

WORD AND WORK

DECISION DAYS.

“Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide
In the strife of Truth with Falsehood, for the good or evil side;
Some great cause, God’s new Messiah, offering each the bloom or
blight,

Parts the goats upon the left hand, and the sheep upon the right,
And the choice goes by forever ’twixt that darkness and that
light.

Careless seems the great Avenger; history’s pages but record
One death-grapple in the darkness ’twixt old systems and the
Word;

*Truth forever on the scaffold, Wrong forever on the throne—
Yet that scaffold sways the future, and, behind the dim unknown,
Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above his own.*

We see dimly in the Present what is small and what is great,
Slow of faith how weak an arm may turn the iron helm of fate,
But the soul is still oracular; and amid the market’s din,
List the ominous stern whisper from the Delphic cave within,—
“They enslave their children’s children who make compromise
with sin.”

*For Humanity sweeps onward; where today the martyr stands,
On the morrow crouches Judas with the silver in his hands;
Far in front the cross stands ready and the crackling fagots burn,
While the hooting mob of yesterday in silent awe return
To glean up the scattered ashes into History’s golden urn.”*

—JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

* * * *

Your little child the other day was taken ill. The doctor saw some little red spots, and he said, “I don’t quite know what it is. It may be measles, or it may be scarlet fever; I can’t say now, but we shall know by and by.” Even a professional man could not tell you. The disease was beginning to work out, but the time for discerning had not yet come. Two or three days later it was quite clear, and he told you what was the matter. That is what Jesus is saying here, “Now is a judgment.” (John 12:31). You have come to a time when you can discern what spirit is moving in the world. You cannot always tell, but you can tell now. Of certain periods we say, “It is a judging time,” or “now is a crisis.” The crisis is the discerning time.—*Selected.*

WORDS IN SEASON.

THE VENGEANCE OF COMPROMISE.

A writer in a recent number of the *Metropolitan* hits off a familiar fact with a few words when he says, "The pulpits, the editorial rooms, the halls of Congress, are filled with *men who don't know what they think* because their power of thought has been weakened by compromise and repression." It is certain that no man can compromise truth and conviction with impunity. That course swiftly avenges itself, and the vengeance is terrible—all the more so because the man does not commonly realize what has come over him. It is simply this, that he comes to the place that he no longer knows definitely what he believes. The lines have been lost, and he believes anything, everything, or nothing, as the mood may be upon him. He does not take himself seriously, for he is dimly aware of the hollowness of his own professions and the shallowness of his beliefs. He has sold out, and now he owns nothing; he has trifled with light and it turned to dusk and darkness; he professed not to see and became blind; he loved not the truth and fell under the spell of delusion. From all which good Lord, deliver us! It is better to suffer than to lose vision of truth and right.

* * * *

"Nay now—if those things thou yearn'st to teach
 Bear wisdom in thy judgment rich and strong,
 Give voice to them, though no man heed thy speech,
 Since right is right, though all the world go wrong,
 The proof that you believe what you declare
 Is that you stand firm while the throngs go by,
 Rather cry truth a lifetime to void air,
 Then flatter list'ning millions with a lie."

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CHRISTIAN NATIONS?

"For 1900 years," says Mr. Eliot, ex-president of Harvard University, "the ethics of Jesus of Nazareth have been in the world, but have had no effect to prevent or even reduce the evils of war, the greatest of the evils which afflict mankind." But for every thrust against truth there is a parry; and the brief and complete reply to this fling (one of many in which the scholarly Mr. Eliot has seen good to indulge) came not, as one might have expected, from a religious source, but from the snappy and thoroughly worldly little magazine, *Life*. "One can't reasonably complain," says *Life*, "That a medicine is no good when the patient doesn't take it. Governments have never adopted Christian ethics. Individuals have and with good results. Even in this war individuals are kind and humane."—That is enough said.

But there are religious papers, preachers, people, who have not the insight this humorous journal of the world evinces. They talk of "Christian nations," and ask one another in dismay whether perhaps Christianity has not collapsed, and the gospel has proved a failure, and such like talk. Why, no! "The firm foundation of the Lord standeth, having this seal: The Lord knoweth them that are his." The nations and the kingdoms of this world are not His: they know it and He knows it. But elect from every nation, born of water and of the Spirit, are His people who from the heart, have accepted Jesus as Lord.



WE KNOW NO MAN AFTER THE FLESH.

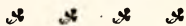
"Wherefore we henceforth know no man after the flesh." And why not? Because in that the Lord Jesus Christ died for us, we all died with Him and through Him. And the sequel is that as he was raised from the dead so we also rose with him. For this cause we do not rate our brother in Christ according to his descent, his nationality, his family, his worldly prestige or possession. We know him now as a child of God in Christ Jesus, destined to be conformed to the Lord's image. For "if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: the old things have passed away; behold they are become new." And even though we have known Christ after the flesh—as the world beholds Him and knows Him; the carpenter from Nazareth; the Prophet from Nazareth; the great Teacher; the great Model; and (the Lord pardon the blasphemy) "the supreme religious Genius," and whatever else the world calls Him and sees in Him;—yet now we know Him so no more. To us He is the Son of God, the sacrifice of our sins, crucified, risen from the dead, the Lord and Saviour, our Life and our Hope. (2 Cor. 5:14-17).



JUDGING GENTLY.

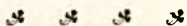
The longer I live the more I perceive that the kindest and most merciful judgment we can pass upon our fellow men is apt to be the justest also; not perhaps from the standpoint of absolute justice (from which none of us are able to judge) but in view of our own human limitations. And is it not a fact that God, seeing He dealt with us in grace, binds it upon us to deal in grace and mercy with our fellow-men? For though it may sometimes be required to speak of a man's evil, he specially enjoins upon us that we should "speak evil of no man." And what a reason he gives! "For we ourselves once were foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another," And how were we delivered out of that sort of life? Without interference from the outside we never could have been. Does the rushing current stop before it reaches the precipice of Niagara? Does the fire's fierce flame desist before it has devoured what is within its reach? Does the law of gravitation swerve to show mercy to

a falling body? "BUT—when the kindness of God our Savior, and His love toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we did ourselves, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit, which He poured out upon us richly; that being justified by His grace, we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." (Tit. 3:2-7). If God has so dealt with us, shall we not manifest grace toward our fellow-man?



WHAT THE FLESH CAN NOT DO.

There is a sore problem laid before the children of God and they have often bungled on both sides of it in trying to solve it: how to stand up for truth and right, and yet not forget love and kindness; how to be just and yet hold fast mercy; how to fight and yet maintain the meekness and gentleness of Christ; how to be angry in righteous indignation, yet sin not by mingling selfish irritation and malice into our zeal for truth and right. Who is sufficient unto these things? The wisdom from above, the wisdom of the Holy Spirit alone can meet the dilemmas. Truly, "they that are in the flesh cannot please God," and since we are all in the flesh except the Spirit of God dwell in us; we walk after the flesh whenever the Spirit of God does not control us. Let us begin anew—and wherein we have failed, "If we erred in human blindness and forgot that we are dust, If we missed the law of kindness when we struggled to be just"—this also will the grace of God cover.



THE GREATEST MARVEL.

That God puts patient labor on a man in whom evil and good are strongly and strangely blended, with evil predominant; that God meets a man where he really stands rather than where he ought to stand, and begins to reach out after him while he is afar off to draw him unto Himself; and that God will condescend to work through and with an imperfect instrument—these facts, in view of what God is, seem to me the greatest marvel of all.



SHALL WE CONTINUE IN SIN?

For all that, God's goodness makes for righteousness. If where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. (Rom. 5:20) it is not that we should continue in sin that grace may abound, but that, being dead to sin we should live unto righteousness. I fear that view of the grace of God which does not make me determinedly opposed to wrong doing, and I am sure that that conception of God's love which does not make me hate and dread sin above everything, is a delusion and snare of Satan; and only that hope is not a lying dream which will make a man purify himself even as Christ is pure. (1 John 3:1-3). For who is God's good friend but the man who stands with Him against all He hates, and for all He wants and loves? And all the mercies

and lovingkindness of God are given us not to make us careless about sin, but to win and deliver and keep us from it forever.



WHERE ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE.

Difficulties and obstacles may bar our way mountain-high, and all the outlook seem hopeless. But when we kneel to pray all things begin to look possible. For there we come in touch with One to whom nothing is impossible. What is it God can not do? What is it God will not do that is right and good? A child of God on his knees—that is the picture of a human being in touch with Omnipotence. What may not come of that! No wonder,

“Satan trembles when he sees
The weakest saint upon his knees.”

No wonder he tries every possible way to keep God's child from praying by suggesting doubts and fears, by inertia and heaviness, by over-filling their time with tasks and duties. For once God's servant learns to pray, satan has an invincible, irresistible factor to contend against; and on the other hand God has an outlet of His power, an instrument and channel through which to exercise His might. For “with God all things are possible.”

“SHE HATH DONE WHAT SHE COULD.”

She lived her life humbly and faithfully and no stain or reproach mars her record; she filled her place, she did her work. She was a good man's good and noble wife, the God-fearing mother of a family of children. And that means much of burden and trial, so much more than anyone who has not passed through the toil and the suffering and the responsibility of it, or has not seen it daily face to face, can realize. It means much to go through that career and come out creditably—even in common life. But hers was something more. Her husband had conceived the purpose to carry the gospel of Jesus Christ beyond the seas. She stood by him, encouraged, aided, and abetted, as only a Christian wife can. So they went and spent some years in the work in Japan; and when they came back it was only because the failing health of the wife and mother compelled it. Now she has closed her eyes and her ministry is ended. She fought a good fight, she finished her course, she kept the faith. Like as for most Christian women, it was her lot to do her work in the quiet obscurity of her home, but the recognition and the praise of her work is with God; and it is ours to pay the tribute of love to her memory. This is Sister C. C. Klingman who lately fell asleep in Jesus.

“Many daughters have done worthily,
But thou excellest them all.
Grace is deceitful and beauty is vain,
But a woman that feareth Jehovah, she shall be praised.”

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No. 2.

The shower of appreciative letters and of subscriptions that has been poured out upon us—what shall we do about it but thank God and take courage?

Brother John E. Dunn sent us an open letter requesting a frank and fair presentation of some prophetic themes concerning which there has been some questioning and stir. We are only too glad to accede to this straightforward request; and in this issue is an article on Premillennialism, which is the first of the topics on which light was requested. Others will follow.

DELIGHTED.

So say others and so say I. "Every page a pleasure to read." "Much improved." "Chuck full of good things from start to finish." "Refreshing." "A strong number." "Just the spirit of fellowship, unsectarianism, devotion, work and study so much needed." These are some of the sentiments written and spoken. That others are pleased greatly pleases me. Congratulations, Brother Boll.

Now, let me remind each reader of his own responsibility in the matter of spreading the blessed gospel through such a medium as Word and Work. It costs much money, time and labor to put out such a work. The editor is under no more obligations to sacrifice than the rest of us. Bearing this in mind let each one put forth a little effort and obtain at least one subscriber. Many will do more.

STANFORD CHAMBERS.

SANBALLAT *versus* NEHEMIAH.

STANFORD CHAMBERS.

It came to pass when King Artaxerxes in the twentieth year of his reign, granted to Nehemiah "according to the good hand of God," and he began rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, that the petty king Sanballat set up an opposition to every measure for the welfare of the ruined city.

Sanballat possessed that quality coveted today by some and admired in others as a distinguishing mark of soundness and loyalty. He was a master opposer, ever combining shrewdness, vigor, determination and persistence. Profit will come with a study of his methods and of how Nehemiah successfully met his opposition. Back of Sanballat was his Satanic Majesty, even the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience," using him just as he uses many today and seeks to use others. Therefore in studying Sanballat's tactics we are studying the devil's. Nehemiah successfully met him, hence a study of his ways which were God's will help us in our warfare. Sanballat's methods were:

1. Ridicule. "What are these feeble Jews doing? Will they fortify themselves? If even a fox go up, he will break down their stone wall." Nehemiah just spoke to the Lord about it and kept on building. "And all the wall was joined together to half the height thereof, for the people had a mind to work."

2. Conspiracy. When they heard that the repairing went forward "they were very wroth and conspired all of them together to come and fight." So he "made prayer to God and set a watch against them day and night; effected a better organization of his forces and inspired them for defense. The enemy then saw that their conspiracy was known and that God had brought their counsel to naught.

3. Compromise. "Now it came to pass, when it was reported to Sanballat," et al., "that I had builded the wall * * * that Sanballat and Geshem sent unto me saying, Come, let us meet together in one of the villages of the plain of Ono." "Come now, therefore, and let us take counsel together." Nehemiah, knowing they planned mischief, replied, "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down." Five times was he thus solicited and the fifth was a false accusation with a threat. Nehemiah refused and, as his custom was, took it to the Lord in prayer.

4. A deceiver's advice. Shemaiah would befriend (?) Nehemiah at this juncture by some wise counsel, advising him to save his life. Nehemiah replied, "Should such a man as I flee?" "And lo, I perceived that God had not sent him, but that he pronounced this prophecy against me; for Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him." "So the wall was finished. And it came to pass, that when our enemies heard thereof * * * they feared and were much cast down in their own eyes; for they perceived that this work was wrought of our God."

SEVEN SUPERIORITIES OF CHRIST.

Col. 1:15-19.

H. L. OLMSTEAD.

After the prayer in behalf of the Church at Colosse and the thanksgiving to the Father for making them fit for the inheritance, for delivering them from the power of darkness, and bringing them into the kingdom of God's dear Son, the Apostle takes up the pre-eminence of Christ. It is in Him we have redemption and it is redemption through blood. (verse 14). His blood is the purchase price that has redeemed us from the power of darkness, but who is He?

