

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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CONTENTS

Authority of the Gospel, T h e	14, 24
Burrows, Mr. S t e p h e n	64
Comments 10, 20, 31 , 43, 54, 63, 73 , 80 , 88, 96, 104, 112	
C o n c l u s i o n	106
C o n s i s t e n c y	35, 46
Editorials.	23, 33, 45, 65, 89, 97 , 105
Epilogue.	115
Faith, Justification by.	46 , 55
Faith, The Promise, the Law and the.	56 , 66
Flesh, Victory over t h e	90
Gospel, The Authority of the.	14 , 24
Gospel of Christ, The.	1
Gospel Unique, The.	1 , 13
Ishmael and I s a a c	75
Jerusalem Conference, The.	24, 35
Jersualem Conference, The (E d i t o r i a l)	33
Justification by Faith.	46, 55
Law and the Faith, The Promise, the.	56 , 66
Law of Liberty, The.	83 , 90
Liberality.	98 , 105
Message, P e n u l t i m a t e	114
Notices.	12, 22, 44, 54, 64, 82, 104, 114
Promise, the Law and the Faith, T h e	56, 66
Questions and Answers.. . . .	11 , 21, 32, 44, 54, 73 , 81 , 88 , 104, 113
S o n s h i p	66, 75
Victory over the F l e s h	90

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"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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JANUARY, 1953.

THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST.

(Galatians 1. 7).

Much of Paul's life, after he became an apostle of Christ **Jesus** through the will of God, **was** devoted to spreading abroad the gospel of Christ, both by word of mouth and by manner of life. To him was entrusted a stewardship to make known this unique gospel without charge, and in this letter to the Galatians he reveals how he received the gospel: not from a man, nor was he taught it as he was taught the law under Gamaliel (Acts 22. 3). It came direct from the Lord Himself, and entirely eclipsed all the religious zeal he had formerly had for the traditions of his fathers.

The apostle was perturbed about the Galatian saints; they were hearing a different gospel from that which he preached, and which, he adds, is not another gospel. Some, with a view to making a fair show in the flesh, were compelling men to be circumcised, only that they themselves might escape persecution for the cross of Christ. His **aim** in this epistle seems to be to correct them in the matters of law and grace.

To the Jew the gospel was a stumblingblock, so well evidenced in the case of Nicodemus and others. But even Nicodemus could not resist light that illuminated his understanding.

"The Master waited up that night,
To give the darkened teacher light. "

S. Stoope.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE GALATIANS.

The Gospel of Christ. The Gospel Unique.

(Galatians 1. 1-10).

From Cardiff. —Before commencing our consideration of the epistle to the Galatians, perhaps it would be advisable and profitable if we read over Acts 13. and 14., where we are given an account of Paul's work in Galatia. As a result of his labours, many had accepted Christ; but, some time after he had left Galatia, certain Judaizing teachers **came** into their midst, drawing them away from the truth, asserting the necessity of their observance of the Law of Moses for salvation (compare Acts 15. 1 with Galatians 5. 2).

The Galatian epistle (written about A. D. 58-60, probably from Corinth) [1] is introduced by Paul laying claim to his apostleship. Doubtless some of the Galatians had endeavoured to lessen his authority; but he was an apostle, not self-appointed, nor yet appointed of men, but through **Jesus** Christ and God the Father.

"The Lord Jesus Christ.... gave Himself for our sins, that he might deliver us out of this present evil age" (R. V. M.), to rescue us from the practices and customs of the world, that we might serve Him and accomplish His will. Paul was fully persuaded that there existed no other gospel than that which he preached, "Christ and Him crucified"; and he pronounced an anathema on all those who preached any other (and yet not another).

They had soon deflected from Him who had called them, not from the apostle himself, who had been instrumental in their salvation, but from God. Soon they had fallen in with those who taught justification by the works of the Law.

H. R. Dodge.

From **Halifax**, Bradford, Leeds. —Paul makes it very clear that he was an apostle through Jesus Christ (1. 1). It is interesting to note that separation is taught in. verse 4: "Our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us out of this present evil world. " Our deliverance from the presence of sin will be when taken home to be with our Saviour. He died also that we, here on earth, might be delivered (or separated) from evil unto Himself. What other gospel can stand with God's word of truth? How fitting are the words of verse 4 to those who were removing from Him that called them! The apostle denounces the perverters of God's gospel. We may thank God for the words of Peter (Acts 4. 12): "And in none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved. "

Paul again draws their attention to the fact that he is seeking to show them the will of God. When Saul of Tarsus sought to please men, he went about persecuting the Christians and casting them into prison; but, now converted, the beloved apostle desires to please God only, and to be a loyal servant to his Lord and Master.

Robert Butler (Jnr.), W. Kirkman.

From **Liverpool**. —The apostle (one sent forth) was not sent from men, neither through man, but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead.

Saul of Tarsus became Paul the apostle, at the direct command of the One whom God raised from the dead, after he had been born again on the Damascus road. His "What shall I do, Lord?" (Acts 22. 10) was answered by the Lord's "Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do" (Acts 9. 6, 22. 10). He was to be sent as a witness for Him (the Righteous One), unto all men, of what he had seen and heard (Acts 22. 14, 15). His apostleship was the ministry he received from the Lord Jesus (Acts 20. 24).

The Galatians, who were the fruit of the power of the gospel entrusted to Paul, and which he faithfully preached, were being troubled by some who would pervert (i. e., corrupt, change from its true sense, turn from truth) the gospel of Christ which is wholly founded on grace. These troublers we thought to be Jews from Palestine, who sought to turn them away from the grace of the gospel to an acknowledgment and observance of the Law and its obligations (Acts 15. 24, Galatians 5. 10, 12, compare Matthew 23. 13, 15).

The apostle comes quickly to the crux of the matter, and marvels that they were so quickly removing from God who called them in the grace of Christ, to that which **was** contrary to the gospel which he had preached, which indeed **was** not another gospel.

Irrespective of who he might be, whether man or angel from heaven, if he preach any gospel other than that which Paul preached and by which the Galatians were reached, let him be accused (anathema), says Paul. To emphasize this all important point, he repeats (1. 9) his judgement upon such. The gospel was **a** revelation from God by **Jesus** Christ and preached by Paul. It was not after man, it was not received from man, he was not taught it (1. 11, 12). The gospel **is** indeed unique (without like or equal).

"Am I now persuading men, or God?" he asks, "Am I seeking to please men? if I were still pleasing men, I should not be **a** servant of Christ" (1. 10). Any attempt to please men by pandering to their feelings, or stopping short of preaching salvation by grace through faith and wholly apart from works, is contrary to that expected of a true servant of Christ.

A. Horridge.

EXTRACTS.

From Melbourne. —We understand that to be an apostle, it was necessary to have seen the Lord, and to have been **a** witness of **His** resurrection (Acts 1. 22-26). The twelve had followed **Him** prior to **His** death and, prior to **His** ascension, the eleven received from **Him** the great commission, but Paul **was** not numbered with the apostles then. To Paul there **was** given **a** personal revelation. **He** could say, "**Am** I not an apostle? have I not seen **Jesus** our Lord?" (1 Corinthians 9. 1). What had been committed to the twelve was likewise committed to the one who was especially an apostle to the Gentiles, "as unto one born out of due time" (1 Corinthians 15. 8).

After his gracious salutation, in verse 3, he reminds them of that wondrous **message** which he had proclaimed unto them (Acts 16. 6), and in which they had been confirmed (Acts 18. 23), **a message** unlike any other that had ever been heard by men, for religious systems of earth's nations had known no such theme. The eternal Son of God, by whom and for whom all things had been created, was found in the likeness of human flesh, and **died** the death of the cross that **He** might redeem the creatures whom **His** hands had fashioned. Hearing and believing such a gospel should change the course of the lives of human beings and make them adoring worshippers of God the Father, and bondservants of Jesus Christ. The world, socially, politically and religiously, was, and is, corrupt, and it **is** the will of God that human beings should be saved, not only from the consequences of sin against God, but "out of this present evil world" and its corruption.

In contrast to this unique gospel which, to those who obeyed it, brought reproach from the world, **because** of their separation therefrom **as** strangers and pilgrims on the earth, there were those who had preached to the Galatians "another gospel" pandering to the natural mind of man, and which brought no reproach and was calculated to cause the offence of the Cross to cease.

T. W. Fullerton.

From Wembley. —The heresy of a Judaized gospel was dangerous, and, **if** the leadership of the apostles had weakened, could have destroyed the early churches. Many Gentiles had come into **the** churches of God after an earlier association with, or interest in, the Jewish faith. The adherence of certain apostles and their friends to the Jewish way of life would influence Gentile converts.

Once the true nature of the gospel became obscured, it was a simple matter for the heresy to gain ground. An attack on Paul's apostolic authority, followed by the attack on the validity of his message, won support from the Galatians. Paul loved the Galatians; they had been rescued from the world at great personal cost; the emotions that he felt are not concealed in the letter.

The opening is direct and more abrupt than in any other Pauline epistle. Verse 1 is a categorical statement of the source and importance of his apostleship. Verse 4 is **a** statement of how salvation came. It is strange that **a** Hebrew of Hebrews should need to defend salvation by faith, and to attack those who had turned to law-keeping **as** necessary to salvation; but Paul was certain of his ground. Verse 6 is **a** statement of position, **as** definite **as** the statement in verse 1, but defining the Galatians' position, not his own. They had deserted so quickly, and the phrase must have touched them when they heard the letter. L. B. H.

From Parkhead, Glasgow. —To get the underlying cause of the apostle's writing of the epistle to the Galatians, we have to look to chapter 6. 12-17. The gospel which Paul preached to both Jews and Gentiles involved the acceptance of the fact that all are under sin. This created in the minds of the self-righteous Jews the offence of the cross. **As** the gospel spread, so also did the antagonism of the Jews, and it appears that many believing Jews, hoping to avoid the persecution thus arising, accepted circumcision **as** being necessary to salvation.

Circumcision was **a** divine ordinance imposed for a particular purpose and time, and was now withdrawn. To continue it was meaningless, and revealed that its true and original purpose had not been understood. To go further and to represent that the gospel of Christ was inadequate apart from circumcision was, in fact, to pervert the gospel of Christ rather than to supplement it. This is evident from the words used, *allos* (1. 6), another of the same sort, *heteros* (1. 7), of a different kind.

Since the apostle begins the epistle by asserting his peculiar apostleship, and since he mentions the good pleasure of God to "reveal His Son in **me**", and having noticed also that the preposition is "in" not "into" (the grace of Christ), we wondered if 1. 6 involved **a** reference to himself **as** "called". **We** would appreciate other minds [2]. W. A. P.

From Knocknacloy. —The outstanding feature of the gospel is that God saves men solely on the grounds of sovereign grace. Its central subject, the Lord Jesus Christ, is the embodiment of the grace of God: "the Word became flesh, . . . full of grace and truth" (John 1. 14). The Galatians were drifting away from this fundamental truth to a gospel of works, which the apostle Paul says was not another gospel. Paul himself was **a** trophy of the grace of God. He was a chosen vessel, an earthen vessel (Acts 9. 15, 2 Corinthians 4. 7). The message was not committed to angels, although they desire to look into these things, but rather to men like Paul, frail vessels "that the exceeding greatness of the power **may** be of God. "

The gospel is a complete message, and speaks of a finished work of salvation wrought by Christ on the Cross. Any other gospel than this is a gospel of works, probably interpreted in the words of the Law. The apostle pronounces a curse on those who preach such. "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a **curse** for us."

Robert Anderson, William Woods,

From London, S. E. —This epistle was written by the apostle Paul after his first visit to Galatia, A. D. 52 (Acts 16. 6), to which he alludes (4. 13-15), saying how they received him as though he were an angel of God. His second visit was in all probability after he wrote the epistle. **See** Acts 18. 23, where he refers to "stablishing all the disciples" [3].

It would **seem** that, before his second visit, news had been brought to him of a defection from his teaching, and serious questioning as to the authenticity of his apostleship. Judaizing evangelists were subverting the saints. **He** marvels that they "are so quickly removing from Him that called you in the grace of Christ unto a different gospel; which is not another gospel: only there are some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ". (Does **He** say there is no other gospel?) [4]. **His** words of condemnation are very solemn, even if an angel from heaven should preach another gospel, he should be anathema.

This claim, that the gospel of the grace of God is the only gospel, the gospel he so ably preached, was the strongest protest against the false claims of Judaizing teachers. It was suggested that there are other gospels, but only one true one, namely, the gospel of the Grace of God, "the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (Mark 1. 1).

In the rest of the epistle he outlines how he received his apostleship by revelation through Jesus Christ.

H. J. Owles.

From Willington Quay. —In writing this epistle to the Galatians, Paul was prompted by two motives, firstly to correct those who were turning to Judaism, and secondly to vindicate his apostleship. Many sought to despise Paul and his teaching. **He** reminds the saints of his apostleship, that it was not from men. In contrast to Matthias (Acts 1. 26), Paul received his apostleship directly from the Lord.

Paul marvelled that the Galatians were so quickly departing from the message of the gospel. When (1. 6) he refers to the **One** who had called them, we would understand that he **is** here referring to God the Father. The gospel which Paul had preached to the Galatians had neither equal nor substitute, and it could not be altered in the slightest degree. *K. R.*

From Crowborough. —Paul reminds the Galatians that he is an apostle, i. e., one who has seen the Lord, or had direct dealings with Him. This was an **office** which was not handed down from generation to generation.

The reason for writing to them appears to be that some were teaching another gospel, which the Galatians were quick to embrace. This teaching was concerning keeping the Law and was perverting the gospel of Christ. The "I marvel" (1. 6) **seems** to express the surprise of the apostle that the saints should be swayed by this wind of doctrine.

Verse 4 caused **us** to meditate on our threefold deliverance from (1) the penalty of sin, (2) the power of sin, and, in a day yet to come, (3) the presence of sin. This is the will of our God and Father. *J. Robertson.*

From Kilmarnock. —The apostle makes known to the Galatians that he did not receive the gospel, which he preached to them, from man, but from Jesus Christ and God the Father. **As** Saul of Tarsus **he** had "advanced in the Jews' religion", but the Lord met him on the Damascus road and gave him a different message to preach. **He** had preached the gospel in various cities of Galatia. It was not long until Satan had his messengers among them, preaching a spurious gospel, but Paul, who was not ashamed of the gospel of Christ (Romans **I**. 16), pronounced a curse on any one who preached another gospel. A. G. S.

From Edinburgh. —In looking at this introduction to the epistle, we considered the letter **as** a whole, and established the following: (1) The writer was Paul. (2) His purpose was teaching against error. (3) It was written from Rome, and (4) was after his second visit to Galatia [5].

Great stress is laid on the fact that the apostleship of **Paul** was derived through a raised and glorified Lord Jesus Christ. The sacrifice of the Son of God, the salvation of souls, the appointment of **Paul** as **an** apostle, are all noted as according to the will of God. **Paul** had visited Galatia, and was known to **the** saints in person, but he now affirmed (1) his status, (2) his Superior, (3) his authority, and (4) his message.

The saints were slipping, being entangled with Jewish laws and ordinances. Was circumcision their chief failing? Without apology, **Paul** strongly attacked such practices. His language was forthright and no excuse could be made for misunderstanding. Teachers of such practices he condemned. So strong was his feeling that the statement was repeated, "Let him be anathema".

What truths have been established, we should hold fast. If we observe the first principles, we shall never wander far. T. Hope.

From Sunderland. —The churches in Galatia would appear to comprise assemblies in such cities **as** Derbe, Lystra, Iconium and Antioch of Pisidia, which were visited by Paul when **he** was first committed to **the** grace of God at Antioch (in Syria). Many disciples were **made** in these cities; **and** churches, composed of both Jews and Gentiles, were formed. The influence of Jews in these parts appears to have been particularly strong, and this seems to account for Paul's circumcising Timothy (Acts 16. 3).

The early days of these churches, **as** recorded in the book of Acts, bear witness to their joy in the Lord, though they **suffered** persecution at the hands of the Jews. Paul reminds them of this in Galatians **3**. 4. Their affection for Paul also appears to have been particularly strong (4. 15). **But** the days of their first love appear to have passed. Evil influences have been at work, perverting the gospel of Christ, and persuading the disciples to observe the ritual of the Law of Moses, as opposed to faith.

J. R., Jnr.

From Brantford, Ont. —This epistle was written because simple faith in the Lord Jesus **as** the way of salvation **was** being assailed. **Paul** reminds the Galatians that, when he visited them, **he** preached **the** glorious message of the all-sufficiency of the work of Christ, which **was** now being **attacked**. Many to-day preach **a** perverted **message** pleasing to men. False teaching was leading" the Galatians into wrong practice, and Paul marvelled **at the**

departure wrought by the false teaching: they were removing from the Lord Himself. Their denial of the completeness and perfection of the work of Calvary was grievous to the apostle, and he used the strong word "anathema". It was no doubt justified when applied to those who sought to move believers away from the faith once for all delivered to the saints.

N. S.

From Atherton. —The reason for this epistle was the departure of the saints so soon from the gospel of Christ, caused by the insidious working of Satan through Judaizing teachers, who taught that it was necessary to keep the Mosaic Law to be saved. Grace and the Law are opposites; the Law demands certain things, but grace offers freely. Failure to keep the Law brought judgement, but God bestowed grace because of man's inability to keep the Law.

The apostle expresses his deep concern that they were so quickly removing from Him that called them in the grace of Christ unto a different gospel. The word "removing" has the thought of a transfer, removing from one person to another, or from one authority to another [6]. These Galatians, by turning aside from the doctrine they had been taught, were subscribing to the authority of Satan. Note the warning in Hebrews 3. 12.

It was asked: by what right or authority did Paul pronounce the anathema? [7]. It was said that the apostles with the divine knowledge granted to them could say of those who perverted the gospel of Christ, "let them be anathema", or set aside for the judgement of God.

It is interesting to consider other uses of the word anathema, e. g., in Romans 9. 3, with regard to the yearning of the great apostle for those who were his brethren according to the flesh. The Holy Spirit will cause men to acknowledge the Lordship of Christ and not to call Him accursed (1 Corinthians 12. 3). What is the import of the apostle's use of the word in 1 Corinthians 16. 22? The word used in Joshua 7., the devoted thing, is the same word as anathema. Just as Achan was cut off from his people, so those who commit wilful sin are cut off from the people of God (see Hebrews 6. 4-8 and 10. 28-31).

J. Bullock, D. H. Butler.

From Coleraine. —The Galatians had departed to another gospel, which would seem to be not another of the same kind, but a totally different gospel, that of circumcision and law-keeping, which was no gospel at all. The Galatians were turning to that which had been fulfilled and nullified by the death of Christ.

Is it possible that when Paul included angels in the anathema that he was looking back in time? The Law was given by a disposition of angels (Acts 7. 53, Galatians 3. 19) through the mediation of Moses, therefore, if angels were to preach concision, they would be accursed. Or was he looking forward to the time when an angel will, in some future day, proclaim the everlasting gospel? (Revelation 14. 6) [8]. As in the first case, if that gospel were prematurely proclaimed, that angel would be accursed. Men in effect proclaim the gospel of the concision to-day. They are denying the death of Christ as the complete and final work of redemption and atonement. In doing so, they are going against the will of God.

From Birkenhead. —We noted that churches in a district are spoken of, indicating churches with a separate existence yet linked together. This could not be said of the Church the Body of Christ. Although the expression church of God is not used here, it was suggested that the Galatians would understand that it was to the churches of God that he was writing.

In considering Paul's apostleship we were directed to a number of scriptures where the word "apostle" is used. The word had a very simple meaning originally, "one who is sent forth," but, like many other words, acquired a recognised meaning in the New Testament writings. It was generally accepted by the people of that day as referring to the men who accompanied the Lord Jesus Christ, during His journeys on earth, and were sent forth by Him with the gospel message (Jude 17). Some apparently doubted the authority of the apostle Paul, because he was not one of them, and he had to make it clear that he too had been spoken to by the Lord Himself and had his message direct from Him. As such he had the same authority as the twelve, and his writings have come down to us as part of the apostles' teaching. It was emphasized that there are no such apostles to-day, as they occupied a foundational place in the teaching of present-day truths (Ephesians 2. 20).

The unity of action and purpose of God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ is twice brought before us in this short portion. Paul's apostleship was through the Lord Jesus Christ and God the Father (1. 1), and Christ gave Himself for us according to the will of our God and Father. Verse 4 also speaks of the Father raising Him from the dead, and the Lord Himself prophesied that He would raise up His body again.

We found the expression "deliver us out of this present evil world" an interesting one. "World" is used to translate more than one original word, and in this passage (the margin gives "age") it may indicate our daily deliverance from the course of this world (the "age" describing the character of those in it), or our eventual deliverance from this world at the Lord's return to take us to be with Himself. The Jews possibly contrasted this present evil world with the Millennium they were expecting their Messiah to usher in.

M. H., R. L. S.

From Greenock. —In the gospel of Christ is revealed "the mystery of Christ" (Ephesians 3. 4-5). It takes its character from the One who is its theme, God's only begotten Son. It is "the gospel of the glory of the blessed God" (1 Timothy 1. 11); "the gospel of God" (1 Thessalonians 2. 2, etc.) "concerning His Son" (Romans 1. 1-3); and the "gospel of the glory of Christ" (2 Corinthians 4. 4). It brings within the reach of the vilest of earth "the unsearchable riches of Christ" (Ephesians 3. 6-8) and makes it possible for them "to know the mystery of God, even Christ" (Colossians 2. 1-3). "It is the power of God unto salvation" (Romans 1. 16), a salvation concerning which the prophets sought and searched diligently, and angels desire to look into (1 Peter 1. 10-12).

Little wonder, then, that with such a concept of the gospel of Christ, Paul marvels at those who would turn away from such a gospel and exchange grace for the impossible demands of the Law (see Acts 15. 10, Galatians 5. 3), surrendering the freedom, wherewith Christ had made them free, for the bondage of circumcision. Paul sorrowed over those who desired to have the Galatian saints circumcised that they might glory in their flesh (Galatians 6. 13).

W. Johnston, Jr., S. Johnston.

From Kingston-on-Thames. —The exact extent of the region, which Paul calls Galatia, is in some doubt. Most maps show it as a tract of country north of Lycaonia, through which Paul travelled on two occasions (Acts 16. 6, 18. 23), but there is no scriptural record of any assemblies being planted there, although disciples are mentioned (Acts 18. 23). For this reason it has been suggested that this epistle was addressed to the churches in the Roman province of Galatia, which includes Lycaonia and would thus embrace the churches at Lystra, Derbe and Iconium. However, Paul's exclamation, "O foolish Galatians" seems to indicate that only strictly Galatian Christians were being addressed.

Paul was rarely on his own (perhaps the only time was at Athens); he acted in close fellowship with other faithful brethren. Thus he links himself with "the brethren which are with me". These are not named as in other epistles (Sosthenes, Silvanus and Timothy), but would be known to the Galatian saints.

It is characteristic of Paul's writings that, when he mentions the name of God the Father or the Lord Jesus Christ, words of praise follow (1. 4, 5). His heart and mind are so filled with the knowledge of God's will and His eternal attributes that he must of necessity put them on record for the blessing of others.

The reason for this epistle is made clear in verses 6 and 7. The Galatians had welcomed the apostle into their midst and had whole-heartedly accepted his divine message. Before long, grievous wolves had entered in, not sparing the flock, and teaching that the true custodians of the gospel were the apostles in Jerusalem, who still kept the Law of Moses, that Paul had no direct authority from God, and that the Gentile converts must keep the Law. The success of this teaching can be judged from Paul's concern that so many had been led astray.

L. Burrows.

From Cowdenbeath. —Paul's first visit to Galatia is recorded in Acts 16. 6. On that occasion Silas and Timothy were with him. Acts 18. 23 records a second visit. Paul refers to "the first time" (4. 13). From this we would infer that the second visit had taken place prior to the writing of the epistle [3].

Commencing, he brings into prominence a truth having a vital bearing on the subject matter of the epistle: Christ died that we might experience a present deliverance from this world. He closes with a similar reference (6. 14), showing how he himself appreciated this great truth. Applying this truth to our lives brings us into alignment with the will of our God and Father.

Paul was not writing to men and women newly come to the faith, but to companies he had established on his second visit. He was therefore amazed that they could so readily accept false teaching. According to the troublers, Paul had not preached a full gospel, and they were suggesting that Paul was one who preached pleasing things to receive the plaudits of men. To this Paul had one answer. If he were a man-pleaser he would not be yoked in the service of Christ. Branded on his body were the marks of Jesus.

Paul preached with the conviction that his message was true. There was only one gospel, and he decried any who would preach another. Paul does not take it upon himself to pronounce a curse on the offender. "Anathema," according to Newberry, can be interpreted as "set apart for God to deal with." The person who dares to preach another gospel places himself under divine judgement.

James K. D. Johnston.

COMMENTS.

[1] (Cardiff). —There is uncertainty as to where Paul wrote Galatians. The A. V. says from Rome. Some have thought from Ephesus. **Others** that it was written from Corinth because of the similarity of language to the Romans, and that it was written about the same time **as the** epistle to Rome, which is generally understood to have been written from Corinth, particularly in view of the reference in chapter 16. to Phoebe. —**J. M.**

Some scholars, including some great names, e. g., Sir Wm. Ramsay, believe the epistle was written before the council (Acts 15.), Galatians 2. 1-10 being identified not with Acts 15. but with Acts 11. 30, i. e., the second visit to Jerusalem, the first being Acts **9. 26-30.** —**S. B.**

[2] (Parkhead, Glasgow). —"From Him that called you", the calling here is of the Galatians, not Paul, and God was the Caller. —**J. M.**

[3] (London, S. E.). —It has been pointed out that "the first (or former) time" (Galatians 4. 13) involves that Paul had paid a second visit to Galatia before he wrote this epistle. —**J. M.**

Our London friends' contribution (also Cowdenbeath) implies the North-Galatian Theory of the destination of the epistle. This **is the** traditional view and has the great authority of Lightfoot in its support. Galatia on this view must refer to the geographical district inhabited by the Gauls or the true Galatian people. Owing to the brilliant advocacy of Sir Wm. Ramsay, the North-Galatian Theory is now generally discarded and the South-Galatian Theory is accepted by most scholars (not Moffat). On this view the Churches addressed were those of Derbe, Lystra, Iconium and Pisidian Antioch. This view is taken for granted by nearly all our friends. Acts 14. is thus the first visit, not 16. 6. Galatia, to Paul, with his Roman outlook, meant the Province of Galatia of which Derbe, Lystra, Iconium and Antioch were important towns in the South. —**S. B.**

[4] (London, S. E.). —There can be no true gospel but one, which has Christ for its Subject, and which comes to man through God's **free** grace and is accepted by faith on man's part. —**J. M.**

[5] (Edinburgh). —See note on Cardiff's paper. —**J. M.**

[6] (Atherton). —The basic idea in the word **as** used here is "to change" or "be changed". **We** may illustrate it to help ourselves **as** to what is meant by referring to what happened in Eden's garden. Satan gained the ear of the woman and she listened and followed the course he indicated; she sinned and fell, and her whole attitude to God underwent a complete change. See 2 Corinthians 11. 3. —**J. M.**

[7] (Atherton). —Paul wrote under the power of the Holy Spirit. See also 1 Corinthians 16. 22. Paul did not curse men or angels, he said "Let him be accursed, " for a **man** who loves not the Lord, who preaches a heterodox gospel, is in an accursed state and at **an** accursed work. —**J. M.**

[8] (Coleraine). —Note the words—"though we, or **an** angel from heaven, should preach"; I do not think that Paul is either looking back or forward, but he is using language of the greatest force to show the divine **and** unalterable character of the gospel he preached to the Galatians, which neither apostles nor angels can alter. Let him be accursed who preaches a heterodox gospel to men whoever he may be. So Paul declares. —**J. M.**

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Question from Liverpool. —Apart from our Lord Jesus Christ, Paul, the twelve, Matthias and Barnabas, were there any other apostles ?

Answer. —Matthias was one of the twelve, being shown by lot that he was to take the place of Judas Iscariot. James the Lord's brother was an apostle (Galatians 1. 19). There were also apostles of churches, that is, brethren sent by the churches on certain forms of service. —*J. M.*

Question from Melbourne. —There were evidently other apostles in addition to the twelve and Paul (Acts 14. 4-14, etc.). We would value some comments thereon.

Answer. —Barnabas was an apostle as well as Paul, as Acts 14. 4 shows. See answer to question from Liverpool. —*J. M.*

Question from Crowborough. —To whom does "him" of verse 6 refer?

Answer. —To God. —*J. M.*

Question from Kilmarnock. —We note from Matthew 24. 14 that the "gospel of the kingdom" will be preached at the end of the world. Will this be the "eternal gospel" of Revelation 14. 6 ?

Answer. —No, the terms of the eternal gospel are stated in Revelation 14. 7: "Fear God, and give Him glory", etc., and describe what is His right by reason of His Creatorship from all created intelligences. The gospel of the kingdom has to do with the announcement of the imminence of the manifestation of Christ the King. The preachers of this gospel were to preach, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." —*J. M.*

Question from Greenock. —At what point in his life did Paul actually become an apostle? immediately after his conversation (Acts 9. 1-19), at Antioch (Acts 13. 1-3), or when ?

Answer. —We may view this matter from three points of view, (1) Paul being an apostle according to divine purpose, (2) what he understood himself of God's purpose, and (3) what men understood regarding God's purpose in him as to his apostleship. As to (1), God's purpose in Paul as an apostle was given him in Christ Jesus before times eternal (2 Timothy 1. 9), and to this he was separated even from his mother's womb, though he himself knew it not (Galatians 1. 15). (2) As to when he himself knew that he was an apostle divinely called we cannot say definitely. It may well have been during the period he spent in Arabia. He clearly understood that he was an apostle called, not through the instrumentality of men, but directly through Jesus Christ and God the Father. Then as to (3), I judge men viewed him as an apostle from the time of Acts 13. 1-4, when he and Barnabas were sent forth by the Holy Spirit, and the prophets and teachers sent them away, or loosed them for the work according to the command of the Holy Spirit. —*J. M.*

Questions from Cardiff. —(1) Whilst we recognize that the temple was a divine institution, could this be said of the synagogue ? (2) What reason could be given for the attendance of the apostles at the temple in Jerusalem, when a church of God was already in existence there ?

Answer.—(1) The temple was the place of divine service (*Latreia*), a service which was committed to Israel (Romans 9. 4), and was carried on by the priests and Levites, the inception of which was at Sinai (Exodus 19., 24., 25.). In contrast to this there is no command relative to the synagogue. The synagogue was a meeting place where the people gathered to hear the Scriptures (the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms) read and expounded. It was not the place of sacrifice, nor was it a dwelling place of God, as was the temple. The synagogue was of ancient institution. We have reference to "the synagogues of God", in Psalm 74. 8. In contrast to the synagogues, which were many, the sanctuary or dwelling place of God was never more than one (verse 7). I judge the synagogues came into being in consequence of a felt need among the people to hear God's word read and explained. See what Jehoshaphat did in his day (2 Chronicles 17. 7-9). The places where these teachers met were of the nature of synagogues. —*J. M.*

There is no evidence for synagogues until after the Captivity. The Hebrew in Psalm 74. 8 is the usual word for "congregation", but seems here to have the sense of "meeting places". "Synagogues" implies a later date for the Psalm, and many scholars do in fact place it in the times of the Maccabees, but against this We should note it is headed "Maschil of Asaph". —*S. B.*

Answer (2). —The apostles went to the temple for the purpose of witness-bearing. See what happened in Acts 3. on one of these occasions. —*J. M.*

Questions from Kingston-on-Thames. —(1) Paul sometimes calls himself an apostle of Jesus Christ and sometimes of Christ Jesus. Has the different order any significance ?

(2) Will a false gospel be preached by a fallen angel from heaven at some future time ?

Answer (1). —The name Jesus Christ means that Jesus, who was born, lived and died on earth, is the Christ; that Man is a Divine Person, even the promised Messiah. Christ Jesus is the name of Him who is Christ, whom the Father sanctified and sent (Christ, the Son of the living God), and would become man by His birth in Bethlehem. Christ Jesus has special reference to the Lord glorified. While the twelve were apostles of Jesus Christ, Paul speaks of himself as being an apostle of Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 1. 1), and of Christ Jesus (2 Corinthians 1. 1, R. V., etc.).

Answer (2). —All false gospels (if we may speak of a false gospel) are doctrines of demons (1 Timothy 4. 1, 2), who work through lying men. We know of no scripture which speaks of a fallen angel preaching a false gospel, as will one of God's angels preach the eternal gospel (Revelation 14. 6, 7). —*J. M.*

NOTE

We are pleased to see contributions from friends in Wembley, Parkhead, Knocknacloy, Coleraine and Greenock.

BIBLE STUDIES

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

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THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE GALATIANS.

The Gospel Unique.

(Galatians 1. 1-10).

From Toronto, Ont. —In defence of his calling as an apostle, Paul indicates that the gospel was not revealed to him through man, nor was he commissioned by the other apostles, but it was God who called him.

We suggest that the word "sins" in 1 John 1. 9 is used in the same way as in verse 4 of this chapter [1]- Philippians 2. 15: as Christ has delivered us out of this present evil world, so we should now shine as lights in the darkness—in the world but not of it, crucified unto it and it unto us.

We also suggest that verse 9 is not just a repetition of verse 8. Verse 8 refers to the preaching of the gospel by Paul, and verse 9 refers to the act of receiving the gospel by the Galatians [2]. *E. N.*

From Sydney. —Romans 1. 14 shows that the gospel is "concerning His S o n . . . Jesus Christ our Lord. " It is unique in that it is to Jew and Gentile. As touching verse 4, it was generally agreed that the deliverance mentioned was a present day-to-day salvation (Titus 2. 14, John 17. 15), and was not the same deliverance as in 1 Thessalonians 1. 10. This finds its type in the sin offerings of Leviticus 4. 13-21 and Hebrews 13. 11, 12.

In consideration of what prompted Paul to write in such terms in verse 6, it was agreed that Judaism was showing itself in the churches of Galatia. The gospel being by grace (Ephesians 2. 8, 9), Judaism, which is a corruption of the law, had no place in this unique gospel. Calvary altered that. The law reveals what man ought to be; Calvary shows what man is. In Acts 15. 1 we find brethren from Judaea coming to the cities of Galatia and teaching that circumcision is necessary to salvation (Galatians 5. 3, 11). This affected all the churches of Galatia, who were at one time "running, well" (Galatians 5. 7), but who were now so quickly removing from Him who called them. *J. G., G. K., J. I.*

From Hamilton, Ont. —The Galatians had turned aside from the gospel, through which they had been saved by the finished work of Christ, and were seeking to be perfected by the works of the Law (1. 4, 3. 1). This was receiving the grace of God in vain, or falling away from grace (chapter 5.). Whilst it was possible for the Galatian saints to remove from Him that called them, it was impossible for them to be severed from His love. Nothing can separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8. 39).

We see a similar condition of things in Acts 15. 1. "Certain men came down from Judaea and taught the brethren, saying, Except ye be circumcised after the custom of Moses, ye cannot be saved. "

Paul's apostleship came directly from God through Jesus Christ. As his apostleship was from God, so also was the gospel he received, and concerning the gospel he says: "I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received, how that Christ died for our sins" (1 Corinthians 15. 1-4).

As spurious gospels are being spread abroad, there is a great need for being grounded in the truth of the gospel. Our ambition should be, in loyalty to our Master, to stand fast in one spirit with one soul, striving for the faith of the gospel.

T. Ramage.

THE AUTHORITY OF THE GOSPEL.

(Galatians 1. 11-24).

From Cowdenbeath. —The apostle shows that he preached a gospel which was no man-appointed scheme, but which he received through direct revelation from the Lord. Paul had gloried much in persecuting the church of God. He had prided himself in his advancement in the Jews' religion; but, when in the good pleasure of God he was called, he turned his back on the Jews' religion to the truth proper to the dispensation of grace.

Paul had been separated to serve and to preach Christ to the Gentiles. The apostle again stresses several points (1. 16-19), which make it abundantly clear that he had conferred but little with men. For example: (1) "I conferred not with flesh and blood: . . . but I went away into Arabia. " In Arabia, we suggest, Paul received the revelation of the gospel from the Lord. Many of God's chosen people have risen from seclusion to be used of God in the fulfilment of His divine purposes, e. g., Moses, Daniel. John the Baptist too, like Paul, came forth to reveal the One who was mightier than himself. (2) "After three years I went up to Jerusalem, " to 'become acquainted with Peter.

The churches of Judaea are a contrast to those in Galatia. They had not seen Paul as the Galatians had, yet they received his teaching and gave glory to God, because of the divine power which had wrought such a change in the life of Paul.

Iain Hunter,

From Willington Quay. -In early life Paul studied at the feet of Gamaliel, and in his zeal had progressed far in the Jews' religion, little realising that he had been set apart from birth to be an apostle to the Gentile nations. What he learned had not brought him to Christ; it required a visitation from the Lord Himself to set Paul's feet on the pathway of discipleship. Who would have thought that, although he had made havoc of the church of God, Paul was to become a chosen vessel unto Christ?

We would be unaware of his stay in Arabia were it not for the reference in verse 17. After three years he visited Cephas, to become acquainted with him. Whilst there he met James. Verse 19 caused us to look further into apostleship. If this James was literally the brother of the Lord, it means that at this time the number of the apostles was greater than twelve; indeed, from Romans 16. 7 it would seem that there were more than this number. Matthias took the place of Judas (Acts 1. 25). But

James the brother of John was put to **death** (Acts 12. 2), thus leaving of the original eleven one further apostle of that name, **James** the son of Alphaeus (Acts 12. 17, 15. 13). Would **this James, the Lord's brother**, be the **same James** mentioned throughout Acts and also in Galatians 2. 9? [3]. *C. B.*

From **Edinburgh**. —Paul's gospel **came** by revelation, not by the teaching of **man**. It was revealed to him by the risen Saviour, **Jesus Christ**. Paul recalls his old manner of life, proving thereby his sincerity and wholeheartedness **in** the things of God. He had advanced far beyond his fellows **in** zeal for the traditions of the fathers. In spite of this, however, Paul was called through grace, to preach the saving grace of Christ to the Gentiles.

