"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).

THE GOSPEL OF THE GLORY OF THE BLESSED GOD

Notes on
2 THESSALONIANS, JAMES, 1 PETER, 1 JOHN
and REVELATION

VOLUME 27.

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EDITORIAL

This issue of Bible Studies is so full that there is no room for an Editorial, but we trust that our fellow-students of the Scriptures will pardon us if we use a little space, first of all to welcome new and returning contributors, and also to make a suggestion intended to keep up the standard of the magazine.

We are delighted to see papers from so many sources, and venture to hope that all contributors will endeavour to send a paper every month, and also try to be early with their contributions.

The subject this year lends itself to very broad treatment and there is a danger of diffuse thinking, and hence of very long papers to little profit as study. One contributor mentions finding difficulty in keeping the paper to 500 words, and then rightly observes that the good work has been done before the paper is published. We might enlarge on this point, but we shall be content to commend it to your contemplation, and to suggest that a few major points well thought out and carefully expressed make a much better paper than many points diffusely treated or lightly touched upon.

Please note that as from January 19th, owing to re-organisation in the postal services, Mr. Baird's address will be: 61, Morton Street, Edinburgh 15. Use of the old address may cause serious delay in delivery. J. B.

NOTES ON THE BOOK OF THE REVELATION

CHAPTER 14

In chapter 14, 1-5 we have an entrancing scene in contrast to that which is presented in chapter 13. Here the Lamb is seen standing on the heavenly mount Zion, the same mount as we have in Hebrews 12.22. With the Lamb are 144,000 who have the Lamb's name and that of His Father written on their foreheads. The voice of this great multitude as they sing was as to its volume like thunder and as to its sweetness like harpers harping with their harps. They sing a new song before the throne, and before the four living creatures and the elders, and no one could learn this song but themselves. There have been many choirs at many times, but here is one which should stir a longing in any honest heart to hear this holy, heavenly song. The sweetness of it must be overwhelming. No mind can conceive it now. Who are these? They are not the saints who compose the Body of Christ, for that company of saints is much more numerous, comprising as it does the saints of this entire dispensation of grace, from Pentecost until the Lord's coming again for the Church. These are not the 144,000 of the twelve
tribes of Israel which are sealed in chapter 7, who in their sealing are protected from the judgements of God which will fall on the earth. The explanation of who they are is given in verses 3 and 4, which is as follows:

"The hundred and forty and four thousand, even they that had been purchased out of the earth. These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. These were purchased from among men, to be the firstfruits unto God and unto the Lamb."

As we have here the virgin companions of the Lamb, we have in Psalm 45. 14, 15, the virgin companions of the Bride.

" She (the Bride) shall be led unto the king in broidered work:
The virgins her companions that follow her
Shall be brought unto Thee.
With gladness and rejoicing shall they be led:
They shall enter into the King's palace."

Despite what some have said about spiritual purity and so forth, we are of the view that the description of the virgins of Revelation 14 is to be understood as given. These are male virgins, for they were not defiled with women. If it were spiritual or moral purity that was to be understood other words could easily have been used by the Spirit. In the understanding of Scripture, we should accept the obvious meaning of a passage and avoid spiritualizing its plain meaning, thus taking from Scripture its evident lesson for us. These virgins were purchased (the same word as in chapter 5. 9; 1 Corinthians 6. 20; 7. 23). The purchase was effected with the blood of the Lamb. They are firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb of the harvest indicated in verses 14-16, the harvest of the righteous. The company of 144, 000 belong to the period between the Lord's coming to the air for the Church and His coming to earth to reign. They follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth and give to Him great delight by the song they sing. In their mouth was found no lie and they are without blemish. Meet companions for the Lamb, truly!

Verses 6 and 7 tell of an angel who will fly in mid heaven having an eternal gospel to proclaim. The substance of this gospel is, " Fear God, and give Him glory; for the hour of His judgement is come: and worship Him that made the heaven and the earth and sea and fountains of waters."

This is what the Creator requires from all created intelligences—" Fear God, and give Him glory. " This is a gospel which has for ever obtained and men on earth have obeyed it where the gospel of a crucified Christ has not reached. Peter stated its effect when he visited the house of Cornelius, " I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to Him. " No one can fear God who has not first repented of his sins, and there can be no working of righteousness apart from repentance. John the Baptist said that the Sadducees and Pharisees were to " bring forth therefore fruit worthy of repentance. " In the gospel of God's grace there is proclaimed " repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ " (Acts 20. 21). In view of the deceptions imposed on men in the time of the beast's kingdom, how gracious of God to send an angel to call upon men to acknowledge Him! This eternal gospel will reach to every tribe and tongue and people. Despite the diverse languages of men, every tribe will know the meaning of the angel's message.
Verse 8 tells of a second angel who announces the fall of Babylon: "Fallen, fallen, is Babylon the great." This is similar to what we read in 18. 2. She drinks the cup of the wine of the fierceness of God's wrath because of her sins, for she made the nations drunk with the wine of her fornication.

Verses 9-11 reveal another angel, a third, who with a great voice warns men on earth against the worship of the beast and his image. Such as worship the beast will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, and will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. The smoke of their torment will go up for ever and ever. It is grace on God's part to warn men of the serious consequences of this worship which will be a popular thing in the kingdom of the beast. In contrast to this we have the endurance of the saints, for they will keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, and will not yield to the deceit and lying wonders of those times.

Another voice from heaven says, "Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth." In this dispensation we read of those who fall asleep in Christ (1 Corinthians 15. 18), who are the dead in Christ (1 Thessalonians 4. 16), but in that future day the blessed dead die in the; Lord. Those who die in the Lord, rest from their labours, for their task that day will be no easy one, but they are assured that their works will follow with them to be rewarded by the Lord with such honours as He knows how.

After this follows the reaping of the earth, first of the righteous (verses 14-16), then of the wicked (verses 17-20). Some have concluded that the person sitting on a white cloud with a golden crown on his head, who is like a son of man, is the Lord Himself, but the words of verse 15 make this doubtful. It says that "another angel came out from the temple, crying with a great voice to him that sat on the cloud, Send forth thy sickle and reap." "Another angel" suggests that he is another angel in addition to the one who sat on the white cloud. Further, it does not seem fitting that the Lord, who is the Lord of all angels, should be commanded by an angel that He was to reap, because the harvest of the earth is ripe. Indeed the Lord speaking of such a time of reaping at the end of the age says that He, the Son of Man, shall send forth His angels to reap His field, the world (Matthew 13: 30, 41).

Another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven having also a sharp sickle. Another angel came out from the altar (I judge, the golden altar), he who had authority over [the] fire. As it is "the fire" in the Greek, it may indicate that it is the fire of the golden altar that is in view, and not fire in general. This angel says to the one with the sharp sickle that he is to gather the clusters of the vine, for her grapes are fully ripe. He cast his sickle into the earth and the earth was reaped of its vintage, and it was cast into the great winepress of the wrath of God. The winepress is trodden, but we are not told here by whom. Blood came from the winepress unto the bridles of the horses, and extended as far as one thousand and six hundred furlongs. This scene seems to have reference to Revelation 19. 15, where it says of the Lord that "He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness of the wrath of Almighty God." It indicates the Lord's judgement of the earth which begins with the destruction of the armies of the kings of the earth under the beast (19. 19-21). The carnage of that day's battle will be fearful, the battle of Armageddon, when men will feel the weight of the Lord's displeasure. On that day mercy retires behind the throne, mercy rejected by men.
This chapter brings us to the seven last plagues, when it is said that
the wrath of God will be finished, that is the wrath of God which has been
poured out on men in different judgements and plagues. God's wrath
against hardened and unrepentant sinners will never cease, such shall know
His displeasure in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone.

First of all we see in this chapter a glorious company of the martyrs,
who come victorious from the beast, standing on the glassy sea (see note on
4. 6). This sea which was like crystal before is now mingled with fire. It
may be that this sea, which was before clear as crystal, is now revealing
the fire of divine wrath against men, which is about to burst on men on
earth) because of how they have treated His saints who now stand on the
glassy sea. God in one of His judgements is about to give men blood to
drink, because they had shed the blood of His saints and prophets. God in
His righteousness causes men to reap as they sow. He is not mocked.

This glorious company, which no doubt contains those of chapter
7. 9-17, their tears and sufferings over, sing the song of Moses the servant
of God, and the song of the Lamb. The song of Moses is that which he sang
with Israel by the Red Sea concerning the LORD being a Man of war, and of
His having cast the horse and his rider into the sea. Thus the martyrs sing,
"Great and marvellous are Thy works, O Lord God, the Almighty;
righteous and true are Thy ways, Thou King of the ages. Who shall not
fear, O Lord, and glorify Thy name ? for Thou only art holy; for all nations
shall come and worship before Thee; for Thy righteous acts have been made
manifest " (verses 3, 4). Isaiah 26. 9 says, "For when Thy judgements
are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness. " Alas,
some will forget that God is a God of judgement and will revolt and bring
upon themselves the severity of divine judgement (20. 7-10).

In verses 5-8 we read of the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in
heaven being opened, and there came out of the temple the seven angels
with the seven last plagues. They were arrayed with stone or linen pure and
bright. (Lithon, stone; Linon, linen: though authorities differ, I lean to the
view that the angels are clothed with linen pure and bright. See Revelation
19. 8. ) They are girt about the breasts with a golden girdle. One of the four
living creatures gave to the seven angels seven bowls (vials of the A. V. is
simply the Greek word Phidias, A Phiale is a bowl or goblet), which were
full of the wrath of God. The temple was filled with smoke from the glory
of God and from His power, so that none could enter until the angels had
finished the seven plagues.

A voice from the temple commanded the seven angels to pour out the
seven bowls of the wrath of God. The first poured out his bowl into the
earth and it became an evil and grievous sore upon the men who had the
mark of the beast, and worshipped his image. Though the beast's worshippers
had privileges on earth, such as freedom to buy and sell in the beast's
kingdom, and were free from bestial persecution, they were not free from
divine judgement even in this life. The righteous need to learn that godliness
has its profit even in this life, as well as in the life to come, for they are free
from many things that the wicked bring upon themselves. Many bring
wicked and wasted lives in this world to a sad and miserable end. Thus it
will be with the beast's worshippers, for the devil has no estate to offer in
the world to come to those whom he has deceived in this world.
The second angel poured out his bowl into the sea, and it became as the blood of one who is dead. The result of this was that every living soul died that was in the sea. If the sea here includes all the oceans of the earth, we can only faintly imagine what a universal catastrophe this will be.

The third angel poured out his bowl into the rivers and the fountains of waters, and they became blood. The righteous judgement of God in this act is declared by the angel of the waters: "Righteous art Thou, which art and which wast, Thou Holy One, because Thou didst thus judge: for they poured out the blood of saints and prophets, and blood hast Thou given them to drink: they are worthy." In response the voice of the altar said, "Yea, O Lord God, the Almighty, true and righteous are Thy judgements."

Men then, as now, forget that God will be perfectly just in His punishment of sin. Every sin will meet its due recompense, and the greater the sin and the knowledge of the sinner, the greater will be the punishment. The Lord showed that the punishment of the fishing towns in Galilee would be greater than that of Sodom and Tyre and Sidon (Matthew 11. 20-24).

The fourth poured out his bowl upon the sun, and it scorched men with fire. This would make the earth like a furnace, and would be a pretaste for many of the eternal burnings. Though men were scorched with heat, men blasphemed God and repented not to give Him glory. This may reveal the hardened and unrepentant attitude of the lost to God in eternal punishment. No glory will rise for ever to God from lost souls.

The fifth poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, so that the beast himself comes in for a share of this judgement. His kingdom also was darkened and they gnawed their tongues with pain. Men must be in excessive pain when they intentionally bite pieces from their tongues. Yet despite their pain they repented not of their works, but blasphemed the God of heaven. What a state the devil, the beast and the false prophet will then have brought the world to!

Then the sixth angel poured his bowl on the river Euphrates. The result of this was that this great river was dried up, and a way was made ready for the kings that come from the sunrising. Then from the mouths of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet issue three unclean spirits, as it were frogs. These we are told are the spirits of demons, working signs, and they go forth to gather the kings of the whole world to the battle of the great day of God, the Almighty. They were gathered at a place called in Hebrew Har-Magedon, or more commonly known by the word used in the A. V., Armageddon. This is a place supposed to be situated in the Plain of Esdraelon, which stretches across Palestine from mount Carmel to the river Jordan. Here will be gathered the massed forces of the kings of the earth under the beast and the false prophet to oppose the descent of the Son of Man to Jerusalem. Then the Lord will take up men's challenge, and, as Zechariah says, "Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when He fought (or fighteth) in the day of battle. And His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east" (Zechariah 14. 3, 4). Revelation 19. 11-21 gives greater details than Zechariah does of the battle and of its sequel. The battle will be short and the carnage fearful. (See Revelation 17. 12-14).

In the light of this battle and the imminent manifestation of the Lord, the saints of that time are warned to watch, as they are in the Gospels which tell of the Lord's coming as Son of Man. "Behold I come as a thief (see 1 Thessalonians 5. 1-5). Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame."
The seventh angel poured out his bowl upon the air, and there came forth a voice out of the temple from the throne, saying, "It is done." It would seem from what is said here, that the throne of God is in the heavenly temple. Chapter 4 may present the view of the heavenly temple, then beyond that we read of "them that dwell (or tabernacle) in heaven" (13. 6), and then in 15. 5 we have "the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven." These statements provide food for meditation for all who have an interest in heaven. "It is done" would seem to refer to the seven judgements which fell consequent upon the out-pouring of the wrath of God from the seven bowls. Then followed lightnings and voices and thunders, and a great earthquake, the greatest since men were upon the earth. This great earthquake rent the city of Babylon into three parts, for God remembered her wickedness and gave her the cup of the fierceness of His wrath. Besides, the cities of the nations fell. God had truly arisen to shake mightily the earth. Also every island fled away and the mountains were not found. Such an earthquake would produce a scene of unspeakable terror of worldwide extent. Then we are told that hailstones fell from heaven on men, each the weight of a talent. No doubt it is of this hail that the LORD asked Job, "Hast thou seen the treasuries of the hail, which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war" (Job 38. 22, 23). The weight of a Jewish talent was 125 lbs., Egyptian and Greek talents were about 86 lbs. We can understand in a slight way the devastation these masses of ice will cause as they are hurled down from heaven upon men. But the effect on men is no better than the previous plagues, for men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail.

J. M.

THE GOSPEL OF THE GLORY OF THE BLESSED GOD

The Unique Dispensational Setting of the Gospel

From Middlesbrough. —The word "dispensation" would appear to imply an arrangement of affairs rather than a period of time [1]. The present is a dispensation of God which is in faith. Under the law man's weakness was revealed, but the gospel is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." This message is of divine origin and Christ is its Subject. In retrospect we can see many of the truths of the gospel hidden in the Old Testament. The word mystery, as used in the New Testament, seems to mean truth revealed to the illuminated. The New Testament mysteries are not truths which are beyond human understanding, but truths that the Holy Spirit has revealed to God's chosen people in His chosen times [and partly understood by them—J. M.].

The apostle Paul had a unique place in making known the truth of the gospel. The gospel Paul preached was given to him by revelation. It is the responsibility of those who proclaim the message to maintain its purity. Paul spoke very strongly against the false teachers who misrepresented or perverted the message. By the Holy Spirit Old Testament writers wrote what they themselves could not have foreseen.

The gospel of the kingdom in the past was to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. [It will be a world-wide message in the future. —J. M.] The gospel of the grace of God is also world-wide in scope. Even in Abraham's day God had in view the blessing of both Jew and Gentile. D. Goodwin, D. H.
From Southport. —The gospel had its origin in God before the world began, according to the revelation of the mystery of God, which has been kept secret in the long ages past (Romans 16. 25). When man fell through sin, God in His mercy promised a Redeemer (Genesis 3. 15). To Abraham God swore, " In thy Seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed " (Genesis 22. 15-18). In Isaiah 7. 13, 14, the LORD spoke to the house of David, saying, " The LORD Himself shall give you a sign; behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel. "

The gospel is described in many ways. Romans 1. 1 refers to "the gospel of God," because it originates from God. In Romans 15. 19 we read of "the gospel of Christ," because it is God's message through Christ to men. It is also called "the gospel of your salvation" (Ephesians 1. 13), because it is the power of God unto salvation.

The apostle Paul was a chosen vessel unto the Lord to bear His Name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel (Acts 9. 15). In Ephesians 3. 1-11 Paul speaks of the dispensation of the "grace of God" made known to him by revelation and the mystery of Christ, in which Christ was to be revealed to the Gentiles as well as to the Jews. Paul speaks of himself as a servant of Jesus Christ separated unto the gospel of God (Romans 1. 1-11).

The gospel of the kingdom which was preached in the past to the Jews will be preached to all nations in the future (Matthew 24. 14). The everlasting gospel will be preached during the great tribulation (Revelation 14. 6) preceding the judgement of the nations. Thomas Brown.

EXTRACTS

From Edinburgh. —The gospel of the kingdom (Matthew 3. 2, etc.) was a call to repentance to Israel, for the King of Israel had come. But the Jews rejected the King. Shortly before the Son of Man returns to reign this gospel will again be preached to all nations (Matthew 24. 14). Some thought that the gospel preachers would be angels (Mark 13. 27), while others thought they would be those who endure to the end (Matthew 24. 13) [2]. The gospel of God's grace is to all men today (Mark 16. 15). This commenced on the day of Pentecost, when the gospel was proclaimed in Jerusalem. It was preached to the Jew first. The Samaritans too believed the gospel, and the Gentiles also. Paul's gospel is the gospel we preach, the gospel of Christ. Its contents are the birth, death and resurrection of Christ.

An eternal gospel is going to be preached world-wide to Gentiles by an angel. This gospel, we suggest, will be preached at the same time as the gospel of the kingdom is. Its message is "Fear God, and give Him glory; .... worship Him" (Revelation 14. 6, 7). A. M. Hope.

From Glasgow. —There has been no dispensation like the one in which we now live, in which we are blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ. God's purposes have been manifested in Christ. Things which were kept in silence from eternity have now been made known, and are set forth by the apostle Paul when he spoke of "the mystery which hath been kept in silence through times eternal" (Romans 16. 25-27). Many things concerning Christ were made known to men in the past, often in type and shadow; and the prophets, Peter says, were "searching what time or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did point unto, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow them" (1 Peter 1. 11-12). J. R.
From Paisley. —The minds of both men and angels were stirred to inquiry as to the suffering and glories of Christ. The good news reveals the character of God, and His eternal counsels kept silent until New Testament times. This gospel is variously described; it is the gospel of God, as to its origin; the gospel of the grace of God, its basis; the gospel of Christ, as to its Subject; and the gospel of your salvation, as to blessings it bestows upon them who believe.

John writes of the eternal gospel proclaimed by an angel flying in mid heaven; its truths cover all dispensational boundaries and stress the eternal power of God. There was a difference of opinion as to when this eternal gospel would be proclaimed. Some thought in pre-millennial days and others during the Millennium [8].

From Belfast. —The gospel in different ages may be characterized by different features, but the presentation of its basic facts remains unchanged. It is always a message of good tidings from God to men, the blessings of which are to be received and entered into by faith alone.

The gospel of the kingdom is prominently in view in Matthew's gospel. It stands related to the manifestation of the King (Matthew 4. 23). The reference in Matthew 24. 14 looks to the future, when this message will again be taken up by the remnant of godly Israelites, and in that day it will be based on the imminent return of the King and the setting up of His kingdom.

The everlasting gospel yet to be proclaimed by an angel flying through mid heaven to all the inhabitants of the earth, saying, "Fear God, and give Him glory," will be heaven's last appeal to all living nations, as they are once more marshalled under the leadership of Satan in their final rebellion against divine authority (Revelation 14. 6, 7). This message in substance, we thought, imparted the same principles that have characterized the message of the gospel from the beginning of time, namely, the call for the subjection of the human will to the divine will.

From Wigan. —The word "gospel" means "good news." Even in Genesis God could tell the Adversary of the coming Christ. When Christ was on earth, He preached the acceptable year of the Lord. After this dispensation the gospel of the kingdom will be preached, but this dispensation of the grace of God is unique. Luke records the angel's words: "There is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour." Here was the Seed that would bruise the serpent's head (Genesis 3. 15). Again "A virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel" (Isaiah 7. 14), and yet again, "Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given" (Isaiah 9. 6).

From Brantford, Ont. —In Eden God spoke of the triumph over Satan of the woman's Seed. God's message to Abraham was, "In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Regarding this, the apostle says that the gospel was preached beforehand unto Abraham (Galatians 3. 8).

The present dispensation outshines all other dispensations as to its glory, its love, its scope and its power.

We ask, "Does the gospel refer only to the news of sins forgiven and peace with God?" As we thought of such scriptures as 1 Timothy 2. 4, that God "willeth that all men should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth," we concluded that it is indeed good news that sinners can be saved and then as living stones be built into a spiritual house, where the true worshippers can worship God in spirit and in truth [4], J. C. B.
From Whitehills and Macduff. —"I am not ashamed of the gospel" said the gospel's greatest expositor, and neither is the God of glory, for it is worthy of Himself. In conception and scope it is unique and the fact that God has "spoken unto us in His Son" gives majesty to its presentation. It is both the gospel of God and the gospel of Christ. All God's pronounce-
ments from Eden foreshadowed the coming Christ, and the constant failure to deal with sin and its effects necessitated a way of righteousness apart from the law. The apostle Paul, whose letters are exhaustive on the subject, repeatedly speaks of the "mystery" of the gospel (Ephesians 6. 19) (Young —"what is only known to the initiated"). In this dispensation the Trinity is clearly shown through the gospel. It is a great revelation that God the Son should be the Saviour and Sacrifice, and it is revealed by God the Spirit. Foreordination and the call of grace greatly impressed Paul, and he burned with missionary zeal to bring the good tidings of hope to aliens and strangers, for the mystery was revealed, that in Christ the middle wall of partition was done away. Priest-like, he saw himself offering up the Gentiles "acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit" (Romans 15. 16). To Saul the Pharisee it was a surprise that Gentiles could ever be accepted by God, but through the gospel of this dispensation the Gentile is accepted by faith alone.

A. R. B.

From Birkenhead. —God planned the gospel. It was not something God thought of after the fall of man, but He planned it before times eternal.
The expression, the gospel of God (Romans 1), is significant, because this letter was written to a Gentile assembly. To Paul there was but one God, and from Him came the gospel. The gospel of Christ means more than the gospel which He preached. Mark says in his introduction, "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus." This gospel covered the life, death, and resurrection of Christ, and the message which flowed out to men from Him. It is the gospel which is fulfilled in Him, and which became possible because of His Sacrifice of Himself. The grace of God is the only possible approach to God for man. It might be thought that nothing but judgement could be meted out to man after his sin against a righteous God; but grace came in, and now the gospel of God's grace puts believers beyond the power of the devil. It is the gospel of our salvation, because it works effectively in us to deliver us from wasted lives and eternal loss.

K. J. Horne.

From London, S. E. —Old Testament saints saw from afar future events, as peaks rising one above the other, each peak more distant than the previous one. Among the things foreshown are the advent of Christ, born of a virgin, His death and Millennial reign. But certain truths, like the valleys between the peaks, were not seen, for example, the Church the "Body of Christ," essential to the gospel of the glory of the Blessed God. Abraham with others saw the peaks, but their eyes did not perceive or their minds understand the hidden mystery of Christ and the Church, which remained a mystery until revealed to Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles (Romans 16. 25, Ephesians 3. 11, Colossians 1. 26). The mystery is now manifested, and by the scriptures of the prophets according to the command-
ment of the eternal God is made known unto all the nations unto obedience of faith. To Paul it was a direct revelation from God (Colossians 1. 27, Titus 1. 3). He also says "by the Scriptures of the prophets." These scriptures we believe to be the Old Testament writings. It cannot be doubted that the mystery of the Church which is His (Christ's) Body is hidden in the story of
Adam and Eve. Under the Spirit's light we see, foreshadowed in that pair, Christ and the Church, His Bride. The mystery is thus revealed in New Testament times.

G. A. Reeve.

From Melbourne. —Many passages of the Old Testament point forward to the gospel (Genesis 3, Isaiah 9. 1, 2). We have the Old Testament examples of the bride being found for Adam, the wife for Joseph, who became the saviour of the world, and the beautiful story of how the servant went forth into a far country to get a wife for his master's son Isaac.

The gospel was firstly to the Jews, but it was in God's will that all men should be saved. It is an important factor that is brought before us in Galatians 1. 11, 12, that the gospel was a direct revelation from God.

L. F.

From Liverpool. —2 Timothy 1 reveals that grace, not works, is the ground upon which God saves men and that His purposes, given us in Christ Jesus before times eternal, have now been shown us by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. The gospel is concerning God's gracious provision for sinners through the work of His Son.

This present period, during which Christ is building His Church, is a mystery unrevealed in the past, though we can perceive in type that which foreshadowed the taking out from the Gentiles a people for His name. See for example the method used by God in giving Adam a wife who was "bone of his bone." We understand that it is not the gospel that is the mystery, but the truths concerning this Church (Ephesians 3). [Both are: see Ephesians 6. 19. —J. M.]

T. Millar, A. H.

From Portstewart. —God spoke to the fathers in the prophets in divers portions and in divers manners (Hebrews 1. 1). The truth of the Church connected to that of the gospel of the grace of God was kept in silence in the past, from angels and men, until the apostle Paul received the revelation through the Holy Spirit. The revelation of the mystery that the Gentiles should share with the Jews as fellow-partakers through the gospel, was first of all to Peter (Acts 10. 9-16). The answer to the prophets searching "what time" seems to be found in Israel's rejection of the Lord, and the "manner of time" in the partial fulfilment of Joel 2. 28-32, the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost sealing and indwelling men (Jew and Gentile) through faith in Christ.

Dispensation (or stewardship as is given in the R. V. M.) means here the law or arrangement of a house. Saints who are called into the Fellowship are built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the Chief Corner Stone (Ephesians 2. 20).

T. Meathy.

From Kingston-on-Thames. —Help would be appreciated as to whether "grace" is a unique characteristic of God's present dealings with men [5]. In this connexion the eternal salvation of the souls of men in all ages was to be dependent on the work of Christ on the cross, whether persons had heard the gospel or not. Some thought that this, in fact, constituted the meaning of the word "grace." Difficulty, however, was felt by some with regard to this in view of certain apparent qualifications, for instance, during the time after the rapture of the saints "endurance to the end" and non-submission to the Beast to receive his mark and to worship him seem to be necessary to salvation, as well as faith in God [6]. It was suggested that the salvation referred to in these cases was not the eternal
salvation of the soul, but the saving of the life for God, and that God would give faith and strength in that day so that the faithful ones would endure to the end. Some felt this to be inconsistent with God's general dealings with men, where human failure is not automatically strengthened by God in this way.

Frank E. Jarvis.

From Crowborough. —A great change took place in the passing from the dispensation of the law to the dispensation of grace, when Christ came and He was rejected by the Jews. We notice a like change indicated in the sending of the twelve (Matthew 10) who were not to go in the way of the Gentiles, but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and the sending of the eleven (Matthew 28. 19): " Go ye... and make disciples of all nations." The sending forth of Matthew 28 is also indicated in Acts 1. 8, "Ye shall by My witnesses both in Jerusalem... and unto the uttermost part of the earth." In Galatians the apostle Paul marvels that some who had been saved by grace should be so soon removing from God, who had called them. The law was given as a rule of life, but not as a means of life. The law condemned the sinner and placed him under a curse. The gospel proclaims One who has taken the place of the sinner in dying as a substitute. This is the very heart of the gospel—Christ's substitutionary work on the cross.

J. H. B.

From Victoria, B. C. —There is only one gospel of God. The Spirit of God says that if a man dare to preach another, it will bring the judgement of the Lord (Galatians 1. 8). The gospel is of divine origin and authority. The man who preaches it does so because it is the Lord's command. The words that are spoken are not calculated to please the ear, but are for the stern purpose of conviction and the happy ending of faith in God. The gospel always brings before us the only Name in which there is salvation. Men were in darkness and without hope or light, but when the glad tidings first shone forth in brightest rays at Pentecost, it revealed the abolition of death. Where death and corruption existed, there is now a message of life and incorruptness (2 Timothy 1. 10). All this was accomplished at the cross, but it is through the preaching of the word that the truth of the gospel is revealed.

Today there is but one gospel. God is speaking to us in the Son. The gospel of the kingdom (Matthew 4. 23) is different as to time and is diverse from the tidings of the cross. It speaks of a King and a rule which are yet to come and which will bring blessing upon this earth, not only to the people, but also to the land, for the desert will bloom with the rose. It is delightful to consider that the One who is our Redeemer is also the Saviour and the King of that day, when He will be revealed to Israel.

A. McLeman, J. McLeman.

From Hamilton, Ont. —The day of Pentecost was, we thought, the commencement of the dispensation of grace, which includes all who are in Christ's Body. There is one Body, one Spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism (Ephesians 4. 4, 5). There is, it would seem, a partial overlapping both before and after the day of Pentecost. [Not dispensationally, but only in the sense of the gradual dawning of light upon the minds of men, who are ever slow to learn God's will and ways. —J. M. J. As late as in Acts 19, there were those who had not yet received the Holy Spirit, knowing only the baptism of John.
In contrasting the gospel of the grace of God, with that which had preceded it, we thought that it could be termed "faith-righteousness" instead of "works-righteousness."

We had no difficulty as to when this day of grace would end, even with the rapture of the Church, when all who are in the Church the Body shall be called up to be for ever with the Lord, P. T., J. Y.

From Atherton. —The gospel of the grace of God stands unique. It is seen in sharp contrast to the law, with its absolute demands. Galatians 3. 24 reveals the temporary character of the law. At the coming of the Christ grace and truth were revealed to be the foundation of something of eternal value to the believer.

In the gospel of Christ the good tidings are viewed in relation to the Son of God. His person and His work are associated with a theme hitherto never contemplated, that is, His resurrection from the dead as a proof that He is the true King. The saviours of Israel in former days lived and died, but as 1 Timothy 6. 15, 16 indicates, "the blessed and only Potentate... only hath immortality."

The gospel of God emanated from God: it was of divine conception and design, differing entirely from man's wisdom (1 Corinthians 1. 18, 19). It is concerning Immanuel (God is with us), no less a Person than One of the Trinity.

E. Birchall, G. A. J.

From Toronto, Ont. —There is a striking similarity of expression between Romans 16. 25, "the mystery which hath been kept in silence through times eternal" and "the mystery which from all ages hath been hid in God" (Ephesians 3. 9). It would appear from these scriptures that the gospel was in the counsels of God in eternity and is primarily concerned with the glory and honour of His Son, in connexion with the truth of the Church and the unsearchable riches of Christ (1 Peter 1. 10, Ephesians 3. 8). These are to be made manifest before principalities and powers in the heavens through the Church, as a demonstration of the manifold wisdom of God. Although God has made provision for men of faith in all ages, such men as were used by God to prophesy in their time were fully aware that they Were not ministering to themselves in making known these things.

S. K. Seath.

From West Hartlepool. —The gospel which Paul proclaimed, did not originate in his mind. He preached the gospel from Old Testament scriptures, and he fully proclaimed the mystery of Christ which had been revealed personally to him by the Lord Jesus (Galatians 1. 17, 2. 6, Ephesians 3. 3).

The Subject of the gospel is Christ. He is the Substance of the message (Romans 15. 19). That Christ might be magnified was the object of Paul's preaching, and is the pattern for gospel preachers today. As to the origin of the gospel, it comes from God, the Fountain-head of Love and Wisdom. The announcement concerning the birth of Christ illustrates the point perfectly (Luke 2. 10-14).

The ground on which the gospel is preached and received by men is the grace of God (Acts 20. 24). The nature of the gospel message is truth (Ephesians 1. 13). There are promises associated with the gospel, that of eternal life and that of receiving of the Holy Spirit, present and peculiar possessions, a future home in glory and much more besides. All this bears the divine hall-mark of truth, that what God has promised He is able also to perform.

R, Ross.
From Nottingham. —The need to differentiate between phases of the gospel is vital. Many today have fallen into grave error through failing to make the distinction. The gospel of the kingdom was a call to repentance, and to be baptized with a view to believing in the promised One of God (Matthew 3). Men have always been called to repentance by God, although many have failed to respond.

The word "mystery" is used in connexion with the gospel of the grace of God. "Mystery" has the meaning of "that which is known to the initiated." It is that which is outside the range of the natural mind.

A striking indication of the parenthetical setting of the dispensation of the gospel of the grace of God is given in Luke 4. 16-21. The Lord did not complete the quotation from Isaiah 61, and did not quote "and the day of vengeance of our God." That day is not yet, for the glorious period of grace must first come.

R. Hickling.

From Cowdenbeath. —In the days of John the Baptist we have an added message to that of the law and the prophets (Luke 16. 16). After John was delivered up (Matthew 4. 12), the Lord Jesus went forth to preach the gospel of the kingdom (Matthew 4. 23). He also sent forth His disciples to do likewise (Matthew 10. 7), and He spoke to them saying, "Ye shall not have gone through the cities of Israel, till the Son of Man be come" (Matthew 10. 23). This agrees with Matthew 24. 14, although the message will then be preached world-wide. Between those days when the gospel of the kingdom was preached by the Lord and His disciples and the days prior to the coming of the Son of Man, there comes the present era of the preaching of the gospel of the grace of God and the revelation of the mystery which hath been kept in silence through times eternal. How thankful we should be to be living in this dispensation of unique privilege! we who have received eternal life (Titus 1. 2), and to whom grace was given in Christ Jesus before times eternal (2 Timothy 1. 9).

During part of the same period of time when faithful ones, in the face of much persecution, shall be preaching to their fellow-men the gospel of the kingdom, which tells of the coming King and also of coming judgement upon wickedness, an angel shall be used by God to proclaim to men on earth the message of the eternal gospel (Revelation 14. 6). Unlike the gospel of the kingdom and the gospel of the grace of God, each of which contains God's messages for men, messages peculiar to the respective dispensation, the eternal gospel, as its name indicates, is applicable to men during all dispensations. Many shall enter into eternal bliss because they have believed according to the terms of the eternal gospel. (See Romans 2. 5-11, Revelation 20. 11-15).

J. Bateman.

COMMENTS

[1] (Middlesbrough). —It would be more correct to say, with reference to the use of dispensation in the New Testament, "an arrangement of affairs within a period of time". —J. M.

[2] (Edinburgh). —An angel will preach the everlasting gospel (Revelation 14. 6, 7), but not the gospel of the kingdom. —J. M.

[3] (Paisley). —The eternal gospel will be proclaimed during the time of the reign of the beast in the second half of Daniel's prophetic week. —J. M.
[4] (Brantford). —We must be careful to distinguish between the gospel to the sinner, which is, that Christ died for our sins, was buried and was raised from the dead (1 Corinthians 15. 3, 4) and the gospel to the saints, "For indeed we have had good tidings (gospel) preached unto us, even as also they " (God's people in the past, relative to God's rest—Hebrews 4. 2). From the former no believer can fall away, but, alas, many have fallen away from the latter, by falling away from the living God (Hebrews 3. 12). Let us keep clearly before us distinct lines of divine truth. All men being saved should never be confused with such saved men coming to the full knowledge of the truth (1 Timothy 2. 4). —J. M.

[5] (Kingston). —Grace is not peculiar to this dispensation. Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD (Genesis 6. 8). So did Abraham, Moses, David and many others. Where it says, in John 1. 17, that "grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, " it is not "came, " but "became. " The law was given, and in its very nature could never meet man's dire need; but in Christ is the full embodiment of grace and truth, wherein is provision to meet man's need, and so from His fulness have we all (believers) received, and grace for grace. God's grace is manifold, that is, it is various, variegated, meeting every phase of human need. We live in a dispensation of grace and a dispensation of faith, grace on God's part and faith on ours. In the past it was law and works, now it is grace and faith. —J. M.

[6] (Kingston). —"Saved, " in Matthew 24. 13, is not saved from hell, but saved from the persecutions of the beast by the coming of the Lord. In that future time as now, salvation from hell will be by calling on the name of the Lord in whom they have believed. Read Romans 10, Joel 2. 32, Acts 2. 21. —J. M.

**QUESTION AND ANSWER**

Question from Paisley. —Did Old Testament saints experience conversion as we do in New Testament times ?

Answer. —Yes, all who are sinners by nature and practice, and that applies to all mankind, must, if they would be in eternal blessedness, "turn from these vain things (idols) unto the living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and all that in them is " (Acts 14. 15). This is conversion, not through the preached gospel, but by the goodness of God and the visible things of the creation which proclaim His eternal power and divinity (Romans 1. 18-23; 2. 4-11). —J. M.

**NOTES ON THE SECOND EPISTLE TO THE THESSALONIANS**

**CHAPTER 2**

Verses 11, 12: *And for this cause God sendeth them a working of error, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.*

Herein lies the cause of the rise of antichrist; men in general want to be told lies, because they have pleasure in unrighteousness. They want to sin; they neither want to be righteous nor to do righteousness. Men need not blame the devil or the antichrist; the state of the world, which will admit of the last tragic scenes of Gentile government and behaviour, will be that which men have made it for themselves. Hence we have the
awful reality and truth of these verses, that God will send them a working of error, that they all may be condemned who believe not the truth. The condition of men's hearts will be fully revealed in that they will actually love lying rather than Truthfulness, hence the devil, the father of lies, will find men an easy prey.

Verses 13, 14: But we are bound to give thanks to God alway for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, for that God chose you from the beginning unto salvation in sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: whereunto He called you through our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul gives thanks again for the Thessalonians, that God chose (Hairred, strictly "to take, to choose"; elsewhere he uses Eklego, to pick, to choose, for election) them from the beginning unto salvation, in sanctification of the Spirit, which is God's side of salvation, and belief of the truth, which is our side. In 1 Peter 1. 1, 2, we have election and sanctification of the Spirit again spoken of, but there it is unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, which is the New Testament answer to Exodus 24. 3-8. But in verse 13 above sanctification of the Spirit is unto salvation. These facts should be carefully noted. It was unto this salvation that the Thessalonians were called through the gospel which had been preached by God's servants.

Verse 15: So then, brethren, standfast, and hold the traditions which ye were taught, whether by word, or by epistle of ours.

Seeing that this was God's purpose regarding them, in election, salvation and glory, they were exhorted to stand fast and firm, and to hold fast the traditions. "The traditions" were the oral instructions or instructions by letter which were given by the apostles to the saints while as yet there was no New Testament. The epistles to the Thessalonians were among the first, if not the first, parts of the New Testament to be written, so we see how the saints of those days were shut up for instruction to the teaching of the apostles (Acts 2. 42) which was the traditions (1 Corinthians 11. 2; 2 Thessalonians 2. 15; 3. 6). The word traditions ceased to be used in the inspired writings of the New Testament as these writings began to appear and be circulated among the saints.

Verses 16, 17: Now our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God our Father which loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and stablish them in every good work and word.

The words, "which loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace," apply to the Father. But Paul wishes the Lord Himself and God the Father to comfort and to stablish the Thessalonians in every good work and word. The thought of the Father having loved us and given to us eternal comfort and good hope through His wondrous grace is very precious indeed. Eternal comfort—nothing can disturb the inward state of rest of the soul that rests completely in Him who says, "Come unto Me... and I will give you rest."

CHAPTER 3

Verses 1, 2: Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run and be glorified, even as also it is with you; and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and evil men; for all have not faith.

Finally, or for the rest, the apostle asks them to pray for him, as he often does throughout his epistles, that the word of the Lord might run
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rapidly and be glorified in reaching the throne of the hearts of the hearers, even as it had in reaching the hearts of the Thessalonians. There are ever opposers of the work of the Lord, hence Paul writes of unreasonable and evil men, "for," said he, "all have not (the) Faith." The definite article is present before faith and should appear, as evidently it is the Faith and not faith.

Verse 3: But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and guard you from the evil one.

"The evil" would point out some definite form of evil, but no evil is mentioned. It seems more natural to conclude that it is "the evil one" who is envisaged. The Lord, who is faithful, would stablish or fix firmly, and guard them from the evil one. He would guard them as a sentinel, for the evil one goes about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour (1 Peter 5. 8).

Verses 4, 5: And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command. And the Lord direct your heart into the love of God, and into the patience of Christ.

"In the Lord" is a term which implies subjection to His will; and Paul was confident in Him that they were so subject that they both did and would do what he commanded them, within the compass of the Lord's will. His wish for them was, that the Lord would direct their hearts into the love of God, which is the mainspring of all true acting, and into the patience or endurance of Christ. The endurance of the Master should be the endurance of all who follow Him.

Verses 6, 7, 8: Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which they received of us. For yourselves know how ye ought to imitate us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you; neither did we eat bread for nought at any man's hand, but in labour and travail, working night and day, that we might not burden any of you:

Whilst the overseers were exhorted, in 1 Thessalonians 5. 14, to admonish the disorderly (Ataktos, "principally spoken of soldiers who desert their ranks"), we have here a state of disorder which calls for admonition to be administered by all within the church; all the saints being commanded in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to withdraw themselves from the disorderly. This command would be made by a public announcement by the overseers to the church. The apostle and his fellows had taught them how to walk orderly when they were with them, and had shown orderly behaviour by working in manual labour to maintain themselves while they preached to the Thessalonians. He described how that they had wrought night and day in ceaseless toil, working and preaching, so that they would not be a burden to any of them.

J. M.

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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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EDITORIAL

We are happy to see contributions from so many assemblies. We trust those who have missed this issue will be able to write for the next.

May we again make a suggestion with the intention of fostering the profitableness of our joint studies and the helpful variety of thought expressed in each issue of Bible Studies? Several papers suffered severe excisions because much of the matter in them was quite irrelevant. We therefore ask all to keep strictly to the subject. This is one circumstance which makes study an arduous exercise: it compels thought in a narrow field, but the course of thought may therefore be the deeper. Please do not borrow more than is absolutely necessary from subjects still to come, or let your course of thought run to things that have little or no connexion with the prescribed subject. By compelling yourselves to strict relevance you will make the labour involved all the more profitable. Serious study never is easy: it requires time, patience, discipline and concentration, so be prepared, please, to accept willingly the ardours inherent in much close study, which the Preacher admitted to be "a weariness of the flesh" (Ecclesiastes 12. 12). We feel sure none of us grudges such weariness of body, if by enduring it we find it possible to promote the edification of the inward man.

In these dark last times in which we live, it is most necessary that the man of God should be furnished completely. As a means to this end, we should seek prayerfully to gather a full and effective knowledge of the Scriptures, both in breadth and in detail. We ought therefore to be like the Preacher, who "sought to find out acceptable words, and that which was written uprightly, even words of truth" (Ecclesiastes 12. 10). J. B.

NOTES ON THE BOOK OF THE REVELATION

CHAPTERS 17 and 18

It seems necessary that we should deal with these two chapters together as they deal with Babylon the great and its fall. Some have tried, but without success, I think, to make out two Babylons in these chapters, a spiritual and a material Babylon. It will be seen in chapter 16. 19 that the great city of Babylon was divided into three parts by an earthquake, at which time the cities of the nations also fell. Then the words of 17. 18 are quite conclusive on the point of Babylon being a city: "And the woman whom thou sawest is the great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth." This great city is the same as that of 16. 19. It is the centre of world government, of world
trade, and of world religion. These are the three main avenues along which the thoughts of mankind flow. Often these three streams flow together between the same river banks, and commercialized religions have their dignitaries in seats of political power. The church of Rome has been viewed as Babylon since the days of Luther by Protestant expositors of different brands of religious opinion, and some have also with Luther spoken of the Pope of Rome as the beast. There can be no doubt that the church of Rome is a phase of Babylon, and many popes have been bestial enough both in their mode of living and in persecuting Christians for their faithfulness to God and His word. But the Babylon of these chapters is something greater than Rome, and it may well be that Rome and other forms of apostate Christianity, with pagan religions which number their followers by the million, will at last converge upon this iniquitous centre, Babylon, which as yet is not in view. This city is a harlot, a city given to lewd and idolatrous practices. The kings of the earth are the most notorious offenders, for they committed fornication with her, that is, not literal fornication, though that, we may be sure, will not be lacking in this city of wickedness, but spiritual fornication, as idolatry is often called in the Old Testament. As a result of the actions of earth's kings, their peoples will, because of their leadership, be made drunken with the wine of her fornication. This state of spiritual drunkenness will lead to utter spiritual confusion on earth. Earth's peoples will stagger about in the dark of Babylonian confusion, save those who find in the Scriptures a lamp for their feet and light for their path. The harlot sits on many waters. These are explained in verse 15, as "peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues." Then John is carried by the Spirit into a wilderness; this was the state into which Babylon had brought the world, into a spiritual wilderness almost void of life. There he saw a woman sitting on a scarlet-coloured beast full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. We are here back again at chapter 13, where we saw the beast as a system with seven heads and ten horns arising out of the sea. Inverses 9 and 10 the woman sits on the heads of the beast, but we are told that in contrast the ten horns hate the woman (verse 16).

The woman is gorgeously arrayed in purple and scarlet, colours which speak of royalty and earth's glory, but there is no blue, the colour we see when we look toward heaven on a clear day. She is decked with gold, precious stones and pearls. This is all outward show and covers the corruptions within. She holds in her hand a golden cup brimful of abominations, which are the unclean things of her fornication. The woman herself is drunk, but what with? She is an inebriate. What is her drink? The answer is, the blood of saints and the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. It is said that "in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all that have been slain upon the earth" (18. 24). God tears aside her gorgeous apparel and reveals her infamy. She has had a long ancestry stretching back to Genesis 11, and in every presentation of Babylon in the Scriptures, she is ever the opponent of God and His people. In her final phase, when the judgement of God shall fall upon her, she shall be found to be the heritor of the blood of God's faithful saints in all ages, and when His judgement finally falls upon her she shall nevermore be found.

From verse 7, the angel begins to tell John the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carried her, which has seven heads and ten horns. When John sees this vision he is transported into the future, to a time when five of the seven heads (kings) had fallen. We have in chapter 13 pointed out that the beast as a system comes up out of the sea, but the beast as a
man comes up out of the abyss. Verses 8 to 13 are of very great importance in the understanding of the mystery connected with this man called the beast. We are told that "the beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and is about to come up out of the abyss, and to go into perdition." He was, that is, he which had reigned, but was not now reigning, as one of the seven heads. He received a death-stroke with a sword and died and went down into the abyss. He comes up out of the abyss in the middle of Daniel's seventyth prophetic week of years. It is evident that he is one of the first five kings who had fallen before that point in the visions which John was shown, as he was neither the one who was reigning when John saw the vision, nor was he the one who was to come, who was to reign but a little while. He is said to be an eighth, that is, in his second term of office, but it is also said that he is out of the seven. This shows that he has two terms of kingly office. Twice over (verses 8 and 11) he is said to go into perdition. He is also called "the son of perdition." These signify what is said of the end of the beast in his fell work on earth, for the beast and the false prophet were cast alive into the lake of fire (chapter 19. 20).

When the beast rises from the abyss, then will arise the revived Roman empire, as seen in the ten diadems being on the horns, in chapter 13. 1. The ten horns, which are ten kings, will receive authority with the beast for one hour (3½ years). They have one mind to give their power and authority to the beast. These ten horns, with the beast, shall hate the harlot, and shall make her desolate, that is, they will plunder her of her wealth and make her as a wilderness. This fact is emphasized, that they will make her naked and eat her flesh, indicating the sacking of Babylon by the beast, his ten kings and their armies. Finally, they will set her on fire. God will put in their hearts to do His will, to give their kingdom to the beast until the words of God shall be finished. Finally the beast and these ten kings shall war against the Lamb, as in the great battle of Har-Magedon, as described in chapter 19. Of the coming beast, the "king of fierce countenance," it is said, "He shall magnify himself in his heart, and in their security shall he destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes (who is the King of kings); but he shall be broken without hand." (Daniel 8. 25). The Lamb shall overcome them, for He is the Lord of lords, and King of kings, and they that are with Him, who are called and chosen and faithful. Faithfulness during their life on earth will be a factor in the character of those who shall be with the Lord and share in His triumph in the great battle of Har-Magedon. All the saints of the Church which is Christ's Body will be with Him in His coming to earth, but not all these will be amongst the faithful. The faithful have a special place and reward.

Babylon's fall and destruction are given in detail in chapter 18. An angel of great authority and marvellous glory cries with a mighty voice, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great. " Her lewd corruptions given in chapter 17 are repeated in verse 3, and in addition we are told that the merchants of the earth had become rich through luxury. In her fall she had now become a habitation of demons, unclean spirits, and of every unclean and hated bird.

Some of God's people who for one reason or another, perhaps to share in her luxurious prosperity, are in Babylon, are called by a voice from heaven, "Come forth. My people, out of her, that ye have no fellowship with her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. " Her sins like those of Sodom of old had reached to heaven. She is to receive double punishment for her works. She had glorified herself and waxed wanton. She thought of herself as a queen and not a widow, but torment and mourning were to be her
portion. In one day her plagues were to come upon her, and she was to be burned with fire, which, as we have seen in 17. 16, is to be carried out by the beast and the ten kings. In this they carry out God's judgement on Babylon. Earth's kings, other than the beast and the ten kings, shall weep and wail over her, when they see the smoke of her burning, and standing afar off shall say, "Woe, woe, the great city, Babylon, the strong city! for in one hour is thy judgement come. And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn over her, for no man buyeth their merchandise any more." Then in verses 12 and 13 we are given a list of the goods and slaves that were bought and sold in Babylon. This list also clearly indicates that Babylon is a literal city. The kings and merchants are real men and God's people are real people. The whole scene in these two chapters (17 and 18) is intensely literal behind the signs used, such as a woman for a city and heads for kings. Note how in 18. 16 it says that the great city was arrayed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold and precious stone and pearls; it says in 17. 4, that the woman, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots was decked with this finery and jewels. This is yet another evidence that the woman is a literal city and not simply a religious system. We may also dismiss the erroneous idea about Rome being the city. It has been called the seven-hilled city, as though chapter 17. 9 gives encouragement to this idea. The heads are mountains, and the mountains are kings. The R. V. renders verse 10 correctly, "They are seven kings," not, "There are seven kings" (A. V.).

The grief and consternation of the merchants and shipmasters is graphically told in verses 15 to 19 as they weep and mourn and cast dust on their heads, as they watch the burning of this rich and luxurious city. But in contrast to this weeping and mourning by those whose interests were entirely worldly, we have this word, "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye saints, and ye apostles, and ye prophets; for God hath judged your judgement on her."

A strong angel casts as it were a great millstone into the sea, and says that thus with a mighty fall shall Babylon, the great city, be cast down, and shall be found no more at all. Her day of mirth and music, of craftsmen and their craft, the voice of the millstone and of the bridegroom and the bride shall no more be heard in her. Her merchants were earth's princes and with her sorcery all nations were deceived. The worst of all her sins was that in her was found the blood of prophets and saints, and of all them that have been slain on the earth. Thus shall come to an end Babylon the great, the city that is yet to be. Where shall she be built? To such a question one would not seek to prophesy, but one sees no reason to question that she will be seen at last in the same land that saw her rise of old, in the land of Chaldea by the Euphrates.

THE GOSPEL OF THE GOSPELS

It is a rewarding study to trace the content of the message proclaimed by the Lord and His apostles as revealed in the four Gospels, and to compare and contrast that message with the gospel which is unique to this dispensation.

Designations used by the Holy Spirit for the Lord's Message

We may helpfully tabulate certain references illustrating the terms used by the Holy Spirit to describe the message of the Lord and the apostles prior to the cross:
Some interesting points emerge from this.

(A) The message of the Lord and the apostles before the cross may rightly be distinguished by the term "the gospel of the kingdom," since this expression is used three times in relation to it, but is never used of the gospel for this dispensation.

(B) It is striking that in the R. V. the Lord's message is three times called "the gospel (or good tidings) of the kingdom of God," but never "the gospel of the kingdom of heaven." It is evident from comparison of Matthew 4. 17 with Mark 1. 15 that the message proclaimed both the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God to be at hand, necessarily referring to an aspect of both kingdoms.

Please also link Luke 9. 2, 11 (R. V.) for further references to the preaching of the kingdom of God by the Lord Jesus in the course of His ministry.

(C) In Mark 1. 14 the R. V. reading is "the gospel of God," compared with the "gospel of the kingdom of God" in the A. V. It is a matter of textual criticism, but as Tischendorf, Tregelles and Alford all support the R. V. reading, the weight of evidence in favour of the R. V. reading is fairly strong. Accepting this, it is noteworthy that the Lord's message should be designated "the gospel of God," which is also applied to the message of the present era as in Romans 1. 1, 1 Thessalonians 2. 8, 9, and elsewhere.

(D) In these scriptures, the A. V. has "gospel," and the R. V. "good tidings." A similar alternative rendering is seen in connexion with the gospel of the present dispensation in Romans 10. 16.

(E) We may fairly assume that where the message of the Lord is referred to simply as "the gospel," the context usually demands that "the gospel of the kingdom" is referred to, just as the context in such places as Acts 16. 10 would demand that reference is being made to the gospel of the grace of God. Matthew 26. 13 and Mark 14. 9 are probably exceptions, for it seems that the Lord was then anticipating also the gospel of the present era.

Salient Features of the Gospel as proclaimed by the Lord
An examination of the main elements in the Lord's message illustrates that the following aspects were prominent:

(A) A National and Dispensational Aspect
That the long-promised Messiah had been announced by John the Baptist, and was now proclaiming God's word to Israel brought a
special responsibility to that nation. The Lord's message made clear their unique national opportunity, and the issues involved. That Israel's Messiah had come was "good news" indeed. It was proclaimed fully throughout Israel in the earlier phase of the Lord's ministry (e.g., Matthew 4. 17, 23; 9. 35; 10. 7, Mark 1. 15, Luke 8. 1; 9. 2, 11, 60; 10. 9). As it became apparent that Israel nationally was hardening against the proclamation of God's special visitation through Messiah being in their midst, the Lord foreshadowed the national and dispensational consequences (e.g., Matthew 11. 13-19; 12. 38-45; 21. 33-46, Luke 13. 6-9; 19. 11-27). [When speaking of Israel's "unique national opportunity," bear in mind John 12. 36-43, particularly verses 39, 40. Israel nationally could not believe. The message through John and the Lord was personal and individual, not national. —J. M. ]

(B) The Proclamation of personal Blessing to believing Individuals

This aspect of the Lord's message is beautifully summarized in Luke 4. 18, 19. Irrespective of the trend of national unbelief, individuals who received the Lord's word continued throughout His ministry to receive rich spiritual blessing, accompanied by abundant blessing in the healing of bodily infirmity. For example, it was on the Lord's last journey through Jericho, when Israel nationally was hardening into final rejection of Christ, that Bartimaeus had his eyes opened (Luke 18. 35-43) and Zacchaeus found spiritual relief (Luke 19. 1-10). [Whilst it is true of all men, as with the men of Israel, a process of hardening goes on the longer they live (Ephesians 4. 18), we must be clear as to the attitude of the people of Israel to Christ from the beginning of His ministry, as witness John 2. 18-20, 3. 14, 15, Luke 4. 28, 29, etc. He was rejected by Israel from the beginning, as Isaiah 53 said He would be. —J. M. ]

(C) Witness to the Lord's Deity

Necessarily this truth was central to the message of Christ, for it lies at the foundation of all God's saving purposes. Hence the Lord's uncompromising insistence that "before Abraham was, I am" (John 8. 58); that "I and the Father are one" (John 10. 30); that "I am the living Bread which came down out of heaven" (John 6. 51), and that "no one cometh unto the Father but by Me" (John 14. 6). See also Matthew 16. 13-17.

(D) The Importance of Genuine Repentance and Faith

The Lord's ministry repeatedly emphasized the uselessness of external religious observance without a recognition of sinnership before God. In Matthew 5. 20 He contrasted genuine justification with the self-righteousness of scribe or Pharisee. In Matthew 5. 28 He penetrated beneath the outward act of sinfulness to arouse conviction regarding the inner counsels of the heart. This was typical of His entire ministry. In further illustration see Matthew 23. 25-28, Mark 7. 1-23, Luke 7. 36-50, John 8. 1-11.

Complementary to this was the clear directive towards faith in Himself as Saviour. The incident of Mark 9. 14-29, with special reference to verses 19 and 23, is but one of many examples. See also John 6. 35; 8. 24; 9. 35-38. —G. P., Jr.
THE GOSPEL OF THE GLORY OF THE BLESSED GOD

The Revelation of the Divine Character through the Gospel

From Glasgow. —In Exodus 34. 6, 7 we have a clear statement of the character of God in dealing with sinners. After the fall estrangement existed between God and man, God demanding that sin be punished. He has only one thing for sin and that is destruction, whether by judgement of the sinner or by some vicarious sacrifice. In order that the claims of divine justice be met, the punishment must be fully imposed, and the prerogative of mercy so exercised as in no way to lessen the sanctity and efficacy of the divine word. Men must not be encouraged to think that its threats would not be carried out. David, in the day of his sin, cried, "Let us fall now into the hand of the LORD; for His mercies are great." He did not expect to avoid punishment, but to have it mercifully administered.

Original sin was a great barrier to the desire of God to enjoy the fellowship and service of His creature, man. He so loved mankind that in Old Testament times He went to great lengths to establish a form of service whereby He might dwell among men, albeit behind curtains. The sacrifices of the law could not remove original sin. They were not good enough to satisfy divine justice and righteousness. No animal was equal to the need of a man created in the image of God. Only the vicarious sacrifices of One who is Man could avail. All were themselves sinners. In wondrous grace God Himself provided the Man Christ Jesus, who would save His people from their sins (Matthew 1. 21).

This Man, holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners, suffered death voluntarily. He did not die as other men die. Death did not take hold of Him against His will. He laid down His life, having power to do so (John 10. 18), bearing away the sin of the world, the original sin of mankind. In His death all demands of divine judgement were met, with a loving, merciful, righteous God able to be just and the Justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus.

From Wigan. —The character of God in His many attributes has been revealed by His dealings with men, and the various names by which godly men learned to call upon Him are related to God's dealings with them. Abraham, after his experience at Moriah, called the name of the place Jehovah-jireh (Genesis 22). He had learned of the faithful character and merciful providence of God. Others followed who learned of His fearful holiness, His glorious majesty, and His righteousness, but never was there such display of His glory as when He sent His Son (Hebrews 1. 3). The gospel is given to give us "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Corinthians 4. 6).

In view of this revealing of God, John's first important work was to set forth in his Gospel the Deity of the Lord Jesus and His eternal relationship and unity with the Father. In this relationship of Father and only begotten Son we are able to appreciate more fully the magnitude of the love of God. For God so loved that He gave His only begotten Son (John 3. 16). In view of the sinfulness and unworthiness of men, on whom God's love is bestowed through the Gospel of grace, we can appreciate the gracious character of God.

In the epistle to the Romans, the gospel epistle, God's righteousness is revealed. The justifying of the sinner, though according to grace, could only be on a righteous basis. The claims of God's throne demanded that
sin must be judged, so the law given by Moses, a righteous law, brought a knowledge of sin (Romans 3. 20), and all were brought under the judgement of God (Romans 3. 19). But Christ Jesus was set forth to be a propitiation (propitiatory sacrifice), to show God's righteousness, that He Himself might be just and the Justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus (Romans 3. 24-26).

John's epistle tells us that God is Love (1 John 4. 8), and Paul in his ministry of the gospel tells how God's love was shown to himself as chief of sinners. In his case the grace of God abounded with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus (1 Timothy 1. 12-16). Paul also revealed the patience of God to the Romans, and speaks of the God of patience (Romans 15. 5). Again he refers to the longsuffering of God toward himself and others (1 Timothy 1. 16, Romans 9. 22).

None of these attributes of God is exercised at the expense of the others, for God is equal in all His attributes (James 1. 17) J. H.

EXTRACTS

From Nottingham. —A person reveals his character to his fellows by his words and by his deeds. God manifested Himself in all His glory and power in creation, but with the coming of God's beloved Son we have the full revelation of Deity in Him. The fields were white unto harvest, and the Lord was desirous to gather in this harvest of souls.

Not only did grace come by the Lord, but also truth (John 1. 17). This term, we thought, would embrace the whole revealed will and purposes of God for the human race.

The 'washing' (Titus 3. 5), it was thought, was not the partial washing, as of the washing of the feet, cleansing from day to day, but the washing of the whole person through the word, that is, the new birth. R. Hickling.

From Belfast. —We have noted that the character of the eternal God is unchangeable. What is true of God today is that which has ever been true in eternal ages past. God has ever been what He revealed concerning Himself to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob and the patriarchs, as well as to Moses and the people of Israel. We see this revealed in a special way to God's servant Moses, who, being sheltered in the cleft of a rock, saw the glory of the incorruptible God of Israel, and heard the majestic words, "The LORD, the LORD, a God full of compassion and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy and truth; keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin" (Exodus 33. 22, 34, 6, 7).

The coming of the Son of God into the world revealed to men a fulness of the divine character that had hitherto not been possible. All the attributes of God the Father were seen embodied in the Divine Son as He trod earth's pathway in perfect obedience to the Father's will. God's surpassing love, His matchless grace, His mercy, His tender compassion, His perfect justice, His intrinsic holiness, His inexorable righteousness, His eternal truth—all these attributes were exemplified in all their purity and perfection in the life of the Son of God here among men, and shown in their fullest splendour when He died on the cross of Golgotha to put away sins for ever.

D. Rea.
From Whitehills and Macduff. — "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other" (Psalm 85. 10). God Himself is the origin of these divine attributes and it may seem difficult at first glance to reconcile the opposites of His nature shown in the quotation. David cast himself on God for judgement for his sin, and yet cried for mercy hoping that God in grace would forgive, cleanse, and restore him (Psalm 51).