1. He is the *image of the invisible God*. verse 15. He is none other than Immanuel—God with us. (Matt. 1:23). "God manifest in the flesh." (1 Tim. 3:16). He is even more than an image for He is *the express image of the Father's substance or Person*. (Heb. 1:3). In this He is superior to all others. Though the first Adam was made in the image and likeness of God he was never called Immanuel nor could he say "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." (Jno. 14:9). In Christ, God came down to earth. There have been many manifestations of God but so far Jesus Christ is the supreme manifestation of the Father. Access to God except through Jesus Christ is a thing impossible. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." O how the world needed to know God and still needs to know Him, but those who seek Him will never find Him apart from Christ who is the image of the invisible God. God will remain not only invisible but also unknowable to those who deny the Son.

2. He is "*the first born of every creature.*" He is pre-eminent here. Of Himself He said, "Before Abraham was, *I am.*" It was for saying this that "They took up stones to cast at him." (Jno. 8:58, 59). Before Adam or the Devil and his angels, before any angel or Archangel is Christ. "In the beginning was the Word." (Jno. 1:1). Truly in this he is superior.

3. In Him were *all things created* that are in heaven and that are in earth. "Without him not anything was made that was made. (Col. 1:16; Jno. 1:3). Everything visible and invisible, thrones, dominions, principalities and powers; all things were created through Him. "Through whom also he made the worlds." (Heb. 1:2). This is the Christ whom we serve. This is He, who existing in the form of God, emptied himself, came into the world which He created and was despised, rejected, slain and made to be sin for us. In the form of a servant He lived and in our human flesh he died, of the seed of Abraham and the son par excellence of David. But the things in heaven and on earth, the things visible and invisible, thrones, dominions, principalities and powers were not only created through Him but *for or unto* Him. (V. 16). "He is heir of all things." (Heb. 1:2). But wonder of wonders, we are joint-heirs. Whatever

He has is ours. The bringing of many sons into glory (Heb. 2:10), will mean glory indeed and certainly the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.

4. And He is *before all things*. v. 17. This gives the lie to materialism. Matter and things are not eternal. He who is the Root as well as the offspring of David is before all *things*. There was a time when they were not, and Christ who was and who is and who is to come, preceded them.

5. In Him *all things consist*. (V. 17). Not only *before* all things and the Creator of all things but the preserver. The whole of creation, visible and invisible is held together (consists) through Christ. That He had power over nature is seen in His miracles. This mighty universe of life force and matter of which we know so little neither exists nor is held together nor is preserved apart from Him through whose blood we are redeemed. Life in all its forms from thy highest to the lowest is in some way dependent upon Christ; force in all its manifestations centers in Him, who, when awakened from sleep by the frightened disciples, said to the storm-tossed sea, Peace be still. Matter with all its phenomena would dissolve again into chaos were it not for Him who fed the multitude from a few loaves and fishes.

6. And He is the *Head of the body, the Church*. The body of Christ is one (Eph. 4:4) and in it Christ is supreme—supreme in authority, supreme in power, supreme in excellency. His Headship must be held by all who in one spirit have been baptized into his body. (1 Cor. 12:13). To no man, to no organization, to no enterprise or system has Christ resigned His authority. Not even unto angels (Col. 2:18, 19) does He allow us to accord divine worship, but we are to hold only the Head. There are many things of which one may be a member but there is none that promises glory save the church over which Christ is Head. We are joined to the Head and are waiting to be glorified with Him. (Eph. 5:22-33). His right to the Headship of the Church rests upon His divine nature and upon the fact that by His own blood He purchased the Church. (Acts 20:28).

7. Who is the *beginning, the first born from the dead*. Christ the first fruits; then they that are Christ's at the coming." (1 Col. 15:23). In this Christ also has the pre-eminence. It would seem from this that in the sense in which believers will be raised and glorified Christ is the first. Others had been raised from the dead but there is no account of their glorification. His being called the "first fruits of them that sleep" and the "first born from the dead" is taken by some to prove that the raisings from the dead such as those of Lazarus and the widow's son were resuscitations rather than resurrections. The first-fruits are a prophecy of the great harvest yet to come when the dead in Christ shall be raised incorruptible, to enter into the joy of Lord. Verily in all things He has the pre-eminence. "A wonderful Savior is Jesus my Lord."

THE BREAD, THE WATER, AND THE LIGHT OF LIFE.

E. L. JORGENSON.

As they journeyed from Egypt to Canaan the redeemed of Israel enjoyed their Redeemer's providence. They ate divinely given food, "He gave them bread out of heaven to eat"; they drank divinely given water, "He clave rocks in the wilderness, and gave them drink abundantly as out of the depths"; they were led and lighted by the divine pillar, "In the day-time also he led them with a cloud, and all the night with a light of fire." And this was typical. In three successive chapters of John—sixth, seventh and eighth—Jesus declares Himself as the true source of the Bread, the Water and the Light of Life.

The crowds are gathering about Him at Capernaum, hinting that He should feed them again. He tells them to give less attention to the food which is of such little account, and to make more of that which is of so much account. Then step by step he approaches his "hard saying." "The bread of God is that which cometh down out of heaven"; "I am the bread of life"; "I am the living bread which came down out of heaven. The bread which I will give is my flesh for the life of the world"; "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, ye have not life in yourselves"; "He that eateth this bread shall live forever." The Jews brought out their usual question, "How," and strove about it. Many of the disciples went back, and thus the Saviour blazed His way between the crowd as He ever does with the two-edged sword of The Word of God. But there were some who knew how to cling to Jesus despite the perplexing things He would sometimes say and do, and to them He explained the "hard saying." No, he does not drive us to the doctrine of transubstantiation; for He says, "It is the spirit that giveth life; the flesh profiteth nothing: *the words that I have spoken unto you are spirit, and are life.*" There we have it. The bread of life is supplied by the words of Jesus. Shall we wonder then that there are Christians everywhere who are starving to death, so little do they "handle the Word of Life"; so little used are their Bibles. The feast is spread before them, but neither will they come to the table nor eat. And so they grow lank, lean and hungry looking, and starve the "inner man," all for the lack of learning to read the words of Jesus. For verily, all that is needed to believe is to read; and all that is needed to disbelieve is to leave the Bible alone.

The next scene is in Jerusalem. You have heard the preacher on the last day of protracted meeting, as he grew eager and earnest lest the people should depart unsaved. O, how eager and burdened the Saviour felt on that last great day of the feast! And now he steps out before the thirsty throng and proclaims Himself the Smitten Rock from which eternal springs are flowing—the on-flowing, ever-flowing, over-flowing

fountain of living water. Here, if any man thirst he may drink and never thirst again. As He said to the outcast woman, "Every one that drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst." There is the first result of drinking; satisfaction for yourself. And you need not think you can lead others to the rock until you have been over the road yourself. But then comes the second result of drinking: "If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me as the scripture hath said, from within him shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believed on him were to receive." The words of Jesus supply the bread of life; and the Holy Spirit within the believer supplies the water of life. Not a mere brook either, nor a creek, nor yet a river alone—but *rivers* of waters of life. Brother, sister, friend of mine, do you know anything about such a life? Have you in the first place drunk to your own soul's satisfaction? And have you in the second place become unto others a very fountain of life? Like desert travelers, men are thirsting, thirsting, dying; and like caravans in Sahara, they haste after the mirage before them never to overtake it; or else they drink brackish, stagnant water from the wells of this world, and "thirst again." They drink at this fountain and that; they go to the dance and theatre, the gaming-table and race-track, the saloon and brothel, because they think these will satisfy—but they come away and "thirst again." Like alcoholic liquors, the waters in the wells of the world can satiate, but they can never satisfy the thirst they themselves create. And you—God has set you a spring, in the center of a circle that no one else can supply; and if rivers of living water are not flowing from within you to them, you have need to drink yourself, and for their sakes.

Again the scene is set in Jerusalem. On either side of the temple court stands the huge golden candalabra, which, during the feast of tabernacles would be burning at night, lighting the court, the city, and from the eminence of Zion, piercing even the shadows of Olivet. In such a setting the Saviour delivered the saying, "I am the light of world." There He stood, the whole world's shining Sun! Veiled indeed in mortal clay was He, as Gideon's lamps were hidden in the pitchers; yet destined, when once the vessel should be broken at the cross, to pierce the deepest darkness and send the shadows skulking to the wall. "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in the darkness but shall have *the light of life.*" It is a great big, broad, sweeping claim. Big enough to put the man who makes it in with lunatics or deceivers, unless he is just what he professed to be. But his influence on succeeding generations denies that he was either lunatic or deceiver; for lunatics get no following, and no deceiver's name could ever become the very synonym of truth and veracity. So far as I know no infidel has ever dared to challenge His statement, "I am the light of the world"; though they may strip Him of His deity, as the sol-

diers once stripped Him of His garments, they have been compelled to say with them, "This was a righteous man." God or man, divine or human, true or false, Jesus has been the light of the world. All other lights have faded before Him. If such a person be not God, we need not seek for any.

But we have not always behaved as if we believed Him the light of *the world*, brethren, but more as if we believed Him the light of some city, county, country, or at the most, of some lone continent, and that our own. Let us henceforth, by praying and by preaching; by giving and by going, make men know that Jesus is the light of the world. Not that we can bring all men to the light; some love darkness rather; but we can bring the light to every man. And at last by his personal presence he will fill the earth with God's knowledge, as waters have filled the sea.

WORDS FITLY SPOKEN.

CHARLES NEAL.

INTERCESSORY CHRISTIANS.

"A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in network of silver." Prov. 25:11.

An aged sister recently said to me, "When I wake in the night I pray—I pray for you that you may say words in season." I am persuaded that her prayers and the prayers of others have enabled me to say "words in season" and "speak boldly as I ought to speak" many times. It is said that a minister once dreamed that he saw rows of beautiful diadems studded with precious jewels. 'Is that big one for me?' said he, remembering there had been many conversions in his church. 'No, not for you,' the angel said, 'that one is for the poor old deaf man who used to sit by your pulpit stairs and plead for souls in the congregation, while you preached to them.' Brethren may we not be neglecting this very important work of the Lord? I fear very much that we are trusting too much in the sword service apart from prayer. What God has joined together we should not put asunder. The apostles said "we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word." Paul said, "take the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God: praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching therein with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints." Let us become intercessory Christians.

IN THE NIGHT WATCHES.

"Mine eyes anticipated the night watches that I might meditate on thy Word." Psa. 119:148.

Like a vine meditation needs a trellis upon which to mount upward. The Word of God proves to be just such a support. Let us fill our minds with the word so that in wakeful hours of the night or in sickness we may be able to mount upward in meditation. Doubtless God sometimes holds our eyes in waking

for reasons known only to Him. (Ps. 77:4; Esther 6:1). Let us learn to utilize the hours of wakefulness by prayer and meditation. Calling down the blessings of God on others and feeding our own souls on the bread from heaven.

Let me suggest to you, dear Christian reader, what may be of help to you in hours of wakefulness. Begin by meditation upon some portion of the Word of God. Give God a chance to come in and illuminate the passage and apply it to your understanding and need. This will perhaps lead you into the spirit of prayer. The transition from hearing God talk to you to your talking to Him will be natural. When a heart full of love to God speaks to Him it is natural to adore Him, confess sins and shortcomings, petition Him for personal needs, intercede for others and thank Him for all His benefits. Perhaps before you have gone this far your eyes will have closed in sleep, but certainly a sleep that overtakes one with the soul reaching heavenward cannot fail to be refreshing.

Here is another healthful habit. Begin the day with prayer—at the first waking moment let the heart go up to God in prayer. Three minutes spent in this way each morning will work wonders in the Christian growth and enjoyment. Three minutes spent in this way may change the whole day. Try it with a whole heart and prove it to your own joy and profit.

REALIZING THE PRESENCE OF GOD.

“My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.”
Ex. 33:14.

When God commands a work He promises His presence in the execution of it. See Ex. 3:10-12; Judge 6:14-16; Josh. 1:9; Jer. 1:17-19; Matt. 28:19, 20. Doubtless as to doctrine we all believe this but in the practical life it is a useless thing. To most of us God is so far away. Brother Joseph Sims once took a colony of people from Kansas to Canada. There was an offer from the government to give to any church that would build a house of worship forty acres of land. When they were ready to build Brother Sims notified the government of the fact and requested the land. They then wrote him asking him where the headquarters of the church of Christ is located. Brother Sims then explained that the church is congregational in form and recognizes no earthly head, Christ being the head of the church. They then wrote him saying, “Will you please give us the headquarters of the Church of Christ?” He answered, “The headquarters of the Church of Christ is in heaven.” They said in reply, “Since your headquarters is so far away we will not take up communication.” I sometimes feel that many Christians feel that way about it—since heaven is so far away what is the use to pray. Better look for help and comfort from a nearer source, and thus we are made to lean on the arm of flesh and Jehovah is dishonored and we suffer great loss. It is this idea of God being so far away that allows us to fall into so many sins. Realizing God as ever present will produce a holy life. How shall we make His presence a blessed reality?

