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* * * * *

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WORD AND WORK

A Monthly Magazine Devoted to the Declaration of the Whole Counsel of God.

R. H. Boll, Editor and Publisher.

One Dollar a Year.

In Clubs of Four or More, Seventy-five Cents.

Entered at the Post Office, Louisville, Ky., as second class matter.

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We supply good books of all kinds. The sales help publish the Magazine.

WORD AND WORK

LOUISVILLE, KY.

WORD AND WORK

WORDS IN SEASON.

R. H. B.

THE BLUE-BOOK AND THE BIBLE.

"Know your guide-book and locate your destination," is the first advice given to the tourist in the "Automobile Blue Book." And what better counsel could one give the traveller through this world in regard to the Hereafter? In fact there is such a similarity between the tourist's need of guidance, and man's need of spiritual direction, that the one constantly illustrates the other.

* * * * *

There are a number of things that an automobilist will learn very soon—by sad experience if not otherwise. One is not to take every fellow's advice. It is remarkable how ready people are to offer advice and direction, and how frequently it turns out that that confident person didn't know what he was talking about. Precisely the same phenomenon may be noticed in the matter of a man's seeking salvation; and you may be very sure, if you have nothing more reliable to go by than what this or that man told you (even though he were a preacher and a scholar) your chances of getting home are small. *Go by the guide-book!* Have you ever gained anything by taking the advice of the native in contra-vention to the guide-book? Even though that might occur in rare instances, no man has ever made any profit by taking the word of man instead of the Bible.

* * * * *

Then, if you have ever been on an automobile trip through unknown country—have you found out that you cannot depend on your "sense of direction," however you may have boasted yourself of it? It is true even in the earthly pilgrimage that "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." (Jer. 10:23). You have also learned, no doubt, that you cannot go by the *looks* of a road, nor by your personal judgment or preference. You have to go by faith, not by sight. Often the most uninviting and unlikely road is the only right one. No—there are not two roads to any point, either, though it may have seemed so. If you de-tour to the left you will simply have to go an equal distance to the right to make up for it, or you will never get there. There is but one real way, and any departure from it must be rectified if the traveller would reach his destination.

* * * * *

Again you have observed, have you not, that however honestly you may believe a certain road to be right—that does not make it right if it is wrong; neither will it take you where you want to go, for all that you are so sincere in it. People don't expect it to. It is only in matters of religion that we lose common-

sense and expect a false road to take us home because we have been honest in it. And on that wrong road we may drive most carefully and guardedly, and avoid every stone and rut and ditch; yet in the end the whole road was wrong just the same.

* * * * *

It is worthy of special notice that the automobile clubs over the country have put up signs along the way—warnings of dangers, of railroad crossings, sharp curves, schools; guide-posts at road-crossings, etc. That is a great help. Now when you get off the regular road all that help and guidance ceases entirely. The only way to regain it is to get back on the appointed road. Now the Blue-Book does not tell you how to get back. The Bible is that much kinder: it will even tell you how to get back on the King's highway if for any cause you have gotten off. (Jas. 4:7-10; 1 John 1:9). And when you are back on the road there is the guidance again; and the tallying of what you see along the way with what the guide-book tells you confirms your faith and gives you a blessed assurance that you are right indeed.

* * * * *

Finally, though the publishers of the Blue-Book have spared no effort to make it fool-proof—they have not wholly succeeded. It simply cannot be done. So long as there are self-opinionated tourists, self-willed travellers who would rather go by their own heads than by the given directions, or who will persist in reading their own notions into the plain statements of the book, and who are bound to put their own qualifications and constructions on everything, the Blue-Book, though gotten up with surpassing skill, cannot guide everybody aright. Neither can the Bible. The Bible is by no means fool-proof—that's evident. Nevertheless the Bible can and does and will continue to guide home every soul that believes in Jesus Christ as Lord and will seek to know the will of God in Christ, and will trust and obey.

THE LOUISVILLE BIBLE COURSE.

The Portland Avenue Church Offers its Winter Course of Bible Classes, Beginning Tuesday, November 6, 1923, closing March 27, 1924.

There will be three Six-Weeks' Courses, each complete in itself.

FREE TUITION.

Free Dormitory for young men.

Board (at Dormitory) on Club Plan very low.

Classes in Sight Singing, English (Grammar) as needed.

Opportunities to take work at the Louisville University or classes (such as N. T. Greek and Hebrew) at the Southern Baptist Seminary. Both these institutions offer tuition free to students preparing for the Ministry of the Gospel.

The Bible classes will cover John and Romans and other New Testament books; also portions of the Old Testament (Joshua, Judges, Books of Samuel and Jeremiah).

The Bible classes are conducted by R. H. Boll.

The courses are open to all and free to all.

For further information write to J. M. Hottel, 2630 Montgomery St., Louisville, Ky.

THE TORONTO MASS MEETING.

Limitations of space forbid a full report of the "June Meeting," the great gathering of Ontario churches, held in Toronto this year. Geo. A. Klingman who is to labor with Bathurst St., for a year or more; the inimitable W. D. Campbell of Detroit, whose preacher "boys" rise up to bless him throughout all Canada; and the writer—the youngest and least of them all—were the speakers, each delivering three addresses. The gathering of so many disciples around the Lord's table in Technical School Auditorium on the Lord's day morning, when W. G. Malcolmson presided, was a sight never to be forgotten. Such singing! Such fellowship! Such love! We had no more than reached the third stanza of the opening hymn—

"Tis sweet to raise the common song,

To join in holy praise and love,

And imitate the blessed throng

That mingle hearts and songs above"—

when all the springs of my heart broke loose and ran right out through my eyes! and it was so I think with others.

The June meeting of 1923 was an immense inspiration. It made me wish for the like of it in "America" as Canadians call our country. Brethren, shall we not make less of our differences, and more of the common joys of our great religion.—E. L. J.

NINETY DOLLARS FOR FOUR BEST ARTICLES.

As announced in June Word and Work an interested brother has put at our disposal the sum of \$90 to be dispensed as follows:

CONTEST No. 1.

\$25 for the best, most suggestive article along any line, not to exceed 1,100 words, typewritten, due in our office by June 30.

\$10 for the second best article.

CONTEST No. 2.

\$35 for the best article, \$15 for the second best article, not to exceed 800 words, typewritten, due in our office not later than Aug. 15, answering the following paragraph:

"I am a sister in the Lord, unmarried, said to have a pleasing appearance, apt to teach, 31 years of age, health good, life clean, no dependents. Would not in the least be chargeable to any one. I wish to be used in the way that will bring the most good to humanity and the greatest glory to God."

The awards in Contest No. 1 will be announced next month. Many interesting papers have been received, and the time is now out. Papers on Contest No. 2 are acceptable up to Aug. 15.

WORD AND WORK

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE WHOSE PURPOSE IS TO DECLARE THE
WHOLE COUNSEL OF GOD.

R. H. Boll, Editor-in-chief.

2605 Montgomery Street, Louisville, Ky.

Address Business letters simply, Word and Work, Louisville, Ky.

Co-editors: Stanford Chambers, H. L. Olmstead, E. L. Jorgenson

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JULY, 1923.

No. 7.

NEWS AND NOTES.

R. H. Boll has held short meetings at Horse Cave, Ky., Shawnee and Highland congregations, Louisville, and at Ripley, Tenn.

Vinewood church, Detroit, Meadford and Cape Rich, Ont., Leon, Ia., Baird, Tex., and Powell, Texas, are among the churches that have adopted the new alphabetical hymnal, "Great Songs of The Church" within the last few weeks. With four out of five apostolic congregations using it, Detroit, the city of singing churches, bids fair to "make it unanimous." Uniformity in the use of a hymnal is the greatest aid to good singing everywhere. Whole districts have adopted "Great Songs of The Church," large and representative congregations in practically every state and province of the United States and Canada. We think we may accurately say that it is now recognized as our *standard hymnal*.