In the gospel God reveals Himself in Jesus Christ ("in Him should all the fulness dwell") who truly is the effulgence of His glory, the image of the invisible God. The qualities seen in Christ are those of Deity, and in His behaviour in many circumstances we see the heavenly virtues of pity, compassion, kindness, and love. Only in the Person of Christ can God show these philanthropic aspects of His nature among men, and He had to send His only Son to do so.

A. B. R.

From Ilford. — It was pointed out that the passage, "No man hath seen God at any time" (John 1. 18), could equally well be rendered, "No one..." It would therefore be right to infer from this verse that no created being, whether angel, man, or demon, had seen God at any time, and that the first time God was beheld by a creature was when Mary brought forth her firstborn Son [1].

But Jesus Christ, the Creator, the Only Begotten Son, was God, one with God the Father in nature, power and glory, privy to His innermost thoughts, and the centre of His affections ("in the bosom of the Father").

The verb "is" (John 1. 18) was noted, and it was thought to be fully in keeping with the Deity of Christ. The suggestion was rejected, that the present tense is used because when John wrote his epistle the Lord Jesus was raised and in heaven. We chose rather the view that the verb was used to express the fact that the Lord Jesus, even when He was down here during the days of His flesh, was also, as God, in the bosom of the Father upholding all things by the word of His power.

L. A. White.

From Southport. — Love which is in Christ Jesus is referred to in 1 Timothy 1. 14. God so loved the sinner that He sent His Son to earth. The Lord Jesus Christ loves us, for He laid down His life. What greater love is there than this? It is written, "Hereby know we love, because He laid down His life for us" (1 John 3. 16). Romans 5. 7, 8 reminds us that Christ displayed this love to us when we were yet sinners. Surely there can be no other love like His! and this love abounds exceedingly.

Let us ponder again the story of David and Mephibosheth (2 Samuel 9). Mephibosheth had no claim on the love of David, because he was of the house of Saul, one of David's enemies. David wished to show the kindness of God to such a helpless one. His kindness is but a feeble illustration of the kindness of David's greater Son to helpless man. Again, the Samaritan, when he beheld the Jew robbed, wounded, helpless and lying by the roadside, saw him as one in need of pity, and showed him mercy (Luke 10. 37). So it is with the Lord Jesus Christ, who saw the helpless condition of the sinner; His heart was so full of pity that in love He was prepared to die.

W. S. Holden.

From Kingston-on-Thames. — The character of God never changes, but He has revealed Himself to men through the ages in different ways. He has always been a gracious God, slow to anger and plenteous in mercy, but until Christ came grace and righteousness appeared to be opposed to
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one another. Now, because of the work of Christ upon the cross, grace reigns through righteousness, mercy and truth are met together. Although the cross shows forth the love of God in all its fulness, it also demonstrates, as nothing else could, His perfect righteousness. God is able to save sinful men and at the same time be righteous, because the pure and holy Son of God suffered and died on the cross and bare our sins in His body upon the tree.

As we trace the footsteps of the Lord Jesus as He walked upon this earth, we have brought before us in all His actions the character of God. However, such virtues as obedience and humility are particularly connected with Christ's incarnation and are the out-shining of certain aspects of His character such as His love and grace.

L. B.

From Paisley. — The words of the Lord Jesus to Philip are significant: "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." By deed and word the character of God was revealed, a revelation that was finally expressed in the cross of Calvary.

There has been entrusted to us a message that reveals the character of God, so fully demonstrated in the life and death of Christ—love, grace, mercy, truth, righteousness, goodness, kindness, longsuffering, forbearance. The blessedness of these we have known, and will know more fully in eternity, when in the ages to come God will show the exceeding riches of His grace in kindness towards us in Christ Jesus.

G. F.

From Cowdenbeath. — A full and perfect revelation of God's character has been given in a unique way—through Christ. Only He could fully reveal God; He is God's only begotten Son. He is of the same nature and substance as His Father, being co-equal and co-eternal with Him. He dwells in the bosom of the Father. This was His place even when He was on earth. He left His Father's side (the place of glory; John 17. 5), but He never left His Father's bosom (the place of affection). Because of these glorious facts He was able to reveal the richness of God's character to men, and to display the divine attributes which were rightfully His and not merely given to Him by another.

The word translated "declared" (John 1. 18) is in every other instance translated "rehearsed" (see Luke 24. 35, Acts 14. 27, 15. 4, 12) and is always used in reference to things. If such "rehearsing" means the telling exactly of things as they happened, the "rehearsing" (or "declaring") of the Father by the Son must mean the telling exactly who and what God is. This is what the Son came to do, and what He alone (because of who He is) is able to do.

J. C. Ross.

From Toronto, Ont. — The gospel reveals in their fulness the love, grace, and mercy of God. Before the gospel was preached mankind had already experienced many tokens of God's love, grace, and mercy. Indeed, since we merit no favours from the hand of God, all temporal gifts are tokens of His grace. Since we must pass through death, unless the Lord should first return, every second of our lives is a token of His mercy. All these things are dependent on the sacrifice which was made once at the end of the age, and they can now be enjoyed to the full. In examining these three divine traits we noted that God's love is displayed in His grace and
mercy. In grace He gives to us blessings which are unmerited. In mercy He withholds deserved judgment. Since grace is unmerited favour, it can only be shown toward an imperfect creature; otherwise those things which we receive in grace would be ours by right. The same is true of mercy. Therefore we read of the Father loving the Son, but not of Him showing grace or mercy toward Him.

For centuries before the gospel was preached, men had been impressed with God's righteousness. Job, realizing God's righteousness, asked, "How can man be just with God?" Not until the gospel was preached was this question answered. Godly men, like David, realized that it was not the sacrifices and burnt offerings that God desired (Psalm 40), but they were never fully shown what God required. In the gospel we are told what God required, how He received it, and also how, on that basis, He can be the Justifier and still remain just.

Malcolm Seath.

From Hamilton, Ont. —The revelation of the Divine Character through the gospel is the fulfilling of that which had its beginning in eternity and was prophesied in the garden of Eden, when it was said that the woman's Seed would bruise the serpent's head. It was typified in the offerings and sacrifices, but was revealed when God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law. The apostle John bore testimony concerning Jesus Christ, that He was the One through whom grace and truth came to man (John 1. 17). The life of the Lord Jesus bore this out.

The power and authority of the Lord Jesus is seen in obedience of the elements to His will as He spoke to the wind and calmed the seas. His grace and love were shown when He went about dispensing blessing to all with whom He came in contact, healing the sick and raising the dead, and above all in His death of ignominy and shame at Calvary.

M. F., D. B.

From Crowborough. —" The law was given by Moses, grace and truth came by Jesus Christ " (John 1. 17). God revealed Himself to the Israelites through the law. It showed men the divine standard. " This do and thou shalt live, " was its language. God's mercy and forgiveness could be seen in Old Testament times. In Exodus 34. 6, 7, we have a description of God's gracious character. When the Lord Jesus came, He revealed the Father in a fuller way. God, unlike us, is perfectly balanced. His grace is never exercised at the expense of His truth.

J. Robertson.

From Edinburgh. —The gospel is the good news of God concerning His Son, and reveals the love of God to a world that hated God. This love is shown in the Person of Christ (1 John 4. 9). The gospel reveals the kindness of God. Kindness is a practical demonstration of love, and the practical expression of God's love is the provision of the Kinsman-Redeemer (Titus 3. 4). Other attributes of God revealed in the gospel are His goodness, forbearance, longsuffering, grace and mercy. The favour and leniency which we so little deserve are freely given us in the gospel.

J. Paterson.

From Middlesbrough. —Under the law the holiness, majesty and power of God were revealed. These are attributes of the eternal unchanging God, but we have today a much fuller revelation of the Divine Character.
The Father is the invisible God: the Son is the image of the invisible God. The Fatherhood of God and the Sonship of Christ are eternal. The Son has declared the Father. The word for "declared" appears to be a comprehensive word indicating "expounded" [2]. Christ has revealed and interpreted God. This revelation is perfect and final.

The epistle to the Romans deals with the unrighteousness of man and the righteousness of God. The righteousness of God is intrinsic and eternal, whereas the righteousness of those in Christ is imputed. This excludes the possibility of self-glorification. Abraham’s righteousness was wholly of faith and apart from circumcision and the law.

The fundamental truths of the gospel are now seen to have been contained in the Old Testament. God has always been gracious, but this grace is fully revealed in the gospel.

From Atherton. —The gospel reveals our state before God: "All have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God".

The gospel reveals the remedy. Only through the love, kindness, mercy, and grace of God could there be a remedy. The very basis of the gospel is God’s love and kindness, shown by the wondrous fact that He gave His only Son to bring His rebel creatures back to Him. God’s exceeding abundant mercy and grace provide the hope and way of redemption.

D. H. J., E. B.

From London, S. E. —The Old Testament writers had a firm knowledge of God’s greatness, majesty, judgement, etc., but in His life Christ demonstrated these and other attributes more clearly than before and in a very practical way. In addition, He added immeasurably to our conception of God by revealing Him as a God of love. Calvary was the ultimate demonstration of this, and there God’s character is shown in striking contrast to man’s worst display of sin and injustice. Christ died and, dying, showed God’s love in a way which will never be equalled. His death and resurrection made possible for men a new approach to God, and God’s relationship to us as OUT Father is an aspect of His character which is mentioned hardly at all in the Old Testament.

Through the gospel, then, we today can appreciate more of the Divine Character than could those living before Christ.

A. C. Bishop,

From West Hartlepool. —We do not usually associate grace with the law, although God, the Lawgiver, was Himself gracious (Exodus 33. 19). Where sin abounded, the law exposed the seriousness of that sin, whereas grace, as becoming through and manifested by Christ, has met our poverty (the state to which sin reduced us) and enriched us with heavenly wealth.

God is true, because He is the Truth, even as Christ was and claimed to be (John 14. 6). Therefore, His word is truth. The law was true, and it revealed the truth about man. The decalogue clearly shows what even elevated Israel was capable of. The law, it may be said, was a way of life.

Christ revealed the truth about God. He spoke truth, because He was the embodiment of it. He revealed also the truth about man, his sinnership and need of salvation. He revealed also the truth of God’s love, wonderful, unsurpassed in excellency and extent, not only during the years of His ministry, but also in a superlative manner, at the consummation thereof, when He gave Himself.

Divine righteousness may act in two ways: God justly condemns sin, and He justly deals with sin.

R. Ross.
The Unique Dispensational Setting of the Gospel

From London, Ont. — It is well for us to note that the setting aside of the Hebrew economy, and the taking up of a new manner of dealing with men, not after the law, but according to grace, were not an afterthought, nor the result of trial and error, but were fully and completely planned in the eternal counsels of God, even before the creation of the earth. We can trace the unfolding of His plan—the woman's Seed in Genesis, the blessing of Abraham, the shadows and types in the tabernacle, and there are vivid portrayals of the sufferings of the Christ found in the Psalms and in Isaiah.

R. Williamson.

COMMENTS

[1] (Ilford). — Whilst the Greek in John 1.18 gives "no one," it may be too much to say that no created being had seen God at any time. The revelation of God to men which was made in His incarnate Son was primarily made to men in the incarnation. He came to declare God to men in their ignorance of God. In Exodus 24.10, 11, it says, "They saw the God of Israel," and "they beheld God." When we speak of seeing one another, how much of one another do we see? Not much more than the head and the hands. Mary saw her Son, but how did she see God? Was it not her Child, the infant Jesus? This is quite a big subject of seeing God. Note His appearances in Exodus 24.17 and Revelation 4.3. — J. M.

[2] (Middlesbrough). — The word Exegeomai (declared) means to tell out, to relate thoroughly, to recount. See Cowdenbeath paper, where citations are made from the R. V. giving "rehearsed." — J. M.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question from Whitehills and Macduff. — For Titus 3.5 the margin gives "laver" for "washing." Does this imply that "washing" refers to the first washing of a priest, that is, the washing that was not repeated? Does the expression, "renewing of the Holy Spirit, " in spite of the use of the word "renewing, " refer to what the Lord intended when he spoke of the new birth (John 3)?

Answer. — The word "washing" is Loutron, which is derived from Loud to wash, and means a bath with water in which the whole person is washed. Thus, by implication, it is rendered by washing in most versions. Yes, it is the antitypical teaching of the washing of Aaron by Moses, which was not repeated. Titus 3.5 shows the same truth as John 3.5. See my notes on Titus last year. — J. M.

Question from Toronto. — Please explain the expression "justified in the spirit" (1 Timothy 3.16). Is the spirit here the Holy Spirit? How can a righteous person be justified?

Answer. — I judge A. V., Darby, Englishman's Greek N. T. to be correct when they print Spirit with a capital showing that the Holy Spirit is intended, not as in the R. V. "spirit." The Lord, who was condemned by men, was justified in Spirit in resurrection. This was in fulfilment of Isaiah 50.8: "He is near that justifieth Me." In connexion with these words men are seen treating the Lord with the greatest indignities. Men condemned Him, but God justified Him, showed Him to be righteous. — J. M.
NOTES ON THE SECOND EPISODE TO THE THESALONIANS

CHAPTER 3

Verses 9, 10: Not because we have not the right, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you, that ye should imitate us. For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, If any will not work, neither let him eat.

Paul had the right, as one who preached the gospel, to live of the gospel (1 Corinthians 9. 14). But to show themselves ensamples for others to follow, these men wrought to keep themselves, so as to make the gospel without charge (1 Corinthians 9. 18). How wholesome are his words, "If any man will not work, neither let him eat"!

Verses 11, 12: For we hear of some that walk among you disorderly, that work not at all, but are busybodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.

Lazybodies become busybodies, officious, prying, intermeddlers, persons who are a stain on any community and serious causes of trouble with their tittle-tattle. Such Paul commanded and exhorted in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work in quietness, to give their tongues a rest and their hands work to do, and to eat their own bread, and not that of others.

Verse 13: But ye, brethren, be not weary in well-doing.

The saints in Thessalonica in general were well-doing people, and they were exhorted not to be weary in well-doing.

Verses 14, 15: And if any man obeyeth not our word by this epistle, note that man, that ye have no company with him, to the end that he may be ashamed. And yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.

If the corrective words of this epistle were not obeyed by any one, that man was to be marked (Semaino from Sema, a sign or mark, and means to signify, also to declare, to announce), and the saints were not to keep company or associate with him, so that he might be ashamed of his conduct. He was to be admonished as a brother and not accounted as an enemy. This is admonition within the church.

Verses 16, 17, 18: Now the Lord of peace Himself give you peace at all times in all ways. The Lord be with you all. The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle: so I write. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

We read of the God of peace several times. Here we have the Lord of peace Himself who would give them peace always and in every way. Paul's wish was, "The Lord be with you all." As of old, so now, He will be with us, if we be with Him. Here is Paul's salutation, a salutation in every one of his fourteen epistles, that of "grace." It is given under his own hand, as in 1 Corinthians 16. 21; Colossians 4. 18. See in contrast Romans 16. 22, and also Galatians 6. 11. J. M.
NOTES ON THE EPISTLE OF JAMES
CHAPTER I

Verse 1: James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are of the Dispersion, greeting.

It is not possible to say with certainty whether this is James the son of Alphseus (Acts 1. 13), called James the less, or James the Lord's brother (Galatians 1. 19). See note on Jude 1. He describes himself as a servant, bondservant or slave, of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ. He addresses his epistle to the twelve tribes of or in the Dispersion. Those addressed were such of the twelve scattered tribes of Israel as had embraced the gospel, and not all Jews of the Dispersion, and those who had embraced the gospel were in the Fellowship of God's Son, as in Acts 2. 42 and 1 Corinthians 1. 9. It is clear from the address that James did not believe in what are called by some " the lost ten tribes. " In his salutation he wished them joy.

Verses 2, 3, 4: Count it all joy, my brethren, when ye fall into manifold temptations; knowing that the proof of your faith worketh patience. And let patience have its perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, lacking in nothing.

We are to esteem it all joy when we fall into various temptations (Peirasmos, a trying, putting to the proof; this is not a bad word in itself, but it is frequently used of temptation or solicitation to sin, from the flesh, from Satan and the world). By temptation there is a proving (Dokimion, "that by which anything is being tried"). Dokimos, a proving, is generally-used in a good sense to reveal the excellence of what is proved, so that it may be approved. James says that the proof (Dokimion) of your faith worketh endurance. Peter also speaks of the proof of faith: " Though now for a little while, if need be, ye have been put to grief in manifold temptations, that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold that perisheth though it is proved by fire, might be found unto praise and glory and honour at (in) the revelation of Jesus Christ " (1 Peter 1. 6, 7). The proving of faith through temptations may at the coming of the Lord be seen to have been unto God's glory and will in consequence be unto our glory. In the meantime it worketh endurance, which means literally, to remain under trial, to endure it. Paul says, " There hath no temptation taken you but such as man can bear: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation make also the way of escape, that ye may be able to endure it " (1 Corinthians 10. 13). The Lord taught His disciples to pray, " Bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one " (Matthew 6. 13). The Lord was Himself " led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil " (Matthew 4. 1). James says, " Ye have heard of the patience (endurance) of Job " (5. 11). Job said, " But He knoweth the way that I take; when He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold" (Job 23. 10). But Elihu said to him, " Would that Job were tried unto the end, because of his answering like wicked men " (Job 34. 36). If we refuse to endure when temptations gather around us, we shall not be perfect and entire, for in the temptation God has something to teach us that we could not learn in any other way.

Verse 5: But if any of you looketh wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

We have an apt illustration of this verse in the case of Solomon. When he was raised to be king over Israel, God told him to ask what He should give him, and it pleased God when he said, " Give me now wisdom and
knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people: for who can judge this Thy people, that is so great? " Because he had not asked riches, fionour, nor the life of his enemies, nor even long life, God gave him wisdom and knowledge such as none had before his time nor after. The wise instruction of his father bore fruit. Solomon said of his father's teaching, " I was a son unto my father... and he taught me... Get wisdom, get understanding... Wisdom is the principal thing;... yea, with all thou hast gotten get understanding... She shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her" (Proverbs 4. 3-8). The value of wisdom in dealing with men and in dealing with things amongst God's remnant people cannot be over-estimated. Seeing that God has not chosen many who are wise after the flesh from among men (1 Corinthians 1. 26-29), we, the foolish things of the world, should have a source of supply of wisdom available to us. Hence we are here told, that if any lack (Leipo, to be left or deserted) wisdom they are to ask of God, who giveth to all liberally, and He reproaches us not for our foolishness. Let young men and women ask wisdom from God in the beginning of their lives, that disaster may not overtake them in youth's early days. But let us all take knowledge from the end of Solomon, that wisdom alone will not preserve the life of those who have it. We need the keeping power of God.

Verses 6, 7, 8: But let him ask in faith, nothing doubting: for he that doubteth is like the surge of the sea driven by the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord; a doubleminded man, unstable in all his ways.

Faith was characteristic of praying Enoch who walked with God. Those who pray must believe that God is and that He rewards them that seek after Him (Hebrews 11. 5, 6). Hence the persons who pray for wisdom must ask in faith. There must be no doubting, staggering or wavering. Abraham is an example of one who doubted not (Romans 4. 20); "He waivered (same word as in James) not through unbelief." Having come to the decision to ask wisdom, it is to be done without wavering or hesitancy, but rather with assured trustfulness that what has been asked for will be given. The wavering doubter is as unstable as the surge of the sea which is driven by the wind and tossed, but a man of faith is not so moved. A doubleminded or two-souled man is unstable, not fixed, inconstant; such will receive nothing from the Lord. To what purpose would it be for the Lord to give wisdom to an unstable man? It would be much like the proverb about a beautiful woman who has no intelligence:

"As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, 
So is a fair woman which is without discretion "

(Proverbs 11. 22).

Again,

"Wisdom is too high for a fool" (Proverbs 24. 7).

J. M.
"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).

EDITORIAL

As was to be expected, there is this month a generous degree of Old Testament reference in developing the subject. A sound and accurate knowledge of the Old Testament is of excellent value in obtaining an understanding of the teaching of the Lord as expressed in the New Testament. Many say, with a degree of inconsistency of which they cannot surely be aware, that they accept the New Testament but reject the Old Testament. This month's subject is a good example of the Spirit-given harmony and unity of the Old and New Testaments.

There come to mind several worthy examples of men guided by the Spirit to use the Old Testament aright. Stephen (Acts 7) used Old Testament history from Abraham to Solomon to reinforce the charge that his hearers were the betrayers and murderers of the Righteous One. Philip (Acts 8) began from Isaiah 53 in preaching to the eunuch. Apollos powerfully and publicly confuted the Jews, and, using the Old Testament Scriptures, showed the truth of the gospel message that Jesus is the Christ (Acts 18. 28). We feel safe in suggesting that the same was true of the preaching of Paul even at the beginning of his witness (Acts 9. 22). Paul also emphasized the direct relevance of Old Testament teaching to the gospel by his insisting that the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord were according to the Scriptures " (1 Corinthians 15. 1-4). It is clear from the Scriptures that all of these testimonies carried conviction, the which conviction was in each case born of the fact that the Scriptures of truth were being used by the Spirit of God.

To these and others we should add the Lord's own teaching on the day of His resurrection from the dead. In warming and gladdening the hearts of two of His dejected followers, He began from Moses and from all the prophets, and interpreted the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures (Old Testament). Which of us does not feel a heartwarming joy in hearing the gospel becomingly set forth from the Scriptures? To the believer a sound, full and warm gospel message is most enjoyable and healthful; to the unsaved it may be the means used of the Spirit to his eternal salvation. May we, therefore, hold up, as a gift to cultivate ambitiously and to desire earnestly and prayerfully, the gift of setting forth the gospel convincingly from the Old Testament as well as the New Testament? Much prayerful study of the word of God and private communion with God will be needed. Let young men seek to do so now!

J. B.
NOTES ON THE BOOK OF THE REVELATION
CHAPTER 19

Following the destruction of Babylon heaven is filled with rejoicing and the voice of a great multitude is heard saying, "Hallelujah; Salvation, and glory, and power, belong unto our God: for true and righteous are His judgements; for He hath judged the great harlot, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and He hath avenged the blood of His servants at her hand. And a second time they say, Hallelujah. " Then we are told that "the four and twenty elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshipped God that sitteth on the throne, saying, Amen; Hallelujah. " A voice from the throne said, "Give praise to our God, all ye His servants, ye that fear Him, the small and the great." Then responded a great multitude with a voice as of many waters, "Hallelujah: for the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigneth." Such was the rejoicing in heaven over the righteous judgement of God upon Babylon the great, the city which shall yet corrupt the earth, one of whose kings had been the beast in his first term of office (see Revelation 17. 10, 11). During his second term of office he shall with the ten kings destroy her. It is said that the smoke of Babylon goeth up for ever and ever (19. 3); this must be the smoke of the torment of the people of Babylon, not of the materials of which the city itself was built. It is said in Jude 7 that Sodom and Gomorrah and the other cities are "suffering the punishment of eternal fire." This does not mean that the materials of which these cities were constructed are still suffering, or that materials suffered at all. It means the people of those cities. See also chapter 14. 11.

After this is seen another woman of quite another sort. She is the Bride, the wife of the Lamb. What is said about her is altogether beautiful.

"Let us rejoice and be exceeding glad, and let us give the glory unto Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. And it was given unto her that she should array herself in fine linen, bright and pure: for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints." What saints are indicated in the words, "the righteous acts of the saints"? These saints are quite evidently those who are comprised in the Bride, as it would be inconceivable that the Bride would have a garment made of the righteous acts of other saints. We have already seen in our notes on chapter 4 that there are those who hold that the four and twenty elders are the saints of the Bride of the Lamb. The ordinary reader of this chapter would never arrive at such an opinion, for the elders are again seen associated with the four living creatures, and quite clearly they are a distinct company from the saints of the Bride.

Who are the saints of the Bride? At the time of the marriage of the Lamb in heaven, Old Testament saints have not yet been raised from the dead. This is clearly seen from Daniel 12. 1-3 and Revelation 11. 15-18, also 20. 4-6. The coming of the Lord for the Church, for all in Christ, takes place before Daniel's seventieth week begins, before the calendar of events connected with the Jewish people commences. The Lord may come for His Church at any time, as it is not necessary for any prophetic events to transpire before He comes for the Church. As 1 Thessalonians 5. 1-5 shows, times and seasons have to do with the Lord's coming to earth and with the day of the Lord which is ushered in with that coming. That day cannot overtake the saints of this dispensation. "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." In addition to the saints of
NOTES ON THE BOOK OF THE REVELATION

Old Testament times not having been raised when the marriage takes place, the remnant nation of Israel is in the wilderness, having escaped from the dragon and the beast, and her scattered seed of faithful men and women are undergoing the severity of the beast's persecution. Besides these there are a vast number of believing Gentiles in the earth, as is indicated in Revelation 7. All these not being present in resurrected bodies will form no part of the Bride. A composite Bride of saints of all dispensations or of the Jewish nation and the Body of Christ is an entirely unscriptural conception. The Church the Body of Christ, which is the Bride of the Lamb, is a unique body of saints which cannot be amalgamated, confederated, coalesced with any other group of saints whatever. There can be no marriage involving the saints of the Body of Christ then present and saints of other dispensations not present, and besides those of Israel who are on earth undergoing the suffering of bestial persecutions, there are those millions of children of Israel who will be born during the Millennium who will not be present either. The Scriptures plainly teach from the typology of Adam and Eve, and other brides of the Old Testament, and the apostle’s exposition in Ephesians 5. 22-33 makes abundantly plain, that the Church which is Christ's Body is the Bride of the Lamb.

The marriage of the Lamb causes great joy in heaven. Here the eternal purpose of God in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 3. 7-11) will be revealed to the wonder and admiration of all in heaven, and God is glorified. The Lamb's wife had made herself ready, for it had been given to her to array herself in fine linen, bright and pure. This fine linen is the righteous acts, or righteousnesses, of the saints. This is not the imputed righteousness of Christ, but acts or works of righteousness done by the saints themselves. It seems evident from this that the judgement seat of Christ is past when the marriage takes place. The unworthy, carnal works of the saints have been burned up, as 1 Corinthians 3. 15 shows. "If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as through fire." The Bride will have no purple and scarlet garments like the harlot of chapter 17; neither will she have jewels of gold, precious stones and pearls: she will appear in the pure spotless garment of bright and pure fine linen. She will be a sight to dazzle every eye that sees her as she takes her place beside her Divine Bridegroom. What a day it will be! She had been a true spinster when she waited for the coming of her Bridegroom, when in earth's night with lighted lamp she spun the linen of her marriage dress. Much that saints have done unseen to any human eye will be revealed in that great day. May we each be spinsters while we wait for His coming.

It seems quite clear that the marriage and the marriage supper of the Lamb are two different events. While the marriage takes place in heaven, the marriage supper takes place on earth. The parable of Matthew 22. 1-14 shows the marriage feast or supper. The people of Israel were the first of the invited guests, but they would not come. Then other messengers were sent to them, but they would not come, but went to their several employments. The rest were more antagonistic and shamefully treated the servants of the King and killed some of them. Whereupon the King sent his armies and destroyed those murderers and burned their city. Then a much wider invitation was sent out to the highways and the marriage feast or supper was filled with guests. It is perhaps unnecessary to say that guests, as in verse 10, do not form the Bride or part thereof. The destruction of the opposing and murderous Jews, and the burning of the city, took place in the years 70 A. D., when Titus, the Roman emperor, slew countless Jews and burnt Jerusalem. All saints of the Church will share in the fine linen of
the Bride's attire, and there can be none in the Bride like the man who had not on the wedding garment provided for all the guests at the feast. None of the saints in the Bride will ever be bound and cast into outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then in Matthew 25. 1-13 we have the marriage feast again and the coming of the Bridegroom. Here it is accentuated, that in connexion with this some will be ready and some not ready. Such is the picture of the kingdom of heaven at the end of the age, at the time of the coming of the Son of Man to the earth. Those who are ready for His coming will go into the marriage feast or supper, and, as it says in Revelation 19. 9, "Blessed are they which are bidden to the marriage supper of the Lamb. " Such a feast at the Lord's coming to earth is indicated in Isaiah 25. 6-8, as also is the resurrection and restoration of Israel: "And in this mountain shall the LORD of Hosts make unto all peoples a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering that is cast over all peoples, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He hath swallowed up death for ever; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the reproach of His people shall He take away from off all the earth: for the LORD hath spoken it." 

J. M. M.

THE GOSPEL OF THE GOSPELS

Comparisons with the Message of the present Dispensation

In preaching the gospel of the grace of God, we draw freely from the ministry of the Lord in the four Gospels. The exquisite parables of Luke 15 still express for us the love of the Triune God for needy sinners. The Lord's discourses in John chapters 3 to 10 provide a rich variety of gospel truth. Among verses most used in the salvation of sinners are John 3. 16 and 5. 24. This all follows because there are certain elements common to the message of both eras, for example:

1. the declaration of Christ the Son of God as the only Saviour,
2. the necessity of repentance towards God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, and
3. common reactions to the message, e. g. those ensnared by covetousness (Luke 12. 13-21), those blinded by religious tradition (Matthew 15. 1-9), and those hindered by pride (Luke 18. 9-14).

Contrasts with the Message of the present Dispensation

But there are also decided points of contrast, which distinguish the message of the Lord from the post-Pentecostal message of the apostles.

1. The Lord limited His message primarily to Israel, whereas the present gospel is universal. Matthew 10. 5, 6 and 15. 24 illustrate this limitation; exceptions, such as ministry to the Samaritans in John 4, are in contrast to the general rule. [Whilst the Lord lived His life almost entirely in Palestine, in what sense are John 3. 16, etc., different from the message of the apostles?—J. M.]

2. His public allusions to His death and resurrection, as in John 2. 19; 12. 24, 32 and Matthew 12. 40, seem to be deliberately obscure. Even though the Lord repeatedly warned His disciples of His approaching sufferings, "they understood none of these things; and this saying was hid from them, and they perceived not the things that were said"
But after Pentecost, the death and resurrection of the Lord had foremost prominence. [Why obscure? Are not most things in Scripture obscure to unbelief?—J.M.]

The Gospel of the Kingdom renewed at the Time of the End

In Daniel chapters 7, 8, and 11, there is an almost imperceptible crossing of a frontier between prophecy about events now past, and events still future. So also in Matthew 10 the Lord's instructions to His twelve apostles merge into words which could only have application to His witness-bearers at the time of the end (i.e., between the end of this dispensation and His coming as Son of Man). For example, contrast the limitation of verses 5 and 6 with the testimony to Gentiles in verse 18; also note the force of verse 23. Matthew 24. 3-14 presents a similar blending of what is now historic and what still remains prophetic. But both portions show that the gospel appropriate to that time will be a renewal of "the gospel of the kingdom." Once more it will be appropriate to declare to Israel nationally that "the kingdom of heaven is at hand" and that "the kingdom of God is at hand." For as at the first advent of Christ in incarnation there was a unique visitation to Israel, so then His second advent will be imminent. Once more they will be on the threshold of unique divine intervention upon earth by the Son of Man in Person, after centuries of the silence of God. Now, however, the message will no longer be limited to Israel. For when the Son of Man is manifested in power and glory, it will not be for the sake of Israel only. All nations will know His visitation, first in judgement and then in Millennial blessing. Hence this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony unto all the nations; and then shall the end come. "Once more the heralds of Messiah's advent will raise the warning cry, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

It is important to see these two phases of the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom in clear perspective, the first phase immediately before the present dispensation of the grace of God, and the second phase succeeding it.

Concluding Reflections

Christ is the Substance of the gospel of God. Mark speaks of "the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God," in relation to the forerunner's testimony. Long before that, "the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand unto Abraham, saying, "In thee shall all the nations be blessed." But there is an ordered development of revelation in connexion with the salvation which is in Christ Jesus. During the Lord's earthly ministry the "gospel of the kingdom" had a limitation and an emphasis appropriate to that time in relation to Israel's national position, and to the fact that the vicarious sufferings of Christ were not yet accomplished. During the present dispensation there has been a further unfolding of His grace through the gospel, marking out this age as the period during which the preaching of the message should result in the formation of the "Church which is His Body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all." Fitting result from a message so unsearchable in its riches! It is apparent that this major purpose through the gospel of the grace of God is never associated with the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom, either before the cross or at the time of the end. [It should, I think, be noted carefully, that the first to speak of baptism in the Spirit was John the Baptist, a fact which is inseparably connected with the building of the Church, the Body (Matthew 3. 11; John 1. 33; Acts 1. 5; 1 Corinthians 12. 12, 13).—J. M.] 

G. Prasher, Jr.
From West Hartlepool!—The propitiatory work of Christ in atoning for sin, effected for time and for eternity what never could be effected by the blood of victims slain under the law. This work of Christ in making atonement vindicated God's passing over of sins done aforetime, and showed His righteousness, that He is both just and the Justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus. As the Lamb of God's providing, the Lord took away the sin of the world. It was sin which separated man from God, and made man the enemy of God. The Lord made peace by the blood of His cross, and men may now know the blessedness (of which David spoke) of him whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered, and unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, but in a fuller measure than in David's day.

The Israelite was taught that sin could only be atoned for by the shedding of blood, and his obedience to the law of God in bringing an animal for sacrifice brought peace. But in the great sacrifice of the Lord, which was the antitype of all these sacrifices of the past, we see a full and final answer to all the claims of an offended God.

The love of God is seen in that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins (1 John 4. 10). The scope of that propitiatory work is seen in chapter 2. 2 of the same epistle, for it was not for our sins only (speaking to believers) but also for the whole world. God can now be merciful to the sinner on the ground of a sacrifice perfect in every respect.

In Romans 3. 26 we see the efficacy of this propitiatory sacrifice on behalf of the individual sinner who believes in Christ. In Hebrews 2. 17 we see the propitiatory work of Christ in relation to the people of God.

R.H.

From Hamilton, Ont. —The true and abiding efficacy of Christ's propitiatory work is known fully to God alone. This applies to His completed work on the cross for the individual sinner, and to His present work in the heavenly sanctuary on behalf of the people of God. This work is of such high intrinsic value, that God in holiness can come out to men in divine mercy. It completely takes away and atones for sin. There is no passing over of sins today, but the atoning death of the Lamb of God is sufficient to meet the need of the whole human race.

Some thought that the mercy-seat was not seen in Romans 3 in relation to the work of Christ in heaven for God's people, but others felt that the mercy-seat and the blood are seen there [1]. By faith men must come to Christ, and through His blood alone have access to God. There is the sense, therefore, in which it is possible for both saved and unsaved to have access to the same mercy-seat. We see in the blessed Person of Christ the mercy-seat and also the victim of sacrifice: He is the propitiation and also the propitiatory. The blood sprinkled mercy-seat (Leviticus 16) typifies Christ's sacrificial death. Through the virtue of His own blood He has entered heaven (Hebrews 9. 12). As individuals we can, day by day, know the value of the propitiatory work of Christ. Through Him we can meet with God, and speak with God. As long as we are in the body, we are prone to err and fail. The people of God have sins, and are in need of the priestly work of Christ. Hence the propitiatory work of Christ today is also associated with His ministry as High Priest before the face of God for us (Hebrews 9. 24).

Alex. Davidson, T. Ramage.
EXTRACTS

From Whitehills and Macduff. —Only the death of the sinner could expiate his sin [2], but substitution makes peace with an offended God and brings mercy to wretched sinners, for "the blood of sprinkling... speaketh better things than that of Abel " (Hebrews 12. 24), whose blood cried for vengeance whereas Christ's speaks peace [3]. The blood of Christ effects propitiation by its essential worth, and God will not refuse mercy to the sinner now that the blood of the Lamb of God is before Him. We note that propitiation is closely similar to atonement in the Levitical offerings, when the priest made atonement for the offerer with the blood of the sacrifice. In the work of Christ He is, by His blood, the means of propitiation (Romans 3. 25), and also the One who acts on our behalf (1 John 2. 2). He is both instrument and agent. Atonement was made on the day of Atonement by sprinkling blood in the immediate presence of God, and also by the fact that the sins were carried away by the scape-goat, which stresses the vicarious character of Christ's suffering and sacrifice [4]. This great sacrifice was for all time: faithful men of all generations will be in heaven because of it. Individuals are blessed by it, and so are the people of God corporate.

A. B. R.

From Paisley. —The propitiatory work of Christ is spoken of in three ways: for sinners, for sinning children of God, and for the sin of the people of God. Associated with this threefold aspect we have the three offices of the Lord Jesus Christ: Mediator, Advocate and High Priest. It is on the basis of what was accomplished at the cross that salvation is offered to man, for the LORD hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all. This aspect of gospel truth is first with regard to all other aspects, and is brought before us weekly in the breaking of the bread. The apostle John saw in propitiation the manifestation of God's love, which manifestation provides an example wherewith to regulate our conduct towards one another.

G. F.

From Greenock and Port Glasgow Y. P. M. —In explanation of the latter portion of Isaiah 53. 10 it was suggested that the seeing of His seed had a partial fulfilment in the dying thief. In eternal ages what a vast throng of redeemed will Christ see and rejoice over! As to the prolonging of His days, we note that in Psalm 102, which portrays the scene in the garden of Gethsemane, the Saviour's words are, "He shortened my days," to which there is the reply, "Thy years are throughout all generations." Though the Lord Jesus did die on Calvary, He rose on the third day and now lives in the power of an indissoluble life.

Then there is the prospering of the pleasure of the LORD in His hand. The prostrate suppliant of Gethsemane cried, "Not My will but Thine be done!" Christ's life had always brought pleasure to God, witnessed by the declaration from the open heaven, "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased," but His death (the basis of atonement) was the summit of this pleasure.

W. L. McLellan.

From Kingston-on-Thames. —Isaiah said that Jesus was "wounded for our transgressions," and that with His stripes we are healed (Isaiah 53. 5), for His soul was made an offering for sin. Therefore at the cross God offered His Son in propitiation, or as a propitiatory sacrifice, for the sinner (Romans 3. 25). In this case the propitiatory work of Christ applies to the individual sinner, whereas Hebrews 2. 17 states that Christ
makes propitiation for the sins of the people; and, furthermore, Christ was also a propitiation for the whole world (1 John 2. 2).

W. H. Humphris.

From Brantford, Ont. —Luke 22. 19, 20 shows how the propitiatory work of the Lord Jesus Christ avails for a man, a man who is deeply troubled as to his state as a sinner.

In Romans 3. 25 we have an allusion to the work done at the copper altar for the individual, pointing us to the One through whom alone God is propitiated for men. In Hebrews 2. 17 we have the mercy-seat alluded to and here there is a difference in application. We understand "the people" to be those living on earth, not Israel in the past. So in Hebrews 2. 17 we have propitiation for those in the house of God. This is done by our Great High Priest. In Romans 3. 25 we have the individual sinner coming, as it were, to the copper altar and receiving full propitiation for his sins. In Hebrews 2. 17 we have the people of God for whom the Lord, the High Priest, makes propitiation. In this day we do not have the shadow but the substance.

From Crowborough. —The propitiation embraces Christ at Calvary, signifies atonement, expiation, sacrifice. Precious indeed is the blood that not only cleanses the sinner from defilement but completely satisfies and vindicates the throne of a thrice holy God.

The publican in Luke 18 appreciated this, when he prayed not only that his sinner-need might be met but his sins put away righteously, so he looked to God, realizing that he could do nothing himself.

From Glasgow. —In the New Testament the mercy-seat is mentioned in Hebrews 9. 45. In Romans 3. 25 it refers to the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth to be a propitiation. The mercy-seat was the place where God communed with Moses concerning the things which affected Israel (Exodus 25. 21, 22).

In the beginning Adam had communion with God his Creator, but through sin communion was broken. But God, ever gracious towards His creature man, provided a way whereby man could again have communion with Him through the shed blood of a sacrifice. Later God provided a way whereby there was restored for the children of Israel communion with God through their high priest. At this present time God has made it possible for His people of this dispensation to have communion with Him on the basis of the more excellent sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Fred Harvey.

From Belfast. —In Old Testament times men brought their sacrifices to God, but these only provided a covering over for the time being. Although they were a poor substitute, God accepted them because they pointed forward to the great Antitype.

The question was asked, "Can we see the reconciliation of the Jews in Isaiah 53?" We were agreed that the scriptures given principally for consideration this month were either spoken or written to certain groups. Luke 22. 19, 20 was spoken to the disciples, and 1 John 2. 2 was written to the saints of that early day. While Isaiah 53 was addressed to the Jews of a past day, it also applies today, and the day is coming when the Jews will believe it. Isaiah wrote, "But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our
peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed. " The Jews will
realize that these wounds were inflicted on their Messiah by themselves.
By the death of Christ on the cross of Calvary men may be forgiven by God.

E. C. Coyne.

From Southport. —The sacrifices which foreshadowed Christ's propitiatory work were to be without blemish, thus prefiguring the perfection and sinlessness of Christ. In due time, predetermined by God, the Lord Jesus suffered on Calvary, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God. Thus Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures and His one offering (not needing repetition) became the ground on which God's wrath was appeased for our sins. This is made clear in 1 John 2. 2 in the words, "He is the propitiation for our sins," and, moreover, "not for ours only, but also for the whole world."

We do not think that the expression, "sins of the whole world," means that all men will be saved, but we regard Christ's work as available and effective for all who are prepared to identify themselves with Christ as men identified themselves with the offerings made under the Mosaic law.

L. Jones.

From Birkenhead. —The mercy-seat was a covering for the ark, and in the sacrifices according to the law there was a temporary covering for sin. In the Old Testament the word 'atonement' is used to convey the same thought as 'propitiation' in the New Testament. On the day of Atonement the second goat was sent away from the camp bearing the sins away. So, when John the Baptist saw the Lord coming, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which beareth away the sin of the world," and Peter speaks of Him "who His own self bore our sins in His own body on the tree." Here are the central thoughts in the work of propitiation,—One who suffered the judgement for our sins and put them away.

It is remarkable that there was no propitiatory sacrifice for fallen angels, but only for man.

P. Kelly, R. L. Sands.

From Liverpool. —The word "propitiation" has the thought of expiation (or to extinguish), and is equivalent to the Old Testament "atonement." The Hebrew word *Kaphar* (to cover) is connected with *Kopher* (a covering). The lid of the ark of the covenant was the mercy-seat or propitiatory.

Romans 3. 25 tells of the One whom God set forth to be a propitiation through faith by His blood. The sinner who exercises faith in the One so set forth is justified. Here we have Christ the propitiation (sacrifice). The cross is the place where the sinner can come and meet with God and know forgiveness because of what was accomplished there.

Hebrews 2. 17 indicates the present work of our High Priest in making propitiation for the sins of the people of God. The day of Atonement (Leviticus 16) reveals the once-a-year remembrance of the sins of the congregation and of the priesthood (verses 6, 16). The two goats were needed to illustrate the great work of Christ: in death He bore the judgement due to us, and took or bore away our sins.

J. Seddon, M. A. Sands, T. H. Sands, A. H.

From Nottingham. —According to Dr. Strong the word "propitiation" appears three times in the New Testament. According to Vine the Greeks used the word with the significance of making the gods
propitious, and the absence of this use in the Scriptures is significant. In the Scriptures, propitiation is that which is carried out by Christ, the God-man, for man's benefit, and not an effort on the part of sinful man to propitiate God. It is the provision of God for the guilty sinner; a provision which man could not provide. Man's part is to accept, and it is in this that we seem to have the difference between propitiation and reconciliation. The propitiatory work of Christ was that which God provided. Our acceptance of this work of propitiation, whereby our sins are forgiven, results in reconciliation.

We note that it was God who set forth Christ Jesus to be a propitiation through His blood (Romans 3. 25); this is God's work of propitiation: man's place is to accept it by faith. R. Hickling.

From Middlesbrough. —Propitiation, as presented in the epistle to the Romans, seems to be to meet the need of the individual sinner. Propitiation in Hebrews 2. 17 is connected with the collective need of God's people in their worship and service. Clearly in Hebrews 2. 17 "propitiation" (R. V.) is to be preferred to the A. V. rendering "reconciliation." The law that God gave revealed the holiness of God and demanded holiness of His people. Certain sins were punishable by expulsion from the camp, and some by death; in other cases a sin offering could be offered and forgiveness known. There were also sins of ignorance; sins of omission as well as of commission; shortcoming as well as transgression. These were dealt with on the day of Atonement, when the high priest entered through the veil into the Holy of Holies not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the errors of the people. Christ, through His atoning sacrifice, has entered the heavenly sanctuary. In Hebrews 2. 17 we have the present and continuous ministry of Christ as the High Priest who ministers on behalf of God's people. Romans 3. 25 speaks of the completed work of Christ at Calvary. D. T. H.

From Cowdenbeath. —We might conveniently consider the propitiatory work of Christ under the headings: (1) original sin, (2) the sins of the individual, (3) the sins of men in past dispensations, (4) the sins of the believer, and (5) the sins of the people of God.

(1) Men are born in sin because of Adam's transgression; such sin we normally describe as original sin. The atoning work of Christ has satisfied God in respect of this. No one will stand condemned for Adam's sin. John pointed out the Lord Jesus as "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1. 29).

(2) Men are sinners by practice, and God will hold unrepentant men accountable for their own sins. The repentant sinner may come to Calvary and find that every claim God has against him is met in the sacrifice of Christ.

(3) The blood shed at the copper altar for the sins of the individual under the old covenant could not fully satisfy God. These sins were passed over by God in His forbearance and were redeemed by Christ on the cross (Hebrews 9. 15; Romans 3. 25).

(4) For the believer provision has been made in event of failure; he has an Advocate before the face of God. The believer will never forfeit eternal life because of sins committed, for the blood of Christ atones for these also. Sin in his life will destroy communion with God. If he desires the forgiveness of his heavenly Father, and the restoration of fellowship, he must confess his sin to God.
(5) While the child of God has an Advocate, the people of God have a High Priest who makes propitiation for the sins of the people, enabling them to continue to serve God (Hebrews 2. 17).

*J. K. D. Johnston.*

From Wigan. —The propitiatory work of Christ in relation to the repentant individual sinner is seen in shadow in Leviticus 4. 27-31, and in substance in Romans 3. 25. By the laying of his hand upon the head of the sin offering which he had brought the unwitting sinner of the past identified himself with the offering which had been accepted for him. This offering was slain in the place of the burnt offering, on the north side of the altar (Leviticus 1. 11). The priest then proceeded to put the blood upon the horns of the copper altar, the remainder being poured out (shed out—Shaphak) at the base of the altar.

The altar of burnt offering foreshadowed the cross. Christ has made peace through the blood of His cross (Colossians 1. 20), thus laying the foundation, whereupon a thrice holy God can receive the repentant sinner through the death of His Son.

The propitiatory work of Christ in relation to the people of God is viewed in type in Leviticus 16, when a remembrance of sins was made year by year before the eyes of a penitent people, the blood of the sin-offering on this solemn occasion finding its place upon and before the mercy-seat. In seeking to define the various aspects of Christ's work, it is important to note that in the case of both the sin offering for the assembly (Leviticus 4. 13-21), the blood of which was taken into the holy place and sprinkled before the veil and put upon the horns of the golden altar, and of the sin offering in view in Leviticus 16, the blood of which found its place upon God's throne, the bodies of these beasts must be burned without the camp (Hebrews 13. 11; Leviticus 4. 21, 16. 27). The people of God are a sanctified people.

*H. Caldwell.*

From Atherton. —The propitiatory work of Christ is that aspect of His work on the cross in which the anger of God was appeased in the matter of sin, and the believer is forgiven. By dividing the time the Lord Jesus was upon the cross into two periods of three hours, the Holy Spirit indicates two distinct phases of the Lord's sufferings, first at the hands of men and then at the hand of God. The propitiatory work is through the Lord's suffering ending in death, which He underwent at the hand of God during the three hours of darkness.

By virtue of the spotless character of the Lord as the Lamb of God, He alone was able to bear God's wrath, and God's righteous demands were satisfied.

Under the law sins were dealt with by atonement. Sacrifices were offered, blood was shed, and God passed over the sins. "Atonement " means " covering, " and sins which were atoned for were covered by the blood of the offering: " apart from shedding of blood there is no remission " (Hebrews 9. 22).

The holy and righteous character of God demanded that sins should be covered and thus put away. The putting away for ever of sins was accomplished by the propitiatory work of Christ.

In the New Testament (R. V. ) there is no mention of the word " atonement. " In its place there is the propitiatory work of Christ, by which God was completely satisfied and we were reconciled to Him.

*D. S. Jones.*
COMMENTS

[1] (Hamilton, Ont.). —It is necessary to distinguish between the sin offering for the individual, a ruler, or one of the common people, and that for the people, in Leviticus 4. In the first case, the sin offering for the individual, atonement was made at the copper altar by the blood being put upon the horns of that altar and the rest poured out at the base of the altar. That for the people of Israel required that the blood be taken into the Holy Place and put upon the horns of the golden altar, and on the day of Atonement the blood was also taken into the Holy of Holies. These two forms of propitiation are dealt with in Romans 3, for the individual sinner, and Hebrews 2, for the people. The Lord Jesus as the High Priest, who has entered into the heavenly sanctuary, makes propitiation for the sins of the people. That of Romans 3 is made at the cross where the sinner meets God in Christ, but that of Hebrews 2 is made in the heavenly sanctuary, into which the High Priest has carried the value of His atoning sacrifice. —J. M.

[2] (Whitehills and Macduff). —Can it be said that the death of the sinner expiates his sin? Certainly physical death does not. And when we think of the second death, that death is unending, so that however long the sinner exists, and there is no end to human existence, the sinner will never expiate his guilt. So it seems to me. —J. M.

[3] (Whitehills and Macduff). —" Better " in Hebrews 12. 24 is not in opposition to " evil or ill," the reference is to " better things " as opposed to a " good thing. " The blood that Abel offered spoke well for nun, for " the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: but unto Cain and to his offering He had not respect " (Genesis 4. 4, 5). It cannot be too strongly stressed that the blood described as " that of Abel" never flowed in his veins; it was the blood of his offering from the firstlings of his flock.—J. B.


[5] (Southport). —It should be noted that " the sins of " in the words of the A. V., "the sins of the whole world, " are in italics, and are not in the Greek. Christ is the propitiation for the whole world (see R. V.). Where we read of " sins," as for example, " Who His own self bare our sins in His body upon the tree," that is the language of the believer and of faith. —J. M.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question from Greenock and Port Glasgow. —According to 2 Corinthians 5. 21, Him who knew no sin was made sin on our behalf. How was the sinless One made sin ?

Answer. —In the Old Testament the word for sin is the same as for sin offering. The context defines whether it is sin or the offering for sin. In the above verse we have a Hebrewism, in which Paul speaks of the Lord as the offering for sin as sin. Somewhat the same thought will be seen in Romans 8. 3, where the translators add the words in italics "as an offering " to explain what " for sin" means. The words "as an offering" are not in the Greek, but are understood. The Lord could in no sense become the act of sin. —J. M.
Question from Middlesbrough. —Is there any thought of appeasement in the New Testament use of the word "propitiation"?

Answer. —God loves the sinner but hates his sin. To appease means to quiet; to pacify; to allay. The word comes from the Latin word for peace. The Greeks in their idea of making propitiation and appeasing their gods had no such ideas that their gods were love, as the God of heaven is both towards Israel and mankind. God is not a savage God that needs to be appeased by sundry offerings, but He is a just God, that having sentenced the sinner to death (such an idea was not in Greek polytheism) provided a means whereby the sentence would be borne by a substitute, the blood of which would cover the sinner and he would be forgiven. This is atonement or propitiation. The sinner is completely covered by the blood of Christ who has made a full payment according to the demands of God's just law. Thus the sinner is completely freed from the consequences of his sins. God is not satisfied unless the sentence of His just law is carried out, so sin was laid upon a substitute, as upon the sin offerings of old, and more especially on the Lord, the sinner's Substitute, on whom all our sins were laid. —J. M.

Question from Atherton. —Is there anything to learn from the fact that the statements made by the Lord Jesus, "My God, My God, why didst Thou forsake Me?" (R. V. M.) and "It is finished," were made prior to His death?

Answer. —The Lord had laid down His life for the sheep and was dying when He spoke these words, both to God and to us. He died immediately after. He had poured out His soul unto death and had made intercession for the transgressors. It is said, "After this Jesus, knowing that all things are now finished" (John 19. 28) asked for the vinegar, by saying, "I thirst," so that Psalm 69. 21 might be accomplished, then taking up the matter again that all things were now finished, he said with a loud voice (Luke 23. 46), "It is finished." —J. M.

NOTES ON THE EPISTLE OF JAMES

CHAPTER 1

Verses 9, 10, 11: But let the brother of low degree glory in his high estate: and the rich, in that he is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away. For the sun ariseth with the scorching wind, and withereth the grass; and the flower thereof faileth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his goings.

It has been the way of God from ancient times to raise up the lowly. Many scriptures testify to this. "He setteth up on high those that be low" (Job 5. 11). Hannah in her prayer said, "The LORD maketh poor, and maketh rich: He bringeth low, He also lifteth up. He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, He lifteth up the needy from the dunghill, to make them sit with princes, and inherit the throne of glory" (1 Samuel 2. 7, 8; see also
Psalm 113. 7, 8). Mary too struck the same note, in Luke 1. 52. Thus it was among Christians in the same Fellowship, the poor were exalted and the rich made low, so that in divine things they might be sharers together in common. The greatness of man is not in what he has, but in what he is. The simile which James uses to force home his words to the rich is powerful, in the effect of the burning east wind from the desert on the grass of Palestine. It turned lush pastures to a land of brown stubble, and flowers which adorned the grass just wilted away. " So also, " James said, " shall the rich man fade away in his goings. "

Verse 12:  

Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he hath been approved, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord promised to them that love Him.

Temptation here, as the following verses show, is from man's own lust which arises from the flesh. The crown of life is mentioned twice, here and in Revelation 2. 10. In the latter place it was promised to those in the church in Smyrna who were faithful unto death in the temptation which they were enduring from the tribulation of their time. They were to have tribulation for ten days. Some were to be cast into prison. The crown of life is promised to those who endure temptation, either from within their own selves or from without, and those who endure temptation manifest in this way their love for the Lord. By enduring temptation saints are proved and approved.

Verses 13, 14, 15, 16:  
Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil (things), and He Himself tempteth no man: but each man is tempted, when he is drawn away by his own lust, and enticed. Then the lust, when it hath conceived, beareth sin: and the sin, when it is fullgrown, bringeth forth death. Be not deceived, my beloved brethren.

It says, in Hebrews 4. 15, " For we have not a High Priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but One that hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. " The " all points " do not include the temptation of which James writes. The Lord was not tempted from lust and sin within as we are. He knew nothing of the lust of the flesh, for " the flesh, " indicative of fallen human nature, had no place in His holy Manhood. There was no sin in Him, and He knew no sin (2 Corinthians 5. 21; 1 John 3. 5). He came in the likeness of sinful flesh (Romans 8. 3)—not in sinful flesh. His temptations therefore were all from without, from the devil and from the world (Matthew 4. 11; John 16. 33). No temptation from without was ever allowed to enter and alight upon and defile His holy humanity. He was ever holy, harmless (guileless), undefiled, separated from sinners (Hebrews 7. 26). Nevertheless, the temptations which He suffered in His Manhood were real and terrible (Luke 22. 28; Hebrews 2. 18). His divine nature, He being of one substance with the Father, was above all temptation, for God cannot be tempted of evil things. God proves, but tempts no man with evil things. This is done by the devil who works upon human lust to bring forth sin. James says that when a man is tempted, he is drawn away or dragged out by his own lust, and enticed (Deleazo, to trap or catch with a bait). Then the lust conceives and gives birth to sin, and sin, when completed or fullgrown, brings forth death. Sin is a killer, its object, like a wild beast, is to kill the sinner who commits sin. " The foolish make a mock at guilt (or sin) " (Proverbs 14. 9), little
realizing its deadly character. We can no more safely play with sin than with a deadly serpent. Let us not be deceived, but kill the lust before it has brought forth its children.

Verses 17, 18: Every good gift and every perfect boon is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom can be no variation, neither shadow that is cast by turning. Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.

Verses 19, 20: Ye know this, my beloved brethren. But let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

Critics differ as to whether verse 19 should commence with " Ye know " or " So that, " whether the word is Hoste or Histe. Whichever is the correct word, the following exhortations emerge from what James has written in the previous verse concerning the excellence of the goodness and changeless character of God. We cannot fail to see the wisdom in what is said. The flesh will be babbling, but a Christian man does not aspire to have a glib tongue. The quickness of the ear should ever come before the quickness of the tongue. Indeed the tongue, that restless evil, needs to be
reined in like a horse (3. 3). Paul says, "Study to be quiet" (1 Thessalonians 4. 11). It is a safe course to be a good listener. The tongue often leads people into trouble, the ear but seldom. "Slow to wrath" is a wise precaution. One of the qualities of an elder is "not soon angry." The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

"He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty"

"The discretion of a man maketh him slow to anger"

(Proverbs 16. 32; 19. 11).

Wrath or anger is one of the things that the believer is to put away (Colossians 3. 8).

Verse 21: Wherefore putting away all filthiness and overflowing of wickedness, receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

We are to lay aside all filthiness, things squalid, sordid, dirty. Purity of conduct is required of the believer. The Lord said, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God" (Matthew 5. 8). Timothy was to be an ensample of purity (1 Timothy 4. 12). James also says, "Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; purify your hearts, ye double minded" (4. 8). We are also to lay aside abounding, superabundant wickedness (Kakia, malice, a word with always a bad meaning), and to receive with meekness or gentleness the implanted (Emphutos, from En, in, and Phuton, a plant) word. As the word of God brought salvation to us as sinners, so the word of God when received with meekness will save our souls (lives) for God. We as saints cannot be saved without it (Hebrews 2. 3).

Verses 22, 23, 24: But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deluding your own selves. For if any one is a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a mirror: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth away, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.

There may be many hearers of the word, but few doers. The causes that the doers are few may be very varied, love of self, of pleasure, present profit, friendship, etc., etc. Deluding (Paralogizomai, "to make a wrong computation, defraud by a false reckoning") means to deceive or delude. Those who hear the word should reckon aright, as to the effect in present loss now through obedience, and of future gain. There is profit and loss both ways. The Lord propounded this matter of profit and loss to His disciples, in Matthew 16. 24-27. James says that a man who is a hearer and not a doer is like a man who, having seen himself in a mirror, forgets what he is like. We can see ourselves in the mirror of the word, both as to our perfection in Christ as God in grace has made us, and also as to what we are like through obedience or disobedience. The word of God gives a true reflection as we stand before it. Here we may learn what Paul says, in Hebrews 4. 13: "There is no creature that is not manifest in His sight: but all things are naked and laid open before the eyes of Him with whom we have to do."
"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).

EDITORIAL

We welcome the first attempt from Ibadan which appears in this issue, and venture to express the hope that it will be but the first of many communications from our friends there.

There are a few points attention to which will be of valued assistance to editors and our friends the printers. Please do not use small sheets closely written. These may easily be misplaced among the other papers, or even fall unnoticed out of the bundle and so fail to be published. Small sheets leave no room for editors to work upon. Sheets of quarto or foolscap size are ideal.

Again, please write on one side of the paper only. Failure to do so makes matters awkward for editors and printers.

Further, please check all quotations carefully, using the Revised Version unless there is special reason for doing otherwise. Scrupulous care in this matter is in line with our objective of promoting careful study of the Scriptures. You will be acquiring a very good habit, if you make a point of being accurate in quotations and of giving chapter and verse every time. This may make the writing of a paper a little more laborious and irksome, but, if persisted in, it will prove profitable indeed.

Finally, may we have more special contributions?

The Index to Young Men’s Corner and Bible Studies is now complete and should soon be ready. We hope this useful publication will be entirely bought up.

J. B.

NOTES ON THE BOOK OF THE REVELATION

CHAPTER 19

Following this we are told that John fell down before his feet to worship him, that is, the angel that showed him these things, as in 22. 8. He was told not to do this, for the angel was his fellow-bondservant, and that of his brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus, which testimony is the spirit of prophecy. That is, what Jesus testified was in its nature and meaning prophecy. The Lord said that His words were spirit and were life (John 6. 63). His words were living as all the oracles of Scriptures are, and His words are the answer and fulfillment of all prophecy. John was told to worship God, a word which is proper to all created intelligences; the opposite of which is idolatry; the giving to that which is created what is due to the Creator only.

"And I saw the heaven opened; and behold, a white horse, and He that sat thereon, called Faithful and True; and in righteousness He doth judge and make war. " He who will be a Bridegroom and Lover to some will be a Judge and Man of war to others. Happy indeed are those who share in
His everlasting love, whether as Bride or friend. His eyes are a flame of fire; such was His character when He judged the condition of the seven churches, in chapters 2 and 3. Now He comes to judge the world in righteousness, and to war against the beast and his armies (Acts 17. 31; Revelation 17. 14). On His head are many diadems, tokens of royalty, for He is King of kings. He has a name written which He only knows (see Philippians 2. 9; Revelation 3. 12). His garment is sprinkled with blood, perhaps the better rendering is that of the A. V., "Dipped in blood." His name is called the Word of God. The Lord as the Word is shown in the writings of John in four ways: the Word who was in the beginning with (towards, or in fellowship with) God; the Word who created all things; the Word who became incarnate and was manifested among men, full of grace and truth (John 1. 1, 2, 14). Now He appears as the Word of God in judgement. In all senses He is the true and full expression of the mind of God. The armies of heaven follow Him on white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and pure. They are clothed in garments similar to those of the Bride on her marriage day. In the one case the linen is bright (Lampros, shining) and pure, and in the other the linen is white and pure. It is too much to say that those armies are the saints of the Bride, because they are arrayed in fine linen. We are told that when the Son of Man shall come in His glory ALL the angels shall come with Him (Matthew 25. 31). We are also told that He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be marvelled at in ALL them that believed (1 Thessalonians 3. 13; 2 Thessalonians 1. 10); and from this we deduce, that all the saints of the Church which is His Body will be with Him. But we also believe that the saints of the Church who have been faithful will have a special place in the battle, when the Lord wars with the beast, the ten kings, and other kings, and their armies. See Revelation 17. 14 where it speaks of those who are with Him, as "called and chosen and faithful." We see these things at the moment from afar; we shall understand more about them in due time.