I have found this practice very helpful in realizing the presence of God. Let me recommend it to you. Go to some place where no one can hear and there all alone with Him talk with Him as you would with an earthly friend. Leave off all stereotyped phrases and dialect of churches and speak to Him from your heart. Tell Him of your need in the common every day language. At first you will find it an awkward experience and the sound of your voice in the stillness will perhaps startle you. It will be very hard to break away from that dignified prayer speech but the effort will be a very healthful exercise. Do not fail to give GoGd time to speak to you for in this will be found the blessedness of communion. After following this practice for some time from a true heart one will be able to realize the presence of God and learn to talk to Him in a way that will bring refreshment to the soul and greater stability in the practical life.

A WORK FOR ALL.

“To every man his work.” Mark 13:34.

No saint of God is so financially poor, so physically sick, so ignorant of letters, so stammering of tongue or so distant from the church but that there is work for him in the kingdom of the Lord. Christ gave to every man his work and the Holy Spirit divides his gifts “to each one severally as He will.” Let none excuse himself—you are fitted for some work—a work which none but yourself can do. Do not excuse yourself with the thought that you have no ability. God knows you have—you know you have, then why not begin this day to discharge it. The following poem by Annie Johnson Flint taken from “The Sunday School Times” may help you some by suggesting some ways in which you are fitted for service.

Three things the Master hath to do,
And we who serve Him here below,
And long to see His kingdom come,
May pray or give or go.

He needs them all,—the open hand,
The willing feet, the asking heart,—
To work together and to weave
The threefold cord that shall not part.

Nor shall the giver count his gift
As greater than the worker's deed,
Nor he in turn his service boast,
Above the prayers that voice his need.

Not all can go, nor all can give
To arm the others for the fray;
But young or old, or rich or poor,
Or strong or weak,—we all can pray.

Pray that the full hands open wide
To speed the message on its way;
That those who hear the call may go,
And—pray that other hearts may pray,

THE CHURCH OF THE THESSALONIANS.

J. EDWARD BOYD.

In the Roman province of Macedonia, on the bay of Therme, was the city of Thessalonica—an important center of commerce and a stronghold of idolatry. To this city came he who was “determined not to know anything * * save Jesus Christ, and him crucified”; and in this region of great darkness appeared the light of the gospel of God’s Son. With the Apostle Paul came his faithful companions and helpers Silas and Timothy, undaunted by the memory of the Philippian jail or by fears of the things which might befall them in their new field. There was in Thessalonica a synagogue of the Jews; “and Paul, as his custom was, went in unto them, and for three Sabbath days reasoned with them from the scriptures.” ((Acts 17:1, 2). From these scriptures he alleged that the Christ—He whom the Jews had been awaiting through the centuries—was destined to suffer, and that He was to rise from the dead; “And this Jesus,” said he, “whom I proclaim unto you, is the Christ.” The resurrection of Jesus was here, as elsewhere, a fundamental part of the apostle’s preaching. A suffering Savior and a risen Lord were essential elements of his gospel.

But so far as the main body of his hearers was concerned, the irrefutable arguments from the scriptures were in vain. However, even among these were some whose hearts were prepared to receive the truth; for “Some of them were persuaded, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few.” (verse 4). Thus we are told of the beginning of the church which Paul at a later time addressed as “The Church of the Thessalonians.”

In many respects this seems to have been a model church. Some of the letters to the churches were called forth by great evils; but in reading the letters to this church we are rather impressed with its many excellent characteristics, which the churches now would do well to emulate. The gospel had come to them not “in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit, and in much assurance”; and they had “received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit.” (1 Thes. 1:5, 6). And what unspeakable joy filled the heart of Paul when, after having been from them for some time, he received the glad tidings of their faith and love, which continued to grow exceedingly even in all the persecutions and afflictions which they endured. (1 Thes. 3:6-9; 2 Thes. 1:3, 4).

The Church of the Thessalonians was pre-eminently a *working* church—a *missionary* church. “For from you,” says the Apostle, “hath sounded forth the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith to God-ward is gone forth; so that we need not to speak anything.” (1 Thes. 1-8). They are not content with sounding forth the word in their own city, or in their own province, alone; nor did they con-

fine their labors here until it could be said that all the heathen at home had been converted. But in this work they became imitators of Paul and his companions. (Verse 6).

Not only was this church a *working church*, but it was also a *waiting church*. They had "turned unto God from idols," not only "to serve a living and true God," but also "to wait for his Son from heaven." Their hopes were not set upon the things of this world—upon social changes, human advancement, political movements; but upon the coming of Jesus. Then they could hope for rest from their trials. Certainly even in their much affliction "the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty" could abound "unto the riches of their liberality." (2 Cor. 8:2).

MOVING PICTURES OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

BY BROTHER BARNABAS.

We may reverently say that the New Testament contains a series of moving pictures of drama, and tragedy, far excelling in every way the productions of men. To see the New Testament pictures one has but to sit in his room, with book in hand, and let pass before his view the scenes, characters and incidents from life; seen by the eye of faith, it is true, but none the less real on that account. Now, moving pictures must have "human interest" and "action," scenes of the strongest emotion and travail of soul; with death or disaster inwoven. All these are in the story the New Testament tells.

The first picture is a night scene near the city of Bethlehem. For a background there is a world in the darkness of ignorance and sin. The "glory of the Lord" bursts through the night and an angel appears addressing humble, trembling shepherds, saying, "Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all the people: for there is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour who is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2). Such, in part, is the story which God, the author, announces by the angel. The shepherds journey in haste to Bethlehem, to view this wonderful, heaven-heralded Saviour. There they see the hero of the gospel as an infant, lying in a manger!

Through wilderness and desert, from the far East, a caravan wends its way. Led by a glittering star they come to Bethlehem. The star halts. Beneath it gather the magi about the Saviour and pour at His feet rich gifts. The scene changes. We see the Saviour as a boy, confounding the learned doctors in the temple by hearing and answering hard questions. About this time He shows His knowledge of the part He is to take in the great gospel drama and tragedy. To His parents who had thought Him lost, He said, "Know ye not that I must be in my Father's house?" (Luke 2:49).

The scene changes again and we behold Him at about 30

years of age receiving baptism at the hands of John the Baptist. Here the Holy Spirit descends upon Him in the form of a dove. Here God says, "This is my beloved Son"; here John says, "Behold the Lamb of God!" In these two characters Jesus appears and gives perfect expression to each part. Not once did He do aught that was not befitting the Son of God. Not only to that generation but to all rings the challenge, "Which of you convicteth me of sin?" The brief three years and a half of His ministry sufficed to witness to His divine Sonship. Of Him it was said, "Never man so spake." Others said, on the occasion of His stilling the tempest, "What manner of man is this!" Even while on the cross He won recognition voiced by the centuries. "Truly this was the Son of God." In the crucifixion and events immediately preceding He is seen as the Lamb of God, bearing the world's sin; meekly, unresistingly led to the slaughter. Between the Lord's baptism and crucifixion He is seen in yet another character—as the express image of God! So perfectly did He fill the place that He could say, as He did to Philip, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." Therefore in Hebrews He is declared to be the "very image" of God's substance. Thus in pardoning sinners, healing the sick, making whole the lame, cleansing lepers, feeding the multitudes and casting out demons, He was ever expressing God's attitude toward, and sympathy and compassion for, human beings. As one expressed it, "Jesus was God spelling Himself out." He left glory to come to earth; left riches and became poor for our sake. He laid aside His honor and glory He had with the Father in heaven that He might identify Himself with the human race. He tabernacled here in human flesh. He came to us in our sinful and ruined state to save us and give us life everlasting. Here we find the "human interest" in this gospel story; for we were *all* in need of a Saviour. And so one died that all might live. Does not this thrill? And this is the story He charged His disciples to tell to "every creature." How can such a story fail to interest any human being? When we ask why Jesus died the love element in our story appears. "God so *loved* the world" that He gave Jesus up for us all. But when the Saviour came to His own people, "they that were His own received Him not." There is pathos for you. There is more pathos in the scene where the disciples are seen forsaking Him as He is being led away to a mock trial. And more pathos still in Gethsemane. There the disciples sleep while the Lord travails in soul, agonizing in the shadow of His cross. Now comes the climax of the tragedy of Calvary. He on whom the salvation of the world depends is nailed to the cross. Does Satan and Hell rejoice? If so, the joy is of short duration. On the third day the tomb of the crucified one is empty. An angel says, "He is not here; for He is risen, even as He said." Later He is seen ascending into heaven by His chosen apostles. And later He sends forth the Holy Spirit whom He had promised them. Under the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit. Peter joyfully

proclaims the fact that remission of sins and salvation are for all who will obey the commands of this crucified and risen Saviour. Here is the "happy ending" of our gospel story. Satan is foiled. Death is conquered and the Hero sits on God's throne; all authority and power are put in His hands. And to us who love and serve this Saviour is the promise that we shall share with Him in all He has received.

Yes, the New Testament contains moving pictures that are moving indeed. They have moved, and continue to move, flinty and sin-deadened hearts to respond with joy to the love revealed therein. To it must credit be given for the fairest deeds and most heroic acts known to men. We have read it to no profit if our ideals and lives are not made the nobler thereby.

SERVING GOD FOR PAY.

W. J. BROWN.

"And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, if God will be with me, and will keep me in the way that I go, and will give bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace, and Jehovah will be my God, then, this stone which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God's house; and of all which Thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto Thee."
Gen. 28:32.

Thus Jacob proposed to make a bargain with Jehovah, while fleeing from an outraged and infuriated brother whom he had outwitted in his craft. Both easy and natural in such circumstances to make what seems to the wrong-doer generous proposals for protection. It is no new thing for one to go to God for protection rather than to the man whom has been grossly injured. But the appeals under such conditions are of a piece with the character of him who makes it, and unavailing with God. If you have injured your brother, stop not to make bargains with God, go be reconciled to your brother. We are still living in a commercial world, and the spirit of trade insinuates itself into the phrases of our petitions. "If Jehovah will give me food to eat and raiment to put on, and keep me in the way of safety, and prosper me in all good things, then Jehovah shall be my God, and I will give back a tenth of what he gives me." Be careful how you make bargains with God. Joab fled to the altar of refuge in time of danger, but he found no protection where he had made no provision. Godliness is profitable, if one does not seek it for that purpose. But the motive of Jacob was not an aspiration in that direction. He was one of those characters whose religious conception takes its color from his own selfish demands. He will do anything in his way that God demands if God will pay him well for it. He will go to the house of the Lord if it is made the most attractive place and the great crowds go there; he will worship and praise God if the services are not too

religious; he will give to the church if the Lord will make a big supper and give him something good to eat; he will never miss a prayer meeting, if the church patronizes his business; he will preach or pray, if his devotions help him to be more popular with the people or help him up to the legislative halls. "If God will give bread to eat, and raiment to put on, and keep me in the way so that I get great gain why, then, Jehovah shall be my God." So much praise so much gain; so much worship so much profit!!

Why not? Is not that what God is for—to serve the people? Why should I serve Him if He does not pay me for my service? I am sometimes reminded of a little boy who was told by his mother if he was bad God would not forgive him. "I thought that was what God was for." It is a deplorable fact that many go to the house of God and leave their hearts at home, in the ledger, or allow it to go off on a pleasure excursion. It is not "presenting the body a living sacrifice to God" when the heart is somewhere else. This may be the case with many in our assemblies: "you draw nigh unto me with your lips but your hearts are far from me." If you discover at the moment of your offering of the "fruit of your lips" that your heart is not in the offering, break suddenly off and send a prayer to God for your heart. "Out of the heart are the issues of life." And out of the heart the mouth speaketh the praises of God. What "God has joined together let not man" nor the devil "put asunder."

It has been reported that a heathen after hearing the missionary tell the story of the Savior, hastened to destroy his idol, saying, "Lo these many years I have worshipped thee and it has profited me nothing, I will try the God Jesus." The devil was speaking the truth for many men when he demanded of Jehovah, "Doth Job serve God for naught?" It was his opinion that all men were like himself. If there was the offer of a great money salvation in the gospel, there would be more converts to Christianity. It was once thought by many of the people in the Savior's time that he was a bread-king, come to reign and feed the people! Hence thousands sought Jesus and more bread. It would seem that the heart, conscience and mind, had turned to stomach.

Neither is the highest type of devotion produced through fear—neither fear of God nor the devil. It is true, "the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom," but it is also the truth that "perfect love casts out all fear." Fear is only a means to the end, which is love. The fear which ends in fear leaves man just where it finds him—in bondage. Love is both a means and an end. In the animal love is a means, in the human heart it is both means and end. The mother love for off-spring in the animal dies out when the young becomes able to take care of itself, not so in the human parent—it is an end within itself. Neither is hope the highest and strongest motive in the service of God. Both hope and fear have important functions in all spheres of life. It is perfectly natural and legitimate to hope for the bet-

ter things and fear the worst. There cannot be too much of either. But there is another element better and more pleasing to both God and man. It is the very thing for which God exists and man was created; namely, love. It is the most potent factor for peace, joy and happiness in the family, and has more power to hold one steadfast in the paths of virtue than any other consideration. It is a great restraining power from evil. It is no discredit to virtue to say that many are kept in the paths of virtue and purity, because they know that any deviations from it would grieve and distress those whom they love. There are many who would do anything and suffer anything rather than cause a pang of sorrow to parent's hearts. Are there not many who have been kept back from crime by thinking of loved ones at home? There are doubtless, multitudes of young men and women—but not as many as there should be—who find the power to resist temptations, in the remembrance of a mother's love in the time of sore trial. The poet makes one of his characters say to his intended companion just at the threshold of the wedded life, "If I did not love virtue more than I love you, I would not be worthy of you." But that is not the conception of the many. There are thousands, perhaps, who are helped on in the straight path of virtue not for the sake of virtue and the dread of humiliation, but for the sake of loved ones and the effect a wrong course would have on the hearts of those who loved and trusted them. No doubt many a young man sent forth from his country home into the blandishments of city life to make his way in the world, has been kept sober, chaste, honest, only by the constraining love of those whom he has left behind. Love keeps him from doing many things that would make a sister blush, or the father avoid the mention of his name. He could throw himself into the evil current of temptation that is sweeping away so many noble young men, if it were not for the remembrance of loved ones. One that had forgotten this love for the moment, plunged into the most violent dissipation, but on awakening was filled with remorse and despair, and that not so much on account of the degradation it had brought upon himself, but the grief, dishonor and sorrow it brought upon the other members of the family.