Paul specially maintains that not by conferring with man, nor with the apostles, but **in** solitude **in** Arabia, he received his commission. It would **seem** that Paul could not have spent many days **in** Arabia (Acts 9. 20). His sojourn **in** Damascus lasted for three years, then he escaped and went to Jerusalem, spending only fifteen days with Peter [4],

Difficulty was experienced **in** interpreting the latter half of verse 19. Was **James**, the Lord's brother, an apostle? [5].

Paul **was** not known by face, but his conversion and zeal had been reported throughout the assemblies, and they glorified God upon hearing of this. *J. V. Lang.*

From **Brantford, Ont.** —Paul received the gospel by direct revelation, and **an** unsaved person must receive the Saviour by revelation of the Spirit. The Greek word for the Jews' religion may be rendered Judaism, a different word from that **in James** 1. 27. Paul was chosen to preach the gospel to the Gentiles, but he did not neglect to preach to the Jews. The Lord said, "Go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matthew 10. 6), and Paul said, "to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Romans 1. 16). The **Jews** rejected his message and Paul turned to the Gentiles (Acts 13. 46, 18. 6).

We had a little difficulty **in** following the movements of Paul after his conversion, especially **in** the light of Acts 9. The period of time he spent **in** Arabia **is** not clear. It does **seem** correct, however, to **surmise** that a period of over three years separates Acts 9. 20 and 9. 26. Our difficulty lies in seeking to reconcile Acts 9. 26-30 with Galatians 1. 18, 19 [6]. *J. K.*

From **Wembley**. —The story of his conversion **is** related twice by Paul in the Acts, but this **is** the first time that he recounts the events subsequent to his leaving Damascus. It **was** felt that this portion does not **set** out to be a historical record of events immediately succeeding one another, but rather gives only those events which Paul wished to emphasize [7].

Verse 13 shows **us** that havoc was made of the church of God, thus indicating a vital **difference between** a church of God **and** the Church the Body of Christ, for the latter **is** inviolable. **We** understand that the phrase "made havock" **is used in** another Greek **writing** describing a wild boar **in** a vineyard. Saul of Tarsus was like a wild boar **in** the Lord's vineyard in Jerusalem [8].

Saul was zealous for the traditions of the fathers. The Lord Jesus (Matthew 15.) pointed out to certain traditionalists that their traditions were contrary to God's commands.

It would appear that, immediately after leaving Damascus for the first time, he went to Arabia and there for an unknown period he remained in seclusion, learning from God the mystery of His will. Paul is emphatic that he was not taught the gospel by the other apostles. His visits to James and Peter were only of short duration, and it appears from his writings how much God had taught him. Paul never forgot that the Man he served was the lowly Man of Sorrows, who is now in the glory awaiting the **day** of His coming for His Bride.

K. H. Riley.

EXTRACTS.

From Glasgow. —Part of the challenge to the gospel, which Paul preached, seems to have arisen from a failure to treat him as an accredited apostle, seeing that he was not one of the twelve. The Judaizers, in their endeavour to bring circumcision into the gospel, sought to discredit Paul's gospel by attacking the man. So we have the declaration of verses 11 and 12 that the gospel was not the work of Paul, or of any other man, but of God, who chose to take up Paul as a vessel for His use in proclaiming salvation to the Gentiles. In Acts 9. 15, we learn that Paul was "a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings, and the children of Israel".

Reading Acts 9. we would think that the apostle went to Jerusalem shortly after his conversion, but Galatians 1. 17 mentions a three years interval and a visit to Arabia. Some have thought that Paul received his revelation of the gospel (1. 12) during his stay in Arabia, rather than on the Damascus road.

That Paul had no doubt of his call to apostleship is clear from verse 17, where he refers to "apostles before me" and from chapter 2. 8, where he places his apostleship on the same level as that of Peter's, the level of divine calling.

J. J. P.

From Kingston-on-Thames. —Some thought that the revelation of the gospel refers to Paul's conversion, after which, with his eyes now open to understand the Scriptures he knew so well, and with time to meditate under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, in Arabia, he came to a fuller understanding of God's purposes. Others thought he may have received such revelations on many occasions. We understood the expression, "To reveal His Son in me" (1. 16), means a revelation to Paul of His Son, and to refer to the scene on the Damascus road [9].

The reference to the church of God (1. 13) is to the church in Jerusalem, but we were not quite clear as to the meaning of the expression (1. 22): "the churches of Judaea which were in Christ". The church throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria (Acts 9. 31), which we assumed to be the church of God in Jerusalem scattered abroad by the persecution, does not at that time appear to have been constituted into separate churches of God as in 1 Thessalonians 2. 14. We felt that verse 22 relates also to the scattered church of God in Jerusalem. We would value help on this point and on the similar expression "churches of Christ" (Romans 16. 16) [10].

Frank E. Jarvis.

From Melbourne. —Paul had **no** hesitation in emphasizing the **supreme** importance of the **message** of the gospel, for it amounts to a divine command to all **men** (Acts 17. 30-31), the terms **and** conditions of which had been conveyed to him by divine revelation, and which, in its purity, he had communicated to the Galatians, who had believed it and rejoiced therein. **But** now the apostle finds it necessary to counteract the influence of others, who in his absence had preached to them "another gospel", an admixture of law and grace, totally devoid of divine authority. **Because** of this he now affirms his own unquestionable authority to proclaim the gospel of Christ. From no higher source than the One, into whose hands all authority in heaven and on earth had been committed, could his commission come, therefore those who had followed with "another gospel" were without valid authority.

We judge that the time when the apostle received his commission **was** during his sojourn in Arabia, when, like Moses and others whom God had chosen for special purposes, he must be trained in solitude by the God who had separated him, even from birth, and now had called him by His grace to preach Christ among the Gentiles. *T. W. Fullerton.*

From Atherton. —After his conversion on the Damascus road Paul **came** to Damascus and preached; from there he went into Arabia and back again to Damascus. **His** conferring not with flesh and blood infers that he had conference with One greater, and **we suggest** that in **Arabia** he met the Lord again. Possibly it **was** on this occasion that the Divine Teacher revealed to him many truths in relation to the gospel, and, **as** in the **case** of the other apostles, the things concerning the kingdom of God (1 Corinthians 9. 1, 11. 23).

Conferring not with flesh and blood does not indicate independency on the apostle's part. It was vital that the apostle should have intercourse with the Lord Himself. Thus the Arabian visit might suggest a **time** of quiet solitude and meditation. After his dealings with the Lord, he rightly sought the fellowship of his brethren. How desirable this **is** ! Thus there loom large before **us** two important principles: (1) dealings with God, giving **us** the needed fitness and the authoritative word to go forward, and (2) fellowship with our brethren in the prosecution of the Lord's work.

The words "To reveal **His** Son in me" (1. 16), refer to the manifestation of the Lord Jesus in the apostle Paul, and not to the revelation which God gave to him. What grace it was that the one, who so assiduously persecuted the name of Jesus, should afterwards become a living demonstration of that same Person ! *G. A. Jones, B. C. Jones.*

From Crowborough. —Paul had the highest possible authority for his apostleship and also for the gospel he preached.

In verse 12, **as** in verse 1, the apostle implies the deity of Christ. He emphasizes "not from man", and then says "b u t . . . through revelation of Jesus Christ", proving that the Lord Jesus was not a mere man. In telling the Galatians the authority of the gospel he preached, he leaves them in no doubt **as** to the **fact** that he did not receive it from the Jewish religion. **He** reminds them of his past life in that religion, that in it he had

distinguished himself above his contemporaries, and that his object had been to lay waste the church of God. But now he being full of love and kindness, the good news from God to men alone could have so changed him. We should never lose sight of the fact that the gospel we preach is God's good news to men.

J. H. B.

From Coleraine. —The revelations to the apostle Paul can be divided into two distinct groups: firstly, those relating to the gospel and the Church the Body of Christ, which, we suggest, he received during the three years of his stay in Damascus [11] (Galatians 1. 17, 18); and secondly, the revelations he received, we suggest, at his stoning at Lystra (2 Corinthians 12. 2-4, Acts 14. 19).

He states, briefly, his travels immediately following his conversion on the Damascus road. He left Damascus, visited Arabia, and then returned to Damascus, during which period, we suggest, he received the gospel revelations. Then he went to Jerusalem, but while there he conversed with no man save the apostles Peter and James, whom he only saw for a brief fifteen days. At that time he was unknown by face in the churches of God in Judaea, so he could not have received it from any of the established churches.

It is also interesting to note that the apostle Paul states (1. 16) that he "conferred not with flesh and blood", but that he received **all** by direct revelation.

A. T. G.

From Cardiff. —The Lord revealed Himself to Paul on the Damascus road, and we wondered if this was the revelation referred to in verse 12, and if it was possible to determine the extent of that revelation [12]. We know that all knowledge of God commences in the initial revealing of Christ to the heart.

The believers, who looked upon Paul as a "late-comer" to the faith, (and many no doubt had misgivings as to his sincerity) had to be confirmed in the fact of his apostleship being received by direct revelation from God through Jesus Christ (1. 11). We know that, from birth, Paul was separated, and that the Corinthians saints were the seal of his apostleship, but the question was asked, "When did he actually 'establish' his apostleship? (a) on the Damascus road, or (b) in Acts 13.?" [13].

Evidently there were certain aspects of the gospel which were revealed to Paul as an expansion of the truths which the Lord had revealed to His disciples. The truth of what the Lord said in Matthew 16. had not fully dawned on them even after **His** ascension.

J. R. D.

From Halifax, Bradford **and** Leeds. —We believe Paul went to Arabia specifically to be prepared for God's service; and here, we suggest, he had another revelation of Jesus Christ. This is where the apostle received his great knowledge, which God has passed on to us through him in His holy word. To be faithful ministers for our Lord we must spend time in preparation, in prayer, and in the study of God's word. Here alone we can learn His will.

The apostle Paul did not wish to confer with brethren (1. 16), but went away into Arabia. We should remember that although we can learn much from our brethren, much also may be learned when alone with Him.

The apostle lived up to his own words: "I am not ashamed of the gospel" (Romans 1. 16). After his return from Arabia, he went to Damascus and thence to the place where he was brought up and preached the things of Jesus Christ to men who had known him as a persecutor of Christians.
R. Butler, Jun., W. Kirkman.

From Liverpool. —Paul tells us that the gospel which he was called to preach (1. 16) was not after man and, though Paul had sat as a student at the feet of Gamaliel (Acts 22. 3), the gospel had not been taught him there, but it came to him through revelation (see Acts 9. 15).

We considered the callings of the apostle: (1) His call, through grace, out of the kingdom of darkness (1. 15); (2) His call into the Fellowship (1 Corinthians 1. 9); (3) His call to be an apostle (1. 1). See also Romans 8. 29, 30. Ours is a like blessed experience as touching the first two, and though not so in the third instance, we have nevertheless each been called to service for God.

God in grace called Saul, who obeyed, as he himself says (Acts 26. 19): "I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision", and "immediately", says the apostle, "I conferred not with flesh and blood" (compare John 6. 63, Jeremiah 17. 5, 6). We also should manifest the Lord Jesus Christ in our daily lives, that our fellows might perceive that we too have been with Jesus. The apostle's case illustrates how God picks his men, and our attention was directed to Isaiah 66. 2. Again we saw how important it is that we should study God's word (1 Timothy 4. 13, 2 Timothy 2. 15, 3. 16, 17). The result will, in measure at least, be as in verse 24—God will be glorified.
R. Roughley, A. Horridge.

From Paisley and Barrhead. —The substance of verses 13 and 14 would indicate that Saul of Tarsus, a brilliant young law student, did not receive the gospel from Gamaliel, his famous teacher. How delightful it is to find the regenerate Paul, who aforesaid made havoc of the church of God, testifying to the saving grace of God!

We were of the impression that the Jews' religion (1. 13, 14) means the law, the traditions of the fathers and great events of national history.

In the light of the second portion of Galatians 1. we see that immediately after his conversion Paul did not visit the apostles in Jerusalem.
W. Terrell, Jun.

From Greenock. —We learn from Galatians 1. 18, 19 that on the occasion of Paul's visit to Jerusalem (Acts 9. 26-31) he saw only Cephas and James, the Lord's brother. The opinion of certain commentators, that James, the Lord's brother, was James the son of Alphaeus, one of the twelve (Acts 1. 13), seems difficult to support from scripture.

In spite of apparent discrepancies in the accounts of Paul's movements after his conversion (Galatians 1. 17-24 and Acts 9. 19-30), a close study of **both** passages reveals their perfect harmony. His visits to Damascus and Jerusalem (1. 17-19) are in accord with Acts 9. The visit to Arabia is

omitted from Acts. In **the regions** of Cilicia and Syria **are** respectively Tarsus (Acts 9, 30) and Antioch (Acts 11, 22-26). Attention **was** drawn to verse 22 **as** conflicting with Acts 9, 28-29, but it **was** pointed out **that** in the latter passage only Jerusalem was the scene of Paul's activities.

S. Johnston.

From Birkenhead. —Paul confesses "I persecuted the church of God". The Church the Body is secure in Christ, and cannot **be made** havoc of. The Church which Paul persecuted **was** a church composed of saints gathered together. It **seems** likely that there **was** only one such church at that time, the church of God in Jerusalem. It **is** difficult to say when other churches were established, but **it is** possible that there **was** already a church in Damascus, when Paul went there [14].

We compared "made havoc of **it** (the church)" with "the faith of which he once **made** havoc" (1. 23). Is **it** true to say that the church and the faith **are** the **same**? There **is** undoubtedly a very close link between the two [15]. The faith **is** a body of doctrine, which can only **be** maintained by saints gathered together in accordance with the word of God. Persecution of the one would thus involve persecution of the other. *D. B., R. L. S.*

COMMENTS.

[1] (Toronto). —"Sins" in Galatians 1. 4 **is** used in the **same** sense as "sins" in 1 Peter 2. 24. —*J. M.*

[2] (Toronto). —"If any man" is not limited to the Galatians, **but** to any man anywhere. —*J. M.*

[3] (Wellington Quay). —Yes, I understand so. The apostles were the twelve, of whom were James the son of Alphaeus, and Matthias who took the place of Judas according to the command in the Psalms. There were also Paul, Barnabas and James the Lord's brother (the son of Joseph and Mary), making fifteen apostles in all. —*J. M.*

[4] (Edinburgh). —Are our friends reading these events aright? After his conversion Paul did not spend many days in Damascus; he **was** only there "certain days". Acts 9. 23 says, "And when many days were fulfilled", this covers the period of the three years between his conversion and his going **up** to Jerusalem, during which he went into Arabia. —*J. M.*

[5] (Edinburgh). —See note [3]. —*J. M.*

[6] (Brantford). —See note [4]. —*J. M.*

[7] (Wembley). —See note [4]. The events in Galatians 1. **seem quite** clear and chronological, with which the record of the Acts **is** not **at** variance. Paul **was** converted outside Damascus, and remained there not many days, during which he publicly proclaimed Jesus to **be** the Son of God. Then he went into Arabia, after which he returned to Damascus and made disciples, called "his" disciples, who let him down over the wall in a basket or hamper. From Damascus he went to Jerusalem to see Peter and also saw James the Lord's brother. —*J. M.*

[8] (Wembley). —The word **used** here (*portheo*) means simply to lay • waste, destroy, ravage, plunder; there **is** nothing of a wild boar in **the** word itself. —*J. M.*

[9] (Kingston). —"To reveal His Son in me" does not simply mean "to reveal His Son to me". The whole of Paul's being was illuminated by the revelation of Christ in him. In consequence Paul said, "Christ liveth in me" (Galatians 2. 20). From such an illuminated man flowed out streams of grace as he declared the divine message. —*J. M.*

[10] (Kingston). —I am disposed to the view that the church had rest, not by the sending of Paul away from Jerusalem to Tarsus, but because of Paul's conversion; so that verse 31 would come in shortly after the conversion of Paul and not three years after when he came to Jerusalem to visit Peter. It is not clear to me that "the church" is the scattered church of God in Jerusalem, and that at that time the churches of God in Judaea had not yet been planted. It may be so. I would not care to be dogmatic on the point. Again, may not "the church throughout" (which means throughout the whole, from which the word "catholic" comes) signify what is equivalent to "the church of the living God" (1 Timothy 3. 15), a definition of the house of God? Paul writes to the Romans of "the churches of Christ", and to the Corinthians of "the churches of the saints". I judge these speak of the same churches. We never read of a church of Christ nor of the saints. Presumably they were churches in Corinth which met at the houses of saints, which formed the church of God in that city. —*J. M.*

[11] (Coleraine). —Paul was not three years in Damascus. See notes [4] and [7]. —*J. M.*

[12] (Cardiff). —See note [9]. Note the wording of the verses 15 and 16, "—separated.... called.... to reveal His Son in me." The calling of Paul is not equivalent to the revelation of Christ in him. This revelation was not what happened on the Damascus road. —*J. M.*

[13] (Cardiff). —See answer to question from Greenock in January issue. —*J. M.*

[14] (Birkenhead). —It is, I think, impossible to say whether there was or was not a church in Damascus. There were nevertheless those there that called on the Lord's name. —*J. M.*

I think we may safely assume that there was. Luke does not record the planting of *churches*. Later he records the appointing of elders (e. g., Acts 14. 23 in the case of Galatia). Note also Acts 20. 7 re Ephesus. What should we know of **a church at** Thessalonica or Philippi or even Corinth apart from Paul's letters?—*S. B.*

[15] (Birkenhead). —A church of God and the faith are quite distinct. Paul made havoc of the faith by persecuting the saints who kept it. —*J. M.*

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Question **from** Toronto, Ont. —We wondered just what significance there is to the fact that "Christ" is the title used throughout this chapter (verses 6, 7, 10) rather than the other titles belonging to that Blessed One.

Answer. —What Paul seems to be emphasizing in the use of the name Christ, is that Christ is the subject of the gospel which he preached. Christ is the answer to human need, not men's own works in law keeping. Christ, the grace of Christ in the gospel of Christ, stands in contrast to the professed good in men, and of men there is none good, not one. —*J. M.*

Question **from** Cowdenbeath. —What **are** we to understand by the latter part of verse **22**: "the churches of Judaea which **were** in Christ" ?

Answer. —"In Christ" here cannot have the **same** meaning **as**, say, "in Christ" in 2 Corinthians **5**. 17, where it is the standing of everyone who is created anew in Him. The **use** of "in Christ" in verse **22** shows rather, that those churches formed no part of the Jewish community which met in the synagogues in the different Judaea towns. They were **in fact** a different community of people, whose life and activities were governed by Christ, not by rabbinical teaching. In 1 Thessalonians **2**. **14** these churches are spoken of as being in Christ Jesus, in Christ who is Jesus. —**J. M.**

Question from Edinburgh. —"I persecuted the church of God" (1. 13). Was this confined solely to the church in Jerusalem? If so, why is a small letter used in "church" and not a capital? Would the authority of the chief priest carry weight in Damascus, a city of a foreign power? Have we any record that Paul persecuted churches other than that at Jerusalem?

Answer. —The church of God is the church in Jerusalem. Invariably the word church is printed with a small "c" in the New Testament. The authority of the high priest affected the synagogues in Damascus (Acts 9. 1, 2), not the city of Damascus. Paul says twice that he persecuted and made havoc of the church of God (1 Corinthians 15. 9, Galatians 1. 13), and Luke tells us of this (Acts 8. 1-3). —**J. M.**

Question from Glasgow. —Does Galatians 1. **19** justify the belief that James, the Lord's brother, was an apostle?

Answer. —Yes, the wording of this verse makes it quite clear that James, the Lord's brother, was one of the apostles. —**J. M.**

Question from Melbourne. —Does the time of sojourn in Arabia lie between verses **25** and **26** of Acts **9**. ?

Answer. —His sojourn in Arabia, I would understand, **is** covered by the words of verse **23**—"and when many days were fulfilled." —**J. M.**

Questions from Atherton. —(1) What is the scope of the words "the gospel" in Scripture? (2) Is it correct to speak of all the Lord's appearances to Paul **as** visions?

Answer. —(1) It **is** difficult to know what our friends wish to know. Please make plain your question.

Answer. —(2) In 2 Corinthians 12. Paul speaks of visions and revelations of the Lord. At one time the Lord spoke to him while **he was in a trance** (Acts **22**. 17-21). At another time the Lord stood by him **and** spoke to him (Acts **23**. **11**). **He had** a vision in Acts 16. 9. A vision and a revelation are evidently different. Paul saw the Lord (1 Corinthians 9. 1). It is, in my view, impossible to say in which ways the Lord appeared to Paul. —**J. M.**

NOTICE.

Young men throughout the Fellowship owe much to the spiritual instruction that **has** come through beloved Dr. Doodson. **His** present illness demands that **he** should rest awhile. Let **us** join fervently in prayer that **he** may soon be recovered, **and**, under God, be able to contribute his valuable help **and guidance** to fellow-students. —**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.

In **his** letter to the Galatians Paul reveals himself **as** nowhere else. He writes at white heat, and his soul is laid bare. No other epistle contains so **much** autobiography. **We** are told here of events of which Luke in the Acts is silent, e. g., the visit to Arabia.

Paul feels the defection of the Galatians keenly. They **had** received his **message at** the first with **an** enthusiasm which had touched his heart (4. 14). Now with sorrow he has to **say**, "I marvel... " (1. 6), **and** this in the very place where it was his custom to write words of thanksgiving and encouragement: "I thank **my** God" (Romans 1. 8, 1 Corinthians 1. 4, Philippians 1. 3, Colossians 1. 3, 1 Thessalonians 1. 2, 2 Thessalonians 1. 3, Philemon 4). "So quickly" has **a** tone of surprise **and** disappointment; it has the place of emphasis in the sentence. If the false doctrine spreads, the whole of his work, yea the gospel itself, is in jeopardy. Paul does not shirk the issue, his whole being rises to the height of the danger.

His defence embraces the three points of the attack which correspond to the three parts of our syllabus: i. The authority of the gospel and his authority to preach it; ii. The place of the Law and the former Scriptures; iii. The moral issue.

There is thus **a** logical unity about this defence and in progressive order the Gospel of faith, its origin, principle and consequences are explained and defended. The result is **a** work which stands alone in its power. A French scholar writes, "There is nothing in ancient or modern literature to be compared with it. All the powers of Paul's soul shine forth in these few pages. Broad and luminous views, keen logic, biting irony—everything that is most forcible in argument, vehement in indignation, ardent and tender in affection is found here combined and poured forth in **a** single stream, forming **a** work of irresistible power".

The spiritual value of this epistle is independent of the many and difficult critical questions that confront **us**. Who were the Galatians? When **was** the epistle written? Acts 15., Galatians 2. 1-10—are they to be identified? While all such questions are of considerable interest (to debate them effectively would take many valuable pages), our Bible students will therefore **keep**, for the most part, to the spiritual **message** of this wonderful letter. It is right, however, that **we** should **be** aware of these difficulties and special articles dealing with **them** would **be** welcome.

S. Burrows,

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE GALATIANS.

The Authority of the Gospel.

(Galatians 1. 11-24).

From Hamilton, Ont. —When did Paul receive the special revelation from the Lord? It was generally thought that it was in Arabia. This was not the first time that God dealt with His chosen vessels alone in the wilderness. David proved the Lord when he was minding the sheep. Moses spent forty years in the wilderness until God's time had come. John the Baptist was "in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel". When we think of the mighty results of these experiences with God, and compare 1 Thessalonians 1. 5: "our gospel came unto . . . you . . . in power", we wonder if there would not be more power manifest in our preaching to-day if there were more desert experiences first.

When we first read of Paul, he was working under authority, but of a different sort. Ananias said of him: "He hath authority from the chief priests" (Acts 9. 14), but the Lord said: "He is a chosen vessel unto me". He was now under a higher authority, the One with "all authority".

Norman MacKay.

From Sydney. —There is no scripture to support the suggestion that Paul went to Mount Sinai, when he went into Arabia. The time of Paul's visit to Arabia (1. 17) was placed in Acts 9., some placing it between the sentences in verse 19, others at the end of verse 22, and others at the end of verse 25. Some joined Acts 9. 23 ("many days") with Gal. 1. 18 ("three years"). We wondered if the three years started from Paul's conversion or referred to his stay in Damascus after returning from Arabia [1]. Did **Paul** go of his own free will into Arabia, or did he go in the good pleasure of God? [2].

Among questions arising during discussion it was asked: Could it be said that the apostle received that which is now manifested by studying "the scriptures of the prophets" (Romans 16. 25-26)? In view of how the apostle quoted Old Testament Scriptures, e. g., Acts 13. 41, 47, we wondered if the apostle had been told expressly that this referred to him or if John 14. 26 applied [3].

J. G., G. K., J. J.

The Jerusalem Conference.

(Galatians 2. 1-10).

From London, S. E. —The visit to Jerusalem seems to be that referred to in Acts 15. The circumstances are very much the same in both cases; the object is the same; and Barnabas is Paul's companion in each journey. Both accounts give James, Peter, Paul and Barnabas as being among the leading figures; they record discussion of the same subject with the same results, the vindication of Paul's authority, and the assertion of Gentile freedom. The opposition to Paul and his view is spoken of in each case, each occasion being of a critical nature. The time was fourteen years after his first visit, or, possibly, after his conversion.

Galatians 2. 2, states that Paul "went up by revelation"; Acts 15. 2, mentions that **Paul** and Barnabas were appointed for a specific purpose. This is no discrepancy. In all probability the decision of the brethren in the church was confirmed by special revelation to Paul. Luke in the Acts is recording the historical facts, but Paul is speaking from the standpoint of a spiritual and doctrinal experience.

His welcome in Jerusalem was quite cordial. He had not gone to receive instructions from the apostles as to how he should conduct his work for the Master. Rather he went to submit an important question pertaining to the churches of God. Consequently, he sought opportunity to lay his case before a few of the leading brethren in private to secure their co-operation before submitting the matter to open conference. The apostles made no attempt to compel him to submit to Jewish rites and customs. This proved that they did not assert jurisdiction over Paul; neither did they seek to impose the Mosaic rites on the Gentile converts.

He appears to have taken Titus with him to provide a case in point. Titus was probably one of the other brethren mentioned in Acts 15. 2, although he is not mentioned by name. Titus was a Gentile, a loved and faithful companion of the apostle. Titus 1. 4, suggests that Titus was converted through the work of Paul, who called him "my true child after a common faith".

The different attitudes adopted by Paul in the cases of Timothy (Acts 16. 3) and Titus, are well worth noting. In the case of Titus, his circumcision seems to have been demanded by some as a matter of obligation. Also, both his parents were Gentiles. So Paul resisted the demand. In the case of Timothy, it was a voluntary compliance with usual custom. Also, his mother was a Jewess, although his father was a Greek. So Paul complied, but circumcision would by no means be understood to be indispensable to discipleship.

There was only one special wish they desired of Paul—a remembrance of the poor. F. L. E.

From Melbourne. —Among the Jewish believers were those in whose hearts Judaism had not died. In the initial period of the Fellowship there arose false brethren who were trying to introduce this doctrine, and, being apparently men of strong influence, were swaying others. Before Paul laid the matter open before the general assembly in Jerusalem, he laid it before those of repute, namely, John, James and Cephas, who, having reached the unanimous decision in regard to the gospel of free grace, laid the matter before the general conference of the apostles and elders. The question having again been discussed here, the findings agreed upon were conveyed to the churches throughout the Fellowship as a permanent teaching. This was one of those "cares" of which the apostle spoke in 2 Corinthians 11. 28: "there is that which presseth upon me daily, anxiety for all the churches". L. F.

From Sunderland. —The details given in this chapter of the visit of Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem are in broad agreement with those in Acts 15., where we read of men coming from Judaea to Antioch saying that circumcision was necessary to salvation. It is evident from Acts 15. 24 that these men had no authority from the apostles for such teaching, though the fact of their coming from the church of God in Jerusalem would appear to give emphasis to their words. They would appear to be the false brethren to whom Paul refers (2. 4): men who were seeking to put a yoke of law-keeping round the necks of the disciples. In Acts 15. 2, and Galatians 2. 5, we find Paul and Barnabas withstanding this teaching as it was not in keeping with the gospel which Paul received by revelation from the Lord. The outcome was that Paul and Barnabas and certain others (this may

include Titus) were appointed by the **church** to go to **Jerusalem** to the apostles and elders about this question.

A private meeting appears to have taken place between **Paul** and the other apostles, at which Paul recounted the gospel preached by him to Gentiles. The substance of his gospel, received from the Lord and to which those who were of repute added nothing, had the full fellowship of the apostles in Jerusalem. There is no specific mention in Galatians of the meeting of the apostles and elders in Jerusalem; but the fact that Titus, who was with Paul and was his fellow-worker, was not compelled to be circumcised, is in keeping with the decree issued by the apostles and elders. It was on this occasion also that Paul was recognised by the apostles and elders as the apostle to the Gentiles, thus confirming the call of the Holy Spirit and the action of the prophets and teachers in Antioch in committing him with Barnabas to the grace of God. This did not preclude Paul from preaching to the Jews, because the gospel was to the Jew first and also to the Greek, but the Lord's purposes concerning him had the Gentiles particularly in view (Acts 9. 15, 1 Timothy 2. 7). The Lord, nevertheless, used Peter in the first instance to open a door of faith to the Gentiles (Acts 15. 14).

Presumably the poor (2. 10) are the poor among the saints, whose needs were met by Paul's ministry in fellowship with other churches on several occasions. Have we any responsibility in meeting the needs of the poor of the world? [4].

J. R., Jnr.

EXTRACTS.

From Kingston-on-Thames. —Verse 2 does not imply doubt in Paul's mind that his actions had been according to the will of God, but he was not sure that James and Peter were of the same mind. At first sight it seems inconsistent that Paul should resolutely refuse to circumcise Titus, when shortly afterwards Timothy was circumcised voluntarily. However, the circumstances were quite different, Timothy's mother and grandmother being Jewesses. Paul deemed circumcision for Timothy to be necessary, not for salvation, but so as not to arouse unnecessary opposition among unconverted Jews when Paul and Timothy entered their synagogues to preach the gospel. In the case of Titus, certain Christian Jews were insisting that circumcision was necessary for salvation, and if the apostle had given in to them, his case would have been completely undermined.

The account of this meeting between Peter, James and John on the one hand, and Paul and Barnabas on the other, indicates that there was complete agreement on the principles involved. Any suggestion that there was between Paul and the other apostles, a rift which persisted and deepened, is false and has no* foundation in Scripture. *L. A. White.*

From Glasgow. —The apostle reveals to the Galatians his visit to Jerusalem about the matter of circumcision. Paul did not give place to such teaching in Antioch, that the truth of the gospel might continue with them. In Jerusalem Titus, who was a Greek, was not compelled to be circumcised. The apostle sought to guide the Galatians out of wrong doctrine, which leads to wrong practice. Anxiety for all the churches was continually upon Paul's heart (2 Corinthians 11. 28).

Paul, in Jerusalem, laid privately before the apostles the gospel which he preached among the Gentiles. This phrase "reputed to **be** pillars" is spoken concerning James, Cephas **and** John (Galatians 2. 9). A pillar is a mainstay in any structure, **and** carries a great portion of the weight of the building. In spiritual things concerning God's house, **we** judge these **men** were mainstays, **men** who bore a heavy responsibility **and** knew God's mind **and** will, and could shepherd and guide the people of God through difficult times. *J. H.*

From **Halifax, Bradford and Leeds**. —Certain Pharisees who believed had proclaimed that the Gentiles must needs **be** circumcised, and keep the law of Moses that they might **be** saved. These **men** the apostle Paul rightly calls "false brethren privily brought in" (2. 4). "If it is by grace, it is no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace" (Romans 11. 6). If a **man** put himself under the law, he puts himself under its bondage. The apostle **was** "under law to Christ" (1 Corinthians 9. 21).

It would appear that Peter, **James and** John were held in very high esteem amongst the Jewish believers, **but** "whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to **me**": said Paul (2. 6).

From Cowdenbeath. —The background of the portion is that Judaizing teachers had come down to Antioch of Syria **and** taught that circumcision **was** necessary to salvation (Acts 15. 1). Paul and Barnabas dissented strongly (Galatians 2. 5), and it would **seem** that, subsequent to their encounter with these false brethren, Paul received a revelation from God. The apostles fully concurred with the terms of the gospel preached by Paul, **and** he adduces as proof of this the fact that Titus, a Greek, was not compelled to **be** circumcised.

Paul **was** not the recipient of any divine knowledge imparted (i. e., knowledge added during his conference with them) by the apostles, but rather, they saw that Paul had received this trust (the gospel of the uncircumcision) from God. They perceived also the **grace** that had **been** given to him, **and** had no hesitation **in** extending to Paul **and** Barnabas the right hands of fellowship in continuance of their mission to the Gentiles. *R. Ross.*

From Crowborough. —Paul had received his commission with great plainness **and** had long **since** come to understand it fully, hence his positiveness. **He** knew he had divine authority for his position **and** therefore he would not give place to these Judaizing teachers. It is important to remember that the truth respecting the Gentiles had not **been** authoritatively established among the Judaeans converts. The incident of Peter **and** Cornelius had not disposed of it entirely. The brethren at Antioch determined to refer the matter to the apostles **and** elders at Jerusalem, whose authority **was** acknowledged to **be** the highest to which they could appeal on earth, so Paul **and** others were sent. "I went **up** by revelation," Paul says; he was convinced that this **was** God's mode of having the matter established.

He also communicated privately with James, Peter **and** John before the general conference, **and** having shewn to them, **and** afterwards to the assembled apostles **and** elders, that the gospel he preached to the Gentiles **was** pure **and** genuine, he **was** assured that they did not wish to **add** to it or to take from it. *D. B.*

From Kilmarnock. —Paul and Barnabas went up to Jerusalem to consult the apostles and elders regarding the matter of circumcising the Gentile believers. We note they went to those who had the authority from the Lord and were leaders in the Fellowship. After Paul had laid before those of repute the gospel which he preached, and received the right hand of fellowship to preach to the Gentiles, "the apostles and the elders were gathered together to consider of this matter". This is how matters of difficulty should be settled, not by all the saints in churches of God discussing the questions.

Peter himself learned it was God's will that the Gentiles should hear and believe the gospel apart from circumcision (Acts 10. 35). Paul, although a circumcised Jew, speaks of himself as an apostle of Gentiles (Romans 11. 13).
A. G. S.

From Willington **Quay**. —The issue at stake was one of great importance to the apostle. If the Judaizing teachers were upheld in their insistence upon circumcision, then Paul's preaching amongst the Gentiles had been in vain. The fact that he went up to Jerusalem "by revelation" is significant. Freedom from the yoke of Judaism was fundamental and must be established, and Paul also desired that his apostleship unto the Gentiles should be acknowledged. The evidence which Paul submitted could not be gainsaid, and it could not be refuted that God was working amongst the Gentiles through Paul. The decisions reached at the Jerusalem conference must have been a great encouragement to him. K. R.

From **Edinburgh**. —Paul was instructed by revelation to go to Jerusalem. Paul had visited Cephas, had seen James (1. 19), but, in general, he was only known to the saints by repute. On this visit, fourteen years after his first, he went up with Barnabas and took Titus with him. To a number of brethren of repute he revealed the gospel which he preached to the Gentiles, refuting the claims for circumcision made by the Jews as attempts to restrict the liberty of Gentile believers. Paul took and circumcised Timothy (Acts 16.) because of the Jews in Galatia. Here in Jerusalem we find that Titus was not compelled to be circumcised. Paul stands firm upon the assertion that the teaching regarding circumcision was false. His desire was that the gospel might continue in all its fulness and simplicity to the Gentiles, without addition of the Mosaic law.

W. Taylor.

From Birkenhead. —The majority agreed with the generally-accepted view that Paul in this passage is referring to the conference at Jerusalem which is recorded in Acts 15., but some found it difficult to accept this. They thought the differences in the accounts of what took place could not be reconciled, and could not understand how Peter could possibly have acted as he did at Antioch in a way which was contrary to the decision reached at the conference. The conference recognised two fields of service, one taking the gospel to the Jews and the other to the Gentiles, but there was no suggestion of two different gospels. There was complete unity among the leaders who were at the conference and those who were to be engaged in both fields of service.

It is important to notice a principle here established. Difficulties experienced in the expanding churches called for a conference of the leaders, that they might reach agreement and be able to make known their united decisions to the churches. Here we have a precedent for the conferences of overseers which take place regularly in our day. *K. H., R. L. S.*

From Toronto, **Ont.** —Paul's reputation had reached Jerusalem. The saints glorified God because "He that once persecuted... now preacheth the faith" (1. 23).

We cannot understand the apostle's reason for waiting fourteen years prior to going up to Jerusalem, except in the light of verse 2: "I went up by revelation". From this same verse we concluded that Paul first met with the leading brethren separately from the others. He strikes an almost sad note, when he says, "lest by any means I should be running, or had run, in vain". In this seemingly doubtful remark we see no weakening of the apostle's assurance in the revealed will of God, but rather, we suggest, his doubts as to the brethren's acceptance of it. Much significance is placed on the closing words: "they... imparted nothing to me". They saw the revealing of God's purposes in Christ to the Gentiles, and the right hand of fellowship was a seal of their approbation (Psalm 133. 1, 2).
N. K.

From Sydney. —We were agreed that Acts 9. and 11. were not the visit of our chapter. Some thought that the differences between Acts 15. and Galatians 2. would point to their being different visits; others thought that these differences could be explained. Since Paul and Barnabas separated toward the end of Acts 15. the conference could not have taken place after that.

Whilst our standing in Christ has conferred on us many liberties, we believe that the liberty of verse 4 refers particularly to our freedom from circumcision, and consequently, freedom from being "debtor to do the whole law" (Galatians 5. 3). As touching "the truth of the gospel" we saw that it brings liberty from the law. The Holy Spirit leads us into all the truth (John 16. 18), and "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2 Corinthians 3. 17). This conference established the principle of oversight consultation, and its immediate effect was to confirm the truth of the gospel, that a man is saved through faith and not of works (Ephesians 2. 8, 9).
J. G., G. K., J. J.