The Lord shall smite the nations with the sharp sword of His mouth, which sword is the spoken word, as in Ephesians 6. 17 and 2 Thessalonians 2. 8; and those of the nations that are left after His judgement is past, He shall rule or shepherd with a rod of iron; this bespeaks the strong, unbending character of His righteous rule over men. No lawlessness will be tolerated then.

He shall then tread the winepress of the fierceness of the wrath of Almighty God. The vintage of the earth is reaped, in Revelation 14. 17-20, and cast into the winepress. It is the Lord who treads the winepress. See what is said in Isaiah 63. 1-3, about the Lord treading the winepress, and of His blood-stained garments.

On His garment and on His thigh is written, King of kings, and Lord of lords. He has a perfect right as the divinely appointed Ruler and Owner of this earth to show His authority and to subject all things to His will; He is not a limited Monarch, but one who is absolute. His word is law and His will the standard of human conduct.

Before the marriage feast, where all the guests will be blessed, comes the great supper of God. This is for the carrion birds that fly in mid-heaven. They are gathered together to eat the flesh of kings and of captains, the flesh of mighty men and of horses, for great will be the carnage in that battle of Har-Magedon, the last battle that will be fought on earth, for with this the Lord will make wars to cease to the end of the earth (Psalm 46. 9). The destruction of Gog and Magog will be like to that which fell on Sodom and Gomorrah, when they were completely devoured by fire and brimstone from heaven.
In contrast to the slaughter of the armies of the beast and his confederate kings, the beast and the false prophet were taken and cast alive into the lake of fire that burneth with brimstone, and they are still there in torment a thousand years after, when the devil is cast into the lake of fire (Revelation 20. 10). This is the beginning of eternal torment, which goes on day and night perpetually. Let all hear and fear before God Almighty whose punishment of the wicked will be eternal. His judgements will be perfectly just. He cannot do wrong, whatever wicked men say about His judgements.

CHAPTER 20

At the time of this battle an angel comes from heaven with the key of the abyss (see chapter 9. 1, the key of the abyss is in the hands of God's angel and not in the hands of the wicked), and a great chain in his hand. He lays hold of the dragon, who is the Old Serpent, the Devil and Satan, who is given his full description, so that there is no doubt who he is. He is bound for a thousand years, and cast into the abyss, which is shut and sealed over him, that He should deceive the nations no more during the thousand years of the reign of Christ with His saints (verse 4). After the thousand years he is loosed for a little time, and he goes forth to deceive the nations that are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog (8). His powers of deception are beyond description. He is able to deceive men in the face of the most hopeless consequences of wrongdoing. Thank God, there are those who adhere to the truth of God's word, the elect who cannot be deceived. The devil's long imprisonment in the abyss does not soften him or change his mind in the least. Such gives us some idea of the awfulness of a reprobate mind, a mind which is wholly given up to sin, in which all virtue is lost. Such is the mind of the devil and of all lost souls in eternity.

In verse 4, things which will be true in the Millennium come into view. First John sees thrones set and they that sat upon them. He does not tell us who these are; but we learn from the words of the Lord that certain of these thrones will be occupied by the twelve apostles. " I appoint unto you a kingdom, even as my Father appointed unto Me, that ye may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom; and ye shall sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel " (Luke 22. 29, 30). Besides the apostles there will be many other crowned heads in that day. Each will receive his place of authority in the coming kingdom according to his faithful labour during the time of the Lord's rejection and absence. See Luke 19. 12-27; also Revelation 2. 26, 27; 3. 21. The rewards will be far more than adequate for what saints have done. Some of the faithful will be highly honoured.

Those who come triumphant from the beast come in for special mention. God will set high value on the faithfulness of such. It is not only what they did do, but what they did not do, that brings them unfading honour; they did not worship the beast or receive his mark on their forehead or on their hand. Then there were others who stood up for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus and suffered martyrdom, they were beheaded for their testimony. These all shall live and reign with Christ a thousand years. Those will then feel as the hymn says,

"It were a well-spent journey,
Though seven deaths lay between"

The rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years were finished. This, we are told, is the first resurrection. The first resurrection seems to relate to those who are raised in connexion with the Lord's coming to reign as the Son of Man. The resurrection of those who are in Christ, at which time the living in Christ will be changed, when the Lord comes to the air,
is a resurrection before the first resurrection. The Lord comes to the air, at least seven years before He comes to earth. It may be that His coming to the air is very much longer than seven years before He comes to earth. The seven years of Daniel's prophecy is not related to the Lord's coming for the Church, but to His dealings with Israel. Indeed if the seven years were related to the Lord's coming for the Church, we could not look for the Lord to come at any moment, for as so many things are yet to transpire on earth, we could not expect the Lord to come for the Church at any time. But times and seasons are not connected with the Lord's coming for those in Christ. Whilst things on earth are hastening on to a climax, and heading up for the end of the age, much is yet to transpire before the Lord can come to earth. The Lord spoke to His disciples of things which would transpire, which would be signs of His coming and of the end of the age. Such are enumerated in Matthew 24. 3-28. They were told that they were to learn the parable of the fig tree, the application of which parable is, that when they see these things come to pass, then they were to know that the Lord was at the doors. Some have said that the fig tree is Israel. The fig tree in this parable has nothing to do with Israel at all.

The rest of the dead does not mean all who are unsaved, for many will rise in the resurrection at the time of the judgement of the Great White Throne and will find their names written in the book of life. Amongst those who shall rise then will be the repentant men of Nineveh, and the Queen of Sheba, who shall rise in the judgement and condemn the unbelievers of the Lord's time and others. Where are those who will receive eternal life at that judgement? (Romans 2. 6, 7). The answer to this question must be that they are in that blessed place in Hades, called Paradise, otherwise Abraham's bosom (Luke 23. 43; 16. 23; Acts 2. 27, 31), the place to which the Lord went at death.

All who have part in the first resurrection are both blessed and holy and over these the second death (which is the lake of fire) has no power. They shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Christ a thousand years. Their priesthood will, I have no doubt, be different from the priesthood of the house of Aaron in the house of God, as described by Ezekiel, when the sacrifices of slain beasts will be offered on the altar in that house (Ezekiel 43. 13-27, etc.).

After the thousand years are finished Satan will be loosed out of his prison for a little while, as we have already seen. He will be at his old ways of deception. Whether it means that the haters of the Lord have removed as far from the Lord as possible as to be in the four corners of the earth, as some have suggested, we cannot say, but there are Gog and Magog, who are referred to in Ezekiel 38, and this chapter shows how they go up against God's people who have been dwelling securely for a thousand years. God will plead with the hordes of Gog from the land of Magog with pestilence and blood, and will rain upon his hordes an overflowing shower, and great hailstones, fire and brimstone (38. 22). There can be no doubt that Ezekiel 38 describes what Revelation 20. 7-9 also reveals. The hordes of Gog and Magog are like the sand of the sea, and they went up over the breadth of the earth. They were bent on war, and their objective was first, the camp or castle of the saints, and second, the beloved city of Jerusalem. What was their purpose? Ezekiel 38. 12, 13 reveals what they are after. They were going "to take the spoil and to take the prey. " They were come "to carry-away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take great spoil." Here is revealed the covetousness of the heart of man, which has been the cause of almost all wars that have brought little else but ruination in their
Upon this covetousness Satan has ever played. Satan well knows that men are ever after something for nothing, and in the hearts of men he finds an agreeable seedplot in which to sow his poisonous seeds. This he will find in the hearts of God and Magog and their peoples. The end of this revolt is, that fire came down out of heaven and consumed them. So ended earth's last revolt against God. Following this, the devil who deceived them was cast into the lake of fire, and there for a thousand years the beast and the false prophet have been, and it finishes with the solemn and awful words, "And they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever." Here is "the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels." (Matthew 25. 41).

"And I saw a Great White Throne, and Him that sat upon it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne." Here we reach the scene of the last great day of judgement. There have previously been various judgements; the judgement-seat of Christ, at which the saints of this dispensation of grace will receive the rewards which they have merited. All at this judgement-seat will be saved people, but the works of some may be burned up. This will take place following the Lord's coming to the air for all who are in Christ (2 Corinthians 5. 10, etc.). Then at the Lord's coming to earth we have the judging and rewarding of the Old Testament saints, and such as die after the Church has been received up to meet the Lord in the air (Revelation 11. 18; Daniel 12. 3, etc.). Then we have the judgement and purification of the sons of Levi (Malachi 3. 3), the judgement of Israel (Malachi 3. 16—4. 3), and the judgement of the living nations (Matthew 25. 31-46). Then after the thousand years of the Lord's reign on earth comes the final judgement of all the dead who were not raised before the Millennium. There is a point and an important one, which does not seem to be revealed in any scripture, so far as the writer knows, and that is, what happens to the people who are alive on earth at the end of the Millennium? We know what happens to Gog and Magog, but what of the rest? This may be one of the secret things that belong to the Lord. At this final judgement "books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works." The books contain a record of the works of the dead. All of reasonable mind will be held accountable for their deeds and the spirit in which the deeds were wrought. All will receive inflexible justice. Who is the Judge? He is the Son of Man to whom all judgement has been given (John 5. 22, 27).

J. M.

Repentance and Faith

From Cowdenbeath. —The Greek word metanoeo, translated "repent," means "to think differently or afterwards" (Dr. Strong). Hence it denotes a change of mind. It is the command of God to men that they should all everywhere repent (Acts 17. 30). His goodness should lead men to such a state (Romans 2. 4): men cannot obtain repentance unless God grant it to them (Acts 11. 18, 2 Timothy 2. 25). Both Peter and Paul preached to bring men to repentance (Acts 2. 37, 38, 20. 21). Such a result cannot be achieved unless the charge of sin and guilt is boldly spoken.
Not only must the sinner repent, but he must also turn. The word for "turn" (Acts 3. 19), being in the aorist tense (Newberry), denotes an action which is rounded off and complete. The rendering in the A. V., "be converted," shows the sinner to be passive whereas the R. V. "turn" suggests that he is active. As conversion is something which is done once for all for the sinner and not something which he does for himself, we would judge that the A. V. conveys the correct meaning. "Turn" (Acts 3. 19) is the word "epistrepho" whereas "turning away" (Acts 3. 26) is "apostrepho." In conversion the sinner turns to God and also turns away from his iniquities. He is made to face in the opposite direction.

Repentance and turning are again linked together in Acts 26. 20. Paul did not call upon men to do works to merit repentance, but he taught them that after they had turned to God, or were converted, they should do worthy works. The doing of good works should follow conversion.

Repentance and faith are linked together (Acts 20. 21). The former is to be shown towards God and the latter towards our Lord Jesus Christ. It is not enough that the sinner should be made to change his mind and be regretful of the sins he has committed, he needs to be pointed to the One through whom alone his sins can be forgiven, and on the ground of faith this can be granted to him. It is impossible for a sinner to repent without faith in Christ.

Faith comes to the sinner when the word of God enters his heart (Romans 10. 9). Faith is essential not only to the receiving of the gospel, but also to the appreciating of the wonderful things wrought for us by Christ. It is by faith and it is unto faith (Romans 1. 17).

Faith stands in contrast to the law. The latter says, "Do and thou shalt live." By the former the believer is able to say, "I believe in what Christ has done, and therefore I live." All the doing is completed: Christ performed the mighty work, therefore glorying is excluded. James Bowman.

From Crowborough. —Repentance involves a turning away from beliefs and actions which have proved unprofitable. Men's ways and God's ways are entirely different from each other, and when men wish to have dealings with God, they must first renounce the things which they thought good. Repentance is a first essential in the preaching of the gospel, for when men are turned from their own ways they are ready to accept God's way. With many who live a seemingly good moral upright life this seems to them a great difficulty. John the Baptist came with his message of repentance, and baptism was an open declaration of a change of mind. Then, being emptied of self, men were ready to turn to God and accept by faith the better way that God was proclaiming. Without faith it is impossible to please God, and men must trust where they cannot trace. This is true not only in the matter of being reconciled to God, but also in the matter of walking with God in His holy way. S. Swift.

From Whitehills and Macduff. —Repentance and faith go together and are necessary if a man is to receive forgiveness and be reconciled to the God from whom he is estranged by his sin and a vain manner of life. When God's will is revealed, and He sent His Son from heaven to do so, men's responsibility begins. God grants opportunity to repent (to think again, to change one's mind), which is an experience of self-judgement and also of turning to God for mercy. Conviction of sin should bring a man to repent towards God and trust in Jesus Christ.
Frequently repentance and faith may be almost one act, although separate and orderly steps in passing from death to life, for "Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out." In the early days, when lifelong allegiance had been given to forms of religion such as Judaism, the apostles asked that works of repentance should be done. The Jews in Acts 2 were baptized, and the Ephesians burned their books of witchcraft showing that they repented towards God and put faith in Jesus Christ. In all generations, righteousness comes by faith in God, and certainly Paul is at pains to show that circumcision does not of itself bring the blessings of God's favour. Abraham, the father of the faithful, by his change of life and mind, repented towards the God who spoke to him and his faith in God's word brought him God's righteousness. The blessings and the promises he received were the result of faith.

From Toronto, Ont. — The command to repent is universal in this dispensation, because God has revealed Himself. He has been declared through His only begotten Son. The times of ignorance have thus been terminated. In consequence, man is held accountable to learn what God requires of him and to bring his thoughts into conformity with the mind of God.

Since man's thoughts have, in all ages, been leading him away from God, he must, if he is to assess things as God does, change his mind about many things. He must learn to view matters in the light of the knowledge that God has made available to him. To the Jew, this involves acceptance of the fact that God has, for the present dispensation, set aside those things that pertained to the law of Moses, and accepts only those who are willing to accept the rejected Messiah. It involved, in the early days, an open confession that in their rejection of the Lord Jesus they had in ignorance gone contrary to God in denying the Holy and Righteous One. They refused Him; God glorified Him! They must repent, i. e., change their minds and also save themselves from a crooked generation.

Not only so, but Israel as a nation is commanded to repent. This she will yet do, in order that there may come to her seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. Not until there is this national repentance will God send to them their appointed Messiah.

To the heathen, repentance is the answer to the claims of God, the living God. This would, doubtless be attended with a turning away from the dead idols of his former life. It did not require that he become associated with the Jewish people, as many seemed to feel it should. Repentance unto life is a gift from God.

It would appear that repentance cannot be effected without the exercise of faith. In many cases repentance is accompanied with a measure of sorrow. For this reason, some have mistaken the sorrow for the repentance, when it may only be the evidence that repentance has taken place. There is no scriptural warrant for associating penance with repentance.

From Liverpool. — No consideration of repentance in relation to the gospel would be complete without reference to the work of the Holy Spirit in convicting the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgement. This work we have experienced ourselves, as the living, active, and powerful word of God was brought to bear on our conscience. The result effected was repentance.

The divine purposes in grace are seen in God's sending of His Son to Israel first, to bless them in turning them from their iniquities. Moses spoke
of this coming One in Deuteronomy 18, and clearly indicated the solemn issues involved in not hearkening to Him.

We Gentiles can rejoice in the grace manifested towards us in that repentance has been granted to us. Peter's wonderful experience (Acts 10) is recounted in Acts 11, and the apostles and brethren were caused to glorify God and say, "Then to the Gentiles also hath God granted repentance unto life" (Acts 11. 18). See Isaiah 42. 1; 49. 6.

If repentance is a turning round, faith is a "reaching out." The dilemma of those who were pricked in their heart on the day of Pentecost as a result of Peter's message is seen in their question, "What shall we do?" The answer, simple, clear and to the point was, "Repent ye." That many did repent and reach out in faith is seen in the fact that, "They then that received his word were baptized" (Acts 2. 41). This is an example of the repentance effected through the preaching of the gospel.

It is the goodness of God that leads men to repentance (Romans 2. 4). The dread of His wrath may well play its part, but the riches of His goodness, forbearance and longsuffering can break down the hard hearts of men. It is through the preaching of the word in the gospel that men are reached by God through the operation of that same life-giving word upon their hearts in the power of the Spirit of God.

A. Horridge.

EXTRACTS

From Kingston-on-Thames. —Repentance means a "change of mind," and God commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent (Acts 17. 30). God has always shown kindness, forbearance and long-suffering towards man, and the apostle Paul had experienced "the kindness of God our Saviour" (Titus 3. 4). We too can rejoice and say, "The LORD hath done great things for us; whereby we are glad" (Psalm 126. 3).

The goodness of God caused the inhabitants of Nineveh to repent at the preaching of Jonah. Judas Iscariot is a solemn example of repentance [1] (Matthew 27. 3-5). But what a contrast to the prodigal son who repented and said, "I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight" (Luke 15. 21)!

W. H. Humphris.

From Ibadan, Nigeria. —God's plan is that every individual person should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. Let us ponder first Acts 3. 19. "Repent ye therefore, and turn again that your sins may be blotted out," were the words of God to the large crowd of people that gathered round after Peter had wonderfully raised the lame man in Jerusalem. It should be made clear therefore, that there is no terror of God when one has not repented of his sins. The gravity of the Lord's words in Luke 13. 8 should be carefully considered, that is, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

We are not saved by the works of the law (Galatians 2. 16), but by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is clear from this verse that one can only be saved by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. But can we trust in one whom we do not know? No. But we can know Him by reading the Holy Scriptures regularly, for there His wonderful deeds are shown. Perhaps Ephesians 2. 8, 9 will foster our knowledge concerning faith. For we are saved by grace through faith in the Lord, and not of works.

It is now clear that a man needs to repent first, after which he should believe in the Lord Jesus Christ for everlasting life. Acts 20. 21 clearly shows that repentance toward God first and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the way of God for salvation.

S. A. E., K. C. B.
From Southport. —The Lord Himself clearly indicated that one of the aspects of the work of the Holy Spirit in the world would be to convict men of sin, righteousness and judgement (John 16, 8-11). The ministry of John seems to have been calculated to produce a deep sense of sin and to lead to repentance.

Repentance unto life was granted to Gentiles who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 11, 17, 18). God has indicated that His goodness is calculated to lead men to repentance. He has shut men up to faith, if they would know His salvation. Without faith it is impossible to please God (Hebrews 11, 6).

To the Galatian saints who were being unsettled by the Judaizing teaching of their day, Paul appeals on the ground of their experience when they received the Holy Spirit. The arguments of Galations 3 are very powerful. By faith in God and His word men may appropriate every blessing in this life and that which is to come. T. R.

From Belfast. —In Acts 11, 18 we read that repentance is granted by God. While a sinner may be in a repentant state, it requires the grace of God to grant him eternal life. This we take to be the meaning of the words "repentance unto life." From this scripture we also see that the Jewish brethren had revealed to them that the Gentiles also were to receive repentance.

With regard to repentance we would be reminded of Esau who despised his birthright; and, though he sought it carefully with tears, God did not grant it to him. If the sinner is to receive forgiveness of sin, it must be by repentance and faith (Acts 20, 21).

The person who has known repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ should manifest his inward experience by an outward change in his life (Acts 26, 20). When the Pharisees and Sadducees came to be baptized with the baptism of repentance, John upbraided them because their life was a complete denial of any genuine repentance toward God (Matthew 3, 7, 8).

In Romans 3, 27-31 we learn the great truth of justification by faith. The word faith conveys the thought of one who has confidence in another's ability. This is the relation of the sinner to Christ; he has placed his faith in the One who can save to the uttermost: his works are completely excluded; no other work save the finished work of Christ can save the guilty soul. N. C. Shields.

From Hamilton, Ont. —In the experience of some, conviction, repentance and faith happen almost simultaneously, while in other cases there is a lapse of time between conviction and conversion.

Since the fall in Eden, man has been separated from God, and before communion can be restored, repentance and faith are necessary. These were seen in men of God, such as Noah, Abraham, etc. As the result of Jonah's preaching, repentance and faith saved Nineveh. John the Baptist, the last of the prophets, preached, "Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." These words were repeated by the Lord Himself. It was remarked that repentance is sometimes the result of fearing the judgement of God. However, the reverse is also true for, "the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance." The acknowledgment of sin is necessary in both cases. In spite of the many ways in which men are attempting to attain unto righteousness before God, such as through the law, good works, etc., it can only be attained by means of repentance and faith (Romans 10, 10).

N. MacKay.
From Wigan. —Repentance involves a change of behaviour (Acts 3. 26), a turning from that which is evil to do that which is good. To the Gentiles the message is the same (Acts 11. 17, 18). In this we see that repentance and faith are linked together, and that the gift of life through repentance and faith is according to grace granted by God.

Accompanying repentance of heart there should be the outward evidence, so we see that baptism was the first manifestation of which Peter says it is "the interrogation of a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 3. 21). It was his message on the day of Pentecost, "Repent ye, and he baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ" (Acts 2. 38).

It is fitting that that which is a type of death and resurrection should be the evidence of a change of heart and a turning away from the crooked and old ways to the new life, in which there is manifested the fruit of repentance (Matthew 3. 8). Paul also preached to the Gentiles that they should repent and turn to God, doing works worthy of repentance (Acts 26. 20). This is in keeping with the word of James 2. 18, "I by my works will show thee my faith." The Thessalonian saints manifested their change of heart, in that they turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God (1 Thessalonians 1. 9).

J. C., J. H.

From Nottingham. —Repentance has the meaning of a changed mind. This can operate in either direction between good and evil. God repented (Genesis 6. 6), but in the New Testament its application is limited to the sinner's change of mind. Repentance is necessary to salvation. It is the result of conviction. This is borne out in Acts 2. 37, 38, Matthew 3. 7-11.

There could be differences in the causes for repentance (2 Corinthians 7. 9, 10). There is a repentance to life which never brings any cause of regret, and a repentance (or remorse), such as that of Judas Iscariot and Pharaoh, which results from a fear of the consequences. "Dead works" (Hebrews 6. 1) were considered to be those of the law; Galatians 3. 21 was used to support this.

God overrules in all things and directs at His will (Romans 2. 4). In Noah's day an ark was provided, but only eight souls took advantage of this way of escape. So today Christ's atoning work is available for us and God wishes us to grasp it firmly, but it is our free choice.

Finally, there are variations in the degree of faith manifested by different persons; such scriptures as Matthew 6. 30, 8. 10, and Luke 17. 5, 6 were quoted to show this. It is desirable that the faith of each of us should grow like that of Abraham of old (Romans 4. 19, 20).

R. D. Williams.

From London, S. E. —We will take repentance first—a position it must always occupy. In its present context it means "to have a change of mind" towards God and His things. This change will follow immediately upon conviction by the Holy Spirit that all is not right between the sinner and God and the sorrow which this conviction brings (2 Corinthians 7. 8), unless, like the scribes and Pharisees in our Lord's day, he hardens his heart. Just as conviction comes from God the Holy Spirit, so repentance emanates from Him, as we see from Acts 11. 18, where God "grants repentance," i. e., gives the ability to repent, and Romans 2. 4, where He "leads" to it by and through His goodness. Further, the nature of this repentance being not merely subjective, like that of Judas (Matthew 27. 3-5), leading to destruction, but objective, as that preached by John the Baptist and Paul (Luke 3. 8, Acts 26. 20) leads to faith.

J. Adams.
From Birkenhead. —At the time of Israel's deliverance from Egypt not only must the lamb have its life taken, but its blood must be caught and applied with hyssop. There was no virtue in the hyssop, the virtue was in the sacrifice and the applied blood.

God is righteous, and man must have the answer to Job's question, "How can man be just before God" (Job 9. 12, Mg.). The gospel contains the answer, for it reveals a righteousness imputed by God as a result of faith, and it is revealed unto faith (Romans 1. 17). This is not a continuous faith, but one act of faith which can never be disannulled. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is begotten of God" (1 John 5. 1).

A. Hyland, K. Home.

From Melbourne. —We see the effects of repentance and faith in the case of the Thessalonians, who, hearing the gospel, turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God (1 Thessalonians 1. 9, 10). In the account of the case of Cornelius and his company, we do not find the word "repentance" mentioned in Acts 10; but the Jewish believers, hearing Peter's report, saw in the receiving of the Holy Spirit evidence of repentance (Acts 11. 18). So we can say that every born-again one has shown repentance by His acceptance of Christ as Saviour. Following upon conversion, there should be godly sorrow for sins and a forsaking of them.

Abraham, though naturally he had no evidence nor could see any possibility of the promise of God taking effect, exercised faith, and his faith was acknowledged and valued by God.

P. W. A.

From Middlesbrough. —The word repentance implies a change of mind, but the heart and the will are also involved. Whilst there must be repentance previous to salvation, there may also be cause for repentance during the believer's life. Of the seven churches in Asia addressed in the book of the Revelation, five received a call to repentance. In the ministry of John the Baptist there was a strong call to repentance. The Lord also spoke strongly against hypocrisy and self-satisfaction, and called for a genuine change of mind. There was a call to repentance from the very beginning of the Lord's ministry (Matthew 4. 17). Pentecostal preaching also contained many references to the need for repentance.

The realization of need, when a person is repentant, may be accompanied by a turning to God in faith. There is also the sad possibility of the individual hardening the heart when the Spirit of God convicts. Where this is so, judgement will surely follow.

D. Goodwin.

From West Hartlepool. —In the Old Testament we see evidence of God calling men to repentance, as, for instance, through the preaching of Noah (Genesis 6) and Jonah (Jonah 3). He visited them in judgement if they repented not, but forgave them if they did repent. In His dealings too with His people Israel there is abundant evidence of His mercies when His people turned toward Him, though the Scriptures would speak more of God repenting Himself for His servants than His people repenting (see Psalm 106. 45) [2].

In the present dispensation, the Lord commanded that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all the nations beginning from Jerusalem (Luke 24. 47). Thus both Jew and Gentile are brought within the pale of divine blessing (Acts 2. 38; 5. 31 and 11. 18). To the Jew, the guilt of crucifying their Messiah wrought conviction in the hearts of many, and to the Gentiles the thought of coming judgement was
prominently brought before them (Acts 10. 42, 17. 30, 31). The goodness of God may lead men to repentance (Romans 2. 4), but so also does the thought of judgement to come (Acts 24. 25). Repentance is illustrated in the story of the prodigal son (Luke 15. 17).

From Glasgow. —The many references in the Bible to repentance lead us to understand that repentance is a change of mind involving a discontinuance of a former mode of conduct upon our appreciation of its abhorrence to the Lord. Faith is clearly defined in Hebrews 11. 1. In relation to the gospel, repentance is the attitude of mind of one who has come to realize the guilt of sin, the sorrow it has brought to God and man and who thereupon desists from his former thoughts and manner of life. This is possible to the sinner only when he comes to realize the squalor and peril of his condition and the magnanimity of the offer of salvation through Christ. The extreme generosity of God in giving His Son is sufficient to stir to faith in God the heart of any repentant sinner.

It is also a basic truth of the gospel that salvation is not of works. The repentant sinner must understand that, willing though he be to make amends, he is shut up to one way of salvation. To make amends is beyond the capacity of the human race. Salvation was made possible only by the death of Christ, the efficacy of which the sinner must believe for himself. He must be like the Israelite of old who laid his hands on the head of the offering, symbolically transferring his sins to the animal and identifying himself personally therewith. The sinner must accept the work of Christ for himself.

A notable example of the outcome of repentance is found in 2 Chronicles 33 regarding Manasseh who, though among the worst of kings, repented and found grace with God. With sinners, generally speaking there is always room for repentance and faith, but with saints this may not always be so. Solemn thought!

From Atherton. —Repentance is the exact opposite to self-righteousness, which is a condition resulting from pride of heart. Faith stands in contrast to good works. Repentance brings a man down in humble contrition before God in his sinner state, accounting God holy and His word true.

"Repentance" in the Old Testament results in "turning" or "returning" (Deut 4. 30, Isaiah 55. 7). In its frequent use in the New Testament it simply means "a change of mind." The joint use, "Repent, . . . and turn again" (Acts 3. 19), would seem to indicate repentance in action. "Repent" involves a change of mind; "turn again" has to do with positive action consequent upon the change of mind. With regard to the Jew, God demanded very clear evidences of repentance in view of their callous rejection of their Messiah.

In the Old Testament the word "faith" is mentioned only twice, though living examples of faith are many, as Hebrews 11 graphically depicts. "Children in whom is no faith" (Deut 32. 20) is the sad commentary of God concerning His erring people. The other use, "The just shall live by faith" (Hab 2. 4), cited three times in the New Testament, is most illuminating, since it presents a foundational truth of the gospel (Romans 1. 17, Galatians 3. 11, Hebrews 10. 38). This last citation, of course, views faith unto the saving of the life of the believer. "Believe" and "trust" are correlative terms to "faith," which occurs over 200 times in the New Testament. This is the faith of Hebrews 11. 1.

J. K. Southern, G. A. J.
The Propitiatory Work of Christ

From Victoria, B. C. —The word propitiation carries the thought of atonement, mercy or covering, and tells of a divine plan to put away the guilt of man. The close association of the work of Christ and atonement of Old Testament times is brought before us in Romans 3. 25, which tells of the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth to be a propitiation. Aaron, in the sprinkling of the blood on and before the mercy-seat, made a covering for sins and there was forgiveness for the guilty. The mercy-seat rested on the ark, bearing out the thought that there is only one way of approach to God, that is, through the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. It also reveals a covering by God and an uncovering by men. Christ, bearing the marks of Calvary, shows a complete covering by God for sin, but the sinner must uncover his guilt by confessing, to enjoy the atonement or expiation made.

Christ is the propitiation for our sins and also the whole world (1 John 2. 2). His blood speaks for ever in the presence of God.


COMMENTS

[1] (Kingston). —The word here for repentance is not Metanoeo to change one's mind, which implies one's mode of acting. The word in Matthew 27. 3-5 is Metamelomai which means "to change one's mind from a painful motive" and indicates in this passage "remorse" which resulted in death, suicide; it is not repentance unto life. —J. M.

[2] (West Hartlepool). —It should, I think, be mentioned that the word to repent (Heb. Nacham) in the Old Testament has not the same meaning as Metanoeo, to change the mind, in the New Testament. The word to repent in the Old Testament means to sigh, to be sorry. The meaning will be seen in Genesis 6. 6: "It repented the LORD that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart." He could not and did not change His mind as to making man in view of His eternal purpose in Christ Jesus and other purposes of grace. We also may grieve over certain events without the necessity of changing our minds. At the same time where there is a need for a change of mind, "godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation, which bringeth no regret" (2 Corinthians 7. 10, R. V. marg.). —J. M.

QUESTION AND ANSWER

Question from London, S. E. —Do repentance and faith occur simultaneously, i. e., at the time we are born again? or may there be an interval between true repentance and the exercise of saving faith?

Answer. —Paul links repentance and faith together, in Acts. 20. 21. The two are infrequently seen together, for where men are called upon to repent, as in Acts 2. 38, faith is implied, and where men are called upon to believe, as in Acts 10. 43, repentance is implied. Repentance without faith would be merely sorrow for wrongdoing without any inward change of heart, and faith without repentance would be a spurious faith. The two things are ever together in a real work of God in an individual. —J. M.
NOTES ON THE EPISTLE OF JAMES

CHAPTER 1

Verse 25: *But he that looketh into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and so continueth, being not a hearer that forgetteth, but a doer that worketh, this man shall be blessed in his doing.*

He that looketh (\textit{Parakupto}, "to stoop down towards, bend forward, particularly for examination") into the perfect law of liberty, refers not to the law of Moses in the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life (2 Corinthians 3. 6): it is the spiritual meaning of the teaching of the old covenant. Note the contrast which Paul draws between the law and the gospel of the glory of the blessed God, in 1 Timothy 1. 6-11. The gospel condemns all forms of wrongdoing, and at the same time provides a remedy for the wrongs. The law of liberty is liberty through doing what is right, not licence to do wrong. The saving grace of God instructs us, "to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteous and godly in this present world" (Titus 2. 11, 12). The doer receives the blessing, not the forgetful hearer. Note Revelation 1. 3, also Psalm 1. 1-3.

Verses 26, 27: *If any man thinketh himself to be religious, while he bridleth not his tongue but deceiveth his heart, this man's religion is vain. Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.*

The Greek word \textit{Threskeia} (religion) is used only four times in the New Testament, in Acts 26. 5; Colossians 2. 18 (worshipping); James 1. 26, 27; and \textit{Threskos} (religious) once, in James 1. 26. Paul calls Phariseeism religion. Dr. Young calls religion "outward religious service." Religion may be but an outward, hollow sham, a cloke to cover mere hypocrisy and wickedness. James describes a man with an unbridled tongue and a deceived heart as one who has a vain religion. But he shows what pure religion is, to care for the fatherless and widows, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world. Here is a saint in the robes of a saint, and not a hypocrite in stolen garments.

CHAPTER 2

Verse 1: *My brethren, hold not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons.*

The faith of our Lord Jesus Christ is "the Faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). It is, as we have said before, the body of doctrine containing the will of God for His New Testament people, as the law of Moses which was commanded in Horeb was for all Israel, God's Old Testament people (Malachi 4. 4). Of old Israel was commanded, "Thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty" (Leviticus 19. 15). "Ye shall not respect persons in judgement; ye shall hear the small and the great alike" (Deuteronomy 1. 17). God said to the remnant through Malachi, ye "have had respect of persons in the law" (Malachi 2. 9).
Verses 2, 3, 4: For if there come into your synagogue a man with a gold ring, in fine clothing and there come in also a poor man in vile clothing; and ye have regard to him that weareth the fine clothing, and say, Sit thou here in a good place; and ye say to the poor man, Stand thou there, or sit under my footstool; are ye not divided in your own mind, and become judges with evil thoughts?

Here we have discrimination of the worst kind. David said, "Though the LORD be nigh, yet hath He respect unto the lowly" (Psalm 138. 6). Again, the LORD blessed the man that respected not the proud (Psalm 40. 4). One of the beautiful events in David's life was his treatment of Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, who was lame on both his feet. How he lifted up the grandson of Saul his persecutor from his poverty, and made him to sit at his table as one of his sons, will ever add lustre to the illustrious name of David, more than any of his many victories. We do well to lay to heart the words of Elihu, "Behold, God is mighty, and despiseth not any" (Job 36. 5), and also Solomon's words, "He that despiseth his neighbour sinneth: but he that hath pity on the poor, happy is he" (Proverbs 14. 21). Such words in their own Scriptures, and there are many others of like kind, would have saved the Jewish believers from acting as James outlined.

Verses 5, 6, 7: Hearken, my beloved brethren; did not God choose them that are poor as to this world to be rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to them that love Him? But ye have dishonoured the poor man. Do not the rich oppress you, and themselves drag you before the judgement-seats? Do not they blaspheme the honourable name by the which ye are called?

It is evident, I think, that God has a special liking for the poor or He would not have chosen so many of them. Scripture speaks in many places of His care for the poor. "The rich man's wealth is his strong city" (Proverbs 10. 15), but the poor have no such defence, so their hope is the Lord, and in many cases the poor turn to Him for help, and such as trust in the Lord are never disappointed. "Riches profit not in the day of wrath" (Proverbs 11. 4), but the poor whose faith is in the Lord fear no day of wrath. The Lord spoke of the deceitfulness of riches, in Matthew 13. 22. What kingdom is this that was promised to them that love God? There is the present kingdom of God, of which the Lord said, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (Luke 12. 32). This was that highly favoured place of being under the rule of God under the lordship of Christ. This favoured place of being a people governed by God was once Israel's, but on their rejection of the Lord it was taken from them and given to another nation (Matthew 21. 43), even to God's New Testament people who were gathered in churches of God, forming the house of God. It is evident that the kingdom of God is a present inheritance (1 Corinthians 6. 9; Ephesians 5. 5). Righteousness, doing what is right, according to God's revealed will, is an essential feature of the kingdom of God (Matthew 6. 33; Romans 14. 17, 18), apart from which collective service for God is impossible. But what is the kingdom of which James writes? Is it the present kingdom of God? It will be noticed that the words, "promised to them that love Him," are used in 1. 12, where the allusion is to a future reward, to the receiving of the crown of life. I am inclined to the thought that the kingdom of verse 5 is a future kingdom, such as that of Luke 22. 28-30, and also in the parable of Luke 19. 11-27 when rewards will be given for faithful service. The time will come when the saints shall possess the kingdom (Daniel 7. 18, 22, 27; see also Revelation 2. 26). Who were the rich that oppressed the poor? These were not
the rich among the saints (though it is not impossible for rich saints to follow this course), they are the rich as a class, as distinct from the poor as a class. It was not uncommon for the rich (1) to oppress the poor, (2) to drag them before the judgement-seats, and (3) to blaspheme the Lord's name.

Verses 8, 9: Howbeit if ye fulfil the royal law, according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: but if ye have respect of persons, ye commit sin, being convicted by the law as transgressors.

What a powerful corrective to all forms of misconduct is the royal law, a kingly law which reigns over and sums up all laws of conduct of man toward his fellow-man! It is a law which says that man's care for himself is to be his care for others: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. " "Who is my neighbour? " was the question asked by the Pharisee, and in answer the Lord spoke the parable, commonly called that of the good Samaritan, by which He showed that a man's neighbour is his fellow-man whether rich or poor, sick or otherwise. Hence the royal law is the remedy of all ills between a man and his neighbour. It saves from the sin of having respect of persons, as Proverbs 14. 21 also shows.

Verses 10, 11: For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is become guilty of all. For He that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou dost not commit adultery, but killest, thou art become a transgressor of the law.

It does not require every link of the anchor chain to break for a ship to be at the mercy of wind and wave and to drift on the rocks. If one link breaks it is as bad as if every link had broken. So is it with the law. Both murder and adultery were capital charges under Moses' law. If one of the statutes of the law was broken, then the law-breaker was a transgressor, and he was guilty. "The wages of sin is death," and death, even that of the Lord, had to take place for the sinner to be forgiven.

Verses 12, 13: So speak ye, and so do, as men that are to be judged by a law of liberty. For judgement is without mercy to him that hath shewed no mercy: mercy glorieth against judgement.

The law of liberty is the law of Christ, who said, "For with what judgement ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured unto you." Then the Lord spoke about taking the beam out of one's own eye before one seeks to remove the mote from our brother's eye (Matthew 7. 1-5). Then we have the Lord's summing up of the teaching of the whole law and the prophets as to man's behaviour towards his fellows in one sentence: "All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them: for this is the law and the prophets" (Matthew 7. 12). It is truly a law of liberty, but if we act differently towards others than we act towards ourselves we are making a rod to break our own back; "for," says James, "judgement is without mercy to him that hath no mercy. " See Matthew 18. 21-35. J. M.
The words "gospel" and "good (or glad) tidings" in the English New Testament arise from translation of two main words, *euangelizo* and *euangelion*, and a third word (occurring only once) *proeuangelizomai*.

The first of these, *euangelizo*, is a verb which literally means "to announce good news," that is, preach the gospel (evangelize). It is the word always used in Luke and Hebrews. The second word is a noun meaning "good message," and is always used in Mark, *Ephesians*, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Philemon and Revelation. Both are used in Matthew, Acts, Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians and 1 Peter.

The English word "gospel" is derived from the Old English "godspel," which is composed of the two words "god spel" (good tidings), and is therefore a literal translation capable of conveying the true sense of the Greek. Fortunately, the word "gospel" has had a good history: it has not degenerated, has not been mis-applied, and the extensions of its meaning have not vitiated its scriptural significance, which would render the word of doubtful usefulness.

This is not so of certain words borrowed from the Greek. Some serious students of the word of God do not view with favour the use of such words as "baptize," "baptism," and "bishop." They would prefer some simpler word, preferably derived from Old English or Anglo-Saxon, because they believe that such words are more readily and more fully understood.

The fact that a word has been borrowed from another language is not in itself a valid objection. If we are to reject all borrowings, we should have to reject "evangelist" and use some word such as "gospeller," a word which now has some rather dubious associations. Borrowings are necessary and serve, in general, a good purpose: they enrich a language and make possible fine distinctions of meaning. Objections, if any, to a word do not arise from the borrowing but from the fact that the meaning of the word may have drifted or may have gathered extended meanings or applications which may be undesirable. "Bishop" is derived from *episcopos* and literally means "overseer." If it were always used in this sense, little harm would be done. On the contrary, "bishop" is used as a title in certain sectarian bodies in such a way as to rob it of its true scriptural application. This circumstance renders the use of the word in its literal sense misleading to the ill-informed. In such a case we should prefer to avoid the use of the word and instead use its self-explanatory equivalent, "overseer." If we must use "bishop," we should be careful to indicate clearly the meaning intended.

The case against "baptize" is not so strong, though in certain circles it has gathered an unscriptural application. Space forbids arguing this case now, but there are valid arguments in favour of retaining the word. Here again, it is important to make clear the scriptural implications of the word, these being set out clearly and definitely in the Scriptures.
Other words translated "tidings" are *logos*, "a report" (Acts 2. 22) and *phasis*, "making known one's thoughts" (Acts 21. 31). These are news or tidings in the ordinary sense, but the gospel is good (Greek, *eu*) tidings, good tidings from God to man, which must be preached or proclaimed, the Lord Jesus having placed this responsibility on His disciples (Matthew 28. 19). These tidings were ever good; they were good when made known to Abraham (Galatians 3. 8), "preached beforehand" (*proeuangelizomai*). They are still good, for us and for all men, and we who live in a day of good things do not well if we are silent in word or in life (2 Kings 7. 9).

**NOTES ON THE BOOK OF THE REVELATION CHAPTER 20**

"The sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works." The sea and death will give up the bodies of the dead, and Hades will give up their souls, and here it is repeated that the judgement was according to their works. Then we are told that if any was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire. This clearly indicates that there may be some at this judgement, there may be many, whose name will be found in the book of life. This is clearly indicated by the Lord in John 5. In verse 24 He first speaks of that translation from death into life, which takes place when a sinner believes the message of the gospel, in which is the testimony of the Father and the Son, and the witness of two is true. This is the spiritual experience of the soul of every believer. Then in verse 25 He says that "the hour cometh, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." Here it is the physically dead, such as Lazarus was, in chapter 11. Lazarus is a type of all who shall share in the resurrection from (out of) the dead, who shall be raised before the Millennium. All such are blessed and holy, as we have just seen. After this, in verses 28 and 29, the Lord says, "Marvel not at this: for the hour cometh, in which all that are in the tombs shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done ill, unto the resurrection of judgement." It is quite clear that in this portion we have the final resurrection of all that are in their tombs, all who will be raised to stand for judgement before the Great White Throne. Here will be revealed those who have done good, and those who have done ill. This is not a judgement to settle whether they will be cast into the lake of fire or not. That was settled before they passed from the earth; it is a judgement to settle the measure of the punishment and to reveal the justice of it. In that judgement it will be more tolerable or bearable for Tyre and Sidon and for Sodom, than for Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum (Matthew 11. 20-24). In that judgement shall stand up the Queen of Sheba and the repentant men of Nineveh and condemn the unbelieving Jewish people (Luke 11. 29-32). No one can do good who has not first repented, nor can they fear God without repentance. See Acts 10. 34, 35, and Romans 2. 4-11, as to how God will deal with those to whom the gospel has not come in the power of the Spirit. The goodness of God should lead men to repentance. The goodness of God in superabundance is seen in the gospel of His grace, but besides, He is good to all.
Finally, death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire, and every one whose name was not found in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire also. Those already there are the beast, the false prophet and the devil (verse 10). Though they are not mentioned in this chapter, the devil's angels may be there also, and such as stood under the figure of goats, in Matthew 25, on the left hand of the Lord, may be there as well. Here ends the sad and ruinous course of sin and death which entered the human family in Genesis 3. Death will disappear for ever from the redeemed of the human race. It is the last enemy to be abolished (1 Corinthians 15. 26).

CHAPTER 21

John, who saw the awful day of judgement, now sees the rapturous sight of a new heaven and a new earth, and the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. "New" in each of the three cases is the Greek word Kainos. There are two words in the Greek for "new," Kainos and Neos. Kainos means new, recent, recently made, not had before. Neos means new, fresh, young, youthful. The old heaven and earth are not put through a refining process and turned out new, rejuvenated in youth and freshness. We are told that the first earth and heaven passed away, and in chapter 20. 11 we are told that "there was found no place for them." In 2 Peter 3. 10, 12 we are told that the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and that the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Again it is said that we look for new heavens and a new earth (Kainos in both cases) wherein dwelleth righteousness. There can be no doubt that "new" in these cases does not mean the renewal of the old earth and heaven, but new in the sense that they were not before. This fact is strengthened by what is said in Hebrews 1. 10-12, where we are told that the earth and the heavens shall perish, that they shall wax old as a garment, and be rolled up like a mantle, and as a garment they shall be changed. We know what is meant by changing a worn-out garment. It is not renovated to become a new one. It is put off and changed for a new one, one that we had not before. It is more difficult to understand what heaven shall pass away. There are three heavens:

(1) the firmament or expanse which was made on the second day of Genesis 1, which God called heaven; this was a heaven for the renewed earth:
(2) the heaven which God created with the earth in the beginning; (3) and the third heaven (Paradise) (2 Corinthians 12. 2, 4), which is heaven itself (Hebrews 9. 24), where the throne of God is (Revelation 4. 2, 3). It may be that it is the heavens (1) and (2) that will be dissolved and pass away, and their place will be taken by a new heaven. About this we would not be definite, but leave it to the reader to consider. God says, "Behold, I make all things new," which must not be read, "Behold, I make old things new." French says of Kainos, "new, not under aspects of time, but of quality, the new as set over against that which has seen service, the outworn, the effete or marred through age, and this is Kainos."

The city, the new Jerusalem, is called, "The Tabernacle of God." The word tabernacle (Skene) does not mean in every use of the word a temporary building or tent, as Hebrews 8. 2; 9. 11, shows. God will at last realize fully His desire that He should dwell with men (Exodus 25. 8; 29. 45; 1 Kings 6. 13; 8. 27; 2 Corinthians 6. 16). In the past, God's dwelling among His people in the tabernacle and the temple was conditioned on their obedience. The building of the tabernacle as proposed by God, in Exodus 25. 1-9, followed Israel's acceptance of the covenant conditions,
when they said, "All that the LORD hath spoken will we do, and be obedient" (Exodus 24. 7; 19. 5-8). Because of their disobedience, God forsook the tabernacle in Shiloh (1 Samuel 2. 12—4. 22; Psalm 78. 60, 61). Similarly, the temple built by Solomon was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, because of the disobedience of Judah and Benjamin (2 Chronicles 36. 1-21), and for seventy years they languished in Babylonish captivity. Then a remnant returned and built again the house of God, as is described in the book of Ezra. The condition of obedience to God's revealed will is still fundamental to God dwelling among His called out and gathered together people. Thus Paul wrote to the church of God in Corinth, "Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man destroyeth the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are " (1 Corinthians 3. 16, 17). "Destroyeth " (Pheiro) means to corrupt either by evil doctrine or practice, or both, for the latter follows the former. Paul says, " Evil company doth corrupt good manners " (1 Corinthians 15. 33). Where are the good manners when they are corrupted? They exist no longer. So also the temple of God, which was the church of God in Corinth, the dwelling place of God in that city, but if it was corrupted by evil doctrine and practice, and so destroyed, it ceased to be God's temple. The temple of God is ever a conditional thing. Utter confusion has existed and still exists in almost all religious literature on the difference between the Church which is Christ's Body, and the church and churches of God, which together form the temple of God. It ought to be clear to all who have a modicum of understanding of the Scriptures, that the Church which is Christ's Body, the Bride of the Lamb, cannot be corrupted.

In that new earth wherein righteousness shall dwell for ever, the holy city, new Jerusalem, the Bride and Wife of the Lamb, shall be God's tabernacle, His dwelling with men on the new earth; " they shall be His peoples, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God " (21. 3). Here the present and ancient desire of God shall be fully realized, " I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people " (2 Corinthians 6. 16; Leviticus 26. 12). In this holy city will be found, what has so frequently been thwarted by men's carnal, rebellious hearts, that obedience and worship which are ever a people's due to their God. Men have so often vainly presumed to worship God without regard first of all to the vital matter of obedience, and often men's precepts have taken the place of God's word. The Lord touched on this weighty matter when He quoted to the Pharisees and scribes the words of Isaiah 29. 13:

" This people honoureth Me with their lips; But their heart is far from Me. But in vain do they worship Me, Teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men "

(Matthew 15. 8, 9).

When the time of verse 3 is reached the results of disobedience will have passed away, for verse 4 says,

" And He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain, any more: the first things are passed away."

What a state of blessedness is here unfolded! All these things which entered through man's disobedience, and were experienced in succeeding generations of those who were disobedient, will then have come to an end. A completely new state of things will have come, in what is called the day of God, a day which we should earnestly desire (2 Peter 3. 12), the day of
eternity (2 Peter 3. 18, R. V. marg.). These faithful and true words will then have come to pass. As is the Father, so is the Son—the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end (verse 6; 22. 13). He will give to all thirsty ones (Greek, present participle), who are even now thirsty, of the fountain of the water of life freely, gratuitously, for nothing. The sole condition of the gift is that we are thirsty.

"He that overcometh shall inherit these things; and I will be his God, and he shall be My son." In what sense are we to understand "overcometh." Here? The word "overcometh" is used frequently in chapters 2 and 3, and, in regard to overcoming there, rewards are offered; saints may overcome by divine strength or be overcome through human weakness. If this is the sense in which "overcometh" is used in verse 7, then it may well be that few will inherit the things mentioned previously in the chapter, and we may ask, What will be the portion of the rest of the saints? I am disposed to the view that the overcoming here is that of 1 John 5. 5: "And who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" "Our faith" is the victory that overcometh the world. That faith is identified, that Jesus is, as Peter confessed, the Christ, the Son of the living God. Such a believer is built by the Lord into the Church, against which the gates of Hades cannot prevail. All the members of the Church which is His body are overcomers by their faith that Jesus is the Son of God, and will be presented sinless and pure by the Lord to Himself (Matthew 16. 15-18; Ephesians 5. 22-27), they are overcomers in the absolute sense over all the powers of earth and hell. Hence what they will receive as in these verses is an inheritance, not a reward. The things offered to the overcomers of the seven churches were rewards, not inheritances. Inheritance in these verses is the inheritance of the saints in light. If the overcoming is for saints in churches of God, then I can conceive that inheritors will be few compared with the rest of saints. What will the rest of the saints inherit? God will be the God of the inheriting overcomers and they will be His sons. But in contrast to those who will be God's sons, there is this company of unbelievers of various grades of wrongdoing. There are the fearful or timid, who ever saw dangers in believing in Christ, because of the enmity of the world against Him: the unbelievers who are a numerous class, who for one reason or another failed to believe in Christ: the abominable, morally and religiously filthy, the loathsome and detestable: the murderers, a class never few, but greatly on the increase in these days: the fornicators, this is one of the kind of sinners that Paul says, God will judge. Fornication is one of man's immoral members, and exceedingly prevalent: the sorcerers, in the Greek this signifies one who prepares drugs, with which was associated in the past enchantment, magic, and association with spirits, evil spirits. The crude form of this still exists in the "medicine-men" of pagan countries: the idolaters, these are an exceedingly numerous class; education has not swept the world free of idolatry. The Roman church is full of it, and also the vast pagan religions. The west is also full of it, and in "covetousness, the which is idolatry" (Colossians 3. 5): the liars, the world is well stocked with these; there are religious liars, political liars, business liars, social liars, and one might go on in an interminable list, for liars are of all shades and grades. All these unrepentant and unforgiven sinners shall find their part in the lake of fire, that burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death.

Then came one of the angels, who had the seven bowls with the seven last plagues, to show to John the Bride, the Wife of the Lamb. He carried John to a mountain great and high, and forward in prophetic vision to the
time of Revelation 21. The new Jerusalem was not descending out of heaven in the time in which John lived. The Bride of the Lamb is a city, even the holy city, the new Jerusalem. What is a city? It is not simply a pile of buildings, but signifies a people who are dwelling together and have houses in the buildings of the city. It may seem unnecessary to say this, but there are so many opinions in existence about the new Jerusalem, that it seems necessary to say that we do not believe that this city is simply a people of no fixed abode. In Revelation 19:7, 8 the Lamb's Wife is seen in her marriage dress of fine linen; here in chapter 21 she is seen in the city in which she lives. Her marriage dress is of her own righteous acts, but her home is a city whose Builder and Maker is God (Hebrews 11:10). This city descends out of heaven from God its Maker. "The Wife of the Lamb," of 21.9 is undoubtedly "His wife," of 19.7. The description here surpasses anything else in Scripture, except heaven, as in chapter 4. The glory of God radiates from this city, the light or luminary of it is like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. This is like the glory of God in chapter 4, which is mixed with the red colour of a sardius. The inherent and radiated light of the city is as clear as crystal. We have already indicated definitely our view, that the Church which is Christ's Body is the Bride of the Lamb, as to the saints who are comprised in it. This is also the view of most expositors of the Word and of hymn-writers. Even so great a servant of God as John the Baptist called himself the friend of the Bridegroom (John 3:29), but overcoming saints of this dispensation, who were members of Christ's Body, were promised that they would have the name of the city of God, the new Jerusalem, written upon them (Revelation 3:12). We have also shown, in our notes on chapter 19, that Old Testament saints or Israel are not part of the Bride.

J. M.

THE GOSPEL OF THE GLORY OF CHRIST

The above title is taken from the R. V. text of 2 Corinthians 4:4. The emphasis there would seem to be on that particular aspect of the gospel which presents to men the glory associated with Christ. In the A. V. it is rendered, "the glorious gospel of Christ," which would seem to direct us to the glorious character of the message. Irrespective of which is considered to be the more correct, it cannot be gainsaid that changelessness is a characteristic peculiar to Deity (Malachi 3:6). The Person of Christ is changeless in essence; He is the possessor of full Deity (Hebrews 1:8-12, 13.8), and whether we view Him in eternity (past) or in the days of His earthly sojourn, or in eternity (future), there is an accompanying glory, although not always found to be manifested in the same way. The glory of Christ in creation has formed the theme of psalmists (Psalm 8, 19, etc.), prophets (Isaiah 40; Amos 4:8), kings (Proverbs 8:22-31) and the apostles (John 1; Colossians 1.13-17). The everlasting tokens of His power and divinity are clearly perceived through the things that are made and written in glory across the spacious firmament (Psalm 8:1; Romans 1.20).

We have been graciously afforded, through the medium of Isaiah 6, a glimpse of the resplendent glory of Christ in eternity (past). That the King, the Lord of Hosts, is none other than God the Son is indisputable. The fact that Christ became incarnate, and was found in accordance with prophecy (Micah 5:2) in such humble circumstances, does not infer a complete laying aside of glory in its every aspect. We are told, "The Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, glory
as of the only begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth" (John 1.14). 

Precious are the scriptural references to the glory manifested in the days of His flesh. In Cana of Galilee the One through whom the ages were made manifested His glory in miraculously producing the wine. The majestic scene on the mount was never to be forgotten by the beholders. The glory of His countenance, the glistening garments, whiter than earthly light, showed His glory (Matthew 17; Mark 9; Luke 9). Stephen (Acts 7.55), Paul (Acts 26.13, 14) and John (Revelation 1.17) were privileged witnesses of His glory in resurrection.

The millennium will reveal glories and beauties yet unknown. The glory of the LORD will be seen upon Israel (Isaiah 60; 40.5). The whole earth will be filled with the glory of Him who is the effulgence of the glory of God (Hebrews 1.3). In that day, when all nations shall bow to His sceptre, His own resting place will be glory (Isaiah 11.10, R.V. M.).

Reconciliation and Forgiveness

From London, S. E. —Reconciliation is the restoration of relations after estrangement. Forgiveness is a pre-requisite of reconciliation. The two go hand-in-hand.

Sin estranged us from God. How complete was the estrangement is emphasized in the flaming sword at Eden's gate! Although man caused the estrangement, God made the first move to reconciliation, and, more than that, provided the means whereby a just reconciliation could be enacted. The price paid was the highest possible, that of the life of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. God demands faith on our part that the estrangement may be dissolved and the fulness of joy of the associated forgiveness may flood our souls. How closely reconciliation and forgiveness are linked in the gospel is seen in the following summary. Forgiveness is by God in overwhelming grace (Ephesians 1.7) and through the death of the Lord (Colossians 1.13). It is known by belief on our part (Acts 10.43) and is that which, having been received by us, we must also show to others (Ephesians 4.32, Matthew 6.14).

Reconciliation is unto God (Romans 5.10), and is possible only by the death of Christ (Romans 5.10). It is the basis for our happiness (Romans 5.11), and, having received it ourselves, we must pass its message to others (2 Corinthians 5.18-21).

The two are made necessary by sin in the "root" and sin in the "shoot." As believers we are encouraged to live close to God, but sin still is an estranging force and needs daily forgiveness and reconciliation (1 John 1.8-2.2) [1]. We look forward to a time when no more will sin prevail and when forgiveness will not be a continual necessity, for we shall be permanently reconciled to Him in His very presence, eternally knowing the joy of our Lord [2].

C. L. Prasher.
72 BIBLE STUDIES

From Kingston-on-Thames. —In Adam through his sin the human race departed from God and has ever since been at enmity with Him. The estrangement was brought about by the rebellion of the first man, so that it is necessary for man to be reconciled to God and not God to man. Since the sinner himself is totally unable to retrace his steps back to the place of favour, God in infinite grace has intervened in order to provide the means whereby reconciliation could be brought about. The Lord Jesus Christ has made peace by the blood of His cross. It only remains for the individual to avail himself of the way back to God which He has provided.

When the apostle Paul deals with this matter in 2 Corinthians 5: 20 it would seem that he is not beseeching them to be reconciled, since they already knew peace with God. He is simply giving a brief statement of this aspect of the gospel message which he and they had the privilege to preach as ambassadors on behalf of Christ.

The work of reconciliation has not only restored the relationship that existed in the days of Adam when God communed with him in the garden of Eden. The fulness and extent of the work of Christ and the exceeding riches of God's grace have also resulted in our being seated with HUB in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 2. 10 read in conjunction with Colossians 1. 20 would lead us to conclude that all things in heaven and earth will finally be reconciled to God, but the things under the earth, although they will bow and be in subjection to the Lord Jesus, will never be reconciled. The doctrine of eternal punishment is thus confirmed.

In earthly relationships there can be no reconciliation unless there is forgiveness first, but it might be possible owing to human weakness for one to forgive another without reconciliation following automatically. In man's dealings with God the two are inseparable, but the individual must know forgiveness before he can enter into the blessings which flow from reconciliation with God. Nevertheless before the sinner could be forgiven, the work of reconciliation must first be effected once and for all by the death of Christ upon the cross.

L. Burrows.

From Edinburgh. —In reconciliation and forgiveness, as in other things we have studied, we see the love of God and the righteousness of God in beautiful and perfect balance. In this work of God there is complete harmony. Reconciliation is a work of God. Man does not reconcile himself to God. He cannot; he is in a state of alienation from God. God is the reconciler and He reconciles us to Himself through the Lord Jesus Christ, who made peace through the blood of His cross and made reconciliation possible on righteous grounds. Reconciliation brings joy to the reconciled (Romans 5. 11). It brings certain responsibilities too. We are ambassadors on behalf of Christ. We now have the ministry of reconciliation: " Be ye reconciled to God " (2 Corinthians 5. 20).

In considering reconciliation, can we forget the story of David and Absalom ? or the wise words of the woman of Tekoa, " Neither doth God take away life, but deviseth means, that he that is banished be not an outcast from Him " (2 Samuel 14. 14) ? Absalom had sinned, and for his sin the law of God demanded his death. He fled and was brought back to know David's kiss of reconciliation on unrighteous grounds. The result was that David nearly lost his throne and his life. But God has not worked in any such way. For the sinner, away from God and worthy of death, a death has taken place. The Son of God has died and paid
the price, and the guilty one can know perfect reconciliation on righteous grounds. Such is the value and the exceeding preciousness of the sacrifice of Christ.

"To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgiveness" (Daniel 9. 9). Whether in the case of a sinner believing in Christ or a saint confessing his sins, God will forgive in Christ. It has always been God's prerogative to forgive. No man who himself has shined has authority to forgive the sins of another. No Church can have the power of forgiveness of sins. "Who can forgive sins, but God alone" (Luke 5. 21)? The moment a guilty sinner believes the gospel, that moment his sins are forgiven. But sins committed afterwards must be confessed, and forgiveness then comes from God (1 John 1. 9). It is because of the old nature within us that we are prone to sin. But we, when we are born again, receive a new nature and this can never sin (1 John 5. 18). God sees us perfect in Christ, though one day we shall answer for the things which have come from our failing to mortify the flesh.

**EXTRACTS**

From Toronto, Ont. —Romans 5. 12 reveals the necessity for reconciliation. Adam's sin of disobedience brought in its train not only death but also alienation from God. Fellowship could no longer be enjoyed as it had been in Eden's garden before the fall. God sought to restore what had been lost. "The Father seeketh worshippers." We felt that Romans 5. 10 presents a once for all reconciliation which need never be repeated. The work of God in reconciling is complete in Christ. None need perish, none need be estranged from God: the work of Christ covers all.

God the Father and God the Son were united in this work of reconciling the world to Himself in Christ when He restored that which He took not away (Psalm 69. 4). The whole groaning creation was in view in the work of reconciliation (Colossians 1. 20; Romans 8. 20-23). These scriptures, we suggest, will have their complete fulfilment when, in a coming day, He will have subjected all things to Himself (Hebrews 2. 8).

It is worthy of note that it is stated as a qualification that "it shall be, when he shall be guilty in one of these things, that he confess that wherein he hath sinned" (Leviticus 5. 5). Confession was a necessity as much as was the accompanying offering before forgiveness could be extended to the erring one. Compare 1 John 1. 9. We were reminded of the psalmist's words in Psalm 130. 3, 4, "If Thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared."