I have spoken of love as a restraining influence, but it is equally powerful in promoting what is best in man. What sacrifices will it not make for those whom we love? What labor and hardships it will endure and what sufferings it will bear for loved ones! There are many young men and women to be found—for which I thank God and good parents—in the world, who endure the greatest privation, and toil from morning till late at night, not so much for themselves, but for an invalid mother and dependent brothers and sisters. The lesson for parents is: make home attractive and redolent with love, and when our children go out to try the discipline of a father's wisdom and a mother's love, they may have in their trials and temptations the help that comes from such homes.

"That old hearthstone was watched by the eyes that are

closed in death; and they who have gone out into the rough world visit it in their prayers and their tears a thousand times, and its loving memories hold them more than all else in earth. Whether here or in heaven, a mother's love is still their choicest treasure, and a father's example and counsel their guiding star. And when, one by one, grandsire and babe, and father and mother, and brother and sister, all have gone away from the old homestead, and passed over the river to the city of God, heaven will be no strange place to them: they had it here."

Brother Chambers reports that one was baptized and two confessed sin the first half of January in New Orleans.



Brother S. R. Cassius, of Meridian, Okla., writes pleading for Gospel work among his people (colored). He needs help on the purchase of a Gospel tent.



Brother J. Porter Wilhite, who preaches at Wills Point, Tex., and at Aylesworth, Okla., reports good success in his Gospel work.



Sister S. M. Stevens, of Holton, La., writes: "When Bro. Chambers started a paper in this state the church seemed to take on new life, and has grown so much; I hope you will keep up the reports from Louisiana."



Brother A. K. Ramsey, New Orleans, La., reports a good meeting at Big Point, Miss., in which an aged lady submitted to baptism after holding out against the truth for forty years. A young woman whose husband was a Christian also became obedient to the faith. Later Brother Ramsay spent forty-six days in southwestern Louisiana, leading a Baptist preacher away from human creeds and human names, and accomplished a good work for Jesus Christ in other ways.



"The Bible in Questions and Answers," a book recently published by Brother F. L. Rowe and John A. Klingman, covering the entire Bible, is such a book as any lover of God's Word would bid God speed. It covers much ground, but brief and to the point. It is unbiased and fair and clear in its comments and answers. It is a compendium of Biblical information. It ought to prove a valuable book to the average man, to the preacher and to Bible students. Price \$2.50. Order from F. L. Rowe, 422 Elm street, Cincinnati, O., or from Word and Work.

GENESIS.

DAVID L. COOPER.

In last month's issue emphasis was laid upon the necessity of studying the book of Genesis because all the fundamental doctrines of the Bible are found in it in the undeveloped state. I now wish to substantiate this proposition by discussing several of them.

First, let us note the statement of the first verse of the book. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." The Hebrew word that is translated "God" is in the plural number. The unity of the Godhead, on the other hand, is fully vindicated by the singular verb. But again the statement of Gen. 1:26 reads: "Let us make man in our own image." From these statements we learn that there is a plurality in the Godhead. But we do not learn that the number of persons is three—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—until we come to the New Testament.

Again, the understanding of the word that is translated "create" demolishes the theory that man evolved from the monkey or ape. This word, "Bara," carries the idea of bringing something into existence that did not previously exist. It is used only in reference to God's actions. It makes three crises in Gen. 1. In verse 1 it means that before the action nothing of the material world existed, but after this action the heavens and the earth were in existence. To use a figure, it spans the chasm between non-existence and existence. It occurs again in verse 21 with reference to God's creating animal life. Here God stepped over the chasm from inanimate creation to the animate—a higher order of creation. In verse 27 God bridged still a greater chasm by bringing into existence a new and higher order of life, human life. Our conviction that man is the highest order of God's creation—and that He is this by creation—is strengthened by the fact that God said, "Let us make a man in our image"—a conference in the council chamber of God concerning the creation of man in the image of God. The facts that God held a consultation before creating man and that He was made in the image of God differentiate him from the animal creation and set him off on a higher plane in a class to himself.

To him God gave dominion over the earth. Through his disobedience he forfeited this dominion to Satan who has been since that time the god of this world. Luke 4:6; John 16:11; II. Cor. 4:4; Eph. 2:1-4; 1 John 5:19. Satan rules, but God overrules. Man's lost dominion is not lost forever, but it will be restored to him according to the eighth psalm. This psalm is both retrospective and prospective—it looks back to the original promise. Gen. 1:26, 27, and forward to the time of its fulfillment. "For thou hast made him but little lower than God and crownest him with glory and honor. Thou makest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands." Ps. 8:5, 6. Note the verbs "crownest" and "makest." These verbs in the Hebrew are

in the imperfect tense, which tense denotes incompleted action, hence future time. This interpretation is confirmed by the application of this same scripture to the world to come (the inhabited earth. R. V. marg.) Heb. 2:5-10. See Isa. 11.

Next let us consider the marriage relation and its typical import. Gen. 2:25. Though there had been millions of marriages before Paul's day, no one knew its real typical meaning. In Eph. 5:31, 32 Paul shows that it typified the relation between Christ and the Church. This same relation is hinted at in II. Cor. 11:2. The great consummation of this relation—marriage of the Lamb—is seen in Rev. 19:6-8.

In Gen. 3, the serpent appears as the tempter of man. Man yields and falls. With his fall came all the distress, sin, and sorrow in the world. Our knowledge of Satan would be very limited and imperfect if this were the only passage on this subject, but God has given us much information elsewhere. In I Kings 22:19-23 God invites us behind the scene and shows us that lying spirits sometimes played a part in human affairs. Also see I. John 4:1, 2. Turn to I. Chron. 21:1. Here Satan moved David to sin by numbering Israel. In Job 1 and 2 the first scene is in heaven and Satan appears as one of the chief actors. In Job 1:10-12 note God's special protection about His servant, "Hast not thou made a hedge about him," etc.? The second scene, which is on the earth, is described in verses 13-22. Note Satan's power over the Sabeans, v. 15, the fire of God v. 16, the Chaldeans 7. 17, and great wind v. 19. From these chapters of Job and Luke 22:31, 32; I. Cor. 10:13, we learn that Satan cannot go beyond certain limits without the permission of God. For more about Satan see Zech. 3:1, 2; Matt. 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13. Concerning his dwelling place—"prince of the powers of the AIR"—and work see Eph. 2:1, 2; 6:12. Concerning his method of attack see Gen. 3:6, "I saw . . . desired . . . took." I. John 2:16. His attitude toward God's people is seen in Rev. 12:9, 10. Note this statement, "the accuser of the brethren . . . who accuseth them before our God day and night." His doom is in the lake of fire. Rev. 20:10.

The doctrine of redemption is also seen in Gen. 3. With man's disobedience come the consciousness of guilt and sin. He endeavored to cover his nakedness with an apron of fig leaves—a crude attempt at man's righteousness. Man's righteousness avails nothing. Before God can save man he has to repudiate his own righteousness. See this principle in Isa. 64:6. "Our righteousnesses are as a polluted garment." Paul realized its insufficiency—"not having a righteousness of mine own, even that which is of law." Phi. 3:9. For man's insufficient covering of fig leaves God gave him coats of skins. The price of these coats of skins was the shedding of blood which was typical of the blood shed for us, the price paid for our wedding garment. Matt. 22:11, the righteousness of Christ. Phi. 3:9.

Turn with me now to Gen. 12. God called Abram from his people and country to go to a land that he would show him, prom-

ising him that he and his seed should be the channel through which he would bless the world. In connection with this great plan of a worldwide blessing God promised to Abram's seed "this land"—the land on which he was then standing. v. 7. In 13:14-18 God promised it not only to Abraham's seed but to HIM also—"to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever." God never did give the land to Abraham—"no, not so much as to set his foot on: and he promised that he would give it to him in possession and to his seed after him," etc. Acts 7:5. There can be no doubt as to what God meant by "this land," Gen. 12:7, for Stephen interpreted it as "this land, wherein ye now dwell"—the land of Palestine. Since God is a covenant keeping God, He will make good every promise though we may not see how He is going to do it. This land promise was the foundation of Old Testament prophecy, the prophets enlarging upon it and giving a most glowing description of conditions under the Messianic reign. Taking the Word of God at its face value one concludes that this promise awaits fulfillment, and that God will redeem every promise He has made in His own good time.

Time fails me to speak of the other great Bible doctrines found in the book of Genesis, such as that of election, God's providence, and love, etc. May these suggestions create in all who read them a thirst for the deep spiritual truths of this book is my prayer.

"SHE SHALL BE SAVED THROUGH HER CHILDBEARING."

A Christian lady requests an explanation of 1 Tim. 2:15—Does it mean that the woman who is so situated that she can lawfully bear children, and will not will be lost—that is that her salvation depends on her bearing children?

The context of this passage must furnish the clue to its meaning. In the verse preceding the disobedience of Eden is referred to. At that time a sentence was passed upon the woman (Gen. 3:16) that in pain and labor she must bear children. But through this very thing came salvation also. Through the woman's childbearing "the woman's seed" (Gen. 3:15) came into the world; "made of a woman," (Gal. 4:4) and through him all that shall have continued "in faith and love and sanctification with sobriety" shall be saved in the great Day. In this sense the woman (generically) is saved through her childbearing. There is another thought suggested: that the woman, and the man as well, must take the place to which God originally sentenced and appointed them: he to toil, she to bear children.

There are valid reasons in some cases when a Christian wife may properly refuse motherhood—reasons physical or moral. That is to be settled between herself and God. But in the absence of such reasons to the contrary as would hold good before God, He expects her to fill the station to which she is appointed, and she could not please God otherwise.

STUDIES IN PROPHECY.

“Lo! He comes, with clouds descending,
 Once for favored sinners slain;
 Thousand thousand saints attending,
 Swell the triumph of his train.
 Hallelujah!
 Jesus now shall ever reign.”

PRE-MILLENIALISM.

R. H. B.

What is Premillennialism? The word looks and sounds formidable, and we get the impression at once that it is one of the many “isms” in the world; the theory of some peculiar sect or cult; or some strange system of doctrine; and that a “premillennialist” is a man who has subscribed to that creed and system. But the impression misleads. Premillennialism and Postmillennialism are simply two alternative positions touching the relative order of the Millennium and Christ’s Coming. Premillennialism is simply the position that Christ comes *before* the Millennium; and Postmillennialism contends that He does not come until *after* the Millennium. And since all professed Christians believe in a millennium of some sort; and all believe that the Lord will come; and none (so far as we have heard) have ever contended that the Lord comes *during* the Millennium—it follows that there are only two chances, and no third: either the Lord comes before the Millennium or after. If one believes the former they call him a “premillennialist;” if the latter, a “postmillennialist.” And so every Christian who takes a position at all, is either the one or the other. If he denies the one, he subscribes to the other; if he combats the one he adopts the other. And

WHAT IS THE MILLENNIUM?

The word “millennium” simply means a period of a thousand years—just like the word “century” means a hundred years. But the term, “*the Millennium*” is used to denote that thousand-year period referred to six times in the first seven verses of Rev. 20. Now, whether this be a period of just this literal length or not, it is identified with that blessed era of which (as all concede) the scriptures speak: a time when Satan shall be bound, when righteousness shall reign; when swords are beaten into plow-shares and spears into pruning-hooks, and the nations shall learn war no more; but the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as waters cover the sea. The postmillennial view puts the Lord’s coming beyond that era of righteousness

and peace, and therefore a good thousand years off. The premillennialist expects the Lord first. Some who have felt the difficulty of the postmillennial position have tried to remedy it by teaching that the Millennium is *going on now*—so that the Lord's return may not be so far off. This latter position will be noticed further on; but I may say here that it is hardly worth serious consideration or refutation.

HOW I FOUND OUT I WAS A PREMILLENNIALIST.

Years ago, having never been influenced, so far as I know, by any human teaching on premillennialism, before in fact I even knew the term, I had from the study of the word of God come to the premillennialist conclusion. In 1903, in a Western State, a denominational preacher who was trying to "place" me asked me, "Do you believe in the second coming of Christ?" "I certainly do," I answered. "Are you pre or post?" "What do you mean?" I asked. "Are you premillennial or postmillennial?" "I do not yet understand what you mean," I responded; "I am not versed in theological terms." "Well you believe in a Millennium?" "Surely." "Then do you believe that Christ comes before or after the millennium?" "Why, I hadn't thought about it specially," I answered, "but it *must* be before; for the Lord told us to 'watch and be ready for ye know not the day nor the hour.'" "That settles it," said the preacher: "*You are a Premillennialist.*" And so I found out for the first time what I was.

THINGS THAT MUST FOLLOW.

From each of these two views, the premillennial and the postmillennial, follow certain consequences. I shall not undertake here to do much more than to state them. The postmillennialist expects that day of bliss to come in consequence of the gradual conversion of the world by the means now in use. For in order to have a millennium, truth and righteousness must first prevail. He therefore expects great improvement in the world, and makes much of all signs of progress and betterment. For this reason he also considers himself "optimistic." I would, however, point out here in passing that this puts the Lord's coming more and more interminably into the far-off future; for not only must the millennium come and pass before the Lord comes, but there is evidently a long stretch before us yet before there can even be a millennium.