W. W. Freeman is now in meetings in Tennessee.

From Thos. Lafollette: "We are having a good Bible School at Dillon, Ky. N. B. Wright and I were at Rosspoint yesterday and there were 85 out for Bible study and preaching. Prospects are good."

Emmet G. Creacy writes us that D. H. Friend and Thomas Joyner are to engage in a friendly discussion of four days' duration, beginning July 10. The place is Center Point, east of Horse Cave, and all visiting brethren will be entertained. The subjects treated are in regard to Baptism, and the Holy Spirit.

"I have a harmless remedy for the tobacco habit that I want every user to try. I guarantee that it will stop all craving for tobacco in any form, no matter how long a person has used it. Write me and I will tell you about it." Loomis O. Hinto, Spencer, Ind. (adv.)

From W. J. Johnson, Gainesville, Fla.: "One was baptized at MacClenay, Fla., on the second Lord's Day in June. I shall teach in the Dasher Bible School next year. I am now doing some special work in the University of Florida. The church here is doing well. Brother Prevatt is an untiring worker for the Lord. Brother Boll's lessons on Revelation are fine."

E. L. Jorgenson is now in a meeting with South Louisville church.

From Winchester, Ky.: "On June 24, H. L. Olmstead, of Franklin, Ky., closed a meeting of fifteen days' duration with the Main Street church. This was his second meeting with us and one of the best we have ever had both in the way of interest and results. There were twelve baptisms and three placed membership with the congregation from elsewhere. Bro. Olmstead put his best effort into the meeting and with the Lord's help the meeting was truly a victory for the Lord, and to Him be all the praise." Claude Neal.

From Stanford Chambers: "H. L. Olmstead was with us from May 29-June 3 inclusive, and delivered some powerful messages which did us all good. Two confessed Christ and two confessed their sins and backslidings. A. B. Barrett was with us the last Sunday in May and gave us a great lesson on the dangers of Evolution. The Lord willing I shall spend a few weeks in tent meetings in Florida beginning about June 12th. May the Lord purge us and increase our fruitage."

From Childress, Texas: "Work here is moving along nicely. There have been some twenty-one additions since the first of the year in our regular meetings. Nine by primary obedience, the others by relation. Some have moved away because of the strike, but others are coming in so we praise God and take courage." R. A. Zahn.

Brother Ben J. Elston writes of the Louisiana French work, from Carson, La.: "I have not thought it best for Brother S. Chambers to turn the accounting of help for this work over to me. But he has done it. Now help me do my best. I wish for the field better than I can do. I feel sure Bro. Chambers wishes the best—will do his best. His work has been invaluable. If God moves you to help, say whether you wish your gift to be for me, for Bro. Newman, for Bro. Prather, or Bro. Istre. I never appropriate anything for myself unless it is so specified. Specially, pray."

From E. H. Hoover: "I have just closed a good meeting at Rosedale, Miss. Only small band of a dozen of "our folks" there. They are very faithful. Six came into the church during the meeting. Some heads of families. Church much rejoiced over results of the meeting. These attend services 100% strong in numbers and seem so in faith. They do some mission and charity work besides supporting their own work. Fine example for some of the older churches in Tennessee and elsewhere."

We have some thousands of the tract, "Why Not Be Just A Christian?", 5c each, 50 for one dollar, \$15 the thousand. Nothing better for use in meetings.

"I spent two weeks of May at Wharton, Texas, where I delivered some special sermons on Fundamental questions covering the subjects of "Evolution," "Inspiration," "Sin," "Grace," "Atonement," "Faith," "Repentance," "The Holy Spirit," "The Right Church," "The Jew: Past, Present and Future," "Undenominational Christianity," "Things to Come," "Heaven," etc. The meetings were held on the Court-House lawn where comfortable seats and good lights had been provided. The community received us kindly and the churches of the town dismissed their night services all the time we were there. Attendance was fine notwithstanding school closing week and a street carnival two blocks away. Brethren at Wharton, Hungerford, and Bay City gave us spiritual and financial support. On Lord's days we spoke for the brethren in the hall where they worship in Wharton.

On my return I spoke six nights and on Lord's day at New Orleans. Two confessed Christ and two backsliders confessed sin." H. L. Olmstead.

From Frank Grammer, Shamrock, Okla.: "I am here with W. L. Oliphant in a protracted meeting. Six confessions up to date. We have a large tabernacle and it is full at each service. From here I go to Westville, Okla., for an 18-days' Normal Singing School; from there to Round Mountain, Ark., for an 18-days' Normal Music School. Then to my home, Mena, Ark., to lead singing for our meeting; then to New Hope near Hackett, Ark., for an 18-days' Normal, and while there I will lead singing for the Valley View Church of Christ with Bro. J. B. Nelson as preacher. Brethren, pray for me that I may ever live faithful and render the best service possible for our blessed Master."

From Elmdale, Mont.: "We had a fine meeting yesterday and seven baptisms. Making a total of seventeen baptisms since the 6th of April. I concluded a meeting at the Timmons' School-house last night and begin one at the Kurens School-house tonight. Bro. J. O. Golphenee begins a meeting at Hillcrest, Saturday night. Three of the seven immersed yesterday were husbands of wives that believed. The others were children of believers. Pray for the Montana work." J. C. Bailey.

Eight times as many "Great Songs of The Church" were sold in June as in June a year ago! Eventually, and permanently—"why not now?"

Have you ever made a cross-country drive in an automobile? The Words in Season, this issue, will interest you. And Don Carlos Janes' "Sight-Seeing in Jerusalem" is delightful!

A fine article from D. H. Jackson, that spiritual, capable evangelist of Toronto, entitled "The Ministry of a Night," is in the proof for next month.

CHURCHES, THE CHURCH, AND CHRISTIANS.

STANFORD CHAMBERS.

The gospel of Christ produces Christians, churches of Christ, and the church of Christ. That is its design. The gospel is responsible for the production of nothing else. Shall we endeavor to look in the matter a little more closely? Let us carefully consider the meaning of our terms and how they are related to each other.

A Christian is one who is in Christ. He has been born again. He is a child of God, a member of the family of God or the church of God. Of course the church of God is the church of Christ. "All things that are mine are thine and thine are mine." Every real Christian belongs to the church or body of Christ. The body or church of Christ embraces every Christian. Not one is left out.

"The churches of Christ salute you." (Rom. 16:16). "The churches of God which are in Judea in Christ Jesus." (1 Thess. 2:14). Here we have the local congregations referred to. The Lord designed the assembly of Christians. This is a geographical position. Hence, we read of the church at Corinth, at Ephesus, at Philippi, and so on. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst." "All with one accord in one place." "Not forsaking our own assembling together" "Let there be no divisions among you." In every place, therefore, where there are two or more Christians, they are to assemble together, and in the name of Christ. "There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all." (Eph. 6:4-6).

All Christians in one place belong in one assembly, and thus the local assembly bears witness of the oneness of the body. To do otherwise is forbidden. In that assembly, gathered simply in the name of Christ, unto Him as the sole head and authority, to worship Him according to His Word, there in one communion; at His table every Christian of that place belongs. He belongs nowhere else and should be nowhere else. To be somewhere else is to bear witness to division instead of unity. "Let there be no divisions among you." "Together" is the word emphasized in the Word. Satan is the author of separations.