From **St. Helens.** —We agreed that the conference referred to was the one recorded in Acts 15., but difficulty was found in reconciling Acts 9. 27, 28 with Galatians 1. 17-19. It was pointed out that Galatians 1. 17 may mean that the apostle's reason for going up to Jerusalem was other than to see his fellow-apostles, although this does not appear to be so in view of what we have in the latter part of the verse.

We thought that the gospels of circumcision and uncircumcision (2. 7) were undoubtedly the same gospel, preached to different classes of people. It is noteworthy that Paul, who had formerly persecuted the church because it violated the Jewish law, as interpreted by the Pharisees, is now defending the church against the infiltration of Jewish legalism: and that one formerly so Jewish in outlook is made the apostle to the Gentiles.

The exhortation given to Paul (2. 10) to **remember** the poor, we felt, would probably apply more to the Jews, who were **at** that time suffering persecution, than to the Gentiles, among whom Paul was ministering spiritual things.
Don Raspin, C. A. O.

From Coleraine. —The conference **at** Jerusalem **was** called to consider the matter of circumcision. In Acts 15. 12, the "multitude" who "**kept** silence" relates, we believe, to the apostles and elders.

Paul went **up** to Jerusalem **by** revelation fourteen years after his first visit to Jerusalem (1. 18), or seventeen years after his conversion. He went to lay before those of **repute** the gospel he preached to the Gentiles. This gospel, which he had received by the revelation of **Jesus** Christ (1. 12), **gave** believers liberty from the Mosaic Law, and all that it entailed. False brethren had been privily brought in to spy out the liberty of saints in Christ **Jesus**, that they might bring such into bondage. To these brethren Paul gave place, no, not for an hour.
A. T. Gault.

From Greenock. —In Galatians Paul gives, in chronological order [?], his movements from his conversion to his second visit to Jerusalem. Clearly, from Acts 15., it is **at** least his third visit. Here Paul **was** appointed to go **up** to Jerusalem in contrast to "by revelation" (2. 2). Further, the visit **was** made openly with the full knowledge of the whole church, which again contrasts with the **secrecy** of Galatians 2. 2. Again the cordial terms in which Peter and **James** refer to Paul (Acts 15.) would indicate that the incident, in which Paul withstood Cephas to the **face** at Antioch, had occurred sufficiently long before for the matter to **be** forgotten.

Acts 9. gives Paul's movements in a general way, not chronologically [?]. His close association with the apostles contrasts strongly with Galatians 1. 18-22. It **was** suggested that the three apostles, so closely associated during the Lord's earthly ministry, and immediately following the advent of the Holy Spirit, are again seen acting together in Galatians 2. 9, which would necessarily place the incident before Acts 12., when **James** was beheaded [5]. It is doubtful if Paul did preach to the Gentiles prior to Acts 14. [6]. It **was** to the church **at** Antioch that they declared.... how God had opened "a door of faith unto the Gentiles" (Acts 14. 27). If Antioch had been a Gentile church we should have thought the door **was** opened with them.

From Liverpool. —After fourteen years in **Syria** and Cilicia the apostle again went **up** to Jerusalem with Barnabas taking Titus (Acts 15. 2), and this for the purpose of discussing the question of circumcision. God revealed to him that he should go. There he laid before those of **repute** the gospel which he preached to the Gentiles.

There **was** some difference of opinion **as** to whether those mentioned in Acts 15. 24 "which went out from us" were in the Fellowship, and some thought that these were the Pharisees of Acts 15. 5, and that they were still in the Fellowship, and that the last part of Acts 15. 24 supplied the answer, in that if they were not in the Fellowship the apostles would have no jurisdiction over them. To such, says the apostle, (Galatians 2. 5) we refused to **be** in subjection, not even for an hour (compare Acts 15. 11).

Alan Sands, AM.

From Atherton. —False teachers had done incalculable damage in the assemblies in Galatia, undermining the claims of the apostle Paul himself as well as his message. The epistle is the apostle's defence. The right hands of fellowship were thought to indicate the unity of the brethren. There was no reserve in the hearts of the apostles Peter, James and John, because Paul had previously persecuted the church. The apostle Paul had every right to go on with the Lord's work. Had not the Lord called him? The love of Christ now filled his heart, to suffer, to hazard his life to the uttermost so that the Gentiles might know the glorious liberty of the Gospel committed to his trust.

What constituted the men of verses 2, 6 and 9, men "of repute"? These men were men of esteem whose work commended itself. Brethren who are doing their appointed task before the Lord should be esteemed; elders who rule well should be counted worthy of double honour, esteemed for their work's sake, not because of their position.

Please explain the words: "Whatsoever they were . . . God accepteth not man's person" (2. 6) [7]. Is the visit of Acts 11. 29-30 the same as Galatians 2. 1? [8]. The fact of its being private made some think it was Acts 11., but the general opinion was that Galatians 2. 1 referred to Acts 15. It was seventeen years after Paul's conversion, and the subject of circumcision plays an important part in the conference of Acts 15., which agrees with what we have in Galatians 2.

E. Birchall, D. H. Butler.

COMMENTS.

[1] (Sydney). —I think it is three years from Paul's conversion. —*J. M.*

[2] (Sydney). —I take it that he went there according to the will of God. —*J. M.*

[3] (Sydney). —Paul undoubtedly studied the Old Testament Scriptures under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, but he had revelation of Jesus Christ, as Galatians 1. 12 shows. —*J. M.*

[4] (Sunderland). —The principle is laid down in Galatians 6. 10, —good to all men especially to the household of the faith. —*J. M.*

[5] (Greenock). —The James of Galatians 2. is James the Lord's brother of Galatians 1. 19, not James the brother of John. —*J. M.*

[6] (Greenock). —There can be no doubt whatever that at Antioch Paul preached to Gentiles. Read Acts 11. 19-26. The issue at Antioch, when the Judaizing teachers came from Judaea, was whether these Gentiles, who had been saved by grace, should be circumcised in order to complete their salvation. —*J. M.*

[7] (Atherton). —Paul is saying that it is not a man's person or reputation that matters, but a man's calling **and** work, work which is wrought in and through him by God's grace. —*J. M.*

[8] (Atherton). —The visit of Acts 11. 29, 30, was to bring relief from Antioch to Judaea, but that of Galatians 2. 1-10 was over circumcision, in which Titus, in my opinion, was a test case, "not even Titus . . . a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised". —*J. M.*

Was Titus a test case? Sir Wm. Ramsay says: "The plain meaning of the Greek words is that the question was not raised, nor publicly decided; Titus was left free and unconstrained; nobody compelled him; he was left alone". Had the apostles formally decided the Titus case it would have settled the Galatian question and Paul could scarcely have avoided giving the judgement clearly. *S. B.*

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Question from Sydney. —Does "the gospel" here refer to salvation alone (1 Corinthians 15. 1-4)? or does it cover the faith once for all delivered to the saints (Jude 3, 4) as found in all Paul's writings?

Answer. —The gospel here is that which proclaims salvation by faith alone, to which must not be added obedience to commandments as is involved in "the faith". —*J. M.*

Question from Melbourne. —Was the revelation (2. 2) a divine revelation direct to the apostle Paul from the Holy Spirit? or did it reach him through travellers from Jerusalem?

Answer. —Yes, I understand it was a divine revelation. —*J. M.*

Question from Crowborough. —Which James is this whom Paul mentions?

Answer. —James in Galatians 2. 9 is the same James as in Galatians 1. 19 (see [5] above). —*J. M.*

Question from Edinburgh. —Titus is not mentioned as being given the right hand of fellowship. Was this because he was uncircumcised? or because he was with Paul as a servant?

Answer. —Paul and Barnabas were apostles, and other apostles gave to them the right hands of fellowship in the Lord's work, showing their agreement with what had been done by the Holy Spirit at Antioch through the prophets and teachers there. See Acts 13. 1-4. Titus was taken by Paul to Jerusalem not as a servant, but, I am of the opinion, as a test case, as to whether he, being a Greek, would be called upon to be circumcised. It would have raised a serious issue if such a demand had been made. —*J. M.*

Question from Kingston-on-Thames. —Why does the apostle refer to Peter as Cephas, when both have the same meaning?

Answer. —Cephas is Aramaic: Peter is Greek. The Lord used the Aramaic name when He renamed Simon (John 1. 42). Paul uses both names in Galatians 2. James calls Peter, Symeon (Simon), in Acts 15. 14. It may be because of local usage that Paul calls Peter, Cephas. He is the only New Testament writer who uses the Aramaic name. —*J. M.*

Questions from Liverpool. —(1) Were those of Acts 15. 24 in the Fellowship? (2) Paul says he went up by revelation (2. 2). In Acts 15. 3 they were brought on their way by the church. Are these two aspects of the same event? (3) Only three apostles are named. Would there not be more at the council?

Answers. —(1) Yes. (2) My opinion is that they refer to the same visit to Jerusalem. (3) Possibly. —*J. M.*

BIBLE STUDIES

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

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THE JERUSALEM CONFERENCES.

There have been many attempts made to fit the events of Galatians 2. into the account of the apostles' movements as recorded in the **Acts of the Apostles**. The problem is a very difficult one, because there is **no** precise chronology available to settle the terminal points of the fourteen years referred to **by** Paul, **and** great care is needed in discussing this matter because it involves important teaching on church government **and** leadership. It is more important to discern this teaching than to **be** dogmatic upon the chronological aspect.

Many students have assumed that all the visits of Paul to Jerusalem after his conversion are mentioned in the Acts, **and** with this limitation the choice must lie **between** the visit described in Acts 11. 27 to Acts 12. 25 **and** that described in Acts 15. We shall firstly state the views of those who favour the view that the private conference took **place** just prior to the public one. In brief, these are, " that the circumstances are similar, the chief persons concerned are the same, **and** the general agreement arrived **at between** them is the same. " We shall leave for the moment the comments of others as to the validity of the statements just **quoted, and** pass **on** to consider how such a conclusion affects the last half of Galatians 2. We will quote from the same commentators as those quoted above:

" If the incident about to be related took place after the Council at Jerusalem at all, it must have taken place immediately after it, for Paul and Barnabas separated soon after their return to Antioch, as recorded in Acts 15. 36-40, and were never together again. It is hardly conceivable, however, that Peter, and even Barnabas, should have acted as here described within such a brief space after the Council... It is highly probable then, that the apostle here goes back to the time of strain at Antioch mentioned in Acts 15. 1, 2. True, Peter is not referred to there, but neither is there any mention of his presence in Antioch between the break-up of the Council and the departure of Barnabas mentioned in Acts 15. 39. "

It is indeed unthinkable that the events of the second half of Galatians 2. should have occurred after the public conference, and the conclusion must be either that there is an inversion of chronological order in Galatians 2. or else the private conference at Jerusalem was prior to Acts 15. 1, 2. The former conclusion is reached by the commentators from whom we quote, and in support of it they say that the adverb used at 1. 18, 21, and 2. 1, " then, " *epeita*, marks a chronological sequence, **but** that in Galatians 2. 11 the word " but, " *de*, is quite consistent with, if indeed it does not actually indicate, a break in the sequence.

If such an inversion of events is not acceptable, and if it is still assumed that the private conference must be one of those visits mentioned in the Acts, then it could only be that referred to in Acts 11—12. Some in favour of such an explanation do not agree with the reasons quoted above in favour of Acts 15. and say, in effect, what one commentator says below:

"The clear divergencies of the two narratives have led to the proposition of a bewildering variety of theories... We can say outright that Galatians 2. 1-10 and Acts 15. do not tally and cannot be made to tally satisfactorily by any supposition that the private interview of Galatians may have culminated in the public debate of Acts 15. "

It will be noted, therefore, that while some say that there is similarity of subject, others say that there are essential differences, and that the conference of Galatians 2. decided that the Gospel should go to the Gentiles through Paul and Barnabas, whereas the conference of Acts 15. dealt mainly with the matter of bringing or not bringing the converted Gentiles under the Law of Moses. Exponents of this "solution" point out that the events of Acts 13. and 14. might imply the implementation of the private conference, **but** the opponents of the "solution" have difficulties connected with Acts 13. 1, 2.

Paul says in Galatians 2. 2 that he went up to Jerusalem by revelation, **but** this is not inconsistent with what is said as to his going up to Jerusalem by the appointment of brethren, for in Acts 9. he was commanded by the Lord to leave Jerusalem and **at** the same time he was sent to Tarsus by the brethren, so this does not decide the issue.

The one definite conclusion so far reached is that the visit of Peter to Antioch must have been prior to the conference in Acts 15., and it is very probable that the events of Galatians 2. 11-14 are referable to those described in Acts 15. 1, 2.

So far, **we** have dealt with the matter on the assumption that the private conference **at** Jerusalem must have taken place during one or other of the visits mentioned in the Acts. In view of the **fact** that Paul reveals matters in Galatians 1. which are not mentioned in the Acts, other commentators have said that there is no need to make such an assumption. Paul and Barnabas were in Antioch for quite a long time, and in view of the increasing difficulties they might have **made a private** visit to Jerusalem. There was time enough and no chronological difficulties are against it. Exponents of this "solution" say that such a visit at a time just before the end of Acts 14. would be consistent with the events of Galatians 2. 11-14 synchronising with those of Acts 15. 1, 2, and leading naturally to the public conference.

Many eminent and godly students have studied this subject, **and** have had their personal preferences for one view or another. One thing **we** should take as certain, that men of the character of James, Peter, Paul, and Barnabas could not have been involved in the incidents of Galatians 2. 11-14 **after** they had committed themselves to the public decisions of Acts 15. Whatever "solution" **we** may prefer, **we** must not permit Satan to deflect our minds from the spiritual lessons that men who are leaders must consult together and stand together that no advantage over the saints **may be** gained **by** the Adversary, who ever seeks to divide and to destroy.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE GALATIANS.

The Jerusalem Conference.

(Galatians 2. 1-10).

From Hamilton, Ont. — Paul, **speaking** of true circumcision, **said**, "circumcision **is** that of the heart, **in** the **spirit**, not **in** the letter" (Romans 2. 29), and "we are the circumcision, who worship **by** the **Spirit** of God, . . . and have no confidence **in** the flesh" (Philippians 3. 3). Stephen, also, said to men of a past day: "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears," showing that a change **must** take place within, and that the thing that counts with God **is** a "new creature" (6. 15). "Where then **is** the glorying? It **is** excluded. By what manner of law? of works? Nay: but by a law of faith" (Romans 3. 27).

Titus **was** not compelled to be circumcised, yet Paul had Timothy circumcised (Acts 16. 3). It may have been that he did not desire to **cause** offence to the Jews. Paul in circumcising Timothy hoped to win men for Christ, for **it** would be **easier** for him to enter into the synagogues in his work for the Lord.

Paul refers (2. 4) to "false brethren privily brought in," their **aim** being to spy out the liberty which the saints had through faith in Christ **Jesus**, and to bring them into bondage. **We** remember the words spoken by our Lord Jesus Christ in Matthew 7. 15: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves." **He** continues by saying, "By their **fruits** ye shall know them." In these dark days **it** is possible for such to be among **us**, and though they may go on for a **time** unnoticed by us, yet God knoweth the hearts of men, and eventually they will be made manifest "by their fruits."

The "truth of the gospel" (2. 5) can be seen in Ephesians, "the Gentiles are fellow-heirs, and fellow-members of the Body, and fellow-partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel" (Ephesians 2. 11-16; 3. 6).
R. Dryburgh, W. Thompson.

Consistency.
(Galatians 2. 11-21).

From Sydney. — Paul stood for the truth of the gospel against no less a person than Peter. Peter **was** aware that Christ had removed the distinction between Jew and Gentile, and that he **was** wrong in withdrawing from the Gentiles, **as is** shown by his defence, after he had been **accused** of going in to men uncircumcised and eating with them (Acts 11. 3). "The fear of man bringeth a snare" (Proverbs 29. 25); **it** **caused** Peter to err, and earlier had caused him to deny his Lord (Matthew 26. 69-75). **We** should learn by **Peter's** **mistake**, and give heed to the word of Scripture: "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." **We** **must** remember that our actions **may** **affect** others, the more so **if** **we** are leaders of the flock. Peter's action might easily have been a stumbling block to the Gentiles, so let **us** carry **out** Hebrews 12. 13.

Paul rebuked Peter openly, illustrating, **some** thought, the teaching of 1 Timothy 5. 20; others thought this Scripture could not apply [1], **We** noted Peter's gracious acceptance of the **rebuke**; he could **speak** later of "our beloved brother Paul" (2 Peter 3. 15).

Paul **stated**, simply and clearly, the truth that **a** man is justified through faith in **Jesus** Christ, and not of works, **a** teaching of which the apostle elsewhere spoke (Acts 13. 39) and wrote (Romans 4. 1-5).

We were unable to reach an understanding of verse 17. **We** considered whether **we** could compare the "sinners" (2. 17) with the "sinners of the Gentiles" (2. 15); and again, whether the seeking to **be** justified preceded or succeeded salvation [2]. **We** compared verse 19 with Romans 7. 4 and 6. 6, **but we** were unable to reach fully the depths of meaning in the expression, "For I through the law died unto the law."

J. G., G. K., J. I.

From Barrhead and Paisley. —The relationship of Christians to the Law of Moses **was** one of the major problems which the early church had to **face**. It **was** only to **be** expected that, **at** that period, there would **be** difficulties of this nature. The majority of believers of that time had **been** of the Jewish faith prior to their conversion, and it is not difficult to understand their attitude, for they had no **New** Testament Scriptures to guide them.

The teaching of the Judaizers **was** that, in addition to faith in Christ, it **was** necessary for justification, to observe the Law of Moses. This teaching had evidently spread **as far as** Galatia and had ensnared some of the saints there (1. 6, 3. 1, 4. 9). The purpose of the epistle, therefore, **seems to be** primarily to refute this doctrine. In the latter part of chapter 2., Paul shows how that the false teaching aimed **at** the very life of the Christian faith and he relates his arguments to various incidents **at** Jerusalem and Antioch.

It would appear that Peter had already learned that Gentiles who believed should not **be** asked to conform to the Law, but his wavering attitude, brought about by the fear of man, **was** strongly censured by Paul.

The plain statement of Habakkuk 2. 4, "the just shall live by his faith" **is a** statement of truth for all time. Men and women of every era can **be** just before God purely on the foundation of faith. Justification places a soul before God in **a** position **as** though he had never committed one sin. In the eyes of divine law that person is righteous. This could never **be** the result of human endeavour, otherwise Christ died in vain.

Reference **was made** to **Paul's** action (Acts 21) in agreeing to purify himself of his vow with others. Did not **Paul**, in this instance, identify himself with the Law and **act** contrary to his teaching? It would appear to **be** so, **but it was** thought that he followed the advice of leading brethren to **act** in such **a** way, lest any of the **Jews** should **be** stumbled. Other than this, it would appear that Paul **put** no value on the **efficacy** of such an **act** [3.]

J. M. Gault.

From Liverpool. —The incident **at** Antioch **was** no mere difference between two brethren that could **be** settled privately, **but a matter to be** settled before **all**. Hence Paul took Peter to task. This dissimulation (hypocrisy) had to **be** shown for what it **was**, for not only **was** Peter involved, **but** others, including even Barnabas, had **been** carried **away** thereby. The acceptance of the truth of the gospel demands an upright walk (Romans 13. 13, 1 Thessalonians 2. 12).

Paul's statement (2. 11) that Cephas (Peter) **came** to Antioch **gave** rise to the question **as** to whether Acts records his going or being there? Did he go voluntarily? Some **suggest** that it were better, perhaps, if he had never gone to Antioch, for it would **seem as** if his presence there had **caused** this trouble. It **was** suggested that he may have gone voluntarily, knowing this **matter** would have to **be** thrashed out. Such troubles **are** the manifestations of the flesh (Galatians 5. 20).

Justification is by faith in the Lord **Jesus** Christ (2. 16, 3. 11; Romans 3. 19-31; Ephesians 2. 8, 9). **We** thought much upon the wonderful words of Paul's personal confession (2. 20), and the question **was** asked **as** to the meaning of "I have been crucified with Christ." Romans 6. supplied a clear and plain answer. It **was** our old man (the Adamic nature) which was crucified in God's reckoning. **We** should in consequence reckon ourselves in a practical sense to **be** dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ **Jesus** (Romans 6. 6, 7, 11; Ephesians 4. 22; Colossians 3. 9). The apostle goes on to say: "Yet I live; and yet no longer I, **but** Christ liveth in me." (compare John 17. 23). How wonderful that we too can confess and say our faith is in the Son of God who loved **us** and gave himself up for **us**! **We** considered also Philippians 3. 10. Verse 21 gives finality to Paul's argument, "for if righteousness is through the law, then Christ died for nought." Such words are conclusive; there remains no further argument.

A. Hyland, A. Horridge.

From Birkenhead.—**We** were reminded of Peter's authority from the Lord **Jesus** Christ (Matthew 16. 19) to open the door to the Gentiles, and of the vision God **gave** him at Joppa (Acts 10. 9-16). In spite of this revelation, however, when certain **came** from **James**, Peter drew **back** from eating with the Gentile believers **at** Antioch. Not only did he err himself, but others were stumbled. The effective testimony at Antioch would **be** marred, if this grave error were not halted. Such a serious threat to the vital truth of justification by faith merited public **rebuke**, and Paul did not hesitate to do so. Peter received the admonition with grace, and writing later he referred to "our beloved brother Paul" (2 Peter 3. 15).

Paul **was** concerned **because** Peter was seeking to uphold those things which he had once destroyed. The Law and justification by faith cannot **be** united. The Law cannot justify; faith in Christ alone justifies a man before God.

We thought verse 20 suggested a two-fold purpose in the death of Christ. Firstly, He died **for** us. "The Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself **up** for me." Secondly, the words "Christ liveth **in** me," **suggest** that the work that **He** accomplished for **us** in His death should now **be expressed** in our lives. **His** death demands that we should subject our hearts to **Him**. Every motive, every action, and every word, should result from this blessed experience—"Christ liveth in me." J. B., R. H.

EXTRACTS.

From Wembley.—**Peter** stood condemned **as** the apostle Paul resisted him. **At** one time he **ate** with the Gentiles, and then drew **back**, and **separated** himself. Several of our number felt that Peter's action could **be** understood in the difficult circumstances in which he **was** placed. Certain ones had come to Antioch from **James**, and with Peter, no doubt, had strictly

observed the Law of Moses. To them it must have presented a great problem that the Gentiles should be brought into the one thing for God. Grace was needed, together with wisdom, discretion and forbearance.

Peter had been used by God to open the door to the Gentiles. Paul was used to follow up the work. The reconciliation of Jew and Gentile "in one body unto God through the cross" was of God (Ephesians 2. 16), and this dissimulation was not according to the will of God. Paul's action was sharp, his words to Peter were firm and, it would seem, had the desired effect. The truth (2. 16) "that a man is not justified by the works of the Law, save through faith in Jesus Christ," is a bed rock of Holy Scripture upon which we rest. Our salvation does not depend upon anything we can do. God desires us to hold fast that which we have learned, and that our lives should be consistently conformed to the truths which God has revealed to us.

J. A. Hopley.

From Clydebank and Dumbarton. —Paul and Barnabas finished their first missionary journey at Antioch, and to the assembly there Paul reported in detail the work which they had accomplished. The hand of the Lord was with them at all times as they witnessed to the word of His grace. Paul showed how they had fulfilled the will and purpose of God by preaching Christ to the Gentiles.

When Cephas came to Antioch, Paul confronted him with the inconsistency of his walk, in compelling the Gentiles to live as do the Jews, while he himself, being a Jew, lived like the Gentiles. This was in the presence of other Christians, that they also might learn the true way. Paul's further instruction to them was that there is no justification by the works of the Law, but only through faith in Jesus Christ. He continues that, if through the Law we were made righteous, then Christ died in vain. *M. R.*

From Glasgow. —The apostle Peter was being inconsistent in his practice, in view of what God had already revealed to him (Acts 10., 11. 16-18), and in the light of his own words (Acts 15. 7-11). God had made no difference between Jew and Gentile, cleansing their hearts alike by faith. Sufficiently enlightened had Peter been that he could associate with the Gentiles by eating with them. Yet when certain men came from James, he drew back, and separated himself, fearing them that were of the circumcision.

Paul says: "We being Jews by nature, . . . even we believed on Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ, and not by works of the Law; because by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified." Peter's practice was a denial of this. By separating himself from the uncircumcised Gentiles, he was going back upon what he had before preached and practised.

It would seem that his courage failed him here. He was a great man, a leader of men; firm as a rock, no doubt, on occasion, yet there was weakness too. Indeed in this case, it would seem to be the old weakness reappearing (Matthew 26. 69-75). *A. McL*

From Kingston-on-Thames. —In common with the first part of this chapter there is some difficulty in identifying the events related in these verses with those recorded in the Acts. Some would infer **that the "but"** at the beginning of verse 11 implies a break in the chronological order, **and**

we are taken **back** to the beginning of **Acts 15**. If this were so, it would be difficult to explain the behaviour of Barnabas, who sided with **Paul** in the **Acts** account, but with Peter in Galatians. Even if he quickly **saw** Peter's error and then took **Paul's** part, he could hardly after such a lapse **be** appointed to go to **Jerusalem** with the apostle [4].

It is more likely that Peter's failure took **place** after the **Jerusalem** conference, and after Judas and Silas returned to Jerusalem, but before **Paul** and Barnabas departed from Antioch. **Acts 15. 35, 36** seem to cover only a short space of time, **but** it would have been sufficiently long if Peter came to Antioch while Judas and Silas were still there. The attitude of Barnabas fits in very **well** here and **was** perhaps the beginning of his temporary estrangement from **Paul** (**Acts 15**).

Peter's **lapse** so soon after his strong support of **Paul** at Jerusalem is, we believe, not inconsistent with his character [5]. While walking on the water, fear seized him and he began to sink. After his wonderful confession of faith at **Caesarea** Philippi, he tried to dissuade the Lord Jesus from going to Jerusalem to die. After vowing to die for his Lord, he denied Him. These incidents reveal a trait in his character which could account for his conduct at Antioch.

This passage has been used by critics to prove that there was a fundamental antagonism between **Paul** and the rest of the apostles. Such a contention cannot honestly **be** held in the **face** of the evidence of other Scriptures, which show that the friendship between Peter and **Paul** continued after this incident (**Galatians 2. 9, 2 Peter 3. 15, 16**). Moreover, it is probable that those who came from James had no instructions from him, but, **as** in **Acts 15. 24**, used the authority of James to lend weight to their words and that without his consent.

L. Burrows.

From Kilmarnock. —Peter was inconsistent before the Gentile believers at Antioch. When we read of the vision Peter had from the Lord (**Acts 10**), of his interview with Cornelius's company, resulting in uncircumcised persons receiving the Holy Spirit, and of his words at Jerusalem (**Acts 15. 7-11**), **we** wonder why he acted **as** in **Galatians 2. 11-13**. Although he **was** highly honoured of the Lord, yet he **was** human and Satan used him to **cause** others to err. **Paul** also **was** a Jew by birth, and had been zealous for the traditions of the fathers, but he acted consistently. Alas ! we have known some who built again what they had destroyed, causing others to go astray. Let **us** give heed to the instruction in **1 Timothy 4. 16** and thus save ourselves and those that hear us.

A. G. S.

From London, S. E. —From **Paul's** account of what passed between him and other apostles **at** Jerusalem, the Galatians might discern both the falseness of what his enemies had said against him, and their own folly in departing from that gospel which he had preached to them. To give the greater weight to what he had said, he now acquaints them with an interview he had with Peter **at** Antioch. There Peter **ate** with the Gentiles, **agreeable** to the instructions given him (**Acts 10.**), when he was warned **by** the heavenly vision to **call** nothing common or unclean. **But**, when there **came** some Jewish Christians from Jerusalem, "**He drew back and separated himself**" (**2. 12**). His action had a **bad** influence on others, for the other Jews also dissembled with him, and, surprisingly, Barnabas himself, one of those who had been instrumental in planting and watering the churches of the Gentiles,

was carried away with their dissimulation. How great a force is example ! especially of great and good men, such as have a reputation for wisdom and honour.

Peter's behaviour prejudiced both the truth of the gospel and the peace of the churches, and Paul in his boldness rebuked him publicly (2. 14), when he saw that " they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, " i. e., that by the death of Christ the partition-wall between Jew and Gentile was taken down. Paul is logical in his argument: "If thou, being a Jew, livest as do the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, how compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews ? " He insists that justification is only by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the Law, thus condemning those who kept up the Law and were for mixing it with faith as the means of justification. " By the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. " *J. D.*

From Cowdenbeath. —If this incident took place some time after the Jerusalem conference, then Peter's conduct is difficult to understand, especially in view of the stand which he took at the Jerusalem conference on behalf of the Gentile believers. Peter was giving to the Law a place which it ought not to have amongst believers in Christ.

Paul makes it clear that when a person accepts Christ, be he Jew or Gentile, the Law has no place. The inability of man to keep the Law proves that there is no distinction between Jew and Gentile, " for all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God. " Clearly then, " by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified, " and this the converted Jews themselves had acknowledged, when they sought justification through Christ. Paul asserts the freedom of the Christian from the Law of Moses as a means of justification. To deny this truth is to deny that men are saved by faith in Christ alone, which is, " the truth of the gospel. "

It may have occasioned the Jews some surprise when they discovered themselves also to be sinners, and learned for the first time that before God they had no superiority over the Gentiles, whom they called sinners. Faith is the characteristic of the new life. To add circumcision, or law-keeping in any form, to the death of Christ, is to set at nought the grace of God.

D. McLelland.

From Willington **Quay**. —This is a sad episode in the life of Peter, and is contrary to the Lord's injunction to him: " Feed my sheep. " What was it that made him fall into this error ? " The fear of man bringeth a snare. " It may be that some of the blame lay at the door of James, or it may be that he was guiltless in this matter, but Peter certainly should have known better than to cause a cleavage in the church of God in Antioch.

Paul's life, as recorded in Scripture, shows that he himself was faced with such problems on more than one occasion. It was because of the Jews that he took Timothy and circumcised him. When he returned to Jerusalem he agreed to having his head shaved and to the offering necessary for his purification after the Jewish custom (Acts 21). It seems that he took the place of one who " sinned by reason of the dead " (Numbers 6. 11). It is difficult to link this with Paul's statement, " For if I build up again those things which I destroyed, I prove myself a transgressor " (2. 18.) [6].

C. B.

From Edinburgh. —In this portion, Paul avers that (1) justification is not by works of the Law, (2) justification is by faith, and that (3) he died unto the Law that he might live unto God. In the New Testament justification is seen in three ways: (1) by His (Christ's) blood (Romans 5. 9), the means, (2) by God's grace (Titus 3. 7), the origin, and (3) by faith (Romans 5. 1), appropriation by us. Paul's reasoning had its effect on Peter. Christ died. Why? For nought? No: for us (1 Thessalonians 5. 10), and for our sins (1 Corinthians 15. 3), and Peter knew these facts.

"I have been crucified with Christ; yet I live; . . . and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself up for me." The love and the gift go together (John 3. 16). Attention is now directed to Calvary, where Christ displayed His love by giving Himself. Peter, no doubt, would recall the time when the Lord Jesus asked him three times: "Lovest thou Me?" He loved us, therefore we should love Him too.

A. M. Hope.

From Crowborough. —Trouble can be caused when a leader errs from the divine pathway. Peter was fully aware of the doctrine, but, because of the fear of man, he turned aside and others followed him. Paul states clearly the principles of the gospel in relation to the Jew and the Gentile, bringing them to one standard of righteousness in Christ. Relief from the burden of keeping the Law brings a new life in fellowship with Christ, a life of faith and trust.

From Sunderland. —In an earlier day, when a door of faith was first opened to the Gentiles, God instructed Peter that he should call no man common or unclean, and that God made no distinction between Jew and Gentile, cleansing the hearts of both by faith. Peter was thus justified in eating with the Gentiles at Antioch. But when he drew back and separated himself from the Gentile believers, he denied the truth of the gospel, and occupying, as he did, a prominent place in the churches, he affected others by his hypocrisy. Conduct of this kind was not befitting one reputed to be a pillar, and Paul rebuked him in the presence of all (1 Timothy 5. 20). Our manner of life must be worthy of the gospel of Christ. The Law did not bring life but death, and the believer is made dead to the Law through the body of Christ to bring forth fruit to God (Romans 7. 4). (See note [1]).

The faith exercised in Christ by the needy sinner must characterise also the life of the saint. The effect of the cross of Christ should be manifested in our lives.

J. B., Jnr.

From Cardiff. —Great credit, under God, accrues to Paul for his determined stand at this important stage in the development of the testimony. Had he remained silent it is difficult to reckon how very soon afterwards the Fellowship might have gone to pieces—certainly far sooner than it did. The dissimulation of Peter shows it is possible for God-given leaders to go aside from the truth of God, unless continuous counsel is shared among them, as they seek to guide the flock of God.

The truth of the gospel (2. 14) asserts in clear unmistakable manner the glorious ascendancy of grace over law-keeping. All men are now on one common platform, whether Jew or Greek. "For we before laid to the charge both of Jews and Greeks, that they are *all* under sin" (Romans 3. 9). That

Paul was a man of singular mind is demonstrated by his intensely practical life, as the following Scriptures show: "And straightway in the synagogues he proclaimed **Jesus**, that **He** is the Son of God " (Acts 9. 20); " and confounded the **Jews** which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is the Christ " (Acts 9. 22); " they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews " (Acts 13. 5). He faithfully pursued this course until the solemn declaration: " lo, **we** turn to the Gentiles " (Acts 13. 46), and thus fulfilled the divine commission to preach " to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. " [Where? not Romans 1. 16 nor 2. 10.]

This incident at Antioch shows the necessity for making a straight course in the things of God, leaving the consequences with God. **M. A. J.**

From **St. Helens**. —After the conference at Jerusalem **Paul** and **Barnabas** went to the churches in Asia Minor to declare to the saints the decision of the conference. In this **passage** the apostle zealously defends the truth of the gospel. His action, in resisting Peter to the **face**, was quite justifiable, for Peter did not **act** in accordance with what had been revealed to him (Acts 10). **He** had plainly seen that the gospel was for both Jews and Gentiles without any distinction whatsoever. **He** should have withstood the brethren, who **came** from James, and also their teaching that circumcision was necessary to salvation. But " the fear of man bringeth a snare " (Proverbs 29. 25), so he failed, and his action might have caused some of the Gentiles to stumble. Although Peter was very brave at times, his failings were many. So great was his fear of man that he denied his Lord not once, but three times.

After relating to the Galatians the incident at Antioch, **Paul** goes on to state clearly the truth of the gospel in its simplicity, pointing out that a man is not justified by the works of the Law, **but** only by faith in Christ. Since they were so justified, he warns them against returning to any of the ordinances of the Law to which they had died; they should now live unto God.

From **Atherton**. —This unusual incident involving Peter and Paul, two eminent men, goes to prove **yet** once more how prone to failure even the best of men are, and teaches **us** the sobering lesson, so often borne out in experience, that in times of triumph **we** should **beware**, for then Satan may triumph, and bring **us** low.

It would appear that Peter took **Paul's** rebuke kindly, since he stood condemned. There is no evidence of malice or retaliation. Both good and essential it is that we **take rebuke** in the right way. " Speaking truth in love " is the right way to **rebuke**, and the rebuke should **be** received in the spirit of love, for " faithful are the wounds of a friend. " Holding matters against one another is both undesirable and unscriptural. **We** should endeavour to gain others after the manner of the exhortation given by James (James 5. 19, 20).

Paul had forsaken the traditions of the **elders** for something infinitely higher and **better**, and to return to these things was to **make** himself a transgressor. What Peter had done was equivalent to returning to, or building again, **the** things he had once destroyed. **Paul** had died unto the Law, faith was now prominent, Christ being manifest in his life, and his

life bearing witness to the resurrection of the crucified One. Verse 15 indicates the **advantage** of the **Jews** in having the Law to govern them, thus keeping them within certain limits; whereas the Gentiles, being without law, **gave** themselves over to **many** ungodly things (Ephesians 4. 17-19). Thus they are spoken of as " sinners of the Gentiles. " The Law reveals **man's sin and** guilt, the gospel reveals Christ, the great Sin-bearer.

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

COMMENTS.

[1] (Sydney). —In 1 Timothy 5. 20 it is " sin, " which views human conduct Before God, **but** in Galatians 2. 11 it is Peter's conduct before men. Peter knew within himself that he **was** acting contrary to the truth of the gospel which he clearly taught in Acts 10. 43; 11. 13-18; 15. 7-11. See 1 John 3. 20, 21, where **we** have this Greek word (*Kataginosko*) used twice, shewing the action of knowledge upon the conscience. Peter **was** resisted in his self-condemnation **by** Paul, **because** of the **effect** his action had upon the Jewish brethren, **even** upon Barnabas, Paul's fellow-apostle. In 1 Timothy 5. 20 it is the **matter** of sin amongst elders **and** how sin **was** to be dealt with. The two passages are not similar. —*J. M.*

[2] (Sydney). —Paul is simply saying that **a man** who is justified in Christ cannot be **a sinner as** well, that is, **a sinner ruined by** the fall in **Adam**. " Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; who is he that shall condemn? " (Romans 8. 83, 34). **A man** who is justified is no longer **a sinner, but a saint**; though through indwelling sin in the flesh, he, **as** 1 John 1. shews, **needs** to confess his carnal sins **and to be cleansed by** the blood of **Jesus**, God's Son. **But** such forgiveness **as** a child of God **needs** continually is not coupled with justification. **We** are justified **by** faith once, **but as** children of God **we** have to confess often **and** receive forgiveness. If one who is justified in Christ is still **a sinner**, then, Paul **says** that Christ **must be** a minister of sin—a sheer impossibility. —*J. M.*

[3] (Barrhead and Paisley). —What Paul did, **as** in Acts 21., **was** on the advice of **James and** the elders in Jerusalem, so that there might **be** removed from the minds of the believing **Jews** in Jerusalem the erroneous report that Paul **was** teaching the **Jews** amongst the Gentiles to forsake the Law of Moses. Paul **was** not teaching the forsaking of Moses' Law, **but** rather he **was** shewing that it **was necessary** for all believers to fulfil it (see Romans 8. 4), the fulfilment of which **was**, on its manward side, " Thou shalt love thy neighbour **as** thyself " (Romans 13. 8-10). This the Lord also taught. Similarly, Paul circumcised Timothy (Acts 16. 3) **because** of the **Jews** in Galatia, so that there would **be** no opposition to Timothy's ministry, **and** to Paul's also in his associating with **an** uncircumcised **man** who **was** half **Jew and** half Gentile. —*J. M.*

[4] (Kingston). —In **my** opinion it would **be** much more difficult to explain the behaviour of both Barnabas **and** Peter after the Jerusalem conferences, in Galatians 2. **and** Acts 15, than it would **be** before such decisions **as** were reached then. If apostles hypocritically **cast** aside agreed decisions both amongst themselves **and** in a conference of apostles **and** elders, it would lower one's estimate of the value of such provision **as** consultation affords for the unity among workers **and** elders amongst God's people. **My** view is that there is **a** break in the **sequence** of **events at** verse 11. —*J. M.*

[5] (Kingston). —I cannot **accept such an aspersion on the character** of so **eminent a servant** of Christ as Peter. **He was** the mightiest of the mighty **men** who formed the **number** of the **twelve** apostles. —*J. M.*

[6] (Willington Quay). —See note [3] in paper from Barrhead and Paisley. —*J. M.*

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Questions from Glasgow. —(1). Is the death in verse 19 the **same as** that envisaged in verse **20** ?