The premillennial view, on the other hand, contends that the distinction between the church and the world will exist clear up to the Lord's return. The church, as its very name implies, is simply an election—a *selection*: God is *taking out* from among the nations a people for his own Name; and Christ's faithful ones will be subject to opposition and persecution until Jesus comes. At the Lord's coming the world will not be essentially better, but even as to the professed church the last days will be the worst and the darkest. The premillennial believer takes no stock in the theory of "world-improvement." As some have expressed it, "the world is a sinking ship, and it is not our business

to try to keep the ship from going under, but to get as many passengers as will to jump into the life-boat;" and that it is not so much our business to put out the fire, as to snatch men as brands from the burning. It must be manifest that this view is very uncomplimentary to the "world." It lays the world's pride and pretense in the dust. The world, the worldly, a worldly church, worldly preachers and all those who, like Demas, "have loved the present world," can in the nature of the case have no sympathy with this teaching. In saying this I do not mean that all who oppose the premillennial view are worldly, for I do not so believe; but that those who are worldly will naturally oppose the premillennial contention. The other side, however, retorts upon the premillennialists that they are "pessimistic." But they insist that the postmillennial position is really the pessimistic one, in that it can offer no better hope than that which the past centuries have belied and proved vain; its prospect points ahead to an endless, weary stretch of years of doubtful world-improvement. Its hope of world-conversion has not the least corroboration from experience, for there has never been such an acceptance of the gospel by even one nation, one land, one city, not even where the gospel has been preached most thoroughly that would lend the least appearance of probability, or sustain the faintest promise of the thought that the world can be or will be so converted. But the premillennial view looks not to earthly developments, but to an event from heaven: its hope is from above, bound up in the appearing of a glorious Lord and Savior who will adjudge, avenge, and adjust all things at his coming and bring about that better day.

STRICT AND LOOSE INTERPRETATIONS.

It may be said further that the premillennial view rests upon a careful and strict construction of the prophetic word; whereas the postmillennial necessitates a figurative and spiritualizing interpretation of most of the Old and New Testament prophecies. It puts upon these scriptures that vague and "highly figurative" construction which to a great extent leaves every man free to read into the Word whatever he wishes to see in it; or to waive the whole prophetic revelation as something too deep and mysterious for him to decipher. For the postmillennial position does not comport with any strict and faithful construction of the prophetic portions of the Word of God. The premillennial position on the other hand depends upon a strict acceptance of what the word of God says. It goes on the assumption that the word of God is inspired; that therefore it means what it says; that when interpreted according to the laws that govern the interpretation of language it is to be absolutely relied on; and that scripture explains scripture.

It is not strange, therefore, that among all the infidel higher critics there is not one premillennialist to be found. They are all and every one, in so far as they believe in any millennium at all, postmillennialists. Nor do they recruit their numbers from premillennialist ranks, but their unbelieving doctrines gain their en-

trance in postmillennial ears and hearts. It is surely significant that among the scholars, theologians, university professors, etc., who hold the premillennial view (and there are a number of them) not one "destructive critic" can be pointed out; and that on the other hand the "destructive critics" are invariably post-millennialists.

This is not saying, of course, that all postmillennialists are infidel critics; but only vice versa. This thing however is evidently true: that the postmillennial view is compatible with the infidel criticism of our day, and that the premillennial teaching is not compatible with this infidelity, inasmuch as a strict and faithful acceptance of the word of God is its very soul and basis

"WATCH AND BE READY."

It is again evident that the postmillennial view cannot be conducive to making a man watchfully expectant of the Savior's coming. If a millennium of universal peace and bliss is to intervene before the Lord's coming, how could one "wait" for that? Or, still less, how could one "look" for it? or, still less, "watch" for it? It is only natural that death should have been substituted as the goal of our hope and the event for which to prepare, in the place of the Lord's coming—an exchange which is common with postmillennialists, but which the New Testament never makes. In fact the postmillennial position would naturally incline Christ's servant to say, "My Lord delayeth his coming"—a thought which leads to a careless life and which we are especially warned against.

IS THE MILLENNIUM NOW?

Some, as pointed out before, who felt this difficulty, have tried to put it that the millennium is in progress now; and since, of course, in that case we could not know just when it would come to a close, it would behoove us to watch and be ready. This is a bit better so far as that point goes, but raises a host of other difficulties. *This the Millennium?!* With nearly half of all humanity involved in the most terrible war of all history? *Satan bound?* In Peter's day he *went about* as a roaring lion. (1 Pet. 5:8). Is he bound *now*? We are told that Satan is "*being bound*" now. But that does not satisfy the case. Before ever that thousand years' reign begins Satan is bound, and not only bound, but imprisoned. Is he so bound now? Is he imprisoned now? What would the world then be if he were turned loose? But enough of that.

One other evidence already touched upon, of the premillennial coming of the Lord lies in the fact that the last days are the worst. It is not so much the question with the inspired writers whether *the world* will get better or worse. The world lieth in the Evil One (1 John 5:19) however it may outwardly improve. But the professed church, the very salt of the earth, will corrupt (2 Tim. 3:1-5) and it will not be much faith that the Son of Man when he cometh shall find on the earth. The mystery of iniquity was already working in Paul's day, awaiting only a release from restraint to come to its full manifestation of the Man of Sin, an

individual with whom the Lord will personally clash at his coming. (2 Thess. 2). This sufficiently shows that no era of universal peace and world-wide conversion and righteousness precedes the coming of the Lord.

But the premillennial expectation of the Lord, (which was the all but universal expectation of the church for several centuries)—needs to meet no such difficulties. It makes watchful and zealous. It fixes our hope on an event ever imminent, in which our whole hope is bound up, and weans our hearts away from the world unto the surpassing glory of "That Day."

THE PROPHETIC ENQUIRERS.

R. H. B.

THE FIRST MEETING.

When on Monday night our four brethren, Apollos, James, Simeon and Bereus, had met around the study-table in the preacher's home, and after words of welcome and a prayer, Apollos opened the investigation, the eager interest of them all shone in their faces. Each of them had thought and studied in the interval, and their souls were kindled. "My first concern," brethren, began Apollos, "was to settle definitely and clearly that the study of the prophetic portions of God's word is legitimate. I think we shall not differ as to the conclusion. I have found that it is not only proper to study the prophecies but as to those portions in both the Old Testament and New Testament we are even exhorted by the Lord Himself to pay attention to them. In the first place they constitute a part of the word of God; and "man liveth not by bread alone, but by *every* word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Matt. 4:4. It is a part of Scripture, and it is written that "Every scripture is inspired of God and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." 2 Tim. 3:16. " whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning." Added to these *general* exhortations as to the use of God's word, we have some specific and direct injunctions not to neglect the prophecies. In 2 Pet. 1:19 God says that we do well to take heed to the word of prophecy, as unto a light shining in a dark place until the Day star rise in our hearts. Again in 2 Pet. 3, verse 2, he reminds us to remember the foregone prophecies of the last days. The one prophetic book of the New Testament, the "Revelation," is introduced to us with a special blessing upon those who *read, hear and keep it.* (Rev. 1:3). That settles the question for me. Brother Bereus is quite right in his contention that the prophetic portions of God's book should receive due notice. I have been at fault in the matter. I must confess that I have but a child's knowledge of the word of prophecy."

"Brother Apollos," said Simeon, "You have worked arduous-

ly, and you have fed us on the fine wheat of God's word according to our need. You may censure yourself, but we have no censure for you. The practical problems of the daily life have pressed upon you, and you have given your time to them and met them manfully. I have not been under the same burden, and I have taken time to study the prophetic word in past years and have learned to love it above my necessary food. But I have learned this, which may be good for us all to know, that I have lost nothing in a practical way by studying prophecy. I have gained. It has marvelously lightened my burden. It has made my heart to burn, and has lent wings to my feet, and has made my hands skilful to do, and my heart strong to endure. It will bless you in like manner."

Those present knew the life of Simeon, that it was pure and full of mercy and good fruits. And the gracious words he had spoken came with weight.

"Brother Simeon took my argument from me," said James. "I was about to object that I could see no practical good in the study of prophecy. It is good to know, doubtless, just as many other things in the world and in the Bible are good to know; but since life is short and we cannot learn everything, it seemed to me that we would do well to take up the essential things of life and duty and to stand by them, and learn what we can readily understand rather than these deep things which I fear nobody really does or can understand. Brother Simeon's remarks shake my view a little. However I am not just convinced. It seems to me that many Christians have lived and died happy, and acquitted themselves creditably without knowing much about prophecy; and I should think we could."

Apollos spoke next. "The speech of Brother James raises the following points which we must consider in order.

1. Is the study of Prophecy of any practical value?
2. Can Prophecy be understood?
3. Is a knowledge of the prophetic Word essential or necessary?

What shall we say about the first question?"

"I say for one," replied Bereus, "that the question is not complimentary to the God who gave us the Bible. If my father should give me a book he had written and urge me to read it, and I should tell him that I would study part of it, but the other part was to no practical purpose—" "Hold on now, Brother Bereus," said James, "we don't mean that. It must be to some good purpose the prophetic portions of the Bible were given us. Only it is natural that when we do not see the practical need for a thing to push it in the background." "Just so," replied Bereus; "and that is what we have done. But do we walk by faith or by sight?" "By faith of course." "Not in this thing, Brother James; for *God said* that *every* scripture is *profitable*, and serves to furnish the man of God thoroughly unto *all good works*. And the prophetic portions of God's word make up at least a fourth of the entire Bible. Now because we do not *see* the practical

benefit of it, we disregard what God says about it." "Brother Bereus, prophecy presents problems. Many have tried to understand prophecy and failed. We do not want to be the 'fools' who 'rush in where angels fear to tread.' We can be saved without it I think." "So far as many having failed goes, Brother James, I note that that has not deterred you from contending for some 'First Principles' on which a great part of the religious world is at fault. But I refer the discussion to Brother Apollos. It will profit more if he will answer."

"Brother James has raised a new point in his last speech," said Apollos, "which we must also look into in due time; namely that the study of prophecy is fraught with risk and danger. At the present I must say that I fully understand Brother James' viewpoint. If any life in the church would prove that the study of prophecy is not necessary to life and godliness, Brother James' would. Nevertheless Brother Bereus stands on the Rock in this thing, I think. We must take God's estimates not our own. It cannot be that, other things being equal, a man who has not taken due interest in prophecy could come up to the same standard as one who had. Furthermore, brethren, I greatly hesitate to mark one part of God's word "necessary," and another part practically "unnecessary." Only the other Sunday I preached a sermon showing the danger of the principle of making such distinctions among God's commandments. I think that principle should be discarded.

"But God has not left us without some points by which we can even *see* the practical value of predictive prophecy. Back of all our work is motive; and whether the motive be to draw or to compel, it lies largely in the future. In our every reference to judgment, to heaven, to hell, to reunion with our loved ones, the coming of the Lord, and all hopes and fears, we make use of unfulfilled prophecies. Is the wheel of the locomotive more practical than the steam and the fire of the boiler? If with our inadequate knowledge of prophecy it has furnished us power for our own lives and appeal for the turning of others—how shall we brand the portions we do not yet know and understand as something impractical that may as well be pushed aside? I take it brethren, that we need not say more on this matter. The next question before us is whether Prophecy can be understood."

(To be continued).

It is the future that gives significance to the present. No man lives in the present and for the present alone. The present does not of itself satisfy. It is the goal, the hope, the prospect before us that makes the present worth while. The expectation of the wicked shall perish; but the hope of the righteous is sure.

"Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry over all the abominations that are done in the midst thereof." (Ezek. 9:4). Is God's mark on you?

BIBLE STUDY COURSE.

R. H. B.

THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

(Lines written on the fly-leaf of a copy of Christopher Barker's Bible dated 1599.)

Here is the spring where waters flowe
To quench our heate of sinne.

Here is the tree where trueth doth growe
To lead our lives therein.

Here is the judge that stints the strife
When men's devices faile.

Here is the bread that feedes the life
That death cannot assaile.

The tidings of salvation deare
Come to our ears from hence.

The fortress of our faith is here,
And shielde of our defence.

Reade not this book in any case,
But with a single eye.

Reade not, but first desire God's grace,
To understand thereby.

Pray still with faith in this respect,
To fructifie therein;

That knowledge may bring this effect,
To mortifie thy sinne.

Then happy thou in all thy life,
Whatso to thee befallles;

Yea, double happie shalt thou be,
When God by death thee calles.



Our study thus far has led us up to the 22nd chapter of Genesis. When we began there was nothing but *God*. Then followed the creation. Then, out of a condition of wasteness and ruin the earth is fitted up for the abode of man, and man himself put upon it. That was a simple beginning. But by now things have taken many turns, and Gen. 22 finds God working in the development of His plan of redemption. A backward glance will help us to proceed with better understanding and interest.

1. Look over the space so far covered with the thought that Genesis is the Book of Beginnings. The beginning of creation, the beginning of the habitable earth, vegetable life, animal life, of man—where are these found? Then the beginning of sin; the beginning of the scheme of redemption; the beginning of the

distinction between God's people and the world. Where do we find these? The beginning of the Hebrew race and of the people of Israel?

2. Sum up these foregoing chapters by *epochs* (1) Creation; (2) Edenic; (3) Antediluvian (before the flood); (4) Post deluvian; (5) Patriarchal.