Although Matthew 6. 12 would seem to be almost like a reversal of Ephesians 4. 32, yet our forgiveness one of another has to be as God has forgiven us. This is the standard our heavenly Father would have us attain to, one of perfection; as we love our brethren, and as love is made perfect with us, so will there be manifested that spirit of forgiving each other, even as God also in Christ forgave us (Ephesians 4. 32, R. V. M.). N. K.

From Glasgow. —In the affairs of men, estranged parties can be reconciled only if there is a proper frame of mind on both sides. But "the mind of the flesh is enmity against God" (Romans 8. 7, 8), and so man was unable to take steps towards reconciliation with God. Philippians 2. 5-8 reveals that the necessary attitude of true humility and obedience was shown by the Lord Jesus. The heart of God is revealed...
in the gift of His Son. and the heart of Christ in His taking our place, bearing
the stroke which was due to us. The Holy Spirit revealed to us our need,
making known the things of Christ and pointing to the One who made
possible forgiveness and reconciliation.

In Genesis we read of two prominent instances of reconciliation which
illustrate the real joy which should accompany forgiveness and recon-
ciliation. When Jacob was told by God to return to his country and his
kindred, he sent out messengers to Esau in the land of Seir. The word
they brought back made Jacob greatly afraid and distressed. But what
of Esau’s heart? Genesis 33. 4 answers. Joseph showed love to those
who had been his enemies (Genesis 45. 1-5, 12-15), and the lasting nature
of this love is seen after the death of Jacob (Genesis 50. 15-21).

Mark G. McKaig.

From West Hartlepool. —In God’s dealings with men we must not
confuse wrath and hostility. God’s love for man is clearly set forth in
the Scriptures, but so also is His wrath against sin. If man in his enmity
rejects God’s love, then the wrath of God abideth upon him.

There is a difference between the work of reconciliation and the word.
The word is the outcome of the work. The latter, being the initial act of
establishing peace by Christ’s death, was accomplished by the Lord, but
the word of reconciliation is ministered by men of God acting as
ambassadors.

Forgiveness, Paul tells us, is according to the riches of God’s grace,
but on the part of unregenerate man there must first be an acknowledgement
of God’s word that all have sinned and fall short of His glory. R. H.

From Wigan. —It is significant that in Colossians 1. 19, 20, where the
subject is reconciliation of all things, the order is: first, things upon the
earth, then things in the heavens, the earth being the place of enmity; while in Philippians 2. 10, where the theme is the acknowledging of the
authority of the exalted Christ, the order is: first, things in heaven, and
then things on earth, heaven being the place of obedience to His throne.
Further, in Colossians 1. 10, things under the earth are not mentioned,
but in Philippians 2. 10 things under the earth shall bow the knee to Him
without being reconciled.

Sin being the cause of enmity, God must first deal with it (Acts 5. 30).
The message to Israel was remission of sins through Jesus; and to the
Gentiles, "Every one that believeth on Him shall receive remission of sins " (Acts 10. 43).

In reconciliation there is a change of attitude of heart. The believing
one is quickened from a state of sin and corruption (the uncircumcision of
your flesh) to a state of righteousness, having been forgiven (Colossians 2. 13).

J. H.

From Belfast. —Through the work of Christ, and through this work
alone, every sinner can be reconciled to God. It is the good pleasure of
the Father " through Him to reconcile all things unto Himself, having
made peace through the blood of His cross " (Colossians 1. 20).

Because God forgives us, we are also reconciled to God through the
death of His Son (Ephesians 1. 7). God forgives us completely, and has
promised, " Their sins and their iniquities I will remember no more."

Another important truth we must learn is that it is our responsibility
to forgive those who have sinned against us. To all those who refuse to
learn this lesson the Master gives the solemn warning in Matthew 6. 15:
"If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. " For Christ's sake we must be "kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, even as God also in Christ forgave us" (Ephesians 4. 32, R. V. M.). D. Mawkinney.  

From Middlesbrough. —Until reconciliation is effected, there can be no fellowship or communion between man and God. As the result of Christ's atoning work reconciliation is possible. The result of reconciliation is peace with God.  

In Colossians 1. 20 the far-reaching effects of Christ's sacrificial work are seen. Its effects extend beyond the human race and affect the whole universe.  

God has revealed Himself as " a God full of compassion... forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin: and that will by no means clear the guilty " (Exodus 34. 6, 7). The justice of God cannot miscarry. Micah asks the question, " Who is a God like unto Thee that pardoneth iniquity ? "  

One of the words translated forgiveness is connected with the word grace, and means to deal in grace, to show favour unconditionally without respect to merit or desert. In the light of the forgiveness we have known we should be ever willing to forgive one another. James Mitchell, D. H.  

From Southport. —God shows wonderful love in reconciling men to Himself by the death of His Son (Romans 5. 10). That it was needful that He should die for man's salvation is shown by teaching frequently found in the New Testament. Christ died for our sins (Romans 4. 25; Galatians 1. 4; 1 Peter 2. 24). In His crucifixion the Lord Jesus Christ suffered on our account. By Christ's death we are reconciled to His Father, God (2 Corinthians 5. 18-21).  

Forgiveness is God's prerogative. He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that seek after Him. " In Ephesians 1. 7 we have the words, " We have our redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, " from which we gather that forgiveness is a present possession, not merely something to hope for. God does not account it enough merely to forgive the sinner, He also cleanses and delivers him from the power of sin. If we sin we have an Advocate, One who will plead our cause. He turned away God's wrath through His sacrifice for sin offered once for all. God can now be just, " and the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus " (Romans 3. 26). "I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake; and I will not remember thy sins " (Isaiah 43. 25). Thomas Brown.  

From Macduff and Whitehills. —Reconciliation does not indicate that a compromise has taken place. God is unchangeable and compromise is always hateful to Him. Reconciliation requires change in us, and not a lowering of God's standards. Only after atonement has been made for us and His righteousness vindicated can we be brought near to our heavenly Father. Once aliens, we are brought into God's family to share in untold blessings from which we were shut out until the work of Christ changed us.  

Putting away from our hearts resentment naturally felt against those who have sinned against us is a condition of God forgiving us in our lives before Him, as the Lord showed when He taught the disciples to pray. While in salvation only a confession of sinnership is required, actual confession of sins, in the case of the believer, is required that the Advocate, the Lord Jesus Himself, may plead our cause. Intercession is also made on our behalf by the Holy Spirit, our other Advocate or Comforter. A. B. R.
From Liverpool. —A number of words are used in the New Testament and translated "reconcile." That in Matthew 5. 23, 24 is Diallasso (used only here) and indicates "to effect an alteration, to exchange; to reconcile, in cases of mutual hostility." Katallasso denotes "to change, exchange (of money); hence (of persons) to change from enmity to friendship, to reconcile." Apokatallasso, "to reconcile completely," is used in Ephesians 2. 16 of the resultant reconciling of Jew and Gentile in one Body unto God through the cross.

We understood that the use of Katallasso in 2 Corinthians 5. 18-21 was an exhortation to Corinthian saints to enter into that which God had wrought through Christ towards the world. [See paper from Kingston.] We rejoice in the grace that "gave unto us the ministry of reconciliation" (2 Corinthians 5. 18, 19). It is our responsibility to preach to all men the gospel, which tells of the provision made in that work at Calvary.

We do not understand the "all things" of Colossians 1. 20 to indicate that for past and present rebellion and unbelief on the part of fallen angels and of men there will be reconciliation for them. The "all things" does not include such, but created things, the whole universe, which is to be brought into a state of reconciliation or into full accord with the mind of God (Ephesians 1. 10).

From Nottingham. —In Romans 5. 11 the word translated "atonement" in the A. V. is translated "reconciliation" in the R. V. Although over the years words change their meaning, it is considered that the better translation is that of the R. V. "Atonement" is found frequently in the Old Testament and its New Testament counterpart is thought to be that of "propitiation," as both show the means by which God's mercy is demonstrated to sinners.

Forgiveness or remission involves the setting aside of the punishment due to sinful conduct, i. e. eternal death (Romans 6. 23), and also the bearing away of the sin. This is accomplished on the basis of the propitiatory work of Christ.

The word for "forgive," used frequently by Paul, is Charizomai, and this has the meaning of bestowing a favour unconditionally. It is only when the life of the believer is envisaged that conditions are attached to service.

When sin is forgiven by God, it is also forgotten (Psalm 103. 12). With the spiritual there should also be a natural parallel, but how often do we fail to forget?

In the believer there is a constant battle between the old man and the new man. On occasions the old man triumphs, and causes us to sin. This is discussed in 1 John 1. 8—2. 2. Sins should be dealt with by confession to God, and seeking forgiveness through the blood of Christ. If sin is unconfessed, it mars our communion with God, but does not bring us once more under God's wrath as unregenerate sinners.

From Atherton. —In Matthew 5. 23, 24 the word Diallasso implies a mutual thorough change, when brother is reconciled to brother in a church of God.

The word used in Romans 5. 10 and 2 Corinthians 5. 18-21 is Katallasso ("Kata" down, and Allasso, to change). As "every good gift and every perfect boon is from above, coming down..." so in association with the gospel, there is that which comes down from God to man, so affecting the
heart of the sinner as to make an abiding change through the death of Christ.

Two views were expressed relative to 2 Corinthians 5. 20. According to the first, this verse refers to the matter of beseeching the sinner ("you not being in the original), and the **also** of 2 Corinthians 6. 1 involves an additional entreaty to the saints. The other view is that the context of the three verses (5. 20-6. 1) refers to the spiritual condition of the assembly, which was in danger of receiving the grace of God in vain [4].

In Exodus 34. 6, 7 the wonderful revelation of a God who forgives iniquity and transgression and sin caused Moses to make haste to worship. In Revelation 1. 6 the glory and the dominion are ascribed to God the Father because of the loosing from sins by (En, in) the blood of Christ. Thus in one of the earliest and one of the latest references to the matter of forgiveness, there is that which calls for worship and praise.

It was queried as to how it could be proved that when the sinner believes the gospel his past, present and future sins are unconditionally forgiven. Such scriptures as Titus 2. 13, 14, 1 John 4. 10, 1 Peter 2, 24 were cited. John 5. 24 indicates that to the believer there will be no future judgement of sins; but his failure to confess sins after the new birth must inevitably result in loss and discredit at Christ's judgement seat, for sin breaks communion with the Father, and this in turn affects any service rendered, which is the matter under review in that day.

E. B.

Repentance and Faith

From Victoria, B. C. —The call to repentance is of grace, for the world is full of helpless sinners who, having wandered from God, have no claim upon His mercy. It is the goodness and forbearance of God that calls men to repentance and faith. The call is of grace, but it is also a command, for in Acts 17. 30 we read of the command of God that all men everywhere should repent. God is sovereign and He gives repentance to whom He will. It is only according to His goodness that we are given repentance (Romans 2. 4).

In repentance we see conviction, sorrow and change. Repentance is due to the operation of the Holy Spirit in the heart. Conviction is seen clearly pictured in Acts 2. 33-38: "What shall we do?" The answer is plain and clear: "Repent and be baptized."

The Lord Jesus waits to welcome all who manifest repentance and faith toward God. True repentance brings a turning away from sin and a turning to God.

J. McL., A. McL.

COMMENTS

[1] (London, S. E.) —We should be careful to distinguish between the forgiveness and consequent reconciliation of the sinner which is permanent, and the forgiveness of the child of God by His heavenly Father which takes place again and again. In the former case forgiveness is associated with eternal salvation, in the latter it is with a view to fellowship. —J. M.

[2] (London, S. E.). —Even now the believing sinner is permanently reconciled to God through the death of His Son, according to Romans 5, etc. —J. M.

[3] (Edinburgh). —We know what our friends mean, that no man, and no church, can forgive the sins of any sinner, so that he may know
eternal salvation. But lest the matter should be misunderstood, we wish to say that there is ecclesiastical forgiveness, that is, forgiveness by a church of God of one who had been one of its number, as see 2 Corinthians 2. 1-11; with this scripture we would link John 20. 21-23 and Matthew 18. 15-18. No doubt our esteemed contributors understand the differences between forgiveness associated with salvation and forgiveness associated with service. —J. M.

[4] (Atherton). —What is said in 2 Corinthians 5. 18-21 is concerning the work of reconciliation by God in Christ in regard to the world which is at enmity against God, and the ministry of reconciliation which God committed to Paul and others toward the world. 2 Corinthians 6. 1 is to the saints in Corinth not to receive the grace of God in vain, which grace is seen in the work of God in Christ. —J. M.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Questions from Macduff and Whitehills. —(1) Is the work of the Advocate a service rendered to His people by the Lord Jesus Christ in His office of Great High Priest? (2) Does His High Priest's office relate to God's people, while the office of Advocate applies to all believers?

Answer. —The work of the Lord as Advocate and as High Priest differ; the former is on behalf of the children of God, the latter on behalf of the people of God. The children of God have two Advocates (1) the Holy Spirit in their hearts, and (2) The Lord in heaven. The people of God have only one High Priest. —J. M.

Question from London, S. E. —Could " repentance to Israel" (Acts 5. 31) embrace not only individual Jews throughout this dispensation but also Israel nationally in a future day?

Answer. —Repentance, which means in the New Testament a change of mind, is connected with individual experience. In the future, prior to the restoration of the remnant of Israel to be God's people, there will be individual repentance. " The land shall mourn, every family apart... every family apart, and their wives apart " (Zechariah 12. 10-14). National mourning, to be real, must imply the mourning of the individual. As I pointed out in last month's issue, the word repentance in the Old Testament means sorrow, grief, whereas in the New it means a change of mind. Israel will show their repentance in their mourning singly. —J. M.

Question from Edinburgh. —Are remission and forgiveness the same?

Answer. —Yes. —J. M.

NOTES ON THE EPISTLE OF JAMES

CHAPTER 2

Verse 14: What doth it profit, my brethren, if a man say he hath faith, but have not works? can that faith save him?

A lifeless faith which merely acquiesces to certain facts, but which does not reach the heart, a faith of the head but not of the heart, can save no one from any danger whatever, whether from hell or any other danger. Saving faith affects the whole being of the believer and he is changed in his attitude to God—"reconciled to God through the death of His Son" (Romans 5. 10). He is converted to God, and begins to move heavenward. Saving
NOTES ON THE EPISTLE OF JAMES

faith is a living, working faith in the heart. Thus we read of "your work of faith." Faith comes before works, as love comes before labour, and hope before patience (1 Thessalonians 1. 3). Here let it be noted in this verse in James, that it is faith being shown to men, not to God. God sees and knows in whose heart faith exists, he does not need to be shown it by the believer's works; but if we are to prove to men that we have faith, we can only show that by our works. Men cannot see into the heart where God can see. If we keep this before us in the consideration of this paragraph in James, we shall see that there is no conflict between what Paul says in Romans about justification by faith, which is by God and before God, and justification by works which is before men.

Verses 15, 16, 17: If a brother or sister be naked, and in lack of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Go in peace, be ye warmed and filled; and yet ye give them not the things needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it have not works, is dead in itself.

The feelings of our common humanity would teach us how to act in such a case; how much more those who have faith in the living God, the supreme Provider for the need of every living thing! But if a brother should act towards a fellow-saint in such a manner as James says—" Go in peace, be ye warmed and filled," but not at my expense, where is faith in such behaviour? James does not say that it does not exist, but that it is dead. To be dead implies that life once existed. We do not speak of stones, bricks, iron, etc., being dead, but all forms of earthly life may die, and faith may die, it may be quite inert and lifeless in itself. To men it is only evident if it have works. The Ephesians showed their faith to all the saints (Ephesians 1. 15). Philemon too showed it toward the saints. This was done by the work that they did for the saints.

Verses 18, 19: Yea, a man will say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith apart from thy works, and I by my works will shew thee my faith. Thou believest that God is one; thou doest well: the devils (demons) also believe, and shudder.

Faith is an action of the heart which cannot be seen by men (Romans 10. 9, 10). We only know those in whom it is by their profession and actions. How otherwise can we prove to others that we have faith? Many may believe that God is one, but their belief is no better than the belief of demons, for it produces no change and good works in them. They no more love God than demons do, who believe and shudder with fear and horror.

Verse 20: But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith apart from works is barren?

James addresses an imaginary, vain, empty man, and says that faith without or apart from works is idle; the A. V. says that it is dead; it is unemployed, and consequently barren of good.

Verses 21, 22, 23: Was not Abraham our father justified by works, in that he offered up Isaac his son upon the altar? Thou seest that faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect; and the scripture was fulfilled which saith, And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness; and he was called the friend of God.

Here we have two incidents in Abraham's life contrasted, (1) that of Genesis 15, when he believed God that he would have a son and heir by
whom he would have seed as numerous as the stars of heaven; and (2) that of Genesis 22, when he offered up that son, in whom his seed was called, on the altar on mount Moriah. The faith of Genesis 15 was fulfilled in the act of Genesis 22: faith first and works second. Abraham's faith in the darkness of the night when he stood alone with God was seen by no one but God, and faith is ever before God. We had not known that Abraham believed God had He not told us. But we can see his act on Moriah when he laid his son on the altar, and by his works was faith made perfect. He was justified by faith before God, and justified by works before men. Who can doubt the faith of Abraham in the light of the works of Abraham? He who had received the promise offered up his only begotten son in obedience to God, for he believed that God would, if he offered him as a burnt offering, raise his son from the dead. Such is a living faith that shows itself in its works. Thus Abraham was called the friend of God.

Verse 24: Ye see that by works a man is justified, and not only by faith. " Not only by faith " are words which show that a man is justified by faith. This agrees with what Paul says in many places in the epistles to the Romans and to the Galatians. For instance, we find him saying, "We reckon therefore that a man is justified by faith apart from the works of the law, " and again, " But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is reckoned for righteousness " (Romans 3. 28; 4. 5). Besides, a man is justified by his works before men.

Verses 25, 26: And in like manner was not also Rahab the harlot justified by works, in that she received the messengers, and sent them out another way? For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, even so faith apart from works is dead.

In Joshua 2. 1 the two men whom Joshua sent to Jericho are called "spies," but here James calls them messengers (Angelos, "one sent, messenger, angel "). This is the word that is used of the seven messengers, one from each of the churches of Asia, in Revelation 1. 20; 2; 1, etc. See also the following where Angelos is used of a human messenger: Matthew 11. 10; Mark 1. 2; Luke 7. 24, 27, 9. 52. James views the two spies as messengers who brought to Rahab a message of salvation, and those men who brought their message to her, Rahab sent out another way. Thus her faith in the God of Israel (Joshua 2. 9-11) wrought, as Abraham's did, with her works, and by her works was faith made perfect. She too was justified by works as well as by faith. She is amongst those envisaged in Isaiah 45. 22: " Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. " As the spirit cannot be separated from the body without death taking place, so faith cannot live if it is separated from works. Let us think a little on the worthies of faith in Hebrews 11 and of what they did through faith. James in nowise cancels out Paul, nor Paul James. Each describes the two sides of a circle, faith and works, faith before God and works before men.

J. M.
**BIBLE STUDIES**

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

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**EDITORIAL**

The writer to the Hebrews, in seeking to clarify their understanding of the nature of faith, deals with his subject largely by illustration, and in doing so cites a number of men and women who by their works showed their faith. Of the many in Hebrews 11, only two, Abraham and Rahab, are named in James 2. These two, differing greatly as to personal qualities and mode of life, have this in common, that they are both named by the Spirit as "justified by works" (James 2. 21, 25) and they also find a place in the genealogy of the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 1. 2, 5). Of the two, Abraham's case is the more readily appreciated. He was a worthy man, and received a call (not because of his worthiness, but of grace) which he obeyed (Hebrews 11. 8, Genesis 12. 1-9), and also promises as to the land and the seed. Rahab had no such advantages. She was one of a doomed race, but she had heard of the works of the Lord and had feared and believed that He is God (Joshua 2. 9-11).

Rahab's treatment of the messengers is the evidence of her faith in the Lord the God of Israel. She "received the spies with peace" (Hebrews 11. 31), and again, she "received the messengers, and then sent them out another way" (James 2. 25). The spies in the midst of a terrorized and hostile people were received and treated kindly by Rahab, and at a propitious time, knowing the way of the pursuers, she sent out the spies and advised them how they might proceed with safety (Joshua 2. 16). This act and the oath she obtained from the spies (Joshua 2. 12-14) indicate that not only had she believed the evidence of the works of the Lord as told in the reports reaching Jericho, but she was also fully convinced that these men would return, and that the Lord would be glorified in the destruction of Jericho. Her faith looked forward to the future and manifested itself in her dealings with the spies.

Were Abraham and Rahab the only two to be "justified by works"? The gallery of faithful ones, named and unnamed, in Hebrews 11 would definitely affirm that there were many more; and, indeed, the argument of Hebrews 11 and of James 2 enjoins on us the obligation to manifest like faith, and to show the liveliness of our faith by our good works.

*J. B.*

**NOTES ON THE BOOK OF THE REVELATION**

**CHAPTER 21**

The city had a wall great and high. It had twelve gates or portals, three on the east, north, south, and west, and at the gates twelve angels, and written on the gates or portals were the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. The wall had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. This is no millennial scene, but an eternal order established by God, which will not give place to another, as the Millennium
will. Twelve angels stand on guard at the gates as heavenly sentinels, it would seem. In the east gate (Pule) was a place of considerable size, "it was in the gate that the Orientals assembled to pass away time, and to hold their market and their courts of judgement." If we conclude, because the names of the tribes of Israel are written on the several gates, that there the redeemed of the tribes of Israel will be found, the gates or portals of the city may extend far beyond our feeble conception now. What will be their functions at the gates is not revealed. We may think of the number twelve, as some have done, as being a governmental number, but even if it is, what assignment of government is given to the tribes is not revealed. It is well not to try to fill in our present ignorance and part knowledge of things what God has left out. We may be perfectly sure of this, that the Bride is not an amalgamation of two or more groups of saints belonging to different dispensations. Then on the twelve foundations were the names of the twelve apostles. What are the names of the twelve tribes? Are the names according to birth, the names of Ephraim and Manasseh being left out and that of Joseph their father in? Can we be sure? Again there are fifteen apostles that we know of. Is Matthias the twelfth, or who? We shall be better able to say when we read the names on the gates and foundations. The wall of the city marks the extent of the Bride; all those within are the Bride and those without are not, and the foundations with the names of the apostles form the dividing line between those within and those without. The wall cannot be for protection from attack from enemies, for the day of enemies is past for ever.

The twelve foundations are adorned each with a particular precious stone. What is the first foundation? Is the first foundation the topmost one? If we think of the first foundation being adorned with jasper, this would agree with the wall which was jasper, so that we begin with a foundation like crystal. Sapphire may be white or of a bluish colour. Chalcedony is a grey colour, with a mixture of purple, blue and yellow. Emerald is green, brilliant as the rainbow round about the throne (Revelation 4). Sardonyx is whitish with red veins. Sardius is red. Chrysolite is a golden colour. Beryl is of bluish green colour. Topaz is a yellowish green colour. Crysoprase is a golden green, green, the colour of a leek. Jacinth violet colour with a mixture of yellow. Amethyst is of deep purple colour. We have only to think of this galaxy of gems to have some little conception of the grandeur of the adornment of the foundations.

The height of the wall is immense, 144 cubits high, at least 216 feet. The length, breadth and height of the city are equal, twelve thousand furlongs (Stadion), (the Greek Stadion or furlong was 606 feet, the English furlong 660 feet). What kinds of gates or portals will be needed for a city so immense and a populace so numerous? It is well however not to be dogmatic about these measures in our equivalents, when it is stated that the cubits are according to the measure of a man, that is, of an angel. This statement may seem somewhat ambiguous to us. Does it mean that the measure is according to how a man measures with accurate measuring, or is it according to the scale of human measurement. What these measures are given for may be to teach us on the one hand that the city is a place of measurement, and that the measures are immense. The wall is of jasper and the city itself of pure gold like pure glass. This kind of gold does not belong to this earth. It will be brilliant and possibly translucent. The twelve gates were of twelve pearls, each gate was a pearl. The street also of the city was of gold as transparent glass. There was no temple of material kind in the city, for, we are told,
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'* the Lord God the Almighty, and the Lamb, are the temple thereof. " We read of overcomers being made pillars in the temple of God (Revelation 3. 12). Here we are in the realm of faith and not of reason, where we must believe implicitly what God says, for it is beyond our minds to conceive what is meant. Here the true worshippers shall in the fullest sense worship God in Spirit and truth. Ritual and buildings will be done away with, and in a holy nearness, yet with holy reverence, and recognition of the distance which must ever be between the Creator and His creatures, whether angels or men, the true worshippers shall for ever worship God. True worship is of the spirit, and not of the flesh, which, alas, is often decked in the fantastic garments and make-up of ancient times, as though it is the clothes that make men holy.

The city will not be lighted from above, as the earth is by sun and moon now; it will be illuminated from within by the glory of God, and the lamp that sheds that glory, through all its vastness of gold and glass, is the Lamb. The nations which dwell on the new earth outside of the city will walk in the light thereof, that is, the earth will also be illuminated by the glory of God which will shine outward from the city. The A. V. has " the nations of them which are saved, " but the better rendering is that of the R. V., " the nations shall walk, " etc. Though " of them that are saved " should be omitted, yet this is an implied fact, in the light of the fact that they are dwelling in the new earth. The kings of those divinely constituted nations will bring their glory into the city in acknowledgment of what is due to their Creator and Redeemer. Though men have ever been failures in giving to God His due (Psalm 29. 1, 2), that will never be so any more. Then the selfishness of the human heart will have gone for ever, and men will gladly give in sinless and unhindered service what is God's due from them. It is further said, "And they shall bring the glory and the honour of the nations into it. " This holy service will go on continually, for the gates shall not be shut by day, and there is no night there. It will be an eternal day. Nothing unclean, abominable or a lie shall ever enter there, and only such as are written in the Lamb's book of life will have the privilege of entering the city. What all this will mean we can with our poor minds dimly perceive. Nothing that was ever thought or penned by men can compare even faintly with the glorious vision of this chapter, of the Lamb's Bride and Wife, the holy city, the new Jerusalem, whose Builder and Maker is God, and this Bride as to its personnel are the saints of the Church which is Christ's Body. The redeemed of mankind are seen in this chapter in three immense groups: (1) the Bride comprising the Church which is Christ's Body; (2) the redeemed of the twelve tribes of Israel whose twelve names are on the portals of the city; (3) the redeemed of Gentile peoples now constituted under kings. These three groups should not be confused.

CHAPTER 22

Here John is shown a river of the water of life, which is bright as crystal, which proceeds out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. This is different from Ezekiel 47, where the waters of the river issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward, and ran down on the right side of the house of God, on the south side of the altar (the north side of the altar being the place where the sacrifices were killed: Leviticus 1. 11; Ezekiel 40. 35-42). This river shall flow from the house of God to the city of Jerusalem, for the millennial temple shall not be in Jerusalem, but in the priests' portion of the land. The river shall divide when it passes through Jerusalem, the one half
of it shall go to the eastern sea (the Dead sea), and the other half to the western sea, the Mediterranean (Ezekiel 47. 1-11; Zechariah 14. 8; Isaiah 33. 21; Psalm 46. 4). This river of Revelation 22. 1 issues from the throne of God and the Lamb, for in the new Jerusalem there will be no temple. It flows in the midst of the street of the city, but where it flows to we are not told, for there is no more sea. On both sides of the river there is the tree of life (not trees of life). This takes the mind back to the garden of Eden, in the midst of which was the tree of life (Genesis 2. 9), but here there will be no tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The tree of life will bear twelve manner of fruits, a different kind each month. This also is different from Ezekiel 47. 12, where we are told that on the bank of the millennial river grows every tree for meat, and they bring forth new or first fruits every month, because the waters of the river issue from the sanctuary. "Every tree" does not mean the tree of life. The fruit will be for meat and the leaf for healing. The water of the river which flows to the Dead sea shall heal the water of that sea and it shall swarm with fish. The leaves of the tree of life will be for the healing of the nations. What does the "healing" of the nations mean? The word for "healing" in the Greek is Therapeia, the first meaning of which is "service". In the eternal state there can be neither disease nor death. If there is no disease, then what does the word healing mean? I am of the opinion, that whereas there will be no disease, there may be some draining of their strength from their employments and some measure of exhaustion, and the leaves of the tree of life when used by the nation will have a vivifying effect upon them. In contrast to the use of the leaves by the nations, the overcomers will have the right or privilege to come to and eat of the fruit of the tree of life (Revelation 2. 7; 22. 14).

There will be no more curse, for there will be no more disobedience. The one thing followed upon the heels of the other. Here again we are told that the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in the city. His bond-servants shall serve (Latreuo, to render divine service) Him, and they shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads. What an honour and what a joy this will be! Here will be realized to the full the hopes of all His servants. Night shall be no more, so that neither lamp nor sun will be needed any more. The Lord God Himself shall give them light and they shall reign for ever and ever. Such will be the portion of God's servants. Thus closes the description of the Lamb's Bride, and those who shall surround her, Israel and the redeemed nations. These words are faithful and true.

Then we are told that the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent His angel to show unto His servants the, things which must shortly come to pass. He says, "Behold, I come quickly. Blessed is he that keepeth the words of the prophecy of this book." Whilst the book of Revelation was sent first of all to the seven churches to show the servants of God what would come to pass in the future, it has, like all Scripture, a wider application than to those to whom it was written at the first. Paul lays down this principle in regard to what God spoke to Abraham, "It was not written for his sake alone... but for our sake also. " God would have His servants know what He intends doing in regard to things on earth, so that they might follow the course of His actions, and so be saved from the error of the wicked. He expects them to keep His word as a sacred trust and a means of their deliverance from evil. The greater part of the book will be of vital importance to those saints of God who will live in the period between the Lord's coming to the air for the Church and His coming to earth as the Son of Man, when His feet shall stand upon the mount of Olives.
John assures us that he heard and saw these things, and who can doubt that this faithful and suffering apostle is a credible witness? He fell down to worship before the feet of the angel that showed him these things, as he did in 19. 10, but he was told to worship God, for he (the angel) was a fellow-bondservant with John, and with the prophets, and with such as kept the words of the prophecy of this book. Further, John was told not to seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time was at hand. This is the opposite of what Daniel was told: "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." Who can doubt that we are in the time of many running to and fro? Time and space on this earth seem well nigh eliminated by the swiftness of the means of travel on and over the earth. Then, the increase of knowledge in the last few decades has been enormous. For long centuries human knowledge remained static, but in recent years it has bounded forward with breath-taking speed. This is all according to the sure word of prophecy. How far the preparation for these events will be advanced before the Church is caught up to meet her Lord is not revealed. We have seen in recent times Israel restored to the land of their fathers and constituted a nation among the nations of the earth, an outstanding event in the fulfilment of prophecy, and how much more saints of the Church may see is hidden from us, but saints of the Church are assured by Scripture that they will not live in the days of the fulfilment of the prophecy of Daniel's seventieth week, the last three and a half years of which is the time of the great Tribulation.

Here we have the solemn fact as declared by Solomon:

*"His own iniquities shall take the wicked,  
And he shall be holden with the cords of his sin"

(Proverbs 5. 22).

It would seem that the speaker of verse 11 is the Lord, for in verse 12, He says, "Behold, I come quickly." The words of verse 11 are both solemn and precious. "He that is unrighteous, let him do unrighteousness still: and he that is filthy, let him be made filthy still." The sinner who refuses the grace of God in Christ and the cleansing and delivering power of the blood of the Lamb becomes fixed in a permanent and unchangeable state. He can do nothing but continue in the doing of unrighteousness and become more filthy by his thoughts and deeds. This will be his condition for ever and ever. There is no repentance and forgiveness for the sinner who rejects God's one remedy for sin, the death of His Son. As with the sinner, so it will be for the saint. "He that is righteous, let him do righteousness still: and he that is holy, let him be made holy still." Here also is a state of permanance in righteousness and holiness; there will be no change in the condition of the saint throughout eternity. The change wrought in him by God's grace remains throughout eternity. There will be for him no falling away from the gate of heaven to the pit of hell, as some have thought to be possible. It was to this end that God chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, "that we should be holy and without blemish before Him in love" (Ephesians 1. 4).

The Lord says that He is coming quickly. The word Taxu has the thoughts quickly, suddenly, and soon, in it, hence He expects that His own will be in a state of expectancy of His coming. His coming is not simply a doctrine that we hold, but the coming of One we love, who cheers us in the night of our waiting with the thought that He is coming quickly. There is no delay on His part. The prophetic word is, that He shall not tarry (Hebrews 10. 37, 38). The word for "come" is Erhomai, a verb of movement,
contrast to Parousia, presence, usually translated by "coming" with reference to the Lord's coming, which signifies His arrival. When the Lord comes He is bringing His reward with Him to give to every man according as His work is. Thus we learn that the Bema or judgement seat of Christ will take place immediately after His coming. Each will receive according to the deeds done in or through the body. The Lord Jesus, equally with God the Father, is the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end. As is the Eternal Father, so is the Eternal Son, and so also is the Eternal Spirit—one God. The Lord Jesus Himself said, "Before Abraham was (Greek, was born) I am" (John 8. 58). It is not, before Abraham was, I was, which would mean simply that He lived before Abraham, but it is "I am," and the truest definition of God's Eternal Being is, "I Am that I Am" (Exodus 3. 14), and what God is, He was, and will be.

"Blessed are they that wash their robes." The A. V. has, "Blessed are they that do His commandments," but "wash their robes" of the R. V. is a text that we may safely follow. The robes are not themselves, but their habits, they are what people see, the things that are done. Such as washed their robes had the right to the tree of life and also to enter by the gates into the city. The cleansing of robes is something that men do in this life and not in the life to come. It seems clear enough that those who wash their robes are not such as dwell in the city, the saints who compose the Bride, but such as dwell outside the city.

Here in verse 15, we have again those whose characters are mentioned in 21. 8, whose part will be in the lake of fire. These will be in that awful "without" for ever, where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matthew 8. 12).

"I Jesus have sent mine angel." As the Lord used the name the Son of Man much more frequently than Son or the Son of God, He seems to take pleasure in the name Jesus. He said to Paul, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." But Paul did not say in reply, "What shall I do, Jesus?" but, "What shall I do, Lord?" Jesus is to us the Lord, the Lord Jesus, the Lord Jesus Christ. Though exalted on the throne of God, He is still the same humble, lowly, loving Jesus, who lived and walked and talked with men on earth. He is "this Jesus, which was received up from you into heaven" (Acts 1. 11). This Jesus sent His angel to testify these things for or over the churches, so that they might know the things that were yet to come to pass. The Lord is the Root of David, the Divine Being from whom David sprang, and the Offspring of David, being of the seed of David according to the flesh. He is also the bright and the morning Star, the One who is coming for the Church just before day breaks over this earth, at His coming as the Sun of righteousness, who shall arise with healing in His wings.

"The Spirit and the Bride say, Come." The Spirit who began His work by moving upon the dark waters, in Genesis 1. 2, and who moved in dark hearts in convicting and regenerating power (John 16. 7-11; 3. 5, 6), joins men in testimony with Him, in John 15. 26. 27. Here we have the joint invitation of the Spirit and Bride for men to come. The call to come goes out in ever widening circles, "And he that heareth, let him say, Come." Then, "He that is athirst, let him come," and "He that will, let him take of the water of life freely." How gracious and how free is the invitation to come to the water of life, both now and for ever!

The words of the book of Revelation must not be tampered with, nor added to, nor any words taken therefrom. This is true of all Scriptures. Moses said, "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the
LORD your God which I command you" (Deuteronomy 4, 2). This is repeated in chapter 12, 32, and in Proverbs 30, 5, 6, we read, "Every word of God is tried (Heb. purified): He is a shield unto them that trust in Him. Add thou not unto His words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar. " Adding to or diminishing from the words of the book of Revelation has serious penalties, (1) " God shall take away his part from the tree of life, " and (2) out of the holy city, " (3) and " God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book. " These words do not, I judge, refer to any saint in the Church, the Bride of Christ, for such saints will not be on the earth when the plagues of the book of Revelation fall upon the earth, but relate to those of that serious time after the Church has gone to be with the Lord.

The Lord who testifies the things of Revelation says, " Yea: I come quickly, " and John, the beloved, responded, "Amen" (his assent meaning, "Come quickly"): "come, Lord Jesus. " How touching! and how personal! as though the old man's heart leaped up to the heart of his Lord, with that nearness that he knew when he lay in His bosom at the last supper. Let us learn too to say from the heart, " " Come quickly, Lord Jesus." Until that glad day of His coming may the grace of the Lord Jesus be with the saints, grace in its manifold application to suit every need. "Amen. "

THE GOSPEL IN PERSPECTIVE

It is beneficial sometimes to stand back and take a panoramic view of the purposes of God, which span the ages. One then sees some features in relation to others, so that the relative importance of one purpose to another is more apparent. The study of the details serves to impress upon one the care and skill of the Divine Artist. It also helps to make one realize the depths of the purposes of God, the intense sincerity with which He has pursued them, and the great beauty of all His words and works. The psalmist could say, " How precious also are Thy thoughts unto me, O God! " (Psalm 139. 17). " For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts " (Isaiah 55. 9). The gospel of the grace of God is a major part of the whole purpose of God.

To see the whole of the picture it is necessary to go back to the book of Genesis. In chapter 1, God sets before us as the Creator and Sustainer of heaven and earth and all things in them. In chapter 2, the Creator sets aside for His own personal use a relatively small plot of land, the garden of Eden, wherein He planted many trees and plants for His own pleasure, it being the duty of the man to dress and keep the garden of the LORD God. The very specific nature of the deeds of God in the garden is worthy of note. He did the planning and the planting; these were not left to the mind of man. It should also be noted that the service required of the man was not laborious; he was not a labourer, but a dresser and keeper of what God had made. His service was one of the God-ordered things in the garden wherein the LORD walked in the cool of the day. One is, in these chapters, introduced to the truths of the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God, and that before the fall which so sadly ruined the man and the woman and spoiled the pleasure of God in His garden. In chapter 3 is the sad record of the changed fortunes of Adam. Deprived of his place in the service of God, he had to win his bread by the sweat of his brow from a land that God had cursed. He was now an outsider and a victim of sin. Until
his sin was removed he could never again serve God as he had done before. The story of Cain and Abel in chapter 4, whilst underlining the results of sin, tells us that man was seeking back to God and was bringing offerings. The acceptance of Abel's offering, a blood offering, indicates that God was prepared to have some, if limited, dealings with His creatures. Relations between God and man developed slowly throughout the days of individual testimony, in which there were many types and shadows of the coming Saviour. The development moved noticeably forward at the time of the deliverance of Israel from Egypt.

J. J. P.

(To be continued, D. V.)

THE GOSPEL OF THE GLORY OF THE BLESSED GOD

Justification

From Victoria, B. C. —The gospel reveals to us the wondrous fact that not only is the sinner forgiven, but he is also justified; he stands before God as though he had not sinned.

In the gospel we learn of the Lord Jesus Christ being given to take our place. At Calvary we see where mercy and truth met together and righteousness and peace kissed each other. The righteous requirements of God's holy throne have been met. It is on this ground that the sinner is justified: not that the sinner kept the law or could keep it, but that Another has met the full requirements of that law. The guilty one is no longer seen as guilty.

The law could not justify the sinner, because the sentence of death was over all mankind because of a broken law, the law condemned (Acts 13. 39). The believing sinner stands as one who has died. The Lord Jesus took the sinner's place, "the righteous for the unrighteous." He was bruised and wounded for our transgression and our iniquities. It is through the obedience of the one Man that we are now justified (Romans 5. 16-18).

We have seen that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ; we learn also that justification is of faith. The sinner is justified by faith when by faith he rests his need on the sacrifice of Christ. The gospel reveals that justification is by three things, by blood, grace and faith. These three are Godward. It is His grace, through our faith in Christ's atoning blood, that brings us into the position of the just before God.

In James's epistle we read that justification is also by works [before men] (James 2. '14-26). We have learned already that by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified [in God's sight], and also that we are saved by grace. Man's works have absolutely no merit for salvation. Abraham's faith was imputed unto him for righteousness; but his work, as seen in the offering up of Isaac, was also classed as the means of justification by works: one is seen by God, the other is seen by man. God who searches the heart of man knows the faith within. Faith in God inevitably brings action. The lack of this may cause men to doubt the faith within. Faith cannot be seen by men apart from works. We suggest that the apostle James is referring to our position before men.

A. McL., J. McL.

From Paisley. —There are four aspects of justification.

Justification by God's grace (Romans 3. 24). It was thought that there is a difference between mercy and grace, although both are manifested in the gospel. Mercy prevented the judgement we did deserve, and grace presented the righteousness we did not deserve. Without stint or measure
God bestows righteousness upon the undeserving sinner who believes, an act of grace resulting from the redemptive work of Christ, whereby God can justify the sinner and still retain His own righteous character. Justification by the blood of Christ (Romans 5. 9). Grace alone could not justify the sinner. God's righteous requirements could only be satisfied by the blood of a sinless sacrifice. Herein the love of God stands fully revealed. God gave His Son to die that we, who were enemies by nature, might stand uncondemned. Thus we are clothed in perfect righteousness, as if we had never committed a single sin.

Justification by faith (Romans 5. 1). The two foregoing aspects are the work of God. We now come to human responsibility. Independently of human merit God justifies by faith alone. Wondrous thought! that the eternal counsels of God and the efficacy of the death of Christ should reach out to the lost, and that in response to an act of faith on man's part God should impute the perfect righteousness of Christ.

Justification by works (James 2. 14-26). The three previous paragraphs outline the ground upon which God can remove from the sinner the guilt and penalty of sin and bestow righteousness, i. e., justification of men before God. Justification by good works is justification of a man in the eyes of his fellows. Justification by works before men is the outward manifestation of that which the grace of God and the blood of Christ have wrought within.

G. F.

EXTRACTS

From Nottingham. —Man was made perfect, but he sinned. For this he was cast out of the garden of Eden, and lost the close communion which he had with God. Many years after, God gave the law, which enabled man to discern between right and wrong; "Through the law cometh the knowledge of sin" (Romans 3. 20). If the law were kept completely, then a basis of justification before God would exist. No man was able to attain to this standard, however, and thus all men stood condemned.

Christ, through one righteous act (His death), makes it possible for us to be justified before God His Father. This implies that a sinner, placing faith in Christ, stands righteous in God's sight, as though he had never sinned. Thus we see that God set the standard, and also provided the One who came up to it fully.

Justification is gratuitously by faith, which faith is subsequently shown forth by works. Herein is the key to the seeming contradiction between the writings of Paul and of James. Both writers refer to Abraham. Paul shows the former aspect, which is between God and man alone. This links up with Genesis 15. 6, where Abraham believed God. James considers the showing forth of faith by works, and he has in mind the episode where Abraham offered Isaac (Genesis 22. 18). F. A. Allen, R. D. Williams.

From Cowdenbeath. —The sinner, on believing, is not only forgiven; he is also justified. Forgiveness and justification are closely allied: the former takes away the penal consequences and guilt of sin, in the latter righteousness is imputed.

The standard laid down in the law was so high that men could not keep it, and thereby be accounted righteous. The law made men conscious of sin, because of their failure to reach the divine standard. The Scriptures foresaw that men would be justified, or reckoned righteous, apart from the law.

The justified sinner need fear no condemnation for God is the Justifier. In reckoning the sinner righteous God remains just, because the full price
was paid at Calvary. The obedience of Christ in death has made this gift of righteousness available unto men. The bestowal of the gift is an evidence of grace on God's part, made possible through the shed blood of Christ, and received through the exercise of faith on our part.

A man's faith will be seen in what he does. Faith and works must go together in practical everyday living. It is through our actions that we are justified before men.

J. K. D. Johnston

From Whitehills and Macduff. —In the things of men the best a convicted criminal can hope for is to be pardoned, and so escape the penalty of his misdeed; he certainly does not expect the judge to justify him in face of the proof of his crime. By so doing a judge would become a partaker of the man's crime and justice would be set aside, yet God is " just and the Justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus. " We are saved because Another bore our punishment, and we are justified because " Him who knew no sin He made to be sin on our behalf. " " I have been crucified with Christ, " said Paul, and in the death of the Lord Jesus we are reckoned to have died, and so law has been vindicated. We died with Christ and are now reckoned new creatures by God who sees us in Christ as just. We could claim no merit of our own to be justified: to plead anything of our own, no matter how small, is to deny ourselves what God's grace alone can give. Works, as James speaks of them, follow, but do not precede, faith which brings justification. His concern was that the Dispersion should show the results of God's grace in them. Likewise, Paul also says, " I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me. " I do not make void the grace of God " (Galatians 2. 20, 21). A. B. R.

From Birkenhead. —The great fact in God's dealings with His friend Abraham is that, " He believed in the LORD; and He counted it to him for righteousness " (Genesis 15. 6). This is the verse Paul uses in the epistle to the Romans to prove that a man is justified by faith apart from the works of the law. James too refers to Genesis 15. 6, although he deals with the events of Genesis 22 which belong to a later epoch in Abraham's life.

There is no essential difference between the teaching of Paul and of James. It is not true to say that Paul teaches salvation and justification by faith only, and James justification by works. (See Romans 4. 2 and James 2. 23.) Faith apart from works can only be recognized by God, but the outcome of faith in the life, i.e., works, can be judged by men.

No man can be justified on the ground of law-keeping. Faith in Christ is necessary before God can pronounce the sinner righteous. Works show to men that a man has faith. We should not do things before men to be seen of them (Matthew 6. 1, 2). What Abraham did in offering up Isaac was in obedience to God (Genesis 22. 18). Good works in the believer's life should be out of love to Christ, and in subjection to God's will, and not to be seen and commended by others. Man's praise does not count; divine approval does.

A. Hyland.

From Glasgow. —The Scriptures make it clear that, from His earliest dealings with men, God has justified (reckoned righteous) men on the grounds of faith. God had great purposes of blessing for men involved in the promise He gave to Abraham, " So shall thy seed be. " Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness. Abraham was a justified man and the father of all them that believe. We are told in Romans 4. 23-25, that it was not written for his sake alone, but for our sakes also, " who believe on Him that raised Jesus our Lord from the dead,
who was delivered up for our trespasses, and was raised again for our justification. " That we might know this experience a holy and righteous God, of whom it is said righteousness and judgement are the foundation of His throne, had to make His spotless Son a sin offering for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him (2 Corinthians 5. 21).

The apostle James takes up what should be the logical outworking of this in the believer's life. There should be evidence in the life of the justified one that a change has taken place. We may question sincerely confessions of faith that are not accompanied by works of faith. Abraham was prepared to lay Isaac his son upon the altar; he thus demonstrated his faith by his works. R. Shaw.

From London, S. E. —In Acts 13. 39, the apostle Paul shows justification to be not dependent on the keeping of the law of Moses, and in Romans 3. 24, justification is seen to be of God's grace. This perfect work of justification makes the believer, in the sight of God, as though he had never sinned. Exactly how God is able to perform this marvellous manifestation of mercy, must ever be beyond our understanding, like so many others of God's wonderful works; but it is evident that the work of righteousness wrought by the Lord Jesus, has made this possible and for God to maintain His holy character. God is eternally satisfied, and the believer, through faith in Christ eternally justified.

Note the three aspects of justification. Justification by grace (Romans 3. 24) is a work of God; justification by blood is the work of Christ (Romans 5. 9); and justification by faith depends on the exercise of faith by men (Romans 5. 1).

George S. Pain.

From Edinburgh. —" It is God that justifieth " (Romans 8. 33). We are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and in the Spirit of God (1 Corinthians 6. 11). No man is justified by the law (Galatians 3. 11). The law was a tutor to bring us to Christ, but was such a hard taskmaster that no one could keep the law to earn justification for whosoever offended in one point was guilty of all (James 2. 10). Thus the standard set by God was such that only His Son, manifested in flesh, kept the law and could therefore claim to live thereby. He chose to suffer death that the justification which He had earned could be imputed to us.

We are justified by faith in the Lord Jesus who died and was raised for this very purpose (Romans 4. 25). This great work of justifying the sinner does not impair God's righteousness nor profane His holiness, for He remains just (Romans 3. 26).

T. Hope.

From Kingston-on-Thames. —To be justified is to be accounted righteous before God (Romans 3. 20, R. V. M. ). We see from this same verse that this could not be by keeping the law. The Pharisee was quoted in this respect (Luke 18. 11-14).

Man is justified immediately he accepts Christ as his Saviour. Christ had sin reckoned to Him when He was made to be sin on the cross; and we have Christ's righteousness reckoned to us when we are saved.

James 2. 21-24 presented difficulty to some, but we thought that these verses speak of the outward showing to those around the working out in our lives of our faith (James 2. 18). Once a man is justified before God it is impossible that his sin could be charged against him again. Daniel Hansen.

From Crowborough. —To justify is to reckon righteous. Only God Himself can by His wonderful grace justify the sinner who believes on the Lord Jesus. Justification is presented to us in the Scriptures in a threefold
way. We are justified freely by God's grace (Romans 3. 24), by faith (Romans 5. 1), and by Christ's blood (Romans 5. 9). In James we read that Abraham was justified by works, when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar. Abraham had faith and works. Faith is Godward, works are manward.

J. Robertson.

From Belfast. —Justice is one of God's great attributes. "A just God" (Isaiah 45. 21) is what Isaiah says, and Paul says, "It is God that justifieth" (Romans 8. 33).

Before God man is guilty. "There is none righteous, no, not one" (Romans 3. 10). Instead of condemnation, God in His unquestionable goodness grants to man the exact opposite, that is, justification. The latter may be defined as the change in man's personal standing before God. To the human mind it is a mystery why God is willing, not only to forgive sin and remove guilt, but also to treat the forgiven sinner as though he had never sinned. Justification means more than mere pardoning. The justified one besides being forgiven is restored to God's favour as an innocent person.

This change in relations with God is not dependent upon character or upon conduct. It is not accomplished by righteous works or good deeds. The source of justification is God's free grace (Romans 3. 24). The ground of justification is the blood of Christ (Romans 5. 9). The condition of justification is through faith in Jesus Christ (Galatians 2. 16). Thus God looks upon the believer in Christ as though he had never sinned.

John Robinson.

From Toronto, Ontario. —Man does not justify himself by believing on Jesus Christ, God justifies man on the basis of faith. In Acts 13. 39 there is no indication that there were some things from which men could be justified by the law of Moses. It shows, as do other scriptures, that man is justified apart from the works of the law. The law brought the knowledge of sin and guidance for those who tried to avoid sinning, but it could not bring justification from sins.

Justification is realized in its fulness in this dispensation, although there are some glimpses of it given in previous dispensations. There seem to be other things too which belong to one dispensation and yet are seen briefly (as in a mirror darkly) in another. In time past God provided a way in which sins could be covered until at the end of those days He set forth His Son to be a propitiation, thus showing that He could remain just while justifying those that have faith in Jesus.

James seems to bring before us a different aspect of truth: he deals with things that are seen ("Show me," 2. 18; "Thou seest," 2. 22; "Ye see," 2. 24). It is impossible for men to see faith, but they can see the outcome of faith, which is works.

Malcolm Seath.

From Liverpool. —Justification by works as the means of a man's salvation is completely opposed to justification by faith. It denies the grace of God. James shows in his epistle that justification by works is the complement of justification by faith. Note the word "say" (James 2. 14). This is a question between man and man, not between man and God. God sees the believing sinner's faith, and does not need to see works to prove a man's faith. Man cannot judge other than by appearances or works. The apostle Paul, in Romans, reveals the mind of God concerning His righteousness and His wrath, and deals with men on the ground of faith.

James addresses men on their own ground. Romans treats of the dealings of a gracious God, who justifies the believing sinner upon the grounds of faith. James deals with a different angle entirely. Paul says,
"to him that worketh not, but believeth " (Romans 4. 5). James shows that to man works prove faith. James uses the example of Abraham to show that this is so. God promised him that his seed would be as the stars of heaven for multitude. Abraham believed God, and it (his faith) was reckoned unto him for righteousness. But not until we come to Genesis 22 do we find him outwardly manifesting his faith in God in the matter of this promise, when he offered up Isaac, thus " completing " his faith: " and the scripture was fulfilled which saith, And Abraham believed God " (James 2. 23) [1].

Faith apart from works is dead (James 2. 17, 26). Works are the outward manifestation of faith (James 2. 15, 16): " I by my works will shew thee my faith " (James 2. 18).

From West Hartlepool. —It was said of Job that he justified himself rather than God, but after God had spoken to him at length, Job abhorred himself, repenting in dust and ashes.

Job asked the question, " How can man be just before God? " and David states firmly that in God's sight shall no man living be justified.

Justification by works, as spoken by James in his epistle, seemed to us to refer to our standing before man after we are saved. Paul states clearly that for the unregenerate man salvation is by faith and not by works (Romans 4. 5), and, amongst others, Abraham is quoted as an example. But James states that Abraham was justified by works in that he offered up Isaac. This work of offering up Isaac was a further exercise of faith. Paul said that, if Abraham was justified by works, he hath whereof to glory, but not before God. Works, therefore, must spring out of faith and be an evidence to those around of faith within.

R. H.

From Middlesbrough. —Many years before the Lord's birth the prophet Isaiah spoke in detail of the activities of God's Servant, saying, " By His knowledge (the knowledge of Him) shall my Righteous Servant justify many (make many righteous)" (Isaiah 53. 11). The knowledge of Christ results in both eternal life and justification. The blessings made available through the suffering of the Servant of Jehovah are available to the many.

In Romans 5 Paul also shows that the fruits of the accomplished work of Christ may be enjoyed by the many. Both Adam and Christ have by a single act affected the whole human race. The result of Adam's sin is that all his posterity share a fallen nature. Sin, death and condemnation are the result of his transgression. In contrast to this, the death of Christ has made justification possible. Adam established a reign of sin and death; Christ a reign of grace and life. Christ has made it possible for the sinner to be put in a right relationship with God.

There is no incompatibility between the teaching of Paul and James regarding justification. Paul has in mind Abraham's early experience, when he believed God's word concerning his future seed. It was some years later that he was proved in connexion with Isaac. James quotes his obedience here as evidence that he was justified by works. The works of which James speaks are not the works of the law or of the flesh, but good works which are the product of a virile faith.

D. T. H.

From Atherton. —Divine justification involves two issues, both of which are seen in Romans 3. 26: that God Himself might be just, and that God might be the Justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus.

God in justifying men did not relax His own righteous standards, but showed His righteousness by setting forth His Son to be a propitiation, by which His holy and just demands were satisfied. This is the fundamental
basis of all God's dealings with men, and, in particular, of justification, which like reconciliation and forgiveness, have been secured for us by Christ's propitiatory work. Here again both aspects of the subject are seen: in order to satisfy God's righteous demands, reconciliation must be made on a just and perfect foundation, and secondly, forgiveness having been granted, it becomes possible for God to regard the sinner as sinless in Christ.

Those who have been justified by faith, are now to live by faith, and this brings us to good works, as in James 2. These good works are only those which are in agreement with God's will.

D. S. Jones.

From Wigan. —Justification of the sinners through faith in Christ was in the purposes of God from times eternal (Romans 8. 30). Justification originates in divine grace (Romans 3. 24) and is based upon the redemptive work of Christ. The problem of how the sinner could be justified before God engaged the thoughts of men in a past dispensation (Psalm 143. 2; 130. 3, 4). Job's question is pertinent: "But how can man be just before God?" (Job. 9. 2, R. V. M.).

Sinful man has no merit to commend him to God, and has no claim upon divine favour. His so-called righteousnesses are as a polluted garment, and without the knowledge of God he is a fool (Isaiah 64. 6, Jeremiah 9, 23, 24); but Christ has become the believer's righteousness, wisdom, sanctification and redemption" (1 Corinthians 1. 30). He is our robe before God's throne, having been raised for our justification (Romans 4. 25; Jeremiah 23. 6; Isaiah 61. 10, 11).

H. Caldwell.

Reconciliation and Forgiveness

From Victoria, B. C. —Man was still at enmity with God when the work of reconciliation was completed. In sovereign grace God has come out and revealed to us that He was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself (2 Corinthians 5. 19). The ministry of reconciliation is revealed as ambassadors on behalf of Christ carry to men not the word of the law, but the word of hope and life (2 Corinthians 5. 20, 21).

The knowledge of forgiveness is another aspect of the love and grace of God toward mankind. Even the grace which reached and saved us from the doom and judgement of our sins and caused us to rejoice in the knowledge of sins forgiven does not appear more wonderful and captivating than that which bears with us from day to day as God's erring children and, in spite of our constant unworthiness, blesses us still. Forgiveness is carried on past the initial act of salvation. During their earthly pilgrimage children of God are still being capable of sinning, and therefore must needs come for daily cleansing and forgiveness (1 John 1. 9).

H. Curran, T. Curran.

COMMENTS

[1] (Liverpool). —We take it that our friends are bearing in mind that Abraham's recorded works of faith begin with his obedience at his out-call from Ur of the Chaldees. "By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed to go out" (Hebrews 11. 8).

J. B.

QUESTION AND ANSWER

Question from London, S. E. —Please explain "justified in the Spirit" (1 Timothy 3. 16).

Answer. —Men condemned the Lord and put Him to death in the flesh (1 Peter 3. 18), though He was ever the Holy and Righteous One (Acts 3. 14). God raised Him from the dead and in so doing declared Him to be
righteous because He was essentially the Righteous One. The justification of the Lord by God is not by imputing righteousness to Him, but declaring Him to be righteous. See Isaiah 50:4-9, where in view of man's shameful treatment of the Lord, the Lord said, "He is near that justifieth Me."

J. M.

NOTES ON THE EPISTLE OF JAMES

CHAPTER 3

Verse 1: Be not many teachers, my brethren, knowing that we shall receive heavier judgement.

Having dealt with the believer, that it is necessary for him to show to men his faith by his works, James now turns to the teacher. Paul asks, "Thou therefore that teachest another, teachest thou not thyself?" (Romans 2:21). James warns the teachers that a greater judgement awaits them. The principle is, that to whom much is given of the same much is required. It is said of the Lord, in Acts 1:1, that He began both to do and to teach. He was the only one who ever did all that He taught. Paul called upon the saints to imitate him as he imitated Christ. He also wrote to the Thessalonians and said, "Ye became imitators of us, and of the Lord" (1 Thessalonians 1:6). Doing should come first and teaching afterward in all who would teach others.

Verse 2: For in many things we all stumble. If any stumbleth not in word, the same is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body also.

How true it is that we stumble, stagger or fall, many times! If we remembered the Lord's words, "And I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgement" (Matthew 12:36), we would be more conservative with our words. The spoken word cannot be recalled. If a man can bridle (put reins on) his tongue, he is able to bridle his whole body also. Such is what James calls a perfect man, a man who is complete, deficient in nothing.

Verses 3, 4: Now if we put the horses' bridles into their mouths, that they may obey us, we turn about their whole body also. Behold, the ships also, though they are so great, and are driven by rough winds, are yet turned about by a very small rudder, whither the impulse of the steersman willeth.

Here we have illustrations of bridling the tongue and in consequence the whole body, in the bridling of a horse and bringing the whole animal under control. This conception of control is strengthened by the use of the rudder in the steering of a ship. The ships in James's day were small things as compared with the giants that sail the oceans these days, yet the early principle of guiding a ship by the rudder is still followed and likely to be. The same principle is followed in the ships that sail across the sky as well as on the sea. This matter of control, and controlling oneself, is of very great importance.

Verses 5, 6: So the tongue also is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how much wood is kindled by how small a fire! And the tongue is a fire: the world of iniquity among our members is the tongue, which defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the wheel of nature, and is set on fire by hell (Gehenna).
How much evil has been caused in the world through masses of men being swayed by oratory of one of their fellows! We can think of the passions of men being aroused by this means, and of wars, world-wide conflagrations, breaking out in consequence. Men's boasting with their tongues is like the small fire kindling much wood. But the tongue may cause an unholy burning in smaller spheres than amongst the nations. A child might light a fire that it would take a fire brigade to put out. "The tongue is a fire," says James. It is the world of iniquity or unrighteousness set in our members. World (Kosmos) here does not mean order, a thing of beauty, an embellishment, but rather the conception of the present world, with weakness, sin and vice, etc., the aggregate of what the world contains (see 1 John 2. 15, 16). The tongue is here viewed as something utterly bad, and, of course, signifies the tongue that is not under the control of the Spirit of God. James says that the tongue defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course or wheel of nature. The word for wheel or course is Trochos which is derived from Trecho, to run. Trochos may describe a runner or a running course, anything round or circular, a wheel of any kind. The word nature is the Greek word Genesis, which has a variety of meanings, origin, source, beginning, birth, race, generation, etc. The course of nature may signify the course in which nature runs. It conveys to the mind that the tongue inflames or sets on fire that which is intensely vital in our being, and this that sets the course or wheel of nature on fire is itself set on fire by Gehenna. Whilst Hell (Hades) was the abode of all the dead in past dispensations, both of the righteous and the wicked, Gehenna is the place where the wicked only will be punished in eternal fire. James sees destruction as the fire which sets on fire the tongue, which is a fire which sets on fire the course of nature. It is altogether a fearful picture. The unbridled tongues of men reek with the very stench of the pit of destruction. But David describes his tongue as his glory (Psalm 30. 12; 57. 8). So also does Christ speak of His tongue being His glory, in Psalm 16. 9.

Verses 7, 8: For every kind of beasts and birds, of creeping things and things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed by mankind: but the tongue can no man tame; it is a restless evil, it is full of deadly poison.

James says that every species of creature, of beasts, birds, creeping things, and sea creatures, have been tamed (Damazo, subdued, or restrained within limits) by the human species. Such was the ordinance of God at the beginning, when he said, "Have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth" (Genesis 1. 28). But in contrast to man's ability to control living things outside of himself, he is not able to control his own tongue, and to restrain it within proper limits. It is a restless evil. Man's other members may become weary, but not his tongue. It is as restless as the troubled sea, which continually casts up mire and dirt (Isaiah 57. 20). The tongue is also full of deadly poison; millions have been poisoned by it. Our sole source of pure thought is the Scriptures; there is no other.