A word more concerning the church as a whole. It does not embrace the various sects. It is not the aggregate of denominations. It does not embrace one of them. Denominations are human and not divine. They are of the flesh and not of the Spirit. They are all to pass away. There will be no denominations in heaven. Only individuals are embraced in the church or body of Christ. No, we must not think of an aggregate of churches of Christ, even as constituting the church of Christ, for in such congregations are always some who are not really God's children. One can be a member of a "church of Christ" and not of *the*

church of Christ. Even in the days of the apostles there were some crept in unawares. There are many more of such today. Again, while it is true that the Lord would have every Christian in a simple New Testament assembly and no part of any other, (And woe to him who knows his Master's will and does it not), yet it is possible for one to be in the body of Christ and not belong to a local New Testament assembly. The Ethiopian eunuch, as soon as he was converted, was in the body of Christ, but was not as yet a member of any congregation. For the two reasons, therefore, the aggregate of such congregations as the Lord can own as His is not co-extensive with the body or church of Christ. When, therefore we speak of the church of Christ let us not be thinking of so many congregations of a certain type, around which is thrown a circle, inside of which, alone, is the church of Christ. When we wish to refer to such congregations let us for the sake of clearness, at least, use the plural form. And when we use the term church of Christ or church of God let us mean the aggregate of individuals who are Christians, whoever and wherever they may be. "The Lord knoweth them that are His." The church of Christ of America consists of every child of God in America. The church of Christ, say, in New Orleans, means every child of God in New Orleans. The church of Christ meeting at Seventh and Camp streets means every one of that congregation. And inasmuch as there is no other assembly in New Orleans gathered simply and solely in the name of Christ, continuing stedfastly in the "apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers," it is the will of God that every child of His in New Orleans meet just there, and they fail of their duty to be anywhere else.

Note.—This, I think, answers the query of a good sister as to whether she should go with her husband to become members of a certain denominational church. It is never right to do wrong even when good might seem to come of it. How much better is it for a Christian to humbly but firmly stand for and with the truth and thus, on praying ground, by a sweet life, a faithful practice and sincere praying, bring the companion to where God's approval is fully met and enjoyed. So many think that just anything called a church will do. Or that just to be religious after some fashion or other is the main thing. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven." It is always right to obey strictly the will of the Lord.

While addressing a class of young preachers, Alexander Campbell held aloft a Bible, so the *World Call* tells us, and said: "Young men, I believe that this book contains all truth, but we have not discovered all the truth that is in it; therefore, when some day you discover a new truth in this marvelous volume, preach that truth."

THE REVELATION.

R. H. B.

THE GREAT PARENTHESIS.

The portion of the Revelation which begins at chapter 12 and runs through chapter 14, is extremely important. It forms a parenthesis in the book—a revelation within the Revelation—being entirely independent, in no direct sequence with what precedes or follows, though intimately related to it. It is an explanatory vision, a sort of side-light on all the "future" portion of the Apocalypse. (Chapters 4 to 11, and 15-19). It furnishes the background and stage-setting to the great drama of the Seals, the Trumpets, and the Bowls. It gives us the existing conditions and circumstances under which these judgments are sent forth from God; it tells us of some of the agents and forces at work during that time; and presents us with a view of the general situation in those days. Its sweep embraces the whole period from chapter 4:1 down to the destruction of the last hostile force by the Lord of Lords and King of Kings in chapter 19.

It is of the highest importance to a proper understanding of the book that the parenthetical character of this portion of the Revelation should be recognized. Any attempt to bring these visions of chapters 12, 13 and 14, into direct connection and sequence with the rest violates the structure of the book, and must end in confusion. The relation of these visions to what precedes and follows will be pointed out in the progress of our study.

THE WOMAN, THE CHILD, AND THE DRAGON.

The first figure in chapter 12 is the Woman. That this vision is symbolic is not only self-evident but it is specially declared; for we are told that this is a *sign*—"a great sign." Moreover the sign is seen in *heaven*—in the spiritual sphere, therefore. (That the local dwelling-place of God is not meant is evident from verse 5). The woman is seen symbolically arrayed with the sun; the moon was under her feet; and upon her head a crown of twelve stars. The interest centers upon the fact that the woman is with child, and crying in pain and travail, at the point of being delivered.

But another sign, a sign of sinister import, was also seen in heaven: a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns and upon his head seven diadems. His tail draweth the third part of the stars of heaven and casts them to the earth. The dragon's one purpose is to destroy the woman's child as soon as it is born.

Follows the birth of the child:—"A son, a man-child, who is to rule the nations with a rod of iron." But the dragon who laid wait to destroy it is foiled of his desire: the child was caught up to God, and to His throne.

Thus briefly is a tremendous situation sketched before our eyes. What does it all mean? Who is the woman? Who the dragon? who the child?

As to the dragon we are told outright in v. 9—"the great dragon. . . the old serpent, he that is called the Devil, and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world." That absolutely settles that. Let those whose exegetical troubles require it, try to make something else out of it: God's own explanation is good enough for the rest of us. Likewise the identity of that *child* does not give us much difficulty. There has never been but *One* to whom it was Divinely allotted to rule the nations with a rod of iron. (Ps. 2:7-9). But the promise made to Christ is by Him Himself extended to His faithful church (Rev. 2:26, 37)—which is His body. This mystic man-child is not simply the Child that was born at Bethlehem, but the Christ as including both Himself, the Head, and the Church, His spiritual Body, which is one with Him. "Ye all are one man in Christ Jesus." (Gal. 3:26-29; 1 Cor. 12:12). That Satan made every effort to destroy the child Jesus, Jesus Christ our Lord personally, and that our Lord ascended to God and to His throne we know; and also his continual attempt to destroy and to corrupt the church of Christ. And her destiny to be "caught up" is also revealed. (1 Thess. 4:16f).

But the Woman? I will not take up good time and space reviewing all the guesses and surmises that have been offered. Only two "women" of scripture-symbology can come into consideration: *Israel*, Jehovah's wife, often so referred to in the Prophets (Jer. 3:14) and *the church*, the betrothed virgin-bride of Christ. (2 Cor. 11:2). The choice lies between these two, and there is no trouble about the division. It was *not the Church* that brought forth the man-child, of course; but of Israel, both ideally and literally, sprang Christ, and the church which is His Body, which, in union with Him shares His prerogative of ruling the nations with the rod of iron. Israel brought forth the Christ and the Church. Even the Gentile contingent sprang out of Israel's covenant-promises and stands till yet upon the root and the fatness of her olive tree. (Eph. 2:12; Rom. 11:17, 18).

It must be noted that the Woman, who in verse 1 is ideally represented as seen in heaven, appears in verse 6 in humiliation, on th earth. But between verses 5 and 6 comes in the episode of the "*war in heaven*" (vs. 7-12), as a comparison of verse 6 with verses 13, 14 will show.

This "war in heaven" breaks loose upon the catching up of the Child to God's throne. "Michael and his angels" cast the dragon out of the sphere of heaven and down upon the earth, where, in great wrath, realizing that his time is short, he proceeds to do his worst. This marks the beginning of "the Great Tribulation"—a time of trouble unapproached in all the history of mankind—which is saying a vast deal.

TOUCHING DANIEL'S PROPHECY.

It is at this point that the Revelation coincides with a point in Daniel's prophecy: "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince that standeth for the children of thy people." What Michael does is not there told us, except that he evidently

arises on behalf of *Israel*; nor are we told in Daniel against whom he stands up—Revelation tells us that. But in Daniel we learn what are the first consequences on the earth of Michael's heavenly warfare: "there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time;" and the further result: "and at that time *thy people* [Israel] shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." (Dan. 12:1).

Now when Satan is cast out of heaven a great voice is heard in heaven announcing a great thing: "NOW IS COME the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ; (Comp. 11:17) for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, who accuseth them before our God day and night. (Comp. Zech. 3). And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb, and because of the word of their testimony; and they loved not their life unto death." That is the hour of Israel's turning and spiritual victory upon which Michael, their great angel, arises for them and thrusts Satan out of his saddle—his high place of government which he held and could hold only so long as Israel was in national rejection. With Israel, now under the Blood, and faithfully, fearlessly holding forth the testimony, Christ, the King of Israel, begins to assume His authority and power for the rule of the earth; and in rage Satan prepares his final resistance to the King of kings and Lord of lords, who will soon come to claim His rights. "Woe for the earth and for the sea: because the devil is gone down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he hath but a short time." This is the cause of the "Great Tribulation."