3. Sum up by *person* Adam, Cain, Abel and Seth; Noah, Abraham.

4. Then look it over once more, and this time with special care in reference to *God*. Consider (1) God as Creator; (2) God in His relation to Adam and Eve; (3) God as revealed in His attitude toward Cain and Abel; (4) God's attitude toward sin and toward faith as shown in the case of Noah and in the Flood; (5) God in His dealings with Abraham: (a) taking the initiative, (b) making promises, (c) entering upon covenant-relation, (d) showing special favor to one that he may later reach the many. We will now resume our regular study.

FIRST DAY.

Gen. 22. The supreme test of Abraham's faith. Read Heb. 11: 17-19; Jas. 2:21-24. There are "works by which faith is made void," and "works by which faith is made perfect." Of which sort was this? Could Abraham have argued and explained away the command God gave him? Why did he not? Here, for the first time God confirmed the promise with an oath. See Heb. 6: 13-20. Who else went to the altar as it were, like Isaac carrying the wood of his own sacrifice? Did Abraham lose anything by giving God his best?

SECOND DAY.

Chapters 23 to 25. Sarah's death; the purchase of Machpelah; Eliezer woos a wife for Isaac. Note Acts 7:5. Even this small spot Abraham bought. As to Eliezer's mission: it was God's purpose that Isaac's wife should come of the original stock. The servant's trust, the providential guidance of God, the willingness of the maiden, and the fact that Isaac "loved her" when he saw her, are the fine features of this story. Would God yet help a man to find the proper wife? or a woman to find the right husband? See Prov. 3:5, 6.

THIRD DAY.

Chapter 26.—Isaac. Read again what has thus far been told us of Isaac: Birth 21:1-10; submissiveness when a lad, 22: 5-10; marriage, 24:62-67. See the repetition of the Promise to him 26:2-5; also how Abraham's duplicity crops out in his son. Verses 26-33 are prophetic of the fact that the day comes when the nations shall seek the Jews because God's blessing is with them. (Zech. 8:20-23).

FOURTH DAY.

Chapter 27.—Read again 25:19-24. God had intended both the birthright and the attendant blessing for Jacob—but did he do right to get them as he did? If a man is only true to God will he not come into his own by and by? On Esau see Heb. 12:16,

17. Esau had no faith; present gratification was more to him than God's promise. Does anybody sell his birthright today?

FIFTH DAY.

Chapter 28—Jacob's departure to Paddanaram. The dream of Jacob was very significant. The ladder is the connection between earth and heaven, between God and man. Compare John 1:51. Jacob's vow would seem sordid, but it has the redeeming element of faith. He felt dependent, and promised the Lord the tenth of all wherewith he was prospered. There is a wrong way of "Serving the Lord for pay," which is well pointed out in an article of this issue. But see Mal. 3:10 and 2 Cor. 9:6-11.

SIXTH DAY.

Chapters 29, 30. Jacob's wives and children. Do you see any similarity in the wrongs Jacob suffered at the hands of Laban, and the wrongs he had done his father and brother at home? Make a list of Jacob's sons, noting the mother in each case.

SEVENTH DAY.

Chapter 31. Jacob's Flight. Note why Laban did not dare to hurt Jacob. (v. 29). Read Ps. 105:9-15. How hard his life had been may be gathered from verses 38-42. Note the trickery practiced by Jacob in chapter 30; the theft and deception of Rachel. God does not approve of such things by any means. But there was one hopeful fact: Jacob was under God's discipline and training.

EIGHTH DAY.

Chapters 32, 33. The meeting with Esau. The news of 32:6 fills Jacob with alarm. He does all he can think of to relieve himself, at least in part. Verses 7, 8, 13-20. Jacob's great prayer (verses 9-12) shows he has got to the end of his wits. It was his own fault; but he appeals to God now in his extremity. What will God do in such a case? Ps. 107: 10-22. The episode of the wrestler brings out a great principle: so long as Jacob strove and schemed in his own strength he gained nothing, but when, helpless, he clings to God he obtains the blessing. A good many of God's children are going around with the very same sort of limp Jacob got—which is not so bad. Henceforth he is *Israel*. Esau was forgiving and generous. The name of Jacob's altar (33:20) shows how big God became in Jacob's estimation.

NINTH DAY.

Chapters 34, 35. A bad chapter is the 34th. The heathen prince shows up to better advantage than Jacob's sons. Their deed came up for reckoning later. (Gen. 49:5-7). In 35:2 it is seen that the idols had been treasured, not by Jacob, but in his household. Now he realizes they must be put away. What did they do with them? A better riddance is described in Exod. 32: 20. What have you done with your idols? Compare Ezek. 14:3; Col. 3:5; Phil. 3:19. Read over chapter 36.

TENTH DAY.

Chapter 37. Here begins the story of Joseph. No stain rests upon Joseph's life. Jacob unwisely showed partiality toward the boy. Joseph's dream added to the hatred of his breth-

ren. Whatever reasons they may have given for their hatred, the real reason was envy and jealousy. Which one of the sons sought to save Joseph altogether? Which other one sought to save him from death, and suggested profitable compromise? Remember that. Imagine Joseph's emotions! How was Jacob still getting paid for deceiving his father? Gal. 6:10. Chapter 38 shows it was high time for the chosen family to leave Canaan. Tamar's name appears in Christ's genealogy. Matt. 1.

ELEVENTH DAY.

Chapter 39. How often do we read in this chapter that God was "with Joseph"? On what ground does Joseph refuse the suggestion of sin? Think what a miserable ending of the story it would have been had Joseph yielded! Oh, what we lose by sinning! After all his loyalty to God Joseph lands in a prison to spend the sweet years of youth behind the bars! Is that true? No. Joseph *has not landed yet*. Read Psalms 37 and 73.

TWELFTH DAY.

Chapter 40. The only touch of the supernatural in Joseph's career was his gift of interpreting dreams. Note how Joseph prospers even in prison. Read Psalm 1. The butler's forgetfulness was also a factor in God's plans. Rom. 8:28.

THIRTEENTH DAY.

Chapter 41. Joseph's Exaltation. In that the Lord Jesus rose from the tomb to the highest place in the universe. (Eph. 1:20, 21), second only to God, the Father; (1 Cor. 15:27), and all are required to bow their knees to him (Phil. 2:9-11); and he became the sole controller of all life and sustenance (Col. 1:19)—so Joseph's career typifies Him step by step. This is the finger of God. Note how Joseph's modesty and humility becomes the reason of his exaltation. Verses 16, 25, 38, 39. Joseph could not know that his father was deceived; nor that two of his brothers had endeavored to save him. To him it must have seemed that they had all abandoned him. See verse 51. Who else, besides Joseph was sold and delivered up by his brethren, and during his rejection finds a Gentile bride? (2 Cor. 11:2; Acts 15:14).

FOURTEENTH DAY.

Chapter 42. Now begins Joseph's dealings with his brethren. Why do they come to him? How does Joseph meet them? Note fulfillment of Joseph's early dream, v. 6, 9. Joseph accidentally gets some news, vs. 21-23.

FIFTEENTH DAY.

Chapter 43. Judah offers himself as surety for Benjamin, without whom they cannot go. Joseph on the other hand has his mind made up to get Benjamin in his power and keep him, for Benjamin is his only full brother, and innocent of the others' deed. But it was to turn out different. Note the points in vs. 33, 34.

SIXTEENTH DAY.

Chapter 44. The scheme of Joseph now appears. The climax from verse 14 on is tremendous. Judah's speech is an example of natural eloquence, unsurpassed, wrung from a heart

full of agony. Joseph learns of his father's mourning (vs. 27,28) and sees a great light. The repentance of Joseph's brethren also is manifest: once they cast off an innocent brother, now they are willing to suffer for and with a supposedly guilty one. Once they lightly broke their father's heart; now, to save their father the last drop of sorrow one of them offers himself for the prison in his brother's stead.

SEVENTEENTH DAY.

Chapter 45. Joseph reveals himself to his brethren, points out God's wonderful ways, sends for his father. Words fail to describe the situation. And thus will the Lord Jesus also manifest Himself to His brethren according to the flesh, from whom in wrath He has hid His face for a little while, but whom in everlasting mercy He will gather. Then shall they say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." (Isa. 8:17; 54:7, 8; Zech. 12:10; Matt. 23:39; Rom. 11:25-32).

EIGHTEENTH DAY.

Chapter 45. Jacob goes to Egypt.—See how God steps in again just in the crisis to reassure and comfort His servant. (Vs. 2-4). Jacob had had a hard life: God saved him the best wine for last. Henceforth Egypt becomes the cradle of God's nation. From Egypt they get protection, and civilizing influence; while yet they are kept separate (Gen. 43:32; 46:34).

NINETEENTH DAY.

Chapter 47. Jacob meets Pharaoh. With verses 7, 10, read Heb. 7:7. That is how God rates men. In verse 9 he calls his and his fathers' lives "pilgrimage"; read again Heb. 11:8-16. Note the magnitude of Joseph's financial operations. So does the Lord Jesus Christ, because He alone controls the Bread of Life (is Himself the Bread of Life, and of His fullness have we all received, grace upon grace) buy up everything for the Father. See Jacob's stipulation about his place of burial.

TWENTIETH DAY.

Chapter 48. Jacob blesses the sons of Joseph. Note how he gave Ephraim the preference. These "blessings" were not mere expressions of good wishes, but oracular utterances of God, and of prophetic force. V. 15, 16 are wonderful. V. 21 is the word of Jacob's faith.

TWENTY-FIRST DAY.

Chapter 49. The blessing of Jacob's sons. Reuben, the oldest is rejected from the pre-eminence of the first-born for good cause. Simeon and Levi, next in order of age, are also set aside. But the next one, Judah, gets the supremacy and the sceptre. The point of v. 10 is that, from the time Judah should become the royal tribe, the royal power should never pass to any other tribe, until the great Messiah should come (and of course not after that). Compare v. 18 with 47:9. This is the essence of the pilgrim life—to live in expectation of God's promise. This is especially true of Christians. Phil. 3:19-21. The second supremacy is given to Joseph (Ephraim). This accounts for the rivalry in after years between Judah and Ephraim, which led to

the division of the Kingdom. The cave of Machpelah is yet existent, and, it is confidently testified by those who know, that it is as yet intact, with the ancient coffins and remains of Abraham and the members of his family who were there buried. The Mohammedans have guarded it jealously for centuries.

TWENTY-SECOND DAY.

Chapter 50. Jacob's and Joseph's death. Note the renewed dread of Joseph's brethren, and Joseph's magnanimous answer. See how Joseph recognized God's hand. In matters not by what ways and instrumentalities, good or bad, our events and changes come—by the time they reach us they are of God. Joseph's grave in Egypt, with the injunction he had left against the day of the promise, was a perpetual witness to sojourning Israel (Heb. 11:22). The contrast has been pointed out between the grand beginning words of Genesis and the mournful conclusion—"in a coffin in Egypt." That is because sin had come into the world, and death by sin. But provision for salvation had also been made within this book, and redemption was well under way. There lies a hope behind the doleful closing words.

HOW THEN IS HE DAVID'S SON? ?

A correspondent from Kentucky writes thus: "For information I desire to ask you a question. In Matt. 16:13 the Savior said he was the Son of man. In the 16th verse Peter said He was the Son of God. In Rom. 1:3, 4 is declared the same thing. In Acts 2:30 God swore with an oath to David that of the fruit of his loins God would raise up Christ to sit on His throne. Now this scripture is true. If Jesus is not the descendant of David, He is not the promised Messiah. Now to the point: can you trace the lineage of Jesus to the loins of David, except only through Joseph, the husband of Mary? Now this is a plain question, but it takes a Christian with some fortitude to answer in the light of God's word."

Has my correspondent missed the mark so far as to conclude that Jesus was *the natural son of Joseph*? It would be too bad if his search for truth had landed him in a blind alley of error and his sincerity and fortitude were wasted in an effort to maintain so extreme a mistake. To answer briefly.

(1) The word of God declares positively that Jesus was *not* Joseph's natural son. Matt. 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-35.

(2) The word of God with equal clearness says that Jesus was David's descendant after the flesh. Both these declarations are absolutely true. Nor are they too difficult to reconcile. It simply follows that Jesus' mother was of the Davidic stock. Had she not been, seeing Jesus had no earthly father he could not have been "of the seed of David according to the flesh," and, as my correspondent correctly remarks, could not have been the promised Messiah.

R. H. B.

ON FOREIGN FIELDS.

D. C. JANES.

Have you observed the way the commission reads in the revised version? Oto Fujimori was born in Japan, February, 1872; baptized by W. D. Campbell in Detroit, May, 1894; opened work at Takahagi, Japan, December, 1898; and has staid with it. Four of his nine children are Christians.

Funds for Miss Sarah Andrews, of Tokyo, Japan, may be sent to I. B. Bradley, Dickson, Tennessee.

Bros. Vincent and McCaleb live about 2½ miles apart in Tokyo and see each other about once a month.

Blood is essential to our life and well being. A steam engine is dead when the fire goes out. Vegetation requires sunlight. And the church of God is essentially a missionary institution. It is made that way. Read that over again.

The missionary society refused to send W. D. Cunningham to Japan, but he, like a certain man who wanted to join the army ("I'm going anyhow") went to the field and has done a great work, showing that even a man who uses instrumental music in his work *can* get along and get along well without the society. McCaleb and others have shown that they can dispense with the organ too. Let Bro. Cunningham do likewise.