J. M.

ERRATUM

Bible Studies, May issue, page 67, line 11 from foot: — for "French" read "Trench".

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EDITORIAL

Our readers will have observed that Mr. Miller's notes on the Revelation were completed in the June issue. We now commence the same author's notes on 1 Peter, which we hope in due course to publish (D. V.) in a bound volume with notes on certain other epistles and on the Revelation. At the time of writing, the volume containing Mr. Miller's notes on Thessalonians, Timothy, Titus, Philemon and Hebrews is in active preparation. We trust much spiritual benefit will be derived from thoughtful reading of these notes.

When we were about to send this issue to the press, we had word from Mr. Miller to the effect that he is "keeping better." We are very grateful for this, and seek your continued prayers on his behalf.

This month's contributions, in their original form, showed two definite tendencies: there was a notable sameness (with consequent extensive excisions), and there was also a distinct element of repetition of the treatment of certain other topics in the present syllabus. This repetition may be in order, but it might arise from failure to distinguish between things that differ from one another. In the study of the Scriptures it is important to appreciate these distinctions, even if they are only slight. We would encourage all our fellow-students of the Scriptures to be diligent in careful detailed study and precise expression of fine distinctions. This will help to achieve one of the objectives of Bible Studies. To all we would say, "Let us not be weary in well-doing" (Galatians 6. 9).

J. B.

NOTES ON THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PETER

Peter, James and Paul wrote epistles to the same people, to the saints of the Dispersion (James 1. 1; 1 Peter 1. 1; 2 Peter 3. 15). The Dispersion was the dispersed Jews who lived in Gentile lands. The only epistle of Paul which answers to what Peter said is that of the Hebrews, and we are of the opinion, despite what some modern writers have written to the contrary, that Paul was the writer of the Hebrews.

CHAPTER 1

Verses 1, 2: Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the elect who are sojourners of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied.

Peter writes as an apostle. Those to whom he writes are the elect in Pontus, Galatia, etc. The elect are viewed as sojourning on earth, a pilgrim people, like the children of Israel in their journey through the wilderness.
This is different from the view of election in Ephesians 1. 4, where the saints are viewed as chosen in Christ before there was any earth. "He chose us in Him (Christ) before the foundation of the world"; and as chosen ones we were blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ. In Ephesians we are taught to look away from earth to the heavenlies in Christ, the place of our blessings and election, but in 1 Peter we look to the earth and see a chosen people wending their way as pilgrims through a strange and foreign land to their inheritance above. These elect in 1 Peter were sojourners in a double sense, they were Jewish people sojourning among the Gentiles, away from their own land, but they were also "sojourners and pilgrims" (chapter 2. 11) in the higher sense; they were pilgrims on earth going on to their heavenly country. Like Abraham, they desired "a better country, that is, a heavenly" (Hebrews 11. 16).

The five places mentioned, Pontus, etc., were Roman provinces in Asia Minor, which is now called Turkey. In these provinces there were churches of God in various cities, certain of which we know were planted by Paul and his fellow-workers.

These elect sojourners were elect according to the foreknowledge of God. Of old, God chose the seed of Abraham, His friend, and we can see how in His foreknowledge He made provision so that His purposes might be fulfilled. We point out but one thing in this connexion, the choice of the sons of Joseph, according to God's foreknowledge of future events, who were given a place among the sons of Jacob as though they had been Jacob's own sons (Genesis 48. 5, 6). This was because the day would come when Levi would be given the place of the firstborn sons of Israel because of the idolatry of the latter in the matter of the golden calf (Exodus 32. 26-29; Numbers 3. 44-51). In this election of 1 Peter 1 we are to make our calling and election sure (2 Peter 1. 10), but in that of Ephesians 1, which is coupled with foreordination, we cannot make it more sure (Ephesians 1. 5). What is said in Ephesians 1 is similar to what is recorded in Romans 8. 30:

"whom He foreordained, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified." This foreordination, which is connected with justification and glory, cannot be made more sure, but in service, during the days of our sojourning on earth, we are to make our election sure. Election in 1 Peter is "unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." This takes us back to Sinai, to the time when Israel became the people of God, to which they had previously been chosen. The sprinkling of the blood of the covenant at Sinai should not be confused with the blood of the passover which was put upon the portals of the doors of the homes of the Israelites in Egypt. Two very different lessons are to be learned from the blood in each case. It was when Moses "took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people", and they said, "All that the LORD hath spoken will we do, and be obedient," that Moses took the blood of the covenant, and sprinkled it on the people and said, "Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words" (Exodus 24. 7, 8). No obedience, save what was involved in the killing of the passover, applying the blood, and eating the passover lamb in preparation for their journey, was required of Israel in Egypt, but it was quite different in regard to the blood of the covenant; the covenant required continual obedience on the part of Israel. It is even so in regard to the obedience and sprinkling of the blood in 1 Peter 1. 2. There is a great difference between obedience to the Faith (Acts 6. 7), and the obedience of faith (Romans 1. 5; 16. 26). To the gospel the believing sinner renders the
obedience of faith; he is not allowed to do more than believe, and hence he is saved and justified by faith. But when he is justified, then he has to be obedient to the Faith in all its commandments, the Faith being the revealed will of God for His people in this day, as the law was for Israel in the past. In the past the covenant was the law, and the law was the testimony; it was the ten commandments written on the tables of stone which were placed in the ark in the Holy of Holies. Peter salutes this elect, sanctified, obedient, blood-sprinkled people with the words " Grace to you and peace be multiplied. 

Even such as Nebuchadnezzar wrote of peace being multiplied (Daniel 4. 1), and of Messiah's kingdom it is written, " Of the increase of His government and of peace there shall be no end " (Isaiah 9. 7).

Verses 3, 4: Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who-according to His great mercy begat us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, unto an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,

Peter begins this paragraph with an ascription of praise to God the Father, whom He calls the God (this implies the Manhood of Christ, who as Man was an obedient worshipper) and Father (this implies the Deity of Christ, who is the only begotten Son of the Father) of our Lord Jesus Christ. He according to His great (not Megas, great, but Polus, " great in magnitude or quantity, much ") mercy begat us again unto a living hope, and that living hope springs from the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The two disciples on the way to Emmaus were in a disconsolate and hopeless state, for to them the Lord was dead. They said, " We hoped that it was He which should redeem Israel, " but their hope blazed up afresh when He was known of them in the breaking of the bread (Luke 24. 35). " The Lord is risen indeed " is the hope of the believer, and to such a hope he is begotten again. The A. V. uses the old English word " lively. " At times this hope, though it is alive in the believer, is not " lively "; it is a fact which does not quicken his pulse, brighten his eye, raise his head. He is more like those who followed the body of the Lord to Joseph's new tomb, than like those who walked out with Him in resurrection to the slopes of Olivet, when He went back to heaven. We have been begotten again to a hope, not to hopelessness.

We have also been begotten again to an inheritance, for since we are children of God with the Spirit-taught words, "Abba, Father, " upon our lips, we are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ (Romans 8. 15-17). Ours is an incorruptible, undefiled, and unfading inheritance. There are no death duties here to reduce a noble inheritance to what is but a faded memory of fabulous fortunes. The inheritance which is ours is in heaven, where there is neither illegal theft, nor legal appropriation. The inheritance does not fade away till its wealth and glory are gone. Neither the corrupting hand of sin nor the defilements of earth can affect it; it is reserved, kept for us against our arrival in heaven. One day we shall claim our own unto which we have been born again. The inheritance is not something we have laboured to attain, but it comes to us through the new birth.

Verse 5: Who by the power of God are guarded through faith unto a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Guarded means that we are guarded as with a military guard. The danger of these pilgrim-heirs was great as they made their way through what was truly " a waste, howling wilderness. " Israel's wilderness was a " land of trouble and anguish, from whence come the lioness and the lion,
the viper and fiery flying serpent" (Isaiah 30. 6); it was the Negeb (the South) of Israel's wanderings. The power of God guarded His people in the past and the power of God is the guard of His people now. Thus we have a reserved inheritance for a guarded people. We are guarded through faith, for we must not stray from the path marked out for us in the Scriptures, for if we stray to the right and left, we may fall a prey to the devil, who, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour (chapter 5. 8). "We walk by faith" (2 Corinthians 5. 7) should follow being saved by faith. We have been saved by grace through faith (Ephesians 2. 8); we are being saved daily by working out our own salvation through God working within us (Philippians 2. 13); and there is salvation yet further, which is nearer to us than when we believed (Romans 13. 11), and which is ready to be revealed in the last time; this is at the Lord's coming again.

J. M.

THE GOSPEL IN PERSPECTIVE

The Passover with its beautiful pictures of Christ placed the children of Israel in a new position. Redeemed from the bondage of Egypt, they were now free and sanctified to serve God in the wide-open spaces of the wilderness. Their early murmurings, however, show that many of the people did not understand the greatness of the days in which they were living. However, it was not His purpose to leave them to wander in the wilderness, but to bring them to a good land, well watered and cultivated, where they would have the means to sustain the service He had in view for them. They had not gone far when He spoke to them the historic words of Exodus 19 and made with them a covenant under which they would be to Him a peculiar treasure from among all peoples, a kingdom of priests and an holy nation. To them He committed the work of constructing and erecting, but not of planning, the tabernacle with its ordinances of divine service. Surely this was a great advance in the restoration of Godward service on the part of men. But the tabernacle with its teaching, rich and beautiful, was only a shadow of what was to come. Many were the prophecies concerning the coming One who would lighten the darkness, clear away the mists and bring to perfection what had been seen only in part. The offerings and sacrifices associated with the tabernacle provided only a temporary covering to enable God to go on with a failing people until Christ should come to make full atonement and put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

"But when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth His Son born of a woman, born under the law" (Galatians 4. 4). John the Baptist, pointing to the Saviour, declared, "Behold, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" (John 1. 29). Here in person was the long-promised Saviour who by His death and resurrection not only brought to believing men and women eternal life, but gave them also a birthright to priestly service. Through Him it is now the will of God that all men should be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth (1 Timothy 2. 4). God, who so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, has not given up His desire to have service from His creatures in His holy place. It is not His purpose that men should be saved only to wander in the wilderness of this world, but rather that, like Israel, having been delivered from bondage they should find a place of rest in "the land." In Ephesians 2 there is teaching first of all to those who were dead in trespasses and sins, but who, by the grace of God, became builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit.
It is clear, therefore, that the gospel reveals a plan of recovery which has been unfolding since the fall, but which is not yet complete. It will be so only when the third of the three aspects of salvation is fulfilled and the Lord's people are taken home to serve Him for ever in the better land. Meanwhile it is to be regretted that some believers seem to regard gospel preaching as an end in itself as though the gospel were a gospel of humanitarianism. But the purposes of God in Christ are greater than that. It is to be hoped that the Lord's people will not only preach the gospel, but will make disciples, so that God's house will never lack priests to carry on its services of praise and glory to His name.

J, J. P.

THE GOSPEL OF THE GLORY OF THE BLESSED GOD

Redemption

From Brantford, Ontario. —The word "redemption," as found in Scripture, implies loosing or setting free that which has been held in bondage. In many cases it refers to the price paid to effect the release. In tracing this meaning, we see all the descendants of Adam held in bondage because of sin. Each one is unable to free himself, let alone help his brother. By the Spirit the sons of Korah in Psalm 49, when viewing men who boast themselves in their wealth and what it can accomplish, were led to say, "None of them can by any means redeem his brother... (for the redemption of their soul is costly). " Peter in his first epistle follows in this strain, and states that those to whom he wrote were redeemed not with silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ.

In Numbers 18, when the LORD gave instructions to the priests as to the holy things which were their portion, He said, "the firstborn of man shall thou surely redeem, and the firstling of unclean beasts shalt thou redeem." This coincides with the LORD's instructions in Exodus 13 regarding the redemption of the firstling of an ass, which was an unclean beast. Even though it was born unclean, it could grow up to be of great service to its master, but first it must be redeemed with a lamb. Likewise we were born in sin and under condemnation, but the Lamb of God died that we might be redeemed and then go on to live a life of service for our Master. We noted that the clean beasts did not require to be redeemed (Numbers 18. 17). Of all those born of women there was only One who was clean. No redemption was necessary for Him. He was holy. We look upon Him in adoration and say, "In whom we have our redemption... according to the riches of His grace" [1].

After having known the blessedness of being set free and released from the penalty of our sin, and desiring to live a life of service, we find that sin still assails us every day. From this we need to be delivered day by day, and it is of this that Paul writes to Titus. Jesus Christ gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a people for His own possession, zealous of good works. Throughout our Christian pathway we press on, seeking to be overcomers in the struggle against sin: and in this body we often groan, longing to be clothed upon with our habitation which is from heaven. For that day we long, when we shall know the redemption of our bodies (Romans 8. 23) and shall see our Redeemer face to face.

J. C. B.
Illustrations help to convey spiritual truth to our natural minds. Redemption has as a basic meaning the recall of captives from captivity through the payment of a ransom for them. The Old Testament is replete with illustrations of this truth. One noted was that of Exodus 13. 13, where a lamb is shown to be the redemption price for every firstling of an ass. In the New Testament there is a contrast drawn between natural and spiritual means of redemption in 1 Peter 1. 18, 19. On the one hand there is that which is valuable in men's eyes, silver and gold, on the other that which satisfies God's requirements, the precious blood of Christ.

There are two different verbs used for "to redeem." The first appears in the Galatian epistle, which deals with the deliverance by Christ of the Christian Jews from the curse of the law. The other occurs in Titus 2. 14 and 1 Peter 1. 18. Each conveys a different thought. In the former the actual redemption is not signified, only the price paid with a view to it. The latter signifies the actual deliverance, the setting at liberty [2].

Two nouns are also used. In Hebrews 9. 12 the redemptive work of Christ is dealt with, which brings deliverance through His death from the guilt and power of sin. The other noun has numerous meanings. In Hebrews 11. 35 (Mg.) deliverance from physical torture is in view. Deliverance from the guilt of sins is seen in Romans 3. 24, Ephesians 1. 7, Colossians 1. 14. In Romans 8. 23 we see the deliverance of the believer from the presence of sin, the redemption of his body at the coming of the Lord Jesus.

Scripture does not seem to shed much light upon the subject of the one to whom the ransom must be paid. Psalm 49. 6-8 might suggest God, but it was put forward that some have said that to redeem us from Satan and sin, then the logical recipient of the price is Satan [3]. R. D. Williams.

The redemption of the soul is costly and must be let alone forever [4]. No man can effect this for himself, or for his nearest relation. All men stand in need of it, since all have sinned (Romans 3. 23). The precious metals of earth, silver and gold, cannot buy it for men (1 Peter 1. 18). The plan of redemption was in the divine counsels from eternity. Infinite love with infinite power were joined in infinite righteousness to reach down with redemption for the lost of earth in infinite grace (Ephesians 3. 9-11). The Redeemer was none less than the Christ of God. The ransom price was nothing less than His precious blood (1 Peter 1. 19). In wondrous grace He gave Himself for us. He was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world (Revelation 13. 8). He was slain by the sword of divine justice (Hebrews 9. 26). He was slain in the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God (Acts 2. 23). He was slain for our sake. He was slain in our stead. Christ died for our sins (1 Corinthians 15. 3). He was delivered up for our offences. The stoop of the Saviour from heaven's throne to Calvary's cross was measureless. He was the Lamb of God without spot or blemish (1 Peter 1. 18), which is indicative of One entirely free from all internal defilement (1 Peter 1. 19), and entirely free from all external blemish. The redemption accruing to men through His glorious work is eternal in its character (Hebrews 9. 12) and world-wide in its application (John 3. 16).

We noted that one of the thoughts relative to the meaning of redemption in the New Testament is that of purchasing men bound in spiritual darkness and slavery, with a view to their release for ever from sin's penalty and power (Romans 3. 24), so that by the Holy Spirit's power they may be suitably fitted for divine service, beginning here on earth, but more fully realized in eternity (Revelation 22. 3, 4).
Some of the different aspects of redemption may be summarized as follows. The redemption of the soul is the believer's past experience; the redemption of the life is the believer's daily experience; and the redemption of the body believer's assured future experience. Redemption from the penal consequences of sin was effected by the Saviour in the past and is experienced by the believer through faith, while redemption from the power of sin is in the present life of the believer. Redemption from the presence of sin will, in a coming day, be effected by the Saviour for all the ransomed host.

**EXTRACTS**

From Hamilton, Ont. —Colossians 1. 14 explains redemption as "the forgiveness of our sins" [5]. Redemption in this verse means "a loosing away," conveying the thought of deliverance from sin's bondage. In addition to being redeemed from sin's bondage we have also been delivered out of the power of darkness over which Satan holds sway (Colossians 1. 13). God said to Pharaoh in connexion with the plague of flies, "I will put a division between My people and thy people" (Exodus 8. 23). In Isaiah 50. 2 He asks, "Is My hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem?" The words "division" and "redeem" in these two portions are translations of the same Hebrew word. The Lord's redeemed people should be separate from the world.

The word "redemption" has different shades of meaning, but a perusal of the following scriptures will show that it is "a loosing away unto God by a price," Colossians 1. 14, Revelation 5. 9, 1 Peter 1. 18, 19. Revelation 5. 9 compared with God's word to Israel in Exodus 19. 4, "I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto Myself," shows that God's redemption is inclusive of the bringing of a people unto Himself. This is borne out in Titus 2. 14, where we again see redemption in relation to a people for God.

Man and the creation are closely related. When man sinned, creation also suffered. Our future redemption will also mean for all groaning creation the fulfilment of the prophetic word, "The desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose" (Isaiah 35. 1). C. Meikle, W. Dryburgh, W. Thompson.

From Victoria, B. C. —The word of the LORD to Israel was, "I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgements" (Exodus 6. 6). The whole land of Egypt was under the sentence of death, and Israel would have suffered the judgement, if the blood had not been shed and applied. Herein lay their redemption and the fulfilment of all God's promises to them. The paschal lamb was the means of Israel's salvation; and the Lord Jesus Christ has become unto us eternal redemption. This is because of a death having taken place. He took our place that the blessings of Abraham might be ours in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3. 13, 14).

We thought also of the words of Exodus 13. 13 concerning the firstling of an ass that had to be redeemed by a lamb, and if it was not redeemed its neck must be broken. There were two classes, the clean and the unclean; and man is classed with the latter. Christ, the Lamb, took our place, and Him who knew no sin God made to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him (2 Corinthians 5. 21). He gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto Himself a people for His own possession, zealous of good works.

H. Curran, T. Curran.
From Whitehills and Macduff. The silver sockets of the sanctuary of the tabernacle were fashioned from the ransom money. Redemption is the foundation of all service Godward, as the silver sockets of the sanctuary show, and likewise the crown of God's righteousness, as seen in the silver chapiters on top of the pillars that supported the white linen screens of the court [6]. The work of Christ in redemption is thus set forth, not here as something for the individual sinner [7], but also as vital to the things of God and the people of God.

The sufferings of our Saviour have set us free to serve Him, and it ill becomes the redeemed to withhold what is now His due, for "ye were bought with a price." We are now delivered from the curse of the law, but our redemption will not be complete until He takes us to be with Himself, for the work of redemption must save us entire out of this scene. For this we wait, expecting the completion of the work when He shall come to the air.

A. B. R.

From London, S. E.—Hebrews 9. 12 deals with the eternal nature of our redemption. Men knew in the olden times that the redemption of the soul was costly, and must be let alone for ever, and sacrifices had to be offered continually. These sacrifices did not avail for salvation and redemption once and for ever, therefore eternal redemption could not be given under the law.

The purpose of our redemption is given in Titus 2. 14. On the negative side, this purpose is that we might keep from sin and iniquity; and on the positive side, that, as a redeemed people, we should be zealous of good works, thus manifesting that we are a people for the Lord's own possession.

Not only are our souls redeemed to God, but in a coming day there will be fulfilled the redemption of our very bodies (Romans 8. 23). They will be conformed to the body of His (the Lord's) glory (Philippians 3. 20, 21). Compare 1 Corinthians 15. 44.

R. F. Robertson,

From Edinburgh. —Eternal redemption would seem to indicate redemption in its fulness. In Hebrews 9 there is a contrast between the high priest of old going into the Holies on the day of Atonement and the Lord Jesus going into heaven as High Priest, and that once for all. In Leviticus 16 the high priest enters within the veil to make atonement for the holy place and the tent of meeting. Then he comes out to make atonement for the altar, and, after the live goat is presented, it is sent away into the wilderness bearing the iniquities of the people. Hence, when Aaron entered the holy place, the sins of the people were still upon them. Not so with Christ: as our High Priest He entered in, having obtained eternal redemption; the work of atonement was then complete in regard to the heavenly things and in regard to us as well.

J. Paterson.

From Paisley. —The word "redemption" signifies a ransom or a buying back. We, who were sold under sin and in bondage thereto, can know deliverance. The children of Israel of old were redeemed from Egypt's slavery that they might be free to serve, God has wrought similarly in our case on a grander scale.

The experience of redemption is a progressive one. There is first that aspect which determines our relationship to God, and then the effect that this should have upon our lives. The unredeemed life is empty and profitless,
the redeemed life is full and bears promise of rich reward. In the work of redemption God had more in view than the individual. Paul writes concerning our Saviour Jesus Christ that He " gave Himself for us, that He might... purify unto Himself a people for His own possession, zealous of good works " (Titus 2. 14).

From Toronto, Ont. —Redemption in relation to the people of God is presented in the Hebrews. The people are viewed in the type as Israel, redeemed by blood. We are a purchased possession (Ephesians 1. 14). In contrast to the high priest of old on the day of Atonement, we have the " once for all" of Hebrews 9. 12. The basis of our entering in as a people is redemption. It was suggested that here we have a loosing to give us liberty or freedom to enter in through the redemptive work of Christ; otherwise we could never enter as a people.

Titus 2. 14 brings before us a people of possession. Good works are associated therewith, so that we have the thought of the royal priesthood aspect as compared to that viewed in Hebrews, the holy priesthood, and the entering in before God. There is a wealth of meaning in redemption, particularly as we see it applying to ourselves as the people of God, and especially as we consider the cost: " Ye were redeemed... with precious blood... even the blood of Christ " (1 Peter 1. 18, 19).

From West Hartlepool. —Several words are used in the Hebrew and the Greek to convey the meaning of " redemption. " We focus attention on the Hebrew word gaal, which, according to Dr. Strong, means " kinsman," implying the thought of purchase or paying the ransom price. Jacob appears to be the first to use this word, which is translated " redeemed " in Genesis 48. 16, to describe his deep spiritual experiences. He was a man who knew deliverance from evil during his pilgrimage as believers can now.

The redemption of a people is seen in the experience of Jacob's progeny,, when God fulfilled His promise by redeeming Israel from the tyranny and oppression of Egypt. These happenings were but the foreshadowing of a more excellent redemptive work, that of our Kinsman-Redeemer, who obtained " eternal redemption " (Hebrews 9. 12), which description shows the abiding nature of the work. Nothing will ever invalidate it. Christ partook of flesh and blood in order to take the place of Kinsman-Redeemer.

Robert Ross.

From Cowdenbeath.: —If children of God (redeemed persons) abide in Christ and conform their lives wholly to the will of God, there will be fulfilled in their lives the redemption from the evil which is in the world, and, collectively, they compose a people for God who are zealous of good works. Because of failure to obey God's word, not all children of God find their place amongst God's together people.

Because of the flesh, the believer experiences spiritual conflict as long as he remains in mortal body, despite the fact that he is indwelt by the Holy Spirit. He longs for deliverance (Romans 7. 24), and groans while he waits for it to come. Although death frees the believer from his body, it is not death he longs for (2 Corinthians 5. 4), but for the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to the air.

J. Ross.
From Birkenhead. — The thought in redemption is the loosing and setting free, by the payment of a price or ransom, of one who is bound. This was the purpose of the coming of the Son of Man (Matthew 20. 28). The sacrifices offered according to the law could never take away sin, and therefore could not effect a ransom, but they spoke of Christ " in whom we have our redemption, the forgiveness of our sins " (Colossians 1. 14). The experience of forgiveness of sins is the outcome of our redemption.

Our redemption is in Christ. It was He who gave the ransom, His own precious blood. This was a perfect ransom, and so the redemption is perfect. The redemption of the body, the final act in our redemption, will take place in a future day, and in that day Christ will have His own purchased possession, the Church which is His Body, for which He gave Himself (Ephesians 5. 26, 27).

D. Banks.

From Glasgow. — The psalmist brings home to us, in Psalm 14. 1-3, the condition to which man has fallen in the sight of God.

God Himself said, " He that is hanged is accursed of God " (Deuteronomy 21. 23). Redemption was obtained for the sinner through the death of the Lord Jesus Christ upon the cross. Of Him it was said, " Thou shalt call His name Jesus; for it is He that shall save His people from their sins " (Matthew 1. 21).

J. M. R.

From Crowborough. — To redeem is to buy back what was sold, pledged or forfeited. A redeemer is one who ransoms by paying the price.

The human race is in bondage to Satan and therefore sold under sin, because Adam by his sin forfeited his life. To buy back to God His creature, Christ had to be born of a woman, born under the law (Galatians 4. 4). Christ is our Kinsman-Redeemer and our redemption is eternal. We are redeemed from the curse of the law, and are redeemed from all iniquity. As to the future, our bodies will be redeemed, and be like into His own glorious body.

B. V. French.

From Kingston-on-Thames. — The New Testament uses many of the ideas associated with the types of the Old Testament. For example, to the Corinthians Paul wrote, " Ye were bought with a price " (1 Corinthians 6. 20); also, the new Song of Revelation 5. 9 speaks of the Lamb who purchased unto God with His blood, men of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.

The price of our redemption was the precious blood of the Lord Jesus, our Redeemer. It was God who demanded this price, and not Satan, to whom through the entrance of sin we were sold. Neither was this price paid to Satan. The type of the deliverance of the children of Israel from Egypt is perhaps a suitable illustration of redemption in this aspect. Pharaoh had control over the children of Israel, as long as they were in bondage in Egypt, although they belonged rightfully to God, who spoke of them as His people. They were redeemed by the blood of the lamb, which was not demanded by Pharaoh, or paid to him, but was commanded by God.

T. E. Jarvis.

From Southport. — The two widows Naomi and Ruth had grown poor. The possession of Naomi was to be sold, and Boaz was prepared to redeem
that possession. A nearer kinsman than Boaz had the right of redemption, but he was not willing. Boaz redeemed the possession by paying the price, and having the transaction witnessed in the gate of Bethlehem. We ourselves could not pay the price of our redemption, but like Ruth we have One, even our Lord Jesus Christ, who paid the price for us (Colossians 1. 14, Ephesians 1. 7).

Boaz paid the price of the parcel of land, but an infinitely greater price was paid for the redemption of our sins, so that God might remain just and at the same time justify him that hath faith in Jesus (Romans 3. 26), that price being the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1. 18, 19).

W. S. Holden.

From Melbourne. — There appear to be three aspects of redemption, past, present and future. "In whom we have our redemption through His blood" (Ephesians 1. 7) would be the past aspect: each believer, on accepting Christ as Saviour, receives eternal redemption. Then Titus 2. 14 indicates the purpose of the Lord's giving of His life for us: that is, that "He might redeem us from all iniquity." This is the present aspect: we as believers, being zealous of good works, can enter into this aspect of redemption. Again, Romans 8. 23 looks forward to a day when we shall know the fulness of redemption, when the redemption of the body at the coming of the Lord will take place.

The literal meaning of "redemption," according to Dr. Young, is "a thorough loosing." Believers can rejoice in the fact that they have received a thorough loosing from all that bound them, from which they could not be released by their own efforts. "If therefore the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8. 36). Israel experienced this when they were loosed from the bondage of Egypt, redeemed by blood and by power. Their thorough loosing brought forth the sweet song of praise and worship as they sang, unto the LORD, "for He hath triumphed gloriously" (Exodus 15. 1).

P. W. Atkinson.

From Wigan. — To redeem (exagorazo) is to liberate by payment of a ransom. All the human race was in bondage to sin and Satan, and God must have revealed very early that redemption would be wrought (Job 19. 25, 33. 24). The purpose of redemption is that God might have a people for Himself, "for His own possession" (Titus 2. 14), called in Ephesians 1. 14 "God's own possession."

The climax of this is seen in Revelation 5. 9, when John saw around the throne a multitude singing a new song, saying, "Worthy art Thou... for Thou wast slain, and didst purchase unto God with Thy blood men of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, and madest them to be unto our God a kingdom and priests."

A further purpose of redemption was to liberate us; set us free from all bondage that we might serve Him, or become bondservants of Christ (1 Corinthians 7. 23). We were sold under sin (Romans 7. 14), but the Lord Jesus gave Himself that He might redeem us from all iniquity (Titus 2. 14). By the blood of Jesus we have been redeemed from our vain manner of life (1 Peter 1. 18, 19), that we might render service to God. "With freedom did Christ set us free:... be not entangled again in any yoke of bondage."

J. Hurst.
From Atherton. —The word "redeem" in the New Testament has various shades of meaning, "to acquire at the forum" (Revelation 5. 9), "to acquire out of the forum" (Galatians 3. 13), "to loose at a price" (Titus 2. 14, 1 Peter 1, 18), "a loosing" (Hebrews 9. 12), and "a loosing away" (Romans 3. 24; 8. 23, Colossians 1. 14).

The price of redemption was the precious blood of Christ (1 Peter 1. 18). He Himself paid the ransom price by giving Himself (Titus 2. 14). We might ask, "To whom was the price paid?" Some might argue that the price must be paid to Satan, in whose power we were. This is not the case. Here the type helps. Redemption by blood in Egypt was not a matter for Pharaoh (type of Satan). It was entirely a matter between God and Israel. By God's power Pharaoh was overthrown. Likewise, Satan was defeated at the cross. The Lord Jesus Christ "delivered us out of the power of darkness," and in Him "we have our redemption, the forgiveness of our sins" (Colossians 1. 13, 14). Therefore the price of redemption must be paid to God, who in righteousness demanded it. None of us could by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him (Psalm 49. 7, 8).

J. Bullock, G. A. J.

Justification

From Hamilton, Ont. —When Adam sinned, God pronounced him guilty. He forfeited communion with God, and was put under the sentence of death (Genesis 2. 17). One act of disobedience, one trespass, was enough to cause separation from God, and this has been passed on to all mankind. Justification by God, is the restoring of that which obtained prior to sin entering the garden of Eden. The blood-bought sinner is seen before God as guiltless, freed from impending judgement and the sentence of death. Romans 5. 9 states that we are justified by the blood of Christ. His sacrificial death was necessary: "Him who knew no sin, He (God) made to be sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness (the justified) of God in Him" (2 Corinthians 5. 21). "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8. 1). It is God that justifies, who then shall condemn (Romans 8. 33)?

Can we be justified by works (James 2. 24)? In Romans 4. 2 we read, "If Abraham was justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not toward God." Justification by grace has no works attached thereto; otherwise it would not be grace. Paul states clearly to the Galatians that "by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." Through faith in Christ we are justified, and "if righteousness is through the law, then Christ died for nought." Howbeit, "the law hath been our tutor to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith."

Abraham, we should say, was justified by faith before God; but, when he offered up Isaac by faith upon the altar, he was justified before men, as he thus demonstrated the reality of his faith in God.

Lewis Mercer, David McEwan, J, Young.

COMMENTS

[1] (Brantford). —It should be noted that it was not a question that the firstborn of clean animals did not need to be redeemed; the fact is that they could not be redeemed. They must go to the altar and be sacrificed. They must die! Even so it was with the Lord; He must die as a sacrifice.

J. M.
[2] (Nottingham). —The verb in Galatians 4. 6 means "to buy out or from," that in 1 Peter 1. 18 means "to loose for a ransom." Both have the object of freedom in view. J. M.

[3] (Nottingham). —Psalm 49. 7 would appear to be decisive on this matter: "give to God a ransom." In the redemption of the firstling of an ass, the lamb was for God (Exodus 13. 11-16). The ransom of those numbered in Israel was "for an offering to the LORD" (Exodus 30. 13). We must be careful of arguments that we feel to be "logical." The analogies of the Scriptures provide the true sense. See elsewhere in this issue. J. B.

It should be understood that the matter dealt with particularly in Psalm 49 is not sin but death. Observe verse 9, "that he should still live alway." God, having sentenced man to death, will accept no ransom from man that he should live alway. J. M.


[5] (Hamilton, Ont.). —Both Ephesians 1. 7 and Colossians 1. 14 are based on two Old Testament types, the lamb slain in Egypt and the scape-goat. Redemption is analogous to the former and forgiveness to the latter. They are not the same. J. B.

[6] (Whitehills and Macduff). —If Strong's (or other) Concordance be consulted, it will be seen that the word rendered "ransom" in Exodus 30. 12 is the Hebrew word kopher, to cover, similar to the word kaphar, frequently rendered "to atone." The same is true of "ransom" in Psalm 49. 7. Further, the atonement silver, on which the tabernacle rested, does not teach the same truth as the blood of the passover lamb, shed and applied in Egypt. J. M.

[7] (Whitehills and Macduff). —This needs care. The individual sinner is not seen here. A. T. D.

**QUESTION AND ANSWER**

Question from London, S. E. —In view of Old Testament types, for instance, the redemption of Israel from Egypt, and the words of the psalmist in Psalm 103. 4, is it true to say that eternal redemption was never given before Christ came?

Answer. —The price of eternal redemption was not paid until the Lord died. Hebrews 9. 12 is part of an exposition of the better things of the New Covenant, and it is clear from this that it was Christ who obtained the eternal redemption.

Eternal redemption is not something that is given. The Lord, when He entered heaven, had obtained eternal redemption through His having given Himself a ransom. Saints of past times, prior to the day of grace, were delivered from sin through their faith in the coming Redeemer, even though His work was not then accomplished. They were, however, not admitted to heaven until the Lord Himself had entered heaven, having obtained eternal redemption. J. M.
Verses 9, 10, 11, 12: Therewith bless we the Lord and Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the likeness of God: out of the same mouth cometh forth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. Doth the fountain send forth from the same opening sweet water and bitter? Can a fig tree, my brethren, yield olives, or a vine figs? neither can salt water yield sweet.

The R. V. gives "the Lord and Father," which is very unusual; the A. V. wording is, "God, even the Father." The contrasts drawn by James are easily understood, that out of the same mouth should not proceed blessing and cursing, even as from the same hole or opening do not pour sweet and bitter waters or waters salt and sweet. So also men do not gather olives from a fig tree or figs from vines. Each tree is true to its nature, but often believers are not true to their new nature, the old man is often heard speaking by the believer's tongue. Such things ought not so to be.

Verses 13, 14: Who is wise and understanding among you? let him shew by his good life his works in meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter jealousy and faction in your heart, glory not and lie not against the truth.

After the many illustrations he has used James comes to grips with their application to assembly life. He addresses the wise and understanding among God's gathered people, that they are to show by their good life (Anastrepho, moving up and down, conduct, mode of life, frequently rendered conversation in A. V.) their works in meekness of wisdom. But if there is bitter jealousy (Zelos, this word may have a good and a bad meaning according to the context in which it is found, it may mean strong affection or zeal, and also envy, jealousy) and faction (Eritheia, this word unlike the former has no good side in the Scriptures, it is the demon of strife, it means "to do anything for gain or ambition," to contend or dispute), in the heart, James says that they are not to boast and lie against the truth.

Verses 15, 16: This wisdom is not a wisdom that cometh down from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where jealousy and faction are, there is confusion and every vile deed.

This wisdom, that which is seen in jealousy and faction, is not heavenly, but earthly, sensual (Psuchikos, soulish, animal, "swayed by the affections and passions of human nature"), devilish (Daimoniodes, demoniacal, "pertaining to or proceeding from demons"). Where jealousy and faction are there is confusion or tumult, and every vile (Phaulos, refuse, worthless, evil, wicked) deed.

Verses 17, 18: But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle (mild), easy to be intreated (easily persuaded, pliant), full of mercy and good fruits, without variance, without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace for them that make peace.

The wisdom from above is pure (chaste, modest, innocent), it is also without variance (impartial), and without hypocrisy (unfeigned, real, sincere). What excellent qualities the wisdom from above has! Here the behaviour of heaven is defined for men on the earth who are moving heavenward and hope to be there one day. The kingdom of God in its moral characteristics is "righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Romans 14. 17). If we want peace we must first do what is right. "The work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and confidence for ever" (Isaiah 32. 17). "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called sons of God" (Matthew 5. 9).
Chapter 4

Verses 1, 2, 3: Whence come wars and whence come fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your pleasures that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and covet, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war; ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may spend it in your pleasures.

These verses present a sorry picture of carnality. Wars and fightings are traced to the desire of these believers for physical pleasures and "lust;" pleasures that war in your members." They were not abstaining from fleshly lusts which war against the soul (1 Peter 2. 11). They lusted, they killed and coveted, but could not obtain. They fought and warred, but they had not. They either ceased to pray, or they prayed and asked amiss, and if they received aught, they spent it to gratify their lust for pleasure. One could hardly visualize a worse state than what is depicted here.

Verses 4, 5: Ye adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore would be a friend of the world maketh himself an enemy of God. Or think ye that the scripture speaketh in vain? Doth the Spirit which He made to dwell in us long unto envying?

In John 14 to 16 and in 1 John 2. 15-17, we have the world's attitude to the Christian and the Christian's attitude to the world clearly defined, and here James calls those who are friends of the world adulteresses, such as break their marriage vows, and form a lewd association. Often in the prophets the association of Israel with the nations and their gods is called adultery; Israel was frequently guilty of unlawful and lewd intercourse. Similarly James views the believer's unlawful association with the world as adultery. The devil is the prince of this world (John 12. 31; 14. 30), and the god of this age (2 Corinthians 4. 4), and it is impossible to walk with God and with the world. It is serious, for the world's friendship is enmity with God, and to be a friend of the world makes a believer an enemy of God. The world is guilty of the rejection and crucifixion of the Lord, hence, if the believer would be faithful to his absent and coming Lord, he must treat the world as it treated his Master. We must not be like a soldier who deserts and joins himself to the camp of the enemy. The flesh in the believer is an ally of the world, hence the flesh must be crucified with the passions and lusts thereof. To the enemy within you cannot allow liberty of action to open the gate of the heart to the world and allow the world to walk in and pervert the affections and to turn the believer from minding heavenly things to minding earthly things. We know that the Spirit does not speak in vain to those who have ears to hear. "Spirit" in verse 5, though printed in both A. V. and R. V. "spirit," is undoubtedly the person of the Holy Spirit, and not a disposition of mind.

Verse 6: But He giveth more grace. Wherefore the scripture saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.

God gives greater grace, greater grace for greater need, for grace is given according to need (Hebrews 4. 16). The words "the scripture" are in italics, and consequently are not in the Greek, "He saith," of the A. V. is correct. God resisteth or sets Himself against the proud (Huperephanos, Huper, above, and Phaino, to shine), such as would be conspicuous above or shine above all others. Such persons have no place with God. He giveth grace to the lowly, those who are not conspicuous. Such was His Son and the prophets and the apostles.
Verses 7, 8: Be subject therefore unto God; but resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye doubleminded.

The saints were to be subject to God, but to stand against the devil, and if they resisted and repelled him, he would flee from them. Here is a word of encouragement both towards God and towards the devil. God said to Asa of old by Azariah, "If ye seek Him, He will be found of you" (2 Chronicles 15. 2). Moses also said, "What great nation is there, that hath God so nigh unto them, as the LORD our God is whensoever we call upon Him?" (Deuteronomy 4. 7, Mg.). Jeremiah said, "Thou drewest near in the day that I called upon Thee" (Lamentations 3. 57). As to the matter of cleansing our hands and purifying our hearts, David said, in Psalm 24. 3, 4, that those who would ascend the hill of the LORD and stand in His holy place must have clean hands and a pure heart. Asaph also said, "Surely God is good to Israel, even to such as are pure in heart" (Psalm 73. 1). The Lord said, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God" (Matthew 5-8). If we do God's work we must have clean hands, and if we think God's thoughts we must have pure hearts. To be doubleminded means to be two-souled, and describes one who is fickle and inconsistent.

Verses 9, 10: Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He shall exalt you.

Ecclesiastes 3-4 says that there is a time to weep and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance. In the light of the condition of those of whom James writes, as shown in the former verses, it was a time to mourn and weep, and to afflict one's soul. Jeremiah had been called the weeping prophet, and well might he weep over the condition of God's remnant people prior to the Babylonian captivity. The LORD said, "Stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls: but they said, We will not walk therein" (Jeremiah 6. 16). Later Jeremiah said, "Hear ye, and give ear: be not proud: for the LORD hath spoken. Give glory to the LORD your God, before He cause darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains: and, while ye look for light, He turn it into the shadow of death, and make it gross darkness. But if ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret for your pride; and mine eye shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because the LORD'S flock is taken captive" (Jeremiah 13. 15-17). James calls for mourning and heaviness because of the condition of God's people in his day. If they humbled themselves in the Lord's sight then He would exalt them, but He could not exalt them as they were.

J. M.

ERRATUM

Bible Studies, April issue, page 53, line 4: — for «' God " read " Gog'

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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).

EDITORIAL

"Understandest thou what thou readest?" asked Philip, and the Ethiopian replied with the question, "How can I, except some one shall guide me?" (Acts 8. 30, 31). In the study of the Scriptures we should ever be asking ourselves if we understand, and this questioning attitude should cause us to probe into many things which might at first sight seem to be minor detail. If we do so in a becoming frame of mind, we cannot fail to be deeply conscious of our need to have One to guide us. We cannot learn the truth without enlightenment from the Holy Spirit. Human reasoning and philosophy will lead us astray: the Spirit of truth will keep us in the truth. For this gracious favour we should be thankful indeed.

The joy that accompanies enlightenment through the Spirit is well illustrated in Luke 24. Two disciples of the Lord, sad at heart, communed with each other of the things which had happened. "And it came to pass, while they communed and questioned together, that Jesus Himself drew near, and went with them." The testimony of these two favoured men was, "Was not our heart burning within us, ... while He opened to us the Scriptures?" Communing together is a very desirable and profitable occupation, especially when we do so in prayerful dependence upon the Lord the Spirit. It was while the two disciples communed together that the Lord joined them and brought such heart-warming blessing to them by His own presence and the opening of the Scriptures. We must, if we are to be established in the Faith, give attention to reading together as well as in private (1 Timothy 4. 13), and we must seek to be led into the truth and kept in the truth by the Spirit of truth (John 14. 17, 26).

We are prompted to make these remarks because we feel that there is, in a significant proportion of the papers submitted, evidence of loose thinking and less careful expression of thought than is usual, and this is more noticeable in papers which seem to be the work of individuals. The papers we have in mind would appear to have suffered from the fact that familiarity of subject and simplicity of thought do not always lead to careful development of detail in the argument of a paper. If the aim of Bible Studies is to be realized, even in a modest measure, we must guard against this danger. Even if a subject is very elementary, well known and fully accepted, we should make it our business to trace out the doctrine carefully and in order. To help towards this end, we should like to stress the fact that critical discussion together is conducive to accuracy in detail and the pruning away of error. We ask our fellow-students of the word of God to suffer us, please, in this word of exhortation to prayerful thoroughness in the study of the Scriptures.

"Iron sharpeneth iron; So a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend"

(Proverbs 27. 17).

J. B.
Verses 6, 7: Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, ye have been put to grief in manifold temptations, that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold that perisheth though it is proved by fire, might be found unto praise and glory and honour at the revelation of Jesus Christ:

"Greatly rejoice," the word translated is Agalliao, which means "to leap for joy, exult." This is what is called "the rapture" by some teachers of the word. On the one hand, we are "transported with desire" at the thought of being saved completely from the world and its corruptions; on the other, we may be put to grief by manifold temptations, if there should be need for this. "But God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation make also the way of escape, that ye may be able to endure it" (1 Corinthians 10. 13). "With the temptation" (with, Sun, together with), shows that the temptation and the escape, the issue or way out, are made together. Often, perchance, we are so grieved with the temptation that we do not wait on God to reveal the way out, which will surely come if we wait for it with patience. The way of escape came for Job after his weary days and nights of temptation. It came also for David, for Joseph, and for many others.

Why should there need to be temptations? The answer is, they are a test of faith. God has had great pleasure in displaying the faith of His saints. Think in particular of faith's "picture gallery" in Hebrews 11. How frequently we have gone round and viewed the characters of those faithful men and women, as the Spirit of God has painted them! That is a display in miniature of what will yet be, which is sufficient to encourage present sufferers to imitate their faith. But what will it be when at the revelation of Jesus Christ the proof of the faith of saints will be exhibited, a proof so precious that gold could not buy it, which will be found unto praise, glory and honour? The revelation of Jesus Christ here is not His revelation to the world in flaming fire, as in 2 Thessalonians 1. 7, 8, etc. The different words used in connexion with the Lord's coming again should be studied. The word Parousia, "coming," or more correctly "presence," is used both in connexion with the Lord's coming to earth as the Son of Man (Matthew 24. 27). Phaneroo, to be manifested or appear, refers to Christ at His first coming (Hebrews 9. 26; 1 John 1. 2; 3. 5-8) and to His coming again for His saints (1 Peter 5. 4; 1 John 2. 28, 3. 2). Epiphaneia, appearing or manifestation, refers to the Lord's first coming (2 Timothy 1. 10; Titus 2. 11), to His coming for His saints (Titus 2. 13, "the blessed hope and appearing of the glory"), and to His coming to earth (1 Timothy 6. 14; 2 Timothy 4. 1). Apokalupsis, uncovering, revelation or appearing, refers to His being revealed to His saints at His coming for them (1 Corinthians 1. 7; 1 Peter 4. 13; 1 Peter 1. 5, 13); revelation also applies to the Lord's coming in judgement to earth (2 Thessalonians 1. 7).

Verses 8, 9: Whom not having seen ye love; on whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice greatly with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.
We believe in One whom we have not seen (John 20. 29), and we also love Him whom we have not seen. Peter is careful to use " ye " and not "we," for he had been privileged to see the Lord daily. Though we see Him not, yet believing (faith makes things more real to the believer than sight, for faith implies seeing persons and things as God sees them), we rejoice greatly (Agalliao, " leap for joy," the same word as in verse 6) with joy unspeakable, with a joy which cannot be told out, and which human words cannot express. Peter thinks of saints leaping for joy, their whole being exulting, something like David when he danced before the LORD at the bringing up of the ark to Zion. Doxazo (full of glory) means to be glorified or such as are glorified; it is a present experience like being changed from glory unto glory, as from the Lord the Spirit (2 Corinthians 3. 18). We are believing ones now; we shall be receiving ones shortly, for we shall receive the end of our faith. This faith which applies to the present circumstances of life (though faith, hope, love, we judge, shall never cease) shall reach its end or issue, which is the salvation of our souls or selves at the Lord's coming.

Verses 10, 11: Concerning which salvation the prophets sought and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what time or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did point unto, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of (unto) Christ, and the glories that should follow them.

Salvation will not be completely effected until we receive the end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls or selves. As has often been pointed out, there is (1) salvation once for all from sin's penalty (Ephesians 2. 5, 8; Titus 3. 5), (2) salvation daily from sin's power, effected by the work of God within us and by our own work and the ministry of others (Philippians 2. 12, 13; 1 Timothy 4. 16), (8) salvation from the defiling presence of sin when we fall asleep in Christ (1 Corinthians 15. 18) or when the Lord comes (Romans 13. 11). God's saving grace has appeared, by which we are already saved (Titus 2. 11), but there is yet grace which is to be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ when He comes for His saints (1 Peter 1. 13). Two words are used, of somewhat similar meaning, of the exercise of the prophets of the Old Testament, they sought out, they set themselves to seek out concerning this salvation of which they wrote, and they also traced out, investigated, scrutinized their own writings and they did so diligently. A prophet not only searched out the matter in his own writings, but he searched the writings of other prophets. Daniel read the prophecy of Jeremiah, and Zechariah referred to what the former prophets had written. What was the cause of their deep and painstaking interest? It was because the Spirit of Christ which was in them testified beforehand the sufferings of (Eis, unto, belonging to) Christ, and the glories that should follow them. What would be the time and what would be the manner of the time of the sufferings of Christ? How evil would be those days, and the people thereof, when men would cause the Messiah, the very Son of God, to suffer! They searched out also the days of the glories of Messiah; these were to follow Messiah's sufferings. Such are still the cause of much diligent searching of the Scriptures on the part of God's saints. Here are mines where they may dig riches untold.
Verse 12: *To whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto you, did they minister these things, which now have been announced unto you through them that preached the gospel unto you by the Holy Spirit sent forth from heaven; which things angels desire to look into.*

What had been covered was revealed to the prophets, but they did not minister the things to themselves, but they ministered in their prophecies things which had their application to those who would have the gospel preached to them. Such are the ways of God who uses some to minister for the good of others. The spirit of this is found in Paul's resignation to the divine will to serve for the blessing and spiritual progress of others: "Yea, and if I am offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all" (Philippians 2. 17). The fulfilment of Old Testament prophecies in the Lord's days and afterwards is referred to by Him in the words, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear.

For verily I say unto you, that many prophets and righteous men desired to see the things which ye see, and saw them not; and to hear the things which ye hear, and heard them not" (Matthew 13. 16, 17). In the comparative gloom of the times of the prophets, as compared with the noonday light which resulted from the coming of the Lord and the coining of the Holy Spirit, the holy men of old sought out and searched out concerning the day of grace which lay ahead of them. What a day of the fulness of divine revelation there is in our time! We have the full revelation of God in the Scriptures to which God will add no more. When the Lord comes He will speak in Person. The Holy Spirit is the One who empowers the preacher of the gospel, even as the Lord said, "Ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be My witnesses" (Acts 1. 8). The preaching was "by," or, rather, "in" the Holy Spirit. The following words show the interest of heaven in the work of God on earth: "which things angels desire to look into." "To look" (Parakupto) means "to stoop down towards, bend forwards, particularly for examination." How wonderful is this conception of the angels bending down and gazing upon the suffering Saviour and examining the glorious results of His sufferings in that salvation which is bound up with His sufferings and glories!

Verse 13: *Wherefore girding up the loins of your mind, be sober and set your hope perfectly on the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;*

The grace of God is manifold, that is, it is variegated (1 Peter 4. 10). There is grace for every need and every time of need. Then there is grace to be brought unto us at the Lord's coming for His saints. The revelation of Jesus Christ here is not His revelation to the world, when every eye shall see Him, but His revelation to His own. We have not to allow our minds to go loose and to be occupied with all manner of unworthy objects, but to set our hope perfectly on the Lord's coming, that great crowning act of grace on His part towards His unworthy people. If we have our hope set on Him we shall be purifying ourselves even as He is pure (1 John 3. 2, 3).

Verses 14, 15, 16: *As children of obedience, not fashioning yourselves according to your former lusts in the time of your ignorance: but like as He which called you is holy, be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living; because it is written, Ye shall be holy; for I am holy.*
The children of God are to be children of obedience. They are not to fashion themselves (Suschematizo): the Greek word signifies that the outward appearance or likeness bears no relationship to the nature which is within. Schema, "fashion," has a vastly different meaning from Morphe, "form," which signifies the external form of the inward nature or essence, "the utterance of the inner life." We, who have a new nature by the new birth, are not to fashion ourselves according to the present evil age (Romans 12. 2), but to be transformed by the renewing of our mind, which is similar in meaning to Peter's exhortation here, not to fashion ourselves according to our former lusts in the time of our ignorance. In contrast, we are to be holy as God who called us is holy and that in all "manner or mode of life, conduct, deportment." Peter strengthens his exhortation by a quotation from Leviticus 11. 44, in which God commanded His people to keep themselves from everything unclean. Then it was physical cleanness and holiness, now it is moral and spiritual holiness. We are to be separate and to touch no unclean thing and to be perfecting holiness in the fear of God (2 Corinthians 6. 14-7. 1).

Verse 17: And if ye call on Him as Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to each man's work, pass the time of your sojourning in fear:

God loves all His children equally, and in the matter of the judgement of their works there are no preferences for the one more than the other. But the faithful or unfaithful work of saints will make a difference both here and hereafter. It is in the hands of saints themselves whether they, through their works, will be commended or condemned. God cannot be blamed for the result, for He judges the work of His saints without respect of persons. How proper and how just are His ways! Hence we are to pass our earthly days in holy fear, not in dread of punishment, but in fear lest our actions should displease our God.

Verses 18, 19: Knowing that ye were redeemed, not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, from your vain manner of life handed down from your fathers; but with precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, even the blood of Christ:

Peter has before him Leviticus 11. 44, in which the people of Israel were commanded to be holy, because God brought them forth from the land of Egypt to be their God. Peter writes of God's people in his day as being redeemed also, not by earthy precious metal, corruptible riches, but with precious blood, even the blood of Christ, from their vain manner of life handed down from their fathers, a life of ritualistic observance in which they were in bondage to the ceremonial law's requirements (Galatians 4. 3, 8-10, 24, 25, 5. 1). Of old, God's people, Israel, were in bondage to Pharaoh, from which God redeemed them by power and by the blood of the paschal lamb. Pharaoh's bondage was a vain, empty life, so also was the bondage of the law; it was a weary round of ceremonials for such as were not men of faith. Faith saw beyond the shadow to the substance, which was Christ (Colossians 2. 16, 17), who is without blemish and without spot, therefore the paschal lamb had to be so too (Exodus 12. 5). See 2 Peter 2. 13, where the pleasure-lovers are described as spots and blemishes, persons who were a disgrace to Christian society. There is neither blemish nor spot on the Lord's behaviour. He is "holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners" (Hebrews 7. 26).

J. M.
THE GOSPEL OF THE GLORY OF THE BLESSED GOD

Salvation

From Birkenhead. —In the Scriptures the word "salvation" sometimes has an everyday meaning which has no connexion with spiritual things. It is used to describe deliverance or escape from hazards such as drowning (Acts 27. 31), and the Gospel-writers used it concerning those who were delivered from their diseases by the Lord's power—" Thy faith hath made thee whole," or " saved thee. " It was suggested that the thought behind the use of the word in the gospel is that man is faced with absolute ruin because of sin and the gospel sets forth how we can be saved.

The plan of salvation is from God. His is the power which makes it possible for men to experience salvation (Romans 1. 15, 16), and today salvation is open to every one that believeth, both Jews and Greeks.

If we commence with the thought of man's ruin, we can trace salvation through its various aspects, until those who are saved are found sharing the glory with their Saviour. "By grace have ye been saved" (Ephesians 2. 8). This is something completed, and which can never be altered or affected by our subsequent conduct. "Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls" (1 Peter 1. 9) is the daily salvation of our lives, which is accomplished by our continuing to walk in faith. We look forward to "a salvation ready to be revealed at the last time." This last is the culmination of our salvation, the redemption of the body.

Philippians 2. 12, 13 brings before us the daily experience of one who has been saved from eternal punishment and yields himself to the power of God to save him from this present evil world: 2 Timothy 2. 10 seems to be linked with this thought, the important words being "with eternal glory." That the elect would obtain salvation was clear, but the apostle desires that his example might encourage others to live lives which would bring to them eternal glory also [1].

It is necessary to examine the context in which the word "salvation" is used, to determine, first of all, whether it has a spiritual application, and, secondly, whether it denotes something eternally secured or something for which the believer should strive, or to which he should look forward.


From Atherton. —The word "salvation" is not always used to indicate eternal salvation, for its employment in the Old Testament has largely to do with that which is temporal and material. Israel as a nation was saved from the power and thraldom of Pharaoh and Egypt. At the Red Sea Moses said, "Stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which He will work for you today" (Exodus 14. 13). This salvation was temporal: it had to do with this life. Yet Israel's salvation is at the same time a type of the eternal salvation known by the believing sinner. God does not save men en masse. They are saved individually. This brings the cross of Christ into full view, for His cross is the focal point of all God's dealings with men. The cross is the one place where God can save a man, and that through the work of His Son—the heaven-sent Saviour. "The Father hath sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world" (1 John 4. 14).

Before the cross, Isaiah declared, "I, even I, am the LORD; and beside Me there is no saviour" (Isaiah 43. 11), and after the cross Peter said, "In none other is there salvation." Human endeavours are unavailing. "By grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, that no man should glory" (Ephesians 2. 8, 9).
The advent of the Lord Jesus, the Saviour, to this scene was marked by the announcement by the angel, "There is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2. 11). Some testimonies to the Saviour character of the Lord are those of Mary, His mother, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour" (Luke 1. 46, 47) [2], of Simeon, "Mine eyes have seen Thy Salvation" (Luke 2. 30), of Zacharias, God "hath raised up a horn of salvation for us" (Luke 1. 69), and of the Samaritans, "We have heard for ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world" (John 4. 42).

We sought to trace the particular aspect of the work of salvation seen in the crosswork, and we suggest that the Saviour's triumph over sin, death and Satan is the principal factor in His saving work: "our Saviour Christ Jesus, who abolished death, and brought life and incorruption to light through the gospel" (2 Timothy 1. 10).

In 1 Peter 1. 9 we read, "receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." When is this experience known? It was suggested that "On whom... yet believing" means believing now, and thus receiving now [3]. Therefore it is a present experience. Another suggestion was made, namely, that the experience is future, to be known when the Lord comes, "At the revelation of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1. 7) [4].

Romans 10. 9 reads, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth." To whom is confession made, to God or to men? Some suggest that the confession is before men, and that Paul has the Jew in mind (Romans 10. 1), public confession being required of the Jew, because of the Jews' national attitude to Christ. It was pointed out that the repentance of the sinner, Jew or Gentile, involves confession to God (Acts 20. 21). Note the calling upon God (Romans 10. 12-14).

G. A. Jones.

EXTRACTS

From Belfast. —God's salvation is a great salvation (Hebrews 2. 3), an eternal salvation (Hebrews 5. 9).

It is vital that we realize that salvation has three aspects—past, present and future, or salvation from the penalty of sin, from the power of sin and from the presence of sin. We obtained salvation from the penalty of sin when we rested faith in the finished work of Christ on the cross. He paid the penalty for us. "The LORD hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53. 6). This salvation is "not of works" on our part, but is the free "gift of God" (Ephesians 2. 8, 9).

Paul tells us to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling (Philippians 2. 12). This is salvation from the power of sin in our daily lives. Then there is salvation which is "nearer to us than when we first believed" (Romans 13. 11). This is salvation from the presence of sin and will take place in the future on that wonderful day that is coming, when we shall meet the One whom not having seen we love. Then we shall be saved from the very presence of sin, and our three-fold salvation will be complete.

This coming day should be often before our hearts. For some it will mean an eternal weight of glory. Others, alas, having spent lives which have yielded nothing for God, will be saved yet so as through fire.

D. Mawkinney.

From Liverpool. —Salvation from the penalty of sin is entirely dependent upon the cross-work of Christ, and is solely by the grace of God
(Ephesians 2. 8), brought to man through the power of the gospel (Romans 1. 16). This aspect is past and complete: it can never be lost, though we can lose the joy of it (Psalm 51. 12).

Salvation from the power of sin is practical and has sanctification in view. The apostle Paul exhorted the Philippian saints to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling (Philippians 2. 12). This does not mean from the penalty of sin, for this is not of works (Ephesians 2. 9). We judge it means to "out-work," i.e., make manifest that which God is working within.

Salvation from the presence of sin is the culmination of our salvation, when the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven (1 Thessalonians 4. 16, 17). With such a blessed hope, "we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for our adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body" (Romans 8. 23).

A. H., M. A. S., J. W., J. S.

From Whitehills and Macduff. —"I say these things, that ye may be saved," said the Lord Jesus (John 5. 34), as He stood amongst men who persecuted Him and sought to kill Him. His words indicated to His audience that through Him should come salvation. The presence of the Lord Himself amongst men showed the love of God to man and the impossibility of salvation coming from another source. God's salvation does not only save from hell and despair; it involves rich blessings, of birth and inheritance beyond telling. Paul was not ashamed of the gospel. God Himself is not ashamed of it either, for it is true to His own gracious character and worthy of the Messiah Himself.

God saves and keeps us till our salvation is complete at the coming of our Lord. We wait for the call which will save us out of this scene, and we now rejoice that our souls are saved and cannot be lost. In respect of our waiting time we have lives to give in service, which, alas, may be lost to our Lord, unless we resist the adversary. Thus may we work out the salvation of our lives, as distinct from the salvation of our souls, which are in His keeping.

T. R.

From Kingston-on-Thames. —Paul said to the Romans that he was not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth (Romans 1. 16). He was a debtor to men, not for what he had received from man, but for what he had received from God; hence he said, "Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel" (1 Corinthians 9. 16).

The Philippian saints were exhorted to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling (Philippians 2. 12). This salvation is not from sin's penalty (which was a past experience), but from sin's power. We all need to be preserved from our past worldly ways cropping up, hence we have an "Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John 2. 1). It is God that worketh in us first to will (to make us willing to be saved from all evils), and then to work for His good pleasure. W. H. Humphris.
From London, S. E. — "The elect" (2 Timothy 2. 10), we suggest are the elect who have not yet been reached by the gospel; this is implied in the words "that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus." Many elect have already obtained salvation. "They also" denotes that there are others who will obtain. Paul's words show divine election and human effort and endurance working together. Fatalism has no place in divine election. Fatalism is of Satan. Election is of God.

The salvation mentioned in 1 Peter 1. 9, 10 has to do with "the end of your faith." This is completed salvation, when saints shall be completely saved from the sorrows, sufferings and sin of this present condition of things, to share the glories of Christ's presence and kingdom.

Philippians 2. 12 refers to salvation from the power of sin, and bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ (2 Corinthians-10. 5). "It is God which worketh in you both to will and to work, for His good pleasure." It is God that works in us, but we must do our part in working to that end, sin's power being brought into subjection in us day by day.