(2). What law is referred to in verse **19** ?

Answers (1). Yes. Law-breaking brought **man** under the curse of the **Law**, for "Cursed is every one which continueth not in all things that **are** written in the book of the law, to do them " (Galatians 3. 10). Christ **redeemed us** from such a curse **by** dying on the tree (3. 13). **We** were crucified with Him (2. 20). **Hence** through the **Law** **we** died to the **Law**, for the victim of a law, which has **enacted** the penalty of death, is **dead** to it. **We** are dead, yet **we** are alive, for Christ lives in us.

(2) The **Law** of Moses. —*J. M.*

From Kingston-on-Thames. —What is the significance of the expression " sinners of the Gentiles " ? Is Paul, for the sake of argument, referring to the Gentiles' position **as it was** under the Law ?

Answer. —The **Jews** **by** nature, **as** descended from Abraham, **were** the chosen people of God of Old Testament times, **but** the Gentiles were **a** people far off, with neither law, **as** divinely given, nor promises; they were aliens **and** strangers, separate from Christ, without God **and** without hope. Such **a** people Paul describes **as** " sinners of the Gentiles. " The **Jews** in contrast were **a** people nigh to God positionally, **but** alas, many of them were not nigh to God **in** heart. —*J. M.*

From London, S. E. —What is the full implication of being crucified with Christ ?

Answer. —The full implication of being crucified with Christ is, I understand, that Saul of Tarsus is dead, **but** Paul the apostle is alive. Being **a** sinner, **and** indeed the chief of sinners, Saul of Tarsus **was under** the death penalty, his life **was** legally forfeited, **but** Christ the Son of God **was** his Substitute, and gave Himself up for him. Saul **saw** in Christ crucified the **end** of his old sinful self, **and** in Christ raised from the **dead and** by union with Him in resurrection, he (Paul, the apostle,) **sees** himself quickened by **a** new life—Christ **was in** him and that life he now had **was** not one of legality, **but** of faith and of love. It **was, in a** word, Christ living over again in **a** man. —*J. M.*

Our beloved co-editor, Dr. Doodson, who has devoted much of his **gift and** energies for young **men**, is still very much **in need** of our prayer. Pray for him, beloved fellow-students. —*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 may be helpful in the first place to refer to one or two matters in the April Study that received little or no attention. In chapter 2. 16 the R. V. rendering of *ean me by* "save" has been termed "a blot on the excellency of the Revised Version" (see "N. T. " 1934 p. 51). Paul cannot have meant that justification is by works of the Law if faith is added. This was the teaching of the Judaizers which Paul contested, and is in direct contradiction to the latter part of the verse. It is true that *ean me* usually means "save" or "except" (see 1. 19) (Winer says "invariably"). Lightfoot, agreeing, connects *ean me* with *dikaroutai* (justified). This is not easy to bring out in translation. We can say "A man is not justified by the works of the Law, he is not justified (at all) save through faith in Christ Jesus." This is practically the sense of the A. V., and we may take it that "but" gives the true sense. The R. S. V. scholars show their agreement by restoring "but" in their version.

The next verse (17) is very difficult. Many explanations have been suggested by expositors but that given by Lightfoot seems (to me personally) to meet the case.

The portion before us this month begins the doctrinal part of Paul's letter. The address to Peter, which closes his personal narrative, really forms the basis of what follows in chapters 3. -6., and it will be well to keep this in mind as we work through these chapters in our study. Thus our present section is germinal in 2. 16.

The doctrine of justification by faith is now opened up, not with the detail of his letter to the Romans; this was unnecessary as Paul, when he was with the Galatians, had carefully taught them, and he did not even need to say in verse 11 that he was quoting from the Old Testament Scriptures.

Paul's aim is to awake in the minds of the Galatians a memory of their first love, and of his gospel, before their minds had been confused by an alien gospel.

Pathos, not anger, is the spirit of the opening words "O foolish Galatians **I**" Foolish, *anoetoi*—senseless, stupid. This particular form of address is called apostrophe. The only other cases in Paul's church epistles occur in 2 Corinthians 6. 11 and Philippians 4. 15. Note the similarity of background. This form of address is also to be found in 1 Timothy 1. 18 and 6. 20. "Galatians," *Galatai*—the people of the province of Galatia, in accordance with Roman usage followed by Paul. The churches in the cities of South Galatia are in view.

S. B.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE GALATIANS.

Consistency.

(Chapter 2. 11-21).

From Hamilton, Ont. —Throughout the Scriptures we have many beautiful examples of consistency. It is recorded that " Enoch walked with God "—a daily habitual walk. Also we have the most beautiful example in the Lord Himself, who did always the things that were pleasing to His Father.

Peter, speaking to those who were gathered at Jerusalem (Acts 15. 7-11), was definitely against the teaching that the Gentiles must be circumcised and keep the Law of Moses. He said that the Law was a yoke that neither the Jews nor their fathers were able to bear (Acts 15. 10), and that now God made no distinction between Jew and Gentile. Peter practised what he taught and set a good example to others by having fellowship with the Gentiles and eating with them.

" The fear of man bringeth a snare. " This solemn truth is brought home to us as we see the unity destroyed because Peter feared those that came from James. Yet on another occasion it is recorded that "When they beheld the boldness of Peter and John . . . they marvelled. "

On more than one occasion Peter showed great weakness—in his denial of the Lord Jesus (Luke 22.), and now in his building of those things he had destroyed (2. 18). He was building again a wall of separation between Jew and Gentile, making a distinction where God makes none. No man liveth unto himself, and Peter's action had serious results among the saints, insomuch that even Barnabas was carried away with their dissimulation. This inconsistency of Peter caused Paul to withstand him to the face.

J. Ramage, A, Davidson,

Justification by Faith.

(Chapter 3. 1-14).

From Cardiff. —Those who had embraced the gospel by faith in Christ and yet continued to seek justification by the works of the Law, caused Paul to label them as " foolish. " Enchanted by the wiles of seducing teachers, they did not obey the truth. Note that to them Jesus Christ had been evidently set forth crucified. There is no question here of the gospel message being proclaimed without vivid reference to the Cross. Paul says: " We preach Christ crucified " (1 Corinthians 1. 23).

" The Law is not of faith " (3. 12). The condition of life demanded by the Law is perfect, personal and perpetual obedience. Its language is: Do this and live. Whilst the emphasis is on the " doing, " was not a certain exercise of faith necessary on the part of individuals to lay hold of the Law in the past day ? [1].

Reception of the word of God begets life. Men in past days received the word of life and were begotten. [2].

Abraham was justified by faith, and his faith was evidenced long before the giving of the law to Moses. Those who are " of the works of the Law are under a curse " (3. 10). If they should offend in one point, they are guilty of all.

Thanks be to God that " Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us " (3. 13).

H. B. Dodge.

From **Parkhead, Glasgow.** —"O foolish Galatians,... before whose eyes Jesus Christ was openly set forth crucified. " Faith in Christ had brought to them blessings that Law-keeping could never give, for " the just shall live by his faith " (Habakkuk 2. 4). Long before the Law came, Abraham believed the promise of God, resulting in Abraham's being reckoned righteous in God's sight. Paul warns them of the futility of seeking to attain to righteousness by the Law, since this brings man under a curse. Faith rests upon a Redeemer, who became a curse for the Law-breaker.

Two things are brought before the Galatians to arrest the erroneous teaching, the reception of the Holy Spirit (3. 2) and justification on the ground of faith alone. The apostle does not anticipate any doubt in their minds as to the first, for he asks: " Received ye the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by the hearing of faith ? " When they first believed the message of the crucified One, they knew the experience of being indwelt by the Holy Spirit.

R. Shaw.

From **Kilmarnock.** —According to Rotherham's translation Romans 3. 20 reads, "By works of law no flesh shall be declared righteous in His presence. " Paul had made known this truth in the gospel message he had preached to the Galatians, and he marvelled that they were giving heed to those who said it was necessary for them to keep the Law in order to be saved. He gives the example of Abraham (3. 6), to whom God said: " In thee shall all the nations be blessed. " " Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness. " By the various Old Testament Scriptures which he quotes, Paul makes it evident " that no man is justified by the Law in the sight of God "; for " the righteous shall live by faith; and the Law is not of faith. " In verse 13 he makes known the glorious truth that " Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, " so we may well sing:

*" Free from the Curse, oh, happy condition !
Jesus hath bled, and there is remission ! "*

A. G. S.

From **Ilford.** —Paul's argument in this portion is irrefutable, and he needs ask only one question to prove his point. Having received the Spirit by faith, how could the Galatians possibly be perfected in the flesh ?

As only those who are of faith are true sons of Abraham, so also only those who believe and receive the Lord Jesus Christ are true sons of God. This is contrary to the general teaching in some of the sects, who believe that all are children of God, even as the Jews thought they were all true sons of Abraham.

Some thought that the gospel which was preached to Abraham was a more limited one than that which we know, but Hebrews 11. seems to indicate that his knowledge of future events was quite exceptional. [3].

Christ, in becoming a curse for us and so making it possible for us to be reconciled to God, fulfilled that of which the scapegoat was a type. The priest, having taken the two goats and separated them, killed one, whose blood he then sprinkled upon the mercy seat and before the mercy seat. The scapegoat bare away the sins of the people. This is what Christ has done for us. We should also read the epistle of James to get a balanced view of faith **and** works.

E. H. Jarvis.

EXTRACTS.

From Sydney. —Justification is by faith and not by the works of the Law, for Christ is the end of the Law unto righteousness to every one that believeth " (Romans 10. 4; see also Romans 3. 28 and 5. 1). Peter spoke concerning God's cleansing the Gentiles' hearts by faith (Acts 15. 9), and Paul said that "by Him every one that believeth is justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the Law of Moses " (Acts 13. 39).

The answer to the apostle's question (3. 2): " Received ye the Spirit ... ? " is found in Ephesians 1. 13: " Having.... believed (in Him), ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. "

The word "suffer" (3. 4) can simply mean "to experience"; however, some thought that definite suffering was implied. The incidents of Acts 14. 5, 19 occurred in Galatia.

The apostle brings before the Galatians a number of Old Testament Scriptures, and sets before them " faithful Abraham, " who " believed in the LORD; and He counted it to him for righteousness " (Genesis 15. 6).

J. G., J. I., G. K.

From Crowborough. —This letter to the Galatians was written to refute the false teaching that justification is by the works of the **Law**, and Paul employs four telling arguments. He first appeals to their own experience, they had received the Spirit by faith. He next asks them if they are so foolish as, having begun in the Spirit, to go back to the flesh. He then reminds them what it had cost them, and lastly, speaks of the miracles wrought among them by faith.

The covenant given to Abraham was a covenant of faith, which he received while he was in uncircumcision. If, like Abraham, we believe God, it is counted to us for righteousness, apart from works, and we are blessed with the faithful Abraham.

From Paisley and Barrhead. —One rendering of verse 1 is: "O foolish Galatians, who did bewitch you before whose eyes Jesus Christ was **graphically set** forth crucified (or *delineated*) ? "

Verse 5 raised the thought that perhaps Christ would not have performed miracles at all, but for the establishing of His Deity. Over against this the suggestion was put forward convincingly that sickness and disease, the fruit of sin, could not thrive in the presence of Him who was the Righteous and Pure One.

In verse 8 God's eternal purpose is revealed. While Christ "came unto His own " primarily, God's great plan brought all mankind within the scope of His grace. As in every dispensation provision was made for the stranger, who chose to cast in his lot with God's people (with the notable exception of the Moabites, who were forbidden from entering Israel's gates for ten generations, because of their wicked treatment of the people of the Lord), so also God bore testimony to all men in every dispensation irrespective of geographical proximity to Israel.

W. Terrell (Jun.).

From Clydebank and Dumbarton. —The apostle Paul asks the Galatians whether they received the Holy Spirit **by** keeping the Law or **by** faith. The Galatians could not possibly have received the Spirit **by** keeping the Law, **as**, being Gentiles, they had not received the Law given through Moses. The gifts possessed **by** the Galatians were proof of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, whose presence in the believer is the seal and proof of his salvation.

The promise **was** given to Abraham before Moses received the Law, and those who rely on faith are blessed with the faithful Abraham. The resurrection of Christ **was** in fulfilment of God's promise to Abraham of an innumerable **seed**; and therefore Abraham's faith in the promise of God, including the resurrection of Christ, **was** reckoned to him for righteousness.

M. R.

From Wembley. —The apostle severely rebukes the Galatians for their foolishness in forgetting the vision of Christ crucified, and turning away to legal things. The Jewish legalists wanted the Galatians to forget the Cross, with its shame and humiliation, where human pride is humbled and human wisdom is confounded; the **Jews** desired human glory which is incompatible with the Cross. This defection is fatal: they had begun in the Spirit and they **must** continue therein. The work of Christ **was** perfect and to it the Mosaic Law could **add** nothing; the Law led to Christ, not the converse.

Abraham was justified by faith and the blessings to him were consequent on his faith. This example of Abraham struck **at** the heart of Judaism, and was a complete **rebuff** to their boast " **We** be Abraham's seed. " **But** God's blessings, the foremost of which is justification, are for men of faith of all nations; these are blessed with Abraham. Paul spoke from personal experience of the Law; he had been a strict Pharisee and had lived blamelessly before men, yet he knew the law of sin in his members, and that it is impossible for human nature to **be** justified through the Law. *A. D. M.*

From Willington Quay. —Paul's ability to engage in doctrinal argument is **but** another example of the rich and varied gifts with which he had been endowed. The Galatians knew that God had wrought with them from the outset on the ground of faith. Initially they had heard, had believed, and had received the Holy Spirit, and since that time they had experienced the working of God in their midst. None of the blessings which they had received could **be** attributed to the works of the Law. Having come thus far by faith, how wrong it now **was** to bring in the law **as** a supplement! Paul draws the analogy between the believer in this dispensation and the faithful Abraham. **We** had difficulty in understanding how " the Scripture . . . preached the gospel beforehand unto Abraham " (3. 8), unless the word Scripture means the actual words which were spoken by God to Abraham. [4],

The Law could not bring justification in the sight of God, and moreover, for those who were under it, there **was** a curse, inasmuch **as** they were unable to keep it. What a difference exists between the works of the Law and the blessings of faith! **Sad** it **was** that the Galatians were seeking after the former, and failing to appreciate the latter. *KM.*

From Liverpool.—Miracles had been worked among the Galatians: could these be ascribed to the effect of the works of the Law? **Nay**, indeed, they were manifestations of the power of the Spirit, but the canker of error had corrupted their faith, and they were reverting to the Law, seeking to be justified by the keeping of the Law. But "by the deeds (works) of the Law shall no flesh be justified in God's sight: for through the Law cometh the knowledge of sin" (Romans 3. 20). The Law is indeed good, yet the apostle himself admits (Romans 7.) that that which was unto life, this he found to be unto death. The Law brought a curse (3. 10) to those, who being under the Law, continued "not in all things that are written in the book of the Law to do them."

All who exercise faith in Christ as Saviour are blessed with Abraham (3. 7-9). Justification (acquittal from any charge against us) by faith is God's purpose for the sinner. When we believe the testimony that God has borne concerning His Son, we are justified freely by God's grace, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus (Romans 3. 24). The shed blood of Christ (Romans 5. 9) is the ground upon which God can by grace (Romans 3. 24) justify the believing sinner through faith (Romans 5. 1).

J. Wannop, A. H.

From Edinburgh.—Justification, being declared righteous, is obtained through faith alone. Paul is seeking to correct the wrong teaching of those who would have added the works of the Law. The Law made no man perfect: its works were linked with human endeavour and took no account of faith. The gospel was Christ crucified, and adherence to that gospel involved suffering. We understood that "He" (3. 5) refers to Christ.

We become children of God by faith in the finished work of Calvary. We become sons of Abraham because of the exercise of faith. He **was** the father of all who believe. Wonderful indeed that, in Abraham's time **and** also before the worlds were brought into being, God thought of those who were near and of us who were afar off! We thus find ourselves linked with Abraham in blessings that come through faith, through the birth of Isaac and the birth of the Lord Jesus.

Justification is not by works, but by faith (Ephesians 2. 5, 8, 9). We understood that this is a continuing in faith [5].

Jas. Paterson.

From Sunderland.—In this portion Paul charges the Galatians with foolishness, and brings to their remembrance that which had first captivated their hearts—the cross of Christ, which **was** publicly set before them in the preaching of the gospel. They had had an experience which **was** the direct outcome of their faith in Christ. They received the Holy Spirit of God, who indwelt their hearts. **Paul** reminds them of this and instructs them that the work which the Holy Spirit began in them could only be perfected **by** the same Spirit. It would appear that miracles had been wrought in their midst as a result of their faith in Christ, but when they turned from the Lord, such powers were no longer in evidence. God, who supplied the Spirit to them, would withhold such powers from them. Surely this in itself would cause those saints to consider their ways!

The Scriptures themselves bore witness to the necessity for faith in regard to the promises of God. Abraham believed God in regard to his seed. Through his faith he was blessed; and the blessing pronounced upon him and his seed embraced also the Gentiles, who enter into such blessings through faith in Christ and as a result of His work upon the Cross. The principle of righteousness by faith, exemplified in Abraham, obtains throughout the Scriptures to this present day. *J. R. (Jun.).*

From Kingston-upon-Thames. —In the phrase "who did bewitch you?" Paul alludes to a popular superstition, well known to the Galatians, namely, the evil eye, to counteract which it was common to post up charms. Despite the fact that Jesus Christ had been openly set forth before the eyes of the Galatians, who had been subjected to the false teachers, they were still fascinated by the evil teaching. The false teachers seem to have seated that to receive the Holy Spirit every believer must be circumcised. The answers to the apostle's questions prove conclusively that the Holy Spirit is given simultaneously with salvation (Ephesians 1. 13, Acts 19. 2). Intense suffering had failed to move them from their faith: would the more subtle methods of the false teachers succeed? Satan throughout the ages has resorted to both methods. Let us ever guard ourselves and betake us to prayer and to the Word.

Having received the righteousness which was of God through faith, they were now seeking to establish a righteousness of their own by keeping the Law. Abraham was not counted righteous by his keeping of the Law, but through faith. Abraham was counted righteous by God, because he placed faith in the promise of God. Man, to be righteous before God, must, like the faithful Abraham, place faith in the Word of God. *L. A. White.*

From **St. Helens**. —In the sight of God no man is justified by the Law, which was "added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise hath been made." It is by faith that the righteous shall live, for which purpose Christ died. Christ, the promised Seed, had come "that upon the Gentiles might come the blessing of Abraham" in Himself. Even as "Abraham believed God and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness," so the sinner who trusts the Saviour in simple faith has imputed to him the righteousness that is in Christ Jesus. Faith without works is dead (James 2. 18-23). Abraham showed his great faith by offering his son Isaac, even though he was his only son. But God had promised, and Abraham believed that promise, that all the nations, Jews and Gentiles, would be blessed in his Seed, who would come through Isaac. Those "which be of faith" (3. 9) are blessed as heirs to the promise, since they are Christ's, who is the promised Seed.

From **London, S. E.** —The Greek word for justification is *dikaioma*, the product or result of making right or just. It is also used for the deed by which one is set forth as righteous, the act of justification accomplished in the sinner. Paul now refers to Old Testament Scriptures to help to bring home the truth of the gospel. "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned

unto him for righteousness " (Galatians 3. 6). That is, he had faith in God: **and** " they which be of faith, the same are sons of Abraham. " The promise having been fulfilled " In thee shall all the nations be blessed, " it follows, therefore, that " they which be of faith are blessed with the faithful Abraham. " The words "the Scripture, foreseeing" (3. 8) would refer to the Holy Spirit, by whose inspiration the Scriptures were written. The words " in thee " refer to Abraham as the progenitor of the Messiah, through whom the blessing of justification comes to man by faith in the atoning work of the Cross.

As opposed to the blessing is the curse. Under the Law there is no way of escape, for no man can keep the Law, and the Law cannot justify. Paul again quotes from the Old Testament, " The righteous shall live by faith " (see Habakkuk 2. 4). Then come from his pen those wonderful words: " Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree. " He indeed was made sin for us. Like the scapegoat of Leviticus 16. 5, He bare our sin and the curse which it entails.

One more Scripture is referred to: " His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt surely bury* him the same day; for he that is hanged is accursed of God " (Deuteronomy 21. 23). After execution, bodies were hanged on trees (Joshua 10. 26).

Christ has satisfied the Law and its demands, and removed the wall of separation between the Jew and Gentile. They both therefore enjoy a like blessing, the blessing of Abraham in Christ Jesus. *E. C. Leamy.*

From Atherton. —The word " bewitch " (3. 1) is a strong word implying delusion or being deluded. Paul chides the Galatians for accepting the perverted teaching. How pointed is his sequence of rhetorical questions in verses 1-5 I The question in verse 2 re-affirms the truth of the giving of the Holy Spirit in the present dispensation. The Holy Spirit is given on believing and not at some distant time after salvation has taken place. Thus, while God expects His people to-day to keep the moral law, it is not a requisite for the receiving of the Holy Spirit. The working of miracles amongst God's people was not the result of Law-keeping, but the work of the Holy Spirit, though at the present time miracles are not employed by God in the fulfilment of His purposes. The return of the Remnant from Babylon had nothing of miracle about it, no Red Sea. It was an act of faith, as is the present testimony expressed in the Fellowship of God's Son, today.

John 8. 39 was brought to our notice, because of the claim of the Jews in relation to their father Abraham, He was justified by faith, and those who follow him by placing their faith in God's Word and in His Son are like Abraham and are sons of Abraham by faith. Sonship speaks of likeness in character. It was impossible for sinful man to keep the Law in every point, because of its holy and lofty character, for failure in one point made him guilty of all. No man could be justified by the Law, but justification came by grace through faith. The faithful ones of old were accounted righteous, not because of their righteous doings, but because they had faith. Thus the curse of the broken Law was over everyone except the Lord Jesus Christ, who alone kept the Law. *R. C. Jones, J. Bullock.*

From Cowdenbeath. —Paul had **seen** the effect upon the Galatians of the preaching of a crucified Christ. Now he asks who had fascinated them by false impressions (Strong) to turn their eyes away from Christ.

It is difficult to understand verse 4, coming **as** it does between verses which **speak** of the Spirit, **as** being in reference to sufferings which they had endured for Christ's **sake**. The translation of Conybeare and Howson would **seem** to fit better the context. "Have you received so many benefits in vain?" or "Have you experienced so many things?" Is not the apostle reminding them of those experiences they had had **as** result of the presence of the indwelling Spirit? Understood in this way verse 4, speaking **of** inward experiences, would be in contrast to verse 5, which speaks of outward evidences of the Spirit's working.

Because Abraham believed God he was reckoned righteous (Genesis 15. 6). Those who stand related **as** sons to Abraham are such **as** believe **as** he did. Sonship implies likeness in character. Those who claim and can prove lineal descent are Abraham's seed (John 8. 37). In Genesis 12. 3 God had in view the blessing of Gentiles **as** well **as** Jews—all the nations. Those who believe receive the **same** blessing **as** Abraham received, i. e., justification through faith—blessed **with** Abraham (3. 9). Blessed **in** Abraham (3. 8) speaks of the means through which the blessing comes, even Christ.

The Galatians, therefore, **were** in the place of blessing, yet in spite of this they were allowing themselves to be enticed back to the place of the curse, the place of all who depend upon obedience to the Law (Deuteronomy 27. 26) Habakkuk 2. 4 and Leviticus 18. 5 set forth truths concerning faith and the Law, which stand opposed to one another. The former Scripture clearly teaches that justification is by faith, the latter that the Law demands man's complete obedience, which thing is impossible to him and so leaves him in the place of the curse. From this very place the Galatians had already been delivered by the death of Christ, who **became** a curse by dying **an** accursed death (Deuteronomy 21. 23), being hanged upon **a** tree that upon others might come the blessing of which God spoke unto Abraham.

James Bowman.

From Brantford (London, Ont.). —Paul concludes chapter 2. with the words: "that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God," and "if righteousness is through the Law, then Christ died for nought." **He** now throws light on this by showing the Galatians the inevitable curse of the Law compared with the blessings already enjoyed by them through receiving the Spirit.

The supplying of the Spirit and the performing of miracles are not by works of the Law, **but** by the hearing of faith, even **as** Abraham believed God **and** it **was** accounted unto him for righteousness. Those that are of faith are blessed with the faithful Abraham, **but** those that are under the Law are under **a** curse (Deuteronomy 27. 26). "Cursed is every one which continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the Law, to do them." The Law has nothing to do with faith. **He** who does these things shall live by doing them (Leviticus 18. 5). Therefore no **man** is justified by the Law before God, **but** "the just shall live by his faith" (Habakkuk 2. 4).

Bill Brown.

COMMENTS.

[1] (Cardiff). —Galatians 3. 12 is quite plain, "The Law is not of faith. " The Judaizers went wrong (and continue still to go wrong), in that they failed to distinguish between a rule of life and a means of life. The Law was ordained to be a rule of life, never as a means of life, " for if there had been a law given which could make alive, verily righteousness would have been of the Law " (Galatians 3. 21). Moses' Law condemned and cursed the sinner. To relieve the sinner of this, there must be the death of a substitute who would bear the sinner's curse and punishment. —*J. M.*

[2] (Cardiff). —True, but what was the word of God about, which begets life? Was it by making demands on man? Then man would be his own saviour. Or was it concerning One who was to come who would provide salvation for man external to himself? Surely the quickening word was about the coming Messiah. —*J. M.*

[3] (Ilford). —There is of course a fulness in the gospel as preached by the Lord and His apostles that is not seen in the statement made by God to Abraham, yet there lay in that ancient declaration the purpose of God to bless mankind by Christ who is the Seed of Abraham. —*J. M.*

[4] (Willington Quay). —Here Paul gives powers to the word of God, that of foreseeing and preaching, which are properly true of God, the Author of Scripture. Scripture is living and active, we are told, and a discernor or critic of the thoughts and intents of the heart (Hebrews 4. 12).

[5] (Edinburgh). —We must be careful not to teach, that "believe and keep on believing" is necessary to salvation. This would make salvation from hell dependent on final perseverance. Surely this is not what our friends mean. —*J. M.*

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Questions from Glasgow. —(1) Would the apostle use the Old Testament writings to depict Christ upon the Cross? (2) What is the significance of the words: "And the Scripture, foreseeing... preached . . ." ? (3) Do the "us" of verse 13 and the "we" of verse 14 refer to Jews only?

Answers. —(1) We know that the Lord used the brazen serpent on the pole (John 3.) as pointing forward to His crosswork. Paul uses Deuteronomy 21. 23, as we see from Galatians 3. 13, and this valiant preacher would know how to use other portions also. (2) See comment [4]. (3) What would be the force of verse 14 if Christ became a curse for Jews only? He became a curse, "that upon the Gentiles might come the blessing of Abraham in Christ Jesus."

SUBJECT FOR 1954 (D. V.)

Please send suggestions to Jas. Martin.

Note. —Beloved Dr. Doodson was a little better (at date of going to the press).

BIBLE STUDIES

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

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THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE GALATIANS.

Justification by Faith.

(Chapter 3. 1-14).

From Birkenhead. —There would, no doubt, be a large number of Jews in the churches to which Paul wrote. He made effective use of the Old Testament to support his teachings. Of Abraham, who has been called the father of the faithful, he says: "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness. " There is much in Abraham's life which bears testimony to his faith, but there was a particular time in his life (Genesis 15.) when it pleased God to reveal that he was counted righteous in His sight because he believed God.

The Law required the fulfilment of many works, and the impossibility of fulfilling all the Law brought a curse upon Law-breakers, for he who failed in one point was guilty of the whole. Furthermore, if salvation was by the works of the Law, the Gentiles had no part in it, because the Law was not given to them. The promise given to Abraham, however, said that in his Seed (the Lord Jesus) all the nations of the earth should be blessed. Thus we learn two precious truths of the gospel, that salvation is by faith, not works, and that it is through the person of Christ.

The references to the Holy Spirit in this portion support the important truth that the Holy Spirit is given to every believer and not, as taught by some, as a further blessing, which only a limited number of believers receive. Verse 2, although in the form of a question, indicates that they received the Holy Spirit by the hearing of faith.

P. K., R. L. S.

From Brantford. —The question was raised as to how the Galatians had received the Spirit, for obviously there had been a definite manifestation amongst them in earlier days. Would not the powers, or miracles, that had been displayed among them, which came not of the Law but by the hearing of faith, influence them in their lives? The apostle pleads with them and focusses their attention on Abraham, who had exercised his faith in God and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness. The promise was given to him " In thee shall all the nations be blessed, " God thus foreshowing that justification is by faith (Genesis 22. 18).

The demands of the Law are brought before us in verse 10, which makes reference to Deuteronomy 27. 26. No man is justified by works or by the Law, for all have sinned and fall short of God's requirements, but only by faith is justification possible. The curse associated with the Law has been removed by the Lord Jesus Christ, who has redeemed us, having become a curse for us. How wonderful that even to us as Gentiles the blessing of Abraham has come through our Lord Jesus Christ! For through

faith we have received justification and the many blessings that accompany salvation. Yet, in our rejoicing in God's love and kindness to us, we are not unmindful of the sufferings of God's beloved Son, who endured the Cross for us, so that we are able to confess, " The Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself up for me. "

J. J. Thomas.

From Hamilton, Ont. —In justifying by faith God finds glory. It is not confined to Israel, for God makes no distinction between Jew and Gentile. God is also the God of the Gentiles (Romans 3. 29), and all may now be justified freely by God's grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. Justification brings peace and there is no dread of condemnation. It is God that justifies. The truth of justification of believing ones goes back to eternity past, for whom He foreordained He called and justified (Romans 8. 29, 30). To the believer Christ's resurrection is the seal of his justification (Romans 4. 25). To the unbeliever it is the assurance of coming judgement (Acts 17. 31).

The proving of Abraham's faith is beautifully seen in his works, and his faith is seen to be perfected through his works (see James 2. 21-24). Whilst good works are not necessary for the sinner's justification, they have their true and proper place in the Christian's life. Good works that are evident should follow salvation and run hand in hand with faith. On the one hand the just shall live by faith, and, on the other, faith without works is dead (James 2. 26). We have been " created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2. 10). It is God's desire that we should give Him something in return, after blessing us with every spiritual blessing in Christ. Faith in God tends to produce good works, and justifies us before our fellow men.

T. Ramage.

The Promise, the Law and the Faith.

(Chapter 3. 15-29).

From Atherton. —The apostle here appeals to the Galatians in a way they would understand. A covenant between men is honoured by men; so also with God's covenant with Abraham. God would not break His word, neither could the Law alter it. The oath, in addition to the promise, was for Abraham's sake, and for ours also who have become heirs of the promise. The apostle here refers to " promises, " and we wondered if he was really referring to the promise which was repeated seven times. Genesis 12. gives God's promise to Abraham when he was seventy-five years of age, but twenty-five years elapsed before Abraham saw any visible sign of the promised blessing through his seed. [1] The zenith of Abraham's faith was reached in Genesis 22. when God repeated the promise in the words of the oath.

Before the giving of the Law 480 years elapsed, but this did not nullify the blessing of the promise. The Law had to do with the people of Israel as to their moral responsibility and spiritual response to God's claims. The Law revealed man's failure and sin, and brought death; faith in all dispensations brings eternal life. Two complementary thoughts were here expressed: (1) a person's initial faith in God is the thing which brings eternal life, (2) divine revelation, and response through faith to it, are essential for salvation. Men of faith looked to One who would redeem them.

How vast is the difference between the promise and the Law! In the promise a deliverance was foretold through the "woman's Seed," the seed of Abraham and of David; this was a message of life preached unto Abraham. In contrast to this the Law slew man through the corruption of his flesh, and therefore could not give life; but without it, man would have had no sense of failure.

Today we are children of promise. A great dispensational change has been effected from Law to grace. "Thou shalt not" predominated in God's commands; today grace presents the positive aspect. We do not so much live under restraint not to do wrong, but are encouraged and exhorted to do right, and this we may do through the quickening power of the Spirit. We who are heirs of promise, who shall inherit salvation through faith, have all our resources in Him who has presented Himself to the Father.

G. Sankey, D. H. Butler,

From St. Helens. —The Law, which came four hundred and thirty years after God's covenant with Abraham, did not make that covenant void. Unlike the Law, which was ordained through angels by the hand of a mediator, the promises were given directly from God to Abraham. The coming of the Law did not affect those promises in any way at all.

What then saith the Law? "It speaketh to them that are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may be brought under the judgement of God" (Romans 3. 19), but "not through the Law was the promise to Abraham or to his seed, that he should be heir of the world, but through the righteousness of faith" (Romans 4. 13). Also through the Law came the knowledge of sin. We were condemned by the Law and were under its curse, but "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law." Through our faith in Christ we have become Abraham's seed and heirs according to promise—one of our many blessings in Christ.

Furthermore the Law was our tutor to bring us unto Christ, and, as a tutor, clearly instructed that justification would be granted and that righteousness would be imputed only to the persons who put faith in Christ. For the righteous shall live by faith.

Believers are all seen in Christ and there is no distinction between Jew and Gentile, between bond or free (in Paul's day slavery was rampant), or between male and female. Clothed with Christ's righteousness and identified with Him we are Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise.

J. A. Lightfoot.

From Crowborough. —Paul makes it quite clear that the promise had nothing to do with the Law, and that through Abraham's Seed, not seeds, the blessing would come. He uses the illustration of a covenant between men. Once it is confirmed, it cannot be altered or disannulled. How much more sure is a covenant which depends on God for fulfilment! The children of Israel received the inheritance of Canaan through the promise. We receive spiritual blessing through Christ because of the promise made to Abraham (Genesis 12. 3, 22. 18). For "God hath granted..." (3. 18), Mr. Newberry gives "God hath freely given." We believe the promise was given, free of conditions, that is, the promise that in Abraham's Seed (Christ) all the nations of the earth should be blessed. That being so, the Law, given 430 years after, could not in any way affect the promise. The Law was different in its purpose, "it was added because of transgressions," and was only for a certain time, —"till the Seed should come..." The Law was

not unconditional, and to receive blessing through the Law, those to whom it **was** given needed to keep it (Exodus 19. 5: " If ye will obey My voice "). The fact of there being a mediator (Moses, **we** believe) indicates that it is a covenant between two parties, God and His people. The blessings connected with the Law God would surely fulfil, but many were forfeited because Israel did not keep their side of the covenant. How different was the promise ! God gave it directly to Abraham and irrespective of what might happen afterwards. *J. H. B.*

From Kingston-on-Thames. —Paul, in this portion, is trying to show to **the Galatians the purpose of the Law which was, it would seem, only a tributary to the main stream of God's purposes.** The promises to Abraham were unconditional **and** could not **be** affected by the Law, which **was** introduced **as a yardstick** against which **man** could measure his sinful **nature** and realise his hopelessness, and thus be ready to accept God's provision for his **need.** The Law **was** thus a " tutor " (3. 24), which implies training **and** discipline.

The promises to Abraham pointed to the **One** through whom God **was** fully **and** completely to accomplish his purposes. Paul shows how impossible it **was** for the Law to have any disannulling **effect** on a covenant confirmed not **by man but** by God Himself.

The period of **430 years** (3. 17) appears, **at first sight, difficult to reconcile with the 400 years of Genesis 15. 13 and Acts 7. 6,** leaving apparently only **30 years** from the giving of the promise to the commencement of the bondage. [2] The reference in Exodus 12. **40, 41,** alluded to in the Galatians scripture, may however **be** read as in the A. V. ; " Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, **was 430 years.** And it **came to pass** at the end of the **430 years . . .** that all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt. " These sojournings include the whole period from the call of Abraham (Genesis 12. 1), the promise (Genesis 12. 3), **and** the confirmation **by a covenant** (Genesis 15. 13-18) to the going up out of Egypt, within two months of which the Law **was** given **at Sinai.**

The **400 years** of Genesis 15. **13** and Acts **7. 6** (which speak of Abraham's descendants) commences **at** the time when Isaac **was** weaned and **became** Abraham's heir (Galatians **3. 29** to 4. 5). It includes the whole period of the sojourning in **Canaan** as well as in Egypt, and not the sojourning in **Egypt** alone. The difference of **30 years** is thus accounted for by the time of Abraham's sojourning (i. e., **between** his receiving the call) to the sojournings of Isaac his heir. *Frank E. Jarvis.*

EXTRACTS.

From Wembley. —Some difficulty **was** voiced over the words: "And to thy **Seed,** which is Christ. " Genesis 13. **15, 16,** would refer to the **seed** as the nation as a whole. Does Genesis **22. 18,** following **as** it does references to the multitudes which should **be** (verse 17), also refer to the nation, or to a section or family of that nation, or to the Messiah ? [3] It is interesting to note the line God chose, rejecting other seeds, for instance, Isaac **but** not Ishmael, Jacob **but** not **Esau.**

The word tutor (R. V.), or schoolmaster (A. V.), has a different meaning from that normally accepted to-day. The tutors of Paul's day were slaves or freedmen, responsible for the behaviour of their **master's*** sons. They

watched over them, restrained them from temptation or evil, **and** brought them to **be** taught by the teacher. Until these boys **became** of age, they were considered as little different from servants, **but** once they reached seniority they were **freed** from the tutor's restraint and were welcomed as responsible sons.

