, even as I also am of Christ. "

* *E. H. Jarvis.*

From **Birkenhead**. —It was not defective preaching, or inconsistent living, that had failed to evoke a greater response to Paul's message; but another power was at work, blinding the minds of those who would not believe, and veiling the gospel so openly proclaimed. Whether it is the veiled hearts of the Israel people or the blinded minds of the Gentiles, it shows a willingness to continue in their own way and be deceived by the god of this world. **How** strong is this resistance to God! At the beginning inanimate creation had responded to the command,

" **Light be,** " but **not so the hearts of men** when the **glad tidings of God** are proclaimed. Christ, invited into our dark hearts, immediately begins to shed abroad that divine light and divine love in the knowledge of the love and the glory of God.

So then it is not so much the earthen vessel that counts, **but** the exceeding greatness of the power within the vessel—a treasure indeed—and a gift. The use of the earthen vessel will have brought divine blessing to others, and will be destined to know a resurrection power like that of the Lord Jesus himself—God will raise us up also with Jesus.

What strong encouragement is found in verses **16 to 18** by the afflicted and faithful ones who **in** their lifetime have their minds set on the things in the heavens, where Christ is, **at** the right hand of God, and give to temporal things their true place in the light of eternal things! **N. G. A.**

From Toronto. —**We** felt that the Apostle's commendation of **himself** and those who were with him was intended for a larger sphere than the assembly in Corinth alone. They were not preaching the Gospel for the vain glory of the flesh, **but** to the eternal glory of the righteous and glorious God. The Apostle realised that, although the outward man was decaying, the inward man was being renewed **day by day**, as he looked not **at** the things which are temporal, **but** at the things which are not seen. Blessed **be** His Name. **James Scott.**

R E M A R K S .

[1] Cowdenbeath. —The literal translation brings out this word-by-word antithesis: —" The momentary lightness of our affliction, " and " an eternal weight of glory. "—**Jas. M.**

[2] Willington Quay. —Referred to the preceding verses, " this treasure " **may** mean, (a) " the knowledge of the glory of God, " or (b) the illumination which this knowledge brings, or (c) the ministry through which the knowledge is proclaimed to all. It **may** include all three—**Jas. M.**

[3] Atherton. —It appears more difficult to define what is meant **by** " the life of Jesus, " than " the dying (or putting to death) of Jesus. " Some have suggested that **it** means the life-giving power of the living exalted Christ, manifested in the many deliverances from death of the Apostle. **Yet** even in our " mortal flesh, " the **seat of decay**, this wonderful " life of Jesus, " whether pictured as His life on earth, or as His resurrection life in **the** glory, **may be** manifested, apart from any physical deliverances from death. —**Jas. M.**

[4] Atherton. —I **am** not as dogmatic as our friends that this does not allude to the Parousia of our Lord Jesus. The second clause, " and shall **present us** with (the same preposition as is used before ' Jesus!) you, " would suggest our being presented as a bride to Christ (see Ephesians 5. 27). It is admitted there is a sense in which this being " presented " **may** take place here **and** now (2 Corinthians, 11. 2, Colossians 1. 21, 22). —**Jas. M.**

[5] Atherton. —With reference to Colossians 3. 10, it has been pointed out that there are two Greek words used for " new, " namely, " **neos** " which has the sense of " youth, " or " young, " and " **kainos** " which has the sense of " newness, " not worn out, " as regards quality. Thus in Colossians 3. 10, **and** have put on the **new (neos)** man, " means the " new, young* recently born-again man, the **babe** in Christ"; and, " which is being **renewed (kainos)** unto knowledge " means this newly-born man is being changed to a man of a fresh and different calibre. The words in a different order (apparently in R. V.) in Ephesians 4. 23-24, " **renewed (neos)** in the spirit of your mind, " suggest a rejuvenation, a making young again, and " put on the **new (kainos)** man, " suggest a complete change from the old, **effete** nature, to the entirely new-in-quality divine nature. —**Jas. M.**

[6] Melbourne. —" The outward man " of verse 16 occurs nowhere else in Scripture. I judge it is the same as the " earthen vessel, " the body in which we live, and not the " old man " of Ephesians 4. 22. See [5] for the " inward man " and the " new man, " which I consider are the same. —*Jas. M.*

[7] Kilmarnock. —Our Atherton friends believe that this renewal of the inward man is conditional. With this view I agree—feeding on the Word is necessary for growth. —*Jas. M.*

[8] Melbourne. —It will be seen from the R. V. M, that the construction here is uncertain. It is either (1) " at the reading of the old covenant the same veil remaineth without being lifted, because it is done away in Christ "; or (2) " at the reading of the old covenant the same veil remaineth or abideth, the revelation not being made that it is done away in Christ. " No. 1 is the meaning of the R. V. text; No. 2 that of the R. V. M. In the first, it is the veil that is done away in Christ, as shown in the text, " which veil . . . " As against this, the context (verse 15) shows that the veil abideth unlifted because of their hardness of heart. Also in this passage it is shown that it is the glory of the old covenant which is being done away (verses 7 and 11). Thus the second (R. V. M.) reading seems preferable, for **in** it, it is the old covenant which is done away in Christ. —*Jas. M.*

WORDS IN 2 CORINTHIANS.

According to Dr. Plummer there is a considerable number of Greek words found in 2 Corinthians, which, in the New Testament, are peculiar to that letter. In the **first** nine chapters there are 54 such words, several used twice or thrice. About **25** of these also appear in the Septuagint. We give a few of these below. In the **last** four chapters there are 33 such words, 11 of which are used in the Septuagint.

2 Corinthians

4. 4 Dawn, Gr. *augazo*, to beam forth, to shed brightness, to shine, derived from *auge*, a ray of light, radiance, dawn, break of day (Acts 20. 11).
4. 2 Handle deceitfully, Gr. *doloo*, to ensnare, or adulterate, **in** the sense of using guile (*dolos*).
4. 8 Despair, Gr. *exaporeo*, from *ek* = *out* of, or intensive, *a* = negative, 7. 8 *poros*=a way through, —meaning " to be quite at a loss, without resources. "
4. 4, 16 Light, Gr. *photismos*, an illumination, metaphorically used **in** these verses, for a verb meaning " to shed rays or to brighten up. "
4. 2 Renounce, Gr. *apeipon*; *apo*=from, *eipon*, an aorist form used to supply parts of *lego*, to say, does not **mean** " to give things up, " but " to abjure from the first. "
4. 8 Straightened, Gr. *stenochoreo*, literally " to crowd into a narrow 6. 12 place, " or " to be pressed for room, " from *stenos* = narrow, *chora*=a, place. Thus distress arising from that condition, anguish. It is found in the Septuagint with literal meaning in Joshua 17. 15, and with metaphorical meaning in Judges 16. 16, where it is recorded of Delilah that " she pressed him (Samson) daily. "

A further study of such words exclusive to 2 Corinthians reveal that generally the thought of "comfort" and **affliction" is prevalent in chapters 1. to 7., that of **glorying" in "weakness" and that of the "folly" of "glorying," in chapters 10. to 12. In the two chapters 8., 9., where the collection for the saints is dealt with we find such words as "abounding," "readiness," "liberality."—*Jas. M.*

CONCORDANCE STUDY.

"Punishment."

This study arises from the word "punishment" used in 2 Corinthians 2. 6, the only place where the Gr. word *epitimia* occurs in the N. T. Its derivation is from *epi* = "at," or "upon," and *time* = value, money paid, esteem, honour.

In classical Greek it denotes the enjoyment of the rights of citizenship. The connecting link between this meaning and punishment is in the word *time*, i. e., the assessment, or the value or estimate placed by a judge on the infringement of such rights, hence the meaning of punishment or penalty. How suitably then is this word used with regard to the case of the man who had despised the high honour of being in the Church of God in Corinth, and being in the Kingdom of God! He had forfeited citizenship rights and was paid the due penalty for such action.

Other two words of interest are *timoria* and *kolasis*. *Timoria* (from *time* — honour, or value, and *ouros* = & guardian) primarily meant help, then vengeance, or vindication, then punishment. It is to help by redressing injuries. Hebrews 10. 29 is the only occurrence in N. T., although verb forms are used in Acts 26. 11, and Acts 22. 5.

Kolasis, from *kolazo*, primarily meaning to curtail, or prune (from *kolos*, docked) then to check, restrain, punish. This word occurs only twice in the N. T. (Matthew 25. 46 and 1 John 4. 18), although the verb forms are found in Acts 4. 21 and 2 Peter 2. 9.

Timoria: according to Dr. French "the vindictive character of the punishment is the predominant thought; (Latin, *vindicatio*)... punishment as satisfying the inflicter's sense of outraged justice, as defending his own honour, or that of the violated law. Herein its meaning agrees with its etymology" (given above).

The same authority says, "In *kolasis*, on the other hand, is more the notion of punishment as it has reference to the correction and bettering of the offender: it is Latin *castigatio*, and naturally has for the most part a milder use than *timoria*." Continuing, he writes, "it would be a very serious error, however, to attempt to transfer this distinction in its entireness to the words as employed in the N. T. The "*kolasis aionios*," eternal punishment, of Matthew 25. 46, as it is plain, is no mere corrective, and therefore temporary, discipline; cannot be any other than that with which the Lord elsewhere threatens finally impenitent men in Mark 9. 43-48. "One" distinction still remains, and may be recognised in the scriptural usage of the words, that in *kolasis* the relation of the punishment to the punished, and in *timoria* to the punisher, is predominant."

Other Greek words for punishment are used in the N. T. as follows: — *dike*=justice, right, or the execution of a sentence in Jude 7 and 2 Thessalonians 1. 9. *Ekdikesis* (*ek*=out, and *dike*, see above), a vindication, retaliation, or punishment (in 1 Peter 2. 14). —*Jas. M.*

BIBLE STUDIES.

⁴⁴ 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.

In this chapter are very rich deposits of truth, which, unfortunately, appear to **be** almost unknown, and certainly not appreciated, **by many** of our contacts in daily life. The following papers have **been** regretfully pruned because of the space available; yet they are full. **One** contributor gives the keynote in the words of verse 17—"the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new."

In the light of the **judgment-seat** of Christ, the Apostle describes three aspects of service (pointing out, meanwhile, the two great motives, "the fear of the Lord" and "the love of Christ"), namely, the capacity of **a preacher** (verses 11-19), of **an ambassador** (verses 20, 21), and of **a minister** (2 Corinthians 6. 1-10).

Have you noticed, how, when the Apostle takes **us** to some great height of revelation, he knows the correct moment to launch **an** appeal? **We** have two such here. "**We beseech** you on behalf of Christ, **be** ye reconciled to God" (verse 20), and, "**we intreat** (same Gr. word) also that **ye** receive not the grace of God in vain" (2 Corinthians 6. 1).

Let us briefly indicate **a few** more. With the words of the doxology of Romans 11. 33-36 in your mind—"O the depth of the riches..."—ponder well the import of the **beseeching** request, "to present your bodies **a** living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God" (Romans 12. 1-3).

What verse is more often in our thought than 1 Corinthians 1. 9, "God is faithful...."? Listen attentively, then, to the entreaty for **unity** in the following verse.

When you fail to find diction adequate to thank God for His dear Son, how **sweet** to copy the words of the Apostle **in** "Thanks **be** to God for His unspeakable gift" (2 Corinthians 9. 15)! Then, immediately follows another **beseeching** "**by** the meekness and gentleness of Christ. " **Meekness** " is that **quiet** submissiveness to God or **man** even **in** provocative circumstances, and "gentleness" is that tolerant spirit of fairness which makes allowances.

One more citation to illustrate our point may **be** given, although further search will reveal other beseechings on the basis of some grand revelation. The immeasurable "love of Christ" and the indefinable "fulness of God" call forth from the Apostle the doxology of Ephesians 3. 20-21—"Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that **we** ask or think.... **be** the glory.... for ever **and** ever. Amen." Then, **in** the following verses, the prisoner **in** chains **beseeches** the saints "to walk worthily, "with all the lovely attributes of Christ".... **giving** diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. "**May we**, too, **in** the light of knowledge **acquired**, strive to render worthy service to our loving Master.

Jas, Martin,

THE SECOND LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS.

Chapter 5.

From London, S. E. 5. —That this chapter is a logical sequence of spiritual thought is obvious from the frequent use of the words "therefore" and ⁴⁴wherefore" (verses 6, 9, 11, 16 and 20). One step leads to another in the delightful progress of Christian instruction.

The certainty of the immortal and spiritual body of the believer gives a cheerful confidence in the anticipation of the heavenly home. Yet the equal certainty of manifestation at the judgment-seat of Christ has a salutary effect, leading to a filial fear and living love of Christ in the heart. The completely new view of life, consequent upon being in Christ, leads to the ministry of reconciliation and the ambassadorial message of peace and righteousness in Christ. The exquisite beauties expressed in this chapter brought untold joy and comfort to the Apostle; in like manner, they are adequate to rejoice and sustain the humblest believer of the present time.

The following are some of the outstanding links in the golden chain of Christian instruction contained in this chapter: —

1. **The certainty of resurrection** (verses 1-4). Throughout the trials of his earthly sojourn, the prospect of eternal happiness was as clear as crystal to the Apostle. (Compare 1 Corinthians 15.).
2. **The Apostle's ambition** was to be "well pleasing unto Him" (verses 5-9). This was the paramount consideration (compare Philippians 1. 20-26).
3. **The judgement-seat of Christ** was constantly before the Apostle's mind (verse 10), because it would prove the acid test of true ambition (compare Revelation 22. 12).
4. **The ministry of reconciliation** was to be preached by the Apostle and his companions in the meantime (verses 11-21). Constrained by the compelling power of the love of Christ, they clearly taught that "one died for all, therefore all died." As an ambassador on behalf of Christ, Paul gloried in the divine message, "the word of the Cross" (compare Romans 5. 8-11).

"**We know.**" This is the language of strong and unwavering assurance. It is the language of the Saviour Himself (e. g., John 3. 11, 4. 22), and of His beloved apostle John (John 21. 24, 1 John 2. 3, etc.). The body which is upon earth and belongs to this earth, the movable and tent-like dwelling-place, is very frail and liable to "dissolution," a veritable house of clay (Job 4. 19). But at the resurrection, at the Lord's coming, a tremendous change will be wrought. The tent or tabernacle will become a building, a house; the earthly will be changed to the heavenly; the temporal will become eternal; the mortal will be swallowed up of life. In the parallel language of 1 Corinthians 15. 42-45, our corrupt, dishonourable, weak and natural bodies will be changed into incorruptible, glorious, powerful and spiritual bodies. It is no wonder that the Apostle had no desire to be unclothed (i. e., die before the Lord's coming), but his hope was to be clothed upon (i. e., at the Lord's coming). He was not afraid to die (see Philippians 1. 23); in fact, it would have been far better, "at home with the Lord." But he looked forward triumphantly to the fulfilment of the written saying, "Death is swallowed up in victory" (1 Corinthians 15. 54). Of Paul it could truly be said,

"The saint in all this glorious war
Shall conquer though he die;
He saw the triumph from afar
And seized it with his eye." **F. L. E.**

From Paisley and Barrhead. —In the early verses of chapter 5, Paul likens the Christian's body of flesh to a tent. This idea is most apt, since our stay upon earth is so transitory, and the nature of our life is that of a pilgrimage. In contradistinction ⁴⁴we have" (i. e., it is absolutely certain that we shall have) a building or a **permanent** form of body from God at the resurrection. Consequent upon our realising the temporary nature of our dwelling here, is the fact that

we groan to dwell within **our** building from God. This **experience** will **be** like putting **a new** garment over an old, **which** thus, in **effect**, disappears. The believer who dies before the Lord's return **lives** in an unclothed **state** until the resurrection. Hence, Paul's yearning to **pass** direct, at His coming, from this life to **a higher**.

We believe that the interpretation of verse **9** is that **we** endeavour now, while in the body, to **be** well-pleasing to the Lord. As **a** consequence, **we** shall give Him pleasure at the judgment-seat when **He** shall commend **us** for faithful service.

"Whether **we** are beside ourselves" (verse 13) may **be** read: "whether **we** went mad," and the thought might be linked with chapter 12. **1-5**. There are **ecstasies** of spiritual experience, but the servant of God **must** also **use** the constraint of **a** sober mind for the sake of others. Only the "love of Christ" can thus constrain.

Paul once knew Christ only after the flesh, i. e., he **judged** Him only **by** material standards. But **a** spiritual birth should **cause** our judgment and knowledge of others to **be based** purely upon spiritual standards.

The whole weight of verse **20** is the knowledge that estranged sinners need not fear **a** God who desires reconciliation, since **His** own Son **became** "**a** sin offering." *David L. Baird.*

From Ilford. —The subject matter of the first ten **verses** of this chapter is linked with the closing **few** verses of the preceding chapter. The Apostle **is** here speaking of the confidence he has in the **fact** of the spiritual resurrection body. And though in the mortal body, we groan, the Apostle **was** very conscious that he was linked with the Lord, who **is** our life, enthroned in heaven. **1** Corinthians 15. **35-54** is very helpful in the study of this subject, especially in connection with the matter of the clothing with which **we** shall **be** covered.

The **use** of the words "at home" and "absent" **seems** to present **a** difficulty in verse 9, and although "our **a i m . . .** to **be** well-pleasing unto Him" whilst absent from **Him** is understood, what **is** the force of the words "at home"? Surely when **we** are in **His** presence, where no sin can enter, and our earthly **service** has finished, then the thought of being well-pleasing to Him, **as far as** opportunity has been taken, will have **passed** [see Kirkintilloch, No. 1]. In the light of this, the Apostle reminds **us** that **we** should live unto **Him**, **as He** has created **us** anew, reconciled us unto Himself, and given **us** the word of entreaty **as** ambassadors to beseech others to be reconciled to God. *S. J. Jarvis.*

EXTRACTS.

From Leeds, Bradford and Halifax. —The latter clause of **2** Corinthians **5. 17** **seems** to **be** the keynote of the entire chapter, "The old things are **passed away**; behold, they are become new." This chapter is full of new things. **2** Corinthians **4. 16-18** is **a** fitting introduction to our chapter, showing **a** new valuation. Then **we** have **a** vision of **a** new home (verses **1-5**) in contrast to **a** decaying state of existence. The Apostle **is** longing to **go** to his real home, even although he **seems** to **be** divided in his mind concerning the intermediate state. **He** **desires** to **be** at home with the Lord. **He** realises that he will not receive his glorified body until the coming of the Lord (cp. v. **4** with Philippians 3. **20, 21**; **1** John 3. **2**). Verse **9** gives **us** **a** new ambition, namely, to **be** like our blessed Lord (John **8. 29**; Psalm 16. **8**), and to **give** constant delight to His God and Father.

In verse **10** **we** have **a** new examination and manifestation. Believers will **be** rewarded according to their real character and actions, not according to what they **may appear** to **be** in the eyes of men. "For **we** have all to **appear without disguise** before the tribunal of Christ" (Moffatt), or "For **we must** all of us appear before Christ's judgement-seat **in our true light**" (Weymouth). Verses **11** to **15**

present a new inspiration and motives for service. Two motives, namely, fear of suffering loss at the Bema, and the urge of the overmastering love of Christ, revealed on the cross, inspire the Apostle's service.

Verse 16 gives a new estimation. The Apostle, in times past sharing the common Jewish conception of Christ as the One who would lead their nation against the Romans, now does not so view Christ, but sees in Him the Head of a new creation.

Verses 17-20—A new blessing bestowed. In verses 17 to 20 Paul views the whole scheme of salvation from two different standpoints, namely, the God-ward and man-ward aspects of reconciliation. He sees God as the source of a new creation, Christ as the Reconciler of the whole world, and believers as ministers of the Reconciliation. God approaches this world not on the basis of the shedding of the blood of beasts, but in virtue of the death of Christ. This death was the medium through which God can now come out in mercy to a sinful and guilty world. The essential difference in the blessings bestowed upon sinful man in this age and the dispensation of law, was that now sin has been taken completely away (John 1. 29), but then it was only typically covered (Psalm 32. 1). Reconciliation from the human standpoint must be received to be enjoyed. We believers are commissioned by the Lord Jesus to be His delegated representatives and witnesses to a Christ-rejecting world. The burden of our message is that all men everywhere should repent, and be reconciled to God through the work of Christ on the Cross.

William G. Henderson, F. Canning.

From Birkenhead. —This chapter commences with the words " We know, " reminding us that, as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, we are sure that the grave is not the end of our existence. We learn that our earthly house, that is our body, can be dissolved. But we have a building from God, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, which is the spiritual body which will be ours in the resurrected state. This is not one of the mansions mentioned in John 14. 2.

The knowledge of these things should cause us continually to be well-pleasing to the Lord, knowing not when we shall be called into His presence.

Verse 10 is the key verse, for all the Apostle's message in this chapter circles around the judgment-seat of Christ.

Verses 14-15 do not support the theory of universal salvation. Those who live are those who have received the reconciliation. It is not a case of God being reconciled to men, but of men being reconciled to God. It is an act which takes place when we believe (Romans 3. 24).

J. Burns, P. 'K.

From Cardiff. —The earthly body is to be transmuted into the heavenly, for, as a glove fits a human hand, so the earthly body will be clothed upon or over-clothed by the heavenly. The Apostle views a person who has died in Christ as being naked, and he states that he desired to remain in the earthly state until the Lord's return, rather than be found naked. The triumphant end to Paul's life would be to remain until the Lord's coming, " that what is mortal may be swallowed up of life. " Verse 5 envisages the human body as being ideally suited to this transformation, as if God had this in mind at creation. The proof of the ultimate changing of our bodies is the presence, to-day, of the indwelling Spirit in a believer's heart.

The Apostle, when broaching the subject of the judgment seat of Christ, seems to speak of the manifestation of the person as an individual possessing character, and secondly, the scrutiny of the deeds done in the body, for which there shall be rewards, dependent on whether they be good or bad. The rewards are not stated, but it is necessary to distinguish between the rewards and the differing glories referred to in 1 Corinthians 15.

J. C. Tucker.

Prom Kirkintilloch.—Verse 3 tells us that the departure of the soul from the earthly house means nakedness. This is a solemn thought.

When our final redemption is completed, we shall be both at home in the body and at home with the Lord, but, until then, it is at home in the body or absent from the Lord, or vice versa. There is some difficulty in verse 9. Most thought the "at home or absent" to mean the same thing; others felt this to damage the meaning of the "or" of alternatives. To be the same, "and" would be required. Some thought it impossible to be absent from the body and not be well-pleasing, others that in eternity we shall be even more willing in the light of greater knowledge to be well-pleasing [1].

We found it difficult to understand in what way we shall receive at the judgment-seat the things which were bad (compare Colossians 3. 25). All were agreed there would be tears at this judgment. Will not our eternal character be in relation to our spiritual growth here? That is, to receive the wrong thing means spiritual immaturity, and that eternally. Our judgment there will be that of servants; as sinners it was at Calvary: as sons, it is now.

Christ's death is seen (in the Divine mind) the death of the entire human race in the matter of sin. This is how we understand the last clauses of verse 14, but we desire help on "all died" [2].

Verse 16. Is it any wonder that Paul, who forgot the things which were behind and was pressing on to that high goal, should know no man after the flesh? Jesus was not to him a good man dying for His convictions, but the very Author of life itself.

From Atherton. —As we read 2 Corinthians 5. 1-5, we were reminded of the words "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality" (1 Corinthians 15. 53). The Apostle is here repeating the same truth under a different figure. That the house from heaven is eternal is plainly stated, but when we speak of "putting on," or "being clothed upon," difficulties may arise. The resurrection of the body is not so clearly defined here, as in 1 Corinthians 15., and some may say that there is no association here between the earthly tabernacles and the building from God, but what we have in verse 4, "that what is mortal may be swallowed up of life," indicates an association between the building from God, and the earthly tabernacle. What is true of the mortal, is true of the corruptible. Can we define the "building from God"? Is it (1) our glorified body in its entirety, or (2) the immortal that comes from heaven to swallow up the mortal? Some thought that it refers to the former, others that it could not be so, because 1 Corinthians 15. suggests a combination of something (sown a natural body, but raised a spiritual body). The building from God cannot be our spiritual body, for that is our body when we are with, and shall be like, Christ. The spiritual body, in its entirety, is surely the result, after the change has taken place; therefore it would seem that that which comes from heaven clothes that which is upon the earth.

The "earnest of the Spirit" (verse 5) is the guarantee or surety of the blessings we shall yet receive. The word "earnest" is used three times: 2 Corinthians 1. 22, 5. 5, and Ephesians 1. 14, each occurrence being linked with the blessed Holy Spirit [3].

It was felt "that being at home with the Lord" is not, in the least, contemplated in verse 9. The meaning of this verse is surely found in verse 6—"at home in the body—absent from the Lord," one viewpoint being manward, and the other being a divine aspect.

Verse 16. What does it mean to know a man "after the flesh"? Here we have before us the carnal and worldly mind, which thinks of position and social standing. Our aim should be to see men in Christ.

Verse 20. It was thought that each one of us is an ambassador, because to us is entrusted the proclamation of the Gospel. But Young's translation indicates a selective term, only applicable to certain gifted ones, which should not be applied to everybody. Perhaps the Apostle, in using the first person plural pronoun, is referring to himself and to his fellow apostles. **D. H. Butler, G. Sankey.**

From Willington Quay. —In chapter 4. verse 16, we saw the outward man *decaying*. Now we see it *dissolved*. The first would be experiential, mortifying the deeds of the flesh, but the dissolution of the body is final and is carried out by the power of God Himself. We leave this temporary dwelling place—a tent—for a permanent house [Is this the thought here? Birkenhead say this is not the same as John 14. 2.] One bears the image of the earthly, the other of the heavenly, and is, indeed, " of God. "

The primary hope of the Christian should be the return of the Lord in person, so that for him there will be no interim period as indicated in verses 3 and 4. In such a case those who have fallen asleep go to be with the Lord and there await His return so that they too might be clothed, each with an eternal body.

This is surely the purpose of God for which He wrought us (verse 5). "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God " (Romans 11. 88)!

We take it that the ALL of verse 10 will be all believers comprising the Body [Yes.]. The varying limitations of individuals will be taken into account and judgment will be passed accordingly. This should make us *diligent* to do good works (see Ephesians 2. 10 and also 1 Corinthians 3. 10-15), but will give us *hope* if we are misjudged by our brethren (1 Corinthians 4. 3-4).

Verse 14 indicates that ALL are dead, and so also verse 15. But surely the death of the Lord Jesus (mentioned here as " One ") is vicarious only for those who believe; or is it that all have died with Christ, but only believers live, or are raised again, with Him? Those " in Christ " are new creations, and things pertaining to the old man are done away. **C. B.**

From Broxburn. —If we should be called up higher before our Lord comes to the air, then we shall be in an unclothed state, and remain so until our Lord comes, when we shall be clothed upon with our habitation which is from heaven. A wonderful moment indeed it will be when He will fashion anew the body of our humiliation, according to the working whereby He is able to subject all things unto Himself.

Having such a glorious prospect, we truly should make it our aim to be well-pleasing unto Him, more especially in the light of the judgment-seat of Christ.

The love of Christ, even as shown at Calvary, was a constraining factor with Paul, and, knowing the fear of the Lord, he sought to persuade men to realise that, being a new creation in Christ, they should seek so to live, that they might be found well-pleasing unto the Lord. Let us follow the example of our Lord, who could say, "I do always the things that are pleasing unto Him. " " Christ pleased not Himself " (see Isaiah 58. 13, 14). **G. R.**

From Melbourne. —Though we groan in our bodily frame, we desire not to be unclothed, or rid of all the trouble that we, in our bodily frame, are heir to, but rather that the power of life might clothe and swallow us up entirely, so that all that is mortal is lost in life. " I die daily, " said the Apostle (1 Corinthians 15. 81). On this point we ask: " Is it possible to be clothed with our habitation from heaven whilst yet on earth? " [I judge this takes place at the Rapture, and

not during our sojourn on earth. —*Jas. M. J.* Undoubtedly the judgment-seat of Christ (*bema*) is for believers only. It is intensely individual in character, for the conduct of every child of God is reviewed and made manifest before Him whose words to the seven churches in Asia were, "I know." Not one thing, whether good or bad, done through the body, will be overlooked (Psalm 119. 137). The judgment of unbelievers will be at the great white throne (*Krisis*).

Verse 11. Knowing therefore the fear of the Lord, the Apostle says: "We persuade men." It was suggested that this was to these Corinthian believers in view of verse 20: they needed reconciling to God, for, he follows on with the sin-offering (verse 21). "We persuade men" also has its application to sinners. God commands (Acts 17. 30), but we persuade.

Verse 15. How necessary it is to have a living Lord Jesus ever before us if we would be drawn from living unto ourselves ! *S. Stoope.*

From Kilmarnock. —From Genesis 2. 7 we learn that the "LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground"; and again in chapter 3. 19 we read, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." In the ordinary course of nature our outward frame would go to corruption, but the Apostle, by the Spirit, speaks with certainty (verse 1) that though this should take place, "we have a building from God, . . . eternal, in the heavens."

The present house has many defects, and the clothing is burdensome, but our future house will be perfect and eternal. This change will come to pass when the Lord shall come, as we learn from 1 Corinthians 15. 51-54.

At the judgment-seat of Christ there will be a testing of our works, individually, and we judge that those done as pleasing to the Lord will be reckoned as good. In all Paul's work for God he sought to do it in the fear of the Lord, constrained by the love of Christ and as an ambassador on behalf of Christ he besought men to be reconciled to God. *A. G. S.*

From Knocknacloy. —In 2 Corinthians 5. the sleeping (dead) believer is viewed as being unclothed, the living believer as clothed, but both the dead and the living will be clothed upon at the Lord's coming with a habitation from the heavens; in the case of the living believer, "immortality," and of the sleeping believer, "incorruption" (1 Corinthians 15. 53).

The Lord died for all, and they that live should not live to themselves, but to Him who died and rose again. Their old ways and habits should have gone, and they should have become new creatures. *George Thompson.*

From Brantford. —How baffled we would be in attempting an exposition of this chapter, if God, by His Spirit, had not revealed that we, His creatures, are tripartite beings ! The soul is the man, and if he is to serve his Creator must have wherein to dwell. When here on earth we have an earthly house, the origin of which we can trace back to the dust of the ground. The Apostle reminds the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 15. 49) that as they had borne the image of the earthy, so would they also bear the image of the heavenly, because of the new birth. The far-reaching effect of the words "It is appointed unto men once to die" extends even to those who are in Christ, and they too are called upon to leave these clods of clay.

Careful reading of such portions as 1 Thessalonians 4. and 1 Corinthians 15. shows that there is no suggestion in verse 1 of our chapter that we will receive our eternal house immediately upon our soul leaving the tenancy of our earthly house.

We observed that the word " dissolved " can be rendered " loosed down, " as a tent, in which the occupant has ceased to reside.

In Philippians 1. 23 Paul states that to be with Christ is very far better, so then he could say, (1) to remain in the body for service to the saints was GOOD, (2) to die would be BETTER, and (3) for the Lord to return would be BEST—blessed hope!

The Apostle likens that glorious moment to being clothed in verses 2, 3 and 4. We were interested to note that the word " clothed " in verses 2 and 4 is the same, while that in verse 3 is different. In verses 2 and 4 it implies that the garment is super-imposed upon the person. On the other hand, verse 3 bears out the thought of sinking into and being enveloped in a garment. What a feeling of comfort and bliss will be ours when the object of our groaning is realised and what is mortal is swallowed up of life !

J. Thomas, Jr., J. Bell.

From Toronto. —In 1 Corinthians 15. Paul wrote as though he believed he might be alive when the Lord returned, " We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. " It would appear from verse 1 of our chapter that he could now see another possibility " if our earthly house . . . be dissolved. " It is worthy of note that we *have* this building from God [4]. It would appear that this eternal building already exists for us, although we shall not come into possession thereof until it pleases God to clothe us or to change us. Such a building is not made with hands, and is, therefore, not to be confused with the " dwelling places " now being prepared by the Lord Jesus, but it will be & spiritual body (1 Corinthians 15.).