It is high time for the Christian to awake out of sleep to look for the coming of his Master (Romans 13. 11), who is bringing salvation with Him, which salvation is ready to be revealed in the last time (1 Peter 1. 5, 9). Should the Lord find us sleeping then certainly we shall be ashamed at His coming (1 John 2. 28).

G. A. Reeve.

From Edinburgh. — Salvation is once for all in relation to the believing sinner; but, after that one act of faith, he must know a day by day salvation. The day of salvation is always "today," always present, and if he is to live a victorious life, the believer must know salvation daily. What God has wrought in us, we must work out; but, unless we experience the day by day salvation from our sins, we shall be robbed of our portion in working out. We are free from the penalty of sin, we must also be freed from its power, till the day dawn when we shall be free from the presence of sin.

A. M. Hope.

From Toronto. — Today faith in Christ is sufficient for us to experience the power of God unto salvation. For the Jews a confession of the Lordship, or Messiahship, of Jesus was necessary for salvation (Romans 10. 9-13), and it is felt that "confession" in this context involved an oral expression of such Lordship. Although Romans 10. 9 is a scripture which the Spirit has employed in many cases to bring a knowledge of salvation, it seems: clear from the context that the verse relates to Jews.

A difference of mind was expressed as to the meaning of 2 Timothy 2. 10. Some felt that "the elect" here refers to Jews. Paul was continually burdened concerning his compatriots in the flesh, and it was his deep desire that they also should obtain the full salvation of God. But some felt that it would be out of context for the Jew to be seen here, and that "the elect" refers to saints for whose lives the apostle was prepared to endure all things. In other words, the aspect of salvation in view is the continual salvation from the power of sin. A still further view defined "the elect" as unbelievers who, in the inscrutable mind of God, were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1. 4). For such Paul was undoubtedly prepared to endure all things [5].

J. A. Lennox Brown.

From Paisley. — "Salvation" is a term descriptive of the great change that God works in the repentant and believing sinner, in that his sins are forgiven and he is saved from God's wrath.
When God saved us He did not eradicate the old nature. As to our standing in Christ we are perfect; but in our mortal bodies we are imperfect. In resurrection bodies we shall be freed for ever from the power and presence of sin, and then shall serve God with an unsinning heart. G. F.

From Crowborough. —The Scriptures present salvation in three aspects, all having as their basis the death of the Lord Jesus at Calvary: (1) salvation from the penalty of sin, (2) salvation from the power of sin, and (3) salvation from the presence of sin. The Lord Jesus paid the price, and it is ours to accept God's offer and live now and for ever in the enjoyment of it.

We await that soon-coming day when our Saviour will take to Himself those whom He purchased at Calvary. God is taking to Himself one by one His beloved saints now, but then all the redeemed shall be called to be with Him. S. Swift.

From West Hartlepool. —"Salvation is of the LORD." So exclaimed Jonah from the fish's belly, and so also has been the experience of the people of God and of individual saints both in former and present dispensations. God is a Saviour (Isaiah 45. 21; 1 Timothy 2. 3, 4), and the Lord Jesus Christ is a Saviour (Acts 5. 31). "In none other is there salvation" (Acts 4. 12). God's salvation in a past day was experienced by Israel in deliverance from evil and from the power of their foes. In the present day it is known in deliverance from sin and the power of the Adversary. In a future day it will again be revealed when God shall deliver His people from the hand of their enemies.

The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world (1 John 4. 14). He was sent first to Israel (Acts 13. 23; Romans 1. 16) and then to the Gentiles (Acts 13. 47).

We considered 1 Timothy 4. 10, where it would appear that God as Creator saves men in times of special need, as in Psalm 107. 19, but it is only those that believe who know His salvation, whether in regard to the soul or the life. This scripture was also viewed in the light of 1 Timothy 2. 3-6, which shows God as bringing salvation within the reach of all men. J. B.

From Middlesbrough. —In Philippians 2 the saints are exhorted in humility and the fear of the Lord to work out their own salvation. This is a continual experience, a daily death and resurrection. The salvation of which James speaks (2. 14) is the salvation of the life. The extent to which we have given heed to this exhortation will be apparent at the judgment-seat of Christ, when our service will be reviewed.

The final aspect of salvation will take place at the coming of the Lord. When He comes again the changed body of the living in Christ and the resurrection body of the dead in Christ will be like His. The present conflict which now goes on within us will then for ever cease. Derek Goodwin.

From Nottingham. —Queries arising out of the passages under discussion were considered. It is acknowledged that salvation can take place in a person without any external sign, yet Romans 10. 9 states that confession with the mouth is necessary. It was thought that this applied to Jews, who, as a nation, considered Christ to be dead, His body having been stolen. Thus, if a Jew openly declared his belief in the resurrection of Christ, it would establish where he stood in the matter.
During a discussion of the words, "on whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing " (1 Peter 1. 8) a diversity of thought was manifest. In the A. V. " in " replaces " on, " and discussion ensued on the difference between belief in or on Christ. In the Englishman's Greek New Testament the passage is translated " on whom now not looking, but believing. " This would give the impression that it is " looking on " and not " believing on " that is here envisaged.

R. D. Williams.

From Wigan. — Salvation has the thought of safety and soundness. The blessed assurance of it in the heart promotes great joy (Psalm 51. 12, Acts 8. 39). It was announced after the fall (Genesis 3. 15) and prophesied of by Old Testament prophets (Isaiah 49. 6, 53, Acts 13. 27) as also was the ultimate salvation of God's ancient people (Isaiah 52. 7-10, Luke 3. 6).

Salvation is depicted as a Rock (Deuteronomy 32. 15, Psalm 95. 1), a horn (Psalm 18. 2, Luke 1. 69), a tower (2 Samuel 22. 51, R. V. M.), a helmet (Isaiah 59. 17, Ephesians 6. 17), a shield (2 Samuel 22. 36), a lamp (Isaiah 62. 1), a cup (Psalm 116. 13), clothing (2 Chronicles 6. 41, Isaiah 61. 10), wells of water (Isaiah 12. 3), walls and bulwarks (Isaiah 26. 1, 60. 18) and chariots (Habakkuk 3. 8). Salvation, in all its aspects, is the work of Christ, whether it be our common salvation (Jude 3), the salvation for the people of God (Hebrews 2. 3), our deliverance from the penalty of sin (John 3. 16, 17), from its power (Romans 6. 6) and ultimately from its presence (Ephesians 1. 13, 14).

J. Caldwell, H. C.

From Victoria, B. C. — Salvation brings to our minds the thought of escaping from some danger or bondage; to the believer it means the escape from the penal consequence of his guilt as a sinner. The theme of the gospel is that God loved the world and sent His Son to bring salvation even to the guiltiest and vilest sinner, for the scope of the gospel embraces all.

From Ezekiel 18. 4 we learn that a sinning soul will suffer the punishment of death. The wrath of God is the consequence of sin (Romans 3). Judgement is God's work and so also is salvation. In Isaiah 43, God says, " beside Me there is no saviour. "

Salvation is without money and without price: it is the gift of God (Ephesians 2. 8). On man's part there is nothing to do: all was done by the Lord upon the cross, and though He died in weakness, the story of the cross is the power of God (Romans 1. 16).

J. McL., A. McL.

From Cowdenbeath. — Although there are several words, as this series of studies shows, which may be used to describe the experience of the sinner in passing out of death and into life, the word "salvation" is, perhaps, the most frequently used.

The Greek noun soteria, which is translated " salvation, " is derived from the verb sozo which means " to deliver or protect " (Dr. Strong). Both thoughts are associated with salvation. Deliverance conveys the thought of something accomplished, whereas protection would suggest that which is continuous. We are completely delivered by the work of our Saviour, and, because of His power to protect, the salvation of which He is the Author is eternal (Hebrews 5. 9), an eternal salvation with which is associated eternal glory (2 Timothy 2. 10).

It is grace on God's part to provide salvation. The means whereby it reaches men is through the gospel, and it can be received only on the ground of faith. Had salvation been made obtainable by works, then men would have cause to glory. Man is not asked to work for salvation; but, contrariwise,
is wrought upon by God, whose workmanship is not a remodelling of the sinner, but a new creation in Christ Jesus.

Although the words of Paul in 2 Corinthians 6. 2 have been frequently and effectively used to impress upon the sinner the urgency of the matter of deciding for Christ, yet their first application was to the Corinthian saints. The acceptable time and the day of salvation for them was experienced through prayer being made and answered, so that by divine help they should give no occasion of stumbling in anything.

J. Bowman.

COMMENTS

[1] (Birkenhead). —This verse does not deal with Paul's personal example to those already saved. It treats rather of his sufferings and labours in the gospel towards those yet unsaved. See London paper. —J. B.

[2] (Atherton). —The title "Saviour" is not applicable to Christ alone. Even in the New Testament it is applied to God the Father. See, for example, 1 Timothy 1. 1, 2, 3, 4, 10, Titus 1, 3, 2, 10, 3, 4, Jude 25. Is there not the possibility that here it applies to God the Trinity? —J. B.

[3] (Atherton). In no sense is the believer during his life on earth receiving the end of his faith; that receiving is yet future when his life on earth is done.

Confession is with the mouth to men, not to God. —J. M.

[4] (Atherton). —"End" here is telos, as to which Dr. Strong writes, "the point aimed at as a limit,... the conclusion of an act or state,... result,... purpose,..." Whether we take conclusion or result or purpose as the meaning of telos, we are led to the same issue—the complete salvation of the believer. This would make the "not seeing" and the "believing" both present, but the "receiving" would remain future. Nevertheless, faith can anticipate, in the kindness of God, the good things that are in store for us, and we can as a result "rejoice greatly with joy unspeakable and full of glory." —J. B.

[5] (Toronto). —In this issue we have allowed expression of differing opinions on this matter: but we feel we must declare openly that we regard the "eject" as all those chosen in Christ, of whatever race. We grant that the salvation of the Jews was one of the burdens of which the apostle Paul felt the full weight, but the scope of this verse is universal. —J. B.

The third view is the correct one. —J. M.

QUESTION AND ANSWER

Question from Atherton. —Is a sinner, when he believes, saved from the power of sin, or is this a day by day experience?

Answer. —Salvation from the penalty of sin is for the sinner, and is his in present possession from the very moment he believes in Christ (John 5. 24). Salvation from the power of sin is for the child of God, and is a day by day experience (1 John 1. 7). There is the grave possibility of failing to avail ourselves of this saving grace of the Lord by failure to confess our sins. Note the "if" in 1 John 1. 9. Possibly our friends' difficulty has arisen from the fact that they have laid hold firmly on the sound teaching that salvation in all its aspects was wrought by the Lord's one act, His death. We must distinguish between the purchasing of our salvation by the Lord and our entering into it in its different aspects. —J. B.
NOTES ON THE EPISTLE OF JAMES

CHAPTER 4

Verses 11, 12: Speak not one against another, brethren. He that speaketh against a brother, or judgeth his brother, speaketh against the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judgest the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge. One only is the lawgiver and judge, even He who is able to save and to destroy: but who art thou that judgest thy neighbour?

These words are like those of the Lord, in Matthew 7. 1-5, when He said, "Judge not, that ye be not judged." Again He said, "Be ye merciful, even as your Father is merciful. And judge not, and ye shall not be judged: and condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: release, and ye shall be released: give, and it shall be given unto you" (Luke 6. 36-38). It is well to remember the incident of Aaron and Miriam when they spoke against Moses (Numbers 12) in this matter of speaking against brethren. James says that he that speaks against his brother speaks against the law, a very serious matter, and he becomes not a doer of the law, but a judge. Paul said that it was a small matter with him to be judged of man's judgement or "man's day." He who judged him was the Lord, who would give a true judgement, having all the deep secrets of the human heart before Him. Whilst God's people are called to judge under the direction of elders, especially where there is sin in the camp, they are to cease judging one another. "He that despiseth his neighbour is void of wisdom" (Proverbs 11. 12).

Verses 13, 14: Go to now, ye that say, To-day or to-morrow we will go into this city, and spend a year there, and trade, and get gain: whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. What is your life? For ye are a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.

God's wisdom through Solomon gives guidance as to all our plans and projects: "In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths" (Proverbs 3. 6). Both the uncertainty of earthly things, and of life itself, should make us in all things seek the leading of God's good Spirit. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God" (Romans 8. 14). The future of our pilgrimage is in God's hands, not our own. Human life is but a vapour, both in its uncertainty and in its brevity. David said at the end of his remarkable and turbulent life, "Our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is no abiding" (1 Chronicles 29. 15).

Verses 15, 16, 17: For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall both live, and do this or that. But now ye glory in your vauntings: all such glorying is evil. To him therefore that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

They were saying of their own volition that they would go here and there and trade and get gain (and have no losses), instead of seeking the Lord's will in their movements and enterprises. "If the Lord will" is not to be merely a saying with us, but implies a seeking and discerning what the Lord's will is in any of our purposes and movements. If we do not know what His will is, we do well to halt, as did Ezra at the river Ahava (Ezra 8. 21), and to seek of God a right way. To embark on a self-chosen way would be as foolish as for a ship to put to sea without chart or compass. Their boasting and vauntings were evil in the sight of God. Ostentation and pomp have no place with God. If they knew what was good to do and did it not, then it was sin; this is true both to them to whom it was written and to us. It is a very corrective word.
Verses 1, 2, 3: Go to now, ye rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and your silver are rusted; and their rust shall be for a testimony against you, and shall eat your flesh as fire. Ye have laid up your treasure in the last days.

Whilst the words of James may have a general application to the rich as a class, their primary application was to the rich among God's people, whom James addresses. Though it is not an evil for any to be rich among God's people, provided that they are rich in good works (1 Timothy 6. 17, 18), yet there is a danger of loving riches for their own sake. This is an evil and a danger. This was the evil James saw in the rich believers of his time. They were to weep and howl for their miseries were approaching, and would come upon them. How small a displacement of the balance of economic stability would leave many, who are esteemed rich, poor and without means of subsistence! James uses some very potent descriptions of the miseries which he saw coming. He said that their riches were putrified, and moths had destroyed the garments which they had stored. Moths do not eat the clothes that people wear, only those that are laid aside. Rust does not corrupt silver and gold in use. The sin and lust of Pharaoh of Egypt in the past was to have great store cities and to fill them as the result of the tears and sweat of his Israelite slaves. It is this evil, in which some have more than enough and many less than enough, which fills the earth with sin and misery. The whole of the teaching of the Scriptures is against this course, and the Lord told His disciples where to lay up their treasures, where there are neither rust nor moths and where there are no thieves either. The Lord spoke powerfully of profit and loss, in Matthew 16. 24-27: gain in the present, loss in the future; loss in the present, and gain in the future. Gold still glitters in the light of this world and drives some people mad, as it did Balaam of old, and Demas in the present dispensation, not to speak of Judas Iscariot. How paltry was the gain of each! Last days is a bad time to lay up treasures on earth.

Verse 4: Behold, the hire of the labourers who mowed your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth out: and the cries of them that reaped have entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.

Here we have the evil work of the rich of the former verses revealed. Instead of rendering to their servants "that which is just and equal" (Colossians 4. 1), according to the command of Paul, they kept back the labourers' hire by fraud, and what was cast into the treasury of the rich fraudulently cried out against the unlawful possessors. It should have been in the needy hands of the labourers. Though the authorities of those days, perchance, paid little heed to such injustice, the cries of the reapers came into the ears of the Lord of Hosts. He will recompense, if men do not, and well may the unjust rich weep and howl in the light of God's just judgement. God is a God of knowledge, and by Him actions are weighed.

Verses 5, 6: Ye have lived delicately on the earth, and taken your pleasure; ye have nourished your hearts in a day of slaughter. Ye have condemned, ye have killed the righteous one; he doth not resist you.

While others lived lives of semi-starvation by their proper wages being fraudulently kept back, the rich luxuriated in delicate living in pleasure. They nourished their hearts in a day of slaughter, for there are more ways
of killing men than hitting them over the head with a bludgeon. It is not revealed who is referred to as the unresisting righteous one, who was condemned and killed, but the crime is laid by James at the door of the rich. It is not the Lord, Stephen or James, I judge, who is referred to, but some other tragedy connected, perhaps, with the fraudulent dealings of the rich with their workers.

Verses 7, 8: Be patient therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient over it, until it receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord is at hand.

The husbandman here is not the Lord, but he illustrates how the Lord waits, and that we too are to be patient, and to stablish our hearts, for the Lord's coming is at hand. The husbandman waits till the fruit of the earth receives the early rain to cause the seed to sprout and the latter rain to fill the ears of the corn. It has no promise or indication that there will be Pentecostal showers of blessing at the end of the dispensation as there were at the beginning. That is not the subject that is being dealt with in the paragraph. The subject is the longsuffering of saints in view of the soon-coming of the Lord.

Verses 9, 10, 11: Murmur not, brethren, one against another, that ye be not judged: behold, the judge standeth before the doors. Take, brethren, for an example of suffering and of patience, the prophets who spake in the name of the Lord. Behold, we call them blessed which endured: ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord, how that the Lord is full of pity, and merciful.

It may be that in the words, "Murmur not... one against another," which means to groan or sigh, we have a reference to Job and his three friends, who "when they lifted up their eyes afar off, and knew him not, they lifted up their voice, and wept; and they rent every one his mantle, and sprinkled dust upon their heads toward heaven. So they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him: for they saw that his grief was great" (Job 2. 12, 13). Is it any wonder that after such a silence Job opened his mouth and cursed the day in which he was born? (Job 3). Their words were no better than their weeping and silence, of which Job said, "To him that is ready to faint kindness should be shewed from his friend" (Job 6. 14), and later he said, "Miserable comforters are ye all" (Job 16. 2). Job said that were they in his state, "I would strengthen you with my mouth, and the solace of my lips should assuage your grief" (Job 16. 5). They had only one idea and that was to condemn Job for his supposed wickedness which they thought was the cause of his great suffering. Some of the greatest saints have been the greatest sufferers. Suffering is not always to be traced to the sin of the sufferer. This is proved in Job's case. Those who suffer, the Lord pointed out, are not the greatest sinners (Luke 13. 1-5). Let us learn the art of comforting the afflicted. Whilst we have the end of the Lord's dealings with few of His prophets, Moses, David and Elijah being exceptions, and we have none of the end of the Lord's dealings with the apostles, except
James, we have the end of the LORD; that is, the end of the LORD'S dealings -with Job. God gave to him twice as much as he had before, and an equal number of sons and daughters to those upon whom the house fell, proving that the LORD is full of pity and merciful. In Job we have an example of patience in suffering, an example worthy of following.

Verse 12: But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by the heaven, nor by the earth, nor by any other oath: but let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay; that ye fall not under judgement.

The command of the LORD, in Leviticus 19. 12, was, "Ye shall not swear by My name falsely, so that thou profane the name of thy God." There has been difference of mind about swearing, as to Matthew 5. 33-37, and in the verse above; some holding that what was before the Lord and James was men swearing lightly by this and that, and has nothing to do with a person taking the oath before a court or tribunal, or swearing fealty to any king or government. Clearly there was no ban on swearing under the law. The swearing, in Leviticus 19. 12, is in connexion with not stealing or dealing falsely with one another. Then in Numbers 30. 2, when a man swore an oath and bound himself, he was not to break his word, but to do according to what he had said. Again, in Deuteronomy 23. 21, 22, it was sin for any one to vow and not to perform the vow, but if there was no vow it was not sin. The Lord cancels all swearing, as under the law, for His disciples by His word, " Swear not at all. " The Christian's word is his bond, and anything beyond, " Yea, yea; Nay, nay, " is of the evil one. Whilst it may be argued that what is taught in these two passages has no primary application to the taking of the oath in a court of law, etc., yet I am of the opinion that the Lord's words, " Swear not at all, " contain a guiding principle even to an oath in a court of law. We are not to swear lest we fall under judgement in not fully performing what we say. There is in Britain provision whereby a person may affirm instead of taking the oath.


Paul and Silas, in the prison in Philippi with lacerated backs and feet in the stocks, first prayed in their suffering, and later, in the upsurge of spiritual joy, they sang praises to God, and the prisoners were listening to them (Acts 16. 25). If suffering saints pray long and fervently, they too may sing praises. God does not ask praise from a heavy heart, most birds do not sing in the winter; but to the afflicted He can and does give joy. Of the Thessalonians it is said, that they " received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit " (1 Thessalonians 1. 6).

J. M.
"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).

EDITORIAL

As we have considered, month by month, different aspects of the gospel, we have become more and more impressed with the great wealth of the subject. We have already dealt with propitiation, repentance and faith, reconciliation and forgiveness, justification, redemption, and sanctification, and we hope, if the Lord will, to deal with regeneration, eternal life and inheritance. These are all deftly woven into the fabric of the gospel, forming a unity worthy of the Triune God. As we ponder these subjects, we are impressed with the thought that we had but little conception of these great and good things when first we believed. The riches and beauty of the gospel continue to unfold as we tread the disciple way, and we are caused to rejoice in the unsearchable riches of Christ. The many-sidedness of the gospel reminds us that God's mercies, works, wisdom and grace are all described as manifold (Nehemiah 9. 19, 27, Ephesians 3. 10, 1 Peter 4. 10), and the gospel is like all His works, manifold and perfect.

"O LORD, how manifold are Thy works!
In wisdom hast Thou made them all" (Psalm 104. 24). J. B.

NOTES ON THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PETER

CHAPTER 1

Verses 20, 21: Who was foreknown indeed before the foundation of the world, but was manifested at the end of the times for your sake, who through Him are believers in God, which raised Him from the dead, and gave Him glory; so that your faith and hope might be in God.

Christ, the incarnate Son of God, was foreknown before the foundation of the world; saints, who are members of the Church which is His Body, were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world. Note that others, not of this dispensation of grace, had their names written in the book of life from the foundation of the world (Revelation 17. 8, 13. 8; Matthew 25. 34). The mystery of the wisdom of God is Christ who was crucified, who was foreordained before the ages unto our glory (1 Corinthians 2. 7, 8). None of the rulers of this world knew of this hidden wisdom, or they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. He who was foreknown was manifested at the end of the times for our sakes. He was manifested that we might enjoy fellowship with the Father and with the Son and with one another (1 John 1. 1-4), and to take away sins (1 John 3. 5; Hebrews 9. 26), and to destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3. 8). It is through Christ that we are believers in God, not by the visible things of the creation which declare God's eternal power and divinity (Romans 1. 20), nor yet by the fact that He spoke to Moses and Israel out of the midst of blazing Sinai when He gave to them the law, but through the Man Christ Jesus we are believers in God. The words and miracles of His life were proved to
be divine, if proof were needed, by His resurrection from the dead, for God glorified His holy Servant Jesus (Acts 3. 13-15). Through this incarnate, crucified and risen Christ, the believer's faith and hope in God are firmly fixed.

Verse 22: Seeing ye have purified your souls in your obedience to the truth unto unfeigned love of the brethren, love one another from the heart fervently:

Purified (Hagnizo) means "to live like one under a vow of abstinence, as the Nazirites, to purify in a moral sense." Obedience to the truth brings us, not into a state of bondage, but into one of glorious liberty in which the heart is free and the conscience is pure. This purity, resulting from obedience to the truth, has for its object unfeigned love of the brethren. "Unfeigned" means "without hypocrisy," not to appear to be what we are not, for there is nothing so fulsome as insincere love, if such love can exist. We are to love one another from the heart fervently. Though the R. V. leaves out "pure" (with a pure heart, A. V.), and certain textual critics leave out Katharos (pure) from the Greek Text, yet purity of heart is undoubtedly involved in loving with the heart fervently, which means intensely, earnestly.

Verses 23, 24, 25: Having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God, which liveth and abideth. For, All flesh is as grass, And all the glory thereof as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower faileth: But the word of the Lord abideth for ever. And this is the word of good tidings which was preached unto you.

God's elect had been both redeemed by the precious blood of Christ (verse 19), and born again. The new (Another, again, anew, or from above: John 3. 3) birth is by the incorruptible seed of the word of God, which word of God is the word (or saying) of the gospel which was preached. Peter uses the word Anagennao in this verse and verse 3. The preposition Ana signifies "again" in composition, as well as "back" and "up." Gennao means "to beget or generate." In Titus 3. 5 the word rendered regeneration is Palingenesia, Palin, "again," and Genneses, "birth," the noun form of the verb Gennao, so that in effect the different words Paul and Peter use are similar in meaning. Both mean another or a second birth, a birth again. The new birth is of water (the laver or washing with the word: Ephesians 5. 26; Titus 3. 5) and the Spirit ("renewing of the Holy Spirit": Titus 3. 5). See John 3. 3, 5. It is by the incorruptible seed of the living word of God (1 Peter 1. 23); it is by receiving Christ by faith in the gospel which is preached (John 1. 12, 13; 1 John 5. 1); for the new birth never was or could be effected by baptism in, or sprinkling of, literal water, either in the case of adults or infants. That which is born of the flesh (by corruptible seed) is flesh, a thing as corruptible as grass or the flowers of the grass. The life of the flesh of man is longer than that of grass, but the end is the same: it falls back again into the dust whence it came: "Dust thou art, and unto dust shall thou return" (Genesis 3. 19). Thus comes to an end the material part of man (in saying this we are not oblivious of the fact of resurrection), but the soul, the individual, which is created by the breath of God, does not end thus. The soul, the person, which came into being by the breath of God (Genesis 2. 7), needs to hear inspired or God-breathed Scripture which lives and abides, and that for ever. There is life in the word. This is the living message of the gospel which was preached unto those to whom Peter wrote, by which they were begotten again.
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CHAPTER 2

Verses 1, 2: Putting away therefore all wickedness, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as newborn babes, long for the spiritual milk which is without guile, that ye may grow thereby unto salvation;

Here are evils which must be put away if the children of God are to grow. They are harmful evils and were, and still are, the habits of life of the old man, the corrupt nature which is still in our flesh. "Wickedness" (Kakia) signifies "worthlessness, cowardice, malice, malignity." It is derived from Chazo, "to retreat in battle." It describes a cowardly, dastardly action, something done with the object to cause harm to another and often done in a cowardly way. "Guile" (Dolos) means "fraud, deceit, insidious artifice, iniquity." It indicates the action of one who sets out to deceive others. Hypocrisies (Hupokrisis); we know what this means; the Pharisees of old were past-masters at the art of appearing to be what they were not. The Lord called them whitened sepulchres. The hypocrite is one who assumes a feigned character. Envies (Phthonos), this word is derived from Phthind, which means "to decay, pine away." There is usually little envying where there is health, vigour, and forward movement. Those given to envy are such as set out to tear into pieces. Evil speakings (Katalalia), this is "detraction, backbiting, calumny." This describes the tearing of the characters of others to pieces. When two evil speakers get together they tear their victim limb from limb. Peter contemplates those to whom he writes as newborn babes, and as natural babes long for milk, so were these to desire or long for To logikon adolon gala, which literally means, "the mental, without guile, milk." This mental milk is for the spiritual mind of the children of God, as natural milk is for the bodies of babes. This is the milk of the word of God. If this milk is freely and regularly taken there will be growth, "unto salvation." God's children, who follow this course, will be saved from many evils, to which those fall a prey who scarcely ever read the Scriptures and meditate therein. The salvation of the sinner is by one act of faith in Christ, and this salvation is once for all, but salvation by growth is a continuous process and never ceases during the earthly lifetime of the children of God.

Verses 3, 4: If ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious: unto whom, coming, a living Stone, rejected indeed of men, but with God elect, precious, "If" (Ei) means, "because, since"; it is not the "if" of doubt, but the "if" of argument. There was no doubt that those to whom Peter wrote had tasted that the Lord is gracious, for they had been redeemed and born again. It is the same conjunction (Ei) that is used in Colossians 3. 1: "If (Ei) then ye were raised together with Christ." There was no doubt that they had been raised with Christ. But it is quite different in Hebrews 3. 6, where "if" (Ean) means "if, on condition that." It is the "if" of condition, and not the "if" of argument. Those in the house of God would remain there on condition that they held fast. About this there cannot be two opinions, and those who faithfully handle the inspired Scriptures will be careful to follow the mind of the Spirit in each passage. Since those to whom Peter wrote had tasted that the Lord was gracious, they had to come again to Him and to continue coming, not to
a Saviour who would save them from the penalty of sin—that was an accomplished fact—but to Christ, the living Stone, the Stone which the builders rejected (Psalm 118. 22; Matthew 21. 42), the Stone which was and still is rejected by men, but with God He is both elect or chosen of God and precious. Here we have a similar thought, but under a different similitude, to what Paul writes in Hebrews 13. 13, "Let us therefore go forth unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach." Christ is both elected and rejected, elected by God and rejected by men, and we should be like Him in this world.

Verse 5: Ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

Christ is the living Stone, and we also are living stones, but stones do not make a house, unless they are built up according to a pattern. God's house had ever a pattern. Moses was given the pattern of God's house, the tabernacle in the wilderness. "Let them make Me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. According to all that I shew thee, the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the furniture thereof, even so shall ye make it" (Exodus 25. 8, 9). David, too, got the pattern of the house of God which he gave to Solomon (1 Chronicles 28. 11-21). Ezekiel also received the pattern of God's house which he was to show to the house of Israel (Ezekiel 43. 10-12). "Let them measure the pattern," said God through Ezekiel. God's children do well today to measure the pattern of the house of God in the New Testament, and then with the measuring rod of God's word, measure where they are to see whether it agrees with the Scriptures. Let them not hold down the truth in unrighteousness, but let the truth speak to them (Romans 1. 18). "Ye are built up," means "ye are being built up"; it is continuous. It may also be rendered "be ye built"; see A. V. margin. The building of the house of God is a continuous process; a condition of remaining in God's house is, "if we hold fast." In Hebrews 3 the falling-away doctrine is plainly taught, not falling away from Christ as Saviour, which can never take place, but falling away from the living God (verse 12), the God of the house of God (1 Timothy 3.15). God's spiritual house, composed of saints, built together according to the pattern contained in the New Testament, is also a holy priesthood, the purpose of which is to offer up spiritual sacrifices which are acceptable to God through Jesus Christ, the Great Priest (Hebrews 8. 3, 10, 21, 22). God the Father is the Object of worship (Matthew 4. 10; John 4. 23, 24).

Verses 6, 7: Because it is contained in scripture,

Behold I lay in Zion a chief corner Stone, elect, precious:
And he that believeth on Him shall not be put to shame.

For you therefore which believe is the preciousness: but for such as disbelieve,
The Stone which the builders rejected,
The same was made the Head of the corner;

The house of God remains ever a possibility, and the offering of spiritual sacrifices therefrom by a holy priesthood is because of the fact that the Lord is laid in Mount Zion above as the chief corner Stone (Hebrews 12. 22). All the heavenly hosts are under His control; all created heavenly beings are in alignment with Him, as a building is laid out from the corner stone, it is under the rule of line and plummet. Christ is Son and Great Priest over the house of God (Hebrews 3. 6, 10. 21), over
those who acknowledge His authority. He has also all authority on earth, though we see not yet all things subjected to Him (Hebrews 2. 8), but the time will come when He will sit upon earthly Zion, and then judgement will be the line, and righteousness the plummet, and all will be brought into line with His authority (Isaiah 28. 16, 17). But that day for the earth is not yet; it awaits His coming again as the Son of Man. The Stone which the builders (the elders of Israel) rejected has become the Head of the corner in the heavenly Zion, of the edifice of the whole angelic order. And if saints on earth would be right they, too, must obey His word, spoken by the Lord Himself and by Him through His apostles.

"For you therefore which believe is the preciousness. " Believe in Christ as Saviour? No, that is not the truth with which Peter is dealing. He is dealing with Christ, the living corner Stone whom men rejected, and whom God has exalted to His throne on Mount Zion above, to whose authority it is the privilege of saints to be subject, and whose commandments they are privileged to obey, if they would become a house for God to dwell in, and a priesthood to offer to Him. But what of those who disbelieve? Their portion is stated in the next verse.

Verse 8: And, A Stone of stumbling, and a Rock of offence; for they stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.

Here we have the fatal choice of the people of Israel through their elders: "And as soon as it was day, the assembly of the elders (the elderhood of the people was gathered together, both chief priests and scribes; and they led Him away into their council " (Luke 22. 66) (Sanhedrim, the council of seventy elders who sat in Moses' seat, Matthew 23. 2, 3; Numbers 11. 16, 17), and they condemned and rejected the Lord there. He was to the leaders of the nation and all who followed them, a Stone of stumbling and Rock of offence. They stumbled at Him nationally and fell and were broken to pieces (Matthew 21. 44). They stumbled because they were disobedient; they refused to be convinced despite all He said and did. Then we come to the solemn word of divine decision in regard to the Israel nation—" Whereunto also they were appointed. " Paul deals fully with this matter of God's governmental dealings with Israel in Romans 11, in which we see God giving to Israel a spirit of stupor, and their eyes were darkened that they should not see, and so a hardening in part befell Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles should come in (Romans 11. 7-10, 25). Though Israel was appointed to stumble nationally at Christ and fall and be broken to pieces, no individual Jew is appointed to stumble at Christ and fall and become a lost soul in eternity. The message of life is to whomsoever, and it was to the Jew first and also to the Greek. We must distinguish between God's dealings with Israel nationally and with the Jew as a man. Though the nation rejected Christ, yet the door of mercy was ever open to those who repudiated the action of their leaders or to the leaders who repudiated their own action in the crucifixion of the Lord, as many did, in Acts 2. 36-42 and after, for a great company of the priests became obedient to the faith (Acts 6. 7). The wrath of God came upon Israel nationally (1 Thessalonians 2. 14-16). God eventually sent the Romans who destroyed the Jews and burnt Jerusalem (Matthew 22. 7), but this must be distinguished from the rejection of Christ by the individual Jew and the punishment of the Christ-rejector in hell.
Verses 9, 10: But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that ye may shew forth the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light: which in time past were no people, but now are the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

"Race" (Genos) means offspring, progeny, and, in consequence, family, kindred. They were "an elect race." Besides, they were "a royal priesthood." In verse 5 these same people are called "a holy priesthood." It has been taught from the time of Luther that all believers are priests. It is more correct to say that all believers have a birthright to priesthood, but not all believers exercise their birthright. Those who are called priests, in Revelation 1.6, were in the seven churches which were in Asia, and are comprehended within the scope of Peter's first letter, who wrote to those in Asia as well as the other four Roman provinces. Priests of the house of Aaron could not function apart from being in the house of God. Priestly service and God's house cannot be separated, either in the past or present. Blemished sons of Aaron who had permanent defects could not engage in the work of priests in a past dispensation, though they ate the bread of their God. Such could neither come into the sanctuary nor approach to the altar (Leviticus 21.16-24). Again a man of Aaron's seed who was a leper or had a running issue was not even allowed to eat of the holy things. If he did approach to the holy things he was to be cut off from before the LORD (Leviticus 22.3, 4). It is far too undefined a statement to say that every believer is a priest. To be priests, however, is the birthright of believers. In order to exercise this birthright believers must be in the house of God, forming part of the holy and royal priesthood. "A holy nation" shows a people together subject to authority, and obedient to the law which governs the nation, not the law of Moses now, but the law of Christ (1 Corinthians 9.21), which is the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ (James 2.1), which was once for all delivered to the saints (Jude 3).

J. H.

THE GOSPEL OF THE GLORY OF THE BLESSED GOD
Sanctification

From Wigan. —"Sanctification" means "to set apart for a particular purpose" (Exodus 13.2, 12). Of the Lord Jesus it is said, "whom the Father sanctified and sent" (John 10.36), and He said, "For their sakes I sanctify Myself" (John 17.19). He was set apart for the work of redemption, that men might be set apart for God. It is according to the will of God; by which will we have been sanctified (Hebrews 10.10), the basis being the blood of Jesus and the offering up of the body of Jesus once for all. Complete sanctification of those who put faith in Jesus (Acts 26.18) is wrought by God, and they are then set apart from "the rest," the children of wrath (Ephesians 2.3).

"Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself up for it; that He might sanctify it" (Ephesians 5.25-27). Thus He set it apart for His own possession that He might present it unto Himself a glorious Church.

"Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered without the gate" (Hebrews 13.12). He was rejected by those who cried, "Away with this Man." Those who recognize the Lordship of Christ and would be obedient to His word must purge themselves out from these and go forth unto Him bearing His reproach (Hebrews 13.13).
Sanctification of the people of God is associated with the blood of the covenant (Hebrews 10. 29). This sets them apart for obedience. "All that the LORD hath spoken will we do, and be obedient." They are under obligation to keep the terms of the covenant, but some, alas, go back on the word of promise, denying the all-authority of the Son of God, and counting the blood of the covenant an unholy thing (Hebrews 10. 29).

There is also the exhortation to progressive sanctification: "Follow after peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no man shall see the Lord" (Hebrews 12. 14). This calls for the disciples to purge themselves from all uncleanness, and to go in the way of righteousness, "for God called us not for uncleanness, but for sanctification" (1 Thessalonians 4. 7). A life sanctified, a life set apart for God, begins by sanctifying in the heart Christ as Lord (1 Peter 3. 15).

From Middlesbrough.—Sanctification is an important truth in both the Old and New Testaments. It is the setting apart for a purpose of either a person or a thing. Sanctification does not involve a change of nature. This is clear from the fact that the Lord Himself was sanctified and sent. The garments of Aaron did not undergo any change when they were hallowed or sanctified (Exodus 29. 21).

There is a "progressive" as well as a "once for all" aspect of sanctification. Also there is the collective aspect which has to do with the sanctification of God's people. The Lord had more than the salvation of the individual sinner before Him in His endurance of the cross. His death has made possible the sanctification of a people to engage in divine service. The sanctification of the Spirit referred to in 1 Peter 1. 2 would also appear to refer to the collective sanctification of the people of God.

God is holy and He would have His people holy in all manner of living. This is brought about through the continual application of the word of God. The Lord besought His Father in prayer, "Sanctify them in the truth: Thy word is truth." Only therein do we learn to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts. Whereas previously, in the unconverted state, we may have presented our members as "servants to uncleanness," now we are to present them "as servants to righteousness unto sanctification." D. Goodwin.

From Glasgow.—It is interesting to ponder the place and importance of sanctification in our lives. We are sanctified by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 26. 18). We have been saved with a great salvation, cleansed and set apart or sanctified for the Master's use.

"Sanctification "means" to set apart, "but it does not in any way alter the person or thing that is set apart. In 1 Corinthians 7 we have the case of the unbelieving husband being sanctified in the believing wife, and vice versa. In each case we see that sanctification does not alter the unbelieving one. It is because of the believing one that the other is sanctified. We would suggest that the marriage bond may have something to do with it, the both being one.

"For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye abstain from fornication" (1 Thessalonians 4. 3). These are solemn words, for God has cleansed us and the Holy Spirit indwells us, and we are sanctified. It is a very serious thing to be defiled with this sin. There are other things that can defile us and the words of 1 Peter 3. 15, should be taken heed to by believers, for the opening words of the verse are, "But sanctify in your hearts Christ as Lord." If this is
done, it will have a purifying effect on us, for we will not be found doing the things we should not do, or being found in places where we should not be. We should be ever watchful of our ways that we might be well pleasing unto Him who has set us apart for His own will.

In Hebrews 12. 14 we are commanded to " follow after peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no man shall see the Lord. " It must be a real spiritual joy to see the Lord, not with the natural eyes, but by faith. This is worth following after.

We were cleansed when we trusted Christ as Saviour, and we were sanctified. There is no doubt that we become defiled at times. " But of Him (God) are ye in Christ Jesus, who was made unto us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption" (1 Corinthians 1. 30). We shall find everything in Christ to help us on our pathway.

J. H.

EXTRACTS

From Edinburgh. —Sanctification associated with Salvation. When a sinner believes the gospel, he becomes heir to an eternal inheritance, and once for all, he is set apart in Christ. The Lord Jesus gave Himself up for the Church that He might sanctify it (Ephesians 5. 26). Sanctification has its foundation in the work of Christ.

Sanctification associated with Service. When Peter wrote " in sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 1. 2), he had before him sanctification associated with the people of God. It calls for obedience to all that the LORD hath spoken, as is seen in Exodus 24, when Israel were set apart as the people of God. The Lord desires a people for Himself, and to make this possible Christ gave Himself to sanctify the people through His own blood (Hebrews 13. 12). But to us this is conditional, for it depends on our obedience to His Word. To turn our back on the truth which God has shown to us is to count the blood of the covenant (not the blood of the Lamb in Exodus 12, but see Exodus 24), wherewith we were sanctified, an unholy thing (Hebrews 10. 29).

God's word is able to give us a present inheritance among them who are sanctified (Acts 20. 22). This is the sanctification which affects us day by day, and on which fruit-bearing depends. Alex. Hope.

From Macduff and Whitehills. —As foreordination is the marking of men for salvation, sanctification is the setting apart by God of men obedient to the word of the gospel. In the Scriptures things as well as men were sanctified, and while the actual setting apart does not mean a change in them, God has chosen to set them apart that they may be for His pleasure and use. His intention for men is unquestionably that they may be conscious of their sanctification and pursue holiness. The state and blessing of sanctification for men in this dispensation comes through Christ Jesus (1 Corinthians 1. 30), the Son of God who came from heaven to bring rich blessings to men. Faith in Him brings the great change in our fortune and status of an inheritance among them that are sanctified. " He that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified are all of one: for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren " (Hebrews 2. 11), so we have some measure of the setting apart that has taken place, once aliens, now brethren and partakers. A. B. R.
There are two aspects of sanctification: (a) that act of God done once for all when the individual exercises faith in Christ, and (b) that practical sanctification of the believer's life through obedience to the Lord and the truth. When a man accepts the Lord Jesus as Saviour, God sets him apart for Himself. This is the work of God. The second aspect is the responsibility of the believer to sanctify Christ as Lord in the heart (1 Peter 3. 15) and to be obedient to Him. It was suggested that this would be manifest in a believer desiring to be baptized (Romans 6. 4).

The truth is that which sets us apart as our hearts are obedient to Him. Then we should be willingly separated from the world and its pleasures, and from sectarianism. Our lives should be set apart for God and there should be no compromise with the world.

Sanctification of a people for God could only be achieved by the death of Christ. Only through the sacrifice of the Saviour could His sovereign purposes reach the individual. Sanctification of the believer involves election (2 Thessalonians 2. 13) and surrendering (Romans 6. 19). In eternity past God in His inscrutable wisdom chose us. It is now ours by the help of the Holy Spirit to show complete surrender. We ought to be vessels fit for the Master's use. This entails a daily surrendering to the claims of Christ and an unceasing war against the world, the flesh and the devil. Unless we are thus sanctified we cannot see the Lord. It is an elevating and joyful experience to be used in the service of the Master.

Sanctification by Faith. The moment a sinner believes the gospel he is set apart by God in holiness, perfect and complete, sanctified not by meritorious deeds or by the elimination of unholy thoughts and desires, but solely by faith.

Progressive sanctification. God commands that the daily life of the believer should be in keeping with the holy position into which divine grace has brought him. This setting apart in obedience to the truth of God is conditional, and requires exercise and diligence on our part. As it is written, "Like as He which called you is holy, be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living" (1 Peter 1. 15).

Sanctification of a people. In the death of Christ there was more in view than the sanctifying of individual sinners. It is God's desire to have a sanctified people.

As applied to the believer, the word "sanctification" is used with reference both to the eternal holiness, which is his immediately he is born again, and to the holiness which may be seen in him as the result of his separated daily walk. As to the former, we learn from Hebrews 10. 10 that we have been sanctified because Jesus Christ offered Himself up once for all. The latter, practical sanctification, may be ours day by day in measure as we sanctify Christ in our hearts as Lord. The first aspect has to do with what Christ has done for us and the second with what Christ does in us. The first is unconditional, the second conditional.

A sanctified person is called in Scripture a "saint"; but with the spread of the false doctrine of justification by works this word has come to be applied among men to persons who are thought to be exceptionally holy. In the New Testament the redeemed of all ages are sometimes termed saints; and Paul frequently uses the word in his epistles.
From London, S. E. — God speaks of His people both in Old Testament and New Testament days as " saints. " In Psalm 50. 5 God says, " Gather My saints together unto Me," meaning His separated, set apart, or holy people.

Christ is the perfect pattern of the sanctified life. He was given up to doing His Father's will. In Him we learn what sanctification means in its fulness. He was set apart by the Father for the mighty work of redeeming man, " sanctified and sent into the world " (John 10. 36). He was separated unto God and for God, that God might use Him in accomplishing His purposes of love towards and for man. His one thought was to fulfil the work that the Father had given Him to do. The kindness of God characterized all His actions towards men.

There can be no true sanctified life unless it be in obedience to the word of truth. We must learn carefully from the word of God how we ought to behave in our homes, in the assembly and before them that are without.

J. D.

From Ilford. The word " sanctification " means " to set apart," in the same way as sanctuary means " a place set apart." Sanctification issues from salvation: those who are saved by the shed blood are sanctified by faith.

The subject of sanctification can be broadly divided into two main parts, holiness and righteousness, holiness being our attitude towards God and righteousness our manner of conduct before men. We are exhorted, " Like as He which called you is holy, be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living." It affects primarily our attitude Godward and produces holiness with reverence. In connexion with right conduct, it is a question of walking in the paths of righteousness.

There is also sanctification in the truth by the word of God. Divine revelation brings love; love begets obedience; and obedience to the word of God, holiness.

S. J. Jarvis.

From Southport. —In his defence before king Agrippa Paul testified concerning his conversion and also concerning the ministry to which the Lord had appointed him (Acts 26. 16-18). He was to make Christ known so that men might turn from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they might receive remission of sins and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith in Christ.

The Lord prayed, " Sanctify them in the truth: Thy word is truth " (John 17. 17). Here we must not take the word " sanctify " simply in its common meaning of make " holy," for it cannot have that meaning when Christ says, " I sanctify Myself " (John 17. 19). Therefore we must understand it in a sense very common in the Old Testament, that is, to consecrate or set apart.

We have the same thought in Hebrews 10. 10. Our sanctification is accomplished through Christ's accomplishment of the will of God, which He came to do, and He did so by the offering of His body once for all. His incarnation was in order that Christ should suffer death, and so become our Sacrifice.

Thomas Brawn.

From Liverpool. —The words " sanctification " and " holiness " are given in the New Testament as translations of the same Greek word, hagiasmos, and the word for " saint," hagios, is from the same root [1].
In 1 Corinthians 1. 2 the words " to be " are not in the original, and the true meaning here is not that these sanctified ones were called with a view to their becoming saints, but that they were saints by calling. This is clearly seen from 1 Corinthians 1. 30. That this sanctified state should find expression in our life and walk is of the utmost importance.

God desires that those thus set apart should be found together, manifesting collectively the will of God. This is in agreement with the desire of the Lord Jesus expressed in His prayer recorded in John 17.

As a nation Israel was redeemed, then brought out, and a special covenant ratified by blood upon the grounds of pledged obedience. As a people Israel could then function as a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation, their service being in connexion with the tabernacle.

Personal sanctification was provided for in the law, and this had a bearing on service (Hebrews 9. 13, 14), and practical sanctification is dealt with in Ephesians 4. 1-3, 17; 5. 2, 8, 15. These should be seen in us.

We are exhorted to put off the old nature and put on the new man. Men should see Christ in us.

From Toronto, Ont. — Acts 26. 18 and 1 Corinthians 1. 2 present what might be termed " unconditional sanctification," which is the lot of all who are saved by faith in the Lord Jesus. It is closely associated with salvation and describes the translation of the sinner from where he was in Adam into his standing in Christ Jesus. Some were of the opinion that this was only the beginning of experiences in sanctification, many, if not all, of which are definitely conditional. This setting apart for holy service (which is the meaning of the expression) seems to be progressive.

Others felt that sanctification is not progressive, but is a once-for-all experience, and that what is true of those in Acts 26 is equally true of those in Hebrews 10. What is seen in Hebrews 10 is a collective people composed of sanctified individuals, whose obedience to the will of God does not in any way sanctify them further than their faith in the Lord Jesus [2].

S. K. Seath.

From Crowborough. — Under the old covenant the priests, Levites and people were often called upon to sanctify themselves to be fit to approach God and to serve Him. God had declared, " I will be sanctified in them that come nigh Me. " He must be approached and served with due reverence and in separation from all that is not according to His word and will.

We are called upon through the Holy Spirit to sanctify Christ as Lord in our hearts. He must have undisputed authority and reign without a rival there. The saints of God are called upon today to yield their members as servants to righteousness unto sanctification. There must of necessity be the sanctifying of ourselves from the existing confused and corrupt state of Christendom, from the world and its ways, from sin in every form, in order to be vessels unto honour, sanctified and meet for the Master's use, prepared unto every good work.

From West Hartlepool. — It seems clear that the act of being sanctified does not basically alter the character of the person or thing sanctified. The Lord indicated in Matthew 23 that the gold given for use in the Temple was sanctified by the temple, but it was still the same gold. It was gold set apart for a special purpose.

In our daily experience, our being sanctified should find expression in a moral application. Paul contrasts sanctification sharply with un-
cleanness (1 Thessalonians 4. 7). Likewise an out-purging is necessary that we may be vessels unto honour, sanctified and meet for the Master's use (2 Timothy 2. 21).

Reference was made to the words of David in Psalm 4, " the LORD hath set apart him that is godly for Himself. " In Hebrews 12 we are asked to follow after peace and the sanctification without which no man shall see the Lord, that is, see His hand in daily experiences.

1 Peter 1. 2 is almost a parallel scripture with 2 Thessalonians 2. 13 and shows clearly that it is God's will that all saved ones should be both sanctified and obedient, and have always before them the example of the Lord Jesus Christ.

From Atherton. —Although we generally view sanctification under the two headings "conditional" and "unconditional," sanctification is one. The apostle Paul said, " I have been crucified with Christ; and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me. " Christ, who had been made unto Paul sanctification, was living in Paul, and this resulted in Paul being sanctified in experience. This is really the crux of the matter. If Christ lives in us, then we shall know sanctification in our daily lives; that is, we shall be saved from the power of sin. It was true of Paul, and we must conclude it is indeed possible for us to know such wonderful liberty, when sin, which because of Christ living in us, has no more dominion over us, no longer binds us in its dreadful power.

Hebrews 10. 10 indicates the value of the once-for-all sacrifice of Christ, which has secured for us sanctification. Verse 2 suggests that, if a person under the law had been entirely cleansed by his offering, he would have had no more conscience of sins. It is obvious how this agrees with our position in Christ. He has cleansed and sanctified us, and so we have no more conscience of sins. But how does this affect our daily experience? Can we know no more conscience of sins? Is this what Paul meant when he said, "I know nothing against myself" (1 Corinthians 4. 4)?

The query was raised as to whether sanctification in 1 Corinthians 6. 11 was conditional or unconditional. The general thought was that it was unconditional, but some suggested the clause " ye washed yourselves " (R. V. M. Gk.) was conditional, and thought the sanctification here was in contrast to the unholiness described in verses 9, 10.

The expression " are all of one " (Hebrews 2. 11) was also queried. In view of the context we considered that the writer had before him God the Father—all of one Father.

From Nottingham. —It would seem that there is some relationship between the words "consecrate" and "sanctify"; but, while they seem to express similar thoughts, we suggest that consecration is associated with service whereas sanctification has the thought of separation or being set apart, whether viewed from its eternal or temporal aspects.

The word "saint" affords an interesting study in connexion with sanctification. In the Old Testament there seem to be two words translated "saint." One word, found, among other places, in Psalm 50. 5, 116. 15, means "kind or pious," while the other word, for example in Deuteronomy 33. 3; Psalm 89. 7, means "separated or set apart." Both words are used in the Old Testament of the Lord.

In the New Testament there is one word translated "saint," and means "separated, set apart." It is the word from which "sanctification" is taken.
God sets us apart in Christ when we believe and being set-apart ones we are saints. This is not attained by our efforts, or conferred on us by others; it is the work of God. Our day to day sanctification should increase as our life develops. The coming of the Lord should be a sanctifying influence in our lives (1 John 3. 3).

K. J. Holmes, R. Hickling.

From Cowdenbeath. —Sanctification is taught right through Scripture. From Genesis 2 we learn that God blessed the seventh day and sanctified or hallowed it. He set this day apart to be kept holy. In Exodus 13 Jehovah claimed from a redeemed people the first-born of man and beast; these were sanctified unto Jehovah, the sons for service, the beasts for sacrifice. Then in Exodus 19 the priests were called to sanctify themselves, and Mount Sinai was set apart or sanctified unto Jehovah because of His holy presence.

Sanctification of the believer takes place whenever he puts faith in the Lord Jesus: from that moment he is set apart for divine service. All true believers have been taken out from the kingdom of darkness and set apart in Christ Jesus for God's holy purpose. In the outworking of sanctification there is a continual conflict, the carnal and spiritual striving for mastery (Galatians 5. 17). Once we were servants of sin, now we are servants of God (Romans 6. 20-22), and, in view of the tremendous cost involved in securing such a blessing, there should be daily sanctification by the individual, a separating of himself from defilement around and sin within, and a prayerful reading of God's word, in order to learn His will that we may do His will in all things through the power of the Holy Spirit (1 Thessalonians 4. 3). God's will for the believer is that he should follow the pathway of separation, morally and spiritually. Many believers manifest practical sanctification, but fail to discern the truth of a people separated for God.

D. McLelland.

COMMENTS

[1] (Liverpool). —We could wish our friends had dealt with this matter more fully. There are several Greek words rendered "holiness" in the New Testament, but hagiasmos is rendered both as "holiness" and as "sanctification." We recommend an investigation of these words as a helpful study.

J. B.

[2] (Toronto). —We trust our friends will find the contributions in this issue will help resolve their difficulty.

J. B.

[3] (Atherton). —We must be careful to distinguish between that phase of sanctification, in that Christ is the sanctification of every believer, which is not affected by the believer's manner of life (In a word, a saint is not a saint because he is saintly, but, being a saint, he should be saintly in behaviour.), and the sanctified life he should live after being sanctified in Christ Jesus. These are entirely different things.

J. M.

[4] (Atherton). —No! These are entirely different things. Paul, as a servant of Christ, knew nothing against himself in his service, but the Lord, being his Judge, might know something of which Paul was unaware. In the case of Hebrews 10. 2, the worshipper, once cleansed by the blood of Christ, is perfect, and has no more conscience of sins. See Hebrews 10. 22.

J. M.
NOTE ON SANCTIFICATION

Sanctification is viewed in the New Testament in at least three ways (we speak not here of the Lord). (1) There is the sanctification of the believing sinner, in that obeying the call of the gospel he is sanctified in Christ Jesus, Christ being his sanctification as He is his wisdom, righteousness and redemption (1 Corinthians 1. 2, 30). He is sanctified by faith in Christ (Acts 26. 18), and by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ (Hebrews 10. 10, 14). (2) There is also the sanctification of a people by the blood (death) of Christ without the gate (Hebrews 13. 12, 13), and here those who would be set apart have to go forth to Him who is still without the camp, bearing his reproach. In this way the subject and obedient are sanctified, or set apart, in the truth (John 17. 17). It was to this end that the Lord sanctified Himself by suffering without the gate, that His own might be sanctified in the truth. (3) Then each of His own is to live a sanctified life, that is, a life of personal holiness (1 Thessalonians 4. 3, 4; 1 Peter 1. 14-16).

NOTES ON THE EPISTLE OF JAMES
CHAPTER 5

Verses 14, 15: Is any among you sick? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save him that is sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, it shall be forgiven him.

Five things in this passage appear on the surface, (1) the sick man, (2) the church, (3) the elders of the church, (4) the prayer of faith, (5) the anointing with oil. There is one thing that does not appear on first reading, and that is, perhaps, the most important of all, the knowledge of the Lord's will, namely whether it is the Lord's will that this saint should be healed or not. For elders to go and pray over a sick saint and anoint him with oil, professedly in the name of the Lord, not knowing that it is the Lord's will to heal the person, is to act blindly. It is no prayer of faith at all. No wonder many who have acted blindly in their praying and anointing have failed in their supposed curing, and have blandly laid the blame on the sick person; a shameful thing to do. The blame lay with the would-be miracle workers. Shame on those who pretend to carry out James 5. 14, 15, and blame the sick person for their failure. It is such as carry out the praying and anointing who are the failures. It is quite erroneous for any one to say that the healing of James 5. 14 is not miraculous healing. Anointing with oil is twice mentioned in the New Testament, in Mark 6. 13,
and James 5. 14. The first was the work of the twelve apostles, who were sent out by the Lord with power to heal the sick and to cast out demons. "And they went out, and preached that men should repent. And they cast out many devils (demons), and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them." No one can deny that the events recorded in these verses were miracles. The saving or raising up of the sick in James is also miraculous. It is not that the sick man, in James, felt a little better after being anointed and prayed over, and little worse the next day, and better the following, and so on, oscillating between better and worse. It might be that because he has been anointed he adopts auto-suggestion, and seeks to convince himself by saying, "I am getting better and better and better." It has been well said that you may have a miracle, or no miracle, but you cannot have half a miracle. Miracles of healing and casting out of demons were wrought by the Lord, in which He proved to men His Deity, and the Lord's disciples were given power by Him to prove the divine character of their message (John 10. 36-38; 14. 10, 11; 15. 22), and when the Lord returned to heaven the working of miracles continued to prove the truth of the great salvation; "God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders, and by manifold powers, and by gifts (distributions) of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will" (Hebrews 2. 4). Many claim miraculous powers today whose doctrines are unscriptural and Satanic, communities of people whose doctrines differ entirely from one another. Is God who is One and whose doctrine is one, putting His seal on all those who claim to be able to perform cures? It simply cannot be. God cannot deny the unity of His own Being and the unity of His revealed as given in the Scriptures. What church is referred to in James 5. 14? It cannot be the Church which is Christ's Body (Ephesians 1. 22, 23), which the Lord called "My Church" (Matthew 16. 18), against which the gates of hell cannot prevail. That Church never meets and it has no elders. The most of its members are in heaven. The church James mentioned was one of the churches of God (1 Corinthians 1. 2; 11. 16; 1 Thessalonians 2. 14; 2 Thessalonians 1. 4, etc.), of which there were many in the days of the apostles. Miracles were not performed because of the godliness of the apostles, consequently the power to work miracles was not lost through the ungodliness of the men who followed the apostles. Hear the words of Peter, "Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this man? or why fasten ye your eyes on us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made him to walk?" The power which healed the lame man was the power of the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 3. 6, 7, 16). James 5. 14, 15 belongs to a miraculous period at the beginning of this dispensation, and such as mimic the miracles of those days will receive a mimic's reward. Does God hear prayer for the sick? We emphatically believe He does, and He has in our experience healed the sick in answer to prayer. According to the wisdom which God has given us, we use the natural means of healing and seek God's blessing thereupon. Careful nursing has often been richly blessed of God. God has often been pleased to use the simple means used to the recovery of the sick. Even Paul, a great miracle-worker, wrote to Timothy to use a little wine for his stomach's sake and his often infirmities (1 Timothy 5. 23); this was wine used medicinally, as we may use medicinal preparations. Till men are given that knowledge that they know that it is God's will to raise a sick person up, they will be wise to leave the oil bottle at home, when they go to visit the sick and to pray for them. If, in the time of James, sin was the cause of the sickness, then the sin would be forgiven. In this way both soul and body would then be brought into a state of well-being.
Verses 16, 17, 18: Confess therefore your sins one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The supplication of a righteous man availeth much in its working. Elijah was a man of like passions with us, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain; and it rained not on the earth for three years and six months. And he prayed again; and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.

Verse 16 does not teach us that sins, such as in 1 John 1, are to be confessed one to another, the intimate things which occur in the lives of believers which have to do with their communion with God. The sins that have to be confessed to one another are such faults and offences which have been committed by saints between themselves, which have affected communion between themselves, and, in consequence, their communion with God. These should be confessed to one another and prayer made for each other. And where sickness has been in consequence of these sins, through confession and prayer the sick person will be healed. Then we are told of the effectiveness of prayer of a person who is righteous and right with God. Elijah is held up as an example as showing what is meant by the prayer of faith. Could any sincere and righteous Israelite have prayed for God to send no rain on the land, and then again for Him to send rain, and God would have hearkened to him? We judge not. What are we to learn from Elijah’s prayer? It is this, that we must first learn what the will of God is, and then to pray according to His will (1 John 3. 19-22; 4. 14, 15). Elijah the prophet was one who claimed to stand before God (1 Kings 17. 1), but he was not at liberty to pray against Israel, because he thought that they should be punished for their wrong doing (1 Kings 19. 9, 10, 13, 14; Romans 11. 2, 3). His prayers had to be according to the will of God. Hence it was that God revealed to him that there would not be dew or rain for years upon Israel, and he prayed for the fulfilment of God’s word. Then God revealed to him His will as to sending rain at the end of three years and a half of drought, and He again prayed for the fulfilment of God’s word. We see him in prayer on Carmel, bowed down upon the earth, with his face between his knees. The rain came according to the word of the Lord and Elijah’s prayer. It is quite possible by not knowing God’s will that we ask amiss (James 4. 3). Elijah’s prayer was the prayer of faith, prayer as the result of divine revelation, for where there has been no revelation there can be no faith.

Verses 19, 20: My brethren, if any among you do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he which converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall cover a multitude of sins.

It is better to read the passage—" If any among you is seduced from the truth, and one convert him "; this is a most profitable and desirable work. What is said here about recovering the erring is like what is said in 1 John 5. 16: "If any man see his brother sinning a sin not unto death, he shall ask, and God will give him life for them that sin not unto death." If a sinning brother goes on in his way of error, then death, spiritual death, will be the result, but if he is converted by someone then he will be saved from death, and a multitude of sins which would have been committed will be covered or concealed (Kalupto, to hide, conceal, or to prevent, but not to cover in the sense of atone for).
"Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the Scripture's daily, whether these things were so" (Acts 17. 11).