So with the Law. It restrained its **keeper** from evil: it provided a way of life: it led to Christ. And when the Galatians, and indeed any other believers, particularly Jews, received Him they came of age, and were freed from the restraints of the Law. They became sons of God (3. 26), with all the privileges attaching to sonship.

Thus, by faith, we are Abraham's seed: believing Gentile will share with the believing Jew all that the promise intended. We become heirs according to promise (3. 29). AM,

From Kilmarnock. —In Genesis 12. 2, 3, we **get** the first mention of God's promise to Abram that " In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed. " Again, in Genesis 15., to Abram's words, "To **me** Thou hast given no seed, " the LORD replied: " Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to tell t h e m : . . . So shall thy seed be. " When we consider the spiritual state of the country in which he lived, his faith in the promise of God was very great. The promise shall yet be fully fulfilled when Christ, the Seed, shall reign as King of kings over all the earth (Zechariah 14. 9).

"The Law was given through Moses" (John 1. 17), and in Exodus 20. to 23. we have a record of that Law that the people of Israel promised to **keep**. From the Old Testament Scriptures **we** know how they sadly failed to **keep** His Law, **but** when **as** a nation they repented and turned to the LORD, **He** always kept His promise to bless them (see, for example, 2 Kings 18. and 22.).

In the later epistles the teaching or doctrine is called the faith, and **we** are exhorted to " continue in the faith " (Colossians 1. 23), " Some . . . **made** shipwreck concerning the faith " (1 Timothy 1. 19), and "Some shall fall away from the faith " (1 Timothy 4. 1), **but** Paul could say, " I have kept the faith. " This should **be** the **aim** of each one in the Fellowship, remembering the exhortation of Jude 3, " Contend earnestly for the faith which **was** once for all delivered unto the saints. " A. G. S.

From Parkhead, Glasgow. —In the first portion of chapter 3. Paul has been showing that the Gentiles now inherit the blessing promised to Abraham.

The covenant was enacted first and the Law followed **430** years afterwards. Therefore the Law, being subsequent to the covenant, could not make any additional conditions to it. The Law in **fact** had nothing **at** all to do with the promise.

" What then is the Law ? " (3. 19). " Is the Law then against the promises of God? " (3. 21). The Law came in to regulate and govern behaviour—to show men what sin was and its effects—till Christ the promised Seed should come. The answer to the second question reveals that the Law is not contrary to the promises. When Christ, the Seed, came and died, the interim period of the Law ended. The old distinction between Jew and Gentile limited the blessings of the covenant. All without distinction now share the blessings through faith, inheriting the blessing promised to Abraham, the father of the faithful. J. H. P.

From Willington Quay. —There is a progression of thought in Paul's reasoning to the end that saints might see God's purpose for them in Christ; he seeks to bring the two principles of faith and the Law together. In the past righteousness had been sought* after the manner of the Law; now righteousness could be obtained by faith in the crucified and risen Christ. In their lifetime most had seen the working of the two principles—not always without friction—and Paul seeks to link the two together, and to show that God's purpose was apparent at each revelation, so that, when God blessed the faithful Abraham, it was with the Seed of Abraham in view. At this point Paul indicates that this Seed was Christ.

The covenant was made with Abraham, because God wished to have dealings with man, even though man had disobeyed Him and had done despite to His will. Between that covenant and the coming of Christ came the Law *via* a mediator and ordained by angels. The description of the Law as a tutor is rich in meaning, for there we see the Law fulfilling its purpose and yet not exceeding it. It was a glad day when the cry was heard, "We have found the Messiah." C. **B.**

From Clydebank and Dumbarton. —The apostle Paul, speaking after the manner of men, points out to the Galatians that a covenant made and confirmed by God can have nothing added to it, and cannot be disannulled by the Law 430 years later.

The Law was to Israel their guide and tutor, but only until the fulfilment of God's promise of the Seed to come. God "hath shut up all unto disobedience that He might have mercy upon all" (Romans 11. 32). Thus the Law brought the people's transgressions plainly before them, and now, having Christ, they have entered a new state.

Paul is here speaking to baptized Christians and emphasizes that all who have faith in Christ are heirs according to the promise. We cannot be of any class, nor bear any other name, than that of Christ.

The baptism referred to in verse 27 is water baptism, which is in line with Romans 6. 4-11 and Colossians 2. 8-15. "Putting on Christ" we believe is synonymous with walking in newness of life (Romans 6. 4).

M. Rennie.

From Sydney. —The apostle takes up the promise mentioned in verse 8, and, drawing attention to the words he has used, shows that the Law, which was to come, could not disannul the promise. It was held by some that "and to thy Seed" referred to Christ alone, while others believed it embraced all believers, as in the body of Christ, with Christ as the Head [4].

Some had difficulty in grasping the force of the word "to" (verses 16 and 19), but the position seemed clarified somewhat by substituting "in" for "to," as some authorities do [5]. The opinion was expressed that the nations prior to Christ, and also those that will be in the Millennium are **embraced** in the promise [6].

J. G., G. K., J. I.

From Liverpool. —The Abrahamic covenant of promise depended upon Abram obeying God's voice. "The LORD said unto Abram, Get thee out . . . and I will make of thee a great nation, . . . So Abram went, as the LORD had spoken unto him" (Genesis 12. 1-7, 13. 15, 17. 7-8, 22. 15-18). Note that the promises were to be Abram's and his seeds'. Note also that "because thou hast obeyed My voice" God confirmed His covenant, and

the Law coming **430 years after** could not make the promise of none **effect**. What **a** word for these Galatians! and how sound **is** the apostle's reasoning! "For **if** the inheritance **is** of the Law, **it is** no more of promise: **but** God hath granted it to Abraham by promise" (Romans 4. 13-22, especially verse 20).

The Sinai covenant—Israel's acceptance of the Law and its obligations connected with divine service was conditional (Exodus 19. 3-8). "If ye **will** obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure..., a kingdom of priests... an holy nation." "All the people answered together,.... **All** that the LORD hath spoken we **will** do." **We** know how sadly they failed in this; of **all** who were delivered from Egypt, Joshua and Caleb were the only two who entered the promised land. *A. H.*

From Sunderland. —When God first spoke to Abraham, He gave him the promises concerning his Seed. At that time there was no covenant with Abraham, and it appears that, **as a** direct outcome of his faith (Genesis 15. 6) God made His covenant (Genesis 15. 18). Later on, to give additional emphasis (if need be) to His word, God spoke by an oath, thus confirming the promises given earlier (Genesis 22. 16-18). **He** also re-affirmed these promises to Isaac and Jacob (Psalm 105. 9, 10). A covenant so confirmed by God could not be made void or added to. Even the Law, which came in later, in no way affected the promises of God concerning the Seed.

We also, **as** Abraham's seed, enter by faith into the promises of God, becoming sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. Verse **28** would appear to speak of the Body of Christ into which **all** believers are baptised [7].

J. R., Jun.

From Edinburgh. —Abraham was called out from among the Chaldeans and was led by God in the way he should go. In course of time his faith was severely tested. Abraham walked by faith and counted God **as** One able to fulfil. His son was counted as sacrificed, when God stayed his hand, and provided **a** substitute for Isaac. God accepted this act of faith saying: "In thy Seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Abraham accepted this by faith, for we read, "Abraham rejoiced to see My day; and he saw it, and was glad." Was the greater Sacrifice, for whom no substitute was found, revealed to Abraham then? [8]

The Seed promised to Abraham was Christ. The Law did not erase the promise; Christ **is a** Life-giver for all nations. Through Christ Jesus **is** clearly revealed justification by faith. *Duncan Meldrum.*

From Barrhead and Paisley. —The temporary nature of the Law **is** illustrated by the **use** of the metaphor of the tutor. The word **is** actually pedagogue, which conveys more accurately the thought. The pedagogue **was** in **full** charge of the children in their tender years, and was responsible for their early training. His authority extended even to administering punishment for wrong-doing. His duties ceased when the children reached mature years.

The inferiority of the Law to grace is borne out by the fact that it was ordained through angels at the hand of a mediator, whereas the promise had been given to Abraham by God Himself. As angels are **used** by God in His governmental dealings with man, it would appear in keeping with God's ways to give them some responsibility in regard to the giving of the Law.

The **weakness** of the Law is that it **was** not designed to bestow righteousness to those who disobeyed it. The promise to Abraham **was** of a blessing which could **be** attained **by** faith only. The Law given **because** of unrighteousness could never fulfil that promise. The **advent** of the Law **430** years **after** the promise brought to **man** the knowledge of his sin and the consciousness of a violation of "Thou shalt not." The decalogue, therefore, **made man** aware of the **need** for atonement. The Law reigned until the death of Christ, although the elements of the **ten** commandments **will last** for **all** time as the standard required by God. J. M. Gault

From Cowdenbeath. —The inheritance spoken of is unconditional, **and** could not have come through the Law. **Paul** has previously defined the blessing God had in view **as** the giving of the Holy Spirit. In Ephesians **1. 14** **we** are told that the Spirit is **an earnest** of the inheritance into which **we** shall one day enter.

Angels played **a** part in the ordaining of the Law, which **was** given through **a** mediator who stood **between** the people **and** God. The **same** God **used** no intermediary when He spoke with Abraham. There **was a** danger of giving prominence to the Law and detracting from the promise. Did the Law militate against the promise of God? Certainly not! What purpose did the Law serve? It identified sin. Israel under the Law proved **man's** inability to **keep** God's holy Law. **Men** were brought to the consciousness of sin through the Law, and the realisation that only through faith in Christ could they **be** justified. The Law is likened unto the pedagogue or slave, who took the **boy** to school and handed him over to the care of the master. In **a** similar **manner** the Law brought **men** to Christ. Now that the faith has come the primary function of the Law has **been** served. No longer **are** believers viewed under the Law's care, **but as** sons of God. Verse **27** presents difficulties. The context would **suggest** that the baptism spoken of is baptism in the Spirit [9]. J. K. D. Johnston.

From London, S. E. —This epistle was written to people who were being **caused** to doubt that their salvation **was** by faith alone. It **was** to **be expected** that such people would also **be muddled** in their understanding of the relative importance of the promise to Abraham **and** the Law given to Moses. In keeping with their slip back to Judaism, there **was a** bias towards **an** over-estimation of the importance of the Law. Hence **Paul** points out that, in **fact**, the promise **made** to Abraham is more far-reaching than the Law, which **was** given to **meet an** immediate **need** until the promise should **be** fulfilled in Christ (3. 19).

Arguing from the more **readily** appreciated workings of covenants **between men**, **Paul** says that if these, when once confirmed, cannot **be** altered, then the promise **made by** God to Abraham could in no **way be** affected by the Law given **430** years later.

The Law, given **by a** mediator—Moses (Exodus **20.**; Deuteronomy **5¹.**)—served the very **useful** purpose of making **man** realise his sin, **and** bringing him to Christ, in whom **by** faith he could receive the blessing mentioned in the promise. The Law had finished its work when Christ died. The promise, however, being more **fundamental**, still continues, since **all** who are Christ's are viewed **as** Abraham's **seed**, **and** inheritors of the promise **made** to him.

A. C. Bishop.

From Brantford, Ont. —Covenants **made** between **men** (e. g., the covenant **between** Jacob **and** Laban at Galeed) are binding, **and** in righteousness should **be** recognised. Covenants **between** nations have sometimes **been** violated and regarded as "scraps of paper." In Scripture there are various types of covenants. **We** mention three: (1) God's covenant to Noah: **a** direct promise **by** God to all mankind not requiring faith or works on the part of any. (2) God's covenant with Abram (Genesis 15.), requiring faith in the spoken word of God [10]. (3) The covenant of Sinai, where God committed to His people His perfect Law, their responsibility being to **be** obedient thereto.

God made many promises to Abraham (3. 16), and it **was suggested** that the covenant (3. 17) entailed many promises commencing with the promise in Genesis 12. **We** understand from Newberry, Beecher, and Ussher dates, that it was approximately **430** years from God's promise to Abram in Genesis 12. to the giving of the Law at Mount Sinai. The LXX writings add "**and in Canaan**" after "Israel... dwelt in Egypt" (Exodus 12. 40).

We suggest that the promises to Abraham **can** be divided into two classes: (1) Those associated with his natural seed, pertaining to the land and the people, for example Genesis 15. 13-21. (2) The promises relating to the promised Seed through whom we have also been blessed, for example Genesis 12. 3, and 22. 18. The words of Hebrews 6. are indeed **a** "strong encouragement" to **us**, in that **we** are **assured** the promises are sure to **us**, **by** two immutable things, the promise of Genesis 12. and oath of Genesis 22.

Israel under the Law, in regard to the promises and inheritance, **was a** child, and could not enter into the richness of their inheritance until the day appointed by God. In the fulness of the time that day came, and so now, **in** Christ through faith **we** are sons, heirs to the immeasurable wealth of blessings from the Father. **We** are most fortunate **in** that **we** live in this **day**, when it is our privilege to **be** son-heirs. May **we** show **by** our life that **we** value the richness of our inheritance !

Jas. Bell.

COMMENTS.

[1] (Atherton). —The promise **in** view **in** Galatians 3* 15 **is** that concerning Abraham and his Seed (Christ) in whom all families of the earth were to **be** blessed. Hebrews 6. 15 says that Abraham having patiently endured obtained the promise, that **is** of Isaac through whom Christ **was** to come; **but** Hebrews 11. 13 says that these (Abraham, Isaac **and** Jacob) all died in faith, not having received the promises, these promises being of the promised land and seed **as** many **as** the stars for multitude. There are several promises implied in the Abrahamic blessing in Genesis 12 1-3. —*J. M.*

[2] (Kingston). —All the time of sojourn in Egypt Israel was not in **a** state of bondage. This did not commence till there arose another king in Egypt who knew not Joseph. The 430 years I understand is dated from the time that Abraham went down to Egypt in Genesis 12. shortly after he **entered** Canaan. Chronology, I think, teaches that they dwelt 215 years **in** Canaan **and** 215 in Egypt; the 430 years begin in Genesis 12. **and** the 400 years of affliction, mentioned in Genesis 15., begin in Genesis 21., when Ishmael, the son of an Egyptian mother, mocked Isaac on the day of his weaning. Note that **in** Galatians 4. 29 this mocking **is** called persecution. Further, I **am** doubtful about including **in** the sojournings of Israel the time from the call of God to Abraham in Ur of the Chaldees until he **entered** Canaan **at** 75 years of age. The time from Isaac's birth till his weaning has to **be** accounted for. —*J. M.*

[8] (Wembley). —Abraham's seed is referred to in different ways— (1) as Isaac, (2) as Ishmael, (3) as Israel, after the flesh, (4) as Abraham's spiritual offspring who share a like faith with him, and (5) as Christ. The promises made to Abraham could only have fulfilment through the one Seed which is Christ and not through the many seeds. Note that Genesis 22. 18 should be read in the light of verse 17, "Thy seed shall possess the gate of His enemies"—*His* enemies, not *their* enemies, hence He spake not of seeds as of many, but of one which is Christ. —*J. M.*

[4] (Sydney). —See note in paper from Wembley. —*J. M.*

[5] (Sydney). —There is neither the preposition *Eis*, into or unto, nor *En*, in, it is simply the dative and I personally see no need to alter "to" to "in." • To Abraham were the promises spoken "is plain enough, and if we put "to" before Abraham, so must we put "to" before his Seed. —*J. M.*

[6] (Sydney). —Surely a change is contemplated in Acts 14. 16; 17. 80, 31, in God's dealings with the nations prior to this dispensation of grace. The nations were in ignorance then, but it is different now since the world-wide gospel has gone forth. —*J. M.*

[7] (Sunderland). —Baptism in verse 27 is water baptism by which Christ is put on. —*J. M.*

[8] (Edinburgh). —I cannot say. —*J. M.*

[0] (Cowdenbeath). —This is baptism in water. —*J. M.*

[10] (Brantford). —Observe the difference between the Abrahamic covenants of Genesis 15. and Genesis 17. —*J. M.*

Mr. STEPHEN BURROWS.

Editors and students of "Bible Studies" have suffered a great loss in the home-call of dear Mr. Stephen Burrows, who passed into his Master's presence on May 15th.

An account of his life and work will appear elsewhere, but we must put on record our deep appreciation of his keen critical ability, and his sound knowledge of language. In so many ways he has been a wonderful help to us during his 14 years as co-editor.

We shall miss his services very much in this magazine. But it is not only his gift that we shall miss—those of us who knew him feel intensely the passing of a good man and a loved friend. He was always gentle in his discussions and patient in argument.

We extend our sincere sympathy to his dear wife and sons.

Jas. M. on behalf of Editors.

Our beloved co-editor, Dr. Doodson still needs, and values, your prayers. His progress to recovery is slow, but we thank our God for any measure of betterment in his health. We look forward to having again his wise guidance in this magazine, through the pages of which he has been such a help to the young men in the Fellowship. *Jas. M.*

Note.

Subject for 1954 (D. V.). We still await suggestions. None has arrived up to going to the press.

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 apostle in the beginning of Galatians 4. returns to his argument concerning his Jewish compatriots under the Law. The Law, he says, in Galatians 3. 23, 24, was as a military guard, a ward affording protection, and a pedagogue, a leader of children, one to train and discipline. The Law was also a guardian and steward (in an ancient household one person might be both guardian and steward) appointed by God to take care of those under it.

Believers in the past dispensation are viewed by Paul as in their minority, and were in consequence under the elementary teaching of the Law, **and** they differed nothing from others who were under the bondage of the Law, enslaved to a legal system in which they could go on without faith, for "the law is not of faith" (Galatians 3. 12). The Lord was born under the Law and was in that legal religious system in which we have Joseph and Mary, Zacharias and Elizabeth, Simeon and Anna, and no doubt many others, believers who were looking for Christ, the Consolation of Israel. But in that religious system were also the Sadducees and Pharisees, Caiaphas and Annas, and many other such wicked people, and so it had been all along, as we learn from the Psalms and many other portions of the Old Testament.

When the Lord appeared, such believers in Him, who was to come, gladly received Him, and in the Lords lifetime a development went on, which, with the Lord's death and resurrection, and the coming of the Spirit, saw the birth of a new nation, a people who emerged out of the old system, having attained their majority, taking their position as sons, which they really were through a new birth, for they were all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. To these were added others who believed in Him through their word. They were not sons by adoption; they were sons through faith in Christ, but they were adopted (placed as sons) and they left behind in their adoption the slaves of the legal system of the Law, and such slaves! for in many cases, from the priesthood downward, they were an organisation of covetous robbers (Matthew 21. 13) who were out to enrich themselves on the ignorance of the pious and the poor. Alas ! Alas !

Should such, as had been redeemed from the Law and its curse, and had received the Word and Spirit of God, proper to the new, return to the elementary teaching of the legal system in which they had been ? And should such Gentiles, as had been under such instruction as their own nation afforded, generally bound up with idolatry, return to their beggarly elements ? The cut had to be clean and the severance complete from both systems, if the new people were to emerge out of the shades and dwell in the clear light graciously granted by God to all who will receive it by faith. It is this mixture of law and grace, also of men's thoughts with God's thoughts, and of Christ's work with men's works, that has been the bane of Christianity from early days, and it has spread its wings like

a monster of the night over **all** lands. The gospel of the devil has its votaries by the tens of thousands, in different systems but all with the same voice, the voice of the dragon, saying that Christ and His work are not sufficient, man must be his own part-saviour himself. Against such, as David against the giant Goliath of old, Paul slings his stone to a hair's breadth in the Galatian epistle and does not miss, for it is a truly warrior epistle.

The adoption of Galatians 4. 5 is not that of Ephesians 1. 5 or Romans 8. 23. J. M.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE GALATIANS.

" The Promise, the **Law** and the **Faith**. "

(Chapter 3. 15-29).

From Hamilton, Ont. —While verse 16 speaks of the promises to Abraham, verse 17 speaks of one promise, which, we thought, is best expressed in the words: "In thee and in thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 28. 14). This far-reaching promise had three distinct fulfilments in view. (1) Under the leadership of Joshua, Israel entered the land of Canaan. Here was the first fulfilment of the promise; the land had been given to Abraham's seed. Later, under the reign of Solomon, other nations were brought under the influence of God's people. (2) Today a spiritual fulfilment has been brought about through Abraham's Seed (Christ)—a spiritual people, who, although God has taken them from among the Gentiles, yet are related to Abraham by faith. (3) The third and final fulfilment of the promise is yet future and belongs to the Millennium, when the promised Seed will sit on the throne and all the nations of the earth will do homage to Him. [1].

Now all who put their trust in Christ are free from the Law and are sons of Abraham—children of God. Under the Law those that sinned were under a curse, but Christ redeemed us, having become a curse for us. When Paul wrote, the Galatian believers were being taught by some that it was necessary to keep the Law to be saved. Similarly, some today teach that good works must be added to faith for the salvation of the soul. It is the privilege and responsibility of those who have been saved by grace through faith, to try to free men and women from this bondage. We considered that the expression "the Faith" is not the same as the term "the Faith" of Jude 3, but rather faith in the finished work of Christ [2],

C. Meikle, N. MacKay.

Sonship.

(Chapter 4. 1-20).

From Toronto, Ont. —This chapter continues the apostle Paul's statements concerning sonship as it applies to both Jew and Gentile believers. Paul commences with the heir as a child; the word *nepios* would convey the thought of a very little child, an infant, one who cannot speak. Until he reached majority, "the term appointed of the father, " he was not reckoned as heir, but in due time he became free of guardianship and could assume his rightful position in the household [3].

The Jews, viewed as children, were under Law, and subject to the "rudiments of the world. " This, we conclude, meant the letter of the Law as it applied to divers washings, carnal ordinances, meats, drinks, etc. (Hebrews 9. 10). We felt that "the Law" (verse 5) is used in a general sense, applicable to both Jew and Gentile law. The definite article is absent

from the Greek text. Nevertheless, the "we" of verse 5 applied to the Jew, for, as those in bondage (verse 3), they differed nothing from bond-servants; the poor Gentile had right to nothing, yet we read in verse 6, "because ye are sons." We receive sonship through grace. "It was not our merit, this grace to inherit." We are heirs through God (4. 7); in other words God Himself has made us heirs, so that we utter the language of sons and say "Abba, Father." This is a heart-cry and crying and tears are associated with it. Please see Mark 14. 36, Romans 8. 15. Suffering and chastening are linked with sonship (Hebrews 12. 6).

Verses 12-20 are a heart appeal to them, as ones who were dearly prized of the apostle for the Lord's sake. His "infirmity of the flesh" we took as referring to his general debility; he was getting old, and doubtless such hazards, as are listed in 2 Corinthians 11. 23-28, were taking their toll on his aging frame. In their high esteem of Paul, the Galatians could scarcely have been more receptive of the Lord Himself, had He appeared to them (4. 15). To this expression of love the apostle appealed. **N. K.**

From Willington **Quay**. —The differences between the position of a child and that of a son are numerous and important. Sonship would appear to entail greater responsibilities, and the will of God for us is that we should attain to such a position [4].

There was ample evidence of the backward trend to the things of the Law which had occurred amongst the Galatians, and which gave rise to such genuine fears on the part of Paul. The elementary, weak and imperfect things, which these Jewish believers of Galatia observed in past days, still held a certain attraction for them, as is seen in their observance of days, months, seasons and years. Furthermore, had the cordiality, with which they received him at the first, now given place to enmity, because he told them the truth? Their zeal, so prominent during his presence with them, had receded during his absence from them. His fears shew his deep love for the saints, promoting the desire that Christ be formed in them. Then, and only then, would these children fully apprehend the blessings and privileges of sonship. **K. R.**

From Edinburgh. —Believers of a past dispensation differed nothing from others of the Jewish people till the fulness of the time came when Christ came, born of a woman, born under the Law, to redeem us that we might receive adoption; this enables us by the Spirit to cry "Abba, Father"—a new cry, because now are we sons and heirs. Paul asks why, with this great standing, the Galatians should turn again to the rudiments of the world, desiring to become enslaved again. Was all the work bestowed upon them to be in vain?

In travail for them Paul says "Be as I am." He desires above all that they emulate him by holding fast to the gospel. Could his next words "for I am as ye are," be a contradiction? No: Paul places himself on the same platform as they: he was a sinner saved by grace. In their divergence from the gospel they were bringing suffering upon themselves.

Paul's infirmity could have given rise to scorning on their part, but they received him as a messenger from God. Paul bears testimony that such was their love for the message and the messenger that no sacrifice was too great. They would even have plucked out their eyes, if that would

have helped him. Why then turn away from the truth **he** had so zealously taught? Trouble-makers were seeking their downfall, desiring that they should be shut out of God's things, not brought into God's things. **It is** a good thing to be earnestly sought, but only **if** we are sought for the glory of God and not for the glory of man.

In travail and pain and anguish of spirit, Paul had struggled and worked for the churches there, that Christ might be formed in them. Then only, not as slaves, but as sons, heirs, they could be trusted to walk worthily of their inheritance.

Wm. Muirhead.

From Wembley. —While **a son is** under age, **he is** kept **in** ward under guardians until the time of his becoming of age, as determined by his father. They were similarly kept in bondage under the elements of the world.

Just as the time would come for the heir of the estate to be accepted as such and given his full status, so also the fulness of time came for God to send forth **His Son** to redeem them which were under the Law. **We** note that it was in the fulness of time—not before or after—that God sent forth **His Son**, and the Son was ready and willing to come. None had the right to redeem except Christ; there was no worthy kinsman to be found in all the earth (Psalm 49. 7, 8). But Christ came, born of **a woman** and under the Law, that He might redeem. Although we have been redeemed, we have to wait for the redemption of our bodies. Thus we have now the "spirit of adoption" (Romans 8. 15) and we were "foreordained.... unto adoption **as** sons through Jesus Christ" unto God (Ephesians 1. 5).

The expression "the Spirit of **His Son**" (4. 6) agrees very precisely with the thought of God as our Father. The Lord Jesus in **His** incarnation ever kept **His** place as Son, being obedient unto **His** Father's will. **We** thought that the terms "sons" and "children" were synonymous, but some thought the former term, in God's purposes, embraced more than the latter [5].

N. F. Toms.

EXTRACTS.

From Brantford, Ont. —When does **a** believer become **a son**? and when does **he** receive his adoption? **We** noted that the Scriptures never speak of believers **as** sons through birth, but always through adoption [6].

We believe that the moment a sinner comes to Christ **he is** born of God and **is** by birth **a** child of God, and that simultaneously **he** becomes **a** son of God by adoption [7].

Adoption seems to mean taking us from **a** place of no pasture and placing **in** **a** position that we did not deserve. The similarity of Galatians 3. and Romans 8. was also noted. In both the truth of the gospel **is** at stake, and the apostle **is** striving for its preservation.

A. Sproul.

From Kingston-on-Thames. —The apostle uses the illustration of the Jewish household, **in** which, apparently, slaves and children were treated alike in being placed under guardians (dealing with persons) and stewards (dealing with goods), so that there was no distinction between them until the children reached maturity.

In Scripture the words "son" and "child" have distinct meanings. Children are such by birth, whereas sonship implies birth plus obedience and likeness, also maturity and a place of honour.

It follows from verse 4 that the One who was sent forth was, and ever had been, God's Son. To say that He became the Son at the moment of His sending forth is quite contrary to the sense of the verse, and is not supported anywhere else in Scripture. We have here the truly amazing declaration that the Son of God came to earth, was born of a woman and was subject to the Law. This and similar Scriptures (John 1. 14, Philippians 2. 7) should fill us with new love and adoration for the glorious Person who stooped so low on our behalf. "What a wonder ! God in human form arrayed."

Verse 12 presents some difficulty. Possibly Paul is beseeching the Galatians to free themselves from the bondage of the Law as he himself had done, and in doing so had become as the Galatians, a Gentile.

Paul's infirmity of the flesh has been the subject of much speculation, but Professor Ramsey has put forward a suggestion which seems to fit the known facts better than most. He thinks that the apostle contracted malaria whilst in the low-lying district of Pamphylia (Acts 13. 13, 14), and had to abandon his work there and move to the higher and more healthy district of Galatia. Here he was still subject to attacks of ague, which rendered him helpless and brought him low in the presence of the Galatian saints, who, instead of despising him, would have given him, if possible, their eyes, in order to secure his recovery. [8]. *L. Burrows*,

From Atherton.—"As many as received Him, to them gave He the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on His Name" (John 1. 12). This is where we all start—born anew, born from above, born of God. Is sonship something different ? It was realised that in addition to birth the word "son" involves character, likeness, expression (Luke 6. 35, 36). Is sonship therefore conditional ? A comparison of Scripture with Scripture may help us to determine that sonship has both a conditional and an unconditional side. We were reckoned sons by God when we were made children. This, it was suggested, is what is in view in Galatians 4. 6. (See Romans 8. 15-17).

There is required on our part obedience to bear the character of God and to do the things that are well-pleasing in His sight. Reference was made to the disobedient son. The prodigal of Luke 15. was always a son, even in disobedience.

The word adoption is misleading. "Son-placing" or "the position of sons" is the true thought. Among the blessings in the heavenlies in Christ we find: "Having foreordained us unto adoption as sons (son-placing) through Jesus Christ unto Himself" (Ephesians 1. 3, 5).

The Galatians, being constituted sons, were not functioning as sons. They were failing to bear the image of the heavenly in their lives, so the apostle writes: "My little children, of whom I am again in travail until Christ be formed in you" (4. 19). *J. Bullock, G. A. Jones.*

From Crowborough.—The apostle deals first with the Jews and God's dealing with them under the Law. At the appointed season God sent His Son in the great redemptive work, and the manner of God's dealing with them was changed. The Lord Jesus came when this people were responsible to keep the Law, and He Himself was subject to it and made

it honourable. He paid the price of redemption that they might be placed in God's sight as sons, through faith, in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3. 26). God gave to them the Spirit of His Son, which is the Holy Spirit, Who taught them to speak to God as their Father.

The Gentiles had been in bondage to false gods, but the Lord Jesus Christ had brought them liberty. The apostle is amazed that, after his faithful labours amongst them revealing the liberty which is in Christ, they should desire to be in bondage again. The apostle commends them for their ready acceptance of his person and ministry at the first, and assures them that he still has their welfare at heart, even as a parent has his offspring's.

S. Swift.

From Cowdenbeath. —As long as an heir is under age, there is no difference between him and a servant, though he be lord of all the property (Moffat), but he is entrusted to the care of others, till the time pre-arranged by the father is fulfilled. Likewise, certain of the Galatians, being by nature Gentiles, in their unregenerate state had been in bondage to idol worship (4. 8) [9].

The Law could not give man life: the Law condemned. That God might redeem men and bring them nearer to Himself, as sons and as heirs, God sent forth His own Son, born under the Law. It is because we now are sons, that God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts. It is of interest to note, that the Spirit (Romans 8. 15, 16) teaches *us* to say "Abba, Father." Yet in Galatians 4. 6 it is the Spirit *Himself* who cries "Abba, Father."

Paul recalls that it was because of illness that he preached the gospel to them on his former visit; and, although his infirmity of the flesh was a trial to them, they welcomed him as they would have welcomed the Lord. Such was their love for him, they would have exchanged eyes with him, had it been possible. Because of this, Paul asks, "Where then is the happiness you accounted yours ?" (Rotherham). Had he become an enemy because of truth ? There were those in Galatia, probably Judaizing teachers, who were ready to show great enthusiasm for them, if they would but turn their backs to the truth. Paul had laboured much on their behalf, and now, absent from them, he exercised the same zeal, the same deep earnest care for them, as when present with them. He would fain be with them that he might see, by outward manifestations in their lives, that Christ was truly formed within **them**.

Iain Hunter.

From Paisley and Barrhead. —Jewish believers are likened to Roman or Greek children, who were under the care of pedagogues, or child-guardians, until their coming of age, when they could act independently as sons. When the fulness of time had come, Christ appeared and emancipated Jewish believers from the thralldom of the Law by His death and resurrection, and made us sons of God.

Verse 19 would appear to underline the fact that the born again person is not necessarily pervaded by the example of Christ. The apostle, in his sorrow on behalf of the Galatians, likens himself to a mother in travail. He could say elsewhere: "I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me."*

W. Terrell, jun.

From Liverpool. —As many as receive Christ as Saviour are given the right to become children (Greek *teknon*—a born one) of God (John 1. 12); this is the new birth. But Galatians 4. 1 speaks of a child-heir (Greek *nepios*), a minor, one not able, or having no right, to speak for himself. He is "kept in ward under the Law" (3. 23), and continues so until the time appointed by his father. Such says the apostle, **was** our condition: we also were held in bondage under the rudiments (first principles) of the world—Jews under the Law of Moses.

In this dispensation the Spirit comes into the heart of each one who accepts the Son of God by faith. **We** are indwelt by and sealed with, the Holy Spirit. Under the Law we read only of the Spirit of God coming upon individuals (Judges 14. 6, 19).

Fruit-bearing is the purpose of God's Spirit within us. God desired fruit from **His** vineyard (the house of Israel) and **His** "choicest vine" and "pleasant plant" (Judah); but where God looked for grapes, wild grapes only were to be seen (Isaiah 5.), and in judgement God pronounced **six** "woes" upon Israel, for **His** anger was kindled against them. The kingdom of God was taken from Israel, and "given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof" (Matthew 21. 33-43, 1 Corinthians 3, 9). **We**, who are in the Kingdom of God today, are required to bear fruit (John 15. 1, 5, 8). See also Galatians 5. for the contrast between the works (plural) of the flesh and the fruit (singular) of the Spirit.

God first sent forth **His** Son, then the Spirit of **His** Son (4. 4, 6, John 14. 16, 17, 26). The eternal Sonship of Christ is seen here: He was at God's side, and God sent **Him** forth. **A. H.**

From Clydebank and Dumbarton. —"For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus" (3. 26). The apostle Paul now speaks of the consequences of this truth, and draws a comparison between heirs under the Law, and heirs through faith in Jesus Christ. Under the Law of God they were as children, and were under guardianship and trusteeship until the **time** fixed by the Father.

A magnificent Temple, beautiful vestments, visible sacrifices were ordained under the Law that man might worship God. But now God is worshipped in spirit and in truth.

Paul was afraid that his labour had been in vain, for the Galatians, having come to be known of God, were again observing the times and seasons of the world. He reminds them of their first love when they were enlightened, and warns them against back-sliding. **M. R.**

From Sunderland. —In the opening verses of this chapter the purpose of God concerning the heirs is viewed dispensationally. The children, that is, believers of a past dispensation, are said to be under bondage "until the term appointed of the father." This would appear to refer to the time of the Law, which continued until the days of John the Baptist (Luke 16. 16). Many of the Galatian **saints** would, however, be Gentiles who were without Law **but** were under the bondage of worldly ordinances (4. 9, 10), which **appear** to be associated with the worship of idols. Barnabas and Paul

taught the people to "turn from these vain things unto the living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and **all** that in them **is**" (Acts 14. 15).

The end of the period of bondage **is** indicated by the words, "the fullness of the time," when God sent forth **His** Son, who was born under the Law, that, as Kinsman-Redeemer, He might redeem them which were under the Law. The glories of God's grace, and **His** fore-knowledge are seen in **His** adopting as sons those He has redeemed. **His** purpose **is** that they should be conformed to the image of **His** Son (Romans 8. 29), and, to **this** end, **He** has sent forth the Spirit of **His** Son into our hearts.

As a result of our redemption we have also come to know God, and to be known of God. Different Greek words are used in verses 8 and 9 concerning not knowing and our knowing God; these would convey the thought of our not seeing **Him** and now being acquainted with Him. God knows those that are **His** own (1 Corinthians 8. 3, 2 Timothy 2. 19).

J. R., Jnr.

From London, S. E. — "The rudiments of the world" may be taken to include both the moral and ceremonial laws given by God to the Jews, and the moral code and religious rites observed by the Galatians in their unconverted days. The ceremonial law of the Jews did indeed contain beautiful types of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the moral law pointed out the need for a Redeemer, but neither was able **in** itself to confer on sinful creatures the title "sons of God." **As** a sign that God recognises no difference between Jew and Gentile, the Spirit inspires both to call upon **Him** as "Father," each in his own language.

Verses 12-20 contain a personal appeal by Paul to the Galatians to return to the freedom which they first enjoyed, when they were released from the bondage of the Law. Paul first preached to them when he **was** suffering from an illness, which either obliged **him** to remain **in** Galatia or to go there to recuperate. Whatever the exact cause of the illness, it disfigured him to such an extent that the Galatians might have been tempted to despise or reject him, and with him his message; but with true love they accepted him as they might have accepted an angel, or even Jesus Christ. When Paul's work was interrupted, God used his weakness for the progress of the gospel, just **as**, later, Paul's imprisonment achieved the **same** purpose (Philippians I. 12, 13). Is it unknown to-day for bodily appearance to influence the reception of God's message, whether the hearer be believer or unbeliever?

Paul warns against those who would like to lead the Galatians away from the true faith to form a distinct sect, and seems to sigh sadly, rather than threaten angrily, when he expresses **his** longing that his teaching be respected **as** much in **his** absence **as** in his presence. **His** loving anxiety for them **is** compared with the pangs of child-birth. May this refer to the continual prayer which we know Paul made on behalf of those for whom he felt particularly responsible? 1 Thessalonians 3. 10 shows that Paul prayed exceedingly day and night for the Thessalonians. There can be no higher aspiration than to lead a life which, by its deeds and words, causes others to see in us a reflection of Christ; but what appears must spring from depths hidden from men and known only to God and ourselves.

D. G. Evans.

COMMENTS.