Negotiations with the Government in India are pending for the admission of Bro. Langpaap, who being of German descent, might not be admitted were he to arrive at an Indian port without permission to land.

John Sherriff, of South Africa, has made his eighth annual report. He is a good man and stands greatly in need of a suitable helper. Who is willing to go?

Sixty-one baptisms in India the first twenty-four days of December. Later: 110 before the month closed.

The writer will forward funds to any of the missionaries without reduction. If you live outside of Kentucky or border states, please remit by a money order or draft on New York, Chicago, or St. Louis. Address 2225 Dearing Ct., Louisville, Ky.

Our brethren who object to sending missionaries to the far-away lands; who contend that the heathen at home should have our chief attention—what sort of argument would they put up if conditions were reversed, and they themselves in the heathen land, with the gospel over here? Would they want somebody to come over and help them? Would they not (if we could imagine that they understood the situation) storm about our selfishness and rebuke and plead and entreat? Wouldn't circumstances alter cases considerably? The golden rule is a good rule: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you. . . ."

MODERN JONAH'S.

R. H. B.

The missionary book of the Old Testament is the book of Jonah. In it the larger purpose of God in choosing Israel shines out, and his loving concern for all humanity is manifest. The conceit and selfishness of the people whom God had set apart for his witnesses in all the earth, is manifest in Jonah's attitude. "The secret of the church's comparative failure," says G. C. Morgan, "is exactly the same which halted Jonah. It is because we hate Nineveh." The real reason Jonah did not want to go to Nineveh with its message is stated by himself in Jonah 4:2—"Therefore I hastened to Tarshish, for I knew that thou art a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abundant in loving-kindness, and repentest thee of the evil." Our objection to God's showing mercy to Nineveh is not in most cases so pronounced and active as Jonah's—though I fear some have almost or altogether gone even that far. But with most of us the "hate" takes the form of "love not." It is passive rather than active, and negative more than positive. We simply do not care whether Nineveh goes to hell or wherever else; and meanwhile, not to seem uncharitable, we entertain a mild hope that perhaps God may do something extra for the "heathen," so that they won't be lost. We do not love Nineveh. If a son or a daughter, a brother or sister, or even a dear friend decides for the foreign field, we go to him like Peter to the Lord, with our "Be it far from thee—this shall never be unto thee." And the loved one is not always strong enough to say "Get thee behind me Satan, for thou mindest not the things of God but the things of men," though by all rights this would be the fair reply. It seems so far-fetched, so useless, so uncalled for that *our* friends or loved ones should go on such—shall we say it?—*a fool's errand*. What strangers we are to the God who so loved the world and sent His own Son that the world might be saved! What strangers in heart to the Son of God who, though he was rich yet for *our* sakes (and who were *we*?) became poor, and came down from heaven to give his life a ransom for many! What strangers even to one of his devoted servants who could have wished himself anathema for the sake of his kinsmen of Israel! No, we don't care for Nineveh; we have heathen at home. And sometimes not overmuch for the heathen at home—the real heathen, that is, and they know it. But as to Jonah, so to us, come God's orders, "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee."—"Go ye therefore and teach all nations baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you; and, lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world." Who then is the wise and faithful servant who will pray and who will give and who will go? Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when he cometh shall find so doing!

ABOUT BOOKS.

R. H. B.

A book frequently becomes a great factor in a human life, and many a man has cursed the day when a bad book, or blessed the day when a good book, fell into his hands. To my notion there can be no greater act of friendly service than the putting of a good book into a man's hands. For there are books and books. Aside from all vile and outspokenly bad and worldly literature, there is much difference even among books that treat on good lines. I used to think that the very fact that a book was published would be sure guarantee of value; for surely no writer would waste time and go to expense; or if he did, no publisher would waste labor or money upon a worthless book. But I have long since been cured of the idea. There are thousands and thousands of books on the market that are by no means worth the paper they are printed on. Life is short, and the search is long and costly. One cannot but appreciate it when a friend puts him on the track of a really good book.

If you are searching for a good help on Bible Study, I recommend "How to Master the English Bible," by J. M. Gray, which costs 40c; or Torrey, "How to Study the Bible to Greatest Profit," 75c. Gray's "Synthetic Bible Studies," \$1.50 is very fine for a general survey study of the Bible. A first class book concerning the Bible, and dealing with almost every question that may arise in regard to the Bible itself is, Angus-Green, "Cyclopedic Handbook to the Bible," \$1.50.

As for helps and commentaries, McGarvey on Acts cannot be beat, \$1.50. On I. Corinthians I have seen nothing better than Hodge (50c).

The greatest little book on the Christian life, just the thing for spirit-burdened, discouraged Christians, is "The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life," by H. W. S., 40c postpaid.

Philip Mauro is a superior writer, clear and strong, with fine spiritual insight. The following two books I consider his best: "The Number of Man"—which deals with the trend of world affairs and movements in the light of God's word. No man would have been better qualified to write on this than Mauro. 75c. "Life in the Word," a masterful little book on the value of the Bible. 50c.

I shall take occasion from time to time to speak of books of which I have personal knowledge. But while recommending such books I would not understand as endorsing every statement and sentiment they contain, but only in the main. Every book written by man—no matter who the man—comes under the rule: "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good."

The Lord's Day Lessons have come in for special commendation on part of our readers. They can also be had separately, a month's lessons in 8 page folder; price 15c a dozen folders; or in quantities of 20 or more, one cent per folder.

THE SECOND LORD'S DAY LESSON OF FEBRUARY.

Lesson VII.

February 13, 1916.

HUMBLED AND EXALTED.

Golden Text.—“For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might become rich.” 2 Cor. 8:9.

Lesson Text.*—Phil. 2:1-11. Memorize verses 5-7.

1. If there is therefore any exhortation in Christ, if any consolation of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any tender mercies and compassions, 2 make full my joy, that ye be of the same mind, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind; 3 doing nothing through faction or through vain-glory, but in lowliness of mind each counting other better than himself; 4 not looking each of you to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others. 5. Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6 who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped; 7 but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; 8 and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross. 9. Wherefore also God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name; 10 that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, 11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

form he took? (John 1:14; Heb. 2:14; Rom. 8:3).

8. What befits anyone who wears the form of a human being? Did Jesus take the true attitude and position a man ought to take? To what extent did he obey? Was the “death of the cross” more than an ordinary death? Gal. 3:13.

9. Why did God so highly exalt him? Had he been exalted before he became man? (See Golden Text, and John 1:1-3, and verse 6 of this lesson). What “glory” did he ask the Father to give him? John 17:5. See note on this point. How high is the name of Jesus? See Acts 4:12 and John 1:12, and Acts 2:38 on the “name” and its significance to us.

10. What will ultimately every human being have to do? What advantage is it to acknowledge and accept Jesus Christ now? (Rom. 10:9, 10).

1. By what four great things does the Apostle implore the Philippians to unity? Is there exhortation in Christ? consolation of love? partnership of the Spirit? tender mercies and compassions?

2. How therefore ought they to show their appreciation? What four items here? Which of the four appears to be of chiefest importance? Is there any difference between sameness and accord? Are the four voices of a quartet the same? Are they in accord? Are the temperaments and gifts of all Christians the same? But should they be in sweet accord and harmony?

3. What is it to work of “faction?” Phil. 1:17. What to work for “vain-glory?” Matt. 6:1; 3 John 9. In what way are we to count others better? Rom. 12:10.

4. What ought we to consider more than our own interest, advantage, or pleasure? Compare Rom. 14:15-20; 15:1-6.

5. What was “the mind of Christ” in general? See John 6:35. To what special point of the mind of Christ in us? Can we have his mind?

6. Where and how did Christ at first exist? (John 1:1-3; 16:28). Was he ambitious to maintain equality with God? Contrast 2 Thess. 2:3, 4.

7. What did he empty himself of? (John 17:5). What was the servant-

NOTES ON LESSON 7.

This passage marks one of the high places of the New Testament revelation. In one grand sweep God sets before us the career of our Lord Jesus Christ, before he became man, during his earthly ministry, and his subsequent exaltation.

1. Before He became man. "He was in the form of God." (Phil. 2:6). There are many passages that have reference to his pre-existent state. He was "with God" (John 1:2); shared the glory of the Father before the world was (John 17:5); he was "God," that is of the same nature and being as the Father (John 1:1); the Father loved Him before the foundation of the world (John 17:24); through His agency all created things were created (John 1:3; 1 Cor. 8:6); all things were created by Him and for Him; He upholds all things by the word of His power, and in Him all things hold together. (Col. 1:16, 17; Heb. 1:3). No wonder therefore our Golden Text states that He was "rich."

2. Now comes the second stage of His career: how He "became poor." Our lesson shows how he laid aside His divine glory. He "emptied" himself—not of his Deity or His Divine character and being, but of His glory and high estate; and "came down from heaven" (John 6:38); he took upon himself the servant-form of a human being. "The word became flesh." Then he took the place of humble obedience which is man's proper place, and obeyed to the last point of abasement, the death of the cross.

3. His Exaltation. For this cause God highly exalted Him. It was indeed only the glory which He had with the Father before the world was that he now received back—the Divine glory which was His by virtue of His very Being (John 17:5); but now he has received it again and on a new ground: what once belong to Him in His essential Deity, he now also holds as glorified Man, as the reward of His perfect work. (Heb. 1:4, 8, 9). Being thus identified with us, he is our Representative and Mediator (1 Tim. 2:5) and Judge (John 5:27; Acts 17:31). Moreover by this step of His it became possible to save men, (Heb. 2:9, 10) and this was "the joy that was set before Him," for the sake of which He despised the shame of the cross. (Heb. 12:2; Isa. 53:11). His exaltation was absolute—God alone being excepted. (Eph. 1:20-22; 1 Cor. 15:27) All authority in heaven and on earth is His.

But what must be especially pointed out is the connection in which the inspired apostle sets forth this wonderful teaching. In exhorting them by every sweet and great privilege in Christ to unity, he presses the need of having "The mind which was in Christ." The natural man—the old man, the flesh, is proud and ambitious, and wants to exalt himself. (2 Thess. 2:4). But the Man from heaven was not ambitious to claim or hold His Divine rights. He humbled Himself, emptied Himself, took upon Himself the form of a servant, and became obedient unto death. It is the spirit of pride and selfish ambition that makes unity impossible. But where all have the mind of Christ, there will be sweet oneness. "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt you in due season."

He who exalts himself shall be abased. But every one who humbles himself in love to take a servant's place, shall be exalted. The world expects advancement by using men as stepping stones; but the mind of Christ constrains us to make ourselves stepping stones to others.

THE THIRD LORD'S DAY LESSON OF FEBRUARY.

Lesson VIII.

February 20, 1916.

THE CHRISTIAN BROTHERHOOD AT JERUSALEM.

(Temperance Lesson.)

Golden Text.—“Love one another from the heart, fervently.” 1 Pet. 1:22.

Lesson Text.*—Acts 4:32-5:16. Memorize verses 34, 35.

32. And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and soul: and not one of them said that aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. 33. And with great power gave the apostles their witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all. 34. For neither was there among them any that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, 35 and laid them at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto each, according as any one had need. 36. And Joseph, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas (which is, being interpreted, Son of exhortation), a Levite, a man of Cyprus by race, 37 having a field, sold it, and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet. 1. But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, 2 and kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet. 3. But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thy heart to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to keep back part of the price of the land? 4. While it remained, did it not remain thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thy power? How is it that thou hast conceived this thing in thy heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God. 5. And Ananias hearing these words fell down and gave up the ghost: and great fear came upon all that heard it.

Did this sword do that as effectively as a sword of steel could? Will this sword be used again to slay? Rev. 19:21.

32. Is it possible for a multitude of Christians to be of one heart and soul? By what bonds would you think they were bound together? (Phil. 2:2; Eph. 4:3; 1 Cor. 12:25-27) Did they put all their possessions in a common fund, or hold them subject to use as the need demanded? Did all do this? Was it required? (Acts 5:4) Was it pleasing to God? What does God ask of us along this line? (Rom. 12:13; 2 Cor. 8:12-15).

33. When did the apostles first get their power to bear their testimony? (Acts 1:8) To what can this “great power” mentioned again be traced? (verse 31).

34-35. What is the evidence of the “great grace” spoken of in the preceding verse? Compare 2 Cor. 8:1-5.

36. Why is this man mentioned specially? Perhaps to introduce him to the reader, since he is to appear again later in this book.

1-2. Just taken in itself, would the action recorded in these two verses have been wrong? With what pretense did they bring their gift?

3-4. In doing this, what had Ananias really done? When one lies to the Holy Spirit, to whom does he lie? If the Holy Spirit were merely a “power” or an “influence,” could it be lied to? How was the attempt to deceive the apostles equivalent to lying to the Holy Spirit? What other man (also for the sake of money) allowed Satan to put an evil purpose in his heart? (John 13:2). After this man had given place to that evil purpose, what followed next? (John 13:27). Did the same thing happen here? See therefore the importance of Prov. 4:23.

5. What slew Ananias? (Heb. 4:12).

NOTES ON LESSON 8.

The fact that once there was a whole multitude of Christians who were "of one heart and soul," shows the feasibility of such a unity. But the Lord has provided no other bonds than the common faith and the common love to hold his people together. Theirs is "the unity of the Spirit." Where the Spirit of God is not, where the fruit of the Spirit is not manifest, there can be no such unity. Even perfect agreement in views can not hold a selfish people together. But because of different stages of spiritual growth, differing abilities and temperaments, there is likely to be no absolutely perfect agreement on many points, even among those who stand together on the great fundamentals. Without true love therefore there can be no unity. There are so many things to fall out about that people who do not love one another will soon split up among themselves over some matter or another, and part company. And this is God's will, too. For he has no interest in preserving the unity of a body of people, bearing His name, who do not love one another.