So we turn to see what Satan will do on the earth. His fury is first of all directed against the woman who had brought forth the Man-child—the people of Israel. But though he can afflict, yet he finds himself unable to destroy the faithful nation. Now he resolves upon new tactics. This is his final, his supreme effort, his utmost stake, into which he throws all his resources. We shall now behold the master-stroke of Satan's cunning and power, the flower and climax of all evil.

He takes his position on the sand of sea, and, lo!—as if conjured forth by Satan's occult art—there arises out of the sea a *Beast*, hideous and terrible of aspect.

THE GREAT BEAST.

The Bible-reader is not unfamiliar with the symbol of a *beast*. In Daniel's prophecy (Dan. 7) the inspired seer beholds four beasts rising in succession out of the troubled sea: the first like a lion; the second like a bear; the third like a leopard; the fourth, a beast "terrible and powerful and strong exceedingly and it had ten horns." These four beasts are defined as "four kings that shall rise out of the earth," and also as "kingdoms" (for the kings stand representatively, and thus interchangeably for their kingdoms). The fourth of these four beasts

holds sway and dominion over all the earth (Dan. 7:23) and turns in fury upon the saints—the people of God. He makes war against them and prevails, and they are given into his hand “until a time and times and half time”—the period we have already met with, and which is defined in the Book of Revelation as equivalent to forty-two months, 1,260 days; that is to say 3½ years. This fourth beast continues his cruel sway and persecution of the saints until the *Ancient of Days* comes (v. 22) and assumes power, and the “one like unto a son of man” receives the universal kingdom. Then sudden judgment from on High is visited upon the Beast, and the saints of the Most High possess the kingdom—the one hitherto held by the beast: “the dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven.” Thus far Daniel.*

Now the great Beast of Rev. 13 is, like the fourth beast of Dan. 7, a universal world-power, headed up in an individual who is its king. “The dragon”—the Devil, Rev. 12:9—gives him “his power and his throne and great authority”—“authority over every tribe and people and nation.” (Vs. 2, 7). Like the fourth beast of Daniel he has *ten horns* and on his horns ten diadems—symbols of rule and authority. The ten horns are ten kings federated for a brief while under the overrule of the Beast. (Rev. 17:12). All this is definitely told us and perfectly plain. The beast has seven heads—but, as we are told later, the seven heads are not contemporaneous: the great Beast has never but one head at any one time. (Rev. 17:9-11). This Beast being the last and most perfect representative of the Gentile world-power (like the great Image, Dan. 2) embodies in himself all the characteristics of the preceding ones: he has the general appearance of the Leopard, and the feet of the Bear, and the mouth of the Lion—but he is the fourth beast himself. And not the fourth beast, (Rome) as it was and passed; nor yet a new, a different, a *fifth* one (for there were not to be five, only four world-powers)—but the fourth one “in the latter time of his kingdom,” revived and returned in Satanic power; which will raise its strength against the King of kings, and will meet its doom at His hands; after which the Lord and his saints reign over all the world. So testifies Daniel and so John in the Revelation.

This Beast will set himself forth as God. (Comp. 2 Thess. 2:4). He is the object of the world’s wonder and admiration, and then of its *worship*. There is as a result a clean separation: *all* will worship him, *those only excepted* whose names are in the Lamb’s book of life. This worship is further enforced by a curious “second” beast, who acts as representative and advertising-agent to the great Beast; works miracles in his name (comp. 2 Thess. 2:9, 10) and sets up an image to the Beast which upon

*It is generally conceded that the four beasts represent Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. The fourth beast, the universal Roman power, has already appeared; and yet, as we shall see, never in such manifestation, nor to meet such a judgment as the prophecy foretells.

pain of death all must worship. (Comp. Dan. 3:1, 6; 12:11; Matt. 24:15; 2 Thess. 2:4). Moreover a brand to distinguish the devotees of the Beast—a mark on their right hand or upon their forehead, even the name of the Beast or the number of his name, which is “666,” must be borne by everyone on penalty of universal boycott and ostracism. Many surmises, some plausible, some not at all so, have been made as to the significance of this number. We will spend no time discussing them. When that day comes the persecuted people of God will know and understand. (Dan. 12:10).

The duration of the Beast’s fierce, antichristian sway will be that period, variously spoken of as “a time, times, and half time” (a *year*, (two) *years*, and *half a year*; 3½ years); equivalent to “a thousand two hundred and threescore days” (Rev. 12:6, 14) or “forty and two months.” (Rev. 13:5). It is the latter half of Daniel’s seventieth week.* (It was during the former half of it, no doubt, that the two witnesses prophesied, Rev. 11:3, and the “woman” found protection, Rev. 12:6, 14). This is not 1,260 years—as some, endeavoring to make the Revelation cover the long extent of past history, have tried to represent it. I believe that God used the various terms to make it perfectly clear that He meant just 1,260 days, 42 prophetic months (of 30 days each) or 3½ years.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER OF REVELATION

consists of seven, separate, disconnected visions, each complete in itself.

1. The Lamb with the redeemed remnant (doubtless the same as that of Rev. 7:1-8) seen standing on Mount Zion. (Vs. 1-5).
2. An angel seen in mid-heaven once more holding out to the dwellers on the earth “eternal good tidings” and calling them to repentance in view of the judgment of God about to fall. (Vs. 6, 7).
3. Another angel announcing the fall of Babylon. (V. 8).
4. Yet another angel warning all men against worship of the Beast and his image or the receiving of his mark on his forehead or his hand. (Vs. 9-12).
5. A voice from heaven comforting those who have to die in the fearful persecution. (V. 13).

*I am aware of the arguments advanced to show that the seventy weeks of Daniel (Dan. 9:24-27) ran continuously, and have long since transpired. To me that position is utterly unsatisfactory and leads to nothing and nowhere. But the terminus of the seventy weeks (as given in Daniel) is the complete restoration and acceptance before God of Israel and of their holy city, Jerusalem. (Dan. 9:24). After the cutting off of the Messiah follows an unmeasured interval of Israel’s rejection. (Dan. 9:26). The seventieth week begins with the people’s fatal covenant with a certain “coming prince” for the duration of seven years; which term of security is interrupted in its midst by the stopping of the temple-services and the “abomination of desolation”—which is the tocsin of the **Great Tribulation**, (Dan. 9:27; 11:31; 12:7, etc.) at the end of which Israel is delivered and forever restored. But we cannot discuss this further here.

6. The vision of *the Harvest*. (Vs. 14-16).
 7. The vision of *the Vintage*. (Vs. 17-20).

These visions are sidelights, illuminating the whole situation; and are set down here without regard to sequence of events.

This whole section, chapters 12-14, is of this character. Were I to place them, I would say that chapter 12:1-5 precedes in point of time the vision beginning at 4:2; and that 12:7 to 13:8 runs alongside of seals and trumpets. (Note for instance the Beast coming upon the scene between the 6th and 7th trumpet, 11:7). The visions of chapter 14 touch the narrative of the seals, trumpets, and bowls at various points, some of which will yet be called attention to.

Here then we have covered the most important section of our study thus far. We can now understand something of the great judgment-hour in which the age must end. Above is God, and the Lord Jesus, risen up to judgment—associated with Him a class of saints already seated in His presence in glory. On the earth, Satan, cast out from his celestial sphere, raging in wrath, persecuting Israel, and reconstructing the universal Gentile world-power under a man in whom all sin finds its climax and perfect expression. While the Divine judgments are falling on the earth from above, the wrath of Satan and his agents below bring about that unparalleled tribulation—such as never has been, no, nor ever shall be. It is primarily “the day of Jacob’s trouble” (“alas! for that day is great so that none is like it” Jer. 30:7)—for all the fury of Satan will be directed against Israel that day, to destroy and exterminate her. However, Israel (the “remnant of Israel”) shall come forth out of it as pure gold from the furnace. But it will be a day of unparalleled trouble to all the world also—that great “hour of trial which is to come upon the whole world to try them that dwell upon the earth.” (Rev. 3:10). Truly if those days had not been shortened no flesh would have been saved; but for the elect’s sake (see the two companies in Rev. 7) those days are shortened. (Matt. 24:21, 22). Immediately after those days comes the Lord with His saints, in glory. (Matt. 24:29)—Many side-applications may properly be made of the prophecy of this book, but the Revelation is supremely concerned with that awful final period of judgment and trial.