[1] (Hamilton, Ont.). —Surely the promises of Galatians 3. 16 to Abraham and his Seed have their fulfilment in Christ alone, for God spake not of seeds, but "to thy Seed, which is Christ. "—*J. M.*

[2] (Hamilton, Ont.). —"The faith" of Galatians 3. 23 is "the faith" of Jude 3, and of Galatians 1. 23, etc. —*J. M.*

[3] (Toronto). —An infant (in law) is a person under the age of 21, a minor. The word *nemos* (child or infant) is used in this sense in Galatians 4. 1-3. —*J. M.*

[4] (Willington Quay). —Sonship in this part of Galatians is not through personal effort or attainment, but is through the dispensational change that took place at the beginning of their dispensation. At the time appointed of God, called "the fulness of the time," God sent forth His Son and the Spirit of His Son, and those who accepted the Son by faith passed from being under the Law, subject to its rudimentary instruction, to being under grace with all its wealth of Spirit-given revelation and teaching; their time of minority was past. —*J. M.*

[5] (Wembley). —"Children" signifies such as are born or born again, but in "sons" we have not only the thought of birth, but also of likeness, character, position or standing. —*J. M.*

[6] (Brantford). —A believer is one of God's sons from the time of regeneration (Galatians 3. 26), but for it to be seen what he is—a son—there must be the manifestation of likeness in character and ways to the Father (Matthew 5. 43-48). "Sons" in this Matthew scripture indicates that we should manifest what we are. Adoption means "son-placing" not "son-making." —*J. M.*

[7] (Brantford). —This is a very incorrect statement *re* birth and adoption. See Editorial. —*J. M.*

[8] (Kingston). —What God leaves out it is vain for anyone to try and fill in in the Divine Scriptures. All this about malaria is fanciful and highly speculative. Ramsey, or anyone else, has no more knowledge of the facts here than the humblest lover of God's word. They were known both to Paul and the Galatians. —*J. M.*

[9] (Cowdenbeath). —It is difficult to think of Jewish believers, in their unregenerate days, being in bondage to idols. It may be that there is a contrast between "we" ("when we were children") of verse 3 and "ye" ("ye were in bondage") of verse 8, the former referring to Jews and the latter to Gentiles. —*J. M.*

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Question from Crowborough. —Paul says that **480** years was the time between the giving of the promise and the giving of the **Law**, but in Exodus **we** are told that Israel were 430 years in Egypt alone.

Answer. —See Kingston's paper and comment [2] thereon in June issue. —*J. M.*

Questions from St. Helens. —(1) Does **3. 26** mean that, by our act of faith in Christ's atoning work, we become *sons* of God? (2) What is the meaning of the phrase "did put on Christ" (verse 27) *t*

Answers. —(1) **Yes**, that is my view. —*J. M.*

(2) Putting on Christ is not the reception of Christ **by** faith, which is a personal and private matter, a matter of the heart, but putting on Christ is **an** outward or public matter, which is done in the public **act** of baptism. —*J. M.*

Questions from Liverpool. —(1) "And to thy Seed, which is Christ " (3. 16): " if ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed " (3. 29). It was suggested that this shows our identification with Christ through faith. Please explain this difficulty.

(2) Is the marginal alternative " the faith " (3. 23) the correct one ? We appreciate the distinction between " faith " and " the faith, " and have in mind " the truth " (1 Timothy 2. 4. See also John 14. 21, 23).

(3) Please explain the basic difference between sons and children (John 1. 12, Galatians 3. 26, Romans 8. 14).

(4) Verse 27: is baptism here water baptism or baptism of the Spirit into the Body of Christ ?

Answer 1. —See note on Abraham's seed in comment [3] in paper from Wembley (June). We are Christ's, if the Spirit of Christ (the Holy Spirit) is in us (Romans 8. 9); this is true of all saved people of this dispensation. If we are Christ's, then we are Abraham's (spiritual) seed, sons of Abraham through faith. In contrast to this, the incarnate Christ, the promised Seed, descended from Abraham. —*J. M.*

(2) The definite article " the " is before faith here, and there is no doubt that the R. V. marginal alternative reading " the faith " is correct. The contrast in this verse is between " the faith " and " the Law. " But often we have "the" before faith where it is "faith" and not "the faith", as, for instance, verse 26, where we have "the " before faith and this is an act of faith in Christ Jesus. The A. V. says "by faith" and the R. V. "through faith" —*J. M.*

(3) " Children " (Greek *Teknon*, a child, comes from *Tikto* to bear children) means simply such as are born, offspring. " Sons " (Greek *Huios*, a son) involves not only the idea of birth and descent, but also of standing, resemblance and character.

(4) This is water baptism, not baptism **in** the Spirit. —*J. M.*

Question from Hamilton, Ont. —We would appreciate help on "ordained through angels" (3. 19).

Answer. —It seems to me in the few and brief references to angels in the Scriptures, that the fall of man, which brought him under Satanic control, resulted in this world being under the domination (within limits) of the devil and his angels, called in Ephesians 6. 12, "the world-rulers of this darkness. " God on the other hand evidently used His angels to guide world affairs according to His will, and Michael the archangel had special responsibility in regard to Israel (Daniel 12. 1). Angelic rule of the world will cease with the coming of the Son of Man with His saints (Hebrews 2. 5).

In the light of such matters it seems evident, from Galatians 3. 19, Acts 7. 53, Hebrews 2. 2, that angels had to do with the giving of the Law, but Christ **came** Himself, the Divine Son, to announce the gospel to men, in His manhood, so that the great change back to God's original purpose for man has begun, that now man hears God's word directly through the Son and in consequence comes into direct responsibility to God. Much more might **be** suggested. —*J. M.*

BIBLE STUDIES

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

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THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE GALATIANS.

Sonship.

(Chapter 4. 1-20).

From Sydney. —Paul, seeking to teach us a lesson in relation to the gospel he has been expounding, brings before us a normal family (4. 1-3). Some were perplexed as to whether the "heir" of verse 1 refers to the "heirs" in chapter 3. 29. This would mean that the child in verse 1, being comparative with the children of verse 3, would make the latter children of God. This would not coincide with our conception of the meaning of verses 4 and 5, which indicate to us that the children of verse 3 were un-saved. [1]

With regard to the "we" of verses 3 and 5, some held that different people were embraced, namely: the children of Israel in the former and Jew and Gentile in the latter. We agreed that both believing Jews and Gentiles become sons by adoption. [2]

Most were agreed that we were placed as sons when we believed (4. 6, Ephesians 1. 13).

J. G., G. K., J. J.

Ishmael and Isaac.

(Chapter 4. 21 to Chapter 5. 1).

From Sunderland. —Paul very beautifully shews that behind the apparently simple Genesis narrative of Ishmael and Isaac, there lies a wealth of spiritual instruction for the people of God to-day. The experiences too of Sarah and Hagar, and their relationship to Abraham, are shewn to illustrate the purposes of God concerning His people of later days. This surely emphasizes the vital interest God has in the lives of His chosen ones of all generations.

Abraham's two sons portray those born under two different covenants. The first, born after the flesh, was born in bondage because his mother was a bondwoman. The second, Isaac, was born through promise and was the son of the freewoman. Isaac became the inheritor of all that Abraham possessed, but Ishmael received gifts with his half-brothers.

In verse 25, Paul, writing by way of allegory, says that this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia; that is Hagar's bondage corresponds to the bondage of the Law which formed the basis of the old covenant. Sarah's freedom, on the other hand, finds its counterpart in the Jerusalem that is above, which is our mother. This appears to refer to the heavenly Jerusalem of Hebrews 12. 22, to which we are now come under the new covenant. Does this mean that, as Sarah was Abraham's wife, the Jerusalem that is above is the wife of the Lamb? [3]

We also are heirs because we are sons of the freewoman, and, as the son of the bondwoman had no place in Abraham's household after being cast out, so neither should Law-keeping, with its fleshly ordinances, have a place under the new covenant. Indeed, the persecution of those after

the Spirit by those after the flesh remains to-day, hence the command: "Cast out the handmaid and her son: for the son of the handmaid shall not inherit with the son of the freewoman. " *J. R., Jnr.*

From Cowdenbeath. —There appears to have existed in the churches of Galatia a feeling that the teaching of the Law could be carried on in the church along with the teaching of the Faith. Paul warns them of the danger of going back to the Law, and, to prove to them that the two teachings were in conflict and could not possibly exist together, he takes them back to a condition which existed in the household of Abraham (Genesis 21.), where there were two sons, Ishmael, the son of the bondwoman, and Isaac, the son of promise.

Abraham had hoped that Ishmael and Isaac could live in his house harmoniously, but this could not be. The birth of Isaac only brought out in Ishmael his real opposition to the child of promise: Ishmael mocked. Such a condition could not go on in Abraham's household. What then was the remedy? to make Ishmael reform? By no means, but "Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac. " Here was the only remedy. This thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son, but however grievous it might be, it was according to the divine will.

The apostle tells the Galatian saints that they should abidingly stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free, and not be entangled again in the yoke of the Law.

They were children of the freewoman, born from above, and could rejoice that they had been brought into such a glorious and privileged place. We would judge that Paul's reason for citing Isaiah 54. was to show them that, as children of Abraham by faith, they had something much more to glory in than had those who were children of Abraham by nature. Those born by faith far outnumber those born to Abraham by nature.

In his warning to the Galatian saints, Paul stressed the freedom and fulness that are in Christ; this renders all appeals to Law utterly superfluous and vain.

David McLelland.

From Paisley **and** Barrhead. —Another name for Sinai is "Hagar" (bondwoman), which represents the bondage of the children of Israel with the introduction of the Law. Sarah (freewoman), although not actually referred to by name, is likened to the freedom of the Jerusalem which is above.

The son of the handmaid represents the children of Israel of the past and those who are now living in the flesh in association with earthly Jerusalem, while the son of the freewoman clearly typifies the children of promise, and such are believers.

Would it be right to suggest that not only does verse 26 bring before us the spiritual state of children according to promise, but also that it brings within its scope the opportunity afforded us of worshipping God in the beauty of holiness (Hebrews 12. 22-23)? [4] On the other hand* would it be in keeping with the Scriptures to state that the New Jerusalem of Revelations 21. 2 is but a future fulfilment of Galatians 4. 26? [5]

W. Terrell, Jnr.

From Birkenhead. —The allegory here used by the apostle is a powerful argument against any who thought they were children of God because they were Abraham's seed.

What the Lord Jesus had already taught Nicodemus about being born from above (John 3.), and taught the Jews about the bondservant of sin being **cast** out (John 8.), is here allegorized in Sarah and Hagar, Isaac and Ishmael. Pride of birth and city of birth without regeneration have no place in the divine counsels. The son of the bondwoman had to give place to the son of the freewoman, the son of promise. Sarah's apparently harsh treatment of Hagar illustrates the divine truth that the Law, as seen in Mount Sinai and the earthly Jerusalem, must give place to grace and to the heavenly Jerusalem. In Isaiah 54. we are allowed a glimpse of this long-hidden truth, now fully revealed in the gospel of Christ. By it we can understand the vital distinction which God makes between those born after the flesh, and those born after the Spirit; and between the means—works and faith (Ephesians 2. 8-10). N. A.

From Sydney. —Paul takes the Galatians back to the Old Testament, to the Law (4. 21, Genesis 21. 8-21, also 16. and 25.). He brings before them a contrast between the Law and grace, setting forth Hagar and Ishmael on the one hand, and Sarah and Isaac on the other. Their antitypes are: (1) Hagar—covenant of Law; (2) Ishmael—the Jew; (3) Sarah—covenant of grace; (4) Isaac—the **life** after the new birth.

"Hagar" (4. 25) refers not simply to the woman, nor does "Jerusalem" refer only to the natural city, but both embrace the whole Mosaic Law. As regards the bondage, some thought that it embraces temporal (*viz.* Roman) and spiritual bondage, others thought that temporal bondage is not contemplated.

Who are referred to in the latter part of verse 27? And what is the apostle's thought in quoting the verse? The general opinion was that the children of the desolate were the children of Hagar, the others being the children of Sarah. As regards the original Scripture (Isaiah 54. 1) most thought it referred to Gentile and Jew. But some thought that the quotation meant that the spiritual seed of Abraham would be greater than the natural seed (3-29). [6] Others wondered if Abraham was viewed as having an especial part in the allegory of these two women, since he was the father of both sons. Again, the latter persons thought that the opinion expressed by the former would mean that the spiritual seed would be the counterpart of the children of the desolate, *i. e.*, the children of Hagar. Howbeit, we are as Isaac was, children of promise and of the freewoman, and should keep ourselves from entanglement again in a yoke of bondage.

J. C. I., J. G., G. K.

EXTRACTS.

From Wembley. —Allegorical language was prevalent in the apostle's time. The interpretation of the allegory of Sarah and Hagar would have been clearly understood by the Galatian saints and would have gone home with power to their hearts.

They knew well the story of Ishmael and Isaac, how that one was born of the bondmaid, born according to the flesh, and the other born of the freewoman, born according to promise, and they could see that although they were desiring to be under the Law, they were as Isaac was, children of promise. As Abraham cast out the bondmaid and her son, so must they cast out Judaism and all its claims and rituals, if God is to be glorified and His will for His gathered-together people is to be fulfilled. Ishmael could not inherit the promise given to Abraham, neither can bondservants of the Law have any inheritance with those who have been freed from the yoke of bondage.

John Avon.

From **Edinburgh**. —Paul entreats those who were casting their eyes back to consider again things of the Law. He recalls the birth of the two sons of Abraham, one born by the will of the flesh, the other born of promise. Faith in the promise was weakening, and Sarah pressed her handmaid upon her husband; but when she was old she conceived and brought forth the son of promise. This, Paul contends, introduced two distinct covenants. The son of the bondwoman is likened to Israel; in bondage to the Law and the earthly ordinances of the traditions of the fathers.

Bond and free could not inherit equally of Abraham's spiritual and material wealth. From this Paul draws his parallel teaching, that there can be no mixture of Law and grace, of the flesh and the Spirit.

W. Bunting, Jnr.

From **Liverpool**. —The regimes of Law and grace are not co-existent, so to those Galatians whose desire was to the Law, the apostle, who was no stranger to the Law and its purpose, presents an allegory which shows clearly just what they were doing.

Sarah and Hagar are two covenants. Allegorically "Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to the Jerusalem that now is: for she is in bondage with her children." All that pertains to Jerusalem, being still under the Law in spite of the grace that came by Jesus Christ, is in bondage. Contrariwise, Jerusalem that is above is free, and we, who by like faith with Abraham have laid hold on the promises of God, have been born of the Spirit of God, and, as Isaac was, are children of promise, having received life by the new birth. "It is not the children of the flesh (typified by Ishmael) that are children of God; but the children of the promise are reckoned for a seed (as was Isaac)" (Romans 9. 8).

It was generally agreed that "the Law" was not merely the ten commandments but the whole of the Old Testament, the oracles of God (see John 15. 25, Romans 3. 2). Through the Spirit of God within us we overcome the flesh, and if we walk after the Spirit we shall fulfil the requirements of the Law (Romans 8. 4-8).

Every child of God must expect to experience some persecution in the world, suffering for Christ's sake. We should be exercised thereby. The apostle gloried in his sufferings; he endured, and out of them all the Lord delivered him (2 Timothy 3. 11, 12). All that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution, whether from the flesh within, or from the flesh in others. Suffering, through persecution in God's will, plays an important part in character building (Romans 8. 17), and we are exhorted not to think such trial strange, but to rejoice at being partakers of Christ's sufferings (Matthew 5. 10-12, 1 Peter 3. 14-17).

A. Fairhurst, Jnr., A. H.

From Crowborough. —Hagar represents all that is associated with Mount Sinai, all that mass of Jewish Law and ritual upon which the Pharisees laid such great stress. The Jews were a proud nation and answered the Lord Jesus with scorn: "We be Abraham's seed, and have never yet been in bondage to any man" (John 8. 33). The heart of the Lord Jesus must often have grieved on hearing this and other proud sayings, for He could see the great bondage which was theirs. Politically, they were under the bondage of Rome, her armies, government and laws; spiritually, under the bondage of Judaism. The apostle exhorts the saints to a complete severance from Judaism and all it entailed. **B. F.**

From Willington Quay. —In following this doctrinal argument Paul quotes from the Old Testament to seek to gain the Jewish believers who had returned to the bondage of the Law, and perhaps too, the Gentile believers who may have followed their lead.

Human nature is impatient and can rarely wait God's time. Ishmael was born as a consequence of the desire of the flesh to beget seed, and spiritually he represents those who were born under bondage. The argument takes an interesting turn here, for, naturally speaking, the Jew is descended from Sarah, but he is pictured here as being from Hagar, whereas the Gentile believer, even though he be after the seed of Ishmael, can be viewed as being of the seed of faith. We wondered if the Arabs are the seed of Hagar. [7]

Here (4. 26) Jerusalem is said to be "above," but in Revelations we see the city "coming down" from above, the time of its manifesting to the nations being then at hand. [8] **C.** **B.**

From Kingston-on-Thames. —Paul's demonstration from the Law is very instructive both in the wealth of meaning that he draws from what might otherwise be considered as purely interesting narrative, and also as a guide as to how we should seek, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to read the Old Testament Scriptures.

Mount Sinai (4. 24) suggests God's holiness and justice and the terror which His presence strikes into the hearts of sinful men, thus the awful nature of the bondage of the Law given from that mountain. Contrasted with this bondage is the freedom of those typified by Isaac, the son of promise, *i. e.*, believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. Of Isaac it is said (Genesis 24. 35-36) that his father had given unto him all that he had. This speaks of the Son, as Heir of all things, who has been given all things by the Father, God: we are joint heirs with Christ.

Verse 27 seems to be a comment upon the whole of Paul's previous argument. In the same way as Sarah was at first barren, but was eventually the mother of a far greater nation than Hagar, so now the "heirs according to promise" far exceed the bondservants of the Law.

Paul, like the Lord Himself, constantly has recourse in his arguments to "What saith the Scriptures," or "It is written." Such reasoning is unassailable, and, in this case, had additional force, because the Judaizing teachers themselves sought authority from the same source for their actions.

It **was** suggested that verse **30** may be understood in the following way. The casting out of the handmaid and her son is analogous to taking a proper view of the Law and not regarding it **as a means** of salvation. To-day the counterpart would be the realisation of the uselessness of putting one's trust in religious worship or giving to charity for the salvation of the soul.

F. E. Jarvis.

From Atherton. —It **seems** rather surprising that what is apparently the result of lack of faith in God's promise of a son on the part of Abraham and Sarah is used by the Spirit to show that the flesh has no place in the purposes of God. [9] The promise concerning Isaac was associated with faith. The sons of Sarah by natural generation are shown by the apostle to be children unto bondage and compared to children of Hagar, the bond-woman. The children of faith are the children of promise (**3. 7**).

Two thoughts were expressed about the Jerusalem that is above. The first viewed all believers **as** having a part in it. This **was** based on the thought of mother and children; the work of Christ is spoken of **as** travail, and the illustration of children being born out of the pain and travail of the Cross **seems** fitting in view of Isaiah **53. 11, 54. 1**. The second thought took in those in the House of God only. Jerusalem under the old covenant **was** the place of worship; under the new covenant **we** have come to the heavenly Jerusalem, of which the earthly Jerusalem was but a type. Thus the figure fits only those who are in the House of God, whose privilege it is to draw near to God. [10]

The Galatians had formerly been in bondage to sin, but they had been set free by the sacrificial work of Christ. By accepting the keeping of the Law, with its observance of days and months, and seasons and years, they were being entangled again in a yoke of bondage. Acts **15. 10** shows that neither the apostles nor the fathers were able to bear the yoke under which the Law-keepers still struggled. Being **free**, we should not become entangled again in a yoke of bondage, for Christ set **us** free that **we** might serve Him. No longer are we slaves to Satan and sin, but now children of God, children of the promise through faith.

D. H. Butler, R. C. Jones.

COMMENTS.

[1] (Sydney). —The "heir" of Galatians **4. 1** is used **as an** illustration by Paul, and refers to any heir to **an** estate who does not come into the inheritance until the time of his father's appointment. "So **we** also" refers to such **as** were believers under the old covenant who, though heirs, could not come into the inheritance until that time appointed by God, when **He** sent forth His Son and also sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts; so that with the dispensational change such were no longer reckoned **as** bondservants but sons. Note also, that such believers **as** died under the old covenant did not receive the promise of the eternal inheritance (that is, the eternal inheritance that **was** promised) until Christ had redeemed their sins (Hebrews **9. 15, 16**). A vast change **was** brought about by the Lord's death and resurrection, and the sending forth of the Spirit. —*J. M.*

[2] (Sydney). —Not sons by adoption; they were adopted **as** sons. Note, it is the adoption (son-placing) of sons, not the placing of children who were not sons, **as** sons. —*J. M.*

[3] (Sunderland). —The heavenly Jerusalem is our mother, and such as are born of this mother form the Bride of the Lamb, so that the heavenly Jerusalem cannot be our mother and the Bride **as** well. —*J. M.*

[4] (Paisley **and** Barrhead). —In Galatians 4. it is birth, such as are born again are born from above, and the heavenly Jerusalem is their mother, but Hebrews 12. presents the other view; that as Israel came to Sinai to serve God in covenant service, so we also have come to Zion and to the heavenly Jerusalem. The latter was when we found our place in God's assembly, accepting the condition of obedience in connexion with that service. —*J. M.*

[5] (Paisley and Barrhead). —Everyone of this dispensation who is born again will form part of the new Jerusalem, the Lamb's Bride and Wife. No doubt also there will be service rendered to God in connexion with the new Jerusalem, which is, I judge, "the tabernacle of God, " and it is said that "His servants shall do **Him** service; and they shall see His face" (Revelation 21. 3; 22. 3, 4). —*J. M.*

[6] (Sydney). —The word desolate (*eremos*) means solitary, deserted, uninhabited, and refers to Sarah who had no child, and her husband, at her suggestion, went to Hagar her handmaid and in consequence she had neither husband nor son; she was utterly desolate or solitary. Yet through divine grace, and promise, and by her faith, since she counted Him faithful who had promised (Hebrews 11. 11), she received power to conceive Isaac, and of him came the many seeds, more than those of Hagar. —*J. M.*

[7] (Willington Quay). —No doubt some of the Arab races are descended from Ishmael, from whom a great nation of twelve princes was to arise (Genesis 16. 10; 17. 20; 21. 18). There are also the descendants of Keturah, also the descendants of Edom, Moab and Ammon, and no doubt other ancient houses, whose offspring go to make up what are called the Arab races, upon whom Mohammedanism has so secure a hold. —*J. M.*

[8] (Willington Quay). —But the heavenly Jerusalem is not the new Jerusalem. —*J. M.*

[9] (Atherton). —It is quite clear from Romans 4. 18-22 and Hebrews 11. 11 that neither Abraham nor Sarah wavered in their faith in the promise of God regarding the promised son who was to be born of themselves. But such is the perversion of the flesh, there is often no accounting how it will act in the best of people; it is not subject to Law. It appears here in Abraham and Sarah, and so great a man as David was badly marked by it. The fruit of the flesh ever brings sorrow. —*J. M.*

[10] (Atherton). —See comment [4] in paper from Barrhead and Paisley. —*J. M.*

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Question **from** Paisley and Barrhead. —What is the distinction between children of God and sons of God. (See Galatians 3. 26, 4. 5-7, John 1. 12 and 1 John 3. 1 in A. V. and R. V.)

Answer. —A child (Greek *teknon*) is an offspring, one **that** is born. *Teknon* comes from *tikto* to bear, to bring forth children. Son (*huios*) is one who is begotten and who bears the character and likeness of the father who begat him. Whilst the R. V. is much more accurate than the A. V. in using the correct English equivalent for *teknon* and *huios* (note that in the

A. V. in John 1. 12 we have sons where it should be children and in Galatians 3. 26 children where it should be sons) even the R. V. is not free from blemish in this respect. The R. V. makes Abraham say, in Luke 16. 25, "Son, remember" in the text, though in the margin this is corrected. The rich man in hell was a child of Abraham, one of his offspring, but not a son, for he bore no resemblance to his father. —*J. M.*

Questions from Crowborough. —(1) What are the rudiments of the world? (4. 3, 9). Are they the same in both verses? (2) When a person accepts the finished work of Christ, he is redeemed, born again, and receives the Holy Spirit. Is this matter of sonship, that comes with adoption, different from the position as children through the new birth?

Answers. —(1) The rudiments of verses 3 and 9 were the elementary teachings of the Law on the one hand and the teachings of the Gentile nations on the other, laws which were calculated to keep men walking and acting in ways agreeable to principles of right as contained in their respective systems, but were in both cases completely inadequate to meet man's spiritual and moral needs. To return to such elementary things on the part of the Christian, would be like a man highly equipped in scientific knowledge returning to learn again and to prefer the A. B. C. to all the knowledge he had acquired.

(2) Adoption is the placing of sons who are sons by birth. Children of God are such as are born again, sons are such as are born again and bear the likeness and character of the Father who begat them. —*J. M.*

Question from Clydebank and Dumbarton. —Was Paul's thorn in the flesh impaired eyesight? (Galatians 4. 15, 6. 11).

Answer. —Paul's thorn in the flesh was, in my opinion, the result of his being battered with stones at Lystra, at which time he was caught up to the third heaven (Acts 14. 19, 20; 2 Corinthians 12. 7). —*J. M.*

Question from Willington Quay. —We wondered if the heavenly city was Jewish only, present-day believers not being part of it (Galatians 4. 26; Hebrews 12. 22; Revelations 3. 12; 21. 2).

Answer. —The Jerusalem of Galatians 4. 26 is the heavenly Jerusalem, but that of Revelations 3. 12; 21. 2 is the new Jerusalem. There are three Jerusalems: (1) the Jerusalem in Palestine, (2) the heavenly Jerusalem, and (3) the new Jerusalem. The heavenly Jerusalem, in the allegorical language of Galatians 4., is our mother, the mother of all believers whether Jew or Gentile, all who are born from above; but all believers form part of the new Jerusalem, which is the Bride of the Lamb. —*J. M.*

NOTICES.

1954 SUBJECT. A syllabus will be in the hands of fellow-students soon (D. V.). The subject chosen is a "Study of the Tabernacle." There will also be "Notes on the Epistle to the Romans," by our beloved co-editor Mr. J. Miller

It will be a joy to fellow-students to learn that beloved Dr. Doodson is making a steady progress to better health. Still remember him in prayer. —*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.)

VOLUME 21.

SEPTEMBER, 1953.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE GALATIANS.

The **Law** of Liberty.

(Chapter 5. 1-12).

From Melbourne. —The object of the false brethren brought in unawares (2. 4) was to bring the saints into bondage by persuading them to be circumcised. The apostle Paul's purpose was to prevent this and he exhorts the saints to "stand fast" and "be not entangled again in a yoke of bondage" (5. 1). By being circumcised they would uphold the keeping of the ordinances of the Law and so fall from grace. The liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free is freedom from the Law and its ordinances, through justification by faith. This liberty must be guarded jealously. Even to-day there are sects who would seek to bring believers into the bondage of ritualism, and we need to stand fast, lest listening to fair speeches and flowing words we are turned aside from grace. Circumcision was used by these internal troublers to ensnare the unsuspecting. It removed the reproach of the Cross and quenched the fire of persecution (5. 11), but the apostle emphasizes that by turning aside to this false teaching they were severing themselves from Christ (5. 4) (not eternal severance, but the severance of all joy, fellowship and communion with Him; compare John 15. 6).

Circumcision required them, as debtors, to keep the ordinances of the Law. Yet it was for the purpose of delivering them from such bondage that the Son of God gave Himself for them. By being circumcised they turned their backs on Him and fell from grace.

We felt that the hope of righteousness (5. 5) for which we wait, would refer to that blissful moment when we are ushered into His presence, and everything which we enjoy now will then be seen and enjoyed in its fulness. (Some wondered if it would be the "fruit" of righteousness to be enjoyed in time.) [1].

Moral sin is in 1 Corinthians 5. likened to leaven. Here it is doctrinal **error**. Both must be dealt with to prevent the assemblies from being polluted.

Paul still had confidence that they would respond to his warning and he wishes that the troublers would cut themselves off from the assemblies.

P. W. A.

From Kingston-on-Thames. —In verse 2 the apostle intends to convey that those who received the doctrine put forward by the Judaizers, that circumcision was necessary for salvation, would lose the freedom that the gospel gives. If circumcision was essential, so was every other ordinance of the Law. The Jew or Gentile Christian, who took up this attitude, would once again be in bondage to the Law, seeking to be justified by it, and, in addition, he would be separated from Christ.

Paul emphasizes (5. 5) that, in contrast, those who had not **been led** astray did not work for a righteousness which **was** unobtainable, **but** waited through the Spirit by faith for the hope of righteousness (that is, to **be** clothed with the garments of righteousness). This **had been** promised unconditionally to **the** believer (Romans 4. 3, **23, 24**) [2].

Verse 7 recalls Paul's previous passionate exclamation: " **O** foolish Galatians, who did bewitch you ? " **He seems** scarcely able to believe that **the** truth so dear to him, having been misrepresented in so blatant a fashion, could lead away these Galatians, who seemed previously to **be** so strong in the Faith. They were called by God in the grace of Christ (chapter 6.), but what they were now embracing **was** not of God, but **an** evil thing, which, if persisted in, would permeate the whole assembly, **as** leaven leavens the whole lump. *S. Burrows.*

From Liverpool. —How positive are Paul's words ! " With freedom did Christ set **us free**: stand fast therefore, and **be** not entangled again in a yoke of bondage. " For such is the Law to those who voluntarily put themselves under its obligations. Acceptance of **what was** being taught concerning circumcision meant that Christ would profit them nothing, **and** they would be debtors to do the whole Law.

" **Ye** are severed from Christ, ye who would **be** justified by the Law; **ye** are fallen away from grace. " Being "severed from Christ" does not **mean** that they would be lost, rather that while they sought to keep the Law, oneness with **Him**, through grace, ceased to exist **in** principle (Romans **5. 1, 2**). " Fallen away from grace " **we** thought to **be** their position, **if they** sought to **be** justified by the Law; though, of course, nothing could alter their standing **in** Christ **in** grace (Romans **5. 1, 2**). **We** thought Hebrews 12. 15 **and** R. V. M. clarified this point. The Authorized rendering of verse 4 is helpful: " Christ is become of no **effect** unto you. "

The hindrance among them, **causing** them to err from the truth, **was** not of God, **and** Paul gives the warning: "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. " **What is** the leaven here ? Generally it **was** agreed that this **was** false **teaching**, which, **if** it were accepted, would **have** a disastrous effect on the testimony **in** Galatia. [3].

" If, " says the apostle, " I still preach circumcision, why **am** I still persecuted ? " It would **seem** that he once taught this doctrine. **But** now **he** preached Christ and **Him** crucified, the Cross with its offence to self-righteous **men**: it **was** for this **he knew** persecution. If on the other **hand** **he** preached circumcision, there would be no persecution for him: then would the offence of the Cross cease. *J. Wannop, A. H.*

EXTRACTS.

From Wembley. —**What is** Christian liberty ? The liberty of **men and** women of the world **is** to do **as** they please; their boast **is** that they **are free**. God's thought of liberty **is** to **make us** " bondmen to God " (Romans 6. 22); **we** are exhorted to **present** ourselves unto God **as** alive from the dead.

It **is a new** life, **we** are to live **as** to God now, not to **man** in the flesh. **We** are to find our joy **and** happiness in loving service to God, **and** the first element of liberty **is** to **be** delivered from the power of sin. **We** have already received the forgiveness of sins, and the gift of the Holy Spirit, through faith in Christ **Jesus**, just **as** these Galatians had. Now that God would have **us** live in this liberty, sin should not have dominion over **us** for **we** are not under Law but under grace (Romans 6. 14), **and we** should present our

members as instruments of righteousness unto God. Our freedom **is** from the bondage of **sin**; **we** are to reckon ourselves dead to it and alive to God.

Circumcision **was a** small part of the Law, but **its** observance **was** sufficient to place them under the legal yoke. They **became** debtors to do the whole Law (Galatians 5. 3). The question **was** asked: **if** circumcision availeth nothing and uncircumcision nothing, how **is** the circumcised one compelled to keep the whole Law? [4]. **W. H. B.**

From Sydney. —Paul was well able to elucidate the facts on this grand theme of liberty, for "**as** touching the righteousness which **is in** the Law " he was blameless. Being "**a** Hebrew of Hebrews, " he would come under all the ordinances of the Law (Philippians 3. 5, 6). Hence his emphatic statement, " Behold, I Paul say unto you . . . "

Liberty **is** first experienced by faith **in** Christ. The law of liberty **is** the law of the Spirit of life in Christ **Jesus** (Romans 8. 2); it **is** faith **in** the risen, glorious Lord Jesus Christ, and can be fully entered into **in** daily life. To stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made **us free is** to abide **in His** word, and, abiding therein, to know the truth which makes **us free** (John 8. 31, 32). Liberty **is seen in** our servant character (Romans 6. 18), and **is** not to be abused (1 Peter 2. 16). The present and future application of the law of liberty to **us is** seen in James 1. 25 and 2. 12.

Seemingly, circumcision was **a** leading **cause** of the marring of this liberty in the Galatian assemblies. Hence, **in** verses 2, 3 and 6, Paul testifies that neither circumcision nor uncircumcision profiteth anything **in** Christ; circumcision to-day **is** that of the heart (Romans 2. 29). Other Scriptures relevant to this fact are 1 Corinthians 7. 19 and Galatians 6. 15. " The hope of righteousness " has **a** future application (Romans 8. 23).

J. I., J. G., G. K.

From Crowborough. —The saints in Galatia had been **running** well **in** the Christian race, but were now being hindered by false doctrine. Some **of** them had followed this teaching, which, it **seems**, had begun **in a** small way (5. 9). Circumcision did not involve just one act, but involved the keeping of the whole Law, which to do was to be entangled **in** the very yoke from which Christ had **set** them free.

The apostle **was** unable to visit the **saints at this time**, as he earnestly desired to do (4. 20), but he hoped that this letter would put matters right (5. 10).

From Kilmarnock. —The apostle used Isaac, the son of promise, as **an** illustration of those who had believed **in** Christ and had been liberated from the Law. The Galatians had believed the good **news** of salvation through Christ's death **and** had gone on well for **a time**, but they had **been** giving heed to wrong teaching **and** the apostle warns them that " a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump " (see also 1 Corinthians 5. 6).

He had confidence that they would not **be** led astray, **and** wished that those who troubled them would **cut** themselves off. **We** understand they were **in** fellowship, but the Lord would judge them. **A. G. S.**

From Sunderland. —**Verse 4** shows **us** that it **is** possible to fall from grace. **We** may also fall from our own steadfastness (2 Peter 3. 17).

As far **as** the Galatian **saints** were concerned their malady **was** traceable to **a** source (false teachers **in** their midst) whose influence affected all the

saints. Paul does not call upon the churches to excommunicate these teachers, but rather to turn from them, and he expresses the desire they might cut themselves off. The latter part of verse 10 shows that the Lord will deal in judgement with those who trouble the saints. This may be a present judgement (1 Corinthians 11. 32) or a future one.

As a corrective to the false teaching, the positive aspects of faith in Christ are set forth graphically in verses 5 and 6, viz., faith, hope, and love. Holding fast to these is necessary to running well in the race set before us.

J. R., Jun.

From Edinburgh. —"Ye were running well. " Happy is the man who, like the Psalmist, can say: "I will run the way of Thy commandments" (Psalm 119. 32).

The Galatians had ceased to run well, they had failed to obey the truth. Let us learn from their mistake. God speaks, Satan speaks, and man speaks: to whom shall we hearken? The Spirit of truth shall guide us into all the truth. On our part there must be the willingness to obey the revealed truth, else our running will be in vain. When God speaks we should take heed to His voice that we may make progress in the pathway.

Patience and endurance are two essential things in the race. Getting off to a good start is needful, but only by exercising patience and endurance and keeping our eyes fixed on Him can we continue stedfastly, following His example. May we run well in our day and time!

Circumcision was the token of a covenant between God and Abraham. It was the first covenant God made putting responsibility on man. There was no circumcision in the wilderness, but it had to take place before they possessed the land. It operated under the Law. The Galatians were not under Law, and therefore it had no bearing on them. "For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek: for the same Lord is Lord of all, and is rich unto all that call upon Him. "

A. M. Hope.

From Barrhead **and** Paisley. —It would seem that the course the Galatians favoured was justification by faith, yet adhering to some of the principles of the Law. Such a course may have been in Paul's mind when *he* said, "If I still preach circumcision, why am I still persecuted?" He argues that he cannot be preaching circumcision, because he is being persecuted for preaching against it.

By the use of the words "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" he repeats the warning he gave to the church at Corinth (1 Corinthians 5. 6). In this way he shows that the teaching of the Judaizers held the same threat to the church as did the conduct of the immoral man. He then expresses the hope that the Galatians will not think otherwise than that this system of corrupt teaching is from man and not of God.

The Law imposed certain limits on an individual's actions by preventing him under threat of punishment, from doing certain things which were wrong; but Paul warns that, although we are freed from the restraints of the Law and its penalties, yet our freedom must not be used as a cloak for the works of the flesh.

J. M. Gault.

From Cowdenbeath. —Works and faith are contrasted in verses 4 and 5. "The Law is not of faith" (3. 12), and "a man is not justified by the works of the Law" (2. 16). The word "severed" in verse 4 is translated

"discharged" in **Romans 7. 2**. This shows clearly the position of such as would heed the speakings of men. The liberty that they enjoyed through **grace** they would surely forfeit if they would be justified **by** the Law. In contrast to the flesh and works, the experience of the believer should be that of waiting through the Spirit **by** faith for the future hope which imputed righteousness affords (probably the hope of **Romans 5. 2**).

Whether **a** person was circumcised or not, i. e., whether **Jew** or **Gentile** at the time of being saved, mattered not; the important matter, the apostle points out, is **a** life of faith, active through love. Is not love the fulfilment of the Law? (**5. 14**).

The word "persuasion" in verse **8** is derived from the same root as "obey," verse **7**: the lack of obedience to the truth is not the work of God who called them.