Any man in Christ is a new creation. Old things, the old man, the former manner of life, died with Christ. This was effected completely at the moment of our conversion, and quite apart from our daily sanctification. This was entirely God's work. God is not reconciled to us; He wins us back to Himself through Christ and was Himself in Christ, to accomplish it.

God is now able to receive these recovered sinners to Himself, and not to reckon to them their transgressions. We suggest that this transgressing was done through our representative head—Adam (Romans 5.), and as we inherited his guilt and condemnation, so we, by faith in Christ, are restored to God through a new creation, under a new Head, Christ.

Such a marvellous message, committed to Paul, caused him to undertake an embassy for Christ. The nature of the mission and the powers of the ambassadors are here outlined. Here is further instruction: —" Him, who knew no sin, " God has made to be what he was not—Sin, that we, who were sinners, might become, what we were not, " the righteousness of God "—which He was.

S. K. Seath.

From Cowdenbeath. —A three-fold description is given of this " building from God, " which stands in sharp contrast to our earthly house; as to its formation, " not made with hands, " as to its character, " eternal, " and as to its present location, " in the heavens. "

God has given unto us the Holy Spirit as an earnest of things to come. This word " earnest " according to Dr. Strong means, " a part (payment) given in advance as security for the rest. " This suggests to us that God, having commenced His work on the believer by the giving of the Spirit, will complete this work when He changes the body also. This will be effected by the descent of our habitation from heaven which will clothe or envelop our mortal frame. Then we shall have a spiritual body.

Having this certain knowledge of one day standing in his Lord's presence, in view of the judgment-seat, Paul had one ambition in life (and what an ambition!) " to be well-pleasing unto Him. " There were two things that governed or controlled Paul's action: (1) The fear of the Lord, and (2) the love of Christ.

Regarding (1), **this** brings before **us** the judgment-seat with all its solemn contemplation. This was the background to Paul's persuasion of men in the preaching of the gospel **message**. Regarding (2), the love of Christ was the constraining power in Paul's **life**. Why **was** this? The scripture tells us that when Christ died, all men [?] in God's estimate, died also (2 Corinthians 5. 14). But Christ died that men might have life, and that eternal, so they which live (on believing the word of reconciliation) should, in view of the matchless love which Christ has displayed, no longer live unto themselves, **but** unto **Him** who for their **sakes** died and rose again.

Robert Ross,

From Crowborough. —The opening verses of the chapter took our minds to 1 Corinthians 15. and the illustration of the sowing of the seed, in relation to the resurrection. It seemed evident to **us** that when the earthly home of our tabernacle **is** dissolved, the soul **is** in **an** unclothed state, until the Lord comes again, when it will be united with the body which God will give it, even **as** it pleases Him. It **was** felt that this body would bear some resemblance to the features of the first body, even **as** the seed which grows produces **a** plant in the likeness of the one which has borne **it**. Some felt that only that pertaining to the old, sinful nature would **be** forgotten, and the Christian love **we** have for each other now would **be** continued, **as** this **is** of God.

J. T.

From Glasgow. —**We** are left on earth **as** witnesses to the work of God in our own hearts, and **as** preachers of the gospel of reconciliation. The estrangement between God and man, which began in Eden, has **been** overcome by the work of Christ. So far **as** God **is** concerned, there are now no obstacles in the way of communion. Sin has been dealt with so completely, that God **is** prepared to receive all that come to Him through **His** Son. He has not required men to submit to retribution for their own sins, **but** has laid **it** all on **Jesus**. God **was** in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. It now only remains for men to **be** reconciled to God.

It **seems** that the Corinthian saints had again become cold in heart toward God, and the Apostle, **as** a special emissary of the Lord, appealed to them to put matters right with God. The implication of the word "ambassador" **must** have been clear to the Corinthians. They had challenged the Apostle's authority, **but** here he laid down his credentials and stated his divine authority for correcting their errors. An ambassador is **a** duly authorised representative in **a** foreign country whose business is to interpret the mind of his government in the country where he **is**. Accordingly he must know the policy and **must be in** touch with the home country. The Apostle had all these qualities, and faithfully taught the will of God among **His** people in Corinth and elsewhere.

J. J. P.

REMARKS.

[1] Kirkintilloch. —Verse 9. The difficulty expressed by our friends arises in many minds—how there is need to **make** it our **aim** to **be** well-pleasing to Him when **we** are "at home with the Lord." In verse 6 it is "at home" in the body . . . **absent** from the Lord. "clearly the same place, i. e., on earth. In verse 8 it is "absent from the body . . . at home with the Lord," clearly the same place, i. e., in **His** presence, in heaven.

Can **we** say that in verse 9 "at home or absent" **is** the **same** place? Perhaps **we** can, and say **it is** on this earth, by viewing "at home" in relation to the body (verse 6) and "absent" in relation to the Lord (verse 6). On this interpretation **it is** the view-point that differs, namely, **as** to whether **we** view our sojourn on earth **as** related to our bodies—at home—our natural sphere, or **as** "absent from the Lord," **as** pilgrims.

Another explanation suggested is to carry ourselves forward in thought to the Rapture (of which time in earlier verses the Apostle has been writing), and say we make it our aim *now*, whether we are in the body *then*, or whether we have died and are absent from our bodies *then*, to be well-pleasing unto Him. —*Jas. M.*

[2] Kirkintilloch. —Verse 14. The A. V. and the R. V. give different meanings here. Accepting the latter, we read that **One** died for all, therefore they all, or *the* all for whom He died, accepting His sacrifice, also died. **He** died on their behalf, they died **in** Him. It would appear that Romans 6. 1-14 deals with this matter, and goes on to show that they are raised also with **Him** to walk **in** newness of life. —*Jas. M.*

[3] Atherton. —Verse 5. There is a Scotch word, "arles," which explains this word "earnest" (Gr. *arobon*, Lat. *arrha*). It means money given in confirmation of a bargain, or of the engagement of a hired servant. The word is said to be of Phœnician origin. It means more than a pledge; it is part of what is to be given, delivered at once, in guarantee that all will follow. Examples are "a coin out of a large sum," or "a turf from an estate." The Holy Spirit, given on our believing **in** Christ as Saviour, is the earnest that what is described **in** the earlier verses **in** chapter 5., and much more, will be given in full. The modern Greek word for an engagement ring is *arrabona*. —*Jas, M.*

(4) Toronto. —We suggest that the sense of "have," here, is that of "absolute certainty" more than of the present tense. —*Jas. M.*

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Question from Brantford. —(1) Is the reconciliation mentioned **in** 2 Corinthians 5. 20, 21, concerning the saints **in** Corinth, or does it refer to the unsaved?

Question from Melbourne. —(2) Are all Christians ambassadors on behalf of Christ?

Answers. —(1) and (2) Paul **in** 2 Corinthians 5. 11 speaks of persuading "men," that is, men in general, not simply saints. Then, **in** verse 19, we have the work of reconciliation **seen in** relation to the world—God **in** Christ reconciling the world to Himself. To Paul and suchlike was committed the ministry of reconciliation, and the word of reconciliation. In consequence Paul says that he, with his fellow-workers, were ambassadors on behalf of Christ, entreating all men (not the Corinthians merely) to be reconciled to God, **in** view of God's attitude to the world and of **His** work **in** Christ, who was made **sin** on the behalf of men that they might become the righteousness of God **in** Him.

The work of the ambassador is the work of men, not of women, though women may speak of Christ **in** their own sphere; and whilst all men should view themselves as potential ambassadors, all men who are saved by grace are not actual ambassadors of Christ. One who is an ambassador of the King of kings is a public servant of **His** who speaks and acts as one **in** such a high office. —*J. M.*

Questions from Glasgow. —(1) What are we to understand from the phrase "transformed into the same image from glory to glory"?

(2) Is "the Lord the Spirit" a reference to the Lord Jesus or to the Holy Spirit?

Answers. —(1) A mirror is transforming according to the image of what is reflected **in** it. So the saint of God, who beholds as "a mirror the glory of the Lord, is so transformed by beholding Christ as He is revealed to the soul by the word and Spirit of God. This transformation is a continuous experience, and the longer a believer looks at Christ and the nearer to Christ He becomes, the more definitely the image of Christ will be imprinted upon him: the work will go on from glory to glory.

(2) "The Lord the Spirit" is the person of the Holy Spirit. —*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 dally whether these things were so " (Acts 17. 11.)

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EDITORIAL.

The Old Testament Scriptures provided rich pasture for the Apostle Paul. Once before, at Antioch of Pisidia, he had quoted a warning to the **Jews** from Isaiah 49. (see Acts 13. 47). Here, in **2 Corinthians 6.**, to the Corinthians, he emphasizes, from the same portion in Isaiah, how welcome and acceptable, how highly-acceptable, how very-welcome (for such is the meaning of the compound word used) was the time in which they lived. But there also emerges a sad thought, almost subconsciously culled from the very identical chapter in Isaiah, the dread possibility of receiving " the grace of God *in vain*. " For, had he not read in that portion of the scroll, " I have laboured *in vain*, I have spent my strength for nought and vanity" (Isaiah 49. 4)? It must indeed be a sad disappointment to a teacher to find that he has laboured with his students to no purpose, producing only " emptiness. " How grieved the Holy Spirit must be when he finds us yet babes, fit only to absorb milk, and not able to digest strong meat! It is evident that this fear gripped the Apostle very often, if we judge by his writings to his dear children, scattered throughout the churches of God in that region known to us to-day as the Middle East.

You remember how he wrote to the Galatians (Galatians 2. 2) of his fear lest he himself, in proclaiming the glorious Gospel to the Gentiles, might have " run *in vain*. " Then in his encouragement to the dear saints in Philippi to **cease** from murmurings and disputings, and to shine as luminaries in the world, he again expressed the hope that he had " not run in vain neither laboured in vain " (Philippians 2. 16). **He** dreaded the inroads of the Tempter upon the faith of the young Thessalonian saints, lest his labours there should also be *in vain* (1 Thessalonians 3. 5).

The meaning of the root word (Gr. **Renos**) for " vain " in all the above quotations (as also in Acts 4. 25, 1 Corinthians 15. 10, 14, Ephesians 5. 6, Colossians 2. 8. and James 2. 20) is " empty, " that which is characterized by hollowness. Paul dreaded lest, after all his teaching, empty words with no kernel of truth, empty hopes with no sure future realization, empty structures with no solid foundations, should be the result of his labours.

There is another interesting words used by the Apostle (and by others, too) in expressing his apprehension of the futility of his work. It is the word **matatos**, meaning " vain, " and signifying " aimlessness " or " void of results. " Thus are described the idolatrous practices of some (Acts 14. 15); the reasonings of the so-called wise (1 Corinthians 3. 20); faith, **if** Christ be not raised (1 Corinthians 15. 17), and foolish questionings (Titus 3. 9), etc.

James uses both these words and brings out their meanings. The vain (*Kenos*) man (James 2. 20) is *empty* of wisdom from above, and the vain (*mataios*) religion (James 1. 26) of the man of an unbridled tongue is that which *accomplishes nothing*.

But Isaiah also had brighter visions. He saw a people building houses and inhabiting them, planting vineyards and enjoying the fruit thereof. . . . " They shall not labour *in vain*.... for they are the seed of the blessed of the LORD. " Read Isaiah 65. 21-25, please. It would be well if we could, in some small degree, anticipate that millennial day in our labours, beloved. *Jas, Martin.*

THE BOOK OF THE **TWELVE** PROPHETS

(The **Minor** Prophets).

1. INTRODUCTORY.

The Hebrew Bible has three main divisions: — 1. The Law of Moses; 2. The Prophets; 3. The Writings, or the Psalms (from the first book in the division) (see Luke 24. 44). What is now known as the Minor Prophets was reckoned as one book and followed Ezekiel. It was thus the last of the prophetic books and known as " The Book of the Twelve. " This book contained rather less matter than Isaiah, and, like Isaiah, was, no doubt, written on one roll. These " Twelve " always stand together, though not always in the same order and not always in the same place in the various lists or manuscripts. In our English Bible " The Twelve " form the last twelve books of the Old Testament, preceded by the " Major Prophets "—Isaiah, Jeremiah (with Lamentations), Ezekiel, and Daniel. We do not know who was responsible for this arrangement, so different from that of the Hebrew Bible, but we may surely see God's providential guidance here. In the Bible of the Christian it is fitting that the Prophets who so clearly foretold the coming of the Christ should find their place immediately before the records of their fulfilment, and particularly that Malachi, with its prophecy of the Lord's fore-runner (chapter 3. 1)—

" Behold, I send my messenger,
and he shall prepare the way before me, "

should lead the way from the Old to the New.

The title " Minor Prophets " was due to the " Latin Fathers. " It referred to their shorter length as compared with the " Major Prophets. " Unfortunately, the term is ambiguous and has left the idea in many minds that these Prophets are of minor importance. No part of Holy Writ is of minor importance, and certainly not " The Twelve " whose prophecies cover a period of over three hundred years. The usual order appears to be roughly chronological. The approximate dates are as follows: —

	<i>The Twelve Prophets.</i>	<i>Major Prophets,</i>	<i>Kings, etc,</i>
B. C. 800	Jonah		Jeroboam II.
790-760	Joel		? Uzziah.
780-760	Amos		Jeroboam II, Uzziah.
785-725	Hosea	Isaiah	Jeroboam II, Uzziah.
			Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah .
745-725	Micah		Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah.
660-630	Nahum		
630-620	Zephaniah		Josiah.
620-610	Habakkuk	Jeremiah	
587	Obadiah	Ezekiel; Daniel	Destruction of Jerusalem.
520-518	Haggai		Rebuilding of the Temple.
520-510	Zechariah		Ditto.
420	Malachi		Close of Nehemiah's reformation.

Joel, **Obadiah**, **Nahum** and **Habakkuk** are undated, and their place in the table is determined by internal evidence; thus **Nahum** is before the fall of Nineveh, and **Habakkuk** before the Chaldean invasion. The table follows the usual chronology.

"The Twelve" carry us from the beginning to the end of the prophetic period. They were held in honour by the Lord and His apostles who quote from them freely. Only three of the shorter prophecies have no clear quotation or allusion in the **New** Testament.

The present series of notes is intended to make "The Twelve Prophets" better known to our Bible students, not to enter into details of interpretation. Their message is of immense importance to a world that has so largely lost God. They were the preachers of their day to sinful men, and to know them and their message will deepen and enrich our message to the men and women round us. These words of another show, better than any words of mine, the breadth of the message "The Twelve" brought to God's erring people:—"They . . . bring forth and speed on their way not a few of the streams of living waters which have nourished later ages, and are flowing to-day. Impetuous cataracts of righteousness—*let it roll on like water, and justice as an everlasting stream*; the irrepressible love of God to sinful men; the perseverance and pursuits of His grace; His mercies that follow the exile and the outcast; His truth that goes forth richly upon the heathen; the hope of the Saviour of mankind; the outpouring of the Spirit; counsels of patience; impulses of tenderness and of healing; melodies innumerable,—all sprang from those lower hills of prophecy, and sprang so strongly that the world hears and feels them still."

But the Prophets, and particularly our "Twelve," were not only preachers to the people of their day, they had their part to play in the preparation for the Coming One, and though over four centuries were to elapse from the last of their number to that long awaited Advent, they were years in which their collected writings were to be recognized as God's Word, and added to God's Book; thus they formed part of the teaching of every Jewish child, and the Lord and His Twelve spoke to a people with a basis of knowledge of God and His ways. **S. B.**

THE SECOND LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS.

Chapter 6.

From Atherton.—This chapter follows on immediately from chapter 5. It is sadly possible that we might receive the grace of God in vain. The day for receiving and following the grace of God is the present—to-day is the day of salvation. It is clear that verse 2, especially the latter part, whilst often applied in the Gospel message to the unsaved is primarily a word to those who are saved, and in the Fellowship of God's Son. Two aspects of the prophecy from Isaiah 49. 5-8 were touched upon, namely, as to how it applied to the prophet himself, and its greater and fuller application to the Lord Jesus Christ.

The apostles sought to serve God and cause stumbling to no one; their conduct and discourse had to be carefully adjusted because their ministration came into disrespect for any misdeed. They were commended as God's ministers in many things, and the catalogue which follows shews the vicissitudes of the pathway they trod.

The Corinthian saints were lacking in affection towards the Apostle, and so he exhorts them to enlarge their affections for him, because they still had a large place in his heart. The negative exhortation which follows in verse 14 may be an admonition to the saints not to be "enlarged" in their hearts towards the things which are wrong [1]. The disciples' pathway is a narrow one, and believers should not be yoked with unbelievers. The insertion of the word "unequally" does not imply that believers and unbelievers may be yoked on equal terms, and meet with God's approval; actually it is quite impossible for believers and

unbelievers to be joined together **in an** equal yoke, because their outlooks are entirely different. The believer looks upward, **and** has his hope **set** on Christ **as** he travels heavenward, while the unbeliever **is** earth-bound **and** self-centred, with no real hope **as** he travels downwards to a lost eternity. The union of diverse things **is** odious to God (see Deuteronomy 22. 10). This principle should **be** exemplified **in** the life of the believer. Righteousness cannot **be** a fellow to iniquity; light **and** darkness have nothing **in** common. Christ and Belial have no concord, because one **is** true and the other false; one **is** eternally the Son of God and the other **is** worthlessness and destruction.

Verses 17 and 18 are clearly a solemn **message** to the Church that they should take the position of a responsible people—God's people—outside the **Camp**, having no agreements or bonds with those from whom they had been called. This definitely calls a person to the narrow way, and **is** an appeal to the individual. It **is** obvious from verse 18 that the promises of God are only to those who walk in obedience to this appeal. They only shall be called sons and daughters, and God shall **be** their "Father" in this very particular sense. Here **we** have in these promises something quite distinct from the family relationship of the fatherhood of God **in** John 1. 12 and 1 John 3. 1. *R. C. Jones, J. K. Southern.*

From Crowborough. —It is possible for **us** as believers to become neglectful of God's goodness. **We** **must** lay hold firmly on God's grace, thereby glorifying God and rising to the privileges and responsibilities of God's people. In this chapter **Paul** sets here the very high standard to which all who would serve God **must** attain, "Giving no occasion of stumbling in anything...." No one who **sees** or knows **us** should have occasion to reproach or blame the ministry. How Paul, at least, conducted himself in his **service** to God, **is** enumerated in **verses 4-10**. He secured **respect** for his calling, **by** living in such a manner **as** his calling demanded. He begins by saying, "**But** in everything.... in much patience...." Here **is** one of the first and foremost of credentials. They who would serve God in this glorious ministry should set an example of patience, so that when they are poor, persecuted, oppressed or imprisoned, they should submit without murmuring. It **is** easy to preach to others, but it **is** not easy to manifest the right spirit in **times** of trial and persecution.

In verses 4-5 Paul refers to various kinds of afflictions, and in verses 6-7 to things pertaining to a holy life and pure conversation, finally, in verses 8-10, to various circumstances. The first group begins with "much patience," the second with "purity," the third with "glory and dishonour." Here **we** see that which tells **us** of our Great Example, our Lord **Jesus** Christ. With regard to the Apostle's appeal for a return of love, he speaks freely and fully to them. **His** affection for them **was** not narrow nor confined; it **was** ample and free. True attachment will find means of expressing itself. A heart full of love will **give** vent to its feelings. And so he tells them they were straightened in their own affections and asks them **by** way of recompense to open their hearts towards him. **He** does not ask for silver or gold, but for a return "in like kind"—a return of love and devotedness to the great **cause** he loved. Thus a father speaks to his children.

In **verses 14-18** we see that all dealing with the unequal yoke **is** inseparably linked with all the foregoing **part** of the chapter. The ministry which should **be** kept unblameable would surely **be** made blameworthy **if** those who serve therein were unequally yoked with unbelievers. **We** were agreed that there **is** a dissimilarity so great between believers and unbelievers that it **is** improper and injurious for them to **be** yoked together. Some thought too that believers in the sects could **be** termed unbelievers with regard to certain truths of scripture, and that "darkness," "iniquity," and "idols" could **be** used in connexion with believers together in a **sect** or system of men. From all these doubtful things the word **is**, "Come ye out." *J. H. B.*

From Hamilton, **Canada**. —Paul, the great ambassador, closes the fifth chapter by stating the message he so loyally bore to all around him: "Be ye reconciled to God." However, the opening word "and" of the sixth chapter shows that he had a twofold burden on his heart. The first was that men might receive the grace of God, and the second was that they might not receive it in vain. This receiving "in vain" has nothing to do with the unconditional security of the believer, but rather refers to his walk. Paul realized that a band of worldly, lukewarm Christians would be no credit to his ministry, and would bring little glory to the God whom he served. Thus so he is entreating the Corinthians to walk before God, "giving no occasion of stumbling" to those who were watching their daily lives. The Apostle knew that they were "known and read of all men," and that his ministry could be hindered by poor behaviour among those who were the results of his endeavours. This is borne out by the words "That our ministration be not blamed."

A worthy disciple must become like his master. He must think as his master thought. He must follow where his master trod. Paul's list of commendations of himself and the other ministers of God shows how much their experience resembled their Master's. The afflictions, the distresses, the stripes, the watchings, and the fastings, all turn our minds to the Man of Sorrows. What depth of truth lay in His words as He spoke to the little band that night and said, "If they persecute Me they will also persecute you"! With tear-filled eyes the Master had looked over the ancient city of Jerusalem, knowing that those He loved despised Him. His heart had been pierced with sorrow at the thought. As Paul now wrote to those in Corinth he must have had a similar experience, for though his heart was enlarged toward those saints, he knew that they needed the exhortation, "Be ye also enlarged."

Robert Dryburgh, Ralph Higgins.

EXTRACTS.

From Kirkintilloch. —In the first verse of this chapter, the words "with him" are in italics, not being in the original text. If we omit them, the sense conveyed would be that the apostles were workers together with one another in the work of the Lord. But the words are evidently inserted in keeping with the theme of the previous verses, for an ambassador must needs work in fellowship with the one whom he represents. The ministry of the apostles was on behalf of Christ, and they were workers together with Him who had sent them. In Romans 5, reconciliation is set forth as a completed act in the believer, through the death of Christ, but in 2 Corinthians 5, it is spoken of as having a bearing upon our lives. The grace bestowed on Paul was not found vain, for it brought forth indeed a wonderful life of service (see 1 Corinthians 15. 10). Verses 4-10 describe such a variety of experiences that one marvels at the exceeding grace of God seen in Paul and Timothy (we were overlooking the fact that Timothy was a co-writer of this epistle, therefore included in the words "we, us, and our" used throughout). No matter what experience they were passing through, in one extreme or the other, they were able to commend themselves to God and to men as worthy ministers of God.

To be straitened in one's own affections is to have a narrow, limited love for others. This may have been the reason for the writing of the wonderful chapter on love in the first epistle to the Corinthians (chapter 13.). It is plainly stated in verse 14, "Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers." A yoke is for joining two together with a view to service, and their service would be very difficult if the two were not of the same kind.

God and His Son are on the outside place, therefore He says, "Come ye out," *not* "Go ye out." His promise, "I will receive you," is not the Saviour receiving sinners, but it is the Father receiving His sons and daughters unto Himself.

H. King, W. Sneddon.

From Glasgow. —The work of entreaty spoken of in verse 1 was the work of the ambassadors referred to in verse 20 of the previous chapter. The Apostle viewed himself and his co-workers as ambassadors of Christ whose mission at that moment was to bring about a reconciliation between God and the Corinthian saints [see answers in May issue]. He pleads with them in verse 1 that the grace of God which they learned in salvation might work in their hearts to remove any offence which they felt to exist between the Apostle and themselves. So far as the Apostle was concerned, the door to full fellowship was thrown wide open, and he entreated the Corinthians to come in. That he was in the mind of God, he had no doubt, and sought by every means at his disposal to demonstrate his own faithfulness, lest his mission as an ambassador should fail through any objection to his character or ministry.

The list of criticisms and persecutions he endured for Christ's sake is formidable, and is surely ample evidence of his complete faith in God. Many a man has been disheartened by sufferings much less than the Apostle's! Such is the steadfastness of one who has a very personal experience of Christ. The revelation on the Damascus road remained very present in the Apostle's mind and was, no doubt, the source of his enduring strength. He knew the risen Lord by personal contact. Believers to-day can be equally strengthened by living contact with the Master. There is no stimulant to faith so potent as experience of Him.

From verse 14 to verse 1 of chapter 7, the Apostle leaves off his entreaty and gives a word of instruction on the irregularity of certain worldly associations. The unequal yoke should be distinguished from the yoke of bondage of 1 Corinthians 7, which is essentially a yoke or deed of arrangement between a master and a servant. The marriage yoke is also different in that "the twain shall become one flesh." The unequal yoke affects the working together of fellow with fellow, each of whom retains his identity and personal responsibility. It should be noted that the parallels drawn are between believers and unbelievers. The portion makes no reference to believers in the sects.

J. J. P.

From Birkenhead. —As with the latter part of chapter 5, the early part of chapter 6, gives rise to the question as to how we are to understand these words as addressed to believers.

Paul and his fellow worker were conscious of the fact that to them God had committed the ministry of reconciliation and could speak of themselves as ambassadors on behalf of Christ. Here we have a description of what this ministry entails. Firstly, the manner in which Christ is presented to all men by earnest entreaty, then the character and credentials of those who are ambassadors of Christ.

As the believing sinner sees that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, so he, in Christ, knows complete and eternal reconciliation with God through his acceptance of God's salvation. Thus his standing in Christ as a reconciled one is unalterable, but when the believer is out of touch with the Lord through sin, he needs to hear afresh this ministry beseeching him to be restored again to that state or condition of reconciliation, and with it comes the entreaty that we receive not the grace of God in vain. This ministry, therefore, envisages a continual beseeching to the believer to get back to that right manner of life in which we can enjoy that peace with God, and be found as workers together with God.

If there is not the fruit of the Spirit in our lives, God's grace is being wasted on us, and some may have even to reflect sadly upon the years which the locust hath eaten. Hence the emphasis on the continuous "now," as the acceptable time, as the clay of salvation; this season of grace not to be missed, but taken advantage of in the ever present "now." *M. H., N. A.*

From Cowdenbeath. —Isaiah had prophesied of a time when God would hearken unto those who laid hold of Him in prayer, and would succour them. At such a time, and in such a day, the Corinthians lived, and so do we (verse 2). God will enable men by his grace to live lives well-pleasing unto Himself. Paul could speak with perfect freedom because he had not received the grace of God in vain. In every circumstance his behaviour commended him as a minister of God. In Acts 16. his conduct led to the salvation of the jailor and his household because, even in prison, Paul commended himself as a minister of the gospel. Not only when suffering at the hands of men, dishonoured and regarded as a deceiver, but even when he received from them glory as at the first in Lystra, his conduct never brought dishonour upon the message he proclaimed. Appearing to be sorrowful he was a man who was inwardly rejoicing. Paul was able because of his blameless life to hold himself up as an example to the Corinthians; and this gave him power to guide them. Paul had a large place in his heart for the Corinthians, but they had little room in their hearts for him. Thus he longed for a reciprocation of love, realizing that love forms the basis of true obedience, and would lead to a more ready response to his teaching. *James K. D. Johnston.*

From Kilmarnock. —"Receive not the grace of God in vain." It is possible for one to be the subject of God's grace (or favour) and his manner of life to be unbecoming. Titus 2. 11-12 says that "the grace of God hath appeared.... instructing us.... that we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world." If we live accordingly, then God's grace will be manifested in us. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15. 10, "by the grace of God I am what I am," and that grace had not been in vain in his case, but it had enabled him to endure the many hardships and difficulties he had to contend with as God's minister (see verses 4 to 10). By his experiences he thus shows his love for them, and he longs to see a manifestation of their heart affection in return. In the world to-day the great cry is for amalgamation and co-operation, no doubt a foreshadowing of the coming rule of the Antichrist, but the word of the Lord to saints in Church of God is, "Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate." *A. G. S.*

From London. —**Because** of the reconciliatory work of God in Christ, Paul's office was that of an ambassador of Christ. This embassy belongs to all the reconciled [see Answers, May, 1950]. Paul's entreaty that "ye receive not the grace of God in vain" or "to no purpose" implies that it is possible for a man to receive the grace without the true sanctification of the life, and hence without the fruitfulness which should follow. The citation from Isaiah 49. 8 is more clearly understood if studied in its original position. It is a prophecy concerning the Christ. His rejection is foretold, and the words of verse 8 were addressed to Him. The words of Psalm 69. 13 onwards were the prayer of the suffering Christ; "My prayer is unto Thee, O LORD, in an acceptable time:.... answer me in the truth of Thy salvation. Deliver me...." The answer of God was in the exertion of His almighty power in resurrection; "In an acceptable time have I answered Thee." Christ was made the power of salvation to the Gentiles. This gives the full meaning to verse 2. "Now" is the present time, this dispensation, the time in which salvation is offered to the Gentiles.

He was made thus, that He might be "a covenant of the people," "to make them inherit the desolate heritages,"—desolate through Israel's failure. His command to His people is, "Go forth." This is in keeping with "Go ye into all the world, etc." Paul, as the true minister of God, knew nothing of the inconsistencies in many Christians' lives, which wrought such havoc, and brought the truths of God into ill repute. His walk was in every detail the practical out-working of his ministry. This he asserts himself: "What we are in word by letters when we are absent, such are we also in deed when we are present" (2 Corinthians 10. 11).

Paul knew only too well the hardships entailed in God's service; in fact **he** probably suffered more than any other. **He** had the true spirit of a minister of God, but he found comfort in the Lord's words, "Blessed are ye when **men** shall persecute you for My sake."

The following verses (8-10) bring to mind the word, "Woe unto you, **when** all men shall speak well of you **1**" (Luke 6. 26). It is a solemn warning to **us** when it is so easy to become lukewarm. **Verses** 14-18. God's desire is for a Holy Nation in which **He** can delight, a living temple in which **He** can dwell. His righteous demand is "Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I **am** holy" (Leviticus 11. 44). **We** through **His** grace have been sanctified unto Christ and separated from the world: "called out of darkness into **His** marvellous light" (1 Peter 2. 9). "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever would be a friend of the world maketh himself **an** enemy of God" (James 4. 4). Thus follows the command, "Be not unequally yoked," which not only covers unequal unions in marriage, but includes every form of association and alliance with that which is at enmity with God. Obedience is followed by the fulfilment of the promise of **Er** Shaddai. The Lord Almighty who called Abram, has called **us** unto Himself in Christ, to be unto Him, the Father, **as** sons and daughters.

"Blessed is the nation whose God is Jehovah; the people whom **He** hath chosen for **His own** inheritance."

A. Reeve.

From Brantford. —**As** ambassadors and ministers of God, the apostles brought forward their credentials and presented them to the Corinthian saints. Included **in** their credentials were some twenty-eight items that testified without a doubt who they were and to whom they belonged. **We** noticed that these items **seemed** to be divided into four groups. The first has to do with persecutions from those without; the second applies to their own sufferings, activated by a heart of love; the third shows their relationship to God; and the fourth shows a contrast between man's opinions and God's.

The words of the Lord Jesus Christ to his disciples in John 15. **20** were true of the apostles: "If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you." How faithfully the Apostle had obeyed the words of the Master (in Matthew 16. 24), in that he had denied himself and taken up his cross and followed **Him!** **He** had separated himself from the world and now his motto was, "For to **me** to live is Christ" (Philippians 1. 21).