The brotherly love in the first church was not in word only, but in deed and truth. John says that such a love gives us boldness and assurance. (1 John 3:14-23). There is an important principle laid down in 2 Cor. 8:12-15, which may throw light on the use and distribution of the goods among the Christians at Jerusalem.

The beauty of the picture is marred by the fraud of Ananias and Sapphira. They sold their property and brought only part of the proceeds to the apostles, while pretending that they were bringing the full amount. Either they simply wanted praise and credit which did not belong to them, or they even thought to cheat the church by drawing on the church-fund for their support, while yet they secretly had money of their own. Now shortly after the Tabernacle had been set up, Nadab and Abihu trifled with God's worship and sanctuary. God made an example of them. (Lev. 10). So also when the Ark was being moved to Jerusalem, He made an example of Uzzah who laid unhallowed hands on it. "Ye shall reverence my sanctuary" was a prime lesson impressed in the Old Dispensation. No less so now. Here is a man and his wife who thought to defraud God, and who showed contempt of the church, and attempted to lie to the omniscient Spirit who indwelt the church and wrought through the apostles. God made an example of them by swift retribution, that all might hear and fear, and do not again such like. The effect of this judgment was as profound as it was wholesome; and "familiarity that breeds contempt" was abolished. Reverence and godly fear is an essential to the true service and worship of God. (Heb. 12:28). We need it badly in these days. The development of the sin of Ananias and his wife is as follows: They conceived of the evil purpose in their hearts. (Verse 4). Secondly, they agreed together to carry it out (v. 9) and thus (whether they understood it or not) they undertook to "try the Spirit of the Lord;" and, thirdly, Satan filled their heart to lie to the Holy Spirit. Thus, as in Judas Iscariot's case, Satan gained an entrance and entered. How we should watch our hearts, and commit them daily to the keeping of God. "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer!" "Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sin." "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." ((Ps. 19:13, 14; 139:23, 24).

The rest of the lesson, not printed here, includes verses 12-16. It is better to enclose the latter half of verse 12, and all of verse 13 and 14, in a parenthesis. By the newly awakened respect of the people, the company of the apostles were left to stand separate from the rest, and they were magnified by all. And God multiplied wonders and signs by their hands exceedingly. It is to be noted that these "signs" were convincing. There were no failures or partial successes, such as distinguishes the counterfeit miracles of these latter days: but "they were healed every one."

THE FOURTH LORD'S DAY LESSON OF FEBRUARY.

Lesson IX.

February 27, 1916.

THE SEVEN HELPERS.

Golden Text.—“Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ.” Gal. 6:2.

Lesson Text.*—Acts 6. Memorize verses 2, 3.

1. Now in these days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a murmuring of the Grecian Jews against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. 2. And the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not fit that we should forsake the word of God, and serve tables. 3. Look ye out therefore, brethren, from among you seven men of good report, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. 4. But we will continue stedfastly in prayer, and in the ministry of the word. 5. And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus a proselyte of Antioch; 6 whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands upon them. 7. And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem exceedingly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.

1. What good work was the church doing? What disturbed the harmony described in 4:32? Should there have been such partiality? But, even if there was, was “murmuring” the best way to meet it? (Jas. 5:9).

2. How did the wisdom of the Holy Spirit meet this crisis? (verses 2-6). Did the apostles have a special work? Were they above doing such acts of service? For what reason only did they refuse to take up their time with it? (verse 4). Have other members of the church special work? (1 Cor. 12:14-31). But are any of them exempted from doing any good work when occasion arises? (Titus 3:1).

3. What kind of men were to be selected? How could we distinguish a man who is “full of the Holy Spirit” (Gal. 5:22, 23). Of what sort is the heavenly wisdom? (Jas. 3:17; contrast 2 Cor. 1:12).

4. What were the two chief portions of the apostles' work? Ought preachers still make a specialty of these two? (1 Tim. 4:13, 15, 16; 1 Thess. 5:17).

5, 6. Would we have answered the description of these men? verse 3. Is there any reason why we should not? Would it be possible? Ought we be content with less? Compare the qual-

ifications of Moses' helpers; Exod. 18:12. What was the form or ceremony of this “appointing” by the apostles? Cp. Acts 13:3.

7. What is meant by “the word of God increased?” Cp. Col. 1:5, 6. What new mark of its power is here mentioned? What is it to be “obedient to the faith”? Acts 2:38-41.

*Amer. Stand. Rev. Version. Copyright. Nelson & Sons.

NOTES ON LESSON 9.

Our Golden Text teaches that while none of us should shirk our own duties or try to impose the burdens we ourselves ought to carry upon others (Gal. 6:5) we should bear one another's burdens. This includes co-operation in every good work.

Between this lesson and the one of last Lord's Day, comes the account of the Second Persecution, which was more serious than the first. The motive of it is laid bare: "they [the persecutors] were filled with jealousy." Of course they would have indignantly repudiated the charge; perhaps they did not realize it themselves; but it was the truth. The apostles, all of them this time, were put in prison; and were miraculously liberated. The next morning, re-arrested, they were brought before the Sanhedrin, where another bold speech was made by the apostles; (Acts 5:39-32) and only the calm counsel of Gamaliel restrained the murderous hatred of those religious leaders. For the "theological hatred" is famed to be the bitterest and most merciless in all the world. Even so they "beat" the apostles before they let them go, by way of impressing upon them the now repeated charge not to speak in the name of Jesus. But the apostles (just as the Lord had taught them, Matt. 5:10-12) rejoiced over this badge of honor; and they "ceased not to teach and to preach Jesus as the Christ."

The account of the appointing of the seven helpers leads up to the man Stephen, who becomes the central figure in the next crisis. Incidentally however, we get a glimpse of the work of the church at Jerusalem. There was a daily ministry to the needs of widows; and, whether by carelessness, or even by partiality, the widows of the Grecian Jews had been neglected, which, naturally caused a murmuring of protest and resentment among the Grecian contingent in the church. One way to avoid trouble is never to try to do anything. There is a peace of the graveyard. But every work undertaken brings difficulties, problems, frictions, which only the love of God and "the wisdom which is from above" can overcome. How this difficulty was overcome we have already seen.

It has been pointed out that the names of these seven helpers are Grecian names—another indication of the fine tact, the love, and the confidence that controlled in the church. This move both obviated all further fear of partiality, and it was a mark of loving confidence in the Grecian brethren, that they should be entrusted with this entire ministry.

Stephen was a remarkably full man: "full of faith, and of the Holy Spirit," "full of wisdom," "full of grace and power." His work of ministering to the widows brought out his other gifts, and gave him opportunities. He wrought signs and wonders among the people, and doubtless his influence grew by leaps. The champions of the different synagogues engaged them—among them those of the synagogue of Cilicia, of which doubtless Soul of Tarsus was a member—engaged him in controversy; and the Lord remembered a good promise of his. (Verse 10; Luke 21:15). Seeing they were no match for him, they tried false witness and slanders. v. 11-14. They cautiously refrained from any flat and grossly evident slander: what they charged against Stephen could, in a manner, be substantiated from Stephen's teaching. They simply colored and distorted the truth so as to make it misrepresent Stephen—which is the most effective sort of slander. It was practiced on the Lord Jesus Christ also. (Matt. 26:59-62). Doubtless Stephen had left the impression that the temple should be destroyed and that a new and different service of God was superseding the old. Nevertheless the way they told it constituted false witnesses. Let us take heed.

The next chapter (Acts 7) contains Stephen's speech. It has been called "Stephen's Apology." Not much apology was it. It was God's final impeachment of the nation by the mouth of His faithful servant.

THE FIRST LORD'S DAY LESSON OF MARCH.

Lesson 10.

March 5, 1916.

Golden Text.—“Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life. Rev. 2:10.

Lesson Text.*—Acts 7:1—8:3. Memorize 7:59, 60.

54. Now when they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth. 55 But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, 65 and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. 57 But they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and rushed upon him with one accord; 58 and they cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul. 59 And they stoned Stephen, calling upon the Lord, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. 60 And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep. 1. And Saul was consenting unto his death. And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church which was in Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles. 2 And devout men buried Stephen, and made great lamentation over him. 3. But Saul laid waste the church, entering into every house, and dragging men and women committed them to prison.

2. Is it proper to sorrow over the loss of loved ones? 1 Thess. 4:13.

3. Why did Saul do all this? 1 Tim. 1:13-15.

54. Had the word of God cut and pricked before this? Acts 2:37; 5:33. What two effects does the word have? 2 Cor. 2:15, 16.

55-56. What did Stephen behold? Did that compensate him? Does God always compensate his servants for the sufferings and persecutions they endure for His sake? 2 Cor. 1:5.

57. How did these men shut out the truth? Are there not more genteel ways of doing the same thing? Can a man speak the truth in love and yet infuriate his entire audience? Luke 4:28, 29.

58. Who else suffered outside the gate? And what does He exhort us to do? (Heb. 13:12-14). Who is mentioned here for the first, but by no means the last time in the New Testament? Was he party to this crime?

59. What was Stephen doing the while they stoned him? To whom did he address his prayer? What did he ask of the Lord? Did the Lord do it? 60. Where had Stephen learned such ways? Luke 23:34. What made Jesus pray as he did? If we are controlled by the same Spirit, what will our attitude be? Did Stephen die an easy death? Was it a great privilege?

1. How did Saul consent? Acts 26:10. Was the church at Jerusalem a very large church? (Acts 2:41-47; 4:4-32; 5:14; 6, 7). What became of them all? Did that injure the work of God? Who were excepted?

John 11:35. How

Acts 26:9. Did that make it right?

NOTES ON LESSON 10.

Only a small part of the lesson is appointed to be printed; but the lesson itself covers the whole seventh chapter of Acts; Stephen's speech before the council.

In order to understand the drift of Stephen's speech we must note first of all what he was accused of. The charge was that he had spoken "against this holy place (the temple) and the law;" and that they had heard him say, "that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change

the customs which Moses delivered unto us." (Acts 6:13, 14). The high priest therefore said, "Are these things so?" In answer Stephen goes back to the beginning of their history, the call of Abraham, and traces it down to Solomon's day and beyond. As he goes along he points out two things: 1. As to the "holy place"—that God was never confined to any locality. He communicated with Abraham in Chaldea; he owned Israel in Egypt; he commissioned Moses in the desert; he spoke to the nation from Mount Sinai; he journeyed with Israel through the wilderness forty years in the Tabernacle which was moved from place to place, and manifesting his presence in the pillar of cloud and fire. When at last Israel entered the land, and David wanted to build him a house of habitation, it was granted to Solomon to do so; but even then it was understood, as their prophets also showed (vs. 47-50) that God "dwelleth not in temples made with hands." Why then, in view of such facts would it be blasphemous in Stephen to declare that the temple should be abolished? 2. As to Moses, their lawgiver and deliverer; they had from the first rejected the messengers and deliverers God sent them. Their fathers, prompted by jealousy, sold Joseph into Egypt; they rejected Moses himself, and would not understand nor accept his mission. And even after he had become their leader they would not be obedient but thrust him from them and in their hearts turned back into Egypt. (V. 39). That was the way they treated the Moses for whom they were now professing so much zeal. Now Moses himself had predicted another prophet whom God would raise up unto them like unto himself, to whom they should hearken in all things. (If perfection had come through the Mosaic law, why should God afterward send another such supreme prophet? Compare Heb. 7:11). And, as they had rejected Moses, and all the prophets who foretold the coming of Christ, so now they had filled up their measure by becoming the betrayers and murderers of the Righteous One. Their forefathers and they themselves were all of a piece, a perverse generation. (Matt. 23:29-36; Deut. 32:53).

Now a few additional points in Acts 7—1. Note that Abraham himself got no inheritance in the land of promise. (v. 5). The only spot he owned (the field and cave of Machpelah) he bought, for a burying place. But see the carefully worded promise of God; Genesis 13:14-17; 17:8. Read also Heb. 11:8-16. We may be not always able to see the how or when, but we need not be uncertain that God will fulfil his word of promise to the very letter. (Ps. 12:6).

2. Note the secret of Joseph's success. Vs. 9, 10. Does Psalm 1 bear on this?

3. Note how the darkest hour came before the dawn. Vs. 17-19. It will again be so. 2 Tim. 3:1.

4. When people try to divide their worship and service between God and something else, what happens? (Vs. 41, 42; Matt. 6:24; 12:30). Does God recognize all worship that is outwardly offered to Him? (Vs. 42, 43). No. (Zech. 7:5, 6). It must be offered to God himself and alone, in sincerity and truth.

5. Note how they resisted the Holy Spirit. Because God's prophets and messengers spake by the Spirit (2 Peter 1:21) it was resisting the Spirit to reject and persecute them.

6. While a man should never needlessly irritate his hearers, and should always speak the truth in love, yet if he speaks the truth itself in simple directness he will bring opposition upon himself sooner or later; and sometimes arouse the fiercest anger. The only way to avoid that is to speak to please men, (1 John 4:5) and to become as the false prophet who said, "Peace, peace," when there was no peace. (Luke 6:26). Much of what is called "tact" is only compromise and cowardice.

7. It has been said that the blood of martyrs is the seed of the church. It proved so in this case. The gospel now leaves Jerusalem and goes out far and wide. One man among the persecutors, upon whom Stephen's death must have made a deep impression, became God's chief messenger to the Gentiles later.