The next article resumes the string which was dropped at the close of chapter 11, and follows the out-pouring of the seven bowls of wrath and the doom of Babylon.

PERSONAL AND HELPFUL THOUGHTS.

They overcame him—the Accuser—not by argument, not by denial of their failures, not by efforts at self-justification, but “because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony; and they loved not their life even unto death.” (Rev. 12:11). This is the way, and this the secret of victory of all that overcome. Recall the seven promises to the overcomer in Rev. 2 and 3. “He that overcometh shall inherit these things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.” (20:7). Revelation is the Overcomer’s Manual.

Do not in time of stress resort to defense of carnal weapons. (13:10.)

“Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.” “In your patience ye possess your souls.” Luke 21:16-19).

The Necessity of a Clean Choice. Here the ways separate. “He that is not with me is against me.” As many as will not worship the image of the Beast shall be killed; and if any one refuses to receive the mark of the beast he shall not be permitted to buy or sell (13:15-17)—which means ostracism and deprivation of all the means of life. But God sends word that if any man worshippeth the Beast and his image, and receiveth a mark on his forehead or upon his hand, he shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God undiluted, from the cup of His anger, and go into eternal torment. (14:9-12). Now make up your mind as to which you prefer. It is fear against fear—God fighting the terror of man by the terror of the Lord. “And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will warn you whom ye shall fear: fear him who after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, **Fear him.**” (Luke 12:4, 5). This choice is going on now also. What is your decision? Are you controlled by the fear of God or by the fear of man?

Read again Rev. 3:10 in its connection. Also Luke 21:34-36. Is there a promise there to the watching and praying ones and to the faithful church that they shall escape the fearful time of the Great Tribulation?

GOING SLOW WITH GOD.

God is never slow from His standpoint, but He is from ours, because impetuosity and doing things prematurely are universal human weaknesses. It may not only be the result of our fallen condition, but one of the infirmities in our very nature as creatures to be in a hurry. When we begin to learn the ways of God we have so many things to unlearn that there are some lessons which God does not begin teaching us till after we have passed the initial stages, and one of these deeper lessons is that of moving very slowly with Himself. It is not indifference, nor lagging behind; it is just the opposite of a dull and slovenly spirit, for it is a disposition entirely wide awake and energetic to keep in the order of God’s will.

God lives and moves in eternity, and every little detail in His working must be like Himself, and have in it the majesty and measured movement, as well as the accuracy and promptness of infinite wisdom. When we deal with God we are not dealing with impetuous, short-sighted creatures. It is a great thing to really come to the knowledge as to who God is, and how we are to behave with Him. There is no hurry in a Being who sees and knows everything from all eternity. True, God often acts instantaneously, but it is the instantaneousness of nature and boundless wisdom, and not the quickness of a creature’s hurry. It is also true that we are to “run the race set before us,” and “run in the way of God’s commandments,” but we are to run with all our faculties calmly collected, with thoughtful deliberation. Running with God is a slow walk with the creature. We are to let God do the swiftness and we do the slowness.

The Holy Spirit tells us to “be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.” That is, swift to take in from God, but slow to give out the opinions, the emotions of the creature. We can

never walk with God until we learn to go slow, to take time to pray, to think twice before we speak once, to watch the pace of His guidance, and measure our steps accordingly. Rebekah and Jacob were in a hurry to get God's fore-ordained blessing from the lips of Isaac, and paid the penalty of twenty years' separation and sorrow. Peter lagged behind Christ at the trial before Pilate, but his very tardiness was the effect of his previous impetuosity in boasting of his fidelity. Had he gone slow in his avowals of heroism, and taken time to weigh his words, he would have gone faster, and closer to the cross. The very recollection as to who God is, would produce a thoughtful, slow, quiet movement in all our dealings with Him.

We miss a great many things from God by not going slow enough with Him. It must be a secret joy in God to give Himself forth to those who love and appreciate Him, but God must always act like Himself, and if we fail to move in harmony with His attributes, and get the things He wants to communicate in His own way, He cannot change His perfections to accommodate our whims, and even if He should undertake to hear and bless us without regard to time and fitness it would do us no good, for the very blessings of God, if not conferred in God's way, would prove curses, like eating raw meat or green fruit. There are glimpses into God's perfections, insight into wonderful truths, quiet unfoldings of daily opportunities, gentle checks of the Holy Spirit upon our decisions or words, sweet and secret promptings to do certain things, the quiet solving of hard problems and mental articulations of special words of strength, which we have often missed because we took our ear from God's telephone a little too quickly or ran past the angle of vision, or wasted time by asking a question, or got in a feverish state of anxiety, or attempted to take God's work into our own hands. There is no telling how much we have lost spiritually, mentally, and physically, by not going slow with God.

There is a time for everything in the universe to get ripe. All thoughts, words, prayers, actions, providences, opportunities, blessings, spiritual experiences, divine revelations, all avocations, all dispensations, whether in nature, grace, or glory, have a time in which they get ripe; and to go slow with God is the heavenly pace that gathers up all things at the time they are ripe. What can be greater than to see God, or to hear Him speak, and we miss both by not going slow.

Going slow with God is our greatest safety. It is dangerous to live with a thousand live wires around us, against which we may jostle at any time by not keeping calm and thoughtful in our movements. In factories of multiplied and complicated machinery a man must needs move cautiously, and especially when wheels, bands, electric motors, and sharp-cutting instruments are running with lightning speed, and a wrong step, or a careless movement of the hand, may cause instant death. In many respects, we are moving amid just such unseen and complicated

machinery; and walking quietly and slowly with God is the only safe way to escape the swift flying bands and pulleys of mighty laws, as well as demoniac snares.

There are more religious delusions at the present day than since the fall of man, and every one of them could be traced to a rash, impetuous taking up with thoughts and things, without taking time to wait on God in humility and teachableness of spirit. Doctrines are formed on one text of Scripture not half understood, while a dozen plain texts to the contrary receive no attention. New, wild, and extravagant teachers are rushed after like a Klondike gold field. All sorts of pious fads, religious delusions and visionary theories are hastily swallowed down, because people do not keep humble enough to watch God and trace His slow and peaceful footsteps. It is not merely going slow that is our safety, but it is *loving* to go slow; it is to lovingly prefer the deep, quiet, peaceful river of God's life to the rushing, noisy, exciting and wild things which always characterize men's foolishness. The soul that has the itch of impatience in it will sooner or later champ the bit, break the traces, or run over a precipice. The very center of the soul must be calm and peaceful, so that it can prefer God's way and God's time of doing things. Did we ever have to repent for taking time to wait on God, and did we ever fail to repent for not taking time to work in His order?

We must needs go slow with God in order to keep in a reverent and worshipping spirit. This is the way saints have turned their lives into a beautiful continual worship of God, by going slow enough to mix God in with everything, and tie all the events of life fast to His throne; by referring all things to Him, and with the eye of thought looking up to Him to dictate their services and their steps.

Some people pray too fast to get any answer from God, like nervous children that rattle away at their parents so rapidly that their words are not intelligible. They must quiet down and talk slow enough to be understood, before their wants or fears can be relieved. One of the curses put on Adam was that of "sweat," which expresses the hurried, over-heated or excited state of the body; and the Lord told Ezekiel that His priests must not enter the holy sanctuary with "woolen garments on them, or anything that would cause them to sweat," because the God of eternal and unruffled peace wants us to worship Him with a calm, collected, reverent spirit, and not with the sweat of creature-hurry in our minds. How can we speak to God in a reverent way or look to Him with adoring love when we have run ourselves into a feverish perspiration and precipitation of thought? Whatever we do accurately must take time and collectedness of mind, and there is no accuracy in all the world like keeping company with God, and yet nothing so free from bondage or tediousness. By going slow with the Lord we accomplish more than by going with a rush, because what we do is done so

much better and does not have to be undone. It is done in a better spirit, with deeper motives, and bears fruit far out in the future, when all mushroom performances have been dissipated forever.—G. D. W.