Jesus said, "By their fruits ye shall know them," and "Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit" (Matthew 7. 16-17). "For the fruit of the Spirit is **in** all goodness and righteousness and truth" (Ephesians 5. **9**, A. V.). In Galatians **5. 22** we have outlined what the fruit of the Spirit is, and these were typical of the life of the Apostle. To the Corinthians he said, "**Be** ye imitators of me, even **as** I also **am** of Christ" (1 Corinthians 11. 1). Like their Master, the apostles had opened their hearts to them, and now they look for a response to such love. As disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ it is essential that we display in our lives this great attribute of love. This chapter opened with the entreaty to "receive not the grace of God in vain," which is followed by an appeal for "Love," and closes with an appeal to "come out." Here is a call to separation, for just **as** it was conditional in Israel's day, so it is to-day, **if** God is to dwell amongst **us** then we must be obedient to **His** will. How forceful are the words, "We are a temple of the living God"! May they have a sanctifying effect upon our lives, and may we be a people truly separated and sanctified, having those characteristics of the love and grace of God manifested in each of **us!**

R. Drake, J. J. Thomas.

From **Cardiff**. —The danger in the Corinthian church was that the grace of God was being received "in vain," through **estrangement** from God. Paul seeks to **fan** into a flame their waning zeal with the quotation from Isaiah 49. so often used **in** the gospel, but which was firstly **used** to the Corinthian saints. May the grace of God revealed to **us** not be "in vain," **in** the **face** of the crying need of the lost! Paul had experienced this grace **in** his life, and, having allowed it free course, could say, "Be ye imitators of me, even **as** I also am of Christ." Truly Paul **knew** "the valley of Achor for a door of hope" (Hosea 2. 15). Philippians 3. 8 shows the Apostle's utter disregard for things temporal **as** he pours himself out **in** service.

Paul, **in** His fatherly spirit, brings **again** before the saints the principle of the yoke. Here it **is** not in the **sense** of working together "with Him," for even the almighty hand of God cannot reconcile the believer being yoked with the unbeliever. But **in** obedient separation **we** can know **Him** **as** "a Father.... the Lord Almighty." Let not the people of God to-day be found lacking **in** individual life, for God's great desire **is** to dwell and walk among **His** people. The weakening of individual life **is** the certain failure to collective testimony.

Eric S. Toms, David Evans.

From Paisley and Barrhead. —In **verses** 11-13, Paul refers to his largeness of heart for the Corinthians, **and** appeals to them to evidence such a condition. Then, verses 14-18 appear to be parenthetical **and** deal with the unequal yoke, and, again, **in** chapter 7. 2 there **is** a return to the appeal—"Open your hearts to us." **We** ask why those verses should thus **be** inserted. Could it be that although the saints should open their hearts, i. e., allow their affections to abound, they must be careful not to embrace that which **is** not of God? [**Yes**, see Atherton's paper and note.]

David L. Baird.

From Broxburn. —Paul and Timothy, **in** chapter 6., are viewed **as** fellow-workers with God. Thus by their **manner** of life they had **given** no occasion of stumbling to any, but had, **in** all things, sought to commend themselves **as** ministers of God. Amongst the enumerated attributes in which they sought to commend themselves, patience comes first. In all these trials Paul was **guided** **in** his conduct by "the word of truth, **in** the power of God; by the armour of righteousness on the right hand **and** on the left." Having sought to bring to their notice things concerning himself, he then appeals to the Corinthians to enlarge their hearts towards them, **as** God's ministers. The Corinthians were apparently unequally yoked with unbelievers, **and** thus had lost that reception which God gives to **His** obedient children, and **His** Fatherly care.

There can be but one answer to the questions **in** verses 14-16, **and** that **is**, "None." Light and darkness cannot dwell together, for, **as** we read **in** Genesis 1., God separated the one from the other. In our day **we** do well to keep separate, that we may continue to know the fatherly care of our God, **in** all things.

J. H.

From Leeds, Bradford and Halifax. —The quotation from Isaiah 49. 8 seems to set forth the Lord **Jesus** **as** the pattern servant of Jehovah, **and** the help **and** strength that **He** receives from God **in** His mediatorial work toward Jews **and** Gentiles. The object of this quotation **seems** to be that all true servants of God receive like help **and** succour **in** the prosecution of their ministry **in** this day of salvation. **We** should be diligent **in** our ministry, for **now** **is** the best possible time to act, "the well accepted time." In following on with the thought of ideal service for God, Paul then shows that he commends his ministry to them, not by **means** of letters of commendation **as** **in** 2 Corinthians 3. 1, but by his exemplary conduct evidenced in **many** trying **and** difficult circumstances of life. **He** **seems** to classify his trials **under** three heads: *Firstly*, in verses 4 to 5, outward

experiences **seem to be** emphasized; *secondly*, in verses 6-7, inward discipline **seems to be** referred to; and, *finally*, he recounts the false values of other **men** (verses 8 to 10) in contrast to his real condition. Verses 14 to 18 **seem to refer** to the Corinthian saints having unscriptural fellowship with idolatrous feasts **in** heathen temples (cp. 2 Corinthians 6. 16 with 1 Corinthians 10. 14 and 21). They **may** also refer to some of the Corinthians taking sides with those who were seeking to defame the character of the Apostle. Moral separation is emphasized in this **chapter**. This world's principles are moulded and controlled by Satan (cp. Ephesians 2. 2; Colossians 2. 8), and are characterized by iniquity, darkness and unbelief. In contrast to this, the child of God is called upon to **base** his motives **and** actions on divine principles, namely, according to righteousness, light, and faith in God. **When** the child of God continues in a compromising attitude towards evil, he forfeits the enjoyment of communion with his heavenly Father. This **can** only be remedied **as we** continue to obey the will of God, and appropriate his promises for ourselves. Finally, living and abiding continuously **in** the love of our Father, **we** should judge that which is evil in our lives, and being motivated by the fear of God, **we** shall at last attain to a full-grown holy character like unto our God Himself (see Leviticus 11. 44).

William G. Henderson, Frank Cannings.

From Knocknacloy. — **Seeing that we** have received grace from God, **we** should learn to put this grace into practice, for **we** believe there **is a** practical side of grace. Please **see** 2 Corinthians 8. 1-9. It **is** possible to receive the grace of God **in** vain, and also to fall short of the grace of God (Hebrews 12. 15).

The unequal yoke, a form of separation, requires consideration by the people of God to-day. Separation **in** Scripture **is** twofold, " from " whatever is contrary to the mind of God, and " unto " God Himself. The unequal yoke is anything which unites a child of God **and an** unbeliever in a common purpose. **We** thought of Israel in this connexion (Exodus 19. 1-6). It **was** only **as** they obeyed and **did** God's will that He **was** with **them** and they were separated from all the peoples. **We** read also Deuteronomy 7. to 12., and **we** would recommend the reading of these chapters by all in the Fellowship. Nothing **less than what is** written **in** these chapters would satisfy God, and nothing **less than** this should satisfy us. **We** know Israel **was an** earthly people with **an** earthly hope of **an** earthly country; their worship was material and also their warfare. Ours are a spiritual worship, spiritual sacrifices, and spiritual warfare, with a heavenly hope and a heavenly country **in** view. **We** are not called upon to go out and destroy material buildings to-day. The weapons of our warfare are not carnal or of the flesh (2 Corinthians 10. 3-6 and Ephesians 6. 10-18). Although ours is a spiritual day, God's principle has not changed. Jehovah **changes** not. God should **see** the Fellowship to-day **as He saw** Israel **in** the past through Balaam. " Lo, it is a people that dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations " (Numbers 23. 9).

Herbert Thompson.

Willington Quay. — Whilst **in** chapter 5. 20 the **entreaty was** directed to the **unsaved**, in the second verse of chapter 6. Paul is entreating the saints **at** Corinth concerning the question of **service**, and the **need for urgency** in that respect. The Apostle's credentials are **presented** in three distinct categories. Firstly, **in** verses 4 and 5, **we** have brought before **us** the **sufferings which** appertain to the earthen vessel, **in** verses 6 and 7 those which appertain to the inward man, and **in** verses 8 and 9 sufferings **in** relation to those around. The **care** and affection which the Apostle had for the saints **in** Corinth, are reiterated in verse 11, and, **as** their " **Father in the Faith**, " his desire is that their hearts may be enlarged, so that the love **between** them **may be** reciprocal.

The last **five** verses of the chapter form a well-known portion of scripture. In **asking** a series of questions, Paul seeks to show the great difference **that** exists between the believer and **the** unbeliever. Righteousness, light, and **Christ** are the portion of the believer, whilst iniquity, darkness and Belial speak of the unregenerate. In order that God can have His portion in **a** believer, **it is** essential that no place **be** given to idols. In verse 17 the injunction **is** to "Come out," and **is** followed in verse **18** by the promise of sonship to those who obey. **We** thought that the question of character **is** involved here, and that although all believers **are** children of God, the position of sonship necessitates a resemblance to the father (Psalm 144. 12-15). *K. R.*

From Melbourne. —The conjunction " and " links the last **few verses** of chapter 5. **with** chapter 6. The Apostle continues his pleadings with them, using an Old Testament scripture to counteract a tendency on their part to turn away from God. Here **was** a company of redeemed ones **in** a wrong condition of soul, needing to be reconciled to God, and asked by the Apostle to receive not the grace of God in vain [**2**], The grace of God was flowing to them, but not from them, for they became straitened (narrowed) in their own affections. It **is** mercy for the sinner, and grace for the believer, for in the grace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the believer grows (2 Peter 3. 18).

The principle of the Apostle was to commend first and warn after. The unequal yoke can be **a** snare to **a** believer in the church of God. Among **such** **we** referred to business partnerships with unbelievers. **We** have to work with unbelievers, but we **can** avoid vexing our soul with their conversation like righteous Lot. **We** also referred to marriage of believers to unbelievers; even marriage between those in fellowship of God's Son and saved ones not in fellowship, **we** judge, is an unequal yoke. The principles are clearly laid down in **1** Corinthians 7. **39**, "only in the Lord." **We** also referred to military training and joining the forces. In these we sign away our freedom for **we** have to own allegiance to the king and not, **as** it should be, to the Lord Christ.

Every person in the fellowship has **a** responsibility to free himself or herself from the unequal yoke, whatever that yoke may be. Freedom from invitations to annual socials in large businesses where one **is** employed **is** desired. **We** note that God will be a Father to these separated ones. In the Church, the Body, there **is** neither male nor female (Galatians 3. 28), but here, in a church of God we **see** sons and daughters. Five things **are** mentioned. Their meanings are: Fellowship—holding together; Communion—using **a** thing in common; Concord—sounding together; Portion—a part; Agreement—setting down together. *S. Stoope.*

REMARKS.

[1] Atherton. —This thought **is** supported by reference to Deuteronomy 11. 16, where the LXX translates "lest your hearts be deceived" **as** "lest thy heart be enlarged," the Greek for "heart be enlarged" being **the same as is** used in verse 11. Thus the Apostle's appeal in verse **13** does not extend to the acceptance of entirely incongruous and opposing ideas. —*Jas. M.*

The LXX in Deuteronomy 11. **16** **is** a free translation of the Hebrew with the sense of "lest your hearts be **puffed up**" **which** suits the context very well. I doubt whether the phrase "hearts enlarged" had such **a** wide meaning as to be used for evil conduct generally; at any rate it **is** not so used in Scripture. (See Psalm 119. **32** LXX). Verse **14** starts **a** fresh subject. —*S. B.*

[2] (Melbourne, Australia). —" **Be reconciled to God**" is a statement of **Paul's (and others')** ambassadorial work towards **all men**. The whole **passage** shows God's **attitude** to the world **and** Paul's work toward **all**. Chapter 6. **1 gives us** Paul's word to the Corinthian church, not to **receive** the grace of God **in vain**. The words " with **Him** " **are in italics**, and should not **be in the text** as there are no Greek equivalents for them. Servants work together, **but** they do not work **with** their Divine Master. —**J. M.**

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Question from Melbourne. —In Exodus 30. 6 the altar of **incense** was placed before the veil. Here Aaron attended the lamps **and** burnt **incense** thereon (Exodus 30. 7, 8). In Leviticus 16. 12 Aaron **was** to take his hands full of sweet **incense**, beaten small, and bring **it** within the veil. Hebrews 9. 2-4 **seems to indicate** that this piece of furniture was not **in** the Holy Place, **but was** after the second veil, the tabernacle which **is** called the Holy of Holies. **We** would **appreciate a** note on the altar of **incense**, its exact position **in** the tabernacle (before or after the veil).
S. Stoope.

Answer. —There **can be** no question **but** that the position of the altar of **incense** was before the veil **in** the holy place, and not within the most holy place. Exodus 30. 6 and 40. 5 **give** the command of the LORD **in** respect to its position **in** the sanctuary; and verse 26 of chapter 40. states that Moses " put the golden altar **in** the tent of **meeting** before the veil. "

The omission of any mention of it **in** verse 2 of Hebrews 9. **is** difficult to understand; **but as** the censer **was** used when the high priest entered the most holy place it may **be** that the Holy Spirit **is** indicating that by **means** of the **censer** the golden altar had a close association with the apartment which **was** beyond the second veil. I take **it** that ordinarily in the day-by-day **services** the golden censer was kindled at the copper altar, then brought into the first tabernacle and placed upon the golden altar, but on the day of atonement it (the censer) was carried right into the most holy place. —**G. P.**

I prefer to regard the " golden **censer** " of Hebrews 9. 3 **as** the altar of **incense** and the word " having " a **sense** similar to that of 1 Kings 6. 22 "**belonging to**. "
—**S. B.**

Question **from** Melbourne. —**Has** any other gathering (presumably body of people) apart from a church of God, the scriptural right to address God as " Father " ?

Answer. —The term " Father, " of God the Father, **is** one which may and should **be** used by all children of God, **as** such. Note that all believers have received the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father (Romans 8. 15-17; Galatians 4. 6). To call God our Father is connected with that relationship which springs from the **new** birth, and not with positional truth of those who are gathered **in** churches of God. —**J. M.**

Question from Brantford. —In what way do we understand the word " daughters " **in** 2 Corinthians 6. 18 ?

Answer. —**Of** all believers who are justified by faith **it is** said, " **Ye** are all sons of God, through faith, **in** Christ **Jesus**" (Galatians 3. 26). Here there are no daughters. **But in** the Fellowship of separated believers, who are temple of the living God, otherwise, the house of God, there are **men** and women, sons and daughters (2 Corinthians 6. 14-18). Note also 1 Timothy 2. 8—3. 16, wherein **we** have the behaviour of **men** and women, overseers and deacons outlined **by** Paul, behaviour which **is** proper to the house of God. —**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.

Our study this month closes the first of the three main divisions of this epistle, and it closes on a happy note, for the apostle is of " good courage " concerning the loyalty towards himself of the saints in Corinth; even after the receipt of the painful letter. Similar elation was experienced by him as he contemplated being at home with the Lord (the same verb is used in 5. 6 and 8). For the first time in this letter he addresses them as " beloved " (verse 1). Once more this term of endearment occurs in the letter (12. 19). It is evident how full his heart is towards his dear converts in Corinth, and, naturally, he longs for a **place** in their hearts. Love cries out for reciprocal love. And, as it was with the apostle, so it is with his blessed Master, who craves for a maintaining of, or a returning to, our first love, the love of our espousals.

To this end we have an enlightening discourse on sorrow " after a godly sort, " that is, sorrow " according to God, " willed by Him, bringing pain, **but** leading to repentance. 'Tis ever a difficult analysis to ascertain spiritually the source of pain. Perhaps it is better considered between the sufferer and his God, alone. It has previously been pointed out, in these studies, that even in the trials and temptations that come our way, the very words used indicate that trials from God are primarily intended to remove the dross, and that temptations from the Adversary are meant to pierce and hurt us, and bring about our downfall.

A great principle is enunciated in verse 10; " For godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation, a repentance which bringeth no regret: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. " This word " worketh " is a compound word meaning " worketh out, " and signifies not only promoting, **but** producing. Let us note then the contrast in the outworkings. " Salvation " is the enjoyment of the life indeed, life eternal; " death " is spiritual deadness. It is clear from verse 11 that despite all their failures, the Corinthians are shown to be an outstanding illustration of the first of the two statements made in verse 10. The sevenfold outcome of godly sorrow is impressive.

" Earnest care " replaces a previous indifference. How much this attribute is needed in a day of apathy ! A " clearing " of themselves indicates an exculpation that no stain should fall on the Testimony. There was " indignation " against any scandal. They exercised a " fear " that was alive to due punishment. Once more they were seized with a " longing " to see the apostle, and they demonstrated " zeal " in the Master's cause. Finally, " avenging " indicated a willingness to punish wrongs, for apparently the punishing of the offender had been one of their difficulties.

" My son, regard not lightly the chastening of the Lord,
Nor faint when thou art reproved of Him;
For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth,
And scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. "

Thus the apostle encouraged the Hebrew saints as he culled the above from the wise words of Solomon.

Jas. Martin.

THE SECOND LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS.

Chapter 7.

From Bradford, Halifax and Leeds. — In continuing the theme of separation, from the last few verses of 2 Corinthians 6., the Apostle enunciates the responsibility of the believer in reference to his personal holiness. The holiness of God consists in his separation from that which is evil (as the original words seem to connote), and our holiness consists in our wholehearted separation unto His will, and this, in the very nature of things, involves both a coming out from evil, and a receiving in to the enjoyed privileges of sonship. In God, holiness is absolute and perfect, but in us it is relative and progressive, and proceeds from a spirit of reverential and filial fear. The saints at Corinth seemed to be acting in a cold-hearted manner towards Paul, and even more than this, in misrepresenting his motives and conduct towards them. Like Samuel of old (1 Samuel 12. 3) it seemed imperative for the Apostle to vindicate his defamed character against the false accusations made against him, and, inferentially, this demonstrated the fact that at least some of the Corinthians were then standing in a wrong relationship to the Apostle. It would seem, by comparing verse 2 with 2 Corinthians 6. 12, that the main cause of the trouble was lack of reciprocal love towards their beloved father in the faith. In contrast to this, every evidence of the grace of God working in their hearts, however small it may be, was observed by the Apostle, and became the source of great rejoicing to him. We concluded from this, that both his and our joy will only be commensurate with the devoted, loving, and sacrificial spirit we show to the people of God for our dear Saviour's sake.

The Apostle seemed to be greatly agitated and disturbed in his spirit at the time of his entry into Macedonia, caused, possibly, partly by the afflictions he passed through at Thessalonica and elsewhere, and partly by his fears as to what might be the Corinthians' response to his first epistle in reference to the sinning brother mentioned in chapter 5. of that epistle. His rejoicing was greatly enhanced by the coming of Titus, who brought him the good news that he was longing for, namely, that his letter had produced the desired effect of submission to the Apostle's authority, and this was manifested in godly sorrow on their part for the evil that had been done in the assembly. We then considered the nature and character of true repentance. It would seem that God, in working providentially through the Holy Spirit, first convicts the sinner of sin. Sin, in its nature, is rebellion against the government of God (1 John 3. 4), and, because of this, repentance must be *primarily* towards God, as illustrated in David, and the prodigal son (Psalm 51. 4; Luke 15. 18 to 21), and not through fear of the consequences, as seen in Judas and Pharaoh. Repentance seems to have two **sides**, namely, the divine and human. God *commands* all men everywhere to repent, thus throwing the onus of responsibility upon them, but, on the other hand, repentance is also spoken of as a gift from God which may be withheld or bestowed according to His sovereign will (see Acts 5. 81, 11. 18, and 2 Timothy 2. 25), and we came to the conclusion that it would be difficult to define where human responsibility ended, and the power of God began. In any case, where there is true repentance, it will soon be evidenced in the life.

True repentance begins in genuine sorrow for sin according to the mind of God, issuing in salvation, and giving no cause for regret in the future (verse 10). The repentance of the Corinthians was demonstrated in a sevenfold way, and thus we see that real repentance towards God must of necessity be followed by

a radical change of life (Matthew 3. 8). Considerable difficulty was expressed as to what was meant by the terms "Clearing of yourselves" and "Avenging" in verse 11. It was thought that the first expression meant that though certain ones had taken sides with the sinning brother at the first, now they had cleared themselves of this guilt by recognizing the discipline imposed upon the brother by the authority of the Lord Jesus, and administered by the Church of God at Corinth. As to the expression "avenging," it was thought that when God acts in judgement towards nations this is His own sole prerogative, as stated in Romans 12. 19, and we must not take part in it, but when God is acting in judgement in His own house, the people of God should then take sides with God against the offending party (1 Corinthians 5. 12, 13). Finally, the Apostle is so elevated spiritually by the good news that Titus brought, and by the gracious reception Titus received from them, that he rejoices partly in the obedience they had rendered to the claims of God, and partly, in that he anticipates the day when their obedience would be complete. *William G. Henderson, F. Canning.*

From Brantford. —God calls His people to separate themselves and to forsake the evil that would defile them, in loving obedience to the will of the Lord, which must be the operating and controlling principle and power of our lives. Perfecting holiness demands holy living, forsaking the evil that would defile us, separating ourselves from all associations and things that would mar us as God's people. To walk before the Lord in a perfect way is to enjoy this blessed relationship and know the real blessing of such promises, that the Lord may establish our hearts unblameable in holiness before our God and Father at the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ with all the saints (1 Thessalonians 3. 13). "Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man destroyeth the temple of God, him shall God destroy, for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are" (1 Corinthians 3. 16, 17). Then, "like as He which called you is holy, be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living" (1 Peter 1. 35).

Paul's great love is seen in his appeal: "Open your hearts to us." How touching! The saints were in his heart, to die together or live together, and his desire was that they might make room in their hearts for him and his co-workers; a lesson for us indeed, that we might have room in our hearts for beloved servants of God and esteem them highly for their work's sake. We thought of the words of the hymn concerning our Lord Jesus, "On His heart our names are graven, on His shoulders we are borne." He has taken us to His heart. Is ours open for Him to dwell and reign there without a rival? Love will break the fallow ground. Paul's love to the Lord was supreme, causing him to show his love towards the saints, to make even the unlovable, lovable. While afflicted on every side he was comforted by the presence of Titus, who came in the fulness of joy, relating to the Apostle the good tidings, a true report of their condition. What a joy to Titus and to the Apostle as he heard of their longing desire, their mourning and their zeal for him! Surely he would experience the truth of Psalm 23., "My cup runneth over." We thought of that scene when the brethren sent Barnabas to Antioch, and when he was come, he saw the grace of God and was glad.

Godly sorrow that has touched the heart worketh repentance unto salvation. True they must have felt very humble for the sin that caused much sorrow. The word of God is living when brought to bear upon our ways: our life must come under self-judgement in the presence of God, which will work out a godly sorrow unto repentance.

What commendation gave the Apostle! We hear him say, "In everything ye approved yourselves to be pure in the matter." The grace of God has been manifested and joy must abound in the assembly and also with the Apostle and his fellow-worker. Love has broken every barrier down, fear and suspicion are removed, manifested care and love are seen in the receiving of Titus. The compassion of God does not fail. His mercy and lovingkindness are freely bestowed. "I rejoice that in everything I am of good courage concerning you."

Neil Sproul, Samuel Stewart.

From Melbourne. —To-day **is** a day of incentive. Manufacturers **give** encouragement to their employees so **as** to step **up** production to catch **up** with demand. God gives incentives to His redeemed children so that **we** may cleanse ourselves from **all** defilement of the **flesh** and spirit. His promises encourage **us** to do **what** He, through the Apostle, asks **us** to do. **As we** come into contact with the world we, in **a** measure, get **defiled** or soiled, and thus need to **be** cleansed. It may **be** remarked that one cannot work in **a** coal-mine and not get contaminated in some measure; but there **is** one part that never **gets** touched or contaminated — the eye, because **it is** constantly washed. **As we** move among men our spiritual eye **is** constantly washed when it **is fixed** on **the** Man in the glory. How **the** Apostle loved **these** saints in spite of their wrong thoughts toward both Timothy and himself! He **was** defending himself but **at the same time** not judging **them**. This required delicate handling. He **had** to win their hearts and was prepared to go through anything for them. The Apostle **was** brought to **a** point in **his** life when **he was** very downcast, afflicted on every side, with no relief for **the** flesh. This gave him an experience **of** being lowly. God could **test** the Apostle almost to breaking point, that no dross would remain to **mar** his Christ-like character. Said the Lord **Jesus** of Himself, " **I am meek** and lowly in heart. " Would **we** experience the comfort of God in **a** time of trial ? Then let **us** become **meek** and lowly in heart. How can God's comfort operate toward **us** **if we** are otherwise ?

He had no regrets in writing to them, though **at** the first he **was** loth to write. Faithfulness to the Lord weighed the balance. Sometimes **a** weighty **matter** takes **a** lot of weighing up, but when **a** decision **is** arrived **at we** have to **be** faithful. **Paul** was not glorying in the fact that he **made** them sorry, **but** in that they repented. How prone **we** are to get into **a** certain frame of mind, and not conscious that we have deteriorated in spiritual things! May our conscience **be** tender or sensitive to the ministry of the Word whether for correction or exhortation! These Corinthian saints did glory at one time in this fornication among them (1 Corinthians 5. 6), but now they were made sorry by faithful **Paul's** epistle. Godly sorrow worketh **a** repentance which bringeth no regret. None of **us** has regretted the day when **we** were **made** sorry for our sins, when God **gave us** a vision of **His** Christ hanging on Calvary's tree. *S. Stoepe.*

EXTRACTS.

From Cowdenbeath. —Such **is** the depth and intimacy of the Apostle's love for them, that he can say, " **Ye** are in our hearts to **die** together and live together. " That love **is** not only manifest in his boldness of speech when in their **midst**, **but is** also shown in speaking **well** of them to others. Even in **times** of intense suffering such **as** the Apostle endured in Macedonia, his thoughts were still for them. Great indeed were the sufferings of **Paul** at this **time**, externally by conflicts with men, and internally with fears, no doubt for the welfare of the saints, but Paul knew much of the comforting hand of God, through Titus, not only by his fellowship, **but** by his **message** of their longings for the Apostle, and great was the comfort imparted to **Paul** by the knowledge of their **zeal** for him.

Paul acknowledges that he had caused them sorrow by his letter, and for **a** time he regretted writing, **but** now he **is** glad in view of the **success** of that effort, **as** evidenced in the repentance of the Corinthian saints, seen in their **desire** to explain their real position, their indignation **at** the offence, fear of its consequences, longing to do right, **zeal** to deal **rightly** with the offender, and readiness to inflict punishment. Such repentance, says the Apostle, proves that his object in writing **was** not merely to get the wrongdoer punished, **but** also to bring out in their hearts, before God, their real care for him. *D. McLelland.*

From Cardiff.—The Holy Spirit sheds much light on the subject of repentance. It is something far deeper than regret—even sorrow is not repentance, but godly sorrow worketh repentance. **Bearing in mind** Acts 20. 21, could it be summed up as a change of mind (for that is the meaning of the word) *Godward*, involving a turning from sin and a turning toward God? The world's sorrow ends in death, but godly sorrow works repentance, which brings no regret. A striking illustration of this truth is seen in David, when he had sinned in connexion with the wife of Uriah, the Hittite. His deep, godly sorrow wrought repentance, as the grievousness of his sin was pointed out, and he said, "I have sinned against the LORD." It was repentance unto salvation, too, because the prophet said, "The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die."

The works "worthy of repentance" could clearly be seen. No longer indifference, but now an earnest care; their glorying in the evil had given place to a clearing of themselves. In everything they had shown themselves to be pure in the matter (i. e., pure from defilement, not contaminated, from the same root as *hagios*, holy). Any misgivings of having spoken too highly of the Corinthian saints had proved to be unfounded. Titus had been refreshed by his visit to them—more than that, his inward affections, literally his bowels (*splanchna*), the seat of the tender affections, were more abundantly toward them. "I rejoice..." says the Apostle; and well he might. Great the cause for rejoicing when grace so triumphs over sin in a church of God.

A. F. Toms.

From Toronto.—Many are the precious promises of God to His people, and we know He is faithful who promised. **Having these promises, it becomes us to** cleanse ourselves from all fleshly defilement. We understand that fleshly defilement is an act of sin in the flesh, while spiritual defilement is of the mind or spirit of a man that is in him. Perhaps the latter type of sin is more prevalent in God's people to-day. If we keep our meditations on Him and His things then we shall not get our thoughts and hearts set on worldly things; for as a man thinketh, so is he. We are then exhorted to present our bodies a living sacrifice and to be not fashioned according to this world but by the renewing of our mind we are to prove the good and acceptable and perfect will of God, and this doing we shall perfect holiness in the fear of God.

E. N.

From Atherton.—The exhortation to cleanse ourselves in view of the foregoing promises of God is something quite apart from our cleansing once for all through the atoning work of the cross of Christ. It is a day-to-day cleansing comparable to the washing of the priests at the laver in Old Testament times. The word "defilement" is a very strong word and suggests "filthiness" (A. V.) or pollution. The word "holiness" conveys the thought of consecration, and is in keeping with the word in 6. 16, that the saints were "a temple of the living God" in which He dwelt. Thus we have the negative and the positive aspect, i. e., abstinence from all that desecrates, and consecration wrought out in its completeness in the fear of God.

The query was raised, What is meant by the expression, "The sorrow of the world worketh death" (verse 10)? We were directed to the scripture, "Ye sorrow not, even as the rest, which have no hope" (1 Thessalonians 4. 13). In the world's sorrow there is no depth, for there is no exercise Godward. Judas Iscariot and Esau were cited as outstanding examples of the sorrow of the world. They thought only of themselves, and had no exercise toward God. They each repented, but as is stated in the case of Esau "he found no place of repentance."

J. Bullock, G. A. Jones.

From Willington Quay. — Paul claims for the Corinthian saints the promises originally given to the people of God under the old covenant, these promises being summarized in verses 6. 10-18. These called for separation by that people from the idolatry and uncleanness that were around them. Similarly, God's people to-day must withdraw from those who are unbelievers and are of darkness; and having done so, are exhorted to cleanse themselves both as to the flesh and the spirit. See also James 4. 8. The cleansing of the spirit is a much higher responsibility called for than with God's earthly people and without the revealed word of God for our cleansing it would not be possible (Hebrews 10. 22).

The disciples in John 13. were shown that, having been bathed, the washing of their feet was to follow, and we think that such washing relates to daily walk. Here in 2 Corinthians 7. we take it the theme is our being acceptable, as a people, to God in His holiness, just as the laver was needed by the priests for their functioning in the Holy Place. Defilement of spirit, we thought, was consequent upon the place idols may have within that which should be the temple, or sanctuary, mentioned in 6. 10. *C. B.*

From Kilmarnock. — To all those believers who are separated from unbelievers the Lord promises to receive them and be a Father unto them, and because of that, the Apostle exhorts, " Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. " Everyone who believes on the Lord Jesus is cleansed from his sins, but this is a cleansing each one has to do for himself. " As He which called you is holy, be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living " (1 Peter 1. 12). Paul again affirms his great love for the saints, and although passing through great tribulation he was " exceeding joyful, " being comforted by God through the coming of Titus, and because of the good news he brought concerning the saints at Corinth.

Although his first letter to them had caused some sorrow, he did not regret sending it because it was " sorrow according to God which works repentance unto salvation, " see verse 10 (Roth.), and had caused a clearing up of the trouble.

When the conduct of the saints caused joy to the servants of the Lord how much more would the Lord, rejoice, as 3 John verse 4 says, " Greater joy have I none than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth. " *A. G. S.*

From Glasgow. — Verse 1 of this chapter seems so closely related to the last paragraph of chapter 6. that it is difficult to see why the Revisers should not have included it in that chapter [1]. Its call to cleanness of flesh and spirit is in harmony with the instruction regarding the unequal yoke. The verse also indicates that there is a difference between defilement of the flesh and defilement of the spirit, and, on examination, this may be taken to refer to defilement of the flesh by immorality and defilement of the spirit by undesirable association with unbelievers and the like, as indicated in chapter 6. verses 14-16.