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EDITORIAL

The fact that the translators of our English Bible have offered us different readings for John 3. 3, 7 is significant and would suggest that it is difficult to render exactly the sense of the original Greek and at the same time retain its vigour, clarity, brevity and beauty. The A. V. rendering is "born again," the R. V. text is "born anew," and the R. V. M, gives "born from above." "Again," " anew " and " from above " are all attempts to convey the sense of the Greek word anothan. "Again," " if understood as indicating a simple repetition, is not adequate. As a result, the Lord's teaching was too difficult for Nicodemus, who spoke of a second time, as though a repetition of natural birth should produce a second time the same man. The Lord's teaching was new to him, and he took the Lord's words in a natural sense. His mind was bound to earth while he conversed with Him who came from above.

It may help us if we note that anothan is also rendered " from above " John 3. 31, 19. 11, James 1. 17, 3. 15, 17, " from the beginning " in Acts 26. 5 (A. V.), " from the very first " in Luke 1. 3, Acts 26. 5 (R. V.), " from the top " in Matthew 27. 51, Mark 15. 38, John 19. 23. It would seem that, to understand John 3, we must bear in mind all three translations. To see the kingdom of God, a man must know the second birth, which is from above and makes him a new creation. He is not born again by human generation, but of God. Natural birth begins the natural life; the new birth begins the new and eternal life.

"Born " also calls for attention. The word in the Greek is gennao, which (according to Dr. Strong) is used properly of the father, but by extension may be used of the mother. For various applications of gennao see, for example, Matthew 1. 20, Luke 1. 57, 23. 29, John 16. 21, 18. 37, Galatians 4. 23, 29, Acts 17. 29, 1 John 5. 1, 18, Hebrews 11. 12, 2 Timothy 2. 23. From these it is evident that gennao has a wide range of application. For our present study it is important to note that the new life is imparted by divine generation. That being so, born-again ones should show their new life and its Source by their likeness to Him from whom they received that life.

The notes on James were completed in September issue, and we now commence a further series of Mr. Miller's helpful and welcome notes. This month we issue the first pages of the notes on 1 John. J. B.
NOTES ON THE FIRST EPISODE OF PETER

CHAPTER 2

"A people for God's own possession," or "a peculiar people," this carries one back in thought to Exodus 19. 5, 6, where we hear God saying to Israel at Sinai: "Now therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me from among all peoples:... and ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation." The parallel between 1 Peter 2 and Exodus, chapters 19 and 24, is too close to be denied. The conditions are similar in both cases—obedience to the revealed will of God, for if people are to be together and function together in collective life, then obedience to revealed and collectively accepted conditions are necessary. Upon Israel's acceptance of the conditions of the covenant, God revealed to them His desire to have a house, a dwelling or sanctuary, and to dwell among them (Exodus 25. 1-9), and thus the tabernacle came into being and the service of God in Israel commenced. The purpose of God in a holy priesthood is to offer spiritual sacrifices to God through Jesus Christ (2. 5), and that in the same people as a royal priesthood is to show forth the Lord's excellencies, which are the excellencies of Deity revealed in the Lord's Manhood. "Excellencies" means "virtues." Virtue (Arete) means "goodness of any kind" and here means "transcendence of divine perfections." We have been called, in His effectual calling, out of darkness into His marvellous light. It is marvellous light indeed when we contrast the darkness of unbelief with the light in which the enlightened believer dwells through the Spirit in revealed truths of the Scriptures, which truths form the truth, like the colours of light which together form light. God's New Testament people were once no people, but in wondrous grace, through divine regeneration and the call of God to come out and be separate in order to give effect to His revealed will, God's people came into existence in the days of the apostles, and today a remnant is found together in God's house to do what the churches of God did at the beginning of the dispensation. Such a people knew not the mercy of God once, but now they have obtained mercy. God's remnant today can say as the remnant of old said, "And now for a little moment grace hath been shewed from the LORD our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in His holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving" (Ezra 9. 8).

Verses 11, 12: Beloved, I beseech you as sojourners and pilgrims, to abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; having your behaviour seemly among the Gentiles; that, wherein they speak against you as evil-doers, they may by your good works, which they behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.

"Beseech" may also be rendered "exhort." Believers in this world are only sojourners or temporary residents. It is also true of all men that their day in the world is very temporary compared with the permanence of eternity, but the unbeliever does not acknowledge this, for this world is the only home he has; his portion is in this life. The enlightened believer is travelling on to his home and rest. He is a pilgrim, a person residing in a country not his own. He is exhorted to abstain from fleshly lusts, or desires of the flesh, which war (as an army on a military expedition) against the soul. Their objective is to wound and reduce the believer to enslavement, so that he may become useless to God. By such lusts, if permitted, he is dragged back to the level of ordinary men of the world. In
contrast, his behaviour is to be of such a character, that though men would wish to speak against the believer, his good works cause them to glorify God in the day that He visits them. Visitation (Episkope) means "inspection" and is the word used of the work of an overseer, in 1 Timothy 3. 1. The word may be applied to a time of God visiting men in mercy, as in Luke 19. 44. A day of visitation may also be one of judgement, as in Isaiah 10. 3. The visitation Peter has in mind seems to be one of mercy, wherein men glorify God for the lives of saints which were as shining lights to them.

Verses 13, 14: Be subject to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as sent by him for vengeance on evil-doers and for praise to them that do well.

Subjection is a necessary lesson which God's saints need to learn, especially in the present state of things in the world: (1) subjection to rulers (verse 13); (2) subjection of servants to masters (verse 18); (3) subjection of wives to their own husbands (3. 1). The form of human government is a human institution or creation (Ktisis, creation, see R. V. margin). Perhaps there never was a day when so many diverse forms of human government occupy men's minds: (1) rulers by natural descent, (2) rulers elected by the people, (3) rulers raised up by dominating foreign powers, and (4) autocrats who grasp the reigns of government by destroying the lives of others, or by artifice, or by both. It is not for believers to choose the kind of government they think should exist, but to acknowledge the institution of men as that to which they are to be subject. They must be subject to the supreme head, king or president, and to their governors who are sent to maintain law and order, and to punish evil-doers and to praise well-doers. To these and all forms of human government in whatever land it may be, the believer is to be subject.

Verses 15, 16, 17: For so is the will of God, that by well-doing ye should put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: as free, and not using your freedom for a cloak of wickedness, but as bond-servants of God. Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.

"Well-doing" is the banner and battle-cry of saints. With it they march against the forces of ignorance and all kinds of evil. Through it they are strong, and without it they are as a flock of terror-stricken sheep ready to be devoured by wolves. The will of God was that by well-doing they should silence and put to shame human ignorance. Though freeborn, and delivered from the bondage in which they previously were, yet they were bond-servants of God; and a cloak of wickedness ill-became those in such high service and employment. They were as heaven's gentlemen to be careful of their manners and to honour all men. Courteous behaviour is ever becoming in a Christian. Whilst we are to honour all men, there are those who are nearer to us, and these we are to love; love the brotherhood, all such as were in a unity of brethren. The word is again used in 1 Peter 5. 9, where it is translated brethren, but it should be brotherhood (see R. V. marg.). It shows those who were brethren joined together in unity, similar to priests united in a priesthood (2. 5, 9). They were to fear God, and of the fear of the LORD David said that it "is clean, enduring for ever" (Psalm 19. 9). It is both wisdom (Job 28. 28), and the beginning of wisdom and knowledge (Proverbs 1. 7, 9. 10). The word Honour (Timao) means "to estimate," "to fix a value upon," and in
consequence "to respect, to reverence." This reverence due to the king must ever be regulated by the reverence due to God implied in the fear of God.

Verses 18, 19: Servants, be in subjection to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this is acceptable, if for conscience toward God a man endureth griefs, suffering wrongfully,

"Servants" means household-servants (see R. V. marg.), they were domestic servants who lived in the house, who were probably household slaves. This thought is strengthened by the word in the Greek for "master" (Despotes), the "absolute master or lord" who had unqualified authority, a master of slaves. To such masters Christian household-servants were to be subject, whether the masters were good and gentle or froward (Skolios, "crooked" or "perverse, hard to please, peevish, morose").

To be subject to masters of the latter sort was acceptable (grace, R. V. marg.); it showed what grace could do or bear for conscience towards God, when servants had to suffer wrongfully.

Verse 20: For what glory is it, if, when ye sin, and are buffeted for it, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye shall take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.

There is no glory in suffering for one's own wrong-doing, but there is glory when one suffers for well-doing. If such suffering is taken patiently then such is acceptable or grace with God. The fruits of grace in the lives of saints are well-pleasing to God. How well pleasing this is to God is revealed in the next verse.

Verse 21: For hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that ye should follow His steps:

Christ is the example for all, whether they be suffering servants or other sufferers. Saints are called to a path of suffering in this world. The Lord assured His own that in the world they would have tribulation, but in Him they would have peace. They were to be of good cheer, for He had overcome the world (John 16. 33). He suffered for us; it was because of us that He had all His suffering as Jehovah's Servant, and servants were called upon to follow His steps. They were to be sufferers, following a suffering Leader.

Verses 22, 23: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth: who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously:

John tells us that "in Him is no sin," no original sin such as that in which all mankind is conceived (Psalm 51. 5), and here we are told by Peter that He "did no sin." No guile, fraud or deceit, was found in His mouth. When He was reviled or was railed at, He railed not in return. He did not return word for word or blow for blow. When He suffered He did not threaten His persecutors with dire retribution for their actions. He committed His cause to God who judgeth righteously, as is said, "He is near that justifieth Me" (Isaiah 50. 8). The time will come when His persecutors will stand before Him to hear His just sentence, but that was not in His lifetime on earth.
NOTES ON THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PETER

Verses 24, 25: Who His own self bare our sins in His body upon the tree, that we, having died unto sins, might live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were going astray like sheep; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

Here was the consummating act of God's suffering Servant, when in His own body He bore our sins upon (Epi, upon), not to or up to the tree. The suffering of Christ for sins was once only (1 Peter 3. 18), and that was when He was hanging on the tree. It was then that God laid upon Him the iniquity of us all (Isaiah 53. 6). Peter, without doubt, had Isaiah 53 before His mind when he wrote " by whose stripes (or bruises) ye were healed, " and that " ye were going astray like sheep. " We have now a Divine Shepherd and Overseer to care for our souls, and, like David, we can say, " The Lord is my Shepherd" (Psalm 23. 1), He who is the Good, Great and Chief Shepherd. Christ bore our sins as our Saviour and Substitute, and we in Him have died unto (not for) sins, and now it is ours to live unto righteousness, to the doing of what is right.

CHAPTER 3

Verses 1, 2: In like manner, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, even if any obey not the word, they may without the word be gained by the behaviour of their wives; beholding your chaste behaviour coupled with fear.

" In like manner " casts us back on the matter of the subjection of believers to kings and governors, and of believing servants to their masters. Here it is the subjection of wives to their own husbands. Subjection is one of the necessary lessons Christians need to learn. Christian wives are to seek to gain their husbands who are disobedient to God's word, not by firing scripture texts at them, or reproofing them in other ways, but by their behaviour. In them husbands are to be able to witness the word of God in practice in a chaste manner of life in fear. Not dread, but fear lest anything be done which would destroy the objective they have before them, of gaining or enriching themselves by having their husbands walking in obedience to the Lord, like themselves.

Verses 3, 4: Whose adorning let it not be the outward adorning of plaiting the hair; and of wearing jewels of gold, or of putting on apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptible apparel of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

Here are two ways of adorning: (1) the body, with braided hair, wearing jewels and fine clothes; (2) the hidden man of the heart, with that which is incorruptible, a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. If the heart is right within, then there will be little need for cosmetics and other things for bodily adornment (Greek, " cosmos, " translated adorning, the beautiful display of hair, jewels and the conspicuousness of the latest fashion). The beauty of the hidden man of the heart will give womanly grace which all who see it cannot but admire. Such clothing is heaven's fashion, not according to the fashion centres of earth.
Verses 5, 6: For after this manner aforetime the holy women also, who hoped in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection to their own husbands: as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose children ye now are, if ye do well, and are not put in fear by any terror.

The conduct of holy women is contrasted with that of common women. The latter went in for a great display of bodily adornment, the former were concerned with the beauty of the heart. We have to remember that "the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart" (1 Samuel 16. 7). In fleeing from decking oneself according to the latest fashion model, women need not run to the opposite extreme and become dowdy in their appearance, as though dowdiness would more abundantly show the beauty of the hidden man of the heart. One need not become a spectacle to show this. Dowdiness may equally mar testimony as fashionableness. Christians should so dress, both men and women, that their outward attire may be in keeping with their profession. "In modest apparel " are the fitting words of Paul (1 Timothy 2. 9). Subjection is seen in the words of Sarah in her old age. She still in old age had that reverence for her husband which she had in youth. She said to the angel concerning her husband Abraham, "my lord being old also" (Genesis 18. 12). In such a case wives will not be put in fear by any terror, and married life will be a delight, as God intended it should be.

Verse 7: Ye husbands, in like manner, dwell with your wives according to knowledge, giving honour unto the woman, as unto the weaker vessel, as being also joint-heirs of the grace of life; to the end that your prayers be not hindered.

Husbands have to see that they play their part in the happiness of married life. What an amount of wise dealing is contained in the exhortation—"Dwell with your wives according to knowledge"! In the secrets of married life that only husband and wife are privy to, the husband's knowledge of his wife, who is the physically weaker partner, or generally so, of the union, plays a large part. If he acts according to his knowledge, he will be a wise man and will pave the way to his own happiness as well as that of his wife and of his family, if they are blessed with a family. It is abominable if Christians follow the ways of the world. The husband is to give honour to the wife as unto the weaker vessel. He is the head and chief partner to the union and much depends upon him. The English word husband is an abbreviation of "house-band," the one who binds the house together. Husband and wife are joint-heirs of the grace of life. This is a peculiar statement not found elsewhere in the Scripture. It is evident that Peter views marriage here as much more than the physical union of male and female, in that they become one flesh. The word here is not Bios, which means the present state of existence, but Zoe, the word always used in the Scriptures where reference is made to eternal life, that is, to the higher life. That the "grace of life" is the higher spiritual life is indicated by the words which follow, "that your prayers be not hindered." The behaviour of the husband and wife is to be such that communion between themselves in spiritual things is not broken, and, in consequence, communion with God hindered. It is a calamity in the home of Christians when the Bible is not opened and read and when joint prayer ceases.
Verses 8, 9: Finally, be ye all likeminded, compassionate, loving as brethren, tenderhearted, humbleminded: not rendering evil for evil, or reviling for reviling; but contrariwise blessing; for hereunto were ye called, that ye should inherit a blessing.

It is of the greatest importance that saints together in the house of God should be of the same mind, not only in doctrine, but in their disposition or attitude to each other, "thinking, feeling, and acting alike," "compassionate," "that is, sympathetic," "loving as brethren, tenderhearted, humbleminded." No exposition is needed of such excellent words of exhortation; their meaning is evident. If believers were in such a condition, how smoothly collective life would flow! There is to be no rendering of evil for evil, nor reviling for reviling. The Lord is to be our example in this, for when He was reviled, He reviled not again. The Christian instead of being a reviler or raider should be one whose words are a blessing, they should "give grace to them that hear" (Ephesians 4. 29). Paul said, "Bless them that persecute you; bless, and curse not" (Romans 12. 14). If they bless, then they will themselves inherit a blessing. The words which form their title to this inheritance of blessing are clear.

J. M.

THE GOSPEL OF THE GLORY OF THE BLESSED GOD.

Regeneration

From West Hartlepool.—The occurrences of the word "regeneration" in the Scriptures are instructive. One has to do with this present dispensation of grace (Titus 3. 5), and the other with the day of the Lord (Matthew 19. 28).

We may profitably ask, "What is involved in regeneration?" Help may be gleaned from a consideration of the creative work of God (Genesis 1). Not until the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the deep was the word of God heard, which led to the rebirth (if we may so use the term) of the earth. It was upon the regenerated earth that God displayed (and continues to display) His handiwork. What is true of the natural is true also of the spiritual.

The use of palingenesia in Titus 3. 5 is associated with the salvation of the soul. The word is a compound of two: palin, again, and genesis, birth (Vine). We therefore connect regeneration with the new birth (John 3. 3). The work of the Holy Spirit and the effect of the word of God are seen together when a sinner is born anew, or regenerated. Men receive Christ by receiving His word (John 1. 12; 15. 3), and are thereby cleansed or washed; and that for eternity. It is abundantly clear therefore that the laver of regeneration is the word of God. This word, which is spiritual in essence, begets spiritual seed (James 1. 18), as opposed to the natural. We have been begotten again through the incorruptible seed of the word of God. This word is life-giving and eternal (1 Peter 1. 23-25). The blessed Spirit of God uses the word of God in His work of convicting sinners, and only by His strivings can men receive Christ through that word which He may choose to use.

Thus in association with the laver of regeneration we have the renewing activities of the spirit of God (Titus 3. 5). Vine, commenting on "the renewing of the Holy Spirit," says that it is "not a fresh bestowment of the Spirit, but a revival of His power, developing the Christian life; this passage
stresses the continued operation of the indwelling Spirit of God " [1]. We are inclined to disagree with this observation, as the word anakainesis carries the thought of renovation, and refers to the thorough renewal of the individual when he is born from above. This is in keeping with 2 Corinthians 5. 17.

R. Ross.

From Southport. —By the word " regeneration " we mean rebirth or being born anew (John 3. 3). The new birth is an event that is not observable, although we can see evidences that it has taken place. The Lord likens its occurrence to the wind, which we cannot see but which we can hear. It pleases God that this rebirth should take place when an individual receives His Son (age limits have not been defined): those reborn become children of God (John 1. 11-13).

The means by which rebirth is wrought is defined by the Lord as " of water and the Spirit " (John 3. 5). Peter makes it clear that this is not natural water, but the word of God, which, he says, is incorruptible seed in contrast to the corruptible seed of mankind.

Regeneration is God's work; but it is expected that born-again ones will testify to their having believed in God, which act of belief is not merely the assent of the mind, but a deep heart-response and acknowledgment of the resurrected Christ as Saviour and Lord. Paul expresses both aspects thus: " with the heart man believeth " and " with the mouth confession is made. " A saved person is a new creature (2 Corinthians 5. 7), begotten of God (1 John 3. 9).

L. Jones.

EXTRACTS

From Cowdenbeath. —In the Revised Version the word " received " occurs in verse 11 and also in verse 12 of John 1, but the original words are slightly different. The word in verse 12 is lambano, and in verse 11 paralambano. The latter means " to receive near, " that is, " associate with " (Dr. Strong). The word paralambano occurs some five times in the New Testament writings; Mark 7. 4 is one of the occurrences. The Jews were willing to accept and adhere closely to the traditions of the elders, but refused to be closely associated with Christ. Individuals who were willing to lay hold on Him were given the right to become children of God.

In His conversation with Nicodemus (John 3. 1-8) the Lord shed further light on the subject of regeneration or rebirth. When Nicodemus claimed to have certain knowledge, the Lord pointed out that there are certain things which cannot be seen or understood by an unregenerate man. It is the same word eido which is rendered " know " in verse 2 and " see " in verse 3. The new birth is a necessary pre-requisite to seeing and entering the kingdom of God, but all born again persons are not in the kingdom. The profound mystery of the new birth baffled the mind of Nicodemus. The new birth is from above; it is accomplished through the word of God and the Holy Spirit. (In John 3. 5 water is used as a figure of the word of God. See also Titus 3. 5, Ephesians 5. 26).

While we cannot see the inward change taking place, there are characteristics which should be seen in the born-again person which prove that he is now in Christ, and a new creature. The child of God who loves God his Father will also have love in his heart for other children of God. This is a sure test of our love for God. It is impossible for us to love God and hate our brother.

J. K. D. Johnston.
From Paisley. —The word "regeneration" conveys the thought of rebirth, and denotes the imparting of the new life to the spiritually dead sinner. Adam and Eve through sin forfeited their place of service and privilege; and before a man can be restored to the place of acceptance he must needs be born again, i.e., experience spiritual rebirth in contrast to natural birth.

A difference of opinion was expressed as to which part of the man's being was regenerated; some considered that the spirit was affected, others the soul, and others a completely new creature implanted. Regeneration should result in a changed outlook on life, new motives and ideals in place of those of our unregenerate days [2].

G. Farquhar.

From Melbourne. —Satan has produced a counterfeit of regeneration in "baptismal regeneration," thus causing multitudes to believe the unscriptural and false teaching that baptism or infant-sprinkling makes one a child of God. Galatians 3. 26 makes it clear how men become sons of God, through faith in Christ Jesus. "Belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." The sinner hears the word of the gospel, believes it, as led by the Holy Spirit, who convicts of sin, righteousness and judgement, and this results in the salvation of the soul, which is the new birth.

Children of God need to feed the new life by the reading of the Scriptures. Daily reading of the word of God is essential for believers: otherwise the child of God will not grow spiritually.

P. W. A.

From Macduff and Whitehills. —Regeneration is not reformation, nor a change of mind, nor is it from the will of men. God Himself has made a new beginning for men. To receive Him who was refused by His own is to become one of God's children. There is no happier state than to be born into God's family. This new birth is of God, by the incorruptible seed of the word of God, not of the flesh but of the Spirit. Balaam said of Israel, "He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath He seen perverseness in Israel" (Numbers 23. 21), and God, having bestowed new life to His child will no longer deal with him as a sinner at the Great White Throne, but gives him the assurance now that, no matter what may happen, heaven is sure for him. He would be a heart-breaking child, however, who would not seek to honour his Father, treasuring the new birth and its blessings.

A. B. R.

From Edinburgh. —Regeneration takes place at the new birth. One act of faith in Christ brings new life to the dead sinner. At that moment, whether he realizes it or not, he is born of God (1 John 5. 1), born of the incorruptible seed (1 Peter 1. 23), born anew (John 3. 3), not of the will of man nor of the flesh (John 1. 13). He becomes a child of God, a new creature (creation) "in Christ" (2 Corinthians 5. 17), and as such he cannot sin (1 John 3. 9, 10), because he is born of God. This does not mean that we are altogether perfect. Far from it! Our old man is ever with us, and when we fail to mortify the flesh we sin and therefore need forgiveness.

Love to God should be the outcome of birth from God, and this leads to love for others born of God. We are members one of another (Romans 12. 4). Those who receive the new birth should as newborn babes long for the spiritual milk (1 Peter 2. 2).

W. Muirhead.
From Wigan. —The new birth is not a natural birth: " that which is born of the flesh is flesh. " It is a spiritual birth; " that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (John 3. 6).

Our sinner nature was judged in the death of Christ, and was crucified with Christ (Galatians 2. 20). We are dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus, and should no longer be in bondage to sin (Romans 6. 6). We are brought unto victory, and should show ourselves renewed in the spirit of our mind, and "put on the new man, which after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth" (Ephesians 4. 23, 24). The manifestation of the new man should be seen in our lives, for we should be transformed by the renewing of our mind (Romans 12. 2).

From Belfast. —The subject of regeneration is clearly stated, in the New Testament, but glimpses of this truth can be seen in the lives of Old Testament saints. The new birth comes from God to man, and the new nature cannot sin. The flesh makes continual war against the new nature which indwells the believer. The apostle Paul felt this when he wrote in Galatians, " The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, " and in Romans he explains it more graphically and in greater detail. " The mind of the flesh is death; but the mind of the spirit is life and peace " (Romans 8. 6). In Romans 7 he writes, " For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see a different law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity under the law of sin which is in my members. O, wretched man that I am !... So then I myself with the mind serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin. " Thus the apostle reveals the battle that rages within, and shows also the dual nature which every believer has. The flesh cannot change, and neither can the indwelling Holy Spirit. Whilst the great truth of regeneration is associated with believers, it can also be seen typified in the creation of the heaven and the earth (Genesis 1). There is a day coming when there will be a new heaven and a new earth, and all things will be made new. The creation will experience it, when the Lord sets up His millennial kingdom, which is referred to in the Gospels as the regeneration. We shall be with Him then, and be like Him, for we shall see Him even as He is.

From Toronto, Ont. —Regeneration is essentially the work of the Holy Spirit (John 3. 6). Dr. Young renders this word " a re-creation, " but unless we follow the analogy in this comparison, this could well prove misleading. We likened it in some respects to resurrection in that there must be a first creation before there could be a new creation. This new creature (creation) is effected in soul, but not in body; it is not something visible to the natural eye, but the evidence can be seen in our renewed walk. We are born of the Spirit, and the word. John 1. 11-13 shows conclusively that the term " born of water " is not baptism in water (as many hold), making such a requisite for salvation. Scripture would substantiate in this divine begetting that the water of John 3 is the figure used by the Lord to portray to the learned Nicodemus the word of God, the Scriptures, of which Nicodemus was a reputed teacher in Israel.

2 Corinthians 5. 17 brings before us the state of the believer as a result of regeneration. We ask the question, " Have the old things passed away ? " We felt that these old things were attached to the old Adamic nature and are still present with us, as see 1 John 2. 15-17, but in respect to the new man, the new creation, they are passed away [3],

P. H.

E. C. Coyne.

N. K.
From Atherton. —The cross of Christ is the foundational basis of divine regeneration, which begins there, even as the Lord made unmistakably plain to Nicodemus (John 3). The Son of Man is seen as the One lifted up (verse 14), as the One given by God (verse 16), and as the One sent by God (verse 17). Thus the work of God in regeneration is effected by the work of the Saviour. In Titus 3. 4-6 we see the combined operation of the word of God and the Spirit of God, the washing (or laver, R. V. M.) of regeneration. The washing of water (or laver) is through the word (Ephesians 5. 26).

Here we observe an Old Testament figure in that Moses was commanded to wash (or bathe) Aaron and his sons, a complete washing never repeated by Moses, and so to be viewed as a once-for-all act (Exodus 29. 4). The Holy Spirit is doubtless the divine agency, the new-creating power in regeneration (John 3. 6, 8).

Regeneration brings relationship. The regenerated one is a child of God, and God is his Father (John 1. 12, 1 John 3. 1). He is "in Christ" (2 Corinthians 5. 17); being born from above (John 3. 7, R. V. M.) he becomes a heavenly citizen (Philippians 3. 20).

Human and divine relationships are sometimes compared, but one notable difference must be observed. Human relationship ceases with this life, whereas divine relationship is abiding and eternal. The new life, springing from the new birth, is eternal life.

G. A. Jones.

From Birkenhead. —The source of all life is God (John 1. 4). By our natural birth life has come to us through Adam, to whom God gave life when He created him. If we are to have a new life this must also come from God. Believers are said to be new creatures in Christ, born of the Spirit, children of God. This aspect of salvation, the new birth, emphasizes the eternal nature of our salvation. The new birth is not a process, but an event which takes place once and has an eternal effect.

There is no visible outward change in the body, but when regeneration has taken place the Holy Spirit can guide and instruct the regenerated man: the natural man cannot be so guided. This led to a suggestion that it is the mind of the man which is born again. It was pointed out, however, that the regenerated man is described as a new creature, and we should not attempt to limit or define the new birth in any way. The man himself is born again and this truth must be accepted in the light of the Lord's words to Nicodemus: "So is every one that is born of the Spirit."

John's first epistle shows how the regenerated man must live in a body where the natural man is still active, so that we get such apparently contradictory statements as, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves" (1 John 1. 8), "if any man sin" (1 John 2. 1), and "whosoever is begotten of God sinneth not" (1 John 5. 18). The new man responds to the Spirit of God, but the old man tends to walk in the natural way which is contrary to the Spirit. God expects the fact of the new birth to be manifested in our control of the old man by yielding to the Holy Spirit.


From Glasgow. —The saying of the Lord, "Ye must be born anew," is at once simple and profound, provoking thought as to the need for a new birth. To Nicodemus it must have come as a shock that he required a new birth, without which he could not see the kingdom of God. Paul wrote to the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 15. 50), "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God," and to the Romans (Romans 8. 8), "They that are in the flesh cannot please God." One can only deduce from such scriptures
that original sin, passed on from generation to generation, unfit man for divine service, because of its defiling influence. See Matthew 15. 10-20. In Psalm 51 David, in the day of his great sin, attributed the origin of his sin to his birth. This was not an aspersion on his parents, but a realization of the serious continuing effect of Adam’s sin on the human race.

The New Testament doctrine of the new birth is clearly linked with belief in Christ, and the life of which the believer becomes a partaker is described as eternal life (John 6. 47), which is a free gift by God to all believers (Romans 6. 23). The power of sin is replaced by the power of the Spirit. The person is no longer motivated only by the will of the flesh, but is indwelt by the Holy Spirit, who may, alas, be resisted or quenched. Paul wrote in Romans 8. 2, "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and of death."

We see, then, that a person who believes in Christ becomes regenerated, having implanted in him a new life, eternal life, in which it is his opportunity to live and his privilege to serve God.

J. J. P.

Sanctification

From Victoria, B. C. —The word "sanctification" means "to set apart" as holy, or, as some suggest, for holy uses. In Hebrews we see it associated with the blood of the covenant. In Hebrews 10 we are seen as perfected for ever through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ.

The believer should follow after sanctification. Being in a relationship with God where acceptable service is recognized by God, the saint is exhorted to have fruit unto sanctification (Romans 6. 22). The call of God is not to sin and self-will, but that His people might give expression to that which pleases Him, a life of denying self and seeking after righteousness. We are called in sanctification (1 Thessalonians 4. 7). J. McLeman, A. McLeman.

COMMENTS

[1] (West Hartlepool). —If the quotation from Mr. Vine is correctly given (I have not got his work), Mr. Vine is quite wrong in his view, in my opinion. What Paul is saying here deals with the regeneration of the sinner. The washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit are presentations of the same act. What follows emphasizes this, "which He poured out (execheen, which is aorist, showing that it is a single act in the past, and that it is not something present continuous, as Mr. Vine makes out) richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour. " We therefore agree with West Hartlepool’s view. J. M.

[2] (Paisley). —It is the man himself who is regenerated, not a part of him. J. M.

[3] (Toronto). —The person who is a new creation in Christ has by that act of God passed into a new relationship both toward God and men, and in consequence all things have become new. He cannot now (or ought not to) seek to live in this world among men as he did in the past. If he does, then the new life which has been imparted to him will be choked at birth, and he will become a passive object amongst the driftwood in the sea of time. The believer has a new life, he has the Spirit, and Christ is in him the Hope of glory, and henceforth he is to live in a manner glorifying to God. J. M.
NOTES ON THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN

CHAPTER 1

Verse 1: That which was from the beginning, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our eyes, that which we beheld, and our hands handled, concerning the Word of life

Here we have the neuter relative pronoun which is rendered "that which." In John 1. 1, John writes of the Word who was in being in the beginning, before all things were made, who was with (Pros, toward) God, in perfect communion and intercourse with God, and that He was God, truly and fully God in essence, nature and attributes, for "the Word was God." By Him all things were made. But in this epistle John writes of that which was from the beginning concerning the Word of life. That which was from the beginning was in due time heard, seen, beheld and handled. In John 1. 1, John writes of the Word "who" was in the beginning, but in this epistle he writes of "that which" was from the beginning concerning the Word. The Word was the One by whom Deity was revealed, and there was that which men on earth heard of Him. In due time men saw with their eyes those things about Him which became indelibly impressed upon them, so that they said, "We cannot but speak the things which we saw and heard" (Acts 4. 20). He was not only seen with the eyes, but the apostles and others beheld, that is, viewed with attention, gazed upon, that which was revealed in the incarnate Word. Then as He came still closer to them, they could say that their hands handled the Word who had become flesh. From the remoteness of the beginning the Word of life came ever nearer and nearer to men, and when raised from the dead, in order that they might be fully convinced that He was still in the flesh, He said, "Handle Me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye behold Me having" (Luke 24. 39). In this place also it says that "He shewed them His hands and His feet" (verse 40), the very hands and feet that bore the wounds of the nails by which He was hanged to the cross.

Verse 2: (And the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare unto you the life, the eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us);

When the Life was manifested or brought to light, the apostles could say, "We have seen, and bear witness, and declare unto you the Life, the eternal, which was with the Father." Quite evidently the Life is not an abstract thing, but a blessed Person. We gather this from 5. 20, where reference is made to God's Son, Jesus Christ; "This is the true God, and eternal life." Eternal life is in the Son, consequently, "He that hath the Son hath the life" (5. 12). And, as Paul says, "The free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6. 23). Christ is our life. "When Christ, who is our life, shall be manifested, then shall ye also with Him be manifested in glory" (Colossians 3. 4). Whilst the Gospel according to John was written that "ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in His name" (John 20. 31), the first epistle of John was written to teach believers how to live the life that they had obtained through faith in Christ. If the apostles were to know the character of this new life that they might be able to live it and teach it to others, it was necessary that the Life should be manifested. The apostles
who lived with and followed the Lord saw the manifestation of the life in Him. They saw how He lived and walked amongst men, how He talked and acted. The lives of the disciples were such that they were called Christians (Acts 11. 26); they were Christ-like people. They lived like Him. Paul, who was one of the chief teachers in Antioch, where the disciples were first called Christians, later wrote to the Corinthians, "Be ye imitators of me, even as I also am of Christ " (1 Corinthians 11. 1). The apostles, being men of like passions with us, had the old Adamic nature in their flesh, and they needed to have demonstrated to them in the life of the Lord how they were to live to please God. Paul often emphasizes his manner of life in connexion with his preaching of the gospel: "Ye know what manner of men we shewed ourselves toward you for your sake. And ye became imitators of us, and of the Lord " (1 Thessalonians 1. 5, 6). In John's Gospel it is the gift of life, and in this epistle it is how to live that life. Many vainly seek to live the life of a Christian without having obtained life, being yet dead in their trespasses and sins.

Verses 3, 4: That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you also, that ye also may have fellowship with us: yea, and our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ: and these things we write, that our joy may be fulfilled.

The object in the manifestation of the Life is fellowship, first, fellowship with the Father and with the Son, in that fellowship which is produced by the power of the indwelling Spirit of God (2 Corinthians 13. 14; Philippians 2. 1). Then, as the result of each walking in the light of God, fellowship with one another (verse 7). Not only does life issue from the Lord, He is also the Light that came into the world; He is the one and only Light of this world. " In Him was life; and the life was the light of men " (John 1. 4). " There was the true Light... coming into the world, " and His purpose in coming was to lighten every man. We first need life to enable us to walk, and we need light to teach us how to walk, even to follow the Lord. No one can possibly walk who has not first received life. Fellowship here is fellowship with (Meta, together with), not that fellowship or community into which those in the church of God in Corinth and all similar churches were called, which latter is synonymous with that fellowship in which those in the church of God in Jerusalem continued steadfastly (Acts 2. 42; 1 Corinthians 1. 9). Fellowship means a sharing in common. It began with the Father and the Son sharing with the apostles the spiritual things of the New Testament. These things the apostles shared with others in their oral ministry and by their inspired writings in the books of the New Testament. These Scriptures are the basis of divine fellowship. John wrote this epistle to promote fellowship and in it he also shows what will hinder fellowship and cause it to cease altogether. John tells of the joy he had in writing his epistle; he says, " that our joy may be fulfilled."

Verses 5, 6: And this is the message which we have heard from Him, and announce unto you, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in the darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:

All man's works are evil in God's sight. " There is none that doeth good, no, not so much as one " (Romans 3. 12). Hence it is, " This is the judgement, that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness
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rather than the light, for their works were evil " (John 3. 19). Even in those who have been turned from darkness to light (Acts 26. 18), there is much of darkness as to the knowledge of God and of His will, but in God, who is light, there is no darkness at all. This is the message which the Lord taught His apostles. The gods of the heathen bear no resemblance to Him, for they have eyes and see not, and ears but they hear not, and a mouth but they cannot speak, and, alas, they that make and serve them become like unto them. But in contrast, those that know their God, and walk in fellowship with Him, take on His likeness. If we should say that we have fellowship with Him and walk in the darkness, we lie and do not the truth. It would be a contradiction in terms, if we said we walked with One who is light and walked in darkness at the same time. To walk in the light means that we walk according to His word. The word of God is the only source of light to men in this world, and apart from it the darkness is dense and complete. Walk signifies the behaviour or deportment of anyone. We manifest the inward condition of our hearts by our walk. Fellowship being an inward experience of the heart in touch with God, so we may measure inward condition by outward behaviour.

Verse 7: But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanseth us from all sin.

Man originally lived in fellowship with the LORD God his Creator, but when he disobeyed the command of God and sin entered, death spiritually resulted and fellowship ceased. The Lord came that we might have life, and have it abundantly (John 10. 10). This opened the way that those who have this new life in Him should so walk that they might know the experience of Eden again. The standard is that we are to walk in the light as He is in the light, a high standard indeed, but God can only have one standard. If each one so walks, then we have fellowship with one another. Fellowship is not politeness nor is it friendliness; it cannot be manufactured. It is the result of the Lord's coming from heaven and teaching the truth of God, and if the children of God walk in the light of that truth then they will have fellowship with one another. Remember that as in Eden the breaking of God's command resulted in the destruction of fellowship, even so it will be now. It is this matter of disobedience that has resulted in the scattering of God's children and the ceasing of fellowship. Those who walk in God's light find out their many defects, and realize their need of cleansing. Hence we have available the one and only cleanser from sin, even the blood of Jesus, God's Son. It is the same blood-shedding that cleansed the believing sinner on the day of his salvation, but here it is not the cleansing of the believing sinner, but the cleansing of God's children. In 1 John 1 it is not the matter of union with Christ that is in view, but that of communion with Him.

Verses 8, 9, 10: If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.

It is needful that the believer should know something of his own complex person. On the one hand he is not free from sin, and cannot say that he has not sinned; if he should say so, then the truth is not in him and he is a liar.
On the other hand, "whosoever is begotten of God doeth no sin, because His seed abideth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is begotten of God" (1 John 3. 9). Here would seem to be at first sight a head-on collision between two statements of Scripture by the same writer, if it were not for the fact that we know that there is still the old man or nature in the flesh of the believer, as Paul says, "For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing" (Romans 7. 18), and that there is also in him "the new man, which after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth" (Ephesians 4. 24). Judicially our old man was crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be done away or annulled [Romans 6. 6; the same word rendered "done away" (R. V.) here, used of the devil in Hebrews 2. 14, Katargeo does not mean to destroy in the sense of annihilate, but to render ineffective or unproductive]. The believer has sin in him, that is in his flesh, and John says that if the child of God should say that he has not sinned he makes God a liar, a very serious thing to do, and His Word is not in him. Confessing sins is the responsibility of the child of God. The sinner is not forgiven on the ground that he confesses his sins to God, far less is he forgiven if he confesses his sins to a priest. No mortal man, whoever he may be, in whatever office of any church he may be, can forgive one sin or make atonement by any mass or prayer he may make. The forgiveness of sins by man is a hoax, plied with the devilish arts of the evil one on credulous people who from their childhood are easily deceived. The forgiveness of the sinner is on the ground of faith in the Sín-Bearer. The words of Peter to Cornelius and his household make the matter of forgiveness crystal clear: "To Him (Christ) bear all the prophets witness, that through His name everyone that believeth on Him shall receive remission of sins. " Faith and faith alone in Christ results in the sinner being forgiven all his sins. This is clearly seen in the fact that the Holy Spirit fell on all them that heard Peter's word (Acts 10. 43, 44). Paul's testimony in the synagogue of Antioch is similar to Peter's, "Be it known unto you, . . . that through this Man is proclaimed unto you remission of sins: and by Him everyone that believeth is justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts 13. 38, 39). The believing sinner is forgiven [which means that his sins are sent away, never to return, on Him on whom God laid the iniquity of us all (Isaiah 53. 6; 1 Peter 2. 24)] and he is justified by God, declared righteous, so righteous that no charge can be laid against him (Romans 8. 33, 34). The sinner believes in Christ and is forgiven and justified, but the sinning child of God confesses his sins to his heavenly Father and is forgiven. Justification is not connected with this forgiveness. This is not that he may be saved, but that he might live in fellowship with the Father and the Son in the fellowship or communion of the Spirit (2 Corinthians 13. 14; Philippians 2. 1) who dwells within him. We must be careful to distinguish between union with Christ, which is for ever, and communion with Him, which sin can affect and sometimes destroys.  

J. M.

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We are again dealing with a subject which taxes to the limit the power of language to express. The Authorised Version speaks of "everlasting life" (John 3.16) while the Revised Version says "eternal life." Man has always and everywhere recognized in death a grim and implacable enemy, and has set himself to seek to oppose death, his desire being to live for ever (Psalm 49.6-9). Man's limited understanding led him only so far, but God gives eternal life, which is definitely superior to anything of man's conceiving. Our contributors rightly hold that eternal life is not merely a life that lasts for ever: the elevated quality of the life is also in view, and also the new relationship to God (John 17.3). We ought therefore to seek not only to know this fact as doctrine, but also to show it in practice.

We note also that, "Ye must be born anew" (John 3.7) is in the plural. What Nicodemus implied in his use of the plural "we" may be in doubt, but there is absolutely no dubiety as to the implication of the Lord's use of the plural "ye," for John 3.7 states the present need of all unsaved ones. It is of universal application. In contrast, John 3.16 is in the singular and so is John 5.24. This is clear scriptural evidence that the new birth is an individual experience: there must be the deliberate act of belief on the part of the individual that the new birth may take place.

Further, "he... cometh not into judgement, but hath passed out of death into life" is also in the singular. The same is true of "whosoever... should not perish." They indicate deliverance of a believing individual and imply the eternal woes of an unbelieving one. Unsaved ones will stand before the Judge in a complete sense of standing alone, and, with none to save, will be ushered in to the eternal horrors described by that dread word "perish," which does not mean dying or ceasing to exist. It describes the eternal state of lost ones in the lake of fire, the second death. As saved from this eternal doom, we should be very thankful to God our Redeemer and should be stirred to greater zeal in the proclamation of the gospel of God's grace.

"Behold then the goodness and severity of God" (Romans 11.22).

"The peace of God... passeth all understanding" (Philippians 4.7).

J. B.
NOTES ON THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PETER

CHAPTER 3

Verses 10, 11, 12: For,

\(\text{He that would love life,}\)
\(\text{And see good days,}\)
\(\text{Let him refrain his tongue from evil,}\)
\(\text{And his lips, that they speak no guile;}\)
\(\text{And let him turn away from evil, and do good;}\)
\(\text{Let him seek peace, and pursue it.}\)

\(\text{For the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous,}\)
\(\text{And His ears unto their supplication;}\)
\(\text{But the face of the Lord is upon them that do evil.}\)

These words are the teaching of David on the fear of the LORD, when he said, "Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the LORD" (Psalm 34. 11-16). This psalm was written by David following his deliverance from Abimelech (Achish) (1 Samuel 21. 10-15). He fled from the persecution of Saul to Achish for protection, but he found that he was in even greater danger among the Philistines than he was from Saul and his own people. If he was to win through to the good days the LORD had promised him, when he would be king over all Israel, it would not be by a policy of vilification of Saul and of Israel. He had to keep his tongue from evil, and there should be no deceit in his mouth. He was to do good though others might do evil to him. He was to be in hot pursuit of peace even amidst his days of turbulence. He was to learn that the LORD knows all, for His eyes are upon the righteous and His ears are open to their cry. His face is against the evil-doers. If we would ever remember that God sees us and hears when we cry to Him, it would save us from saying and doing things that grieve Him and which are against our own well-being.

Verses 13, 14: And who is he that will harm you, if ye be zealous of that which is good? But and if ye should suffer for righteousness' sake, blessed are ye: and fear not their fear, neither be troubled;

Solomon wrote, "When a man's ways please the LORD, He maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him" (Proverbs 16. 7). When Jehoshaphat walked in the first ways of his father David and when he sent princes, Levites and priests to teach the law of the LORD in all the cities of Judah, "the fear (or terror) of the LORD fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that were round about Judah, so that they made no war against Jehoshaphat" (2 Chronicles 17. 3-10). It does, nevertheless, happen that God's saints are caused to suffer for righteousness' sake, even as the blessed Master suffered in His day on earth.

"A sufferer all His life was He,
A dying Lamb at last."

He said, "Blessed are they that have been persecuted for righteousness' sake, " and again, "Blessed are ye when men shall reproach you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven"
Matthew 5. 10-12. "Fear not their fear " is a rendering of Isaiah 8. 12. Men have their fear, but men's fear is not to be the fear of God's saints. Those who fear God have no fear of divine retribution, but for persecutors there is punishment ahead; for though God allows His saints to suffer betimes, He is not unconcerned about it. See 2 Thessalonians 1. 4-10.

Verses 15, 16: But sanctify in your hearts Christ as Lord: being ready always to give answer to every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you, yet with meekness and fear: having a good conscience; that, wherein ye are spoken against, they may be put to shame who revile your good manner of life in Christ.

Here is one of those proofs of the Deity of the Lord Jesus which occur frequently in the Sacred Scriptures. This refers to Isaiah 8. 13, where we have Isaiah saying, "The LORD of hosts, Him shall ye sanctify." Peter renders this, "Sanctify in your hearts Christ as Lord " (R. V. ). Christ the Lord is the LORD of Hosts. Sanctify means to set apart, and the Lord is to be Lord in our hearts to dominate our whole being in all its affections and activities. If this is so, then we shall be ever ready to give a reason for our hope, and this we are to do with meekness and fear, without ostentation. If we have a good conscience that our manner of life is in keeping with our testimony, then we need be in terror of no one, whatever may be said regarding our life and hope. "Christ liveth in me," said Paul. The old Saul-life was dead; it was now the Christ-life, a life ever beautiful and radiant.

Verses 17, 18: For it is better, if the will of God should so will, that ye suffer for well-doing than for evil-doing. Because Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that He might bring us to God; being put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the Spirit; Christ is an Ensample in suffering. He suffered for the sins of others, the object of this was that He might bring them to God. He was righteous and those who caused Him to suffer were unrighteous. If saints suffer, let it not be for evil-doing. The Lord was a sufferer all His life, suffering ever for well-doing, but when He suffered for sins, it was once and once only, when He hung on the cross, bearing our sins in His own body on the tree. He was not the Sin-bearer all His lifetime. We must distinguish between His suffering once at the hands of God for sins, and His day-by-day sufferings at the hands of men. He was put to death in the flesh, but quickened or made alive in the Spirit. Spirit here is the Person of the Holy Spirit and should be printed, as in A. V., with a capital. The Spirit was the One by or in whom He was made alive. He rose from the dead in the body in which He was nailed to the tree. He showed to the disciples and also to Thomas the print of the nails in his hands, and the spear-wound in His side, the marks of identification (John 20. 20, 25, 27).

Verses 19, 20: In which also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison, which aforetime were disobedient, when the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water:

We have here an admittedly difficult passage upon which we tender our view. Firstly, we are told that Christ did not go in Person and preach
to those spirits, but went in the same Spirit as that in which He was quickened after His death on the cross. If the heralding took place in prison, in Hades, why was it limited to the people who perished in the flood of Noah? Others perished in signal judgements, such as the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, Pharaoh’s army in the Red Sea, the host of Sennacherib, and why should the preaching be limited to the Antediluvians? This presents a difficulty, if the preaching took place in Hades. Then again, What could be the message heralded to these people in Hades? Was it a message of hope and deliverance? That could not be! If it were, it would open up a vast question which would be against any scripture we know in the whole range of the word of God. Then, Was the message one of added doom and despair? What would be the value of such a preaching? It seems to us that the simple, straightforward interpretation of the passage is this, that Christ went in the Holy Spirit and preached by the mouth of Noah who was a preacher of righteousness (2 Peter 2. 5). Both the preaching to and the disobedience of the Antediluvians (who disobeyed aforetime) were "when the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing. " "When " and " while " refer to the same time as the preaching and the disobedience. God speaking to men on earth by the mouth of His prophets, and also by the apostles (2 Peter 3. 2), is one of the most common things in the Scriptures. "He spake by the mouth of His holy prophets which have been since the world began" (Luke 1. 70). '*"God spake by the mouth of His holy prophets which have been since the world began" (Acts 3. 21). "The Holy Spirit spake before by the mouth of David" (Acts 1. 16). David spoke in the Spirit (Matthew 22. 43), and the Spirit of the LORD spoke by him, and His word was upon his tongue (2 Samuel 23. 2). The Spirit of Christ who was in the prophets " testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow them" (1 Peter 1. 11). "Men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Peter 1. 21). We believe that Christ in the Spirit spoke to the men of Noah's time, even as the gospel is now preached "by the Holy Spirit sent forth from heaven" through men (1 Peter 1. 12). The following is a helpful note by Mr. William Kelly on this difficult passage: "To be understood, this verse must be taken with what goes before. Christ was 'put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit, by which also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison, which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah,' etc., just as we read, in 1 Peter 1. 10-12, of Christ's Spirit in the prophets testifying, so here we learn that His Spirit preached (i. e. in Noah). Those who heard were disobedient then, and their spirits are in prison now. Christ's Spirit, by Noah, went and preached to them when they were living men, before the Deluge came; but they rejected it, and now, consequently, their spirits are kept for judgement. The collocation of the Greek (Tois en Phulake Pneumasin) is decisive, that the true connexion is not between the preaching, but the spirits and the prison. The preaching was by Christ's Spirit in Noah to men on earth, whose spirits are now imprisoned till the judgement of the dead." Peter tells us that those in the ark were saved through water. They were saved by the ark from the water, which was God's judgement upon the world, but they were saved by the water from the corrupt world which was destroyed by the flood. "Saved" and "salvation" do not refer always to salvation from the same danger—God's wrath. We need to be saved from men, as well as from God's wrath, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation," said Peter (Acts 2. 40), and there are many like exhortations regarding salvation from surrounding dangers in this present evil age.

J. M.
THE GOSPEL OF THE GLORY OF THE BLESSED GOD.

Eternal Life

From Nottingham. —Of the several words used in the New Testament for "life", the one that concerns us most in this particular study is zoe, which Vine renders as "Life as a principle, life in the absolute sense, life as God has it [1]." To understand something of the significance of eternal life it is necessary to appreciate in some degree that God is life. He is life in Himself; none giveth life to Him, He is supreme, and all life which creatures have must come from the One who is life in Himself. This seems to be the significance of John 5. 26. The Son manifested it in the world (1 John 1. 2).

Sin alienated man from God and brought death (Ephesians 4. 18, Romans 5. 12). So man lost his life through sin. Genesis 2. 17 makes clear the result of man's disobedience. This is more than natural death (which Adam experienced in due course), this is spiritual death, the cutting off of a man from the source of life. Is there not, perhaps, something of the same principle in the dreadful declaration recorded in Matthew 25. 41?

It required the death of the Saviour to bring us life. The simple yet profound words of John 14. 6 come to mind; also our attention was drawn to John 5. 24 and the significance of the words "hath eternal life." Do we always appreciate the force of these words? "Hath" has been described as meaning "have it now and always." This is a wondrous thing, and we realize in the light of this truth that when believers die naturally, death is only a passing from this scene into the presence of the Saviour, where they continue to enjoy the delights of eternal life, which we shall know in their fulness in the coming eternal ages. When the Lord comes for us, we shall enter into the joys of eternal life in bodies of incorruption (2 Corinthians 5. 4, 2 Timothy 1. 10).

We note that life is closely associated with holiness, while death is joined with sin.

R. Hickling.

From Crowborough. —Eternal life is the free gift of God (Romans 6. 23), and is obtained through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. We become the happy possessors of it as soon as we are saved, and can begin to enjoy it here and now as well as in eternity. It is possible to know while on earth that we have eternal life (1 John 5. 13). What is eternal life? It is more than merely living for ever. The unsaved will do this, but they do not have eternal life. The words of the Lord Jesus answer our question. "This is life eternal, that they should know Thee the only true God, and Him whom Thou didst send, even Jesus Christ" (John 17. 2, 3). Life eternal results in a true knowledge of God and of His Son Jesus Christ.

There is another side to this. We as believers have had Christ's life imparted to us, and we should seek to live as Christ lived. We need in this sense to lay hold on the life eternal. If the life of Christ is abiding in us, we shall not have any hatred in our hearts to each other, but will be filled with love. This is the teaching of 1 John. The more we are truly abiding in Christ the more like Him we shall become, and men will take note of us that we have been with Jesus.

J. Robertson.

From Edinburgh. —Whether we are aware of the fact or not, God's word declares that we all belong to God, that we have all sinned, and that all sinners are dead (Ezekiel 18. 4). Therefore we all need eternal life. The moment we take God at His word and accept Christ as our Saviour, God gives us to Christ, who gives us the free gift of eternal life (John 17. 2, 6).
That moment we receive a new nature, and God sees us perfect in Christ (1 John 3. 9). Our sins spring from our old nature: eternal life belongs to our new nature, which cannot sin (1 John 3. 9). Those with eternal life cannot perish (John 10. 28).

Unwisely the Jews refused and rejected the word of God (they judged themselves unworthy of eternal life), and the apostle Paul turned to the Gentiles (Acts 13. 45-48). Nothing or no one can deny the believer this present possession. While John in his Gospel and epistles writes specially on this gift of eternal life, yet all the divine writings are at our disposal to give us the assurance that we have eternal life (1 John 5. 13).

The experience of knowing God and the Giver of eternal life is, we suggest, the meaning of "life eternal," which is life indeed: we must lay hold of it (1 Timothy 6. 12), if we would realise the life we have (1 Timothy 6. 19). Those with eternal life could fail to grasp the life eternal, for this experience is dependent on ourselves. It is a day by day experience. The deeper our knowledge of God becomes, the fuller our enjoyment of this life will be [2].

A. Hope.

EXTRACTS

From Kingston-on-Thames. —When a sinner accepts God's saving grace, he receives eternal life. This is testified by many scriptures, particularly in John's Gospel. "He that heareth My word, and believeth Him that sent Me, hath eternal life" (John 5. 24). "My sheep hear My voice, and I give unto them eternal life" (John 10. 27, 28). In confirmation of their eternal security Jesus says that no one shall snatch them out of His hand; and further, no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.

Eternal life is given by God; it is "the free gift of God" (Romans 6. 23): the Lord Jesus is the Imparter of it (John 10. 28), and faith receives it (John 3, 15, 36). The more we enjoy Christ, the more we shall appreciate eternal life.

W. H. Humphris.

From Birkenhead. —The Gospels and Epistles abound with references to "eternal life" or "life eternal." In the Psalms this life is foreshadowed by the words "even life for evermore" (Psalm 133. 3).

The words of Christ in John 5. 24 prove that this life is the actual present possession of the believer. The gift of eternal life is received through Christ alone, but more than that it is in Him, "in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6. 23), "in His Son" (1 John 5. 11). He is the Source of all life, the Giver and Sustainer of life (John 6. 68). The outward behaviour of some children of God may not always be in keeping with the eternal life they possess, but it is quite clear that, once received, this life can never be forfeited.

The believer's eternal life should normally be manifested by progressive growth in Christian character, as he humbly learns more about God. This was in the Lord's mind when He prayed to His Father (John 17), and was also the burden of the last words written by Peter, "Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3. 18).

A. Hyland.

From Whitehills and Macduff. —Eternal life is the life God gives to His children. It is not something which begins when we reach the glory, but is a very real and very present possession for those who believe God and trust in His Son. It is the free gift of God and has no conditions attached to its acceptance, although all may not enjoy it or pursue it as they should.
Eternal life is to be prized and enjoyed: the disciple must consider that God has given him this new life that he may live to the glory of his Lord. As in the parable of the pounds, the possessor should be able to show development and profit. We must show that we have eternal life abiding in us: but the lusts and passions of the old life, which are unto death, should not be seen in us. Those who have a common Father have much in common, and the early apostles were anxious that there should be brotherly love among the possessors of eternal life. Thus may we demonstrate that we possess eternal life and have the same Heavenly Father.

From Southport. —Eternal life has been desired from of old, for the young man asked the Lord Jesus Christ, "What good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?" (Matthew 19. 16). The Lord Jesus said, "Ye search the Scriptures, because ye think that in them ye have eternal life; ... and ye will not come to Me, that ye may have life." (John 5. 39, 40), showing that eternal life is through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Acts 13. 46-48 tells us that eternal life is for the Gentiles as well as for the Jews. 1 Timothy 1. 16 tells us that eternal life is for those who should hereafter believe, showing that God's grace extends to us who are "hereafter" as well as to believers during the time of the apostles.

In some ways we can compare eternal life with earthly life. For earthly life we have a father; for eternal life the believer has God the Father; for earthly life we have a birth; for eternal life we have a new birth: in earthly life we grow in stature, in experience and in fulness; in eternal life we ought also to grow in the same way. Again there are men whose earthly lives are filled with small things, and there are other men whose lives are full of great works and mighty achievements. It is something like this in regard to eternal life, for the Lord Jesus Christ desired that men may have life, and may "have it abundantly." (John 10. 10). "Lay hold on the life eternal" was written to the believer Timothy, who already had eternal life, yet he was exhorted to "lay hold on the life eternal." He was to lay hold on that life that he might have a living, vigorous life for God. Galatians 6. 8 and Romans 6. 22 could be read in this connexion.

We read in the message from the Lord Jesus Christ to those in the church at Sardis, "I will in no wise blot his name out of the book of life," as if the believer's name is conditionally enrolled in the book. As an explanation it has been suggested that there are two books of records in heaven, one of born-again ones (Luke 10. 20) and the other containing the names of those who serve (Philippians 4. 3) [3].

From Paisley. —In John 3. 16 eternal life is contrasted with perishing. It has to do firstly with the spiritual part of a man, inasmuch as through faith he becomes the present possessor of eternal life. In heaven we shall realize more fully than here on earth the enjoyments associated with that life.

There was a difference of opinion expressed regarding the expressions "eternal life" and "life eternal" (John 17. 2, 3). To some "eternal life" signified possession and "life eternal" betokened a progressive experience. Others considered that the inversion of the terms emphasized in one instance the duration of life (eternal life) and in the other the quality of that life (life eternal). John 17. 2 indicated possession, and verse 3 defines the basis of that possession, namely, a knowledge of God and Jesus Christ as the sent One of the Father [4].
From Belfast. —God is our Creator through natural birth and Father by spiritual birth. We must be born again of the Spirit of God, because we are spiritually dead through our sins and trespasses. What is eternal life? Christ the eternal Son was manifested in the flesh to die that we might ever live. The resurrected Christ has gone to prepare a dwelling-place for us in heaven, "that in the ages to come He (God) might show the exceeding riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus."

He also lives in us to save us from the power of the evil one (Galatians 2. 20). This focuses our attention on the nature of eternal life. It is the life of God. We are highly privileged that Christ should live in us. We are exhorted to lay hold on eternal life, and, for this, we must count "all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3. 8). Laying hold of eternal life by the Christian entails his appreciation of it, and his joy unspeakable in it.

Just as Satan hates God, he hates lives that glorify Christ because of their Christlikeness. In view of eternity, may we each learn to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. 

W. Dyer.

From Glasgow. —If man is ever to obtain eternal life, it must proceed from God Himself, who is life and the Giver of life. The good news for the sinner is that God sent His Son, the Righteous One, so that by the obedience of the Lord Jesus Christ grace might reign through righteousness unto eternal life.

Because we were dead in trespasses and sins, God in His wonderful compassion, love and mercy, remembered us in our low estate, and He sent His Son to bring us eternal life. When we receive eternal life, God desires that we should enjoy a practical experience of this life, as the Son said, "This is life eternal, that they should know Thee the only true God, and Him whom Thou didst send, even Jesus Christ" (John 17. 3).

Eternal life does not consist only of living for ever, important though that is; for (solemn thought!) the unsaved exist for ever in the lake of fire. We are convinced then that eternal life consists of an eternity of bliss and joy and unbroken communion with God.

The difference between eternal life and eternal inheritance was brought before us; whilst eternal life is the present portion of the believer, eternal inheritance is future (1 Peter 1. 4). The believer should have his mind and heart fixed in the things that are above. "The things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." Fred Harvey.

From Cowdenbeath. —In the natural sphere, the birth of a child is the act of its coming into life; in the spiritual, a person, by placing faith in Christ, experiences the new birth (John 1. 12), by which he passes out of death into life (John 5. 24).

The Father gave His Son (John 3. 16); the Son came (Philippians 2. 6-8), and one of the results of the work accomplished by the Lord Jesus is the gift of eternal life. The unity of action of the Father and the Son is emphasized in 1 John 5. 11 and John 10. 28-30. The Son does and ever did the works of the Father. The Father and the Son are co-equal and act in unity. A man who receives eternal life can never be deprived of it (John 10. 28).

Eternal life is the present possession of every believer, but all do not have it abundantly. In many cases there is no evidence of spiritual growth or of enjoyment of divine things. If eternal life is to be known and enjoyed in its fullest measure, the possessor must lay hold on it (1 Timothy 6. 12). This exercise and striving is the concern of the few (Matthew 7. 13, 14).

C. Ross.
From Wigan.—God's great love-gift, the giving of His Son, was with a view to bringing the sinner back to Himself, although many other purposes are involved. "Hear, and your soul shall live," was Isaiah's message to Israel in their spiritual darkness (Isaiah 55. 3). The words of the Lord Jesus are spirit and are life (John 6. 63). "He that heareth my word, and believeth Him that sent Me, hath eternal life" (John 5. 24). It is impossible to possess eternal life without Christ, for in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead" (Colossians 2. 9). "This life is in His (God's) Son" (1 John 5. 11), and "He that hath the Son hath the life" (1 John 5. 12).

From West Hartlepool—We wondered if the reversing of the order in John 17. 3 (life eternal) might perhaps indicate the deep joy of eternal life, experienced in the increasing knowledge of God and of the Lord Jesus-through the word [5]. Eternal life is certainly something we enjoy here and now, and shall enjoy in eternity in a fuller measure. It is a life which is available to all on the ground of faith alone. The use of the word "ordain" in Acts 13. 48 presented some difficulties [6]. In Romans 13. 1 the same word is used. We understand it means "to assign or dispose." Two views were expressed in the discussion. In the first Luke was writing in retrospect and used the word to mean that those persons were predestined. The second view was that these persons were in a certain frame of mind, i. e., disposed to believing.