Were the false teachers upholding their spurious doctrine by saying that Paul was preaching circumcision? (**5. 11**). The apostle negates this by pointing out that he was **a** persecuted man. For what reason? **He** taught that blessing comes through **a** crucified Messiah; this hurt the Jewish national pride and was **a** stumbling block to the Jews. The truth is that the Cross ends circumcision in the flesh. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing" (**John 6. 63**). **R. Ross.**

From Atherton. —The word "sever" (verse **4**) does not imply in any sense that the eternal security of the believer can **be affected by** becoming entangled in Law-keeping or ceremonial observances. It means to make void, and then to cause to cease, and finally to cease being under or connected with any person or thing; so that the sense is that they had ceased, withdrawn, or apostatized from Christ. Their fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ **was** broken by their giving place to circumcision, and still more serious the doctrine of the Lord was being set aside: this could only end in disaster. "Ye are fallen away from **grace**" has been used to support "the falling away" theory. It has to do with falling from any state or condition, or to lose one's part or interest in that **state**: hence **it** is **a** conditional aspect of truth **as** seen in **2 Peter 3. 17**.

In considering verse **5** **it** was said that the Galatian saints were trying to attain to **a** righteousness through the Law, whereas in **a** **time** to come they would **be** perfectly righteous through the efficacious work of Christ. Others thought **it** was the person of Christ referred to as the "hope of righteousness." The whole tenor of the argument is Law against grace, and, because they had turned unto the Law, they were severed from Christ, and instead of waiting for Christ they were taken up with attaining their own righteousness. [5].

These beloved saints had been running well, **but** some person or persons had hindered them. This word "hinder" seems capable of different interpretations. Liddell and Scott gives "to **beat**, force, or drive back": Dr. Young's Concordance "to **cut** up, or **cut** back." Another interpretation gives the idea of some person "breaking up the path" to prevent their obedience to the truth.

"**A** little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" seems to have two possible explanations. (1) **It** refers to the false teachers that had intruded upon the assemblies, and whose leaven (or false doctrine) had spread rapidly. (2) It refers to the **few** in the assemblies that had accepted the false teaching and were affecting others thereby. (See also **1 Corinthians 5. 6**). [6].

E. Birchall, D. H. Butter.

COMMENTS.

[1] (Melbourne). —It is the "hope" of righteousness, not the "fruit" of righteousness. It is not the hope of having righteousness, but the hope that divine righteousness, through faith in God's promises, **engenders** in the heart of believers. It is something akin to **Paul's** words to Titus (3. 7), when he speaks of becoming heirs according to the hope of eternal life, which is not the hope of receiving eternal life, **but** the hope that eternal life begets in the heart of all believers, who are heirs of God. —**J. M.**

[2] (Kingston). —It is the "hope" of righteousness, not righteousness itself. See note [1] on Melbourne's paper. —**J. M.**

[3] (Liverpool). —Leaven here is the heretical doctrine of salvation by legal works. —**J. M.**

[4] (Wembley). —What possible strength or force **can** circumcision have, or the lack of it? None **at** all! If circumcision did not result in Law-keeping, the true meaning of which Law-keeping **was** love to God and love to one's neighbours, then it was a useless rite. Circumcision in this dispensation has been discarded for the teaching of the Cross, which means, death to self and self-love, so that we may love one another, for **as** long as self is alive **we** shall ever love ourselves better than **any** other or love ourselves to the exclusion of all others. —**J. M.**

[5] (Atherton). See note [1] on paper from Melbourne. —**J. M.**

[6] (Atherton). Paul is using a proverbial saying, I would **judge**, **and** that **as** even a little leaven leavens the whole lump, so would this erroneous teaching about circumcision leaven the assemblies in Galatia and corrupt the testimony of the Lord; so it must **be cast** out in its entirety. —**J. M.**

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Questions **from** Kingston (1)—Do we receive the hope of righteousness **at** the coming of the Lord (5. 5)?

(2) Do the false teachers bear their judgement here and now, or **at** the judgement **seat** of Christ, or both (5. 10)?

Answers. —(1) **We wait** for the hope of righteousness, which puts the realization of this hope in the future and, I judge, it **must be** in connection with the Lord's coming.

(2) Paul had confidence in the Galatians that they would stand firm on the doctrine of the Lord, and this would imply that they would judge the false teacher or teachers. Indeed, Paul wished that the troublers would even **cut** themselves off. It is true also that each **man's** work will **be** tried **at** the judgement **seat** of Christ, where such troublers will **suffer** loss in seeing their works burnt up. —**J. M.**

Question **from** Liverpool. —Is the righteousness of verse 5 something **we** look for and which will **be** ours **at** the redemption of the body? or **is** it a daily experience in the sense of the exhortation "Follow after righteousness"?

Answer. —See answer to Kingston, also note [1] in paper from Melbourne. —**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 1. 7. 11.)

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EDITORIAL.

The subject this month is concerning the flesh and its works, and the fruit of the Spirit, and the lusting of the former against the latter. Whilst many papers **state** the fact that the flesh is still with the believer after regeneration, a clear and definite line is not drawn so that we may understand exactly what is meant.

Each individual of Adam's race is born with what has been called original sin in him. This corrupt stream has flowed through countless generations by natural generation. The apparently innocent stage in human life, in childhood, the most beautiful time of natural life, is soon defiled, when the growing child realizes that he has committed sin. This may be in thought, word or deed. Paul refers to this change in his case in Romans 7. 7-14. In his case the knowledge of sin came through the Law, which said " Thou shalt not covet " or lust. But the Gentiles which have no Law, **but** do the things of the Law by nature (Romans 2. 14, 15), reached the same condition of being dead through trespasses and sins (Ephesians 2. 1), for in Jew and Gentile the same original sin was in both from birth. Seeking to adhere to the statutes of the Law could bring no quickening, for there is no Law but one, that can make alive, and that is the Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus (Romans 8. 2). This Law is set forth in the gospel, through which, by a Law of faith (Romans 2. 27), the dead sinner is made alive, and there is no other Law that can make alive **but** this (Galatians 3. 21).

From the day that the sinner commits sin he is both dead and in the flesh, and we are told that they that are in the flesh cannot please God, and are not subject to the Law of God (Romans 8. 7, 8), hence the uselessness of circumcision and attempted Law-keeping. A sinner cannot keep the Law; his whole being revolts against it. He is carnal and the Law is spiritual; he is unholy and the Law holy; he is unjust and the Law is just; he cannot do good and the Law is good. By nature he is the exact antithesis of the Law. He needs to be delivered out of the flesh into the Spirit. Hence we read of the believer, " Ye are not in the flesh, **but** in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you " (Romans 8. 9). Yet though he is delivered out of the flesh, the flesh (the corrupt nature which he inherited at birth) is still in his flesh, as Paul says, " I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing " (Romans 7. 18), and it is from the flesh resident in our flesh that all sin arises, whether it be from pride, in factions and heresies, etc., or from lust, in fornication and uncleanness, etc. The foul stream runs on through our flesh, and the regeneration of the individual through grace does not stop its flow, for all naturally-born children of Christian people inherit the same nature from them, **as** do the children of ungodly sinners from their parents. *J. M.*

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE GALATIANS.

The Law of Liberty.

(Chapter 5. 1-12).

From Hamilton, Ontario. —The Law that required a man to be circumcised also made him a debtor to do the whole Law (5. 3). No man was able to keep the whole Law; hence it was necessary for man to accept the finished work of Christ. Christ fulfilled both the Law and the prophets (Matthew 5. 17). He is also the end of the Law unto righteousness to everyone that believeth (Romans 10. 4).

It is precious to know that not only have we forgiveness, but we are also justified or released from sin because of our old man having been crucified with Christ (Romans 6. 6, 7). Salvation cannot be obtained by the works of the natural man, for "by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified" (Romans 3. 20), and "the flesh profiteth nothing" (John 6. 63). The body of the flesh (Colossians 2. 11), or the body of sin (Romans 6. 6), has been done away through the Cross-work of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In contrast to the yoke of bondage (5. 1), we read of the yoke of the meek and lowly One, which we are exhorted to take upon ourselves, and in taking it upon us to learn more of that blessed One, who said, "My yoke is easy, and My burden is light" (Matthew 11. 29, 30).

Paul did not preach circumcision (5. 11); if he had, he would not have been persecuted. The Jewish people of that day would have received the teaching of circumcision in the flesh, for it was an established thing among the Jews. But, when Paul came with the message of salvation apart from the works of the Law (Romans 3. 28), it proved to be a stumbling-block to them.

We would suggest that the "Law of liberty" (James 1. 25) is that which is referred to as the "royal law" in James 2. 8, that is, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Did not Christ love us, His neighbours (and, also His enemies), as Himself, when He laid down His life for us at Calvary? Shall we not love Him, seeing He has first loved us (1 John 4. 19)? Our love will be manifested by our deeds (1 John 3. 18), and this "royal law" is the law by which we shall be judged at the judgement-seat of Christ (2 Corinthians 5. 10), where we shall "receive the things (or deeds) done in the body." Only deeds done in love, in accordance with the "royal Law," will receive a reward (James 2. 12).

M. Vanderwater, W. Thompson.

Victory over the Flesh.

(Chapter 5. 13-26).

From Atherton. —Satan's attacks in seeking to disintegrate God's people are clearly evident from the Galatian epistle, and equally so to-day in our spiritual experiences. When wrong doctrine is propagated, often enough, saints become at variance and contention for the Faith may become contention against one another. We are prone indeed to this very real danger, and its dread climax is to be seen in verse 15.

Some consider the lusts of the flesh as having to do with the three things of verse 19, but the list is much longer, as seen in the ensuing verses. Of the fifteen matters indicated here, the first five and the last two may be principally external to the assembly, whereas the remaining eight are realities which bear upon internal relationships. It is regrettable that even strife, jealousies and wraths may be seen betimes in our dealings with those in "the without."

The fruit of the Spirit presents, **by** contrast, a perfect balance of divine working in and among God's people, beginning with love, and ending with self-control. **If** love dominates, then self-control will **be** clearly manifest, in spite of varying temperaments and even under **adverse** conditions. Victory over the flesh may **be** achieved by prayer and an exercised heart toward the word of God. The Proverbs **may** greatly help our infirmities; Solomon, in wonderful wisdom, says "**A** soft answer turneth away wrath: **but** a grievous word stirreth **up** anger " (Proverbs 15. 1).

We discussed the apparent difference between the *two* great commandments **as** indicated by the Lord in Matthew 22. 34-40 and the *one* commandment of Galatians 5. 14. The apostle **seems** to prosecute his argument to the very practical consideration of assembly strength and unity. Love to God **must** inevitably fail, if **we** love not our brother whom **we** have seen (1 John 4. 20). The Lord's new commandment of John 13. 34 bears the hall-mark of the pre-eminence of the grace and truth, that **came** by **Jesus** Christ, over a Law given by Moses. The Sermon on the Mount provides ample proof of this. The standard of His expectation from **us** is unbounded and unlimited—" *even as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.* "

To live and to walk so **as** to inherit the kingdom of God is very heart-searching, exacting and humbling. The practice of the fearful works of the flesh **must be met** by excommunication alone. Even those that seek to gain the victory over the flesh **must** habitually and consistently listen to that " still small voice " within, in order to possess the peace and joy associated with that kingdom (Romans 14. 17). *G. A. Jones, E. Birchall.*

From Edinburgh. —Paul exhorts to walk by, and to **be** led by, the Spirit. Only thus can the lusts of the flesh **be** mortified, and the spiritual life of a saint or a church bear fruit to God's glory.

Paul reminds the Galatians that they had been called from sin with its bondage to freedom from the Law of sin and death. This liberty is not to **be** misused **by us** in fleshly lusts. There is continual war between the flesh and the Spirit. An illustration is seen in Israel, who failed to destroy Amalek and were continually troubled in the way.

Walking in the lust of the flesh soon draws men away from the things of God. Paul enumerates many lusts which **we** do well to avoid. Those who practise such shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

If **we** are in the Spirit, **we** will walk in love. The fruit of the Spirit is love, and it, in turn, bestows many blessings. Let **us** live and walk in love. Envyng or provoking one another robs God of His portion.

D. Meldrum.

From Wembley. —The title and the portion **we** have considered contain one of those words which are often loosely used. The question is: " What is the flesh ? "

The word is **used** in **at** least six senses in the **New** Testament. Vine in his dictionary gives thirteen shades of meaning, and it is unfair to the intention of **Scripture** to mix all these **uses** and produce a composite definition of the word. The idea that the apostles regarded their natural appetites **as** evil and fought their own bodies has been the source of many heresies. Romans 7. and Galatians 5. cannot **be** brought together without confusion until **the** meaning of " the flesh " in Galatians is defined.

The flesh exercises an influence in opposition to the influence of the Spirit. The flesh is responsible for man's sinful works. Its works include immorality, jealousy **and** idolatry. The flesh is what is described in other places as the old man in us. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified this thing in themselves.

The image of the crucifixion of the sinful nature, inherited at birth, is a vivid one. The flesh was crucified symbolically when we were baptised [1]. It was crucified by an act of the will, when we accepted the Lordship of Christ, and chose His pattern for life instead of the very different patterns that the human mind has produced. It is only dead by intention, unfortunately it is very alive in practice [2],

Verse 14 is often read as though it said that we should love our neighbours better than we love ourselves: what it says is that we should love our neighbours as we love ourselves, or as though they were ourselves. This does not ask for an amputation of feeling but an extension of love. [3].

The general message of the portion seems to be that the Galatians were not called to a life of small and mean restrictions: they were called to freedom. The call required from them a greatness of living that could only exist in freedom. They were asked to watch that the influence on their free actions did not come from the source in them which they had already denounced, the flesh, but from the source which they had acknowledged, the Spirit.

Verse 25 left us wondering whether it was a statement that the Spirit was the source of our life, or whether it was an answer to some people who were claiming that the Spirit influenced their actions, requiring them to show the fruit of the Spirit. [4].

L. B. H.

From London, S. E. —The Christian is called for freedom, but he is to be a servant. Faith in Christ delivers the sinner from the penalty of sin, but freedom from the works of sin is effected by the saved sinner's obedience to God's righteous claims (Romans 6.). Severing himself from the works of the flesh, he is to look into the perfect Law, the Law of liberty, **and** be a "doer that worketh" (James 1. 25).

"Through love be servants." This is a theme developed fully by John in his first epistle, reference to which should yield much fruit **and** cause us to be careful of our behaviour one to another (see also James 2.). The Law finds its truest utterance in this commandment: "Thou shalt love," for if we love truly, we cannot but fulfil the whole Law. There can be little more displeasing to God, or more harmful to an assembly of God, than for those therein to bear malice towards each other. This biting and devouring, suggesting the fighting of wild beasts, could indeed jeopardize the very life of an assembly. Against such things Paul gives ample warning in this and other epistles.

The matter of walking and being led-by the Spirit is dependent upon our submission to the Spirit, and our obedience to the revealed truth of God.

The flesh, which minds the things of this world, is ever warring against the Holy Spirit, each antagonist striving for control of the human person (Romans 7. 17-8. 11). The result of this conflict is manifested in the nature of the believer's daily life, whether it brings forth the glorious fruit of the Spirit or the hideous works of the flesh.

It is noteworthy how completely these fleshly works transgress the Law of God, and, in contrast, how the fruit of the Spirit is perfectly manifested in the Lord Jesus Christ.

In this argument Paul **uses** the term " works " in contrast to " fruit. " Elsewhere, however, the flesh is pictured rather as **a weed** bearing corrupt fruit (Romans 6. 20-21, Ephesians 5. 9-11), the development of which is described in James 1. 15. We are reminded too of the contrasts in the parable of the fig and vine, thorn and thistle (Matthew 7. 16).

They that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the passions and lusts of the flesh. This is abiding in Christ; this is walking in the Spirit as led by Him. This is manifesting the fruit of the Spirit to the glory of God, and thus is inherited the kingdom of God.

Giving prayerful heed to these solemn **but** vital exhortations, **we** should have true liberty, dwelling in pleasant unity, in love. *A. Reeve.*

EXTRACTS.

From Kingston-on-Thames. —Verse 15 appears to refer to those who sought to **be** justified by the Law, and had begun to **criticize** their brethren who fell short of its rigid demands. Such attacks would inevitably recoil upon their own heads, for it is beyond the capacity of man to keep the whole Law.

The flesh and the **Spirit** are here shown to **be** in **direct** opposition, and the works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit are contrasted in an arresting manner. Paul is not considering the difference between the actions of saved and unsaved persons but, sadly enough, he has to warn the Galatian saints against fifteen kinds of evil to which it is possible for any saint to descend, **if** he fails to walk **by** the Spirit.

" Practise " implies making **a** habit of **a** certain course of action. Those who persist in the works of the flesh will have no part in the privileges of the kingdom of God, which **we** considered to **be** an inheritance into which **we** can enter here and now. The kingdom of God is the sphere in which God's authority is acknowledged **as** vested in Christ. It follows that those who are not led **by** the Spirit of God cannot participate in the things of His kingdom. *L. Burrows,*

From Melbourne. —Love is to **be** the restraining and constraining factor in our dealings with one another. " By love serve one another " (A. V.) The biting and devouring of one another **are** outworkings of the flesh, and, **if** unchecked, would **be** disastrous to the assemblies. The flesh is in every believer; **but** some believers might shun some of the things named in verse 19 and **yet be** guilty of others enumerated. **We** need to walk by the Spirit to gain the victory over the flesh, for, in the believer, there is **a** constant battle between the flesh **and** the Spirit. **Whilst** every believer **lives** by the Spirit, not every believer **walks** by the **Spirit**.

The desire for vainglory is **a** product of the flesh, and should not **be** seen amongst those who are in **a** church of God. Walking by the Spirit will cause us to " consider one another to provoke unto love and good works " (Hebrews 10. 24), and will prevent the envying of one another. *P. W. A.*

From Crowborough. —The apostle ably sums **up** that portion of the Mosaic Law which governs our conduct towards our fellows. There is **a** great danger that, when **we** realize that **we** are not compelled to keep the Law, **we may** go to the other extreme, and forget that **we** have **a** responsibility towards others, not now of compulsion, **but** for love's sake.

When we practise the works of the flesh, we do much injury to our brethren, and the apostle reminds us that the kingdom of God is not then our portion. They who would make it manifest that they belong to the exalted Man in the glory, are ready to lay aside those distasteful things of the flesh and seek heavenly things. " S. S.

From **Willington Quay**. —The apostle warns that whilst the believer in Christ can enjoy a freedom the like of which could never have been possible under the old economy, there is a possibility that as a result of this freedom the flesh may be given greater scope. The whole Law can be summed up in one word—love, and this must still be the restraining force in our conflict with the flesh.

We would take the phrase, " if ye are led by the Spirit, " as being a general condition and not implying that such an experience is of a spasmodic nature.

Those things which are enumerated as being works of the flesh are fittingly described as being manifest. They readily shew themselves. What a contrast is provided by the fruit of the Spirit! Seen, alas, on so few occasions yet of such value that it is greatly to be desired.

The child of God, who has crucified the flesh and lives by the Spirit who indwells him, should maintain a continuous walk by the Spirit. K. R.

From **Sunderland**. —To those who were desirous of keeping the Law, Paul sets forth the great commandment in which the whole Law is fulfilled: " Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. " In another place he says, " Love therefore is the fulfilment of the Law " (Romans 13. 10). This was the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ to the Pharisees, though the Lord spoke of two great commandments on which hung the Law and the prophets (Matthew 22. 40).

Though the believer is set free from the bondage of sin and Law, the flesh still remains with him as the great hindrance to keeping the commandments of the Lord. The same evil propensities of the flesh also remain, though the believer should reckon himself as being dead unto sin. Only by the power of the Holy Spirit can the flesh be overcome, hence the vital necessity to walk by the Spirit. In a parallel portion (Romans 8. 4) Paul shews that fulfilment of the requirement of the Law can only be attained by those who walk after the Spirit. J. H. Jnr.

From **Kilmarnock**. —In this portion the apostle shews that, though as saints the Galatians were alive in Christ by the power of the Spirit, yet it was possible that they might still fulfil the lusts of the flesh. Although they were free from the Law, they were not to use that liberty in fulfilling the lusts of the flesh, for that would be hurtful to their spiritual life, and to avoid this they should "walk by the Spirit" (5. 16). What a contrast are the works of the flesh to the "fruit of the Spirit"! If all believers in churches of God were thus walking day by day, what love and fellowship there would be! and what power for God! There would then indeed be " victory over the flesh. " A. G. S.

From **Liverpool**. —The flesh expresses itself in our natural craving after things which are contrary to the mind of the Lord. Romans 8. shews clearly that the mind of the flesh is death and enmity against God. It is not subject to the Law of God, neither can it be. In a word, they that

are in the flesh cannot please God (Romans 8. 5-8). We who have been liberated from the bondage of sin and of the Law, are not to use our liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but should willingly yield ourselves to the influence of the Spirit, the mind of which is life and peace (Romans 8. 6).

Salvation and the joy thereof is indeed a blessed experience, but the joy can be lost, through the flesh, by practising any of the things enumerated here as the works of the flesh. Moreover, they who practise such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Clearly there is another inheritance than that which is the lot of every believer through faith in Christ (1 Peter 1. 4, Colossians 1. 12, Romans 14. 17).

There is at our disposal infinite power to enable us to overcome our sinful nature, and it is the same power which wrought in Christ, when God raised Him from the dead (Ephesians 1.).

How lovely is the fruit of the Spirit! and how awful the works of the flesh! For such awful things the wrath of God cometh upon the sons of disobedience. Against the fruit of the Spirit there is no Law. **A. II.**

From Sydney. —A wonderful change takes place in the lives of those who are born of the Spirit; but there arises immediately a conflict (5. 17) between the flesh and the Spirit. Having received the Spirit by the hearing of faith, that selfsame Spirit is He who leads us into all truth (John 16. 13). If we know the truth, the truth shall make us free. The apostle's description of the works of the flesh (5. 19-21) is true: and over these things we can have a victory by walking by the Spirit, that is, walking according to the knowledge we receive through the reading of God's word, which is truth. We are exhorted (James 1. 22) to be not only hearers, but doers of the Word.

" Heresies " (5. 20) can be translated " sects, " and thus we find the making of parties (Acts 20. 30) being brought under the heading " works of the flesh, " and we must be on guard against them (1 Corinthians 11. 18, 19). We are exhorted to do nothing through faction (Philippians 2. 3). The way of the truth is not a sect, though often so called (Acts 24. 14).

The fruit of the Spirit is the outcome of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit within us. The first three mentioned represent an inward state that God places within us, the second three shew our attitude to fellow-men, and the third three are things to be seen in us. The keynote is love: as God so loved us, so ought we to love one another (1 John 4. 11). In love of the brethren we are to be tenderly affectioned one to another (Romans 12. 10). In love we are to do bondservice one to another (5. 13). The great example of this is found in John 13., where the Lord says, " I have given you an example. "

The works of the flesh belong to the old nature, and we can only obtain a victory over the flesh within the " Law of liberty. " We are assured that, if love, which is the greatest attribute of the fruit of the Spirit, prevails in assemblies of God, then we do truly shew that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren (1 John 3. 14).

J. G., G. K., J. I.

From Cowdenbeath. —The Law forbade men to do certain things and so restrained their desires. Although Paul taught freedom from the Law, this did not mean that they were thereby given unrestricted liberty to do according to every desire of the flesh. They were freed from one bondage, the bondage of the Law, to come under another bondage, the bondage of love, and by this means the whole Law can be fulfilled. " Love

worketh **no** ill to **his** neighbour: love therefore is the fulfilment of the Law " (Romans 13. 10).

Although the believer is indwelt by the Spirit when he is born again, the flesh remains with him, seeking to control his thoughts and actions, and endeavouring to **express** itself through the members of his body. **But** the Holy Spirit also desires to control the man, and so a struggle ensues. The decision **as** to who shall have control rests with the man. Either he gives heed to the lusts of his evil nature or to the promptings of the Spirit. The Spirit has not been given only to enable **us** to say " No " to the flesh. His work **is** to transform our lives and **cause us** to grow, producing fruit which will **be** seen. The work of the Spirit is not simply that **we** should do good things on occasion, **but** that certain **graces** should characterise **us**, and should **be** always in evidence in our lives.

Victory over the flesh is not decisive and final, for the flesh will remain with **us**, so long **as we** are in the body, to continue its struggle against the Spirit. If the flesh is given liberty, it may lead to the believer losing his inheritance in the kingdom of God, i. e., his place in the assembly, the church of God. The solemnity and seriousness of this truth is to **be** viewed in the light of the Cross. In his identification with the death of Christ, the believer **crucifies** the flesh with its passions and lusts. Alas, then, **if** what has been crucified and so reckoned to have been put to death should again **be** seen active and operative in his life, so making it difficult, **if** not impossible, for others to know that such **a** one has **ever** been to the Cross at all. **At** the Cross **we** experience death, **but** there also **we** receive life.

James Bowman,

COMMENTS.

[1] (Wembley). —Baptism **is** a **figure** of burial and resurrection, but prior to burial **is** death. Note Romans 6. 8—" If **we** died with Christ. " This is not the "if" of doubt, **but** it may **be** rendered "seeing"—"Seeing **we** died with Christ. " In verse 6 **we** are told " that our old man was crucified with Him. " Crucifixion comes before burial. The believer dies with His Substitute. Then baptism follows that, or should do. —*J. M.*

[2] (Wembley). —There **is** no once-for-all act of being **crucified** with Christ when one acknowledges the Lordship of Christ, **but** such **a** believer has to recognize the requirement of the Lord that he should die daily, die to self, sin and the world. To this end he is taught to take up his cross daily and follow the Lord, and if he takes up his cross daily he goes forth to die daily, for the cross **is** not an article of decoration or embellishment (alas, it **is** so with men and women) **at** the end of **beads** and round the neck, and also on buildings, the cross **was** an article of execution and death. —*J. M.*

[3] (Wembley). —Our friends say truly **as** to what the Law says, **but** the Lord said, " A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; even **as** I have loved you " (John 13. 34). This new commandment **is** to obtain amongst **His** disciples, even **as** John says—" which thing **is** true in **Him** and in you " (1 John 2. 8). —*J. M.*

[4] (Wembley). —The Lord's words are apposite to this verse (25). **He** said, " It **is** the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing " (John 6. 63). You may **ask**, "But how does the **Spirit** quicken" ? The following words explain the matter: " The words that I have spoken unto you are spirit, and are life. " The Spirit quickens by means of the word of God and in *no other way*, —*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

Paul commences this chapter abruptly by addressing his readers personally—"Brethren. " Then he says, " Even **if** a man be overtaken in any trespass, " there **is** hope for such a man; he **is** not to be written off as a bad debt. We have to remember that " to err **is** human. " Even the supposedly perfect saint **is** still in the flesh, and has still a great struggle with himself.

*" For they who fain would serve Thee best
Are conscious most of wrong within"*

Those who would restore one, who has fallen to the working of the flesh, must not approach the erring brother in a fleshly, self-righteous attitude. The apostolic word is—" Ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of meekness; looking to thyself, lest thou also be tempted. "

If we knew the burdens and struggles of some saints, we would have more sympathy when an offence **is** committed. It **is** easy enough to draw in our skirts and shut up our compassions, and adopt the role of the elder brother in the parable of the Prodigal Son, and say, quite wrongfully, of course, " I never transgressed a commandment of thine, " but in what way will this help the restoration of the erring brother? **We** should ever try to view ourselves in the position of the erring one and this will correct all harsh treatment.

What **is** the Law of Christ but that of which Isaiah spoke?—" Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows " (53. 4). He has shown us what to do by **His** example, but to follow **His** example calls for **His** love (not our own) in our hearts. " Burdens, " in verse 2, are heavy weights, too heavy for one to carry alone. So, **if** we help to bear the burdens of others, some one will bear ours. How different the Law of Christ **is** from any other Law !

Pride of heart causes us to think that we are something and somebody when we are actually of little account. Often the greatest of men are the most humble-minded. It **is** the bantam-men that crow most. Let us each test our own work. It is easy enough to be a big man amongst small men, but it **is** a different thing to be a big man among big men.

The word burden in verse 5, as several of our contributors have pointed out, **is** a different word from that of verse 2; it means a load, such as the freight or cargo of a ship; it **is** the burden which **is** proper to each individual saint. Often, one fears, some shirk this their proper burden, and **if** this continues the Lord may give them a burden of grief which will be much heavier to bear than **His** light burden.

J. M.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE GALATIANS.

Liberality.

(Chapter 6. 1-10).

From Birkenhead. —Brethren who are spiritual are called upon to exercise a spirit of meekness in dealing with one who has been overtaken in a trespass. We thought that such a one must be distinguished from one who persists in a wrong action, or wilfully teaches error. Other scriptures teach that these latter must be dealt with in a firm manner, and for some, not restoration, but excommunication, is appropriate. The apostle himself, on some occasions, uses very strong language in condemning the words and actions of certain. (1. 9).

We should not like to be dogmatic on the difference between the two original words which are translated "burden" (6. 2, 5), but it was suggested that the latter verse speaks of a natural burden, which we can be expected to bear, while the thought in verse 2 is of a burden which has become too heavy, possibly through our own fault, but not necessarily so. When our brethren or sisters are so weighed down, we have opportunity to bear their burdens. In doing so we fulfil a divine principle: "Thou shalt love the LORD thy God...; and thy neighbour as thyself." This principle is basic in the Law, and applies also in this day of grace.

There appear to be two possible understandings of the exhortation in verse 6. The one that he that is taught is himself a teacher, who is exhorted to pass on his knowledge to others that they may become teachers. This, however, appears to overlook the real meanings of "communicate" (to share) and of "all good things." The passage is, therefore, more likely an exhortation to those who are taught, to be ready to share their material blessings with those who minister to them of spiritual things. [1]. Lydia was mentioned as an example of one who had her heart opened by the Lord and who opened her home to the apostles.

In view of verse 8, which would seem to imply the possibility of so working, or sowing, in this life that we may secure eternal life, the frequent use of verse 7 in the preaching of the gospel caused difficulty to some of us. It was claimed, however, that we must distinguish between the several scriptural uses of the term "eternal life," which in the first instance we have by simple faith. We are exhorted to lay hold of it, and, according to this passage, we may reap it. The statement here concerning sowing and reaping sets forth a divine principle, which applies to both believers and unbelievers. The reaping may, to some extent, be in this life, though often only eternity will reveal the result of the sowing. **R. D.**

From Willington Quay. —This chapter touches on many human problems and is a fitting ending to the doctrines that have gone before. Paul concludes chapter 5. with the exhortation, "Let us not be vain-glorious" (5. 26), and he now shows the need for meekness when restoring the weak brother. In Hebrews 12. 1, we read of "the sin which doth so easily beset us." Much grace is required for the restoration of the weak, for who amongst us is beyond the reach of the evil one?

Rather than "provoking one another" (5. 26) we should be bearing one another's burdens—the daily problems and trials, loving one another according to the precept of Christ (John 13. 34). Nor should we envy one another (5. 26), but we should seek each to bear his own burden. "I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings" (Jeremiah 17. 10).

We would gather that the heading "Liberality" refers to verse 6, which clearly shows that we have a great responsibility and opportunity in meeting the needs of those who minister the word of the Lord to us.

Again and again disciples of the Lord are encouraged not to faint (surely a human weakness). When we see no fruit for our labours, be it in open-air preaching, distribution of leaflets, or aught else, we may be tempted to give up. It is in due season that we reap, if we faint not. Let us walk by the Spirit (5. 25). Let us not be weary in well-doing (6. 9). Let us work that which is good (6. 10). C. B.

From Kilmarnock. —Although all who were in the churches of Galatia were believers and born of the Spirit of God, they were not faultless. They might be tripped up, and it was the duty of spiritually minded ones to try to restore those who failed, while looking to themselves lest they also be tempted.

The Lord Jesus was ever ready to help those in need or difficulty, so saints in churches of God to-day should follow His example, and seek to bear one another's burdens. He was "meek and lowly in heart," so we ought not to have too high an opinion of ourselves or our work (Romans 12. 3), but should endeavour to bear our own load of responsibility. In verse 8, the apostle likens our manner of living to sowing seed. If we do the works of the flesh (5. 19), we shall reap corruption: but the works of the Spirit will yield life age-abiding. How careful then we should be that all our actions be for good to all men, and especially to our brethren.

"How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" (Psalm 133. 1). A. G. S.

From Crowborough. —Paul appeals (6. 1) to those who are spiritual to restore any erring one. For "restore" Dr. Young gives "put thoroughly right." Unless an erring one is put thoroughly right, the work is only half done, but the apostle says it must be done "in a spirit of meekness." In the previous chapter he reminds them of the fruit of the Spirit, and that meekness is a part of that fruit—not one of the fruits. Linked with the restoration of another is the need to look to oneself. Perhaps it can be said that here too is another part of the fruit of the Spirit, namely, self-control or temperance. The work of the would-be restorer is not fully done, if he does not look to himself.

To help one another in trouble and difficulty is probably what the apostle meant by "Bear ye one another's burdens." Some thought it to mean helping in a general sense, and not confined just to troubles, etc. "If a man thinketh himself to be something,.... he deceiveth himself" (6. 3) shows lack of spirituality in such a man, and the fruit of the Spirit is not exhibited in him.

The burden of verse 5 was thought to mean each man's responsibility to God, which he should bear himself. Consideration of this verse is needful to all. The very thought of being answerable to God should make us more diligent in fulfilling our responsibility towards Him.

Regarding liberality, verse 7 makes us think it a very serious matter. In 2 Corinthians 9. 6-8 the apostle, speaking of giving ("not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver"), reminds us again of sowing and reaping. We cannot pretend or make mere professions with God, for He is not to be mocked. In this case, as in 2 Corinthians 9. 6, the reaping will show what the sowing was. To be self-indulgent is

to be useless in the service of God; no benefit **is** derived from sowing to the flesh. " The flesh profiteth nothing. "

The question was asked: In what way are we, as a collective people, doing good unto all men? (6. 10). Mention was made of Camps, Sunday School outings, the help given to German P. O. W's. Some thought that " doing good " **is** not confined to financial help, or giving of all kinds of gifts, but indicates doing good generally, as opportunity **is** presented. [2]

J. H. B.

From Barrhead and Paisley. —An important principle in church discipline **is** laid down in verse 1, the restoration of one who has been overtaken in a trespass. Restoration was thought not to be, in this instance, restoration to the assembly of someone who had been previously put away. The principle covers this as well, but it **is** thought to be the restoration of the soul of the individual. The word for restore **is** also used in the Gospels, translated " mend "; the Lord came upon the disciples mending their nets. This would seem to indicate that the trespass was of the nature of a tear or a hole caused by use, and such could be restored. This **is** to be done in a spirit of meekness or humility, with an eye to one's own susceptibility to failure. Such good work could be thwarted by self-righteous pride in the one who would restore.

Humility, one of the basic laws of Christ's teaching, will help us to bear one another's load of trials and troubles, but each individual must bear his own responsibility in divine service. The word " burden " **is** used twice in the English rendering for two different words in the original. Paul varies the word when he varies the thought.

One responsibility **is** to provide for those who engage full-time in the teaching of Scripture. Those who are taught, and who receive spiritual sustenance, must in turn contribute to the physical needs of their teachers.

As in the laws of nature so in the spiritual world: what a man sows, that shall he also reap. The omniscience of God **is** clearly brought out here; " God **is** not mocked, " knowing, as He does, the thoughts and intents of a man's heart.

A final principle **is** laid down: " work that which **is** good toward all men, and especially toward them that are of the household of the faith. " Our first and greatest efforts toward good works must be for those with whom we are linked in fellowship.

J. M. Gault.

EXTRACTS.

From Atherton. —The opening verse of this chapter seems to be a reference to the works of the flesh, about which the apostle warns the Galatians in the latter part of chapter 5. All are liable to sin and fall into the snare of the Devil, but this does not mean that sin can be glossed over. On the contrary, those who are walking by the Spirit are exhorted to restore one who has erred, at the same time manifesting the fruit of the Spirit in the form of gentleness, the gentleness of Christ, but not gentleness at the expense of faithfulness. While showing the brother the error of his ways, they must not condone the sin, neither be haughty and proud, but seek, in faithfulness and love, to lead the erring one back to God, remembering that they themselves may fall into the same error. Some thought the works of the flesh in chap. 5. are deep-seated sins, but here (6. 1) it would appear that the saint has been tripped up and the sin **is** unpremeditated.

Two different Greek words in this passage of Scripture are translated "burden." The first, a burden to be shared by the saints, denotes something heavy or oppressive (Acts 15. 28): the second **is** a light burden, and **is** used of that which **is** involved in discipleship (Matthew 11. 30). In the first case, we are helping one another along the difficult path. This **is** a vital part of the life of God's saints, and we should see to it that we are not lacking in this love one toward another. When Paul persecuted the Christians, he persecuted the Lord. When we bear one another's burdens, we do it for the Lord. In the second case, we see how God has given to each one of us a task to fulfil, and each one must bear the responsibility as to how he fulfils that task.

What **is** the Law of Christ? was asked. It seems to be a particular commandment to love of one another (1 John 4. 21, John 13. 34-35). This Law **is** distinctive, and **is** embodied in "the Faith" once for all delivered to the saints (Jude 3). In the Law of Christ we see the Love of Christ.

Could verse 5 have reference to the judgement-seat of Christ? This could very well be so, for the thought here **is** of responsibility. Let each man prove his own work (1 Corinthians 3. 13-15). [3]

A. Hyland, D. H. Butler.

From Edinburgh. —At first sight this chapter appears to be a series of unconnected utterances, giving the impression that Paul, in summing up his letter, was impressing on the Galatians warnings which they required, but one theme can be traced throughout—duty towards the Master and love to all the saints.

The theme of brotherly love **is** evident at the beginning. Although a man be overtaken in a fault, love decrees there shall be no pointing of the finger, no hasty words, no display of self-righteousness, but always a gentle leading back.

We concluded that verses 2 and 5 are not contradictory, but verse 2 refers to heavy burdens of saints and verse 5 to one's personal burdens.