In verse 2 the Apostle returns to where he left off in chapter 6. 13, pleading that the Corinthians might once again extend to him the warmth of their affection. There was really no reason why they should be offended in him, had they only realized that the firmness of the first epistle was an indication of the Apostle's faithfulness and zeal for them. However, verse 7 shows that they got over the first hostile reaction and resumed their longing, mourning and zeal for him. Their sorrow was a godly sorrow, not born of revenge, but of repentance. Their realization of the sad error they made in not dealing with the fornicator wrought in them a zeal for God greater than they had been showing. It stirred them up to appreciate the lethargy into which they had slipped, and made them conscious of their responsibility as the custodians of divine truth. *J. J. P.*

From Kirkintilloch. —We must allow the action of the pure word of God to have full sway on our mind and heart. "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to Thy word" (Psalm 119. 9). In verse 2 Paul **asks** the saints to open their hearts to him, for he had a big place in his heart for them, but some had very little place for him. It would seem that the Apostle offended some of them by **Ms** teaching. Jealousy on the part of some saints may have started a division causing them to turn against Paul for no reason at all.

The fightings without in verse 5 would refer to the persecutions mentioned such as in 6. 4-5. The fears within would apply to Paul's inner thoughts as to the news from the Corinthians, and he was anxious as to the results of his first letter to them, but his fears were banished by the arrival of Titus. The Corinthians were made sorry by his writing in the first epistle, not by the writing itself, but by the revelation of their wrongdoing. Godly sorrow was the result of the epistle on their hearts. When repenting, godly sorrow **is** not regretful; when one repents it brings restoration, and where there **is** restoration to the things of God **there is** no regret. How unlike the sorrow of the world which worketh death!

James Whitelaw.

From Crowborough. —The cleansing away of impurity **is** a positive step towards holiness, and holiness has always had to be characteristic of the people of God. It **is** not merely an ideal, but something that can be attained. **We** read in Romans 12. 1, "Present your bodies a living sacrifice...." This can not be true **if** we are not wholly clean, body and spirit. The result of godly sorrow **is** the viewing of things **as** God views them. One who experiences godly sorrow would never regret it because of **its** effect. Repentance implies a coming to a right mind, regret **is** merely uneasiness of feeling over past deeds.

We saw a lovely picture in Paul and Titus rejoicing over the effect of God's mercy. Paul could say, "In everything ye approved yourselves to be pure in the matter." What a commendation! How his heart rejoiced **as** he was comforted! Truly grace had triumphed in the hearts of the saints. *B. F.*

From Knocknacloy. —There are great promises of reward associated **with** separation, both for the child of God and the people of God. The Lord Jesus "died for all, that they which live should no longer live unto themselves, **but** unto **Him** who for their sakes died and rose again" (2 Corinthians 5. 15). The choice before us **is** plain and cannot be evaded. Shall we live unto ourselves or unto **Him**? shall we seek our own or the things of Jesus Christ?

The example of the Lord **Jesus** Christ **Himself is** that **He** pleased not Himself (Romans 15. 3), and **He** always did the things **that** were pleasing unto the Father (John 8. 29). Paul was greatly comforted in the coming of Titus, who told Paul of the longing and zeal of the Corinthian saints for him. Paul had boasted to Titus about the Corinthians and was therefore pleased when Titus told him of their state, and that his boasting was found to be true, and Titus himself was well pleased with them when he saw their obedience and how they received him with fear and trembling. *Herbert Thompson, George Thompson.*

From Birkenhead. —**We** are exhorted to cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit. This **is** indeed a formidable task, and one which will keep us constantly on our guard against sin **if** we would try to please the Lord perfectly, in "perfecting holiness." The word "perfecting," which **is** also used in the **same** sense in 2 Corinthians 13. 9, **is** "a thorough adjustment," which means that we

should **be** constantly adjusting our lives to coincide with **the** Divine pattern. If **a** mechanical device goes wrong, the technician **makes** the necessary adjustments, and then the machine runs smoothly. So we should seek to get rid of the things that would hinder our lives being to the glory of God.

The news that the Apostle received, in connexion with the acceptance of his ministry, overjoyed him, and his heart of love went out to the Corinthians. **He** uses superb language. " **I am** filled with comfort, **T** overflow with joy in **all** our affliction. " The saints had experienced repentance through godly sorrow. The word " sorrow " **is** that which **is** associated with affliction or grief; not the sorrow which **we meet** with in the general circumstances of life, but **a** sorrow which **is** brought about by things which should not have happened. The word **is** used in 1 Peter 2. 19 and translated " griefs. " How often in the law courts of to-day do we read of persons telling the judge they are sorry for their wrong deeds, and in **a** very short time they are back again, charged with the **same** offence! That **is** not sorrow. How lovely, then, it **is** when one is made sorry for wrongdoing, through the word of God being brought home to the heart, causing godly sorrow and bringing true repentance which will never be regretted!

Philip Kelly.

From London, S. E. —The cardinal error of the Corinthian assembly lay in the acceptance of evil practices diametrically opposed to the doctrine of the Lord **Jesus** Christ. The Apostle's inspired **letter** reached one of the major climaxes in chapter **6**. 14-18, when it called on the people of God to come out and be separate. " Chapter seven **is** linked to this profound portion of chapter six by the initial verse, which, in view of " these promises, " demands **a** highly personal cleansing. What is the substance of these promises? They are, above **all** else, conditional—viz., dependent entirely upon the truth of separation.

1. Separation of believers from unbelievers.
2. Separation of righteousness from iniquity.
3. Separation of light from darkness.
4. Separation of Christ from Belial.
5. Separation of God from idols.

Separation, therefore, **is** the complete severance in every sense of the word from the diabolical world.

The cleansing envisaged by the Apostle is of **a** most exhaustive character—" from **all** defilement of flesh and spirit. " Defilement of the flesh is more readily understood than defilement of spirit. Some guidance is given in this matter in 1 John 4. 1-6. Here **a** discerning of spirits is called for to discover whether they be

- (a) of God or of the anti-Christ,
- (b) of truth or of the error.

Belief **is** to be accompanied by proof and the character of **a** spirit decided by the manner of its confession. Persons are obviously recognized by their spirits; and since John **uses** this mode of expression **as** an explanation of how to reveal **a** person's character it **seems** sound to deduce that **a** spirit condition is in keeping with **a** person's life. If this is so, then it appears **as** a corollary that our spirits can be led into error and so **away** from God—indeed are **we** not exhorted to beware of seducing spirits? Separation is the only basis, therefore, on which to commence the imperative cleansing of flesh and spirit in the " fear of God " with the result of " perfect holiness. " " **Be** ye holy; for **I am** holy. "

Reginald D. Wood.

REMARKS.

[1] Glasgow: To make any change in the traditional division of the Bible into chapters and verses **was** quite impracticable. The Revisers have superimposed their own **system** of paragraphs, and our friends will **see** that **7. 1** is joined in one paragraph with **6. 14-18**. See Revisers' **Preface** to the **New Testament**, III. **4 b**. —S. B.

BIBLE STUDIES.

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

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EDITORIAL.

Chapters 8. and 9. of this Epistle deal **with** the collection for **the** poor saints of Jerusalem. The matter is also dealt with in **1** Corinthians **16. 1-3**, Romans **15. 26-27**, and is referred to, by Paul, in his speech before Felix in **Acts 24. 17**. From this purely local background of need certain principles of " giving " are enunciated for the guidance of churches of God to-day. The following papers bring these out clearly.

It is evident that Paul treated this matter seriously, because the need **was** great, and because in its completion proof was forthcoming of the unity of the churches, and the act of giving strengthened the bonds of affection between Gentile and Jewish Christians. Further, for the saints in Corinth, some of whom had been turned against the Apostle by Judaizers, to give on Paul's appeal to saints in Jerusalem was an evidence of his authority in their midst and of their obedience to instruction.

Eight words are used, most of them in these two chapters, to **describe** this fund. They are: —

1. Fellowship or contribution (8. 4 and 9. 13, and Romans 15. 26). **Koinonia** = a sharing in common.
2. Ministering or ministration (8. 4, 9. 1, 12, 13). **Diakonia**=the office or work of a deacon.
3. Grace or liberality (8. 4, 1 Corinthians 16. 3). **Charis**=grace (a study of this word appears in Bible Studies, 1942, page 43).
4. Bounty or abundant supply (8. 20). **Hadrotēs**, from **hadros**=fat, thick, full-grown or rich—a **fat** offering.
5. Bounty or blessing (9. 5). **Eulogia** = **Si** blessing (so in 9. 6 bountifully means with blessings (R. V. M.)).
6. Public service (9. 12). **Leitourgia** = the ministration of believers, one to another, regarded **as** a public service.
7. Collection (1 Corinthians 16. 1). **Logia** from **lego**=to collect.
8. Alms (Acts 24. 17). **Eleemosune**, connected with **eleemon** = merciful, signifies the pity shown in giving alms.

Meditation on these words will unfold the depth of meaning even in the " giving " and " dispensing " of this **fund**. There **is** that also which further enhances the **exercise** of giving, namely, the recurrence of the word " grace "—seven times in chapter **8**. and three **times** in chapter **9**.

These are chapter 8. verses **1, 4, 6, 7, 9, 16** (R. V. = thanks), and **19**, and chapter 9. verses **8, 14, 15** (R. V. =thanks).

He that soweth sparingly, sparingly shall also reap, and he that soweth on the principle of blessings on the principle of blessings shall also reap.

Jas. Martin.

THE BOOK OF THE TWELVE PROPHETS.

The Minor Prophets **in** the New Testament.

We sometimes think of the disciples of the Lord as Galilean peasants, and such indeed some of them were, but this does not mean that they were illiterate. One qualified to speak, after alluding to this very matter, says—"The only other nations which have ever rivalled the Israel of the Ancient Synagogue in respect of their high level of educated intelligence have been those which at the Reformation followed the Jewish example and made education based on the Scriptures both a national and spiritual possession for man, woman and child." When the Jews said of the Lord, "How knoweth this man letters having never learned?" they meant that He had not been trained in one of their great schools, yet in His teaching seemed quite familiar with the methods of those that had.

Thus the Apostles and New Testament writers were in a true sense educated men, though only Paul had been educated in one of their schools. They knew the Old Testament Scriptures thoroughly, and large portions by heart. They had also learned from the Master Himself the secret of their true interpretation. A study of their use of the Old Testament is, therefore, of great importance, and before we commence our study of "the Twelve" we think it well to set down the quotations from, and allusions to, their writings to be found in the New Testament.

We begin with those of **THE LORD HIMSELF**: —

Hosea.

6. 6. I desire mercy, and not sacrifice. Matthew 9. 13, 12. 7.
10. 8. And they shall say to the mountains, Cover us; and to the hills,
Fall on us. Luke 23. 30.

Joel.

3. 13. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Mark 4. 29.

Jonah.

1. 17. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.
Matthew 12. 40.
The sign of the Prophet Jonah. Matthew 12. 39, Luke 11. 29, 30.
3. 4-10. The preaching of Jonah and the repentance of Nineveh. Matthew
12. 41, Luke 11. 32.

Micah.

7. 6. A man's enemies are the men of his own house. Matthew 10. 36.

Zechariah.

9. 9. . . . thy King cometh, meek . . . lowly and riding upon an ass . . .
Matthew 21. 5.
13. 7. Smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered. Matthew
26. 31, Mark 14. 27.

Malachi.

3. 1. Behold, I send My messenger . . . Matthew 11. 10, Luke 7. 27.
4. 5. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet. Matthew 17. 11, 12,
Mark 9. 12.

THE APOSTLES.**Peter.**

- Hosea 1. 8, 2. 1, 2. 23. Ammi, Ruhamah. 1 Peter 2. 10.
Joel 2. 28-32 . . . I will pour out my Spirit . . . Acts 2. 17-21.
2. 32. Whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD. Acts 2. 39.

James.

- * Joel 2. 23. The former rain and the latter rain. James 5. 7.
Amos 9. 11, 12. The tabernacle of David . . . Acts 15. 16-18.

John.

Zechariah 9. 9 thy King cometh... riding upon... a colt. John 12. 15.

Zechariah 12. 10. And they shall look unto him whom they have pierced. John 19. 37.

Matthew.

Hosea 11. 1. I called my Son out of Egypt. Matthew 2. 15.

Paul.

Hosea 1. 10 ye are the sons of the living God. Romans 9. 26.

Hosea 1. 10. Ye are the sons of the living God. 2 Corinthians 6. 18.

(Probably several O. T. Scriptures are combined in 2 Corinthians 6. 18).

Hosea 2. 23. I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people. Romans 9. 25.

Hosea 10. 12. Sow to yourselves in righteousness. 2 Corinthians 9. 10.

Hosea 13. 14. O death, where are thy plagues? O Sheol, where is thy destruction. 1 Corinthians 15. 55.

Hosea 14. 9. The ways of the Lord are right. Acts 13. 10.

Joel 2. 32. Whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered. Romans 10. 13.

Habakkuk 1. 5. Behold ye among the nations... wonder, etc. Acts 13. 41.

Habakkuk 2. 4. The righteous shall live by his faith. Romans 1. 17.

Habakkuk 2. 4. The righteous shall live by his faith. Galatians 3. 11.

Habakkuk 2. 3, 4. The righteous shall live by his faith. Hebrews 10. 37-38.

Haggai 2. 6. Yet once,, and I will shake the heavens and the earth. Hebrews 12. 26.

Zechariah 8. 16. Speak ye every man the truth with his neighbours. Ephesians 4. 25.

Malachi 1. 2-3. I loved Jacob; but Esau I hated. Romans 9. 13.

OTHERS.**Stephen.**

Amos 5. 25. Did ye bring unto Me sacrifices, etc. Acts 7. 42, 43.

Scribes.

Micah 5. 2. But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah. Matthew 2. 6.

Multitude.

Micah 5. 2. But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah. John 7. 42.

Mary.

Micah 7. 20. Which thou hast sworn unto our fathers. Luke 1. 55.

Angel.

Malachi 4. 5. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet. Luke 1. 17.

In some cases, e. g., 1 Corinthians 15. 55, the New Testament quotation is more an echo of the Old Testament passage than a direct quotation; familiar words spring into the mind and are appropriated to the immediate purpose without apparent reference to the context from which they are taken. There may be others of a like character not given in the above lists.

Two references by the writer of the letter to the Hebrews have been included under " Paul. "

The quotations and allusions in the Revelation are too numerous to be given here. They will require separate treatment. **S. B.**

THE SECOND LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS.

Chapter 7.

From Hamilton, **Ontario**. —The promises (verse 1), we believe, are those contained in chapter 6. 10-18, and they have reference to position, which in turn necessitates a holy condition. To give effect to this condition in our lives there is the constant need for daily cleansing in the fear of God. The cleansing here referred to is not the initial cleansing we received upon salvation, but rather that which we must do for ourselves, that God may dwell in us as a collective testimony. Defilement of flesh and spirit would no doubt speak of both the outward and the inward manifestations of sin, for sin not only defiles our body, but also corrupts our minds [1]. God has made provision for us through the Holy Spirit and His precious Word (Psalm 119. 9). The end in view is that "like as He which called you is holy, be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living" (1 Peter 1. 15).

The word of God had proved effectual, for the object of Paul's first letter had been accomplished, and the Corinthian saints had been made sorry with a godly sorrow, unto repentance. The Apostle could now speak very highly of them (cp. verses 4 and 11 with 1 Corinthians 5. 2), for they had humbled themselves under the mighty hand of God. It would seem that after the Apostle received the comforting news from Titus, he decided to write another epistle to the Corinthians, expressing his thankfulness to God for them, and it is noticeable it is not only addressed to the saints in Corinth, but to all the saints in Achaia; perhaps they too had been affected by the state of affairs in Corinth.

T. Ramage, P. Thomas,

Chapter 8.

From Glasgow. —The desire to help the saints in Judaea was a striking testimony to the effectiveness of their salvation in that they felt sympathy for the Jewish brethren whom, perhaps, they had never seen. The bond of fellowship was obviously known and appreciated by the Gentile churches. The fact that the idea originated in the assembly in Corinth (see verse 10) of which some were formerly extortioners, etc. (1 Corinthians 6. 9-11), showed that they had not received the grace of God in vain. Generosity is not natural in thieves and extortioners, but it becomes possible after regeneration.

The breaking down of the partition between Jew and Gentile is also noteworthy. But for the grace of God, the Judaeans Jews would probably have scorned any assistance from these uncircumcised Gentiles. But the believing Jews accepted the gifts as an expression of love and fellowship, and glorified God for such manifestation of His love in the Gentile brethren.

The example of the Corinthian saints stirred up the other assemblies both in Achaia and Macedonia to a like service, so effectively that the Macedonian saints were actually ready to send their gifts before the somewhat lethargic Corinthians, who had let a whole year go by before completing the good work they had begun. The Apostle exhorts them, therefore, to bring their work to completion in the same generous spirit as they had begun.

Some of the principles behind the giving are worthy of note and of application in our own day. Firstly, there is the great example of the Lord Jesus, who left the wealth of heaven that He might come Himself to earth and pay the price of redemption. The Lord of Heaven was found on earth in very humble and poor circumstances, with little comfort at any time in His short life. Briefly, His example teaches us to give generously. Verse 12 teaches us that as long as the gift is generous in thought, its size is not material [6].

The stirring up of the Gentile saints is also **seen as** God's way of providing for His own **in Judaea** in their time of acute need. **He** provided **an** excess in Achaia **and** Macedonia, that these brethren **might** have opportunity to minister to their brethren **in** distress, that there might **be** equality. Just **as** in the days of **the** wilderness journey, God provided **manna** in the day of distress. He also specified the method of collection, that there might **be** equality of distribution, that no one should have **a** surfeit while some one else was in want. It should be noted that these arrangements applied to abnormal circumstances when God's people were under **stress**. Similarly, **if a** need should arise in any part of the Fellowship, through circumstances beyond the control **of** saints, those more fortunately placed should be ready to assist in any way they can. Thereby they can demonstrate that love one for another which should be characteristic of God's people.

J. J. P.

From Cowdenbeath. —This grace—such **is** the way in which Paul describes **the** giving by the churches of Macedonia and Achaia unto the poor saints in Judaea. Such grace was first manifested in Corinth. The proposal to send help originated with them. They were also the first to make **a** beginning to collect during a visit by Titus, but there had been some delay in completing their gift. The information regarding the delay must have reached Paul through some one other than Titus. Being desirous that their gift should be made ready, he exhorted Titus to return, which thing he was willing to do.

In Macedonia, where he was at the time of writing, Paul beheld a manifestation of the grace of God which exceeded his expectations. When the saints there became aware that **a** gift was being prepared by other churches they earnestly intreated to be allowed to have fellowship in this service. They put a high value upon the privilege of having fellowship, and their deep poverty and affliction was no deterrent to them. There was neither lack of desire nor lack of determination to execute their **desire**. Surely their action was the result of much **exercise** of heart and of prayer. They acted according to the will of God, giving themselves first to the Lord, then to Paul. They placed themselves in his hands, that he might **make use** of them, in order to produce some means to send **as** a contribution unto their poor brethren in Judaea. Such an example **is** brought before the Corinthians not to put them to shame, but to urge them on through the earnestness of these poor and afflicted ones.

The outstanding thought with regard to the Lord Jesus **is** not so much what **He** gave **as** what **He** became. **He** became poor. The Corinthians were not asked to impoverish themselves in giving to enrich others, nor yet to share their wealth with others, but to give out of their ability, according to their means.

Paul exercised care to guard himself against suspicion in administering the gift on behalf of the churches by having brethren appointed to accompany him to Jerusalem. **His aim** was to appear honourable not only in the sight of God, **but** also before the eyes of men. Along with Titus, who had an earnest care for the saints even **as** himself, Paul sent two unnamed brethren to Corinth. The first **was** probably **a** man of Macedonia, chosen and trustworthy, and who was an able preacher of the Gospel. The other brother **is** noted for his earnestness, and probably knew the Corinthians **as** he was able to repose confidence in them that what they had begun they would also complete.

The visit of the three brethren to the Corinthians was an important one **because** by it they were being put to the **test** in two ways, firstly, by showing their love in receiving them, and secondly, by their response to the purpose of the visit, so justifying Paul's boasting on their behalf.

James Bowman,

From **Cardiff**. —The apostle stresses, as of great importance, the liberality of the Macedonian saints; not only as a spur, but as a significant manifestation of the grace of God. Firstly, they "gave their own selves to the Lord," and not only this, but "beyond their power they gave of their own accord." This giving by the churches of the Gentiles was to Paul a grand symbol of the divine unity of the churches of God—he seems to rejoice in using the term "the churches."

To him it was all the more remarkable because they had "over-subscribed" to this cause out of deep poverty and affliction. The Corinthians had received detailed instructions in the first epistle (chapter 16.), and it is interesting to note how he persuades and urges in verse 8, compared with the fact that he had given "order" to the churches of Galatia (1 Corinthians 16. 1).

What a commendation Paul has for Titus' companion, "the brother whose praise in the Gospel is spread through all the churches"!

Is it possible there is here a suggestion of full time devotion to the Gospel by one or more local brethren in a district—their maintenance to be the responsibility of such district, apart altogether from recognized "Lord's servants." Is such a suggestion unscriptural, even if not so obviously inferred here? [2]. *K. B.*

EXTRACTS.

From **Kirkintilloch**. —Romans 15. 25-26 was referred to as probably being the same instance when Paul went down to the church in Jerusalem to minister to the poor saints there, bearing with him the contribution from the saints in Macedonia and Achaia. The Macedonian churches were likened by us to the widow who gave her two mites and had nothing left over; her heart was filled with the grace of God. These churches were in deep poverty themselves, yet they gave what they had to the church in Jerusalem. The church in Corinth was rich in love and faith, and that is why Paul asked them to complete their gift, which was begun a year before.

Paul reminded them of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was to be an example to them of abundant giving. Verse 9 would also teach us that Christ was rich with God from the beginning, for when He was on earth He had not even a penny [seemingly so on one occasion].

Although this church gave beyond their power, the teaching for us is to give according as we have (verse 12).

We were impressed by the carefulness Paul had to have other brethren associated with him in carrying the gifts to Jerusalem. They were men whose characters had been formed by the gospel—men who by their lives were the glory of Christ.

W. Bell.

From **Birkenhead**. —We note the difference between the "giving" in this chapter and that in Acts 2., when they sold their possessions and divided them as each had need. Here they are exhorted to give, each as a man hath.

As in previous chapters, we again see brought out the fundamental principle of the unity of the churches. They were all linked together in connexion with this matter of giving. In 1 Corinthians 1. 4-5 the Apostle had spoken of their enrichment by the grace of God. The working out of this grace was to be seen in the sacrifice they made.

In verse 9 we have the great example of giving in the Lord Himself. Other examples come to mind, the poor widow who gave her mites, and rich David who also gave abundantly. It was a happy time when Israel gave for the building of God's house. They gave willingly to overflowing. This need and giving teach that no assembly is an independent unit. We also see the principle of "Districts" being set up, the churches of Macedonia and the churches of Achaia [Macedonia and Achaia were countries. —*Jas. M. J.* There is also the important matter in the administration of the funds that others should be linked in fellowship with the apostle.

Who was the brother of verse 22? [We are not told. There will be many revealed in a day to come who have done exploits for Him—inognito as far as earth is concerned. It is almost futile for us to conjecture who the brother was, although the following names have been suggested—Barnabas, Silas, Mark, Trophimus, and Luke. —*Jas. M. J.* *L. Sands, P. K.*

From **Halifax, Bradford and Leeds.** —It was felt that the excessive generosity of the Macedonian church was a rebuke to us to-day. In the matter of this giving each separate assembly contributed its part, not simply as an isolated unit, but in full fellowship with all other assemblies in the district. The Corinthians had determined a year before to make this contribution; now Paul reminds them it was time to fulfil their original purpose. It would seem from 1 Corinthians 16. 4 that at the first the apostle was not sure whether he would take the offering or not, but in 2 Corinthians 8. 19, 20, he seems to have decided to undertake the work in fellowship with fully accredited messengers from the churches. Verse 5 suggests that all true service should be first based upon absolute personal surrender to the Lord Himself, and then, springing out of this fact, a desire to serve others for His Name's sake.

In this respect, the condescending grace of our Lord Jesus Christ is set forth as the source from which all our graces flow, and the true pattern of all Christian ministry and giving. All Christian giving should be based upon two principles, firstly, the motive and intention should be right, and then the practical execution of their giving would prove the genuineness of their motives. The divine principle of giving (unlike Communism) is not share and share alike, but that each should minister to others to the full extent of his ability, and according to the other man's need. This principle was illustrated in the distribution of the manna (cp. verse 15 with Exodus 16. 18). From this illustration we deduced the principle that when God's gifts are shared out in God's way, then all will be adequately provided for. This should stimulate us to more generous giving, for God will fully compensate those who act upon this principle (cp. Proverbs 11. 24). It was observed that there is no such legislation in the New Testament for giving as the tithe under the Old Testament, but grace, operating in the heart, should be its source and measure.

Titus spontaneously responds to supervise the collection, and in conjunction with him, the churches deputed messengers (or apostles, Greek) to accompany Paul with the gifts to Jerusalem. As the Lord Jesus is the Apostle, or One sent, with all the authority of the Father to a needy world, so these messengers, in doing the same kind of work under His authority, reflect His glorious character (verse 23).

William G. Henderson.

From Kilmarnock. —In the portion before us, Paul is letting the saints in Corinth know of God's grace that had been given in the churches of God in Macedonia, and although they had been passing through many great troubles themselves, yet they had shown great consideration for other saints in need. He does not state this as a command, but as an example for them to show their love to those in need, and he also reminds them of the great example of the Lord Jesus, who was "rich" yet became "poor." It is important that there is the *willingness* to give according to what one may have. It is possible that circumstanced may arise when an assembly as a whole may be in need of help, then other assemblies should feel their responsibility to help, thus showing the fellowship of assemblies (see Acts 11. 28-30).
A. G. S.

From Melbourne. —It was agreed that the offerings received should be used as soon as the need arose rather than some set aside and allowed to accumulate in a bank. May we also bear in mind the rising cost of living in our ministering to the Lord's servants, for, under God, they depend on the liberality of the saints in the Fellowship. If God gets the heart, He gets all. The Macedonians gave liberally, even beyond their power, yea, they gave till it hurt. The Corinthian assembly were not without instruction in this matter of money (1 Corinthians 16. 1-3), but it would appear that the zeal they had twelve months previously cooled off.

The principle in Malachi 3. 10 still stands, to bring the gifts for the assembly to dispense as the need arises. Yet in James 2. 16 an individual responsibility is enjoined. One may see a pressing need requiring immediate attention, and meet that need without the assembly's knowledge. Such action will be favourably noted by the Lord. It is also an individual privilege to contribute to charity, but not through religious organizations, however worthy the cause. On the other hand we must not forget our other responsibilities in life, to see that our families are provided for. After all responsibilities have been met, then there is liberty to lay by. A debtor should pay his debts first before giving to the Lord. One can give to the Lord in a number of ways, namely, helping the aged saints, providing means to study the Word, and rendering hospitality and nursing the sick. The Pharisees were rebuked by the Lord for giving to God that which should have been given to father or mother, for in so doing they rendered void the Word of God, because of their tradition (Matthew 15. 5, 6).

Who is the brother whom the Apostle many times proved earnest in many things (verse 22)? [3]. Those who manage the collections should have the confidence of the assembly and, we judge, should be deacons or elders (Acts 6. 2, 3).

S. Stoope.

From Willington **Quay**. —Has the apostle the same thought in mind when he refers in verse 5 to their having given their own selves unto the Lord, as he has in his epistle to the Romans, 12. 1, when he beseeches the brethren to present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is their reasonable service? [I would think so. —*Jas. Mj*. This matter of giving is one in which all the saints in the assembly can take part.

Paul had no commandment from the Lord concerning this matter, but he sought by entreaty to encourage the saints in reminding them of the great example given by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. We had divergence of thought regarding the Lord's poverty mentioned in verse 9, whether it was of a "material" or "spiritual" (for the want of a better word) poverty. The Lord Jesus Christ was

rich (spiritually)—He became poor—that we might become rich (spiritually), and as the two states of richness are both spiritual it was thought that the state of poverty which the Lord experienced must also have been of a " spiritual " nature. On the other hand, the setting of this chapter is one of material giving, and it was thought that the apostle was reminding the saints of the material poverty which the Lord experienced during His sojourn on earth [4].

The state of equality (verse 14) was one which existed shortly after Pentecost (Acts 2. 44, 45), but the point which the apostle seeks to bring home is that no one should be in want whilst others have abundance [5]. The Divine provision which God made for the " Church in the Wilderness " in the giving of the manna was characterized by the principle of equality.

The taking of the bounty to Jerusalem was an important matter, as well as the collections themselves, and it seems as if there were at least two other brethren who went with Titus. Paul, himself, needed no commendation to the saints in Corinth (chapter 3. 1), but in verse 23 he gives these brethren a very good commendation, " the messengers of the churches. " **K.** **R.**

From London, S. E. —The thought we must first of all appreciate is that God is a giving God, and that He does not need what we can give Him. It is to be noted that none can give to God in the way that God commands unless one has first been redeemed. When the children of Israel were in Egypt there was no mention of giving to God. But when they had crossed the Red Sea and were a people of God's possession, and on their way to the promised land, then God spoke of their free-will offerings. Some had only a little to give, perhaps a handful of goat's hair (Exodus 25. 4), yet to that humble offering God gave great prominence, for the goat's hair curtain hung down the front, right across the whole breadth of the Tabernacle, meeting God's eye from within and man's from without. It is noteworthy that the first mention of the House of God is associated with giving (see Genesis 28. 22). This principle of giving the tenth is found again in Deuteronomy 26. 12.

These tithes came from a people who were gathered together by God, and who realized that they had responsibilities to those who were not so well-favoured as themselves, and to see to the temporal needs of those who were whole-time in God's service. The tenth was a gift for a specific purpose, but other gifts would be made over and above this (see 2 Kings 12. 9). When the people ceased to contribute to the upkeep of the Levite, the work of the House suffered, and revival only came (2 Chronicles 31. 10) when Hezekiah opened the doors of the House and cleansed it, and *then* the people gave **in** abundance, and at last Azariah, answering for the others, said, " Since the people began to bring the oblations into the House of the LORD, we have eaten and had enough. "

In New Testament times, however, we do not find that the tenth is required by commandment. Our giving should then be as much as we can give without causing distress to ourselves (2 Corinthians 8. 13). The New Testament never lays down a minimum for giving. In the midst of this encouragement to giving we find that the Holy Spirit has set a veritable gem of scripture. Our example should always be to give as the Lord Himself gave. Whatever we give can never match this wonderful example.

The distribution of the offering is not to be left to the giver. The farmer in Deuteronomy 26., when he made his offering of the tithe, did not give orders as to its distribution; he apportioned his tithe between the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, but the actual distribution was done by the priest. So too, in these days, our offering is made to the various functions of the assembly, and though we prayerfully allocate our offering, the actual distribution *is* to be left to those who are guided by God to give to those who need it most.

K. H. Riley,

From Atherton.—If a church of God is in a state of humility, and the Holy Spirit is stirring the hearts of the saints, there will arise a **fervent** desire to give to the Lord liberally, with singleness of heart. The consideration of the poor in **all** their afflictions has **been** emphasized by the Holy Spirit in every dispensation. They have a very near place to the Father's heart. **Please** read Proverbs **19. 17, Psalm 41. 1-3.** Failure to have the heart touched **was an** indication of **leanness** of soul and departure from God. In this connexion **please see** Amos **2. 6.** The heart of the Lord **Jesus was** moved with compassion towards the poor, and, out of their slender resources **in** the little bag, He bade that distribution **be** made for the needy ones (John 13. 29). This consideration is the hallmark of true discipleship. Rich in instruction are the words to the young ruler (Luke 18. 22).