1 Timothy 6. 12, 1 John 3. 13-16 and Revelation 3. 5 clearly show the outworking in the life of the believer of the eternal life which he received as a gift at the time of the new birth—witnessing, fruit-bearing and continuing steadfastly in the Faith. Paul was an example to all believers: he sowed to the Spirit and reaped the fruits of eternal life; and this he exhorted others to do. John states that one who hates his brother is a murderer, and a believer who hates his brother is clearly not manifesting the eternal life he has received.

The words of Revelation 3. 5 were addressed to the church of God in Sardis. These saints were in low spiritual condition, but to the overcomers this promise is given: "I will in no wise blot his name out of the book of life." In Malachi's day God kept a book of remembrance for those that feared the LORD and thought on His name. May it not be that there are books relative to our service here on earth?

From Atherton.—God, who is the source of all life, is the one who provides eternal life (Acts 17. 25, Romans 6. 23). It is essentially bound up in the Person of the Lord Jesus, who came to bring it to man that he might know its fulness (1 John 1. 2, John 10. 10). It can never be lost or forfeited, and its recipients are sealed by God and the Holy Spirit (John 10. 28, 29, 2 Corinthians 1. 21, 22, Ephesians 1. 13, 14). It involves relationship with the Father, communion with the Father, Son and Spirit, and brings joy, peace and happiness to the believer (1 John 1. 3, Romans 8. 15, 16). As in human life there should be corresponding growth and development, so should this new life grow and develop. Hence we may "reap eternal life" (Galatians 6. 8), and we can "lay hold on the life eternal" (1 Timothy 6. 12). Self-denial and obedience are involved in its pursuit (John 12. 25, 50).

The matter of the transposition of the words, "eternal life" and "life eternal," in some of the passages cited caused some little discussion, but it was felt that the context of the passage must be the guiding factor as in such scriptures as John 17. 2, 3 and 1 Timothy 6. 12.
Acts 13. 48 introduces the doctrine of ordination with reference to eternal life. This appears to deal with divine foreknowledge and appointment, as in such scriptures as Matthew 28. 16 and Romans 8. 29-80, 13. 1 [7].

E. B.

COMMENTS

[1] (Nottingham). Those who have Trench's " Synonyms of the New Testament, " and who can follow the learned reasoning of this great authority on words, will find much to occupy and perhaps enlighten in the difference he draws between the two Greek words Bios and Zoe, both of which mean life but are distinct in Greek usage. English has but one word for life. He says, " No one will deny that Zoe is... the nobler word expressing as it continually does all our highest and best which saints possess in God. " " In revealed religion, which thus makes death to have come into the world through sin and only through sin, life is the correlative of holiness. Whatever truly lives, does so because sin has never found place in it, or, having found place for a time, has since been overcome and expelled. " " No wonder then, that Scripture should know of no higher word than Zoe to set forth the blessedness of God, and the blessedness of the creature in communion with God. "—J. M.

[2] (Edinburgh). We should not assume that, because the adjective eternal comes after life, it is a different life than where the adjective eternal is before life in our English Bibles. In fact, if we just think of John 3. 16, the order of the words is, " but have life eternal, " in the Greek. In 1 Timothy 6. 12 the order of the words is " Lay hold of the eternal life. " This is the order in the A. V. here and in verse 19. The A. V. again renders 1 Timothy 1. 16 "life everlasting, according to the order of the Greek words. " The A. V. is not consistent, for instead of following strictly the order of the words, as above, it gives " eternal life " in Titus 1. 2; 3. 7. Besides eternal life being the gift of God in Christ Jesus, for this life is in His Son, we may reap eternal life (life eternal in the Greek) (Galatians 6. 8), that is we may by the means indicated in this verse reap an increase of the life we already possess, in a word, we may have life abundantly (John 10. 10). One may with a concordance be profited to see quickly the different presentations of this eternal life. —J. M.

[3] (Southport). —Whether there are two books or one, and we have little knowledge, or none at all, of what God's book is like, there must, I think, be two writings of names, those who are God's children, and also of His servants. —J. M.

[4] (Paisley). —Not the basis, but the consequent experience and possibility of having eternal life, " that they should know, " etc. —J. M.

[5] (West Hartlepool). —Where the definite article is before the words eternal life, which views this life objectively, the order of the words is changed from where there is no definite article, where the life is viewed characteristically. The definite article is found before eternal life in John 17. 3; 1 Timothy 6. 12, 19. In John 17. 3, "And this is the eternal life, " points back to the previous verse where it says He should give to them eternal life (no definite article). —J. M.

[6] (West Hartlepool). —Please see my note on this verse (Acts 13. 48), which evidently has not been read by our friends. This may not be a fault with our friends only, for much that is written in our magazines is not read
NOTES ON THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN

as it should be, considering the much time and labour that is spent in giving reading matter to God's people. See June issue of N. T., page 84. —

[7] (Atherton). —Our friends seem also to be like those of West Hartlepool and have not read the note on this verse in June issue of N. T., page 84. —J. M.

QUESTION AND ANSWER

Question from Nottingham. —Does Revelation 21. 8 apply to people of the present dispensation? If so, how can all liars taste the second death?

Answer. —This means all unforgiven liars, liars that are not cleansed and sheltered by the blood of the Redeemer. Alas, children of God may lie, even intentionally; this affects their communion, but not their union with Christ. —J. M.

NOTES ON THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN

CHAPTER 2

Verses 1, 2: My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye may not sin. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world.

The gracious provision for the forgiveness of sin should not be taken as an encouragement, but rather a deterrent, to sin. Let none turn the grace of God into licence to do evil, but rather let us be thankful for God's gracious provision to meet our weaknesses, for they are many. A learned scholar says of the verb "sin," which is aorist 2 subjunctive, "The moods of the aorist usually express single definite actions not contemplated as continuing." Then the writer who makes this quotation from this scholar suggests the translation of the verse as follows: —

"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye may commit no act of sin; and if any (of us) shall have committed an act of sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." John wrote to his little children, who were also God's children, that they might not sin, but if they did, then they had an Advocate with the Father. God's children have two Advocates, Comforters or Helpers, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. The Lord promised His disciples, "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may be with you for e v e r... for He abideth with you, and shall be in you" (John 14. 16, 17). Though all God's children have two Advocates or Comforters, God's people have but one High Priest. The office of High Priest should not be confused with the work of the Advocate. The Lord as the Advocate is with the Father on behalf of the Father's children, but the High Priest makes propitiation for the sins of the people (Hebrews 2. 17). He is the propitiation also for the sins of God's children, so that they might live in fellowship with their Father, but it is in connexion with the service of a people that the High Priest makes propitiation. Besides being the propitiation for the sins of God's children He is the propitiation for the whole world. The words "the sins of" the whole world shown in italics in the A. V. are not part of the inspired Word. Thus the Lord is the propitiation
(1) for the whole world in the matter of salvation, (2) for the sins of the children of God in the matter of fellowship, and (3) is a Priest to make propitiation for the sins of the people of God in the matter of service. The following note is by Mr. William Kelly: — "I see no reason for giving up the common view of Christians, that Jesus is called the Paraclete, as taking up the cause of believers with the Father: as for a similar reason the Holy Spirit is so styled by John, as to His place in and with them on earth, though of course carried on in a different way (John 14. 16). It is not correct to say that the propitiation of Jesus is here stated to be for the sins of the whole world. The English version says so, I know, but it is by inserting words which are better left out. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the whole world. There is provision for it to the uttermost; but Scripture never speaks of the sins being borne away, save of believers. And it is as plain as possible that this very passage discriminates between ' us ' and the ' world,' even as to expiation; while advocacy with the Father is in no way connected with the world, but with the family of God."

Verses 3, 4: And hereby know we that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him:

Here is the test of knowledge, and the Lord, in John 14. 21, made the keeping of His commandments the test of love. "He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me." Many movements of our time. "Youth movements" and such-like, characterized by such a term as, "all one in Christ," have little time or place for the sobering Word of the Lord and of John. Obedience to the commandments of the Lord is set aside and there seems to be little more than froth and foam of the turbulent activity of the flesh. Others seek to sketch a better plan than that outlined clearly in the Lord's commandments. The Psalmist said, "I will run the way of Thy commandments, when Thou shalt enlarge my heart" (Psalm 119. 32). But those who are in the movements indicated characterize those who go in "the way of God's commandments" as narrow-minded, but instead, they are such as are narrow, for the word of God can find no way of entrance into their hearts. They need enlargement of heart. John's words are powerful and plain, that such as say they know God, yet keep not His commandments, are liars and the truth is not in them. Strong words indeed!

Verses 5, 6: But whoso keepeth His word, in him verily hath the love of God been perfected. Hereby know we that we are in Him: he that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also to walk even as He walked.

We are told in chapter 5. 3, "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. " This is not a description of the immensity of God's love, or of how it has been manifested in our case (1 John 4. 9, 10), but it is the way in which the love of God is manifested by us and the way by which we reflect His love to Him and to others. Without obedience to His word, which is the only way we keep His word, His love is not perfected in us; it has not effected in us that which is God's will that it should. The child of God keeps the word by doing, just as an electric dynamo keeps electricity in itself, namely by rotating and by movement. If it stops then there is no electricity and consequently no power. In the obedience of the Lord unto the death of the cross, we learn the love of God, and this love which reaches us through obedience should have like action in us in our obedience to God's Word. By this means we know
that we are in Him. This is the condition of "abiding in Him," not * being in Christ by being united to Him as members of His Body," the Church. Verse 6 shows this to be the case. The steps John indicates are plain; (1) keeping His Word, (2) abiding in Him, (3) walking as He walked. Walk describes the life and behaviour of a disciple of the Lord. Christ is ever our pattern, if we would be truly Christians.

Verse 7: Beloved, no new commandment write I unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning: the old commandment is the word which ye heard.

The old commandment is, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," which, Paul shows, sums up all the commandments of God in man's relationship to his neighbour (Romans 13. 8, 10). "Love therefore is the fulfilment of the law." The Lord in one sentence summed up the meaning of the whole Old Testament in this matter of man's behaviour to his neighbour: "All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them: for this is the law and the prophets." (Matthew 7. 12).

Verse 8: Again, a new commandment write I unto you, which thing is true in Him and in you; because the darkness is passing away, and the true light already shineth.

The new commandment is that which is contained in John 13. 34, 35: "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; even as I have loved you, that ye also love another. By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another." This commandment "is true in Him, and in you," and cannot find a place among any but the Lord's disciples. The old commandment of the law was "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," but the new commandment is that we shall love each other as the Lord loved us. How can this be attained in any measure? only by the abandonment of self and self-interest by the power of the Holy Spirit within us. This is better expressed in the words of Paul, in regard to himself. "I have been crucified with Christ; yet I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me." (Galatians 2. 20). Saul was dead, but Christ was alive in Paul. Only by Christ living in us can we in any measure love as He loved. The darkness of unbelief, of jealousy, hatred, and every evil work, passes away where the true light of the light and love of Christ sheds its health-giving, purifying rays.

Verses 9, 10, 11: He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in the darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. But he that hateth his brother is in the darkness, and walketh in the darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because the darkness hath blinded his eyes.

Hatred and darkness are associates even as love and light. One cannot be in the light and yet hate his brother. John goes further, we might say, in Chapter 3, 15, when he says, "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." He does not say that no murderer has eternal life, but he says that no murderer hath eternal life "abiding in him." All members of the Body of Christ are in Christ and have Christ in them the Hope of glory (Colossians 1. 24-27), but many such may not be abiding in Him (John 15. 4, 5). "Brother" here is not a brother in the flesh, but one who is a brother by the new birth, so that a child of God may live in the darkness because of his behaviour. In contrast to this, a brother who loves his brother abides
in the light, and his correct and praiseworthy behaviour gives no occasion for anyone to stumble. But one who hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and like a blind man knows not whither he goes, for he is blinded by the darkness of his own wickedness.

Verse 12: *I write unto you, my little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake.*

Little children are not expected to know much, but they should know this quite clearly, that their sins are forgiven through (Dia, by means of) His name. The infinite value of the name (which signifies the Person) of the Redeemer is the ground of divine forgiveness.

Verse 13: *I write unto you, fathers, because ye know Him which is from the beginning.*

Whilst the children know that which is recent in their experience, even the forgiveness of their sins, the knowledge of the fathers stretches back over the ages to Him who was from the beginning, but who had been manifested, as in 1 John 1. 2. It is precious to hear the exuberant joy of those newly born again over the fact that their sins are forgiven, but it is pitiful when fathers make no advance from that state, in whose soul there are no deeper soundings of the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, "That I may know Him" was the yearning of Paul at the end of his life as it had been at the beginning (Philippians 3. 7-12).

Verse 13: *I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the evil one.*

Young men should be the warriors, those who join issue with the evil one. Those who are here addressed had been in the battle and had overcome the devil. "The evil one" describes one who is utterly bad; one who gives no quarter. In any battle with him it is war to the death. The devil may flee (James 4. 7), but let not the Christian soldier think he will escape if he should flee from him. There is no armour for the soldier's back.

Verses 13, 14: *I have written unto you, little children, because ye know the Father. I have written unto you, fathers, because ye know Him which is from the beginning. » I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the evil one.*

We have in these verses the subdivision of God's children into children, fathers and young men. John says, "I write, " and, again, "I wrote. " The little children whose sins were forgiven know or have known the Father. The Spirit of His Son has come into their hearts, whereby they cry, "Abba, Father" (Romans 8. 15; Galatians 4. 6). Fathers are again said to know or have known Him which is from the beginning. The young men were strong because of the Word abiding in them, and by the power of the Word they had overcome the evil one. Satan cannot stand before what is written in the Word of God. When the Lord said, "It is written", three times in the temptation, Satan's power of deception utterly failed. As light dispels darkness, so truth overcomes error. "No lie is of the truth" (Chapter 2. 21). Young men should diligently read the Word, store their minds with the sacred writings, so that when the day of battle and war with the evil one comes it may find them prepared for the fight. But if in time of peace they have squandered their time on questionable employments they may be found quite defenceless against the foe.
Verses 15, 16: Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the vainglory of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

Why should children of God direct their affections towards and set their love upon such a heartless thing as the world? It has no heart to return any love bestowed upon it. Its pleasures and its things have an appeal to the carnal and material, but afford no satisfaction, no pleasure to the soul in its higher and spiritual life. It can never minister to the soul in its higher and spiritual life, where there are but the pleasures of sin which are but for a season. Of old, Moses turned away from these. Upon the palace and upon all that the world had then to offer, he turned his back and set his face towards the brickfields, the wilderness, and, above all, toward God. The world of the Pharaohs has disappeared, save in the mummified relics of a glory which has passed away, but that Moses, who despised the world, its glory and its gifts, lives on in the imperishable record of the divine Scriptures, the first part of which he wrote 'midst the wastes of the Sinai desert. Men who went outside the world system of their day wrote the Scriptures, and men who would read and understand these writings must go outside the world system of their time. The truths of the Bible can never mix with the world, and to obey its words we must be prepared to "go forth unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach" (Hebrews 13. 13), for no one was ever more truly outside the world system than the Lord Himself. Two loves cannot exist in the same heart, just as no man can love and serve two masters, or love equally two women at the same time, as witness the life of Jacob. If children of God love the world, they cannot love the Father. The world and God being two opposites, the world hated the Father and the Son (John 15. 24) and crucified the Son, and it hates the Lord's disciples.

Then we are told what is in the world, (1) "the lust of the flesh," (2) "the lust of the eyes," and (3) "the vainglory of life." These three things are seen in Eve's temptation and sin, and in the Lord's temptation without sin. (1) It is said that "the woman saw that the tree was good for food." In the Lord's temptation the tempter said, "If Thou art the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." "If " here is not the if of doubt, but the premise of an argument, for the devil knew well who He was, and it had been plainly declared in the hearing of the devil in the Father's words at the Lord's baptism, "This is My Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3. 17). The Lord could not be tempted as God or the Son of God in the wilderness, for the Divine nature cannot be tempted of evil things (James 1. 13); He was tempted as Man, as His reply clearly shows: "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Where Eve failed in rejecting the word of God, the Lord triumphed by means of God's Word. (2) It is told us in Luke that the devil led the Lord up (the R. V. leaves out "an high mountain" as in the A. V., though it is given in Matthew) and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. Was ever such worldly glory and power flashed before the eyes of man in a moment of time, before or since? We believe, never! All this the devil claimed as his, and that he had power to give it to whomsoever he would (we may well, I think, doubt his claim), and all this would be the Lord's on one condition only, if He would worship before the devil.
The bait which many myriads have greedily swallowed was utterly and immediately rejected by the Lord, who said, "It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." But Eve in her innocence looked and took, for the forbidden fruit "was a delight to the eyes." How easily she was fascinated! Colour schemes are still fashionable and fascinating to her daughters. We need to be careful about what we allow our eyes to see, for it is well to remember that the eye is but the lens of the mind and scenes and pictures may be fixed indelibly for life on the mind which may be a deadly menace to spiritual life. Let us guard against having wandering eyes and a wandering mind. Remember that you cannot see clearly through glass which is dipped into a filthy pool, and you cannot have purity of thought where the mind is defiled by things the believer should not look upon. Was there ever a day such as the present when the lust of the eyes is catered for in ever increasing volume? (3) Then as to the vainglory of life, we are told that when the woman saw that "the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; and she gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat." Earthly, natural, sinful wisdom burst in upon the minds of the guilty pair. The bait of the serpent was swallowed—"for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." Was ever the glory of innocence so despised? and in the hand which so easily gave it up was placed only vainglory! Pure gold was given up for tinsel. Inward peace, like the surface of a lake on which is reflected the glory of heaven, was given away for a dark, storm-tossed, condemned conscience, which knew what was right to do but had no power to do it. Such was the plight of man by the fall and such it is still. In contrast to this, the devil led the Lord to Jerusalem and set Him on the pinnacle, the wing or edge of the temple. Here again he repeats, "If Thou art the Son of God," and encourages Him in vainglory to presume upon divine providence, wrongly quoting from Psalm 91. 11, 12, by leaving out the words that are vital to the whole passage—"to keep Thee in all Thy ways." The Son of God needed no angelic keeping, or ministration, as He received in the garden of Gethsemenè (Luke 22. 43), but the Son of Man was ministered to and kept by angels in the weakness of His Manhood (Matthew 4. 11), even as saints are the objects of angelic ministration (Hebrews 1. 14). The Son of Man was not vainglorious to cast Himself down into the Kidron valley, to do what God had never told Him to do, and so He said again, "It is written, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." He, the Man Christ Jesus, is our example in all temptation; adherence to what is written is the sure defence against all the wiles of the devil. The flood-gates of sin and misery were opened upon the human race by the rejection of and disobedience to the Word of God, but the flood-gates of mercy were opened by the obedience of the Lord, obedience which was unto death, the death of the Cross. Let us be fully persuaded that all that is in, and is characteristic of, this world-system, which is not of the Father, and its lust for power and hatred of what is right, were truly manifested when it rejected the Father's Son, the Prince of Life. Remember, "the friendship of the world is enmity with God" (James 4. 4).
"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).

EDITORIAL

In this issue we come to the end of a year's work in which we have considered gospel subjects of vital importance. Sometimes we seemed to be but skimming the surface of oceans of profound truth, and for that reason, as we leave the subject, we are conscious of a longing for deeper knowledge.

Among the several features characteristic of this year's contributions there is one on which we should like to make brief comment. The papers for 1959 were marked by an increase in references to the original Greek. This we welcome, but we suggest that our fellow-students could with profit carry the process a stage further. When the original Greek word has been examined, we have a means of determining the true sense of the word or passage under consideration: frequently it is also profitable to assess carefully the adequacy and suitability of the words in the text (R. V. or A. V.). Through such critical reading we may, with the help of the Holy Spirit, gather a precise knowledge of the Scriptures and be the more able to handle aright the word of truth (2 Timothy 2. 15).

Among the words prominent in our studies this year are: propitiation, repentance, faith, reconciliation, forgiveness, justification, redemption, salvation, sanctification, regeneration, inheritance. These words would, in the main, appear to convey satisfactorily the sense of the original Greek, even though they are all, with one exception, of Latin origin. The dictionary definition is not sufficient; neither is the meaning obtained by finding the derivation of these words. Reference to a sound work on the original Greek words often sheds much fresh light on the subject. The exception in the above list is "forgiveness," a purely English word with which we all feel familiar.

While it is most important to examine words used in the Scriptures, it is also necessary to be careful of certain words much used by students of the Scriptures, words which, though convenient, are not found in the Scriptures. Of these we may here mention two, because they are related to our present study. We admit the accuracy and convenience of the words "incarnation" and "humanity" in reference to the Lord, but have to confess that the terms employed in the Scriptures are loftily superior—"the days of His flesh" and "the Word became flesh." It is advisable to keep to the terms used in the Scriptures. If we do so, we shall not be led astray by our use of words. Scriptural words are best: in their simplicity they convey profound truth.

"The words of the LORD are pure words; As silver tried in a furnace on the earth, Purified seven times" (Psalm 12. 6).

J. B.
Verses 21, 22: Which also after a true likeness doth now save you, even baptism, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the interrogation of a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ; who is on the right hand of God, having gone into heaven; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him.

Sprinkling water on infants and adults is a mockery of divine regeneration, and the mocking rite of churches (so called) which do not hold baptismal regeneration, is in no sense baptism. Baptism means dipping, and in scriptural language signifies burial and resurrection, a figure of the Lord's burial and resurrection (Romans 6. 3, 4; Colossians 2. 12). Baptism in water is not necessary to salvation from hell, as some teach, for salvation from hell is by God's grace through our faith in Christ, and through faith in Christ alone (Acts 16. 30, 31; Ephesians 2. 5, 8, 9). As Noah and his family were saved by the ark from the waters of judgement and from a corrupt world by the same judgement of the flood, so after a true likeness baptism saves us, if we truly appreciate that baptism is not just dipping a person in water, but it has a spiritual significance. It signifies that the believer who died with Christ to sin is buried with Him and raised with Him, the object of this being that the old life which ended in death is finished and buried. We should be raised from a corrupt world, as the ark of Noah was by the water, from the evil world that then was to the top of Ararat. The believer is now to walk in newness of life. If this truth is appreciated it will save the believer from the corruptions of the world. It is in such a sense that the believer is saved through water. Though the believer should regard himself as dead to this world and buried, dead to all its plans and pleasures, the corruptions of his flesh are not put away by baptism. Noah, who was saved from a corrupt world, planted a vineyard, made wine and drank too freely and "was drunken" (Genesis 9. 21), and "old Noah," or "old Adam," still lives in our flesh, and we need to learn what it means to die daily (1 Corinthians 15. 31). Paul also said of himself, "Always bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our body" (2 Corinthians 4. 10). Death is the only way that the corruptions of the flesh can be dealt with. Baptism is the question or demand of a good conscience, and when it is obeyed it is the answer of that same good conscience toward or unto God; it is the outward sign of the invisible conscience within. Christ is raised from the dead, but the unbaptized believer who died with Him is neither buried nor raised with Him through faith in the working of God who raised Him from the dead (Colossians 2. 12). He who has been raised is on the right hand of God, and to Him angels, authorities and powers are subject, but the unbaptized believer is not subject or obedient. No wonder conscience often knocks at his heart's door demanding that he should obey the word of the Lord.
NOTES ON THE FIRST EPISODE OF PETER 179

CHAPTER 4

Verses 1, 2: Forasmuch then as Christ suffered in the flesh, arm ye yourselves also with the same mind; for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; that ye no longer should live the rest of your time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.

Here the believer is to arm himself with the same idea, thought, or intention, that he is to be a sufferer in the flesh as Christ was, He who suffered at the hands of men. Consequently, when suffering is his portion, he is not to be surprised as though some strange thing has happened to him (verses 12, 13). It is what the believer is to expect in this world. Then Peter adds, "For he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin," that is, he has done with, left off, desisted or refrained from sin. Suffering in this world (not bodily illness) is a purifier in the life of the believer, as we learn from Hebrews 12. 4-11, and by it God chastens His sons so that they may become partakers of His holiness. The object of suffering, as stated by Peter, is that we should no longer live the rest of our time in the flesh (that is during this earthly life) to the lusts of men, but to the will of God. "The rest of your time," what an opportunity, be the time long or short, to devote it to the doing of God's will, and there is nothing more important!

Verses 3, 4: For the time past may suffice to have wrought the desire of the Gentiles, and to have walked in lasciviousness, lusts, winebibblings, revellings, carousings, and abominable idolatries: wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them into the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you:

The time past, previous to conversion, is a sufficient part of human existence to be devoted to work the desire, purpose or determination of the Gentiles, and to have walked in all forms of lust, and in some cases idolatry. How frequently the unbeliever is surprised in the changed behaviour of a friend who has just been saved by grace! The whole attitude of each to each is changed by the one having become a new creature in Christ. The greater the change in the believer the greater the wonderment of the unbeliever. Then sometimes evil-speaking starts and scorn is heaped on the believer.

Verses 5, 6: Who shall give account to Him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead. For unto this end was the gospel preached even to the dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the Spirit.

Solemn indeed will be the accountability of the wicked in the day of judgement. They wilfully allow themselves to be cheated that the day of judgement will never come or that it is far distant from them and they have more than enough time to reform their ways, whereas the Lord is ready to judge, and was ready to judge the living and the dead when the epistle was written. The wicked have no time to lose to repent and believe the gospel. Death is an enemy who may come upon them unawares, and then time will be gone. Then we are told that it was unto this end, in view of divine judgement, that the gospel was preached to the dead, that is the dead in trespasses and sins (Ephesians 2. 1), not to persons who once lived and are now dead (certainly not to the physically dead), that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, their sins having been borne and judged in the person of Christ their Substitute (2. 24; Romans 5. 6, 8), the judgement of God for them is past (John 5. 24; Romans 8. 1). Now it is theirs to live according to God in the Spirit. Spirit here is the Holy Spirit. "If we live by the Spirit, by the Spirit let us also walk (Galatians 5. 25).
Verses 7, 8, 9, 10: But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore of sound mind, and be sober unto prayer: above all things being fervent in your love among yourselves; for love covereth a multitude of sins: using hospitality one to another without murmuring: according as each hath received a gift, ministering it among yourselves, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God;

New Testament writers speak of this dispensation as the "end of the times" (1. 20), "the last days" (James 5. 3), "the last hour" (1 John 2. 18). If the end was at hand when Peter wrote, how close to us the end must be now! In the light of the swiftly-approaching end we are to be of sound or sober mind, to be sober, watchful, vigilant, unto prayers. We are to be fervent in love among ourselves. Love covers sins, not discovers them. Where there is little love the sins and wrongs done by one believer to another grow like the snowball, when rolled for a time, to enormous proportions. "Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all transgressions" (Proverbs 10. 12). Where love is, believers act like Shem and Japheth in regard to their father's sin and shame, but loveless believers act like Ham (Genesis 9. 20-27). How fulsome and wrong it is to murmur at the need of showing hospitality, which means love for strangers, and be glad to see them go! How has God treated us who were strangers and aliens? If God loved us should we not be like the Father's children and love one another? Whatever gift we have, whether it is in spiritual things or things material, we are to minister it among the saints as good and beautiful stewards (for we are only stewards of what God has given us) of the manifold (Poikilos, various, variegated, different) grace of God. God's manifold grace suits every need and time: His grace is all-sufficient.

Verse 11: If any man speaketh, speaking as it were oracles of God; if any man ministereth, ministering as of the strength which God supplieth: that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, whose is the glory and the dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Speaking and ministering or serving (Diakoneo) are quite evidently not identical. The speaker is to speak (Laleo) the word as if he were speaking oracles of God, and he that serves is to do so in the strength with which God has supplied him, which, I judge, is something different from mere physical, bodily strength, though that too is necessary in its place. All is to be done that God may be glorified amongst His people through Jesus Christ. Due to God is the glory and the dominion or might unto the ages of the ages. Amen.

Verses 12, 13: Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial among you, which cometh upon you to prove you, as though a strange thing happened unto you: but insomuch as ye are partakers of Christs sufferings, rejoice; that at the revelation of His glory also ye may rejoice with exceeding joy.

Satan had been allowed by God to turn on the fire of persecution, to try or tempt (Petrazo) God's saints so that they might break down in the temptation, but they were not to think that something strange had happened. The Lord continually warned His disciples of the suffering that they must expect in this world for His sake. "If the world hateth you, ye know that it hath hated Me before it hated you.... Now have they both seen and hated both Me and My Father" (John 15. 18, 19, 24). These are but a few of the Lord's statements of the world's attitude to the Father, the Son and His disciples. Suffering saints are to rejoice if they are partakers of, if they share in, the sufferings of Christ, for at the revelation of His glory great will be their joy. Great sufferers will be great rejoicers!
Verse 14: If ye are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are ye; because the Spirit of glory and the Spirit of God resteth upon you.

"Reproached" (Oneidizo) is a bad word, it means "to revile, scoff at, insult with opprobrious language." It is the language of those who live in the darkness of sin when they see coming into view one upon whom the light of the glory of God's Spirit dwells. Such as hate the light, hate also the light-givers, believers who are as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life (Philippians 2. 16). If the believer hides his light, then there will be no reproach, for he will be as an ordinary man in whom no light is, but the glorified saint in this world is sure to be reproached. But blessed are they who shine in this dark world. "Ye are the light of the world," said the Lord (Matthew 5. 14). How dark this world would be without the children of God!

Verses 15, 16: For let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or an evil-doer, or as a meddler in other men's matters: but if a man suffer as a Christian let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God in this name.

Believers may bring suffering upon themselves by their behaviour, but they should not. Some think that a believer might be a thief, an evil-doer or a meddler in other men's matters, but he could never be a murderer. Such forget that one who hates his brother is in God's sight a murderer. "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer" (1 John 3. 15). Indeed if it were not possible for a believer to be a murderer such an exhortation would not have been given by Peter. But if any one suffers as a Christian, a disciple of Christ, he is not to be ashamed of being one who belongs to Christ and follows Him, but rather, he is to glorify God in this name by which he is called. We are told "that the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch" (Acts 11. 26). It was not a nickname, but a correct definition of their character. They lived like Christ. Called (Chrematizo) means "to transact public business; to converse or treat about business in the N. T. to impart a divine warning or admonition... to be called, named, be known by a particular appellation..." (Acts 11. 26; Romans 7. 3).

Verses 17, 18: For the time is come for judgement to begin at the house of God: and if it begin first at us, what shall be the end of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous is scarcely saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?

This judgement which begins at the house of God is not such as we read of in 1 Corinthians 5. 12, 13: "For what have I to do with judging them that are without? Do not ye judge them that are within, whereas they that are without God judgeth? Put away the wicked man from among yourselves." Both the elders and the church of God in Corinth had failed in their responsibility to judge the fornicator and to put him away, hence Paul had to judge the case, as he says, "For I verily, being absent in body but present in spirit, have already, as though I were present, judged him that so wrought this thing" (verse 3). This same kind of judgement had to be effected by Joshua the high priest in the remnant that returned from Babylon to Jerusalem to build the temple. "Thus saith the LORD of Hosts: If thou wilt walk in My ways, and if thou wilt keep My charge, then thou shalt judge My house, and shalt also judge My courts" (Zechariah 3. 7). See also Deuteronomy 17. 9 and 1 Corinthians 6. 1-8.

There is a parallel between judgement beginning at the house of God in the above verses and judgement beginning at God's sanctuary or house
as portrayed in Ezekiel 9. Men were marked who sighed and cried because of the condition of God's people and were to be spared in the judgement which was about to fall in the coming of Nebuchadnezzar and the Chaldeans, whilst others were to fall in that judgement as set forth in the six men with weapons in their hands. The judgement of God's house in these verses, in the connexion in which they were found, leads one to conclude that it was by external persecution, which the carnal, worldly-minded believers would not endure but would leave the faithful to continue in their testimony as the pillar and ground of the truth (1 Timothy 3. 15). If God judges His house by fiery trial, what shall be the end of them that obey not the gospel? They have but one end, the fiery torment of hell. If the righteous is scarcely saved! Mark, it is not if the sinner who believes is scarcely saved, for there can be no "scarcely", or with difficulty, in that glorious salvation by Christ. But here it is the salvation of the righteous. What is his danger? His danger is not that of eternal fire, but the dangers of this evil world through which he is passing. He has a trinity of evils to combat, Satan the adversary in front of him, the world around him, and the flesh within. But what of the ungodly and sinner who know no present salvation from such evils, who are slaves to sin? Where will they appear? The answer is at the Great White Throne judgement, there to hear the fatal sentence and to be cast into the lake of fire (Revelation 20. 11-15). Those who will be there are denned in Revelation 21. 8.

Verse 19: Wherefore let them also that suffer according to the will of God commit their souls in well-doing unto a faithful Creator. The Lord in encouraging His disciples in Luke 12 said that they were not to fear them that kill the body, but to fear Him who had power to cast into Gehenna (not His disciples but others). Then He speaks of God in His faithfulness as Creator, that not one common sparrow is forgotten in His sight, and His disciples were of more value than many sparrows. He said that the very hairs of their head were all numbered. He also taught them lessons from God's care for the ravens and from the lilies of the field. Such is the faithful Creator to whom all sufferers are to commit their souls in well-doing. Let them do well and God the Creator will not fail to do well for them. Let none say as did Zion, "Jehovah hath forsaken me, and the Lord hath forgotten me... Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of My hands; thy walls are continually before Me " (Isaiah 49. 14, 16).

J. M.

THE GOSPEL OF THE GLORY OF THE BLESSED GOD

Inheritance

From Cowdenbeath. —The inheritance mentioned in Acts 26. 18 is the present possession of every believer [1]. Such have passed out of death into life and are, each one, sanctified by faith in Christ. Every believer may not be aware of the value of what he possesses and, consequently, may fail to appreciate those spiritual things which are his to enjoy. This inheritance might be described as a spiritual sphere into which the believer is brought because of his being united with Christ, and it would seem to be similar to, if not identical with, what is called the "heavenlies" (Ephesians 1. 3).

The Greek verb Kieroo, to assign a privilege, is derived from the noun Kieros, an inheritance (Dr. Strong). It appears only twice in the New
Testament (Ephesians 1. 11, Hebrews 1. 4). In the former of these it is translated "we were made a heritage" (R. V. ) but "we obtained an inheritance" (A. V. ). In Hebrews 1. 4 it is rendered "hath inherited" (R. V. ) and "by inheritance obtained" (A. V. ). It would seem that the word is intended to convey the meaning that we are the possessors (A. V. ) rather than the possessed (R. V. ), although both thoughts may be true [2].

The saints in light (Colossians 1. 12) describes the saints as at present and is not descriptive of the saints in glory. Light is in contrast to darkness of the following verse, which darkness is that from which the believer has been delivered.

The inheritance spoken of in Acts 20. 32 is one which the word of God is able to give. Firstly, the word builds up. It is only such as are thus edified who can possess. This requires personal diligence in study. Those who possess are described as being sanctified. Sanctification here cannot mean the same as in Acts 26. 18. "Neither can the word " all " be taken to mean all believers as such. Rather would it emphasize that only such as are sanctified can have a place in this inheritance, being sanctified through separation from evil. The giving, and therefore also the receiving, of the inheritance is not something which is momentary, as the receiving of a gift, but it appears clear, if we bear in mind that those who are here addressed were overseers in the church of God at Ephesus, that the receiving is a continuous process. This is in keeping with Hebrews 12. 28, " Wherefore, receiving (and continuing to receive) a kingdom that cannot be shaken. " A place in this inheritance can be lost through sin or misbehaviour (Ephesians 5. 5).

The inheritance of 1 Peter 1. 4 will be the portion of every born-again person in a day to come. It is reserved in heaven. None shall fail to possess or enjoy it. This inheritance shall become ours by right of birth, even as the child of a rich man is born to inherit the father's substance. Our being now indwelt by the Holy Spirit is the guarantee that we shall inherit (Ephesians 1. 14). Knowing that such shall be ours we should serve the Lord faithfully now (Colossians 3. 24). Such service should not be rendered in order that we may possess, but because we shall possess. In addition the believer may also ensure that he shall possess eternal riches by laying up treasure in heaven. This is a matter of individual responsibility, whereas the possessing of the inheritance is entirely unconditional [3].

From Whitehills and Macduff. The gospel brings to the believer the title to a rich inheritance. On receiving the new birth, we immediately receive the blessing of a new status before the God we once offended. " The Gentiles are fellow-heirs and fellow-members of the Body, and fellow-partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel " (Ephesians 3. 6). The right to the inheritance is the gift of God through grace, and, as nothing can deny the believer his privileges in the family of God, a portion is assured to him by his heavenly Father. Our receiving of our inheritance and the common ground on which we receive it are tied up with our membership of the Body of Christ.

Saved ones rejoice now in the anticipated blessings of the adoption and are sure of a place in heaven. Likewise they have a place in millennial and future plans of our Lord—to be a heritage as well as to receive an inheritance through grace is rich blessing indeed. " As in the case of the Israelite who entered the promised land, there are richer blessings for those who go into
the land and possess it. Knowledge of God's will brings promise of better things, "the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints" (Ephesians 1. 18), but rebellion and sin against God's word will drive us out of the kingdom of God, the place of richer blessings of inheritance. Birthright inevitably confers responsibility as well as privilege, and it must be grievous to our Father when the inheritance is lightly esteemed and full possession not striven for. In every aspect of our lives we must remember our new status and inheritance, and work as unto the Lord that we may, on top of all the blessings that grace has promised, receive at the last the crowning recompense for good service.

A. BM.

From Kingston-on-Thames. — Among the Old Testament types of inheritance, Israel's inheritance in the promised land at once springs to mind. We suggest that the experiences of the Israelites provide valuable teaching relating to the Christian's spiritual inheritance, which may be enjoyed here and now by those who, warring against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places, enter into the spiritual blessings which God has provided in connexion with His kingdom and His house. Participation in these things is conditional upon the laying hold of the promises of God.

The unconditional inheritance secured by faith in Christ is spoken of by Peter in his first epistle (1. 4) as being incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away. The blessings which came to Ruth through her marriage to Boaz would speak of this aspect of the subject. She was an alien with no claims upon the promises of God, but by grace through faith she was numbered with the children of promise and received an inheritance with them. In the same way we, who were aforetime without God and without hope in the world, by faith in Christ have now become children of God and receive the gift of eternal life. We are joint-heirs with Christ. But Christ is heir of all things (Hebrews 1. 2), so that our inheritance is limitless in extent and wealth. All that is His is ours [4]. Furthermore, we receive an earnest of these riches immediately upon being indwelt by the Holy Spirit.

The inheritance spoken of by the apostle Paul (Colossians 3. 24) is connected with our earthly service. It seems to be a kind of recompense which will have relation to the service rendered. The context appears to indicate that it will be one of the rewards given at the judgement-seat of Christ.

Ephesians 1 (verses 11, 18) has to do with Christ's inheritance in the saints, which will accrue to Him in all its fulness in a future day, when the countless myriads of the redeemed shall worship and serve Him for ever. "He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied." L. Burrows.

From London, S. E. — An inheritance is that which is received from progenitors. In connexion with the gospel, the inheritance is given only to those who are children of God; this relationship is essential (Romans 8. 12-17).

There is an inheritance which is the right of every child of God, an inheritance based on promise and faith. Paul develops this thesis in Galatians 3 and proves that all who receive Christ become the recipients of the promises and the inheritance made to Abraham. This inheritance included the land, his Seed and the overall blessing of God. In Christ, we
inherit these things too; we inherit the "territory of truth," and in the millennium will reign with Christ, who is the fulfilment of the promise of the Seed, and in Him we are blessed with every spiritual blessing (Ephesians 1), that we may, in turn, be a blessing to others [5].

The tenor of Galatians 3 and 4. 1-7 is that the Christian, by reason of his faith, receives an inheritance here on earth: but it is only part of the inheritance. Ephesians 1. 1-14 and 1 Peter 1. 3-5 make it clear that a fuller inheritance will be received in heaven. We have the Holy Spirit as an earnest of our inheritance; the pledge that by faith we have an inalienable right to the future inheritance in heaven. Inheritance and promise are closely linked with the giving of the Spirit (Galatians 3. 14, Acts 2. 38-39) [6].

It appears that this inheritance is unconditional, but there is another, associated specifically with the kingdom of God, to which very stringent conditions are attached. This inheritance is promised to those of God's children who obey the laws associated with that kingdom, the chief of which is to love God (James 2. 5). So as to make the matter quite clear, a list of offences, the practice of which precludes the Christian having any part in this inheritance, is given in 1 Corinthians 6. 9-11, Galatians 5. 19-21 and Ephesians 5. 5.

It has been noticed in previous studies that some aspects of the gospel have both an eternal and a conditional application, e. g. sanctification. Similarly, it appears that there is an inheritance which belongs to all Christians, and also one which depends on behaviour, love to God and obedience to His will. The blessings of both can be known now, but will only be appreciated fully in heaven.

A. C. Bishop.

EXTRACTS

From Atherton.—One kind of inheritance is that which concerns the land of promise in which we are (which is the Fellowship). As in the days of Israel, the promised land must be entered and the enemies cast out, before we can enter into the rest associated therewith and thereby realize our inheritance. Part of this inheritance concerns us as individuals, as with Caleb and Naboth. Then collectively, as God's people, there is much land to be gained. Our separated path as a holy nation is closely linked with the inheritance of God's people in connexion with God's glory being seen amongst us.

The "inheritance among them that are sanctified" seems to be somewhat progressive. In Acts 26. 18 it definitely refers to the unconditional inheritance of 1 Peter 1. 4, but a later aspect or stage of this is seen in Acts 20. 32 [7].

The "inheritance among them that are sanctified" seems to be somewhat progressive. In Acts 26. 18 it definitely refers to the unconditional inheritance of 1 Peter 1. 4, but a "later" aspect or stage of this is seen in Acts 20. 32.

The unconditional inheritance of Colossians 1. 12, 13 was thought by some to be seen in type when Israel entered the land. Despite failure, God kept His promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and brought Israel into the land.

The inheritance of Ephesians 5. 5 is that of being in the Fellowship, our place there, which is an inheritance, being dependent on our conduct.
From Southport. —Certain scriptures indicate that we should receive our inheritance as a plot of land to use and cultivate (1 Peter 3. 9). To Joshua the LORD said, "Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, to you have I given it" (Joshua 1. 3). So it is with us with regard to the present aspect of our inheritance. We may compare the commands of God to Joshua, as he entered Caanan, with the apostle's words to the elders of Ephesus (Acts 20. 32).

The Lord made it very clear that, in regard to the present aspect of the inheritance, there is a receiving; "in this time, and in the world to come eternal life" (Luke 18. 30). Ephesians 5 and other scriptures clearly indicate that the practising of certain sins prevents anyone from inheriting the blessing associated with the kingdom of God in this dispensation. T. R.

From Crowborough. —The inheritance we may know today is the peace, joy and contentment that come through obedience to the word of God. Israel were not only God's people but also His inheritance (Deuteronomy 9. 29). In the New Testament we find the same thought in Titus 2. 14. This is conditional upon our obedience to His will.

As joint-heirs with Christ, we have an inheritance reserved in heaven. We understand that this inheritance is the future lot of every child of God. B. V. F.

From Paisley. —The sealing of the believer by the Holy Spirit at conversion is a token of greater things to come. Material possessions are subject to the ravages of time, but we have been begotten to possessions that are eternal. Only by continued obedience to the word of God can we realize this inheritance that God has granted to us.

It would seem, from Colossians 3. 24, that, when we enter upon our eternal inheritance, some will do so with greater reward than others. The measure of faithfulness manifested in our earthly service will determine the recompense in a day to come. G. Farquhar.

From Belfast. —Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and by faith in Him we receive the inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled and which fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us. Throughout the countless ages of eternity we shall be engaged in the unfolding of our inheritance.

There is an unconditional aspect of our inheritance. We have this inheritance from the moment we exercise faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Its realization is future and independent of our life's work. W. Dyer.

From Wigan. —In this life we have an inheritance in which certain conditions are laid down by God, a standard of life befitting those who find a place and portion in it. This is referred to in Acts 20. 32 and Ephesians 5. 5, where we learn that the kingdom of Christ and of God, which we understand to be the kingdom of God over which Christ has all authority (Matthew 28. 18-20), is our present inheritance. This is not a gift like eternal salvation, but an inheritance which is based upon the obedience and subjection of believers to the word and will of God. The unrighteous cannot inherit the kingdom of God, and a saint by misconduct can disinherit himself.
There is also an aspect of inheritance in which people of God are referred to as God's inheritance (Deuteronomy 32. 9). The LORD'S portion is His people; Jacob is the lot of His inheritance. We are God's own possession by redemption (Ephesians 1. 14), and an elect race, a people for God's own possession (1 Peter 2. 9).

From Nottingham. —An inheritance is normally passed on through the death of a person. When we think of the inheritance of which we have become partakers, we are necessarily pointed to the One through whom this inheritance comes and by whose death it is passed to us.

While we can be sure of having become partakers of the inheritance now, and while we ought to live as those who have received riches untold, there are certain aspects of our inheritance which it is impossible to appreciate here, but which we shall enjoy fully only in the glory. In many ways we see a similarity between our having eternal life and our having received an inheritance.

Acts 20. 32 seems to point to another aspect of the inheritance. The word of grace was to build the saints up, to give them the inheritance. The truth of God regarding the house of God is part of our inheritance, which we should grasp and value, but which is lost by some believers.

On comparing the text of the R. V. with the A. V. for Ephesians 1. 11, we find a difference. The words "heritage" and "inheritance" seem synonymous, but the sense of the two renderings seems quite different. This scripture, we considered, teaches that not only have we received an inheritance through our Lord Jesus, but God looks upon us as an heritage, a people bought for His glory (Ephesians 1. 11), in whom He should have a portion [8].

R. Hickling.

From West Hartlepool. —For the most part the New Testament Scriptures speak of inheritance in at least two different ways, an inheritance associated with salvation (Ephesians 1. 14, Colossians 1. 12, 1 Peter 1. 14), and an inheritance associated with service (Acts 20. 32, 1 Corinthians 6. 7-10, Ephesians 5. 5).

Peter in writing to the saints of the Dispersion shows clearly that believers have been born again unto an inheritance which is situated in the heavens. Thus it is eternal (Hebrews 9. 15) and is described as incorruptible, because it is undefiled by sin. Sin is responsible for corruption (Galatians 6. 8). In contrast to earthly inheritances, which are often lost to posterity, our heavenly inheritance cannot fade away. We shall never be disinherited, because our heirship to the inheritance is based upon the relationship that we are both children and sons of God. We have been made meet, that is, granted a competence by the Father, for such an inheritance, which is described as "in light ", the light of an eternal day.

The inheritance associated with service is based upon our being subjects in the kingdom of God. 1 Corinthians 15. 50 teaches that unregenerate persons have no inheritance in this kingdom. There is no relationship between that which is natural and that which is spiritual. This is the sphere wherein Christ is served in a manner acceptable to God (Romans 14. 17, 18). This inheritance can only be the portion of those who, in obedience to the word of God, find themselves in a church of God, and consequently in the kingdom of God, as the elders of the church in Ephesus were (Acts 20. 32). This verse, by the use of the word " all," makes it clear that the will of God is that all sanctified ones (saints) should be in the kingdom of God.

Though we can never be robbed of our eternal inheritance, for it is
secured to us through the work of Christ and comes to the believer through the initial act of faith, it is sadly possible that we can lose our inheritance in the kingdom of God and of Christ (Ephesians 5. 5). This happened by way of example to the immoral man of 1 Corinthians 5; also 1 Corinthians 6. 9, 10 gives a list of sins which exclude men from the kingdom and also lead to disinheritance.

R. H., R. R.

COMMENTS

[1] (Cowdenbeath). Is not the inheritance of Acts 26. 18 the same as that of Acts 20. 32, which is a present inheritance, similar to that of 1 Corinthians 6. 9 and Ephesians 5. 5? It seems to me they are the same. See N. T. 1959 (October), top of page 151. It is true that these saints indicated in Paul's words "we're sanctified by faith", but so were the saints in the church of God in Corinth (1 Corinthians 1. 2, 30).

J. M.

[2] (Cowdenbeath). I presume that Kieroo and Kieros are either cases of misspelling or printer's errors. The Greek words meant are Kieros and Kleroo. The word Kieros is used thirteen times in the New Testament, eight times given as "lot" or "lots," twice as "part," and three times as "inheritance." It literally means "a die, anything used in determining chances," hence it is a casting of lots, and consequently a lot, that is, a part or portion; see Acts 1. 17, 25. The verb Kleroo means to choose by lot. Kleronomia is a composite word—Kieros, a lot, and Nomos, law. (Nomos is derived from Nemo, which means to distribute, dispense, and also is used for herdsmen pasturing or grazing their flocks. The law governing the grazing of flocks on common ground, such as heaths and hills, was one of the most ancient forms of unwritten law.) Thus Kleronomos was a lawful heir or possessor, and Kleronomia the inheritance. See Dr. Strong for the usages of these words. We hope that what we have said will give our friends a broader conception of this matter of inheritance.

J. M.

[3] (Cowdenbeath). Whilst the inheritance of Colossians 1. 12 and 1 Peter 1. 4 is future and in heaven, the inheritance of Acts 20. 32; 26. 18 is among (En, in, collectively) sanctified ones, a present inheritance. —J. M.

[4] (Kingston). Our friends may be clear enough in their minds as to what they mean when they say, "All that is His is ours," but the reader may not be able to grasp the content of these words. We need, I think, to be careful to distinguish what is the Lord's as of the Persons of the Godhead, who, as God, own all things, as, I judge, John 17. 10 declares, "All things that are Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine," and, on the other hand, what is said in 1 Corinthians 3. 22, 23: "All are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." In the latter scripture the Lord is viewed in His servant and mediatorial character (God and Man, one Christ), and it is in this sense and in this sense alone, that we are joint-heirs with Christ (Romans 8. 17). —J. M.

[5] (London). I think a little more care is needed in seeking to expound Galatians 3. Our friends say that those who receive Christ—all believers now—inherit the land and his (Abraham's) seed, which is Christ. The land they compare to "the territory of truth," but do we inherit Christ? Surely the answer must be "No"! We receive Christ, God's unspeakable Gift as a Gift, and not an inheritance. An inheritance implies relationship, and when we received Christ there was no relationship (save that of Creator and creature) between God and ourselves. Note the stages
of God's dealing with Abraham in Mesopotamia (in Ur). (1) "The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he dwelt in Mesopotamia." By this appearance of the God of glory Abraham was soundly converted from the idolatry in which he had been brought up (Joshua 24. 2). Following this the promises of Genesis 12. 2, 3 were made to him. He inherited the promises, but much contained in the promises he did not inherit, for instance, the land (Hebrews 11. 13). Again it is said, in Hebrews 6. 15, "He obtained the promise," that is, of Isaac the son of promise, type of the Lord, the Seed, "to whom the promise hath been made" (Galatians 3. 19). The point that the apostle is arguing in Galatians 3 is that of the distinction between law and promise, between faith and works. The promise of the Seed, the Redeemer, was not given by law, though it is witnessed to in the law and the prophets, but was given in promise to Abraham and his seed and could only be received by faith, not the reward of works. —J. M.

[6] (London). —Our friends are, quite evidently, confused between the promise of an inheritance and the inheritance itself. There is a present inheritance among sanctified ones (Acts 20. 32; 26. 18) and at the judgement-seat of Christ those who have wrought heartily as unto the Lord, for we serve the Lord Christ, shall receive the recompense, requital or reward, of their labour in the present inheritance (Colossians 3. 23-25). There is also a future inheritance in which all the children of God shall share, which is reserved in heaven (Colossians 1. 12; 1 Peter 1. 4), which will be theirs solely on the ground of grace and faith. —J. M.


[8] (Nottingham). —Whilst it is true that God's people are His inheritance (Deuteronomy 32. 9), the reference in Ephesians 1. 11 is to the elect Jewish remnant, of which Paul was one, "we who had before hoped in Christ." —J. M.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question from Whitehills and Macduff. —Is the "we" of Ephesians 1. 11, 12 the Jewish remnant of Romans 11. 5, and the "ye" of Ephesians 1. 13 the Gentiles? or do these references in Ephesians 1 have a wider application?

Answer. —Yes, the "we" refers to the believers of the Jewish elect remnant, of which Paul was one. The "ye" refers to Gentile believers in Ephesus and elsewhere, both then and now. —J. M.

Question from London, S. E. —1 Corinthians 6. 9-11 and Galatians 5. 19-21 refer to the inheritance of the kingdom of God, and Ephesians 5. 5 mentions an inheritance in the kingdom of God. Are these identical? or is it possible to inherit the kingdom and yet to forfeit an inheritance in the kingdom?

Answer. —1 Corinthians 6. 9-11; Galatians 5. 19-21; Ephesians 5. 5 refer to the kingdom of God as a present inheritance. These scriptures refer to the same thing. No, it is not possible to inherit the kingdom of God and forfeit an inheritance in that kingdom. If a person is in the kingdom of God, then he has an inheritance in it. If he is not in the kingdom, he has no inheritance in it. —J. M.
NOTES ON THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN

CHAPTER 2

Verse 17: And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

Here we have what is passing and what is permanent, what passes with the using, and what remains by the doing. The world is like the daily newspaper, with its reports of the actions of men in the flesh, and is but fit material to kindle the fire with the next day; but he who reads the Bible and keeps what is written therein is as abiding and permanent as the Bible. "The Word of the Lord abideth for ever" (1 Peter 1. 25). "He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." The latter acquires his permanence from the former.

Verse 18: Little children, it is the last hour: and as ye heard that antichrist cometh, even now have there arisen many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last hour.

The closing days of the apostolic period were days in which many false teachers arose among God's people, and others crept in privily, as we learn from the epistles to Timothy, 2 Peter, Jude, and the Revelation, who made havoc of the work of God, a havoc more deadly in character than that of Saul of Tarsus, who laid waste the church of God in Jerusalem. He persecuted the saints, but he did not corrupt them as these antichrists did. The work of the antichrist is in part told us in Daniel 11. 32, 34: "And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he pervert (corrupt, A. V.) by flatteries: but the people that know their God shall be strong, and do exploits. And they, [the teachers of the people (R. V. marg. )], shall instruct many: yet they shall fall by the sword and by flame, by captivity and by spoil, many days." Then later we read, "But many shall join themselves unto them with flatteries, and some of them that be wise shall fall, to refine them, and to purify, and to make them white, even to the time of the end" (verses 34, 35). Flattery, the praise of insincerity, is a deadly form of deception plied by those who are tools of the devil. Many have been caught in this spider's web and have never escaped therefrom. It is a bait to which the flesh takes readily. The savage times described by the Lord in Matthew 24. 4-14 will be days of great peril, but 'midst the foul flatteries on the one hand, and the violent martyrdoms on the other, there will be a people led by men of enlightenment, grit and courage, who will teach and instruct the people at the peril of their lives, and will yield not an inch of truth in the midst of the frightful turbulence and deceptions of the days of antichrist. Let us, like them, stand against the perils and evil teachings of our own day, for if John's time was the last hour, the clock of eternity is quickly approaching the last minutes of that hour.

Verse 19: They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest how that they all are not of us.

Where had the antichrists arisen, as stated in verse 18? Acts 20. 30 supplies the answer: "From among your own selves (the elders) shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them." The antichrists arose in the churches of God; they sowed their poisonous doctrines and overthrow the faith of some (2 Timothy 2. 17, 18), and then out they went with their followers. Thus sect after sect appeared in the first century and after, each with its own peculiar blend of poison, each pernicious and deadly. The verse says, "They went out from us, but
NOTES ON THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN

Verse 20: And ye have an anointing from the Holy One, and ye know all things.

Peter speaks of Jesus of Nazareth being anointed by God with the Holy Spirit and with power (Acts 10. 38). Saints also are anointed with the Holy Spirit; "Now He that stablisheth us with you in Christ, and anointed us, is God; who also sealed us, and gave us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" (2 Corinthians 1. 21, 22). Paul writes in Ephesians 1. 13, 14, "Ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is an earnest of our inheritance." Thus the gift of the Holy Spirit to all believers in Christ is an anointing, and by His teaching (John 16. 13, 14) we shall be guided into all the truth, know things that are yet to come, and have declared to us the things of Christ. The condition laid down by the Lord is, "If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know (Ginosko, to learn) of the teaching" (John 7. 17). Note, in contrast, the use of know (Oida, to see), which means, not to learn, but to know, to see. By the Spirit's anointing men who are but babes see things hidden from the wise (Matthew 11. 25).

Verses 21, 22: I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and because no lie is of the truth. Who is the liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, even he that denieth the Father and the Son.

By the revelation of the Spirit, by the anointing of the Holy One, they knew (Oida, to see) the truth, and it was because they knew the truth that John wrote to his dear little children that they might be warned against existing lies and liars, for, says he, "no lie is of the truth." Lies and the truth can never unite. It is ever the devil's aim to coat his lies with a semblance of truth, even as he seeks to fashion himself into an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11. 14). Who is the liar? The answer is, the antichrist. Why? because antichrist and antichristian teaching deny that Jesus is the Christ and deny the Father and the Son. The truest definition of who Jesus is was made by Peter when he said who he believed the Son of Man to be, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16. 16). All who believe in Him as such are born again, and are members of His Body, the Church, against which the gates of Hell cannot prevail. This is not the Romish church nor any other of the so-called churches of Christendom, but one composed of all believers in Christ throughout this whole dispensation of grace until the Lord comes. Who is Christ? He is, as to His manhood, "the Son of David." This answer the Jews gave, when asked by the Lord, "What think ye of the Christ? whose Son is He?" But they were silent, and are to this day, when the Lord asked the further question, "How then doth David in the Spirit call Him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, sit Thou on My right hand, till I put Thine enemies underneath Thy feet. If David then calleth him Lord, how is He his Son?" Christ is David's Lord as well as David's Son. He is both God and Man. But in what sense is God the Father, and Jesus Christ the Son? The ancient and misleading statement, "Holy Mary, mother of God," is still the central pillar of the religion of myriads, the
logic of which is that Jesus \textbf{is} God, and Mary \textbf{is} the mother of Jesus, hence the illogical conclusion that she \textbf{is} the mother of God. Did Jesus become God by \textbf{being} born of Mary? No, certainly not, for \textbf{He was} God in the beginning (John 1. 1). There \textbf{is} not, and never \textbf{was}, motherhood in the Godhead, but in the Godhead there \textbf{is} both Fatherhood and Sonship. Women are not the mothers of gods, even though both men (judges) (Exodus 21. 6) and angels (Psalm 8. 5) are called in \textbf{Hebrew Elohim} (God plural). "Mothers of gods" \textbf{is} mythology and paganism, \textbf{as is} the statement, "Holy Mary, mother of God." The Scriptures are ever careful, when speaking of the Lord in \textbf{His} manhood, to \textbf{use} the words "according to the flesh" (Kata Sarka) (Romans 1. 3; 9. 5). The \textbf{same} considerations arise in the \textbf{case} of those who hold that Christ \textbf{became} the Son of God through \textbf{His} birth of Mary in Bethlehem. If this \textbf{is} so, then the whole argument of Paul \textbf{as} to the Person of Christ disappears, for the One who \textbf{is} the theme of the gospel which \textbf{He} preached is God's Son, who \textbf{was} born of the \textbf{seed} of David, according to the flesh, and who \textbf{is} declared to \textbf{be} the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness. "According to the flesh" and "according to the spirit of holiness" \textbf{describe} the two natures of Christ \textbf{as} Man and \textbf{as} God, Son of Man and Son of God. Who \textbf{was} born of the virgin Mary in Bethlehem? The answer \textbf{is}, One who \textbf{was} \textbf{to be} called the Son of the Most High and the Son of God. Did \textbf{He} become the Son of God by that birth? \textbf{He} no more \textbf{became} the Son of God by that human birth according to the flesh than \textbf{He became} God by that birth. \textbf{He became} the Son of David by that birth. To \textbf{Him} shall \textbf{be} given the throne of \textbf{His} father David (Luke 1. 32-35), for \textbf{He is} the Son of David and the Son of Abraham (Matthew 1. 1) and also the Son of Man (Adam) (Psalm 8. 4; Hebrews 2. 6-8) in \textbf{His} manhood. But to confuse \textbf{His} manhood with \textbf{His} Godhood and to confound His being the Son of God from eternity, before all \textbf{ages}, with \textbf{His} being born the Son of Man in \textbf{time}, \textbf{is} a fatal mistake and a heresy of the worst kind. What happened at \textbf{His} incarnation \textbf{was} that \textbf{He}, the eternal Son, of uncreated essence and nature took the body prepared in the womb of \textbf{His} mother, \textbf{a} body of created substance of blood and flesh which God had prepared for \textbf{Him} (Hebrews 10. 5-7). In contrast to Psalm 40. 6, "Mine ears hast Thou opened (digged)". Hebrews 10. 5 follows exactly the LXX rendering of this psalm, "A body didst Thou prepare for me." Human ears demanded \textbf{a} human body in which the will of God, which \textbf{He} heard with His ears, might \textbf{be} done. Jesus Christ \textbf{is} one Person, not two beings, \textbf{a} Man called Jesus, and God the Son. \textbf{He} is One Person, the Son of God, only begotten and eternal, who \textbf{became} Man by \textbf{a} human birth according to the \textbf{flesh}. The Word, who \textbf{was} fully and truly God in the beginning (John 1. 1), \textbf{became} flesh in time (John 1. 14), and \textbf{was} "manifested in the flesh" (1 Timothy 3. 16) "for your sake" (1 Peter 1. 20). To say that the Lord \textbf{became} the Son of God \textbf{by} His human birth \textbf{is} utterly wrong, and heretical, and antichristian. If God had no eternal Son, then God the Father \textbf{is} not the eternal Father. The Fatherhood of God and the eternal Sonship of Jesus Christ stand or fall together.

\textit{J. M.}