DAILY EXPERIENCES.

O. D. BIXLER.

Personal contact and influence are only different words for that teaching upon teaching that we are doing daily. Some people may feel that the only profitable effort on the part of an evangelist, or of one not an evangelist, is that made in verbal effort to preach the gospel. I am of the conviction that there is far too little of this done among Christians. I would encourage every member of the body of Jesus Christ to preach verbally more and more. But this does not mean that that is all that counts for God in the Christian's life.

I seldom go out from home on any kind of an errand without having experiences that make my heart glad for Jesus' sake, although they are often not verbal sermons. In this section Christianity has been heard of, but is not understood at all by one person in a thousand. These country people are rather suspicious of us. Sometimes I meet railway station-masters, or employees, army officers, village and township mayors, influential citizens, some young person, some farmer or his wife or child; and it is when we have a friendly talk and form a friendship that I return home happy that we are here. Or, on other occasions, when we are permitted to relieve some physical pain or mental anxiety; then we feel happy for Jesus' sake that we are here.

But there is yet another side to personal influence. I mean to say that our weaknesses, mistakes, sins, are seen of the people, too. We ask your prayers for us that we may overcome. "We who died to sin, why should we any longer live therein?" Sin has no more dominion over the Christian. Jesus also is our intercessor in just this point. We are his servants whom we serve. It is certain that we do not serve Satan intentionally, but mistakes are not to be winked at, and especially in the missionary who is situated where his influence is always going out.

"The congregation at Waterford expressed its Christian love in obtaining a new Ford touring car for its preacher. Sister Hickman, now deceased, and Sister Ruby Rouse, wife of Bro. Vane Rouse, sponsored the cause, shouldered the responsibility of making up the funds. Their preacher is now in possession of the new Ford. He feels greatly indebted to the Lord and to each member of the congregation at Waterford for this very liberal contribution to the work of the Lord at that place." A. C. Reader.

SIGHTSEEING IN JERUSALEM.

Please remember the geographical references in last month's paper and refresh your mind by looking at the map of Jerusalem in your Bible, noting the surrounding wall, the four "quarters" and the Temple Area, the Kidron Valley, Mt. of Olives and "Calvary." Upon alighting from the train, you are unable to see the city, but when you have gone but a short distance it is in clear view and close at hand, but it doesn't look like New York, Chicago, nor any other American city. It is *not* an American city, but an old, old Oriental city whose history runs away back to Christ and on back to Solomon and David, and yet back to the Jebusites and to Melchizedek who was "king of Salem."

The tourist is at once struck with the strangeness of the ancient enclosing wall and the buildings of stone with their flat or dome shaped roofs, and the earnest Christian finds many things to claim his attention as he goes from one spot to another.

What memories cluster around that southeastern corner where it is said Araunah was driving his cattle on the threshing floor when David refused to accept it without pay as the site of an altar to God when thousands from Dan to Beersheba were dying from pestilence. 2 Sam. 24:15-25. Before that Abraham was about to sacrifice his only son here on Moriah when the hand of God interposed. Gen. 22:1-19. David came up from Bethlehem after reigning there seven and a half years and defeated the Jebusites, making the Holy City his capital for the remaining thirty-three years of his life. Then Solomon, the wise, erected his splendid temple on this hill and reigned from north to south and from Bashan to the sea. And then the thousand things which have transpired since his death—the division of the kingdom; the wars and apostasies; the captivity; the rebuilding of the temple; Herod's temple and the experiences of our Lord here; his triumphal entry; his rejection by those he had come to save; Peter and John going up to the temple at the hour of prayer when the man who had been lame from birth was healed; and where would be the end of this sketch if all the historic events of this mountain top were enumerated?

The world-conquering Romans under Titus besieged the city in the year 70, the investment resulting in awful suffering, many deaths, the fall of the city, destruction of the temple, the crucifixion of a great number of the impenitent and unbelieving Jews, etc. A "Christian" church was afterwards reared on the temple site; a heathen temple has stood here; and some 1200 years ago, the Mohammedans built the Mosque of Omar, or Dome of the Rock, as it is sometimes called from the fact that the immense dome hangs above a great, massive rock—part of the natural formation of the mount and said to be the stone upon which Isaac was to have been offered and the location of the altar of burnt offerings in front of Solomon's temple.

When I was in Jerusalem in 1904, access to this area was re-

stricted and it was necessary to make arrangements with the Turkish government through the American Consul in order to visit the interesting spot, but you remember there has been a great war since then and the Turkish crescent no longer waves above Jerusalem and these haters of Christianity no longer have to be consulted by tourists who wish to visit the place of the various temples of Solomon, Zerubbabel and Herod. Since General Allenby's victorious entry, the city has been dominated by the British who now hold the mandate of Palestine. Consequently the Temple Area is now as open for visitors as any other quarter of the city. But it is British policy to leave "sacred sites" in the hands of their former custodians, so Mohammedans control their own Mosques here just as the Catholics and others control their churches in different parts of the city. Mrs. Janes and I bought some food and went into the great open space from the west side and sat down between the wall behind us and the platform of the great mosque (see your Bible map) and deliberately consumed our meal. Then we went up one of the several flights of stairs to this vast platform and walked over towards the Mt. of Olives on the east, but found the entrance there was closed. It was at this point on my former journey that I and my fellow travelers had to put some big slippers on over our shoes before we could enter the mosque. Now we walk around to the west side where the door is open and a Mohammedan attendant directs us to remove our shoes after which we entered the splendidly carpeted octagonal building and were shown about, seeing the great rock which is 57 feet long and 43 feet wide. The Mosque El Aksa stands a little to the south and used to be visited every Friday by the Turkish governor who went there to worship.

We went over to the eastern side of the Area and climbed up on the wall near the Golden Gate which is now closed. From this point we had a good view of the slope of Mt. Moriah down to the Kidron (which is a running stream only in the wet season) from whence the Mount of Olives rises somewhat higher than Moriah. Down there at the foot of this mountain is the reported location of the garden of agonies, otherwise called Gethsemane. On this side of the valley is a structure intended to mark the place of Stephen's stoning. Its Greek inscriptions from the Testament are interesting and impressive. On the slope of Olivet is the Russian church, and at the summit is the fine Russian Tower from whose top I have observed the country for many miles around. Now, turn around from facing the Mt. of Olives and look at this stone-paved section here in the lower end of the Temple Area. Beneath those rocks are great caverns. When the Temple was built there was not enough level ground around it to suit the taste or needs of those in authority and immense stone columns were reared, arches built and this pavement made here many feet above the slope of the mountain and those spaces beneath are what are meant by the modern designation, Solomon's Stables, though he did not use them for that purpose.

MARY T. HICKMAN.

On May 17th, 1923, Sister Mary T. Hickman, wife of Bro. Ronald Hickman, fell asleep. Sister Hickman was one of those very earnest and sincere Christians whose home was always open to the preacher and whose sincerity and devotion directed her always to the place of worship on Lord's day. The weather was no barrier to her, hot or cold, rain or shine, Sister Hickman and the family were always present. The church feels a deep loss and we share with Bro. Hickman and the boys, the father and brother and the sisters in their hour of trial. A. C. R.

MORGAN PATTERSON.

On June 26th, we laid to rest our Brother Morgan Patterson in the Cemetery at Kings. Bro. Patterson leaves his good wife and two children. He obeyed the gospel 23 years ago and he was faithful to the Lord the greater part of the time. We will miss him very much and we sorrow with those that sorrow in their hour of trial. The 23rd Psalm is consolation to those that weep. A. C. R.