"Treasure **in** heaven," in its application to us, would have in view the "day of reward," and not material gain upon earth. The principle that God presents to **us** in His giving the **manna** is that there **was** enough of **His** provision for **all**—neither too much, nor too little—there **was** no lack. The words "that there may be equality" do not imply that the rich should immediately equalize his resources with the poor, but rather that those who have should **see** to it that their brother in want should have his need adequately met.

Concerning the **unnamed messengers** of the church, **we** are sure that **many** valiant **men and** women of God have their identity hidden **as far as** the record here is known, yet God has used them in a wondrous way for His own divine purposes.

The apostles themselves were very zealous to remember the poor, but the ever increasing company of the disciples called for **an exercise** of heart from the various **assemblies.** Thus, the grace of God, not having **been** bestowed **in vain,** caused some to yield themselves whole-heartedly **and** completely unto the Lord, and to give with exceeding liberality. This corresponds to the willing-heartedness of David and his people, who confessed that it **was** indeed **an** inestimable privilege to give **back** to the Lord that which **in** the first **place came** from His very hand (1 Chronicles **29. 14,** R. V. M.).

The repeated word "earnest," **as applied** to the three brethren—Titus **and** the two **unnamed**—is very **significant; an alternative** word is "diligent," **and** is the opposite of slothful or sluggish (see Hebrews **6. 11, 12).**

E. Birchall, G. Sankey.

From Crowborough.—The generous giving by the churches in Macedonia **was** undoubtedly **because** of the giving of their own **selves** to the Lord. **O** that **we** could learn the secret of **entire** consecration **and perfect** dedication of ourselves unto our Lord **and** Master! Then would the grace of God **be manifest** in our lives. Perhaps the recent unrest experienced **in** the Corinthian church had hindered the giving to the collection for the poor in Jerusalem. Thus **a** stirring up **was** needed.

In connexion with the collecting and delivering of the bounty, **Paul** reminds the Corinthians that fit and **capable men** had **been** chosen for this work, **men** who would observe rigid honesty and would aim at what **was** fair **and** honourable in the eyes of **men.** The apostle's **unnamed** fellow-workers in this matter were highly commended **as** "the glory of Christ." **D. N. B.**

REMARKS.

[1] (Hamilton, Ontario). —⁴ Defilement of flesh and spirit. " In this verse (2 Corinthians 7. 1) the Apostle sums up what he has been saying in the previous paragraph (6. 14-18). It will be seen in his references to Leviticus 26. 12 and Isaiah 52. 11, that holiness of behaviour is the keynote of his exhortation. God's command to Israel in Leviticus was, " Ye shall be holy; for I am holy " (1 Peter 1. 16; Leviticus 11. 44). This necessitated first of all separation from the Gentile nations around; but it demanded more, they had not to touch things that defiled them, and if they did touch, say, a dead body, then there was the water of separation, in which there was the application of the ashes of the red heifer, by which the defilement was cleansed. There were also diverse washings of their persons and their clothes.

In our time these things have their anti-typical teaching. We are not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers. This does not mean that there is an equal and therefore a lawful yoking with unbelievers. Such a yoking of believers and unbelievers is unlawful as the yoking of an ox and an ass together, and quite as unlawful as it is impossible to unite light and darkness.

But whilst we are to maintain separation, we are also to guard against every form of defilement of the flesh, and to guard also against defilement of the spirit. Our spirits may come into contact with the defiling influence of spiritual defilement, a defilement which may not affect our flesh at all. See Jude 8 and 1 Thessalonians 5. 23. Progressive holiness of life should be the aim of those who form the temple of God. —J. M.

[2] (Cardiff). —Obviously there are two points which call for consideration in such a question: (1) an unnamed brother whose praise in the gospel was in " all the churches "; (2) this brother was sent by Paul with Titus, and had previously been appointed by the churches to travel with Paul in the matter of this grace (the gift to be sent by the churches of Macedonia and Achaia to Jerusalem). It would be an assumption to say that this brother who was so eminent a gospel preacher (would that God would give us such to-day !), that his praise was in all (how far did " all " extend ?) the churches, that he was only what we may call a " local " brother who was not wholly in the Lord's work. Then, as to (2), Paul was in the habit of sending men (see Philippians 2. 19) who were wholly in the Lord's work, and if this brother belonged to Macedonia, such as Aristarchus or Secundus (Acts 20. 4), it would be quite a thing to be expected that he would be appointed to accompany the apostle. Indeed, Paul himself was in the habit of associating others with him in his work. See how he joins Sosthenes with himself in writing to the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 1. 1; Acts 18. 17). This would have added weight, when one of themselves is joined in such a corrective letter as 1 Corinthians. If such a brother as is in view in the mind of the questioner is able for work in one district, he is surely able for work in another. —J. M.

[3] (Melbourne). —No one now can say who he was. It would be mere conjecture to attempt to say who it was. It will be revealed when the books are opened. The fact that names are omitted in this chapter of worthy men should teach us that it is quite unnecessary that our names should be attached to every little job we do. It will, I think, be all the happier in the day of Christ when the secrets of who did this or that are revealed. The work and not the worker will be what will count in that day, for we shall be remembered by what we have done. —J. M.

[4] (Willington Quay). —" He became poor " is in the aorist tense, and points to a definite act in the past. We suggest He, who was rich with God, eternally, became poor at His incarnation (cp. Philippians 2. 6-8). —Jas. M.

Yes, but the aorist here is ingressive and indicates the entering on a state of poverty. Egeneto in John 1. 14, " became flesh ", indicates the entering on a state or condition of existence—incarnation. See Romans 14. 9 for a similar use of the aorist—" lived again " (became alive). —S. B.

[5] (Willington Quay). —No, there was no state of equality (in material things) in Acts 2. 44, 45. Note that in Acts 2. they sold their possessions and goods, here it was the selling of things moveable, but as the need continued, those who had things heritable, lands or houses, sold them and brought the prices to the apostles (Acts 4. 34, 35). Need was the determining factor in those early days. Great need can only be met by great sacrifices. —*J. M.*

[6] (Glasgow). —Is it possible to be generous in thought and yet give niggardly, when it is within a person's power to give with greater generosity? I greatly doubt it. —*J. M.*

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Question from **Kirkintilloch**. —2 Corinthians 8. 15. What precisely would we understand the nature of the manna-gathering and measuring-out to be, since Paul saw in it an illustration of assemblies helping assemblies in a time of need?

Answer. —It is clear as to the time of gathering, and also that some gathered more, some less. Then it was measured, and each got an omer. What centre it was in the Camp, or whether there were different centres where it was measured, we are not told. But that it was measured to each Israelite is clear, and when it was measured there was neither anything over nor any lack. A gracious Provider through human instrumentality resulted in a daily miracle.

The above note assumes that the equality in Exodus 16. 18 was secured by human means. The narrative, however, looks quite the other way: it was a miracle, as was the giving of the manna. To have measured out the manna for two million people or 200, 000 tents would have required not one centre, but many hundreds. Better risk some inequality than this. Note the word is "when *not " then "; this does not necessitate a measuring every time or every day, but *when* it was measured, whether in the tent or elsewhere, it was found to be as stated. Paul quotes the passage to illustrate the principle of equality. —*S. B.*

Question from Hamilton (Ontario). —Regarding 2 Corinthians 7. 12, the mind was expressed that the brother that did the wrong and the brother who was wronged was one and the same person. This seems substantiated from 2 Corinthians 2. 6-10, in that the Corinthian saints had not confirmed their love towards him. Or was it the father of the one who did the wrong, or was it the Apostle himself who was wronged?

Answer. —The person who did the wrong was the one on whom the punishment was inflicted by the many (2 Corinthians 2. 6), and the person who suffered the wrong was he who suffered in this case of incest (1 Corinthians 5. 1), not the Apostle Paul. —*J. M.*

NOTE.

From Kilmarnock. Re "The unequal yoke" (2 Corinthians 6. 14). Our friends in Glasgow say, "The portion makes no reference to believers in the sects" (page 56). We are inclined to think that for one in a church of God to marry a believer in the sects would be an unequal yoke. We agree with Melbourne friends on this point (page 61). —*A. G. S.*

We agree as to the irregularity of one in the Fellowship marrying a believer in the sects, but as to whether such marriages or marriages of believers and unbelievers should be called an "unequal yoke," I would refer readers to what the late F. A. Banks wrote on the point in "Spiritual Growth." —*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.

On **Liberality.**

In our current study on " giving, " the word " liberality " occurs in 2 Corinthians 8. 2, 9. 11, 13, and also in Romans 12. 8. It is a word peculiar to Paul in the New Testament. The Greek noun *haplotes* is derived from a primitive word meaning "to braid" or "plait, " and hence comes to mean "single" or "simple. " (*haplous* in contrast to *diplous* = double) or " without folds or wrinkles. " In the above cases where it is translated " liberality, " the R. V. M. shows " singleness, " indicating a oneness of aim to assist those evidently *in* need, no other purpose being allowed to thwart the helpers.

The same word is translated " singleness " (of heart) in Colossians 3. 22 and Ephesians 6. 5. The adjective *haplous*, is found in Matthew 6. 22 and Luke 11. 34—thine eye be " single, " where singleness of purpose keeps us from having, a double treasure and therefore a divided heart. We judge that this word used subjectively (that is affecting oneself) means " without dissimulation, " " sincere "; and used objectively (that is affecting others) means " generosity " or " copious bestowal. "

The following synonyms are also interesting.

Akeraios (harmless or simple), means "unmixed, " "with the absence of any foreign mixture, " or "pure. " It is translated "harmless. " The Greeks used the word of wine unmixed with water, and of pure metal with no alloy added. Used only three times in N. T., *i. e.*, in Matthew 10. 16—" harmless, " R. V. M. simple; in Philippians 2. 15—" harmless " and in Romans 16. 19, " ' simple ' unto that which is evil. " The fundamental meaning is freedom from any disturbing element.

Akakos is the negative of *kakos* meaning " harm, " and occurs twice in the New Testament, in Hebrews 7. 26, "For such a high priest became us holy, " *guileless* " . . . , and in Romans 16. 18, " by their smooth **and** fair speech they beguile the hearts of the " *innocent* " It means " void of harm or evil, " " harmless. "

In the scripture in Hebrews the use of the word, associated with other high qualifications, implies not only the absence of all harm, but the presence of all good. Job is thus described by God as a "perfect" man (Job. 2. 3, Septuagint), and in Job 8. 20 the same word is opposed to evil-doers.

In Romans 16. 18 there lies the suggestion of the possibility of carrying this "simplicity" too far—a man who himself is free from evil may judge others so, and though a noble attribute, may lead to his being deceived and considered an "innocent." In malice we are to be babes, but in mind, men of full age. (See 1 Corinthians 14. 20). We are enjoined in Romans 16. 19 to be simple (*akeraios*, see above) unto that which is evil; and wise unto that which is good.

One more word, *adolos*, meaning "without guile" (R. V.), sincere (A. V.). (*A* — negative, *dolos* = guile) occurs once only in the N. T., 1 Peter 2. 2. Peter, however, uses the word "*dolos*" = "guile" in a few places. (1 Peter 2. 1, 2. 22, 3. 10).

Thus Dr. Trench sums up a comparison of these words.

"If the *akakos* has nothing of the serpent's *tooth*, the *adolos* has nothing of the serpent's *guile*; if the absence of willingness to hurt, of the malice of our fallen nature, is predicted of the *akakos*, the absence of its fraud and deceit is predicted of the *adolos*, the Nathaniel in whom is no guile (John 1. 47). And, finally, to sum up all, we may say that as the *akakos* (= Latin innocent) has no harmfulness in him, and the *adolos* (= Latin, *sincerus*) no guile, so the *akerais* (= Latin, *integer*) no foreign admixture, and the *haplous* (= Latin, *simplex*) no folds."

Jas. Martin.

THE SECOND LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS.

Chapter 9.

From Willington **Quay**.—The Church of God in Corinth had shown great desire some twelve months earlier to communicate to the brethren in Judaea out of their abundance, but this and the preceding chapter seem to indicate that they lagged behind in the completing of their first impulse, of which impulse Paul had boasted to those of Macedonia. Twelve months is a long time for those in need, and the apostle feared that his glorying on their behalf might be made of none effect. To will to be of help is one thing, to complete the doing is another, and, in both, Macedonia had shewn a remarkable zeal and liberality.

What had caused the delay in this ministry to those in need in Jerusalem? We thought that we had a parallel case in Numbers 12. 15. Miriam, having sinned, was judged and the people were stayed in their journey for seven days—"And the people journeyed not till Miriam was brought in again." The Church of God in Corinth had put away from among themselves an erring brother and it may be that their spiritual condition was affected; cp. this epistle, Ch. 2. 11, "That no advantage may be gained over us by Satan."

The making up of the afore-promised bounty caused us to examine again the first epistle, Ch. 16. 2, where we saw that the injunction was for each to "lay by him in store," and it would seem to be the gathering up of this bounty that was to precede the visit of the apostle and those with him. Such gift had been promised, now it was to be made up and dispatched.

The motive of all giving is to be one of cheerfulness and willingness. In Ch. 8. we saw the Lord Jesus becoming poor that we might become rich, His own voluntary act to meet our need, whereas in Ch. 9. God is presented as the Giver. The motive behind the gift of the Son lay alone in the heart of God and formed a part of the counsels of a past eternity; truly such a Gift is unspeakable.

Surely then, God must love a cheerful giver, one who, seeing a need, hastens to meet that need, and herein we thought lay the responsibility of the child of God—a stewardship. Unless the desire to give is completed by the giving, thanksgiving cannot abound Godward either for the Son, or, as in our present study, for the answer to the need of those in Judaea.

C. B.

From Kilmarnock. —The apostle apparently had been telling the Macedonian saints of the readiness of the Corinthian saints in the matter of ministering to those in need.

He knew it was not necessary for him to remind them of this matter, but he requested Titus and another brother to go beforehand and see that their afore-promised bounty was ready before he, and perhaps some from Macedonia, came, for if it was not prepared he would be ashamed after boasting to the Macedonians.

If all God's people give in the spirit of verses 6, 7, bountifully, then He "is able to make all grace abound towards them," for He is a giving God and "giveth to all life, and breath, and all things" (Acts 17. 25). Verse 12: The apostle points out that while their giving to the necessities of the saints gives much joy to those who receive, it also causes much thanksgiving to ascend to God and also manifests fellowship among the saints. While we have much cause for thankfulness to God for temporal blessings received day by day, language fails to express the magnitude of the "unspeakable gift" of His well-beloved Son. Thus the apostle, in exhorting to give liberally, brings before them, and us, God's greatest Gift, so that our hearts may be exercised in our giving.

A. G. S.

From Birkenhead. —The apostle says that the efforts of the Corinthian saints had stirred up other churches. This was a good testimony. It would seem a goodly thing for one church to be so exercised in the Lord's things, that other churches would be stirred up to be of the same mind.

We consider as lovely the action of the Apostle in sending brethren on before so that they would not be put to shame before the saints in Macedonia. In the matter of giving every saint has an opportunity of serving the Lord, sisters as well as brethren, for we can give not only money, but time and energy. "Bountifully" means "with blessings" (R. V. M.), so he that sows "blessings" shall reap "blessings." In Proverbs 11. 24, 25, we read of the great blessing that comes to a cheerful giver, "for God loveth a cheerful giver." According to Acts 20. 35, the Lord Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

The reason why God did not bless His people in Malachi's day was that they did not bring the whole tithe into the storehouse (Malachi 3, 8-10). The governing word to-day for giving is " according as he hath purposed in his heart; not grudgingly, or of necessity.

The ministration of this service of " giving " brings many blessings, namely the filling " up the measure of the wants of the saints," and thanksgiving to God, a response in love one to another, and a very happy state of fellowship.

Philip Kelly.

From Cowdenbeath. —In this portion the apostle deals with some of the principles which govern this matter of giving. Doth not nature itself also teach us? Poor sowing means poor harvest; bountiful sowing means bountiful harvest. " Giving " emanates from an exercise of heart. Paul exhorts them to give **as** they have purposed in their heart, not with *sorrow* (R. V. M.), for God loves **a cheerful** giver. God is no man's debtor in this matter of giving for He is able to bless those who so give that they not only have sufficient for their own needs, but are also able to meet the needs of others (verse 8).

When a person gives of his substance to the Lord there is that which stands to his credit eternally (verse 9). By giving, the Corinthians were assured that they would be enriched (verses 10, 11); and not only so, but that such a manifestation of generosity would be a cause of thanksgiving to God.

How honoured the Corinthians would be to have their name mentioned in God's presence, as those dear Judæan saints, with deep longings after them, poured out their heart-felt praise to God for such a manifestation of the grace of God in them! In all this we are reminded " to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased " (hebrews 13. 16).

The gift of the Corinthians resulted in many thanksgivings, but no appropriate term can be found for God's gift, which is described as " unspeakable."

Robert Ross.

From Bradford, Halifax and Leeds. The subject of this chapter is mainly a continuation of Chapter 8., namely, that of Christian giving. The apostle writes in order to make sure that the collection for the needy saints would be ready when the appointed messengers would come to collect it. All giving should be characterized by a careful preparedness and purpose of heart, spontaneously as unto the Lord, and this should be accompanied by cheerfulness, and not in an irksome or grudging spirit, which would give no joy to our Heavenly Father. Granted that these conditions have been fulfilled the gift should then be set aside, but above all, the glory of God should be our final objective. If we have true love towards our Heavenly Father, it will be shewn by our concern for, and our practical response to, the needs of God's people*. Our God is so closely identified with his own children that what is done to them, in a very intimate way is done to Him (see Isaiah 63. 9; Zechariah 2. 8). We should bear in mind that **all** giving will have a reflex action

upon our **own** souls, **either** for good or for evil, for God's principle of compensation **and** equality **is** marked throughout the whole course of His providence (2 Corinthians 9. 6; Galatians 6. 7, 8; Ezekiel 18. 25). **We** should always remember that the quality of our giving will **have** permanent results **in** our lives (2 Corinthians 9. 9). The apostle no doubt calculated that the gifts from the Gentile churches might not be received by the **Jews** of Jerusalem, and so he appeals later to the saints at Rome for their co-operation in prayer, that the prejudices of those in Judaea might be overcome (Romans 15. 30, 31), and that the final result might be that both Jewish and Gentile Christians might together glorify God for such an evidence of **His** grace. **Such** love **was** already having its effect upon those in Judaea, in the spirit of gratefulness and prayer, and love towards the Corinthians saints (2 Corinthians 9. 14). All true giving has for its primal source, the love of God, as revealed in **His** greatest Gift, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Paul was very exemplary in his conduct. Part of the original work that **he** agreed to do in fellowship with other apostles was that he would be responsible to make provision for the poor saints (Galatians 2. 9, 10). Finally, Paul accompanied the messengers to Jerusalem (Romans 15. 25-28).

William G. Henderson, Frank Canning.

From Atherton. —In this chapter and in 1 Corinthians 16. 1, 2, we have some of the principles of " collective giving ": —(1) the time—the first day of the week; (2) according **as** each man purposes in his heart; and (3) according **as** a man prospers. There should be individual **exercise** on the part of all in the assembly towards " collective giving. " **A** complete understanding should exist between husband and **wife** (in the Lord) in this matter of giving out of the family income. Younger ones should also be exercised, **if** such receive any money, to give the Lord His portion. Giving should always be with cheerfulness, in contrast to giving grudgingly. Does material **gain** follow giving to the Lord ? God does not promise material blessing, but experience proves that those who give to the Lord will lack nothing. The apostle speaks of himself being in want. But he was the Lord's servant, dependent on the gifts of the saints, and when saints neglected **him** he had even to resort to his former trade of tent-making. Failure to give to the Lord's servants **is** a very serious fault. More important than material gain **is** the spiritual enrichment which God will make to abound to **us** **as** we respond, wholeheartedly, in our giving unto Him. The interchange of giving and receiving brings mutual blessing—comfort and cheer to the giver and the recipient, and also **calls** for general thanksgiving to God.

The quotation from Psalm 112. **is** applicable, primarily, to the righteous man of that Psalm, **but** here **it** **is** applied to the saints giving bountifully.

The word " unspeakable " in verse 15 means " indescribable. " In 2 Corinthians 12. 4, the **same** English word means (in Greek) " unutterable, " that is, " words, which **it** **is** not lawful for **a** man to utter, " and in 1 Peter 1. 8 " Joy unspeakable " means an indisclosable joy **that** cannot be told out, to **the** outside world.

We thought the expression " unspeakable **gift**, " refers to the " exceeding grace of God " seen in the saints (verse 14), but **it** **is** difficult to divorce the **gift** of grace from the person through whom grace flows. Therefore **He** who **is** indeed God's " unspeakable gift, " **is** Jesus Christ our Lord.

From Melbourne, Australia. —It is a practical expression of love to give, —as a Christian, and how pleasing in the sight of God if any are looking to the welfare of others, even to forstall the need for necessitous saints to resort to asking for help! The apostle illustrates the subject from the principles of sowing and reaping. Farmers know that if the seed is sparsely sown then the harvest is going to be lean. A bountiful harvest necessarily requires a bountiful sowing. The box that receives our free-will offerings is our sowing field and God will be no man's debtor. "There is that withholdeth what is justly due, but it tendeth only to want" (Proverbs 11. 24, R. V. M.). Among the different gifts of Romans 12. is one of giving: "He that giveth, let him do it with liberality" (verse 8). The churches of Macedonia, out of their deep poverty and beyond their power, gave of their own accord; they were liberal. "The liberal soul shall be made fat" (Proverbs 11. 25). Those possessed of the gift of giving (Romans 12. 8) have a responsibility to use that gift as all other God-given gifts, to the glory of God. Deeds count very much with God. "But whoso hath the world's goods, and beholdeth his brother in need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how doth the love of God abide in him?" (1 John 3. 17). This giving does three things in verses 12 to 14. (1) It brought many thanksgivings to God; (2) it caused many to glorify God, and (3) it produced prayer for those who had given the ministrations. None of our giving, however liberal, can in any measure compare with the gift that God gave to us. No tongue can measure the praises equal to that gift because it is unspeakable.

S. Stoope.

From Crowborough. —The apostle, in continuation of his appeal in the matter of giving for the poor, betrays a certain uneasiness. He seems assured that they were of a willing mind and we thought perhaps they had failed to bring that which they had set aside and put it into the common fund. This giving to the saints causes thanksgiving to arise unto God and God is thereby glorified. Then the apostle reminds them of the greatest Giver of all, who gave the greatest Gift, when He gave His dear Son. The wonders of this Gift are beyond the knowledge of man, and, seeing that there is nothing on earth with which they can compare it, is beyond man to describe them.

S. S.

From Knocknacloy. —How necessary it is that all in the Fellowship should give themselves and of their substance to the Lord, that the testimony of God may be maintained and extended in these last days! Lessons may be learned from men who live in past dispensations. Abram gave a tenth of the spoils (Genesis 14. 20 and Hebrews 7. 4). Jacob, at the place where we have the first mention of the House of God, vowed to give a tenth unto the great Giver of all things (Genesis 28. 10-22). Under Moses' leadership the children of Israel responded so willingly and liberally to the claims of the Lord that they had to be stopped from bringing (Exodus 35. 5, 20-22, and 36. 5-7). And again we read of the great provision made by David (1 Chronicles 29. 1-5), for the palace that was for the LORD God. This he did because of his affection for God's House. See in 1 Chronicles 29. 9 how the people rejoiced, and how David, the king, also rejoiced (verses 10-17). Yet David sums up all that they had been able to offer, as coming from, and belonging to God. What a contrast when we come to Malachi, how this same people offered to God that which they would not have taken themselves! Let us guard against getting away in heart from God, for it is only in giving ourselves and of our substance that we will be preserved as a people.

We have, at the beginning of the present dispensation, a wonderful example of giving by the early Christians (Acts 4. 32-37). Then we have seen how the saints in Macedonia gave out of their deep poverty and beyond their power, even to the giving of their own selves to the Lord (2 Corinthians 8. 2-5). This is the vital point. We must give ourselves to the Lord, otherwise we will neglect giving both to the Lord and His people.

No matter what we give, let it be out of a full heart, not only of our substance, but also of our lives day by day.

*Oh, wondrous Gift, in whom we find
Thine every heavenly gift combined;
Our All-in-all is He.
Our Life, our Peace, our Righteousness;
All that we have and shall possess,
We have in Him, from Thee.*

Herbert Thompson.

From London, S. E. —The apostle, as the " spiritual father " of the Corinthian church, was ever conscious of their growth in the things of God. Under the leading of the Holy Spirit, Paul and his fellows had laboured much and had built up this living testimony. Thus Paul stressed that their gift for the poor in Jerusalem must be presented from a willingness of heart, and not as a matter of extortion which would undoubtedly detract from the preciousness of the gift and destroy its value as a sacrifice acceptable and well pleasing to God.

It is of importance to realize that nought that we have is our own, for all substance is from the hand of God. The psalmist says, "The earth is the LORD'S and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein, " and Paul says, " Ye are not your own; for ye were bought with a price. "

Verse 6 does not necessarily refer to the quantity sown or given, inasmuch as some are entrusted with greater substance than others. The important feature of giving to God in ministering to the saints, as already stressed, is the condition of heart. There is much encouragement in the Lord's words, " Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, shall they give into your bosom. For with what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again " (Luke 6. 38).

The effect of this ministry is clearly shown in these closing verses. Not only does it satisfy the needs of the saints, relieving them from hardship, but out of grateful hearts thanksgiving is raised to God for His goodness.

The word of the Lord to the young man was, " Go sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow Me. " Sad it was that he failed.

Paul, whilst dealing with this matter, has ever in his thoughts the wondrous truth of God's greatest Gift to man in the sacrifice of the Son. Such was his joy that he ends his words with a triumphant burst of praise, " Thanks be to God for His unspeakable Gift! " In the light of these words let our response be that expressed by the poet:

*" Praise the Saviour, ye who know Him;
Who can tell how much we owe Him !
Gladly let us render to Him
All we have and are. "*

A. Reeve.

From Hamilton, Ontario. —Zeal in the things of God is a good thing so long as it is according to knowledge, and just as a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump, a little zeal will also spread. Such was the case with the Corinthian assembly, as seen in chapter 9. 2. Their zeal in the matter of giving to the saints stirred up very many of them. Apparently from chapter 8. 10, they were the first to make a move in this direction a year previous so that Paul could speak and could glory in their readiness, and the first few verses of this chapter seem to be a reminder to them of their former intentions, so that when the brethren came to collect the money neither Paul nor the saints in Corinth would be ashamed. Perhaps the beginning of this is seen in 1 Corinthians 16. 2, where Paul states principles concerning the matter of giving, and the fact that the Galatians were told first and yet the Corinthians were first to respond, shows that the need must have created a ready response in their hearts. Such readiness should be seen in our lives. Great exercise should be used in giving to the Lord. As we read "He that giveth, let him do it with liberality...." "Not grudgingly,.... for God loveth a cheerful giver." "Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase." So may we experience the truth of these words, "My God shall fulfil every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus."

As we ponder over the great things that the Lord has done for us, well might we give thanks unto our God for his gift which surpasses all other giving. Well may we lift our voice and say, "Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and his wonderful works to the children of men." *A. Davidson, J. Ramage.*

Question and Answers.

Question. —What is the explanation of the fact that although the Corinthians were ready with their gift a year before the date of this letter (see Ch. 8. 10 and Ch. 9. 2), the gift was not sent at that time, when it was evidently needed ?

Answer. —2 Corinthians 8. 10 says that the Corinthians "were the first to make a beginning a year ago." Then Paul adds, in verse 11, "But now complete the doing also; that as there was the readiness to will, so there maybe the completion also out of your ability." These statements seem to be quite clear, that a year before Paul wrote they began with good will to collect for the need in Judaea, but they had evidently been lax in completing their collection which they began with so heartily. I judge that 2 Corinthians 9. 2 states the same thing about the readiness of the Corinthians a year past, not that the bounty was ready for despatch. They started well and in consequence stirred up many, but they were now called upon by Paul to "complete the doing." *J. M.*

There was in any case no question of Achaia acting independently and sending their gift by itself. 1 Corinthians 16. 1-3, with 2 Corinthians 9. 2, Romans 15. 25-27, and Acts 20. 4, make it quite clear that this was to be a united gift from the Gentile churches in Galatia, Asia, Macedonia, and Achaia. Each province was to send the gift by its own representative. In Acts 20. no representative from Achaia is mentioned; possibly Paul himself had been deputed to act on their behalf. *S. B.*

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.

There is a wonderful statement in Galatians 5, concerning the cluster of the fruit of the Spirit—namely, " against such there is no law. " These Christlike attributes need no regulating, no embargoes, no penalties. Paul in 1 Timothy 1. 9-10 reveals for whom law is legislated.

When faced with the rebuff and scorn of men for whose new birth he had travailed much, Paul betakes himself to some of those wonderful virtues, so that his correcting of the Corinthians and their ways may be tempered with much mercy.

⁴⁴ The meekness and gentleness of Christ. " The very phrase is melody. In the spirit of these virtues men have "quenched the power of fire, . . . from weakness were made strong, . . . turned to flight armies of aliens. " Meekness and gentleness are the negative and positive poles of the great magnet, *Love*.

Meekness is love suffering, gentleness is love serving: meekness is love in repose, gentleness is love in action; meekness is love bearing evil, gentleness is love doing good. Meekness and gentleness were almost entirely new virtues when the Man of Nazareth came and taught and lived their meaning on earth. Mankind had not been without some virtues; or, at least, had striven after them, almost vainly, because of the weight of sin. Lip-service was given to truth and the search therefor. Crude bravery and courage were manifested on many a field of battle. Purity of life was the striving of some. But meekness and gentleness were graces of another complexion from which men turned. One has written: "Gentleness, that is a virtue for women to practise, it is too mean for men. Meekness, that is a low base-born spirit unworthy of either man or woman. We have never heard them spoken of save in whispers: they are not the sort of things we have been accustomed to dignify with the name of virtue. We shall sink in the estimation of the world if we try to be gentle: we shall sink in our own if we try to be meek. "

Certainly not in the pagan world do we find examples of those who lived in the spirit of these two graces. And even in the history of God's chosen people very rare indeed are the occasions when men proved themselves meek and gentle.

Such examples as there are have proved to be types of Him who was to come, whose very name is " Love. " We are referring to such cases as Joseph forgiving his brethren, and David sparing Saul. It is hard for us who know, at least in our minds, even if not practised in our lives, the dew-distilled truths of the sermon on the mount, to apprehend what a radical change was taking place. For He who taught such heavenly graces as " blessed are the meek " practised them every day of His sojourn here on earth. His assessment of Himself was, " I am meek and lowly in heart. " We remind ourselves again that meekness is love suffering and bearing evil. Every conceivable kind of evil was hurled at Him. They called Him a glutton and a wine-bibber. They attributed His wonderful powers to Beelzebub, the prince of demons. Many times they plotted to take His life. But He, in all such trials, was meek. How would we behave under a small fraction of such contumely and shame and pain ? He murmured not against God nor man, but struggled on from the humble home in Nazareth to the glory of the resurrection morning.

He was dependent on a humble Hebrew maid at His birth; women sustained Him in His many weary journeys, and ministered to Him at the end. He companied with unlearned and ignorant men, filled with old time prejudices and petty jealousies. He appealed to teachers and scribes and lawyers, almost in vain. Listen to that sad, sad cry at the Feast, " But now ye seek to kill Me, a Man that hath told you the truth, which I heard from God. " Thus bearing with their unbelief and legal coldness of heart, He was unperturbed and ever meek. And what shall we say of the end of the road, where all the avenues of sorrow meet? His enemies were treacherous, but He was meek. His judges dispensed injustice, but He was meek. His friends were unfaithful, but He was meek. The cross was heavy, the scourging painful, the mocking cruel, the nails sharp, the pangs of crucifixion grievous, the soldiers unduly harsh, the crowd fickle and opposed. Yet no bitter word escaped His tongue. Along the Via Dolorosa He stumbled, preaching peace to the weeping women, and as cruel men nailed His lovely hands and feet to the rugged tree He breathed from His heart that gracious prayer, " Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. " Oh, the transcendent glory of His majestic meekness ! Oh, the marvellous miracle of His grace !