Verses 3 and 4 were difficult to follow, for verse 4 seemed to open the way to the error of verse 3 through an individual judging his own work. How can this be done in a right spirit, unbiased? It **is** possible only **if** the glorying **is** according to the will of God. We shall know, **if** we are in the mind of God, and then can we judge righteously. No man, no matter how high in the things of men, has any standing in the things of God, unless he is in the mind of God and doing His will. *W. Taylor.*

From Sydney. —Paul gives instruction regarding restoration in the case of a person being overtaken in a fault. He **is** exhorting that such an one be dealt with in a spirit of meekness, and reminds the Galatians of the ever-present possibility of falling into the same fault (1 Corinthians 10. 12). We noticed that the person **is** not merely to be corrected, but to be restored. Restoration will be the work of converting a sinner from the error of his way, and, in connexion with this, reference was made to James 5. 19-20. Consideration was also given to the Lord's words to Peter in Luke 22. 32. It was expressed that the principle of conversion in these three verses **is** the same, but the accent in Galatians 6. 1 and James 5. 20 **is** on the responsibility of the converting one, which thought **is** not in Luke 22. 32.

Verse 4 brings in a different point of view. It brings us to our responsibilities; as disciples of Christ, we have the duty, laid on us by Christ,

to carry out **His** command (Matthew 28. 19 and 20), and so we find Paul exhorting that every **man** should **bear** his own burden. *J. G., G. K., J. J.*

From London, S. E. —Romans 15. 1 gives help with verse 2: " Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the Law of Christ. " There **is** fellowship and sympathy in this. Wherever possible the most Christlike way of bearing burdens **is** by sharing them. A burden borne individually strains the bearer with its full weight, but a burden shared **is** a burden halved. The Lord **Jesus** Himself rebuked the lawyers (Luke 11. 46) for their failure **in** this matter. The Lord Jesus Christ **is** the perfect example of **One** who bears and shares burdens. Firstly, the burden of our **sins** was borne away by **His** sacrifice upon Golgotha's cross. He, the exalted **One**, now bears the burdens of the saint; we suggest both everyday trials and perplexities: and, **as** one of **His** services **as** our Great High **Priest** (Numbers 18. 1), our liability to failure relative to our holy priesthood service unto God.

In the exhortation **in** verses 9 and 10—" And let **us** not be weary **in** well-doing: for in due season **we** shall reap, **if** **we** faint not "—**are** given promise and incentive toward continued practice of well-doing. While this verse (and correctly so) **is** often referred to **as** an encouragement to gospel workers, and workers among the young, we feel **it** has a **meaning** of weight for all; and bears upon the foregoing verse **as** sowing unto the Spirit. This goodly quality **is** to be manifest in a work of good towards all men, thus gaining opportunity for testimony; and when **we** do good " toward them that are of the household of the faith, " **we** render pleasant and blessed service unto our Lord and **His** beloved people. *Geo. Pain.*

From Sunderland. —The exhortation to walk by **the** Spirit touches very closely the mutual relationship of saints. In the event of a brother's falling, those who are spiritual should **seek** such **an** one **again**. To restore means to adjust, to put in order again. A spirit of **meekness** would suggest entreaty of the sinning one that, peradventure, God may give repentance unto the knowledge of the truth.

Verse 6 contains a divine provision for those who labour **in** the Word—the labourer **is** worthy of his hire. Sharing in spiritual things imposes also an obligation to share in material things. Those who **are** taught are debtors. **We** reap according **as** we sow. This serves **as** both an encouragement and a warning. Good works have principally **in** view those who are of the household of the Faith, but extend also to all men. *J. B., Jr.*

From Kingston-on-Thames. —The walk of the believer should **be** " by the Spirit, " and this would prevent the fulfilling of the lusts of the flesh; but, Paul says, " Even **if** a **man** be overtaken **in** any trespass, " such **an** one should not be shunned, but shown a spirit of gentleness in **an** attempt to restore him firstly to fellowship with God **and** also to **his** brethren.

Such **cases** require careful handling, and only such **as** are spiritual (that is, those who are exhibiting the Christlike characteristics listed **as** the fruit of the Spirit) should deal with them. The natural tendency, of acting **as** a judge rather than **as** one just **as** liable to **sin** **as** the erring brother, would not be evidenced in such a person. Paul does not say " lest thou also fall, " but " lest thou also be tempted, " **as** though to **suggest** that the difference between the two men **is** not that both were tempted, and one resisted and one fell, but that one was tempted and fell. The other did not fall, because he had not been tempted.

Our standard of measure should not be the shortcomings of others, but we should test, or prove, our own works by God's standard, **His** Word, which will be that by which we shall be judged and rewarded at the judgement-seat of Christ.

It was suggested that Paul may, perhaps, be reproving the Galatians (6. 6-10) for their failure to attend to the material welfare of himself and others, whilst they may have been caring for the Judaizing teachers that were amongst them.

The injunction to continuing in well-doing seems to suggest that reaping **is** conditional on "fainting not," and we wondered whether this would imply that service, carried out by one who later lapses in his continuance in the things of God, would not be accounted to him for reward.

F. E. Jarvis,

From Liverpool. —We fulfil the Law of Christ as we bear each other's burdens (Romans 15. 1, 1 Thessalonians 5. 14, Galatians 5. 6, 14). We generally agreed that the Law of Christ **is** Love (John 13. 34, 15. 12, Matthew 22. 34-40). Personal pride should have no place in the heart of the child of God. There should be no self-deception; no seeking to be great in the eyes of men; rather should we seek to be great in the eyes of God. Humility **is** the only course in this; we do well to consider Philipians 2. 1-11: Christ humbled Himself, wherefore God exalted Him. Our concern should be for others. We appreciated that we could experience individually an inward satisfaction (of a godly sort) in the proving of our own work. We are individually responsible to the Lord in this, and in this each bears his own burden of responsibility. We thought this had in view the judgement-seat of Christ (Romans 14. 12).

Some seeds spring up and fruit quickly, others more slowly; reaping will come sooner or later. We should never tire of well-doing: the promise **is** this—"in due season we shall reap": God will see to it. Having this in mind, let us, as opportunity affords, be found working that which **is** good toward all men, especially toward them that are with us in the house of God.

R. Roughley, A. H.

From Cowdenbeath. —This scripture **is** important in that it gives us guidance in dealing with persons who have yielded to temptation. In this case, it **is** not a matter for assembly action but, rather, the trespass might be described in the words of 1 John 5. 16 as "a sin not unto death." In 6. 1 we have (1) the erring one, (2) the kind of persons who undertake the work of restoration, and (3) the manner in which this work **is** carried out. The trespasser **is** likened (6. 2) unto a person bearing a burden (Gk. *baros*: a weight), which has proved too heavy for him. The persons, who are to relieve the load and thus share the burden, are described as spiritual, i. e., those who walk by the Spirit (5. 25). The man **is** thus given an opportunity to recover from the ill effects of the overpowering load. This **is** the work of restoration, which has to be done in a spirit of meekness. Self-centred lives are not God-glorifying; we must consider others and so "fulfil the Law of Christ." "Christ also pleased not Himself" (Romans 15. 3). Whilst we can, and should, bear the burdens of others, there is, however, a burden (Gk. *phortion*: a definite apportioned load, i. e., a task) which we must bear ourselves. "Own work" (6. 4) and "own burden" (6. 5) are the same, and show individual responsibility. We each have our work in the assembly, and we should be duly taken up with it to see that it **is** accomplished, "for the day shall declare it" (1 Corinthians 3. 13).

There **is a** further responsibility brought before us in verse 6. Those who are taught should share their temporal blessings with those who teach. We are to give to those " which minister about sacred things " (1 Corinthians 9. 13). God takes note of our well-doing or otherwise. If we sow to satisfy our own fleshly desires and appetites, we shall reap corruption, a process leading to spiritual death. We judge it **is** possible to reap in our present life as well as in the future from our actions. David of old was one who reaped as a result of sowing unto the flesh. Contrariwise, **if** we sow unto the Spirit, living lives governed by **His** promptings, being thus led and consequently walking by the Spirit, our harvest will be of a spiritual sort. Is not this the abundant life ? *Robert Ross.*

COMMENTS.

[1] (Birkenhead). —The latter view of this verse **is** the correct one, I judge. —*J. M.*

[2] (Crowborough). —The highest good we can do to men **is** to bring the word of God to them; this **is** by far our most important duty. In this work it may be found necessary to assist in material things. The Fellowship was not in the days of the apostles a humanitarian society which existed for the meeting of the material needs of men, either inside or outside that Fellowship. See how the elders were to be remembered because they spake the word of God to the people of God (Hebrews 13. 7).

[3] (Atherton). —I do not see any direct reference to the judgement-seat of Christ in verse 5, though the thought of bearing one's own burden will, of course, carry the mind forward to that time, when the faithful burden-bearer will be rewarded. —*J. M.*

QUESTION AND ANSWER.

Question **from** Liverpool. —Some suggested that verse 6 brings before us brethren, such as overseers, communicating their understanding of spiritual matters to those that teach, the latter being any who minister. Contrariwise the " good things " are temporal things. See Romans 15. 25-27, 1 Corinthians 9. 11. Please comment.

Answer. —The " good things " here are material things for the support of such as are engaged in spiritual things. This **is** sowing to the Spirit, as in verse 7; but **if** a believer spends all on the well-being or gratification of his own flesh, then let him be assured he shall of the flesh reap corruption, for the Law of sowing and reaping, which **is** unchangeable, **is** " Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. " —*J. M.*

NOTICE.

We wish to encourage fellow-students to obtain a syllabus of the 1954 Bible Studies subject, and to place an order for a copy of the magazine, each month. The main subject, " The Tabernacle, " **is** one of intense interest to those who desire to worship our God aright. Also, we are assured that the " Notes on the Epistle to the Romans, " by our beloved co-editor, Mr. J. Miller, will be of much interest and instruction to all. Copies of the syllabus may be obtained from Mr. J. Martin, on request. We are desirous that all who are interested in the study of the Scriptures will co-operate with us, and purchase a copy of the magazine, *monthly*.

We welcome papers of a general study nature, and questions on the main subject. *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.

Every book of the New Testament has its own distinctive character and teaching, even though the same truths may be referred to in the different parts of the New Testament. Can it be doubted that the Galatian Epistle is epitomized in the two statements placed by **Paul** in juxtaposition?—"They desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh. But far be it from me to glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Galatians 6. 13, 14). "The end of all flesh is come before Me" (Genesis 6. 13). The ark of gopher wood saw the end of the ruinous past prior to the flood, and saw a new beginning in men sheltered by that ark from the flood to start afresh in an earth cleansed by divine judgement. Such is the Cross to the believer. He has ended his old sinful past at the Cross, and from thence, as created anew in Christ, he begins afresh to live according to God in the Spirit (1 Peter 4. 6). Any compromise with the old past life is disastrous. **All** things for the man in Christ have become new. Hence it is not in our flesh we glory, but in the Cross of Christ, and what a subject is this! The cursed tree, the end of the felon and the slave, that kind of death that the Lord of all angels and men died, is for ever to be the Christian's boast, the hall-mark of all true Christian living, and the Christian's hope in death.

J. M.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE GALATIANS.

Liberality.

(Chapter 6. 1-10).

From Melbourne. —It is possible for any of **us** to be overtaken in a trespass, and it is possible to attempt to restore such **an** one in a fleshly manner, but restoration should be done by spiritual ones (5. 22, 23) in a spirit of meekness.

Each of us has a responsibility to bear one another's burdens, and in fulfilling it we should bear in mind Galatians 5. 14, 6. 3, and 1 Corinthians 10. 12. If consciousness of a fault has overtaken a person and is bearing him down, it is then our responsibility to bear him up.

There is no room for class distinction, neither is there a place for individualism in the Fellowship, in which individuals from **all** walks of life and with different temperaments are brought together to be subject to the Lord. The Fellowship is a vital link in the chain of divine testimony.

T. L. Fullerton,

Conclusion.

(Chapter 6. 11-18).

From Cowdenbeath. —It **was** customary for **the** apostle Paul to employ **an** amanuensis in writing his epistles, **and** to end the epistle by writing, in his own handwriting, his salutation to the **church**, **as** for example, **2** Thessalonians. Paul probably used **an** amanuensis to write to the Galatian saints, **because he** had other brethren with him (1. 2). However, it would **seem** that from verse **11** of chapter **6**, the apostle commences to write with his own hand, and it **was** perhaps his infirmity of the flesh (4. **13-15**) which **caused** the enlargement of **his** hand-writing. [1]

There were those in Galatia who urged the saints to **be** circumcised, in order that they themselves might avoid the persecution associated with **the** Cross of Christ. Those who advocated circumcision did not themselves keep the Law, but they desired to **see** the saints circumcised, that **they** might have **cause** to glory, should the saints bow to their request.

To the apostle this gave no **cause** for glorying: only **in** one **thing** could **he** glory—in the Cross of Christ. Crucifixion meant **much** to Paul, for **he** had been " crucified with Christ " (2. 20). In chapter **5. 24**, the crucifixion of the flesh with the passions and lusts thereof is brought to the attention of the Galatians, and in chapter **6. 14**, Paul **makes** it known that the world **had been** crucified unto him, and **he** unto the world.

Since the event of the Cross, circumcision counts for nothing. **What** does matter is **the new** creation. Paul thus condemns the teaching of those who insisted on circumcision.

As many **as** are able to abstain from false teaching, and to live in the enjoyment of the **new** life, the apostle asks that **peace and** mercy **may** rest upon them. **He** asks, too, that he be no longer troubled, for he bore on his person marks suffered for the sake of his Master.

Paul concludes the epistle, **as** he does other epistles, with a salutation, " The grace of our Lord **Jesus** Christ be with your spirit. " *Iain Hunter*,

From Sunderland. —As he approaches the end of his epistle Paul, **at** verse **10**, appears to pause **and** consider its subject-matter **and**, **as** though to recapitulate, he writes again concerning those who taught circumcision. On account of their teaching Paul **was** constrained to write the epistle. **He** reveals the real motive underlying their teaching—a desire to glory in the flesh, and to avoid the persecution of the Cross. How far removed this **was** from the example of Paul, their tutor, whose glorying **was** centred only in the Cross of our Lord **Jesus** Christ! Paul, if he had desired, had every human attainment for confidence in the flesh, but, **as** he clearly states in verse 14, the Cross of our Lord **Jesus** Christ meant for him death to the world **and** the flesh. In words similar to chapter **5. 6**, he again emphasizes that circumcision **and** uncircumcision are of no avail in Christ. If any **man** is in Christ he is **a new** creation. This is the rule **by** which all believers should walk, **and peace and** mercy shall be upon those who so walk. " The Israel of God " appears to refer to those who walk according to the faith of Abraham. [2]

Persecution because of the Cross of Christ had **meant** much to **Paul**, for, **as** he writes he considers the marks of Jesus on his body. They were **a** result of his all-consuming desire to know Christ and **the** power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death. Could any appeal have been stronger to the Galatian saints **f** **Was** there ever such **a man as** Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, who followed so closely **in** the steps of our Lord Jesus Christ? **J. j?. Jnr.**

From Hamilton, Ontario. —**Paul**, **as** he nears the end of this epistle, in which he condemns a mixture of Law and grace to which the Galatian saints seemed likely to **fall a prey**, gives another warning against **a "fair show in the flesh"** (6. 12). It belongs to human nature to glory in the flesh, but such glorying is of no value whatever in the sight of God. **What** then should our glorying be? The Cross of Christ should **mean** to **us** far more than **all** the treasures of this present evil world, far more than **just an** occasional glimpse of that Blessed **One** who hung upon it and became **a** curse for us. It should be a living reality in our lives, held in remembrance at all times.

Through the Cross of Christ the world has been crucified unto **us** (6. 14). **We** are now not of the world (John 17. 16), for **He** is not of the world, **and** we have been identified with **His** death on the Cross, for "our old **man** was crucified with **Him**" (Romans 6. 6). The world should no longer **see** manifested our "old man" with his worldly lusts, but should **see** the works of the "new man" **in** our daily walk (2 Corinthians 4. 10). In the putting off of the old man, the world, with **all** that **is** desirable to the old nature, has been crucified to us. In putting on the new **man**, we manifest to all that we have been crucified unto the world.

Again Paul warns, "neither **is** circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." The Law could never make a **new** creature of **a man**, because the Law **is** not of faith (3. 11, 12). God has clearly shown in His word that the new nature **is** in such only who have believed in Christ (3. 21, 22). Well might the apostle say, "as many as shall walk by this rule, peace be upon them, and mercy."

He concludes by saying, "I bear branded on my body the marks of Jesus." The words that Christ spoke concerning the sufferings that **Paul** would pass through for **His** name's sake were truly fulfilled (Acts 9. 16, 2 Corinthians 11. 23-33). But with what reward?—"an eternal weight of glory" (2 Corinthians 4. 17), and "the crown of righteousness" (2 Timothy 4. 6-8). **We** see from his **life** that he, as a runner in the upward race that leads to God, had a goal ever before him, a desire to know the Lord Jesus Christ and to apprehend the love of God (Philippians 3. 7-16). **W. T.**

From Kingston-upon-Thames. —**Paul** mentions at the end of 2 Thessalonians that every epistle contains his salutation of grace. Normally **his** letters were dictated to **an amanuensis**, only the closing words being written personally by the apostle. In the case of Galatians, either the whole letter was penned by him, or, if the margin is the correct reading ("write" instead of "have written"), possibly only the last eight verses. In any **case** it is **a** departure from his normal practice, perhaps due to **the** urgency and fervour with which the letter was written. It has been **suggested**

that the large letters were the result of the apostle's poor eyesight, or perhaps simply a means of emphasizing his point. There does not appear to be any way of deciding the precise reason.

The force of verse 14 is difficult to appreciate to-day, when the Cross is generally an object of veneration among religious people, but in the apostle's day it was used only for the execution of slaves and the vilest malefactors and was viewed with the utmost contempt. That Paul, once a Pharisee and a Hebrew of Hebrews, could now glory or boast in the Cross, is a striking demonstration of the change that the gospel can produce in a man. Those things which he once richly prized, he now counted as loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord.

Having dealt with the errors of the Judaizers, the apostle makes known his desire that they should not again trouble him by such questions. He finally clinches the whole matter by referring to his sufferings and persecutions, which had left their indelible mark on his body, proving that he belonged to Christ. This would appear to be a reference to the branding of a slave, but Vine asserts that the figure is derived from the branding of an idol-worshipper with the peculiar mark of his god. *L. A. White.*

EXTRACTS.

From Birkenhead. —In his conclusion the apostle again refers to the main theme of his letter, the condemnation of those who taught that the Law, as necessary to salvation, must be kept, and the establishment of the truth of justification by faith. He claims that those who desired them to be circumcised did so only so that they themselves might escape persecution. Apparently there were those among the Jews who were prepared to suffer the Christians and their teaching, provided they adhered to the keeping of the Law, but the apostle makes it quite clear that the Cross of Christ was a great separator from the Jewish religion. We thought the expression "the Cross of Christ" a very significant one, involving something more than the death of Christ. The Cross was given to Him by the most religious of men, and was, therefore, a condemnation of the best that was in man. The Cross put Jew and Gentile on one plane, and this made it a stumbling-block to the Jews. In different scriptures the Cross is used to define our attitude to the world, to the Law, and to the flesh.

The epistle was intended to root out errors among Jewish believers, with whom Law-keeping was a major difficulty. Martin Luther used this epistle to combat false doctrine, and to establish the truth of justification by faith alone. Thus the epistle had a great value many years after it was written, although primarily written to combat the errors of that early day.

P. K., R. L. S.

From Liverpool. —Those who would have compelled the Galatians to be circumcised desired to make a fair show in the flesh; they longed to glory in converts to circumcision, which the apostle tells us is nothing. He says, too, that their reason was that they might not be persecuted for the Cross of Christ, which to some is foolishness (1 Corinthians 1. 18), and to many an offence, for it leaves no room for self-righteousness (Romans 2. 25-29),

If a **man** receive circumcision **he** is a debtor to do the whole Law (5. 3); and even those who do receive circumcision, do not keep the Law; **and** the Law condemns those who do not keep it.

The only thing in which Paul would glory **was** the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world, with its systems and religions, had been crucified unto him, and **he** unto **the** world. **We** should **make** this a practical experience. The world should be dead to us, holding no attractions for us, and **we** dead to the world. We are **in** the world, yet not of it; nothing of it should be found in us.

We understood the words "Israel of God" to include all believers (3. 7, 9, **29**, Romans 2. 29). [3] *A. Fairhurst, Jun., A. H.*

From Edinburgh. —**We** are reminded of Solomon's words, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter" (Ecclesiastes 12. 13 R. V. M.), for Paul now brings to an end the subject of circumcision, a rite of no avail towards salvation. Paul **is** writing from a full heart, fearful lest the Galatians should depart from the Truth. It would **seem** that the teachers of this doctrine were not themselves keeping the Law, but were steering a middle course, having outward show without the responsibility of standing for spiritual truth. Thus would they avoid persecution.

It was thought that this could be applied to the words "they may glory in your flesh." What a contrast to Paul and the Thessalonians! "Ye are our glory." They were fruit of his work, abiding in his teaching. Where **is** our glorying? How many of us steer a middle course? What **effect** has the Cross on our lives and testimony? The Lord endured the Cross, that **we** might be saved. The Cross should be our glory. May **we** be stirred **up** to realise **afresh** where our glorying lies.

The "marks of Jesus" we associated with Acts **9. 16**, 2 Corinthians **6. 4-5**, 11. 23-27. **His** closing greeting calls to mind: "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ." Remembering this, we can be kept in humility and can glory in the Cross. May it be ours to follow the great example!

Jas. Paterson.

From Kilmarnock. —The apostle wrote this letter to the Galatian saints with **his** own hand, **in** order to warn **them** to give no heed to those who would desire them to be circumcised. This **was** only that they might glory in the flesh. In contrast to that, Paul's testimony was, "Far **be** it from **me** to glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." **He reckoned** himself to be dead unto **sin**, but alive unto God **in** Christ Jesus (Romans **6. 11**). While believers to-day are not now led away by circumcision, there are many other evils attractive to the flesh **in us**, and **we** must seek by God's grace to guard against these, **if we** would be a testimony for the Lord.

A. G. S.

From Wembley. —The false teachers wanted to glory **in** the Galatians' obedience to fleshly ordinances, whilst, **in** contrast, the glorying of **the** apostle **was in** the Cross of Christ. **He** reckoned himself **as** dead unto the world. Those things which were gain to him were now **as** refuse (Philippians **3. 7, 8**). Having no confidence **in** the flesh, he boasted in Christ **and** His work.

To count circumcision **and** uncircumcision **as** nothing was the rule by which they were exhorted to walk. "If we live by the Spirit, by the Spirit let **us** also walk" (5. 25). "The Israel of God" **we** took to **mean** believing and obedient Jews. [4]

The apostle's desire, to be troubled no further, indicates that he had established his **case** against the false teachers. *N. F. Toms.*

From Crowborough. —The false teachers, who were compelling the Galatian saints to receive circumcision, were doing so for **a** two-fold purpose: (1) that they might escape the persecution of the Cross, and (2) that they might glory in the flesh. Paul, on the other hand, was resolved to glory only in the Cross of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul knew what it was to be persecuted for the Cross. **He** surveys his body, which bore the marks of Jesus, much **as a** veteran soldier would survey his battle scars. Each mark told **a** tale and was gained in service for his Lord. *J. H.*

From Willington Quay. —In concluding this letter the apostle again refutes those who had sought to place upon the saints the burden of circumcision. It was not because they had a desire to keep the Law; these Judaizers wished to escape the persecution connected with the Cross of Christ.

For Paul, the Cross of Christ was something in which to glory, and because of it the world was dead to him, and likewise he was dead to the world. Although it is a strong statement he makes in verse 14, it was very true because in his life separation from the world was indeed a reality. *K. R.*

From London, S. E. —The apostle opens this last portion with a remark about his handwriting. This shows that the epistle was written by him personally. Romans 16. 22 implies that other letters were dictated by him to an amanuensis, Romans being written by Tertius. May we not gather from this that the matter of this epistle was so vital and important that to emphasize this he wrote it himself? Does the word "large" refer to the actual letters of the epistle? We feel that this seems to fit the context. Compared with other epistles Galatians is a short one. Perhaps Paul thought of Habakkuk 2. 2-4: "Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may **run** that readeth it . . . The just shall live by his faith." [5]

Again (6. 15) we have one more affirmation that the essential character of true Christianity is that it consists **not in** circumcision nor in uncircumcision, but in the re-creation of the soul in the image of God. "If any man is in Christ, he is a new creature*" (2 Corinthians 5. 17).

Paul implores his converts not to trouble him further and occasion him more distress by more disobedience. The wounded warrior pleads his own scars, and they were honourable ones, the marks of Jesus branded on his body. These were the scars of wounds sustained **in** the service of his Lord and theirs, but how and where obtained he does not say, but we know that at Lystra he was stoned and left as one dead (Acts 14. 19).

A final benediction **is** bestowed, which in its very tenderness and love, reminds them that their truest happiness **is in** close following and heart communion with the Lord Jesus Christ. *H. J. Owles.*

From Paisley and Barrhead.—The apostle shows with great clarity the real purpose of the Judaizers of that time, namely, that the stumbling-block of the Cross would disappear with the introduction of circumcision (now firmly established with the Jew as a tradition of the fathers) in addition to the Christian faith, thus exalting an act of man and detracting from the work of Christ.

It was thought by some that the words "the Israel of God" (6. 16) were a necessary emphasis of the satisfaction of peace and mercy to be found in pleasing the Lord. We wondered **if** these words were written for the special benefit of the Jews in the Galatian churches. [6]

Verse 17, coming in **as** it does, seems a peculiar verse, but perhaps the previous reference to circumcision gives a clue to its insertion here. The circumcision of an individual, who has attained the age of manhood, would be quite a painful experience, and perhaps through being criticised for not upholding circumcision, Paul considered the depth of his own experience of suffering and was caused to say, "I bear branded on my body the marks of Jesus."

The apostle bears no rancour or resentment towards those saints who have caused him so much anxiety and exercise of heart, but, in the true shepherd character of the One whom he followed, commends them to "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ." *W. Terrell. Jun.*

From Atherton.—The false teachers placed great emphasis on circumcision, because it **was** an ordinance, visible in the flesh; Paul had learned the value of the Cross of Christ, and henceforth there **was** no glorying in himself or in what he had done. The Cross of Christ severs from the world, and **as** soon as a person puts faith in Christ he **is**, in God's purposes, separated from the world. Whether he separates himself and takes the position, which God would have him take, **is** his responsibility. **We** wondered which of these **is** in view in verse 14. Does it refer to a man, **as** God sees him, crucified to the world, or to a man taking the outside place and being separate from the things of this world? [7]

Verse 17 caused us to wonder at the connexion between the two sentences. Would this suggest that the apostle at this time was feeling very much his bodily weakness, and wished for no trouble or annoyance? **Or** had he been suffering much unnecessary trouble from God's people? [8]

Paul's visits to Philippi, Iconium, etc., had undoubtedly left their marks upon him, and these were marks that could not be erased—lacerations and bruises, which the apostle terms "the marks of Jesus." Weymouth's translation gives "brand marks," and the Greek word *stigmata* means brand-marks, or scars, burned into the skin of a slave.

Thus we come to the end of the epistle, and the apostle uses his customary salutation. How much would be needed the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, **as** the brethren went onward seeking to resist evil and follow after that which **is** good! *G. Sankey, R. C. Jones.*

From Melbourne. —Although the apostle's eyesight had probably been affected by the vision, necessitating confining his writing to the salutation and signature to the epistles, he showed special attention to the Galatians by writing the entire epistle by his own hand.

The various assemblies, of which we have record, had shown a waning of enthusiasm after some time. This necessitated visits of the apostles and the writing of epistles. It seemed hard for Jewish believers to accept the doctrine of salvation by faith alone, because of the fact that they had the Law regarding circumcision, which had been practised for about **2, 000** years, but now they had to abandon it for something that seemed entirely new.

The apostle reveals the contrast between glorying in the flesh and glorying in the Cross, which severs the Christian from the world, religiously, politically and socially, and its warfare also. *L. F.*

COMMENTS.

[1] (Cowdenbeath). —I **am** disposed to the opinion that **the** apostle **in** verse **11** **is** referring to what he had already written of the Galatian epistle rather than what he **was** about to write from verse **11** to the end. What he had written was completed when **he** wrote verse **11**. Probably Paul wrote the letter in Uncial, rather than **in** Cursive, **smaller** handwriting. —*J. M.*

[2] (Sunderland). —Israel in the past were God's people, **so** here also Israel signifies the people of God, **a** people ruled by God. —*J. M.*

[3] (Liverpool). —The Israel of God means the people of God. Note how **a** remnant **is** called "**all** Israel" (Ezra 2. 70), though the most of the Jewish people were in Babylon. Note too that it says **in** Romans 11. **26:** "And so **all** Israel shall be saved," which does not **mean** that **all** Jews of **a** coming day will be saved. Again see Romans 9. **6:** "For they are not **all** Israel, which are of Israel." The Israel of God does not signify **all** believers. —*J. M.*

[4] (Wembley). —See note [3] above. —*J. M.*

[5] (London). —See note [1] above. —*J. M.*

[6] (Paisley and Barrhead). —See note [3] above. —*J. M.*

[7] (Atherton). —We are to recognize what happened to **all** believers **in** Christ, in God's reckoning, that their old man was crucified with Christ. **As** the Jewish people viewed Christ crucified **as** accused of God, even so does God view the "old man" **as** an accursed thing and **He** condemned it to the accursed death of crucifixion. But in verse **14** Paul describes what was **his** rule of life, and ought also to be the rule by which **all** believers in Christ should walk. **He** views the world **as** dying an accursed death to him. The worldly system in which he once lived **was** dead to Paul, and **as** truly **as** that was so, he was dead to it. **He** would not compromise **and** enter that world, and especially **in** regard to its religious **side**, **which** rejected Christ and crucified **Him**, and sought the **easement** of the conscience and acceptance with God through perfecting the **flesh**, which **is** utterly corrupt. **A** new creation **demand**s that we henceforth know no **man** after the **flesh**;

we view men now from the standpoint of being in Christ, and viewing men and things from this standpoint all things become new. Peace be upon such as walk by such a rule. —*J. M.*

[8] (Atherton). —Paul had had a hard and bitter battle, first with the Jewish people, without, over the truth of the gospel and the preaching of Christ crucified, and then with the Judaizers within the Fellowship, "to whom," he said, "we gave place in the way of subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you" (Galatians 2. 5). He had fought them in oral discussion, but now, as he draws to a close his inspired epistle, he wishes no more trouble over this issue. God had come in, in the inspired words of the Galatian epistle, and given His decision on circumcision and Law-keeping, that such had no place or part whatever in the gospel of which He is the Author. In the light of such a fact Paul might well say, "Henceforth let no man trouble me:" and he adds, "for I bear branded on my body the marks of Jesus." He had had trouble enough. The story of his trouble could be read in the weals across his back, which had been healed and been opened up again by the biting lash as it cut open his wounds again. Many other bruises he bore, as Jesus, his Master, had also borne for the same cause, that the truth of the gospel might continue with us. —*J. M.*

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Question from **Crowborough**. —Seeing the epistle is addressed to a collective company, why is "spirit" and not "spirits" used in 6. 18?

Answer. —It is the normal way of Paul's writing. Note that while Paul wrote to the church in Corinth with all that in every place, etc. (Chap. 1. 2), he wrote in Chap. 6. 19, "Or know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit?" To the Thessalonians he wrote, "Your spirit and soul and body" (1 Thessalonians 5. 23). See also Philipians 4. 23. —*J. M.*

Question from **Hamilton, Ont.** —What is the "Israel of God" (6. 16)? Does it refer to the "holy nation" (1 Peter 2. 9)?

Answer. —**Yes.** —*J. M.*

Question from **Melbourne**. —Would the "Israel of God" be those who bow in submission to God's will, having as a parallel the case of Jacob wrestling with God?

Answer. —See answers to question from Hamilton and Willington Quay. Jacob truly in his strivings after God was an Overcomer, not one who was overcome, and see the reward to such in churches of God (Revelations 2. 7, 11, 17, 26-28; 3. 5, 12, 21).

Question from **Willington Quay**. —Why is the term "the Israel of God" (6. 16) used to describe those that are children of God?

Answer. —The Israel of God describes the people of God, not the children of God. —*J. M.*

Question from **Kilmarnock**. —Newberry's margin gives, for **verse 17**, "brand marks of Jesus." Would this refer to the wounds and stripes Paul had received in his body for Christ's sake (2 Corinthians 11. 23-25)?

Answer. —**Yes**, this is my understanding of **what** is meant by "the marks of Jesus." —*J. M.*

NOTICE.

A bound volume of each of the following Bible Studies, in good condition, available from **Jas. Martin**, at **3/6** each, inclusive of postage. Years **1949**, **1950**, **1951** and **1952**.

PENULTIMATE MESSAGE.

Twenty-one years of Bible Studies have **run** their course. In the midst of those years the second world war tested, in a severe way, the faith of God's heritage. In the British Isles death came right up to the doors of many. One wonders if these world upheavals have cast us back, more and more, on our trust in God. As far as the world is concerned, the opposite seems to have been the outcome... men are apathetic, rootless, hopeless, and one hears far, far too often, the despairing phrase, " I couldn't care less. "

But redeemed people, and particularly those in God's House, surely have found our God to be a God of deliverances. We have been continually cast back upon Him, and on the word of His grace. Hence it is a joy, tinged with sorrow, that we have been able to reach the end of twenty-one years of uninterrupted publication, despite paper shortages and advancing costs.

We are reminded of the uncertainty of time. Our beloved co-editor, Mr. S. Burrows, prepared the syllabus for the Galatian Letter study, and had hoped to write the Editorials. Ere half the year had run its course his Master called him home. Beloved Dr. Doodson, whose wise guidance has been an inspiration to this magazine since its commencement, has been laid aside for nearly a year. It is a joy to see his Epilogue.

Let us return thanks to our God for others who have laboured to help younger men to understand the will of our God, and to learn lessons from the inspired page. We are deeply indebted to the keen insight of divine truth that is displayed in the Comments and Answers by beloved Mr. J. Miller. We do not mention others who have laboured in the back-ground, from compiling the papers to the final printed page. We trust we have all been " helps, " one to another, and it is the prayer of the editors that it may be to the glory of our God.

The study of the letter to the Galatians has not been exhaustive by any manner of means. Much more gold can be digged out of this robust letter to a people of a restless, impulsive and fickle nature.

Let us revert to the order of the syllabus.

The *personal narrative*, as revealed in the letter, can be profitably compared with the intensely personal passages in the second letter to the Corinthians and the letter to the Philippians. But this vindication of his apostleship by Paul is with a view to upholding the doctrine, so precious to all, of justification by faith.

In the *doctrinal argument*, a profitable line of further study is a comparison of parallel statements in the letter to the Romans (which letter should play a prominent part in our next year's study). The comparisons are indeed very marked, but there are also interesting contrasts of treatment. AH doctrine should emerge in a becoming behaviour; the practical side of life must be based on a teaching outside ourselves.

The last, *practical*, section is hortatory. Blood-bought freedom must be held fast, but such liberty must not be an excuse for licence. The controlling factor in each one's life must be the blessed Holy Spirit. Divine love should be the impelling force. Then the harvest of fruit will be a wondrous collection of attributes, against which, marvellous to relate, " there is no law. "

Those who are thus happily controlled are encouraged to restore their brethren, and those who are not so directed by the blessed Holy Spirit are warned as to the corrupt harvest they shall reap, unless they are guided by their Spirit-led brethren.

The Epistle commences with its author asserting his commissioned apostleship. It closes with the benediction of a tried and tested servant of his Heavenly Master.

We leave the Letter, for the time being, with a ringing in our ears of the lovely word, " BRETHREN. "

Greetings.

Jas. Martin.

EPILOGUE.

We have now come to the end of our study of the Epistle to the Galatians, and we shall, no doubt, wonder afresh that the apostle, who loved to ascend into lofty regions of thought concerning Christ, could condescend to write, even with his own hands, to fallible men regarding their failings. It is always a wonder to any thinking man that the pure word of God comes to minds that are too often soiled by earthly thoughts, but it is all in conformity with the general action of God, whose concern is with the weak and the failing ones that He might strengthen them, with the sinful ones that He might redeem them and purify them. And if it were not so, then we would hardly ever know the peace and tranquillity of soul that we may enjoy in these bodies of ours by the operation of the Holy Spirit. It is when we are engaged in the highest planes of thought that too often we are constrained to have to deal with things carnal. Many an overseer has felt that he would gladly spend his time in speaking of the sweet things of Christ instead of having to speak words of reproof, but, while men are as they are, both things are needed, and we may feel sure that the apostle did not count his time wasted because he had to spend it on such practical instruction as he gave to the Galatian saints. Nor has our time been ill-spent if we have gained knowledge, or self-restraint, or humility, or a true understanding of righteousness, which are all matters dealt with by the apostle.

It is interesting to note in the Epistle to the Ephesians how Paul in chapter 2. rises from one high state to another until in mind he sees us seated with Christ. Then, men might say, should come the forgetfulness of all things that are foreign to that high and holy place, but the apostle, with one mighty swoop, comes right down to the mire of earth, and says, " Wherefore remember... "—all that once we were. The saint who rejoices for a little while in holy ecstasy fails not to remember that he still lives in a body of flesh, and, " while he marvels at the great grace shown unto him, he seeks grace also to preserve him and to set his feet firmly in the pathway.

There might seem little connexion between the subject for the past year and that which **is** before **us** for next year, but the above thoughts show **a** similar application to matters touching the Tabernacle. The Israelite with eager eyes **might** be gazing at the place where Jehovah was dwelling, but **he** had to come down in his thoughts to what he was, and to consider the sin-offering which was so needful for him. The priest that went into **the** Holy Place and set eyes on things that moved **him** to the core of his **being** (or so we fain would think) would, on his return journey, pass once **again** the laver and the altar at which the sin-offering was being offered.

The inter-play of light and shade gives charm to many a landscape, and there **is** something of this which gives a charm to the Scriptures; side by side are the instructions for **a** holy service and instructions for dealing with the contamination from earthly things. May we all profit thereby !

I **wish** to take this opportunity of thanking all readers of this magazine for their kind thoughts to **me** throughout this year, and for their prayers. These have been **a** comfort to me, together with the knowledge that **men** of **a** rising generation were not behind their spiritual forefathers in a longing for spirituality and all godly living. —*A. T. D.*