R. F. GILL.

In ripe old age (born 1841) surrounded by his loving family, Brother Robert F. Gill fell asleep at his home, Allensville, Ky., on June 26. He was a strong man, in all that pertains to manhood, physically, mentally, morally: always clean, upright, honest, honorable, straightforward in all his words and dealings with his fellow-man. Solid as a rock, frank and outspoken, his heart was nevertheless tender and affectionate, and he was ready unto every good work. As a young man he never participated in wild-oats sowing (and was thereby spared many a bitter harvest); but at the age of 19 he confessed Christ as Lord, was baptized, and added to the church of God, in the communion and fellowship of which he remained unto his death. He departed in peace with God and man. Sister Gill, the dear good mother in Israel, with all her sons and daughters and grand-children, and a great host of friends, neighbors, and relatives were present at the funeral. Thus passed a man in Christ faithful and true, whose epitaph might well read like David's, who "after he had served his own generation by the will of God fell on sleep."

"Sleep on, beloved, sleep, and take thy rest;
Lay down thy head upon thy Saviour's breast;
We love thee well, but Jesus loves thee best—
Good night!

"Until we meet again before His throne,
Clothed in the spotless robe He gives His own,
Until we know even as we are known,
Good night!"

The Lord's Day Lessons.

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FIRST LORD'S DAY LESSON OF JULY.

Lesson 1.

July 1, 1923.

JOHN THE BAPTIST.

(A Survey of the Life of John the Baptist)

Golden Text: Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel; For he hath visited and wrought redemption for his people.—Luke 1:68.

Lesson Text: Luke 3:3-8; 7:24-28.

3. And he came into all the region round about the Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins; 4 as it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, The voice of one crying in the wilderness,

Make ye ready the way of the Lord, Make his paths straight.

5 Every valley shall be filled, And every mountain and hill shall be brought low; And the crooked shall become straight,

And the rough ways smooth; 6 And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

7 He said therefore to the multitudes that went out to be baptized of him, Ye offspring of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

24. And when the messengers of John were departed, he began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to behold? a reed shaken with the wind? 25 But what went ye out to see? a man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they that are gorgeously apparelled, and live delicately, are in kings' courts. 26 But what went ye out to see? a prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet. 27 This is he of whom it is written,

Verse 3. What statement just precedes this? (v. 2). How long had he been in the wilderness? (Luke 1:80) Where did John do his preaching? What was the substance of it? Of what inward change was John's baptism a sign? What was this baptism for? From whence was this message of John's? (v. 2).

Verses 4-6. Who had long before foretold this work of John the Baptist? How is the way of the Lord made ready and prepared? (Matt. 3:2). What blocks the way of the Lord into the hearts of men? (Isa. 59:2). How is the hindrance removed? (Comp. Rev. 3:19, 20). Is the way into our hearts open to the Lord? On the condition that this road-clearing be done, what blessed result would come to all flesh?

Verse 7. What did John call the multitudes? Did they realize they were that bad? Do people in sin realize their condition? Was it unkind of God to show them what they were? What would have been much more terrible? Do people like to have their sin shown them? But is it good for them? What class especially did John so rebuke? (Matt. 3:7). Who were they? If the religious leaders are of that sort would the common people be better? What was awaiting them all? How only could they escape the wrath to come? Is that still true?

Verse 8. What proof of repentance did God demand? What were they in danger of putting their trust in? Can a sinner who does not repent get through on his relation to Abraham? Or on any other claim of station or

Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, Who shall prepare thy way before thee.

28 I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there is none greater than John: yet he that is but little in the kingdom of God is greater than he.

privilege? If they failed to repent would God be at a loss to find children of Abraham to fulfil His promises to? **Verses 24-28** (of Luke 7). **THE LORD'S EULOGY OF JOHN.** When John's messengers to Jesus had gone, to whom did He speak about John? Did the Lord Jesus ever deal in empty compliments? In what sort of terms did He speak of John the Baptist?

Was John merely a prophet? What more? What surprising estimate of John does Jesus express? Did John ever do what men would count great exploits? But did the Lord know the inward worth of the man, and the value of his faithful and fearless work? Why do those who are in the Kingdom stand higher than the greatest of those who are "born of women"? (John 3:5).

THE LIFE OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

1. **The Birth of John.** John the Baptist figures in all four gospels, but only Luke tells us of the circumstances of his birth. Like Isaac he was a child of promise born to aged parents, not in the course and strength of nature, but by the grace of God. By order of God he was named "John"—a name which means literally, "the favor of Jehovah"—or "the gift of God's grace." Was John's life and ministry such a blessing to men as his name implied? The work John was to do is clearly stated in Gabriel's announcement, and in the song of Zacharias his father (Luke 1:14-17; 76-79). John's earlier life was spent in the seclusion of the desert-wilds. (Luke 1:80).

2. **JOHN'S MINISTRY.** Let us divide this into three parts:

His Preaching: a call to repentance.

John's Baptism: the sign and symbol of repentance.

John's Testimony to Jesus.

The Preaching of John.

Where did John get his message? Luke 3:2: "The word of God came unto John, the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness." The keynote of John's preaching was **repentance**. By repentance and only by real, sincere repentance, is the way opened and the path cleared for the Lord to come in to save and bless. The motive for repentance is all comprehended in the announcement, "the kingdom of heaven is at hand." To the Israelite instructed out of the scriptures of the prophets this was the great hope—a powerful incentive to repent that he might have a part and share in the Promise. It also carried a solemn warning. For the great crisis which was to bring in the Kingdom would be connected with a sifting and testing, a judgment which would consume the wicked. They must not rely upon the fact that they were Abraham's children by fleshly descent: that wouldn't save them if they were not personally right with God. The tree is to be judged by its fruit. Already the axe lies ready for use at the root of the trees—not the pruning-knife of discipline and chastening, but the axe of judgment and retribution. Every tree that brings not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. Repentance, if genuine, must show itself in fruit, that is in works of righteousness.

How greatly needed is such a message today amid the careless church-membership who bank upon the fact that they "belong," but neither do the will of God nor really care for Him; who walk after their own desires and in **habitual sin!**

John's preaching was not done in the crowded city and in auditoriums and amphitheatres, but in the wilderness; and the vast crowds flocked to hear him from far and near. It was a powerful "Voice" that cried in the wilderness, a voice of terrible earnestness.

THE BAPTISM OF JOHN.

Whatever similar practices may have been current (as some claim) in Judaism—this was not an old institution. It was a new thing brought in by

John, else it would not have been called **John's baptism**. It was a preparatory rite, looking forward to the acceptance of a Savior who was yet to come (Acts 19:4) who could and would do what John's baptism could not accomplish. John could plow and break up the earth; Jesus alone could drop a living seed that would spring up into a new being. John could move people to penitence and reformation: the Lord Jesus alone could give life and power. "He shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit." John's baptism was the sign and pledge of repentance, thus leading into remission of sins.

JOHN'S TESTIMONY TO JESUS.

This was the most important, because the highest, work of John: to introduce Jesus Christ the Lord to His people Israel. "That he should be made manifest to Israel, for this cause came I baptizing in water." (John 1:31). From the first, John told the multitudes that the unknown Great One, the latchet of whose shoes John was not worthy to unloose, was already standing in their midst. In the first and third chapters of the gospel of John we have the testimony of John the Baptist: (1) to the delegation from Jerusalem, John 1:19-28; (2) to his own disciples, John 1:29-38; and (3) on another occasion to his disciples, John 3:22-30. (See also John 5:33-35). Note carefully all that John declared about Jesus. Was it to John's earthly advantage to bear such a testimony?

QUESTIONS ON THE LIFE AND WORK OF JOHN.