We turn to the positive side. Gentleness is love in action doing good. But it is difficult to separate the warp from the woof of that wondrous life. Paul's words are " the meekness and gentleness of *Christ*, " not " of Christianity. " If you take one of these virtues from the other, the seamless robe of His life would be rent; the virtues are so inter-woven into the whole fabric of His being. To the malice of men, He turned with mercy in His hand, love in His eye, and rich promises on His lips. No mother could have dealt more gently with her infant than He did with the children of men. Consider how gently He dealt with the woman of Sychar (John 4.), with the woman of the city in Simon's home (Luke 7.), and with the woman caught in adultery (John 8.). And with men, good and bad, His approach was just as gentle. Gentleness tempered His reply (when He did speak) to Caiaphas, Judas, and Pilate. Rough fishermen in His company became refined, publicans lost their greed of gold, and a brigand gave up his guilty life, blessing Him and extolling His excellences. His miracles were gently effected for the good of mankind, and the glory of His God. Those wondrous changes wrought by His hand did not bring pain and affliction as did those miracles enacted through Moses (who "was very meek, above all men which were upon the face of the earth "). And, again, compare the gentleness of His blessings, uttered on the Mount of Beatitudes, with the thunders of the law, given through Moses, on Sinai. Even in reproof His voice was gentle. To His seeking parents we read His first recorded words, " Wist ye not that I must be in My Father's house ? " And, finally, to His mother, as brokenhearted she stood by His cross, He said, " Woman (lovely word), behold, thy son ! "

Have not we all realised how gently and unobtrusively He has removed the stones from our upward pathway, levelled the mountains and exalted the valleys of our pilgrimage, and tempered the winter blasts and eased the summer heat to us, the sheep of His fold ?

Well might a remembrance of such virtues, divinely expressed by the Man, Christ Jesus, cause the Apostle, in all his troubles and successes, to be "lowly . . . and of good courage."

"Gentleness and tender feeling,
Pity, too, and grace,
Softly lusted all Thy dealing
With our stricken race.
Thou with sympathy and healing,
Mid our woes didst move;
Every gracious deed revealing,
Thou, O Lord, art *Love*"".

Jas. Martin.

THE BOOK OF THE TWELVE PROPHETS. HOSEA.

I. ANALYSIS.

1. The training of the Prophet. Chapters 1. —3.
 - (a) The Word of Jehovah. 1. 1-11.
 - (b) Discipline. 2. 1-23.
 - (c) Israel's sin; Jehovah's faithfulness. 3. 1-5.
2. The teaching of the Prophet. 4. —14.
 - (a) The controversy with the land. 4. 1-5.
 - (b) The controversy with the people. 4. 6-18.
 - (c) The controversy with the priests. 5. 1-7.
 - (d) The controversy with the princes. 5. 8-15.
 - (e) Pollution and its punishment. 6.—10.
 - i. The case against Israel. 6., 7.
 - ii. The judgement. 8., 9.
 - iii. The punishment—judgement. 10.
 - (f) The love and mercy of Jehovah. 11. —14.
 - i. The mercy of Jehovah, restoration. 11.
 - ii. Jehovah yearns over His people. 12. and 13.
 - iii. Repentance and restoration. 14.

II. Some Proper Names and their meaning: —

- Achor, "Valley of troubling" or "sorrow" (2. 15).
 Admah, "Red earth," (11. 8).
 Aram, "High," "Elevated" (12. 12).
 Baal, "Lord," "Master" (2. 8; 13. 1).
 Baali, "My Master" (2. 16).
 Beeri, "Well of God" (1. 1).
 Bethaven, "House of vanity" (4. 15; 5. 8; 10. 5).
 Diblaim, "Two cakes of figs" (1. 3).
 Gomer, "Complete" (1. 3).
 Hosea, "Salvation" (1. 1, 2).
 Ishi, "My husband" (2. 16).
 Jareb, "He will plead" or "contend" (5. 13).
 Jezreel, "He will be sown of God" (1. 4, 5, 11; 2. 22).
 Lebanon, "White" (mountain) (14. 5, 6, 7).
 Lo-ammi, "Not my people," "No folk" (1. 9; 2. 23).
 Lo-ruhamah, "Without mercy," "No pity" (1. 6, 8; 2. 23).
 Mizpah, "Watch tower" (5. 1).
 Ramah, "Lofty place" (5. 8).
 Shechem, "Back" (6. 9).
 Tabor, "Separated" (5. 1).

THE SECOND LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS.

Chapter 10.

From Bradford, Halifax, **and** Leeds. —This chapter opens by setting forth two beautiful moral qualities which characterize our Lord Jesus Christ, and in contrast to the unchristlike conduct of His opponents, Paul desires to imitate his Master's example. It was thought that meekness is an internal quality of heart characterized by being able to endure all things with an even temper, and free from haughty self-sufficiency, whereas gentleness is more an external quality of a yielding disposition, marked by sweet reasonableness, and demonstrated by considerateness (see Acts 24. 4 (clemency) and Philippians 4. 5, R. V. M.).

It was thought that the authority of the apostle was being opposed possibly by men who followed on with the work at Corinth after the church had been planted by the apostle Paul. Quite probably they were party leaders (cp. verse 7 with 1 Corinthians 1. 1-12), who were using carnal reasonings and sarcastic statements in order to undermine the apostle's authority. From the description they give of him in verse 10, it would seem that the apostle was rather a weak-looking person, and possibly because he did not use high sounding words like them (cp. verse 5 with 1 Corinthians 1. 17 and 1 Corinthians 2. 1) they said his speech was of no account. They also said he acted upon fleshly principles, and he replied by saying that though his natural life was governed by fleshly conditions, he did not act according to the impulses of his lower nature. Moreover, the weapons that he will use to subject the rebellious minority in the church will be spiritual in their character. Then, by means of a military metaphor, he describes what the plan of campaign will be in dealing with his adversaries. He describes a Roman military campaign against the rock fortresses all along the coast of his native country, Cilicia. They would first capture the stronghold exalting itself upon some very high hill, then they would reduce the rebel forces inside to servitude, and then, finally, if in a country that had been conquered on the whole, rebellions were here and there to break out again, it was not the habit of the Romans to desist till complete subordination was established. In like manner, the apostle will by his authority and power demolish the reasonings of these carnal and proud men, rendering powerless the intents of their minds, and reduce them to entire subjection to the government of our Lord Jesus Christ. He claims that as they profess to be Christ's (possibly alluding to the sect of that name in the Corinthian church), so also did he belong to Christ, and it was deduced from this that the real unity between all the children of God is greater, and of more importance, than any sectarian names. He then claims that the primary functions of all Christian ministry is for constructive, and not destructive, purposes, and this in accord with the general analogy of Scripture (see Ephesians 4. 12), albeit, should they continue in their rebellious attitude, the apostle will shew them, in a very marked manner, that the judgement he threatened them with previously, he will certainly execute.

He then goes on to say that unlike his opponents, the province or limit of his service is measured out not according to a man-made rule, but under the guidance and restrictions of the God of measure (verse 13, J. N. Darby and Robert Young trans.), and he glories not in the limit of another man's labour, but in his own limit, which up to that time seemed to extend as far as Corinth. He is hoping that the work of God will so progress there, that in full fellowship with them, and not in an independent way, the Lord's works may prosper and be enlarged, thus giving cause for them all to glory, not in the work that they had done but in the Lord, who inspired and consummated their whole sphere of service. Finally, we need to heed the solemn warning of the last verse in the chapter, that the final valuation of every Christian's service will not be according to our measure, but according to the judgment of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

William G. Henderson, Frank Canning.

From Kirkintilloch. —This epistle is written in the spirit of **the meekness** and gentleness of Christ, for **such was** the attitude of the apostle towards the Corinthians. Some were criticising him, **and** saying that he **was** carnal **and** walked after the flesh. The only possible reason they could have for this attitude towards him **was** that they envied him because of his authority **as an** apostle. He **is** careful to **say**, though, that he had no authority for casting down the saints, he only had authority to build them up (see also chapter **13**. 10).

Paul and his co-workers walked in the flesh, for they were living **men**; **but** they did not walk according to the flesh, for they were spiritual **men**; neither did they wage a carnal warfare, for they used weapons which were mighty before God to the casting down of strongholds. If the warrior would cast down strongholds, he must learn to cast down his own imaginations, and bring every proud and lofty thought into captivity unto the obedience of Christ. **Verse 6** points out that it **is** when a **man's** obedience in this respect is fulfilled he can have readiness to avenge disobedience **in** others.

In the Lord's work it is wrong to compare ourselves with one another, for this encourages envy and strife. **We** compared Philipians 1. 15-18, which speaks of some who preached Christ out of envy and strife, and although Paul rejoiced that the Gospel was being proclaimed by them at all, such base motives will not merit the Lord's approval upon the preacher, although the Lord may, in His own wisdom, bless the preaching of **His** Word.

It is important for a **man** to know the **measure** of his service for God. Notice the Greek text of **2** Corinthians 10. **13**, where God is called " the God of measure, " for **it was He** who measured out the vast field of service of the apostles, and this included reaching unto the Corinthians with the Word of God. **Verse 14** shows that it is sadly possible for a man to stretch himself beyond his God-given measure.

The scripture, " **He** that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord, " applied from Jeremiah **9**. **24**, **is** used twice by the apostle; once in **1** Corinthians 1. **31**, when he **is** dealing with our standing in Christ, and again in **2** Corinthians 10. **17** in relation to our service for God. **H. King.**

From Hamilton, Canada. —Some of the apostle Paul's remarks **in** this letter are very impressive and appropriate. **We** were struck with the expression in verse **1**: " The meekness and gentleness of Christ. " It was a word of entreaty, and surely no better example could be found, calculated to touch the hearts of the saints, than that of the **One** whom Paul was seeking to emulate. If Paul was lowly when among them, how much more his Master ?

The apostle had learned the great secret of the triumphant, Christian life, not to retaliate against the flesh with fleshly weapons. For, said he, " the weapons of our warfare **are** not of the flesh, but mighty before God to the casting down of strongholds. " **He** writes in similar vein to the Ephesians **in** chapter **6**. **12**: " Our wrestling **is** not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers,.... against the spiritual hosts of wickedness **in** the heavenly places. " Ours are the **same** powerful weapons Paul used, still " mighty before God, " the only weakness being our inability to **use** them effectively. Prayer will overcome any accusation of the Adversary, while the Word of God will divide asunder any false doctrine or argument which **is** " exalted against the knowledge of God. " Meekness **is** often mistaken for weakness, and even though Paul's bodily presence appeared weak, his inward man was **as** strong when absent.

"**He** that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord" **seems** to be the keynote to the whole subject of glorying. If we depart from this standard **we** are " glorying beyond our measure. " As we think of all Paul's fruitful labours, and the small amount of glorying he did, **we** know that his last words **in** this chapter were a heart experience with him; " Not he that commendeth himself **is** approved, but whom the Lord commendeth. " **R. Dryburgh, N. Mackay.**

EXTRACTS.

From Melbourne, Australia. —Many things in the assembly of God at Corinth were observed by the apostle **as** needing correction, but how careful he was not to use human arguments ! His writings, coupled with Old Testament scriptures, were his weapons to combat their peculiar attitude toward him. " The things which I write unto you, . . . they are the commandment of the Lord " (1 Corinthians 14. 37). He had authority but he refrained from lording it over them in any sense. The Word of God, the sword of the Spirit, is the only weapon the believer can use effectively to cast down every high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God. In the world, those who walk according to the flesh have many imaginations. Men think highly of themselves, but when they are brought face to face with God's Word they are brought very low. Our weapons are mighty, so powerful that nothing can stand against them. " For God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble " (1 Peter 5. 5 and James 4. 6). " The haughty He knoweth from afar " (Psalm 138. 6). The apostle had a very special care for them, for it was he who laboured among them first in the gospel; then, in teaching them, he more than anyone else on earth knew all about them, their triumphs, their failures; he was intimate with them, but alas, they were not recognizing him. In writing to Timothy years later, he says: " Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially those who labour in the word and in teaching " (1 Timothy 5. 17). Instead of double honour forthcoming from them, they formed their own opinion of him in his absence, saying: " His bodily presence is weak, and his speech of no account. " Though his speech and preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, his motive was misunderstood by some. Whatever we do, let our work have the approval and the commendation of the Lord. Self-commendation will receive no recognition whatsoever at the judgement seat (bema) of Christ.

S. Stoope.

From Atherton. —The chapter deals with the apostle's vindication of his apostleship and authority. The meekness and gentleness of Christ seem to characterize the whole chapter, as they did the whole personality of the writer. The following view was very much stressed (although some differed), that Paul was not a shy man, yet not forward, but at all times forceful and shewing real energy. What others said about him (verse 10) evidently came from the lips of false teachers, who spoke in his absence. Verses 10 to 15 indicate that there was still something or someone wrong in the assembly, probably one particular person, for we know there **is** always a leader (see chapter 11. 4).

Probably the beatings the apostle suffered at Lystra affected him in his speech and in his sight. Jealousy was the root cause of the attitude of the Corinthian Church. We remember that when Christ stood before the scribes and lawyers, jealousy inflamed them. Some were asserting that Paul and Timothy were motivated by natural passions and lusts. The apostle replied that, while they walked in the flesh, they did not walk according to the flesh, and further demonstrated that his warfare was not according to the flesh, nor were his enemies fleshly enemies, but spiritual ones; and hence the armour must be spiritual (see Ephesians 6. 10-18). This armour composes the " weapons . . . mighty before God. " By use of these weapons the apostle was able to cast down imaginations (reasonings) and everything which was exalted against the knowledge of God, and to bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. What an experience that our every thought, word and action should be controlled by the Holy Spirit !

In the face of dishonourable insinuations, the apostle did not wish to contest his cause too vigorously, and thus he intreats (verse 1) and beseeches in (verse 2). Perhaps those who boasted that they were Christ's (verse 7) were those who claimed to be " of Christ, " in 1 Corinthians 1. 12. The apostles were as much Christ's **as** they were, and, in addition, had authority, delegated by the Lord, for the edification of the Church in Corinth. The comparison of **a** thing with itself **is** no criterion of perfection. Thus those who gloried in their own accomplishments

and trusted in themselves, were not pleasing to God. We may glory only in that we understand and know the Lord's loving-kindness, judgement, and righteousness (Jeremiah 9. 24).

Reference was made to the word " province " occurring in verses 13, 15 and 16, the same Greek word being used in Galatians 6. 16 and Philipians 3. 16. Some felt it meant *rule or pattern of doctrine*. Others thought that the word rather indicated the limit of the apostle's activities. One further suggestion was that the two thoughts are possibly included in the passage [1].

R. C. Jones, G. Sankey.

From Kilmarnock. —The attitude of some in Corinth would remind us of how Korah and his company said of Moses and Aaron, " Ye take too much upon you, " etc. (Numbers 16. 3). This showed a rebellious spirit and brought God's judgement upon them.

While the apostle's letters were " weighty and strong, " they were written under the Lord's authority (verse 8), and in the spirit of meekness and gentleness, not to terrify them, but for their spiritual building up.

Verse 10. Those complainers seemed to judge by outward appearance. **W**e wonder **if** Paul was little of stature and deficient **in** his speech. Would his bodily sufferings have affected him in any way ? (see chapter 11. 23-30).

Although Paul was among the foremost of the apostles, and had been much used of God, yet he did not glory in this, but humbly ascribed the glory to God. In this he followed the Master, and **is** an example to all in churches of God, no matter what position they may be in. Let us ever remember, " Not he that commendeth himself **is** approved, but whom the Lord commendeth. "

A. G. S.

From Glasgow. —In this chapter the apostle returns to the castigation of those false brethren who sought to belittle him and to discredit his teaching as an apostle. In the opening verses he appeals to the saints to accept his admonitions as given in the grace of Christ rather than in the anger of a carnally minded man. This opening is similar to that used **in** Philemon 8-9 (which see). The apostle's object is to draw out the good in the Corinthian saints, that they might counteract the evil forces at work in their midst. He did not relish the duty of rebuking and censuring some of them, and tried to avoid it by entreating in the love of Christ. He did, however, make it clear that his appeal to them should not be regarded, as apparently it was by some, as a sign of abjection or feebleness. On the contrary, he acted in the power of the Holy Spirit. Should the Corinthians in the main give heed to his appeal, he was ready to deal very firmly with those who persisted in their disobedience to his injunctions.

To those who sought to disparage him, the apostle suggests a self-examination. If any of their factious members trusted in himself that he was Christ's, the apostle claimed that he was equally so. He tempered his language lest it should appear as though he were trying to terrify them into obedience. J. J. P.

From Cowdenbeath. —The authority Paul had received from the Lord was for building up, not casting down, but building up what was of God entailed pulling down what was not of God. Paul had no desire to terrify the Corinthians with his letters. **H**e had been forced because of the conditions that prevailed in Corinth to display some of his authority in his letters. This led the Corinthians to contrast Paul's attitude to them when present and when absent. When he had come to Corinth his speech had not been persuasive and he had determined to know nothing save Christ, and Him crucified. **A**s a result of his attitude, they said of him that his speech was of no account, and his bodily presence weak, but they were forced to admit that his letters were weighty and strong. Paul assures them that what he was by letter he was in word when present.

It was as a result of his labours that the assembly in Corinth had **been** brought into being. He **was** not glorying in other **men's** labours **as** some in Corinth were. **Paul** was glorying in the province that God had apportioned unto him. The **desire** and hope of the apostle **was** that Corinth should become **a base** from which he could stretch forth unto regions beyond. **Of** the Thessalonians **Paul** had said, " In every **place** your faith to God-ward is gone forth; so that **we need** not to **speak** anything. " Thus **Paul's desire** for the Corinthians **was** that their faith should grow and facilitate the **spread** of the gospel.

James K. D. Johnston.

From Crowborough. —**Paul's** life **was** spent in exhorting **and** uplifting the **fallen**, yet he did not condone **sin**. Surely **we** have **an example** here. The **meekness** and gentleness of Christ are worth practising **by all believers** to-day. To others **Paul** said: —" I shrank not from declaring unto you the whole counsel of God " (Acts 20. 27), for he **was** not afraid to speak out for God, **yet** God had given to him the remarkable **gift** of expression **in** writing, **and** his desire, through this medium, **was** to admonish **and** lead, rather than terrify. The apostle's **example** **was** to bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. Thus there **is** no room for the flesh. **We** would do **well** to remind ourselves of our warfare against those who would uplift ought **against** Christ. Let **us** put on the whole armour of God, and practise complete obedience to Christ.

Paul's aim **was** to **seek** out unploughed fields, to take the gospel into **new** spheres, and not to trespass upon another's work, that glory might **be** to the Lord. How does the Lord make His approval **manifest** ? (verse 18). He **did** so **in** giving to His apostles the power to perform miracles. This gift has not **been passed** on to-day, but **we can** perceive the Spirit of God in some, and the grace of God in others, thus revealing the commendation of God.

E. Swift,

From Birkenhead. —The closing three chapters form **a** distinct part of the epistle. The apostle vindicates his authority **and deals** with his critics **in** Corinth. Those who **seek** to **lead** will always have criticism.

Verse 10. Here **we** have the charge **against** the apostle, " his bodily **presence** **is weak**. " Characteristically the apostle **was** humble, **and** thus he **begins** his **answer** by **saying** " I . . . entreat you by the **meekness and gentleness** of Christ. " Then " his speech of no account " may have arisen from his preaching the Gospel "not **in** wisdom of words. " The Corinthian opposers had no true **value** of spiritual things and failed to value the character of the apostle.

We may ask, How do **we** judge when one **is** approved of God ? To Timothy the apostle wrote, " Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God " (2 Timothy 2. 15). Spiritually-minded ones are **able** to judge that such **an** one is approved of God. Those who lead should **be** capable, when **necessary**, of dealing strongly (verse 6).

T. M. Hyland, P. K.

From Willington Quay. —**We** had difficulty in understanding the meaning of verse 6, especially the **use** of the word " **avenge**, " **but we** were inclined to think that it **is** used here more with the thought of **giving effect** to the word of the Lord, than that of vindication [2].

It is interesting to note the difference **in** the Corinthians' **attitude** to that of the Galatians. Whereas the saints **in** Corinth despised **Paul** because of his physical **weakness**, the Galatians received him **as** " **an angel** of God " (Galatians 4. 12-15). **We** noted the type of authority that **was Paul's**, **namely**, that of building up, **and we** compared **and** contrasted **it** with that which **was given** to Jeremiah (Jeremiah 1. 9, 10). The apostle **was able** to **stand any** test of comparison with others (chapter 11. 18), **but** such comparisons **in** which **men** set the standards according to their own judgment are worthless.

Paul looked upon the taking of the Gospel to Corinth **as** his own particular God-given work, and in this, and not beyond it, he sought to glory. Nevertheless, his hope was, that **as** the faith of the saints in Corinth grew, it might **be** granted him to preach the Gospel in parts beyond them, where Christ **was** not already named (Romans 15. 20). **K. R.**

REMARKS.

[1] Atherton. —The word " province " is the R. V. translation of Gr. *kanon*, which, originally, meant " a straight rod used **as** ruler, or measuring instrument the secondary notion being either (a) of keeping anything straight or (b) of testing straightness, **as** a carpenter's rule ; by a common transition in the meaning of words, that which measures, **was used** for what was measured In general the word that **came** to serve for anything regulating the actions of men, **as** a standard or principle " (Vine).

In Galatians 6. 16 it is translated " rule, " and refers to teaching in the previous verses. In 2 Corinthians 10. 13, 15, 16, it is translated " province " (R. V.) and " limit or measuring rod " (R. V. M.), and " rule " and " line of things " in A. V., or " line " (A. V. M.). We suggest that here it has to do with the measurement and allotment of territory. Our word " canon " is derived therefrom. *Jas. M.*

[2] Willington Quay. —" Avenged, " derivatively, *ekdikeo* means ex=" from " or "out of, " and *dike* = <>" justice, " that which proceeds from justice. It thus means (a) to vindicate a person's right, or (6) to avenge a thing. See R. V. M. of Luke 18. 5, 7, 8, " do **me** justice of, " where the meaning (a) is evident. We have the meaning (6) in Revelation 6. 10 and 19. 2, where God avenges the blood of **His** saints. **Here** in 2 Corinthians 10. 6 the apostle is saying he is in readiness to use his authority to punish all disobedience, **as** soon **as** his readers had shown their obedience.

The word for " disobedience " occurs here only and in Romans 5. 19 and Hebrews 2. 2, and means to "hear amiss, " or "failing to hear, " derivatively from *parakoe* (*para*=aside, *akouo*=to hear). Hence it signifies a "refusal to hear, " and from that meaning, because of careless or inattentive hearing, it acquires the meaning of active disobedience. Often in the O. T. disobedience is described as refusal to hear (e. g., Jeremiah 11. 10). In Hebrew 2. 2 we learn that not only the overt act of " transgression, " but also the failure or refusal to hear " the things that were heard " will be justly dealt with. *Jas. M.*

WORD STUDY.

Meekness, Gentleness, Humility (lowly).

Meekness: Gr. *Praotes*. According to Dr. French the meaning given to this word in Scripture is far richer and deeper than that given by classical Greek writers. Leaving the comparisons he gives, we would pass on to his definition. " The Scriptural *praotes* is not in a man's outward behaviour only; nor yet in his relations to his fellow-men; as little as in his mere natural disposition. Rather is it an inwrought grace of the soul; and the exercises of it are first and chiefly towards God. It is that temper of spirit in which we accept His dealings with us as good, and therefore without disputing or resisting; and it is closely linked with 'humility' (Gr. *tapeinophrosune*), and follows directly upon it in Ephesians 4. 2; Colossians 3. 12, because it is only the humble heart which is also meek; and which, as such, does not fight against God and more or less struggle and contend with Him. This meekness, however, which is first a meekness in respect of God, is also such in the face of men, even of evil men, out of a sense that these, with the insults and injuries which they may inflict, are permitted and employed by Him for the chastening and purifying of His saints. This was the root of David's *praotes* when Shimei cursed and flung stones at him (2 Samuel 16. 11). "

It is admittedly difficult to express the true meaning in English, for "meekness" in its common use, often expresses " weakness. " But as referring to the Lord

Jesus, and commended **in** believers, it is the result of power and a relying on the infinite resources of God. One has described it negatively: —" Meekness is the opposite of self-assertiveness and self-interest. " Because not occupied with self it **is** neither elated nor downcast. See its use in the following scriptures: —1 Corinthians 4. 21, 2 Corinthians 10. 1, Galatians 5. 23, 6. 1, Ephesians 4. 2, Colossians 3. 12, 1 Timothy 6. 11, 2 Timothy 2. 25, Titus 3. 2.

Gentleness: Gr. *Epieikeia* (from *epi* = unto, and *eikos* = likely) denotes seemliness, fitness, hence equitable dealing, fairness, moderation, a not insisting on the letter of the law, gentleness. Dr. French writes as follows: " It expresses exactly that moderation which recognises the impossibility of cleaving to all formal law... it recognises the danger that ever awaits upon the assertion of legal rights, lest they should be pushed into moral wrongs... it redresses the injustices of justice... it is thus more truly just than strict justice would have been... This aspect of *epieikeia*, namely that it is a going back from the letter of right for the better preserving of the spirit, must never be lost sight of... The true pattern of this grace is found in God. **All** His going back from the strictness of His rights as against men... **All** His remembering whereof we are made, and measuring His dealings with us thereby... **All** of these we may contemplate as *epieikeia* (gentleness) upon His part; even as they demand in return the same, one toward another, upon ours. Peter, when himself restored, must strengthen his brethren (Luke 22. 32), etc. "

Meekness is a passive grace, gentleness is an active grace; the seat of meekness is in the inner spirit, while gentleness **is** expressed in outward acts. Meekness is more a temperament of the mind, while gentleness is expressed actively in dealings with others. The word for gentleness occurs in Acts 24. 4, 2 Corinthians 10. 1. The adjective *epieikes*, meaning seemly, suitable, equitable, fair, mild, gentle, occurs in Philippians 4. 5, 1 Timothy 3. 3, Titus 3. 2, James 3. 17, and 1 Peter 2. 18.

Lowly: Gr. *Tapeinos*, primarily denotes low-lying.

Humility: Gr. *Tapeinophrosune* (*tapeinos* = lowly, and *phren* = the mind), means lowliness of mind, humility.

Dr. French says: —" The work for which Christ came into the world **was** no less than to put down the mighty from their seat, and to exalt the humble and meek. It was then only in accordance with this its mission that it should dethrone the heathen virtue, *megalopsuchia* (human magnanimity) and set up the despised Christian grace, *tapeinophrosune* in its room,... A Christian writer has called this latter not merely a grace, but the casket or treasure-house **in** which **all** other graces are contained. "

" The instances are few and exceptional in which (the adjective) *tapeinos* (used by pagan Greek writers) signifies anything for them which **is** not grovelling, slavish, and mean-spirited. "

The New Testament knows nothing of this debased use of the word, but rather raises the word to designate the noblest of virtues. Cremer writes: " It **is** the disposition of the man who esteems himself as small before God and men, takes a low estimate of himself,... a representation foreign to profane Greek. " True humility **is** brought about by a believer yielding himself completely to the Holy Spirit. The word occurs in Acts 20. 19, Ephesians 4. 2, Philippians 2. 3, Colossians 2. 18, 23, 3. 12, and 1 Peter 5. 5, and **is** translated variously, humility or lowliness of mind. Briefly, " humility or lowliness has to do with one's estimate of one's self, *meekness* with one's attitude towards the dealings of God and man with respect to oneself and *gentleness* with one's treatment of others.

Jas. M.

NOTE.

A copy of 1951 Syllabus (Subject, " The Epistles of Peter and Jude ") can be obtained from J. Martin, 36, Whitley Crescent, Wigan.

There **is** a great need for short articles on matters of interest to Bible students, and contributions are invited.

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.

A brief outline of this section of 2nd Corinthians may assist us to apprehend why in the light of:—" for not he that commendeth himself **is** approved, but whom the Lord commendeth " (10. 18), the apostle dwells so much on his glorying. In verses 1-15, the first sub-section, he glories **in** the fact that he has taken no wages from the Corinthians, but that all his services have been gratuitously given. This **is** followed in the second sub-section (verses 16-33) by his glorying in his many trials and sufferings, and finally in chapter 12. 1-10, **we** have him glorying in the wonderful revelation that was granted to him **in** Paradise. At the beginning, middle and end of this portion, the apostle calls attention to the folly of this glorying (11. 1, **16** and 12. 11), but only by lowering himself to be considered foolish, has he been able to confute his adversaries, and show up the poverty of their claims, **as** compared with his own.

In sub-section **1**, verses **1-6** are introductory, wherein the apostle speaks of his godly jealousy for the Corinthians and his sincere desire to present them to Christ **in** their pristine simplicity and purity. This engenders the sad thoughts of how Satan beguiled Eve, the bait in her case being similar to that used by the Judaizing leaders—a promise of enlightenment. Paul had not burdened the Corinthians, but others had met his needs. Thus he was able to maintain in Corinth an independence of spirit that permitted him to rebuke freely, **if** rebuke were needed. Further he avoided any accusations of being greedy, when he ministered to the need of himself and others; and churches far-removed from Corinth had fellowship with him. But even this wise action did not escape the criticism of his adversaries. Behind all this opposition were the evil ministers of Satan. Compare with this sub-section 1 Corinthians 9., especially verses 12, **15 and 18**.

In the second sub-section also, the first **six** verses (16-21) may be taken **as** introductory, and then follows **in** verses **22-23** one of the most interesting, historical, self-revealing pictures of the apostle. In connexion with it, we may read 1 Corinthians 4. 11-13, 2 Corinthians 4. 7-10, 6. 4-10. But here we have much detail, omitted elsewhere, and proving that his trials, described by others in the Acts, have not been one whit exaggerated. Further, even if the apostle admits not being an orator (verse 6), here **we** have rhetoric of the highest order. The high strains of 1 Corinthians 13. or 15. may not be reached, but there **is** a powerful torrent of argument in this glorying in his trials. It provides an interesting study of balanced sentences and striking effect. Please note the five phrases commencing

with " if **he** " (verse 20), followed by the rhetorical questions, " Are they Hebrews ? so **am** I. Are they Israelites ? so **am** I. Are they **the seed** of **Abraham** ? so **am** I. " Later **we** have the cumulative effect of the various trials in the phrases prefaced by "in perils. " Each phrase could be the title to **a** thrilling chapter in an extended autobiography.

And besides the many trials, including those not enumerated, was the daily burden of anxiety (not only " care " **as** in the A. V.) for all the churches—**a** distracting anxiety experienced only by humans, the meaning of which **is** made more clear in " Casting all your **anxiety** upon Him, **because** He **careth** for you " (1 Peter 5. 7). His eyes then lift to " the God and Father of the Lord Jesus, " and he cannot restrain **a** burst of praise—" **He** who is blessed for evermore " To those who can trace profane history, verses **32** and **33** are of importance in fixing the date of the apostle's conversion.

The third sub-section (which **is** our final study) **is** dealt with in 12. 1-10. Although intending to speak of " visions and revelations of the Lord, " Paul gives one outstanding **case** only, where he heard those " unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for **a man** to utter. "

Oh, to learn **as** the apostle did—" My grace **is** sufficient for thee: for My power **is** made perfect **in** weakness, " and to crave that the power of Christ **may** spread **a** tabernacle over us !

Jas, M.

THE SECOND LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS.

Chapter 11.

From Atherton. —It appears that after all that the apostle had expended upon the Corinthians in earnest zeal, jealous love, and tender forbearance, the results were so nullified by false teachers and false doctrine that Paul **was** looked upon as **a man** of intolerable folly. The key words of the passage serve to emphasize their attitude; for the word " folly " or " fool " occurs **five times**, **and** the words "to bear with" also occur five times. The church in Corinth **was** prepared to bear with or tolerate these false, deceitful workers, **but** no longer were they prepared to bear with the faithful apostle ! With **a sense** of indignation aimed at those whose claims to apostleship were absolutely extravagant, he speaks of himself **as** in no **sense** inferior to the " pre-eminent " or " extra super " apostles. It **was** suggested that the apostle does not here refer to the twelve, but rather to these false apostles who were commending themselves. Thus **in** his remarks (see verse 5) there **is** possibly **a** little sarcasm. Others thought that his reference was to the twelve, or possibly to those **named as** the three pillars, James, Cephas, and John (see Galatians 2. 9 and 2 Corinthians 12. 11).

In comparing himself with these false apostles, the apostle goes on to **make** reference (1) to his knowledge and self-abasement (verses 6, 7), (2) to his self-denial about maintenance and support from the assembly (verses 8-11), (3) to the privileges of his birth (verses 21 and 22), (4) to the tremendous labours and fearful perils to which he **was** exposed (verses 23 to 27), **and** (5) to the internal difficulties and care of all the assemblies (verse 28).

The outrageous pretensions to apostleship made by these false, deceitful workers he would **meet** with **a** folly not of his own choosing; he could, and would, defeat with such weapons **if** this was what the Corinthians required. His real boast was in his weakness, the **weakness** of his **intense** sufferings. In giving this account of his **many** hardships and tribulations, he strangely concludes with **an** account of his first trial, his ignominious **escape** from death **at** Damascus.

An important lesson we may derive from the perils and hardships of Paul is that persecution is the common lot of all who would live godly in Christ Jesus. Paul, writing to Timothy, says, "Suffer hardship with me" (see 2 Timothy 1. 8; 2. 3; and 3. 10-12). Suffering is ever viewed as associated with the kingdom of God. Several distinguishing features of suffering in the early days, and suffering for the sake of the Name to-day, were discussed, and it was pointed out that God's people suffer very largely to-day for the truth of separation.

The character of Satan as an angel of light is shown by the method he employed in the sad story of Ananias. "Why hath Satan filled they heart to lie to the Holy Spirit?" (Acts 5. 3). In the title "Angel of light" the word "light" seems to suggest the thought of revelation. Satan inculcated into the minds of these false teachers his own satanic revelation of false teaching; thus leading those taught into spiritual darkness. Satan had been at work in the Corinthian church as hinderer—hindering them from doing the right in the matter of judgement. This he did by artful guile, craftiness, and insidious working. See 2 Corinthians 2. 5-11, especially verse 11. There are occasions when he works entirely on his own—the case of Judas being an outstanding example of this—"Satan entered into Judas" (Luke 22. 3).

The question was raised, "Was the apostle justified in his refusal to accept gifts from the Corinthians?" Some thought the apostle was clearly justified, the fault being entirely the Corinthians'. Others took the view that the apostle went a step too far—a fault which he seems to admit in chapter 12. 13, "Forgive me this wrong."

In verses 28, 29, we see the true shepherd heart of the apostle. Oh, to emulate the spirit of the men who felt so keenly, in the midst of bitterest trials, the weaknesses of the saints!

Paul followed in the wake of patriarchs, prophets, kings, fellow-apostles, and great men of all times who only became great by a deep realization of their own weakness, and the fulness of the power of the ever-living God. Oh, that we might follow in their train and know ourselves the fulness of the blessing of Christ! (1 Corinthians 1. 26-31 and Romans 15. 29). *E. Birchall, G. A. Jones.*

From Cowdenbeath.—Paul makes it clear that the motives which actuate him are his jealous love for the Corinthians and his fear lest they be led astray. Having wooed them to be Christ's alone, his jealous desire is that as a pure virgin they might continue faithful and undefiled, and not be corrupted and turned aside from the single-mindedness and purity that is toward Christ. Paul shows that his fear is not without cause, for the Corinthians have borne with these false teachers, who present all things differently from the apostle. He admits that he may not compare with his opponents in the arts of oratory, but in knowledge of divine things he is not one whit behind the most pre-eminent of these false apostles, as he has proved in his labours among all sorts of men. If these false apostles should question his apostleship on the grounds that he did not accept maintenance from the Corinthian saints, then Paul states that when he was in need he received the measure of his wants from the saints in Macedonia.

He warns the Corinthians not to be beguiled by such men, fashioned according to the pattern of their master, Satan, for, as their deeds are, so shall be their end.

Like them, Paul can claim to be a Hebrew, an Israelite, a son of Abraham, but as a servant of Christ he far outshines them, as he could show from his body, branded with the marks of suffering labour, marks received in prisons, as at Philippi (Acts 16. 23); in deaths, or sicknesses threatening death, as in Asia (2 Corinthians 1. 8-10; by beatings from the Jews, and by the Romans with rods, as at Philippi (Acts 16. 22, 23); from stoning, as at Lystra (Acts 14. 19); from shipwreck and suffering the agonies of floating in the open sea upon a plank or some piece of wreckage, for a night and a day, as in Acts 27. 44.

But **while Paul** could **claim a** right to glory, he throws **aside all** folly of boasting, and boasts only **in his weakness which** evokes and demonstrates **the** strength of his Lord.

It is **well to feel** our weakness, and to acknowledge it, but what **cause** for joy when **we learn** the strength of the Lord **is ours!** *D. McLelland.*

From Willington **Quay**. —In asserting his love and affection for the Corinthian saints, **Paul** reveals the inward motive that characterized his labours. It was **a zeal** for God **like** unto the **zeal** the **LORD Himself** displayed toward His people Israel in forbidding them to worship other gods (cf. Exodus 34. 14). The **LORD** desired, and still **desires**, the undivided worship of His people, and **Paul** feared lest the singleness and chastity toward Christ, which characterized the saints in the days of their pristine love, should be marred by Satan. This would have been brought about by the preaching of another Jesus; **i. e.**, either **false** teaching touching the person of the Lord or by the presentation of **false** Christs (cf. Matthew 24. 24).

Paul laboured to present the saints perfect in Christ. This may have **a** present application relating to the spiritual stature of the saints, or it may indicate the labourer, **Paul**, presenting the saints individually at the judgement **seat** of Christ (cf. 1 Thessalonians 2. 19). In no way could Satan corrupt the Church, the Body of Christ, which the Lord **will** present to Himself without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

The great danger that confronted the Corinthian saints lay in the apparent conformity to the truth on the part of those emissaries of Satan who would have led the saints astray. These deceitful workers gloried in the flesh: they appeared to have little **else** to glory in. Not content therewith, they would have belittled the person and work of the apostle Paul (verse 6). So that, to cut off occasions from such, **Paul** relates his experiences and labours, though to him, glorying in the flesh **was** foolishness. **He** emphasizes first, the things he did not do: he received no material gain or sustenance from the churches of Achaia and thus burdened no man. In this **was** demonstrated the purity of his motive. Secondly, **as a Jew**, he enumerates **all** the fleshly advantages that were his. This would suggest that those troubling the saints may be Judaizing teachers. Then he tells of his experiences **as a minister of Christ**; —things without and within which can scarcely bear description. Such **a** record of conflict and suffering would assuredly establish **Paul's claim** to be not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles (verse 5).

J. Renfrew, Jun.

EXTRACTS.

From Halifax, Bradford and Leeds. —This chapter is largely occupied with **Paul's** defence against his adversaries at Corinth. They are described **as** ministers or servants of Satan, and, just like their master, their methods and propaganda were characterized by deceitfulness, pride of race, **false** doctrine, worldly wisdom and rhetoric and an affected manner. They, being inflated with spiritual pride, aspired to **a** position of authority which had not been assigned to them by the Lord himself, namely that of the apostolic office and authority. It would **seem** from verses **13** to **15** that they were trying to deceive the Corinthians by coming in an attractive **guise**, possibly inculcating their error by means of worldly philosophy and rhetoric which would be **a** powerful attraction for the Corinthians. **Paul** probably refers to this in 2 Corinthians 10. 5 and 1 Corinthians 1. 19-20, and 2. 4, 5). Had their influence been allowed to work unhindered, the minds of the saints would have been brought to ruin (**Gk. Phtheiro**), and depraved by the moral influence of these evil men. **Paul** reminds the saints in verse 2 that the

object of his ministry was to preserve them **in** virgin purity towards their beloved Lord. This purity would be accompanied by **an** unaffected air and manner, **and a** singleness of heart **and** purpose **in** all their **service** for God. These **men** seemed to **answer** to the present day modernists. They preached another **Jesus**, possibly **an** imperfect Saviour whose work needed to be implemented by works of the law **as in** the Galatian church and elsewhere (cf. Acts 15. 1), or perhaps a great ethical teacher (see John 3. 2), or otherwise one who would save **men** by **his** example, but certainly not the Jesus of gospel history or Calvary's cross. **We** deduced from this that Satan's great method to-day was to counterfeit the truth, **as seen in** the parable of the wheat and tares, and thus by deception to **ensnare** the souls of many. These **men** also preached **an** entirely different gospel (Gk. *Heteros*) and had it been accepted the Corinthians would then come under the control of demon spirits. The apostle **in** making **his** defence against his adversaries says: " Though I be unskilled in the arts of speech, yet I **am** not wanting **in** the **gift** of knowledge " (i. e. deep insight into spiritual truth) (Conybeare and Howson). This **is an** experimental and progressive knowledge of God that **is** acquired by effort, learning, or experience, and Paul had demonstrated this fact to many persons for the benefit of the Corinthians. Very likely they were Judaizers who were boasting **in a** spirit of racial pride (cf. verse 22) and Paul replies that **he is** at least equal to them **in** all these things. Finally, the greatest proof of the reality of our Christian character and ministry will not be found merely **in** what we say, but **in** the loyalty, devotion, and self-sacrificing spirit shewn towards our Lord and His people, which was so fully manifested **in** the life of **His** faithful servant, Paul, as seen at the end of this chapter (verses 22-31). *William G. Henderson.*

From Crowborough. —In this chapter, Paul's object **is** to vindicate himself from the charges brought against **him**, and especially to vindicate **his** claims of apostleship. It would **seem** that he had been charged with folly **in** boasting. **He** therefore entreats them to bear with him **a** little further **in his** folly. Then he states the motives why he **was** disposed to go into this subject at **all**. It **was** not that he wished to sound his own praise, but it was from love to them. **He** had espoused them to one husband, and **was** afraid lest their affections would be alienated from the Redeemer. Then he reminds them of the beguilement of Eve, and that Satan may **use** those **same** plausible arts to steal away their affections and lead them into **sin**. The persuasive and subtle acts of false teachers and the attractiveness and the corrupting influences of the world might be employed to draw them away from the simplicity and the purity that **is** towards Christ. This simplicity and purity towards Christ would perhaps teach **us** that it **is** a simple and single-hearted devotedness that counts, **a** freedom from all guile and dishonesty. The Lord Jesus had **a** single aim. **He was** pure and holy and there **was** no guile found **in** Him. **We, His** followers, therefore should seek to **be in** like **manner** artless and guileless. To keep pure we must not depart from Him.

When we read of the labours, toils, sorrows and trials of Paul it fills **us** with admiration for him, and, **in a** greater **measure**, fills **us** with deep thanksgiving to the **One** who brought him through them. What **a** record we have **in** this chapter of extraordinary trials and **sufferings** ! **We are** able to **see** that **the** life of Paul was **a** self-renouncing one, continually, for by **sea** or land, at home or abroad, **he was** subjected to privations **and** persecutions. In addition to all **the** external **sufferings** and trials there **was** that which weighed heavily on his heart, "anxiety for all **the** churches. " How heavy or how great this burden **was** we cannot **tell**, but **the** language **is** forceful—" that which presseth upon **me** daily. " Thus **the** apostle gladly laboured on, spending and being **spent** for **his** Master, able to sympathize **with the** weak **and** those that stumble, due to his many **and** varied yet truly practical experiences. This was he who gloried in his weakness, **he** who could **have stayed in his** own place and **there received** the honours already **in his** grasp, **but** chose **rather** to obey and love Christ, and then to find he had **gained a** crown of righteousness. *J. H. B.*

From London, **S. E.** —The beloved apostle seeks the saints' forbearance in what he expresses as a " little foolishness," as his speakings might at first have appeared to them; though to those fully taught of God they are very wisdom.

It was the fire of godly zeal for the Lord's own, the saints of the Corinthian church, that aroused the apostle's great concern to present them unto Christ, in unblemished purity and untarnished integrity regarding the truths of God. What a wonderful example to the leaders and overseers of the Lord's people to-day !

Verses 10, 11. Paul is glorying not in himself, but in the truth of Christ in him as the Lord's servant.

He speaks of many glorying after the flesh, and verily Paul by the sustaining hand of God was enabled to endure intense peril, privation and hardness, which would put many to humbling shame. He fulfilled the wholesome teaching given to Timothy, *Suffer hardship with me as a good soldier of Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 2. 3). How very like to his Lord's experiences were the sufferings that befell him! "In stripes above measure"—compare Isaiah 53. 5, John 19. 1; "perils of robbers"—they even took His garments from Him; "perils of my countrymen" (R. V. M. "race")—many of the Jews hated Him; "perils in the sea"—sharing with His disciples the rigours of Galilee's storm; "perils in the wilderness"—there He knew, when alone in the desert, the hunger and the pitiless biting cold of the night. The thirst and nakedness take one in sad thought to His intense sufferings on the Cross. "Perils among false brethren" would cause the greatest sorrow of all to beloved and lovable Paul. The Lord Jesus also knew the bitterness of this when Judas betrayed Him. **G. S. Pain.**

From Cardiff. —We can understand what Paul means when he says, "that which presseth upon me daily, anxiety for all the churches," as he fears that his children, the fruit of his labours, may be lost to service. The word translated "presseth" is very strong.

In what way was Paul responsible for presenting them "as a pure virgin to Christ"? Are we not sanctified through Christ alone?" (Ephesians 5. 27). [See answer to London.] The Corinthians did not know the danger of tampering with a different gospel. The "knowledge of good and evil" had appealed to Eve's inquisitiveness, but for us the exhortation is:—"I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple unto that which is evil" (Romans 16. 19).

The false apostles were evidently numbered with the saints at Corinth. If still unsaved, they had obtained an entrance by error, or, if saved, they had fallen from the simplicity toward Christ. **E. S. T.**

From Melbourne, **Australia.** —With a godly jealousy the apostle is getting right down to grips with those that would not accept him as an apostle. Some were taking a prominent place in the assembly, preaching another Jesus, and even corrupting the minds of others from the simplicity and purity that is toward Christ, the Christ he preached unto them. The stage of Galatians 1. 6 had not yet been reached by the Corinthians, but what happened to the Galatian assembly could happen to Corinth, yea even to ourselves. We need to watch the beginning of things, to be vigilant and see that nothing unscriptural gets a start. In Acts 20. 30, we learn of men, from among the overseers, arising and speaking perverse things to draw away the disciples from Him to themselves. In 3 John 9-10, we have a deplorable example of men creeping in and causing factions in an Assembly, prating with wicked words and seizing power to cast ones out. Diotrophes may have been one of those privily brought in, as in Galatians 2. 4. The apostle speaks of some such in Corinth, false apostles, deceitful workers, fashioning themselves as ministers of righteousness, but their end, he prophesies, shall be

according to their works. Now it **is** necessary for the apostle to glory for the **sakes** of the saints **in** Corinth **and** so he proceeds to relate some of his experiences down the years. Physical sufferings **in** the body he counted **as** light; trials are here connected with **his** spirit, the anxious mind and fears. Those who exalted themselves in the eyes of these Corinthian believers would know little or nothing of **his** experiences.

Suffering for Christ will result in lasting benefit throughout the eternal **ages**. Let us not mistake the buffetings for our own faults, **as** suffering for Christ's **sake**. There **is** a difference.
S. Stoope.

From Birkenhead.—The matter found in this chapter reminds us of what we read in 1 Corinthians 11. 1, "**Be** ye imitators of **me**, even **as** I also **am** of Christ." **As** the Lord Jesus bore suffering patiently, he set us an example (see 1 Peter 2. 21). Once again we have brought before us the anxiety of the apostle on behalf of the church. He is desirous that they should not give an **ear** to a different gospel. In similar strain he writes to the Galatians (Galatians 1. 8, 9). It was **a** great grief to the apostle to have to write such words as, "Or did I commit **a** sin in abasing myself... ?"

He was grieved that the assembly, which he was instrumental in planting, should cause him so much sorrow.
J. Burns, P. K.

From Kirkintilloch.—The apostle views himself **as** the one who had brought the Corinthians to Christ. **He** also speaks of presenting them **as** a pure virgin to Christ. **We** were of divided opinion **as** to the meaning of verse 2; some thinking it was to a future day the apostle referred when he would present them **as** fruit of his labours, others thought that he was presenting them to Christ in daily sanctification. [See answer to London.] Paul had **a** strong fear that they might be beguiled from Christ. **He** refers to Eve being deceived by Satan to **such** an extent that she forgot what God had said to Adam. There **is** a danger that the saints of God can be beguiled from the person of Christ.

The fact that he had used simple speech had lowered him in the estimation of some whose opinion of themselves was very high and who therefore found occasion to glory. The apostle's letters to the Corinthians were evidence of his great store of knowledge. Paul had laboured in their midst in great humility, but his message was to the end that they might be saved and brought to God's house with all its blessings. Paul was very careful not to offend or allow himself to be a burden, so that although there were things he required, he sacrificed them, such was his zeal for the saints. Apparently there were some who continually sought to humiliate Paul that they themselves might be esteemed greatly. In verse 13, we find that such men are false apostles, imitating those with divine authority, fashioning themselves into apostles of Christ. This was a work of Satan against the assembly of God, stirring up men, who we concluded were men who were saved, and transforming them into deceitful workers. God desires his saints to be full of good works, but these men were full of deceitful works.

If the apostle wished to glory, he had **much** more of which he could glory. Compared with **his** sufferings, the claims of others fade into insignificance. In verses 23-33 we read of the things Paul endured **which** are almost more than any man could bear. **Such** a record should silence any who glory in their activities yet these were only the outward experiences of **his** life. Inwardly, as he states in verse 28, **was** a daily anxiety for all the churches, **which** suggests a linking together of all the churches into one united thing for God. There **was** also **his** anxiety for the individual saints and Paul's care for God's saints **is** also manifest **as** when one is stumbled Paul **is** deeply grieved.
Wm. Whitelaw.

From Glasgow. —In this chapter the apostle continues his defence of his conduct and teaching. He speaks in what was charged as folly—that self commendation which necessarily accompanied self-vindication. It was difficult for him to defend himself without appearing to be commending himself. Hence the frequent references to folly.

Some apparently took offence at his self-support during his initial visit to Corinth when he laboured at his trade and earned his own living. He determined not to make himself a charge on them at any time lest the false apostles should find occasion to say that he preached Christ for gain. They were on the watch for any occasion to disparage the apostle's teaching. The very sincerity of his ministry was an injury to them and they sought by every means to discredit him and bring his ministry into disrepute.

The previous warnings against false teachers are repeated in this chapter. The apostle had endeavoured to win them for Christ in a pure condition, but he was afraid that they were being corrupted by false teaching. Against such the children of God need warning, in this day no less than in any other. False teachers appear in the guise of apostles of Christ and little wonder, for the Adversary himself takes the form of an angel of light. The only way to deal with false teaching is to compare it with the pure Word of God and find its hollowness. But one needs to know the Scriptures to deal effectively with the subtle propaganda of this modern age. The truth of God must triumph over falsehood. *J. J. P.*

From Kilmarnock. —The apostle seems to feel that he has been rather imprudent in the manner he has been writing, but he hopes that the saints will bear with him. He likens the church in Corinth to a betrothed virgin whose chief virtue is to be faithful to the One she loves. He had wooed them to Christ through the preaching of the Gospel and he was jealous lest Satan, through his ministers, should have beguiled them into receiving another gospel.

We do not think it was in a boastful spirit that the apostle describes his great suffering, but rather he was showing his love for Christ and the Gospel. As we read of all the bodily sufferings he passed through, it makes one wonder how he was able to endure it all, and over and above, the care he had for all the churches.

In writing to the Philippian saints he gives the secret, " I am mighty enough for all things *in Him* who empowers *me* " (chapter 4. 13 Roth.). *A. G. S.*

Questions and Answers.

Question from London, S. E. —Can we assume from verse 2 that the Bride of Christ is limited to those in the church of God ? Or do all the redeemed in the Church His Body constitute the Bride ?

Answer. —It is not the Church, the Body of Christ, that is in view in 1 Corinthians 11. 2, but the church of God in Corinth. This will be clearly seen from at least two considerations which emerge from a consideration of the passages in 2 Corinthians 11. and Ephesians 5. In the former Paul speaks of presenting the church in Corinth as a pure virgin to Christ. This was through the effectiveness of Paul's ministry, when, during his stay in Corinth of a year and six months, the church of God there was planted by him (1 Corinthians 3. 6). In the latter scripture (Ephesians 5.) it is Christ Himself that will present the Church, the Body, to Himself. The words are—" that He might present the Church to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish " (verse 27). This is the Eve of Genesis chapter 2. presented in all the holiness and unblemished state of the perfect work of God upon her. The Church of Ephesians 5. can never be tempted or fall, for

to the **Church**, the Body, as such, no commandments have been given. The Eve of Genesis 3. is an Eve to whom God's commandment **had** been given to **be** kept. **Such is** the church of God, and here the work of the serpent can **be** seen and known. The minds of saints can be and have been corrupted by him through the instruments he **uses as** seen in 2 Corinthians 11. 15, ministers that fashion themselves **as** ministers of righteousness. Here in verses **14** and **15** we have an evidence of the excellence of the R. V. over the A. V. The A. V. uses the word "transformed," both in regard to Satan and his ministers, whereas the R. V. correctly gives "fashioneth" and "fashion." Satan can never transform himself **as** an angel of light. There **is** no inner life or light in him to find expression in the answering outward form; with him and his ministers it **is** only a matter of fashioning themselves like what they are not nor ever can be.

All the redeemed of this dispensation are in the Church, the Body and Bride of Christ. J. M.

Questions from Willington Quay. —(1) Verse 4. "Ye do well to bear with him." What **is** the tenor of those words ?

Answer (1). —Paul here **is** speaking ironically. Can there be another **Jesus** than Paul preached, a different spirit, a different gospel than he preached ? If so, then they would do well to bear with the bearers of such tidings. But **as** there **is** no other **Jesus** and no other gospel, then tolerance of men who were truly false apostles and deceitful workers should not be allowed. Such, I judge, **is** his meaning. J. M.

There are at least three possible explanations of this perplexing clause: —

1. Paul was speaking ironically (as above).
2. **He was** speaking seriously in argument—" **If** the false teacher could recommend a better Saviour, e t c they would do well to receive his doctrines. "
3. That the clause should be "ye do well to bear with me," i. e., " If you **receive** so readily one who preaches another gospel, one who comes with far less evidence, etc., you might at least bear with **me** also. For I reckon that I **am** not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles. "—F. L. E.

Question 2. —Verse **13**. Were these persons in an assembly of God ?

Answer 2. —Alas, such men had crept in privily and the damage they **did** when inside the Fellowship was great, **as** we learn from Acts 20. **29**, Jude 4. J. M.

Questions from Cowdenbeath. —(1). Verse 2. How are **we** to understand Paul presenting the Corinthian saints **as a** pure virgin to Christ.

See answer to question from London above. —J. M.

Question (2). Verse 22. What **is** the difference in the terms—Hebrews, Israelites, Seed of Abraham ?

Answer (2). —The word " Hebrew " **is** first used in Genesis 14. **13**, "And there **came** one that had escaped, and told Abram the Hebrew. " This **was a** definition by which the inhabitants of Canaan knew Abraham. It conveyed the thought of whence he had. come; Trench says, " This title containing allusion to the **passing over** of Abraham from the other side of Euphrates. " Abraham **was** an incomer into the land of Canaan. It **was** imposed on Abraham and his descendants by others. See Genesis 39. 14, **17-**; 41. **12**; Exodus 1. **16, 19**, etc.

" Israelites " **is, as** Trench says, " the absolute name, that which expressed the whole dignity and glory of a member of the Theocratic nation, of the people in peculiar covenant with God. The name springs from that name given to Jacob

the wrestler, who was a Prince who had power with God". Had the Jews ever remembered their high calling and destiny as Israelites how different would have been their history!

The seed of Abraham refers (1) first of all to Christ, as we learn from Galatians 3. 16. It also refers (2) to Abraham's seed as springing from Isaac, such as he was who was born after the Spirit (Romans 9. 7). It is applied to Gentiles (3), by Paul in Romans 4. 18, who are Abraham's spiritual seed; "Who in hope believed against hope, to the end that he might become a father of many nations, according to that which had been spoken, so shall thy seed be." It is also (4) used of those who are merely children of the flesh, who are descended from Abraham, as Ishmael was. "And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he is thy seed" (Genesis 21. 13, and see Galatians 4. 21-31 as to the allegorical teaching in the contrast made between Isaac and Ishmael, the children of Sarah and Hagar respectively).—J. M.

Question from Cardiff.—How can we link 2 Corinthians 11. 17, "That which I speak, I speak not after the Lord...." with 1 Corinthians 7. 12, "But to the rest say I, not the Lord...." and with 1 Corinthians 7. 40, "and I think that I also have the Spirit of God:...." and with 2 Timothy 3. 16, "Every scripture inspired of God...."?

Answer.—It is quite clear that, though every scripture is inspired of God, the Scriptures record things that are not true, though what they record were facts. For instance, in Genesis 3. 4 the serpent said to the woman, that if they ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, "Ye shall not surely die." This was a deliberate lie, yet it is part of the inspired Scriptures. Again, the lie of Sarah at the prospective birth of Isaac is recorded: "Then Sarah denied, saying, I laughed not; for she was afraid. And He said, Nay; but thou didst laugh" (Genesis 18. 15). The Spirit of God could not have given an account of the facts that surrounded the birth of Isaac without recounting this. There are many like things in the Scriptures.

Paul in 2 Corinthians 11. 17 recounts by the Spirit's guidance facts, that he was about to follow the foolish practice of others who gloried in the flesh as to their sufferings and accomplishments, and this course he follows to cancel out their small amount of sufferings by his great sufferings for the Lord's sake. Yet in so doing, he says that they made him foolish, for a man is foolish who speaks about himself and writes his own biography. Men have written their own biographies because they have feared that no one else would trouble themselves to write them; Paul again tells us facts in 1 Corinthians 7. In one part he writes the commandment of the Lord; in another part he gives his own judgement, as one who has received mercy to be faithful to the Lord, and in giving advice to the widow to remain unmarried he does not put it stronger than, "I think that I also have the Spirit of God," in saying what he says. Such things are quite clear and self-explanatory. The Spirit of God has recorded much in the Scriptures that were facts, but these things which He caused men to write were far from His mind that they should ever have happened.—J. M.

Question from Kirkintilloch.—2 Corinthians 11. 5 and 12. 11—"the very chiefest apostles," or R. V. M. "those pre-eminent apostles." Is the apostle Paul referring to true or false apostles here?

Answer.—The chiefest apostles, or those pre-eminent or in the highest degree, were apostles of the Lord, and not such as assumed that name, who said that they were apostles and were not (2 Corinthians 11. 13, Revelation 2. 2). God's servants are not all on the same level of gift and ability, so was it with the apostles. Some were pre-eminent above the rest, as, for instance, Peter and James and John. Paul was pre-eminent above Barnabas. Men need ever to recognize such differences that God has made, who has not made all men equal as to gift, etc.—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.

The art of letter-writing is waning. There may be many causes for this; perhaps, well up in the list, the rush of current affairs. Even if one delights in communicating one's thoughts in letter-form, the general tendency is to be brief, curt, and concise. Thus much is often lost in the expressing of finer feelings.

Some one, commenting recently on the centenary of a master of prose and poetry and belles-lettres, has said concerning his writings: " *He* spent far too long over polishing his sentences. " Well—it is surely good to read goodly matter in goodly words.

Letter-writing is often self-revealing. Add to this the fact that the Holy Spirit has used such a man as the beloved Paul to convey the light of God's will for His people, through the prism of his own sanctified mind. Thus we feel sure we can agree, after our year's study of this second letter to the Corinthians, with the commentator who sums up as follows: " In its individuality of style, intensity of feeling, inimitable expression of the writer's idiosyncrasy, it (2 Corinthians) may be said to stand at the head of all the Pauline Epistles, Galatians not excepted It is the most personal, least doctrinal, of all the Epistles except Philemon; but at the same time it is saturated with the characteristic conceptions of the Apostle Paul. "

We repeat that letters, and no less divinely-inspired letters, are self-revealing. The following phrase reveals much to us; it is a key-word that unlocks the deep treasures of a sanctified life.

⁴¹ *For Christ's sake* " (2 Corinthians 12. 10).

Those trials, almost past human endurance, were bearable because of this. An echo from Paul's call on the Damascus road floats down to us: "I will show him how many things he must suffer for *My Name's sake*" (Acts 9. 16).

Then, taking long steps, we look into that little sitting-room in Caesarea, where two worthy servants of the Lord, Paul and Philip, are holding converse. There intrudes a certain prophet, Agabus, with ominous warnings to which warm-hearted Paul replies, " What do ye, weeping and breaking my heart ? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the *Name of*

the Lord Jesus " (Acts 21. 13). It appears that ever reverberating in his heart were the words of his Master: " Blessed are ye when men shall reproach you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for *My sake*. Rejoice.... " (Matthew 5. 11-12).

John gives further insight into the trials of those who follow Him—" All these things will they do unto you for *My Name's sake*, because they know not Him that sent Me " (John 15. 21). Then later, when, as a very old man, he is writing to Gaius, the beloved, he encourages him to continue in his labour of love towards those who for the *sake of the Name* had gone forth, " taking nothing of the Gentiles " (3 John 7). Bearing for His Name's sake is part of the risen Lord's commendation to the Church at Ephesus (Revelation 2. 3).

May it be that we all, with warmed hearts to Himself, may emulate the worthy men of early days and go forth " rejoicing that they were counted worthy to **suffer** dishonour for *the Name* " (Acts 5. 41). *Jas. Martin.*

THE SECOND LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS.

Chapters 12 and 13.

From Cowdenbeath.—In this, the most personal of all his epistles, Paul reveals to us much of his inner life and he also narrates certain incidents which are not recorded elsewhere. Had the Corinthians not compelled him we would not have known concerning his unique experience of being caught up into Paradise. The purpose of this was personal. It was neither permissible nor possible for mortal lips to repeat what he had heard. It was, therefore, not an occasion when he received revelations of divine truth for communicating to the churches. Paul's object in relating this incident was not to provide himself with an opportunity to glory, but rather to explain how he came to possess such weakness. The very thing which they despised, he, on his part, accounted an actual endowment from the Lord to fit him more perfectly for His service. Paul's desire was to have the thorn removed and concerning this he prayed thrice, but the Lord's answer was sufficient. He was assured of grace to face the anguish caused by his physical infirmity and what to him was more blessed still he was now in a condition, because of his weakness, for Christ to display His power through him. "For Christ's sake"—this was the principal consideration in Paul's life. As he viewed the trying circumstances of life he now saw these in an entirely new light. Instead of dwelling upon the bitterness of these to himself he rejoiced in the knowledge which the Lord's words imparted to him that Christ would be magnified therein.

Impelled by his fatherly love he intends to visit them again yet not to be cared for. But because he cared for them, not to get, but to give, and if indeed he did desire anything from them it was their love in greater measure. It would appear that some were ready to accuse him. If he himself had not received from them he had sent others to be supported by them. He openly challenged such an accusation and condemned it as being untrue. Although he wrote to justify himself against their accusations his real objective in so doing was to edify them that they might be assured that he was an apostle with authority from the Lord and in view of his proposed visit they would seek to put matters right in the assembly. He gives solemn warning that when he comes he will not spare the wrongdoers and so he will give them a proof of Christ speaking in him.

The Corinthians associated the thought of power with Christ, but weakness with Paul. He would instruct them, however, that although Christ is powerful, He' was crucified in weakness, and although he (Paul), was looked upon as being weak, he would display the power of God when in their presence. Having thus met every argument which they could put-up against him he asks them to turn the investigations upon themselves: They were looking for an evidence of Christ being in him (Paul), but perhaps they did not realize that they ought to

have expected to see Christ in themselves. Christ in the believer is a different truth from the believer being "in Christ." "In Christ" is the unassailable position of every believer, whilst the other truth is entirely a conditional state. Christ may or may not dwell in our hearts. He desires such a place and if He is *within*, the evidence will be seen *without*, but if we give Him the outside place although possessors of eternal life yet we may become reprobate, having no fitness for His service. The word "reprobate" is the same as is translated "rejected" in 1 Corinthians 9. 27. —secure as saints, but rejected as servants is a possibility.

Paul's exhortation that they should be perfected (verse 11) was in accord with his prayer for them unto this same end (verse 9). He prayed before he exhorted. We have here a pattern to copy. How much more effective our exhortations would be if preceded and accompanied by prayer!

From London, S. E. —After enumerating the physical trials which entitle him to boast, Paul regrets the necessity of boasting, but proceeds to mention "visions and revelations of the Lord." As a compromise between leaving them out altogether and sounding too boastful he refers to himself in the third person. It is important to realise the significance of the "thorn in the flesh." Whether the revelations were intended to fortify Paul in his faith when the thorn proved almost unbearable, or whether the thorn was to impress upon Paul the sense of his own weakness which might have been forgotten in contemplation of the great honour conferred on him, is open to discussion. If the Lord spoke the words, "My grace is sufficient for thee," in answer to Paul's prayer the second alternative seems more likely, especially in view of verse 7. The important lesson derived from his experience is that in human weakness God reveals most powerfully His own strength.

Paul refutes any idea that he is coming among them merely for his own material gains, and maintains that he is coming for the welfare of their souls. To the accusation that he exploited them cunningly by sending envoys to collect money for the saints in Jerusalem he quotes the example of Titus whose integrity they never seem to have doubted. Were not Paul and Titus walking by the same Spirit, in the same steps? To clear any doubts that may have arisen in the minds of the Corinthians, Paul explains that he has vindicated his character not out of any personal consideration, but for their edification. In doubting Paul's credentials they were doubting the truth of God, which Paul was trying to teach them. Only when these doubts were removed could the Corinthians be found in a healthy spiritual condition, such as prevailed before Paul had occasion to write reproving them for their shortcomings.

As a proof of his apostleship Paul directs the saints to examine themselves whether they were in the faith or not; that is, if they were assured of their salvation and could prove themselves not to be reprobates, then he trusted they would be assured of his authority and standing as an apostle.

The care and love for the church by the apostle is seen in his prayer for them (13. 7-9). Paul prays that they may do no evil, but that they "may do that which is honourable." It is interesting to compare this prayer of the apostle with the "Lord's prayer" in Matthew 6., where the Lord Himself, showing His love for the disciples, says in verse 13, "Bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one." It would appear that such prayer is important, for the spiritual well-being of the saints.

In conclusion Paul takes his leave of them stressing the need for them to be perfected, to be of the same mind, and to live in peace; though it would appear that living in peace ought to be a natural outcome of being of one mind.

The assurance of the presence of the triune God is given most definitely in verse 14, and the fact that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are individual persons and yet one is clearly emphasized.

D. G. Evans, A. C. Bishop.

From Kirkintilloch. —At Corinth, the authority of Paul was in question and he had been compelled by outward circumstances to write in defence of his apostleship. Had Paul failed in his purpose, all his writings, which he claimed to be regarded as the commandments of the Lord, would be undermined, and his doctrine would be repudiated as unauthoritative. This matter is serious, as it not only affected these in Corinth, but the believers of the present day, hence, he was compelled to boast.

Paul commences chapter 12. with another line of defence. " But I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. " Regarding this statement, some thought it might have been experienced during Paul's visit to Arabia. On the other hand, it seems that this epistle was written about A. D. 60. Fourteen years before this (A. D. 46) Paul was stoned at Lystra and his bruised and battered body was dragged outside the city and left as dead. Paul had such wonderful communion with the Lord and heard such unspeakable words, that he seemed to have been given physical strength and spiritual help to endure. He had been sorely bruised in chapter 11., but spiritually blessed in chapter 12. Contact with things in the third heaven could not be made known to those upon the earth.

The man whom Paul knew and speaks of here is " a man in Christ, " and of such a one would he glory. What he saw and heard there remained with him. As to the exact time when this took place, we cannot be too positive, but the important factor is this, not the time, but the experience which was unique and real. "The man in Christ, " was undoubtedly himself, not Paul as Paul, but Paul hidden in Christ.

We note with regard to " the thorn in the flesh " in verse 7, (1) Divine permission—"there was given to me". (2) Physical handicap—"a thorn in the flesh". (3) Inflicted by Satan—"messenger of Satan to buffet me". What this thorn was, we do not actually know, but it must have been very painful. The Greek word, *Akantha*, means a cluster of thorns, such as we have in Genesis 3. and John 19., that which was an emblem of the curse and was given to the Lord when He was crucified. But the word " thorn " in 2 Corinthians 12. is another word in the Greek text, *Skolops*, meaning a sharp pointed stake, inflicting bodily pain. To connect this with Acts 14. 19 and Galatians 4. 13, and 2 Corinthians 10. is only speculative. Whatever it was, it is a happy thing that the Spirit of God led Paul to omit naming the particular kind of trouble. God knows the subtlety of the human heart and He knows well, how others might trade and make much of the same trouble. God could use Paul, and bless others through him, in a far greater way in this condition, than if he had been full of carnal strength and physical power. He realised the sufficiency of God. He rested upon the word of His grace, and the grace of His word became a mighty force through him. " That ye, having always all sufficiency in everything, may abound unto every good work " (see 9. 8).

In his service among the saints, what tireless energy Paul manifested, what an intense life he lived, what an amazing amount of work he pressed into his life ! He travelled 8, 100 miles during his three missionary journeys which took about ten years, besides the rest of the journeys which are not given in detail. His service was self-sacrificing. In verse 16, the Greek word rendered *crafty* means, first of all, unscrupulous workings (see also Luke 20. 23; 1 Corinthians 3. 19; 2 Corinthians 4. 2, *Panourgia*). Then the word rendered in the Greek text, *Panourgos*, means cunning or quick-wittedness in skilful seizing of opportunities. The word rendered in the Greek text for " Guile " is *Dolos*, meaning, a Bait (see Mark 14. 1). The expression, in verse 19 of our chapter, " In the sight of God, " appears many times in 2 Corinthians. See 2. 17, 4. 2, 7. 12, 8. 21. Notice the three occurrences of the word " lest, " in verses 20 and 21, reminding us of three possibilities, (1) Condition, (2) Contact, (3) Contrition. *Maxwell Sangster.*

From Hamilton, Ontario.—Paul had reason whereof to glory, his conversion being one of the richest displays of God's grace to man. Could he ever forget that heavenly vision, that glorious appearing on the Damascus highway when he saw the divine glory in the face of Jesus Christ? From that day forth his one desire was, "But far be it from me to glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Galatians 6. 14). Here is the only basis for divine glorying. "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 1. 31). It would seem clear from Acts 26. 16 that Paul had various appearings and visions. That which he spake and wrote he received directly from the Lord himself (Galatians 1. 12-17).

It was through the apostle that God unfolded the glorious mystery concerning the Church which is His Body (see Ephesians 3. 3-8). Also, regarding the divine ordinance of the breaking of the bread he says, "For I received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, etc. . . ." (1 Corinthians 11. 23-25). The apostle had revealed to him the mystery of the Faith which embodies the whole truth of God. We also thought of the visions he received while at Troas (Acts 16. 9, 10), at Corinth (Acts 18. 9, 10) and on the ship (Acts 27. 23, 24). No doubt Paul is speaking of himself in the vision of our study, which perhaps refers to the stoning at Lystra (Acts 14. 19). There is also the occasion when Paul, at Jerusalem, fell into a trance (Acts 22. 17).

Concerning the thorn in the flesh—the apostle perhaps was following the example of the Lord Jesus in Gethsemane, when he earnestly besought the Lord thrice for its removal. The Lord did not grant His request, but the Master Himself drew near, and whispered, "My grace is sufficient for thee." The Lord's words were enough for Paul, and are sufficient for us too.

Paul was not one of the twelve, yet he had the high honour of being called an Apostle of Christ Jesus, through the will of God. He had seen Christ in resurrection and had heard His voice (1 Corinthians 15. 9 and Acts 22. 14, 15). Other helpful scriptures in this respect are, 1 Timothy 1. 12 and 2 Timothy 1. 11 and 1 Corinthians 9. 1, 2.

Another apostolic sign was the power of working miracles. Note some of Paul's miracles recorded in Acts 14. 8-11, 15. 12, 16. 18, and 20. 7-12.

The apostle Peter (in 2 Peter 3. 15), and Luke, the beloved physician throughout the Acts of the Apostles, both bear witness to the genuineness of his divine call. And although the Corinthians did not honour him as an apostle, we notice in these two chapters how Paul belittles himself. (See also 1 Corinthians 15. 9, and Ephesians 3. 8). Following his example then, we, who are also in Christ Jesus, ought to humble ourselves in obedience to our Lord and Master Jesus Christ.

William Thompson, Thomas Ramage.

From Crowborough. Perhaps there were two reasons why the words Paul heard were "unspeakable." (a) Human words could never describe the things he saw and heard, and a finite mind could not understand them, (b) The visions and revelations may have been meant for Paul himself and never to be communicated to another. He shows a distinction between the rapt and glorified person of verses 2 and 4 and the infirmity-laden victim of the thorn in the flesh of verse 7. The weakness belonged to himself as natural Paul the man, the glorying was something beyond.

Paul's longing was that the church would still be espoused to one husband as a pure virgin with no adulteration of the world whatever. If the earlier fears were confirmed, however, he was not going to spare. Paul, lover of grace as he was, would not forget that God was also zealous of righteousness.

B. U. French.

From Glasgow. —Paul opens with **a** reference to **a** wonderful experience which, it is thought, refers to **an** experience in his own life. **He** was mysteriously caught up to the third heaven, and heard words there concerning things pertaining to God, and perhaps spoken by Him, **in** the counsels of Heaven, words which he himself could not utter. It is thought that the "third heaven" **is a place** outside the knowledge of man and beyond his powers of perception. The apostle records this event to indicate to all who challenged him that he had very real and very substantial experience of God **as** an apostle of His.

Many have tried to define what "the thorn in flesh" **was**, adducing the evidence of Galatians 4. **15** and 6. **11** **as** showing that he suffered from defective eyesight. Others have thought that "a messenger of Satan" was more likely to **be** something in the spiritual sphere, but of this **we** can be sure that it **was** designed **as a** restraining influence on the apostle when he might have been tempted to glory in himself.

With regard to his proposed visit Paul had **a** fear that he might be disappointed in the behaviour of certain of them who were giving place to fleshly passions which should have been under firm control long before. **He** had ministered faithfully to them on such sins and on carnal minds and he feared that when he **came** to them again, he might, **as** an ambassador of Christ, be humbled before them **because** of the apparent failure of his mission. This time he would not spare any who had continued in their wrongdoing. If they sought a proof of Christ's working in him, they might find the proof not so palatable **as** they might have wished. Accordingly he called upon them to examine themselves and **see** the evidence of Christ **in** their own hearts, to purify their ways that he might have no occasion for disciplinary action when he eventually **came** among them. *J. J. P.*

From Atherton. —It was suggested that the third heaven and Paradise, verses **2** and **4**, might refer to the **same** place, the immediate presence of God. Paradise here **is** very clearly not the **same as** in Luke 23. 43. The Lord's words to the dying thief tell of the place below this earth—Upper Sheol—upper **as** distinct from lower Sheol; whereas the apostle here speaks of being **caught up** into Paradise. Paradise speaks of **a** place where peace and joy reign, where communion with God **is** known and where sin **is** absent.

Verse 14 brings before **us** an all-important principle which should find its proper place in the domestic circle, though directly the apostle **is** writing of his own fatherly care for the saints.

Chapter 13. Did the apostle visit Corinth **a** second time? The evidence, it was suggested, **is** conclusive, since here he speaks of coming to them the third time. Then in chapter **2**. 1 he writes of not coming again to them with sorrow. **Had** he come before with sorrow, this would point to an earlier (second) visit, but could not bear reference to the initial visit resulting in the planting of the Assembly. It was pointed out that "with sorrow" does not necessarily indicate **a** previous visit with sorrow, but rather in his intention to come this second time he does not wish to come thus—"with sorrow."

The reference to Christ "crucified through weakness" would **seem** to take us to **His** humility in becoming man and enduring the death of the cross.

We conclude our present study with the happy benediction, which **we** would all seek to know and blessedly realise in greater fulness—"The grace of the Lord •Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all."

From Cardiff. — "Paradise" appears to be a term used on various occasions to denote a place where peace and tranquility are supreme. The LXX uses "paradeisos" in Genesis 2. 8, the scene of man's blissful innocence before the Fall, and it is used again in the Song of Songs (4. 13), translated "orchard," or "choice garden." The word occurs again in Revelation 2. 7, speaking of the "Paradise" (or garden, note R. V. M.) of God, in which was the tree of life, the fruit which those who overcame were permitted to eat. "Paradise" also referred to that place which was the abode of the dead, where the Lord Himself went (Acts 2. 31) otherwise called Abraham's bosom (see Luke 16. 23 and Luke 23. 43).

Fourteen years after the event Paul is led to recount his experience in order to meet the exigencies of the moment, that in the minds of the Corinthian saints he might be established as an apostle who had been given authority and power in fulfilling his ministry.

Paul indeed was a chosen vessel unto the Lord (Acts 9. 15) yet as an earthen vessel (4. 7) he was moulded and fashioned in the hands of the Master Workman. In every situation it was his ambition to be well-pleasing unto Him (2 Corinthians 5. 9). He plainly warns them of his purpose to adjust matters, although even in that his action would be but another proof of the authority which had been given him for their building-up, and not for their destruction.

Weakness which draws contempt from man, is in God's purposes a medium of power, and Paul, to substantiate this, refers to the resignation and submission of the Lord to the will of His Father.

There is established, then, the truth that our weakness is ever the condition for the operation of the power of God. It was so in Him; so it is in us. As we are identified with Him in patient endurance and submission to the Divine will, we live and triumph through the power of God. *John Follett.*

From Birkenhead. —With regard to his experience Paul did not know whether he left his body or not. The apostle John had a similar experience in Revelation 4., when he heard, "Come up hither." The main thought is that he was "in Christ." Death has no effect upon this state. It proves the continued existence of the soul apart from the body. With regard to the vision we would point out that it was what the apostle "heard" and not what he "saw," and the purpose thereof was to strengthen him.

The general principle, however, is that power is made perfect in weakness.

Verse 14. It is evident that the apostle made a visit to Corinth which is not mentioned in the Acts. We suggest that his writings here are in connexion with his second visit.

It was the apostle's wish to see the evidence of Christ in the Corinthian saints, so he exhorts them to prove themselves, in the light of the Scriptures, which contain the standards of perfection. *R. B. Williams, P. K.*

From Willington Quay. —We noticed the special reference in verse 2 to "a man in Christ" and thought this related to the soul of a man as distinct from the body or spirit of a man (2 Corinthians 5. 17). Although Paul is unable to say whether he was in the body or not, it is evident that he had powers of perception and understanding whilst in this state. The revelation which the Lord gave to the apostle at this time was no doubt for the purpose of encouraging and strengthening him, that he might be assured that his trials and sufferings were not in vain.

In view of the thorn in the flesh being described as " a messenger of Satan, " and of the reference to buffeting in verse 7, could it refer to a person ? In Numbers 33. 55, the Lord warned Israel that those people whom they failed to drive out of the land of Canaan would be as thorns in their sides. On the other hand, the fact that the thorn in the flesh was administered at approximately the same time as the vision, it is doubtful whether the thorn could be a person affecting Paul throughout the intervening 14 years.

It is interesting to note that Paul besought the Lord " thrice " concerning this thing, but the Lord reassured him. In the preceding chapter we are given a glimpse of the great physical weakness that so oft beset the apostle, yet he could rejoice in such weaknesses because it was then that the power of God was seen in all its perfection.

In chapter 13. 5, the apostle exhorts the saints to examine themselves concerning their being in the faith, and then speaks of the possibility of a saint being reprobate—the thought here would seem to be concerning a saint's spiritual condition and his inability to be of service for God if he be in a state of rejection (reprobate).

Paul did not desire that when he came to Corinth he would have to take drastic action, and before closing the Epistle in such a loving manner, he again repeats that his authority from the Lord was to build up and not to cast down. **K. R.**

Prom Melbourne.—Among the revelations given to Paul were: the mystery of the Church the Body, the mystery of Christ, and the coming of the Lord for His Church. The man he knew was, of course, himself. What he didn't know was whether he was in the body or out. This rules out the false teaching of " soul-sleep. " Even for such an one as the apostle Paul it was necessary to have a counterbalance. The more knowledge we acquire the more likely we are to be puffed up. The Lord knoweth how and when to lay his hand on his children to keep them from kicking over the traces. Nevertheless great care needs to be exercised when we speak concerning anyone whom we deem to have been chastened. The margin of error on our apprehension is too great to risk. Judge not that ye be not judged.

In presenting his credential it would seem he had taken a course that **was** against his desires. **He** is more at home in his humiliation; at his first coming to them, he determined not to know anything among them, save Jesus Christ, and **Him** crucified. His speech and preaching then were in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. But now he goes to great lengths and speaks in language that they would understand. **He** was a father to them, brought them up, planted them, fed, nursed or admonished them, yet the more he loved them, the less he was loved by them.

To be of one mind and live in peace is the effective antidote to any strife in the community. In the last two verses the word *all* is worthy of notice. **We** must not become self-centred and become individualists; we need to think of ourselves as a whole. **S. Stoope.**

From Kilmarnock.—According to Newberry's dates, 14 years previous would refer to the time Paul **was** stoned at Lystra (Acts 14.). **He** was thought to be dead, but God wrought a miracle in that he was able to **rise** up and walk. I understand it would be while he was unconscious to the world that **he** heard the things "which it is not allowable for a man to speak. " (*Roth.*), Naturally to **be** honoured thus would cause one to be proud, but the Lord who knows human weakness, allowed Satan to buffet him lest he should be exalted overmuch.

It is the Lord's will that no matter how gifted a brother may be, he should not "think of himself more highly than he ought to think" (Romans 12. 3). While the Lord did not remove the "thorn in the flesh," His grace was sufficient, and Paul gladly gloried in his weakness; thus showing an example to every suffering saint.

Chapter 13. 5. "Try your own selves"; we are inclined to think this is not in regard to their *salvation*, but rather their attitude towards Christ as Lord. Rotherham gives *disapproved* instead of *reprobate* in verses 5 and 6. In verse 11, we have a five-fold exhortation which if carried out will result in "the God of love and peace shall be with you." A. G. S.

From Halifax, Bradford and Leeds.—The main themes of the two final chapters of the 2nd Epistle to the Corinthians seem to be that of a vindication of Paul's apostolic authority, a revelation concerning the problem of suffering, and an endeavour on the apostle's part to restore the rebellious to the perfect will of God. In establishing his authority Paul maintained this attitude because he realized that the Testimony of God was at stake in the Corinthian Church, and thus the authority of the Lord over his own Church might be rejected. The apostle's sole ambition seems to be to glorify Christ. With this object in view, he records a personal narrative of a man who was caught up to Paradise, and had such wonderful visions unfolded before him, and heard such unspeakable sounds that he was not permitted to reveal their character. (Note that in verse 7 he uses the first personal pronoun). From such wonderful visions and revelations it would seem that Paul was in danger of becoming exalted overmuch and thus he was afflicted by some bodily disease (the words "in the flesh," 2 Corinthians 12. 7, seem to suggest this). Probably this was due to demon activity, for it was observed that he would pass through their sphere of influence on his way to the third heaven (Ephesians 2. 2 and 6. 12). The solemn lesson we should learn from this is never to give place to the devil's insidious suggestions to our mind. We were puzzled as to the reason why Satan should have any power over the body of the believer, but in any case we observed that Paul recognized the sovereignty of Christ over Satan in this matter. Paul later rejoices in the fact that though he appeared weak in the eyes of his adversaries these very experiences were the medium through which the power of Christ was being manifested (cp. 2 Corinthians 4. 7).
William G. Henderson, F. Canning.

From Paisley and Barrhead.—The brief record of the **unique** bestowal of divine revelations upon the apostle Paul appears to be the crowning feature of his message. Assuming, as all the evidence here suggests, that Paul was indeed speaking of himself, the passage gives rise to much possible speculation as to where and when the experience was given, as to the meaning of "in the body, or apart from the body," as to what Paul's "thorn in the flesh" was, etc., all of which is very interesting, but difficult to pursue to conclusive scriptural findings, if indeed that be possible. We were rather interested, however, in the use of the term "the third heaven." To what place in the sphere of divine abode does this refer, and is it the same place as Paradise (verse 4), as was suggested by some? [1].

Some discussion centred on Paul's words,—^{*}But being crafty I caught you with guile." In view of such Scriptures as John 1. 47 and 1 Peter 2. 1, we found the apostle's words in this verse rather surprising. The thought was expressed that perhaps "guile" here was used similarly to "foolishness" earlier in the chapter. Neither was a characteristic to be proud of, but Paul had been compelled by their attitude to use a semblance of both. [2].

"Try your own selves, whether ye be in the faith" (13. 5). Consideration of this expression gave rise to the suggestion that it was possible to be "in the faith" nominally, yet not so in the sight of God. That is taking "the faith"

here as expressed in the Fellowship. This in turn led to mention of Matthew 16. 19. Here, it would appear, right and proper measures taken by those who have the rule in God's House, have already been determined in Heaven. We would like some further help on this matter. [3].

J. D. T.

FORM AND FASHION.

This word-study arises from the occurrence of the Gr. word *meta-schematizo* in 2 Corinthians 11. 13-15. It may simplify matters a little if we look first at the two root words *morphe* — form, and *schema* = fashion, before studying the compound words. — See also Bible Studies, 1933, page 62.

Morphe occurs in Mark 16. 12. "He was manifested in another *form* unto t w o . . . " and in Philippians 2. 6, 7, . . . "who, being in the *form* of G o d . . . taking the *form* of a servant (bondservant)". *Schema* occurs in 1 Corinthians 7. 31, . . . "the *fashion* of this world passeth away", and Philippians 2. 8 . . . "being found *in fashion as a man*."

The importance of the difference between these words is brought out in a study of Philippians 2. 6-8. But before looking into this portion, we submit definitions of the words given by scholars.

Vine: — "*Morphe* denotes the special or characteristic *form* or *feature* of a person . . . it is used with particular significance in the New Testament only of Christ in Philippians 2. 6, 7 . . . "*form* of G o d " . . . "*form* of a servant."

Gifford: — "*Morphe* is therefore properly the nature or essence, not in the abstract, but as actually subsisting in the individual and retained as long as the individual exists . . . Thus in Philippians 2. 6, *Morphe Theon* (form of God) is the Divine nature actually and inseparably subsisting in the person of Christ

Wuest: — "*Morphe* is a Greek . . . term which refers to the outward expression one gives of himself, that outward expression proceeding from and being truly representative of one's inward character and nature. We use the word "form" in that way in the sentence, "the tennis-player's *form* was excellent": we mean that the outward expression he gave of his inward ability to play tennis was excellent.

Trench: — "*Morphe*, like the Latin, *forma* . . . signifies the form as it is the utterance of the inner life: not 'being,' but 'mode of being,' or, better, 'mode of existence'; and only God could have the mode of existence of God. But He who had thus been from eternity 'in the form of God' took at His incarnation 'the form of a servant (*doulos* = a bondservant) . . . His manner of existence was now that of a bondservant, that is, a bondservant of God; for in the midst of all our Lord's humiliations, He was never a bondslave of men. Their *diakonos* (deacon, servant) He may have been (e. g., John 13. 4, 5) . . . but the *Doulos*, never; they, on the contrary, His."

Schema is defined by Vine as follows: — "A figure, fashion . . . is translated ⁴ 'fashion' in 1 Corinthians 7. 31, 'of the world,' signifying that which comprises the manner of life, actions, etc. of humanity in general; in Philippians 2. 8 it is used of the Lord in His being found 'in fashion as a man,' and signifies what He was in the eyes of m a n . . . the entire outwardly perceptible mode and shape of His existence, just as the preceding words *morphe* = form, and *homoïoma* = likeness, describe what He was in Himself as Man."

Trench: — "and being found 'in fashion (*schema*) as a man' . . . these words . . . but declare the outward facts, which came under the knowledge of his fellow-men, with therefore an emphasis on 'having been found.' He was by man found ⁴ in fashion as a man, 'the *schema* here signifying the whole outward presentation."

Trench, continuing, writes, "The distinction between them (these two words) comes out very clearly in the compound verbs, *metaschematizo* and *meta-morphoo*. Thus if I were to change a Dutch garden into an Italian this would be *meta-*

schematizo, but if I were to transform a garden into something wholly different, as into a city, this would be *metamorphoo*. It is possible for Satan *'metaschematizo'* himself into an angel of light: he can take the whole outward semblance of such. But to any such change of his it would be impossible to apply *metamorphoo*; for this would imply a change not external, but internal... which lies quite beyond his power. "

Wuest: —" The word *metaschematizo* means to change one's outward expression by assuming from the outside an expression that does not proceed from, nor is it representative of one's true inner nature. The word 'masquerade' is an exact English translation. Satan was originally the holy angel Lucifer. As such he gave outward expression of his inner nature as an angel of light, which expression proceeded from and was truly representative of that nature. That was *morphoo*. Then he sinned and became an angel of darkness, giving outward expression of that darkness. That was *morphoo*. Then he changed his outward expression from that of darkness to one of light by assuming from the outside an expression of light, which outward expression did not come from, nor was it representative of his inner nature as an angel of darkness. That is *metaschematizo*. The translation could read, 'masquerading as apostles of Christ'... 'Even Satan masquerades as an angel of light' "

The word used in Mark 9. 2. and Matthew 17. 2 to describe the transfiguration of the Lord is *metamorphoo*. In Romans 12. 2 Trench **even** admits the **need** of the highest skill of an English scholar adequately to reproduce in his own language the difference in " fashion " and " transformed, " and he paraphrases thus, " Do not fall in with the fleeting fashions of this world, nor be yourselves fashioned to them (*suschematizo* = to fashion one thing like another), **but** undergo a deep abiding change (*metamorphoo*) by the renewing of your mind, such as the Spirit of God alone can work in you (cp. 2 Corinthians 3. 18). "

"Summorphizo is used in Philippians 3. 10 and *Summorphos* in Romans 8. 29, (see also Philippians 3. 21). In the former, "the saints are predestined to be brought to the same outward expression as that which now is true of the Lord Jesus, " and in the latter " Paul's desire was that he would be brought to the place where he would become, both as to his inner heart life and also as to the outward expression of the same, like his Lord in His life of death to self and service to others " (Wuest).

So then when Paul declared his yearning desire for the Galatians (Galatians 4. 19) that " Christ **be formed** in you, " **we** find he **uses** the word *morphoo*, for he meant " until Christ be outwardly expressed in you, that outward expression proceeding from and "being truly representative of Him. " Jas. M.

REMARKS.

(Paisley and Barrhead). —[1] The "third" heaven and "Paradise" are quite clearly the same place. In Genesis 1. 8 we read of the firmament being called heaven, which, counting upward from, the earth, is the "first" heaven. Then there was a heaven created with the earth, which we would describe as the "second" heaven (Genesis 1. 1). And then there is the heaven which John describes in Revelation 4., when he was told to " come up hither. " This I would judge is the " third "heaven to which Paul was caught up. J. M.

[2] "Guile" here is the usual word for guile (*Dolos*), which means fraud, deceit, artifice. Here "artifice" might be an equivalent for the original word. He had been crafty or artful or shrewd. He had not taken any subsistence from the Corinthians, he had not been burdensome to them. He had, as he said, robbed other churches, taking wages of them so that he might minister to the Corinthians; this was as he said to cut off an occasion (of reproach) from them which desired an occasion (compare chapter 11. 7-12 with 12. 15-17). —J. M.

[3] "The faith" is not "the Fellowship," though the faith should find expression in the Fellowship, just as the law was to be seen in practice in Israel in a past day. "The Faith" is the body of doctrine which was delivered to the saints (Jude 3).

As to Matthew 16. 19, this verse has nothing whatever to do with God's house, but with the kingdom of heaven, which is here seen in association with the Church, the Body of Christ. In Matthew 18. 18 we have binding and loosing connected with receiving saints into and putting them away from a church of God. Dr. Young renders this verse "shall be having been bound" and "shall be having been loosed."—J. M.

Questions and Answers.

Question from **Cardiff**.—How was Jesus—said to be Mighty God (Isaiah 9. 6)—crucified in weakness?

Answer.—Christ is both God and Man, both almighty and weak. As Man He slept in the boat weary with His abundant labours, but as the Mighty God He arose and stilled the great tempest (Matthew 8. 23-27). Paul speaking of Christ incarnate and Christ crucified speaks of the weakness of God being stronger than men (1 Corinthians 1.). When the eternal Word, the Creator, became flesh, as in John 1. He appeared in weakness and dependence. Human flesh is an exceedingly weak thing. Let us ever distinguish between the two natures of Christ, divine and human, and note what Scripture says about the characteristics of each.
J. M.

Question from Kirkintilloch.—2 Corinthians 12. 21. At what time in the lives of the saints in Corinth would the "heretofore" apply?

Answer.—It seems clear that whereas Paul could recommend the restoration of the sinning brother of 1 Corinthians 5. in his words in 2 Corinthians 2. 1-11, there were others who had sinned before his second visit to Corinth (Acts 20. 2) who showed no repentance for their conduct, and he anticipated that should he pay them a third visit he would be humbled by the sad condition of those he indicated, of whom there seemed to be many. "Heretofore" does not refer to their condition prior to regeneration (as in 1 Corinthians 6. 11, "Such were some of you") but since.—J. M.

Questions from London, S. E.—(1) Do verses 2-4 of 1 Corinthians 12. refer to one incident, or are two incidents involved?

Answer (1).—I judge they refer to the same incident which happened fourteen years prior to the time that Paul was writing.

' Question (2).—Is the "man in Christ" Paul the Apostle? Verse 5 suggests that the writer is prepared to glory on behalf of the man in Christ, but not on his own behalf.

Answer (2).—The man in Christ I understand to be Paul. This is clear, I think, from verse 7 where we have the personal pronouns of "I" and "me," in which Paul in writing passes from the third to the first person. When he glories on behalf of "this man in Christ," it is another way of glorying in what the grace of God had done in his case. In himself he had nothing to glory, and none of us in ourselves has anything to glory in.

Question (3).—Does the thorn in the flesh refer to a physical defect or does it refer to a fleshly characteristic as opposed to a spiritual one? The thorn is called "a messenger of Satan."

Answer (3).—The thorn in the flesh I take to be the result of the stoning at Lystra (Acts 14. 19, 20), in which time, I presume, Paul was caught up to the third heaven. At that time the multitudes dragged him out of the city supposing that he was dead. How great was the miracle, that, as the disciples stood round him, he rose up, and entered into the city!—J. M.