How was John a child of promise? Names of his father and mother? (Luke 1). Where did he spend his youth? (Luke 1:80). What did Gabriel say John was to do? (Luke 1:15-17). What had Isaiah prophesied of him? (See lesson-text). Where did John get his message? (Luke 3:2). What was the key-note of his preaching? Why was repentance necessary? What awful name did he call the leaders and the people? Of what did he warn them? How did John bear witness to Jesus? What did the Lord say of John? (Lesson text). What great qualities of character can you see in John? Where were his latter days spent? How did he die? (Mark 6:14-29). What great lessons in the life, work, and teaching of John the Baptist for us? (Lessons of warning? of promise? of fearlessness and faithfulness? Was John an ease-lover? a money-lover? a pleasure-seeker? money-seeker? seeker after men's favor?)

SECOND LORD'S DAY LESSON OF JULY.

Lesson 2.

July 8, 1923

MARY, THE MOTHER OF JESUS.

(A Survey of the Life of Mary, the Mother of Jesus)

Golden Text: Thou shalt call his name Jesus; for it is he that shall save his people from their sins.—Matt. 1:21.

Lesson Text: Luke 2:41-52.

41. And his parents went every year to Jerusalem at the feast of the passover. 42 And when he was twelve years old, they went up after the custom of the feast; 43 and when they had fulfilled the days, as they were returning, the boy Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and his parents knew it not; 44 but supposing him to be in the company, they went a day's journey; and they sought for him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance: 45 and when they found him not, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking for him. 46 And it came to pass, after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both hearing them and asking them questions: 47 and all that heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. 48 And when they saw him, they were astonished; and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I sought thee sorrowing. 49 And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? knew ye not that I must be in my Father's house? 50 And

they understood not the saying which he spake unto them. 51 And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth; and he was subject unto them: and his mother kept all these sayings in her heart. 52 And Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

Most of the facts concerning Mary the mother of Jesus are given us by Luke; for Luke emphasizes the human nature of our Lord Jesus Christ, and naturally gives us the facts of His parentage, birth, childhood, youth.

Mary must have been of the seed of David. We know that Joseph, her husband, was a descendant of David; but we also know that Joseph was not the father of Jesus. (Matt. 1). Jesus had no other human parentage than Mary, His mother. But we are told over and over that He was "of the seed David according to the flesh," and "of the fruit of his loins," that is a direct lineal descendant of David. That settles the fact that Mary was of David's line. Every circumstance indicates that the genealogy of Luke 3 is the line of the actual fleshly descent of our Lord Jesus Christ, **Mary's lineage**; Joseph's name being given instead of hers as "The son (i. e., son-in-law) of Heli" because it was contrary to Jewish custom for a woman's name to stand as a link in a genealogy. The genealogy in Matt. 1, is Joseph's—giving the legal descent of our Lord, according to which he was legal heir (because first-born son, though by adoption) of Joseph.

Mary was a simple, humble, quiet, modest Jewish maiden, poor and lowly, living in the despised village of Nazareth. But she was the one woman whom God selected to the honor of being the mother of His Son. God has always smitten human pride and pretense in the forehead, when He went to make choice among men. (Comp. 1 Cor. 1:26-29). The story of the angel's visit and announcement to Mary is told us in Luke 1:26-38, which read. The angel told her to what high calling and destiny God had chosen her, and how great her child should be. It was also explained to her that the child should be of God, not of a human father: "Wherefore also the holy thing which is begotten shall be called the Son of God." (v. 35). Mary's answer was, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word."

Mary's visit to Elizabeth followed soon after. Elizabeth was a relative of Mary, and the angel had mentioned her to Mary in his announcement. (Luke 1:36). Thither she hastened, and was received of Elizabeth with a cry of joy, and words of welcome which showed that Elizabeth knew all. Then Mary lifted up her voice in a psalm of praise—greatly like the inspired song of Hannah, the mother of Samuel. (Luke 1:46-55; comp. 1 Sam. 2:1-10).

Of the circumstances of birth of Jesus we read in Matt. 1:18-25 and Luke 2:1-20. The one incident of Jesus' boyhood, in which Mary also figures, is given in our printed lesson-text.

Mary's standing with the Lord Jesus Christ. To those whose minds have been pre-occupied by the legends and fables and traditions of the Church of Rome the simple facts revealed in the gospels come as a startling surprise. No indication in God's word of any such thing as Mary's perpetual virginity, but rather that she subsequently was the mother of Joseph's children. (Mark 6:2, 3). Moreover the Lord expressly showed that Mary had no special claim on Him, no favored position or particular privileges just because according to the flesh she was His mother. He emphasized this in the plainest terms. (Matt. 12:46-50; Luke 11:27, 28). The Roman doctrine about Mary, the names and influence they ascribe to her—as Lordess, Mediatrix, Queen of heaven, etc., are idolatrous in their nature, blasphemous, and opposed to all that is taught in the word of God. There is but one Mediator between God and man, Himself Man, Christ Jesus. (1 Tim. 2:5). Every faithful and obedient man and woman in the church stands as near to the Lord as Mary the mother of Jesus. It is not fleshly relationship that gives anyone a standing with the Lord Jesus Christ, but faith and obedience; and to one no more than to another, regardless of earthly circumstances and relation. The conditions of salvation were precisely the same for Mary as for all the rest; and she stands on the same ground with all

the redeemed. It is no honor to Mary to deify her or worship her or "venerate" her after the Roman fashion. Little children keep yourselves from Mariolatry!

Last mention of Mary. On the cross the Lord Jesus specially commended Mary to the care of the apostle John. (John 19:26, 27). Joseph, it seems, was dead; and the half-brothers of Jesus were unbelieving and unsympathetic. (John 7:5). But Mary's faith and love clung to Him to the last. Doubtless she was one among those who saw Him after His resurrection. The last mention of her is found in Acts 1:14, among those who waited and prayed after the Lord Jesus' ascension, along with His brethren who now also had joined in with the ranks of those who believed in Jesus.

QUESTIONS ON THE LIFE OF MARY?

Of what family was Mary? What sort of young woman would you picture her to have been? Would the Lord have chosen her to be the mother of Christ if she had been disobedient? impudent? immodest? proud? silly, giddy, frivolous? What sort of girl is it that God is well pleased with today? Was Mary high up in society, or was she of lowly rank? What indication in Mary's song (Luke 1:46-55) that God shows preference to the humble and lowly? What is the value of a worthy woman? (Prov. 31). Should any child honor its father and mother? (Eph. 6:1-3). Did the Lord Jesus honor His? (Luke 2:51). But in the matter of salvation, did Mary have any special privilege over others who believe and obey the Lord? Can any of us stand as near to the Lord Jesus as His own mother did? How? (Matt. 12:48-50). Did God command us to worship Mary? to pray to her? Is she our "Mediatress"? (1 Tim. 2:5). If we depart from the word of God and follow the traditions of men, what will become of us? (Luke 6:39; Matt. 15:9; 2 John 9). Did the Lord mention Mary on His Cross? Where have we the last mention of her? Mention some of the greatest women in the Bible.

THIRD LORD'S DAY LESSON OF JULY.

Lesson 3.

July 15, 1923.

SIMON PETER.

(A Survey of Simon Peter's Life).

Golden Text: Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee.—John 21:17.

Lesson Text: Matt. 16:13-18; 21-23; John 21:15-17.

13 Now when Jesus came into the parts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Who do men say that the Son of man is? 14 And they said, Some say John the Baptist; some, Elijah; and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. 15 He saith unto them, But who say ye that I am? 16 And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. 17 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven. 18 And I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

(Verses 13-23 relate the great crisis and turning-point in the Lord Jesus' dealings with His apostles. Simon Peter figures here prominently.)

Verses 13, 14. What important question did Jesus ask His disciples? Why is this question so important? (John 8:24). What did "men" think about it? Were not these opinions complimentary to Jesus? But were they right?

Verses 15, 16. What does the Lord ask His disciples direct? Who answered before any of the rest? Have you noticed that Peter always was quick to speak up and to step out? Did he say just the right thing this time? What was his answer?

Verse 17. Whence had Peter got this truth? Had he reasoned it out in his

21 From that time began Jesus to show unto his disciples, that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and the third day be raised up. 22 And Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall never be unto thee. 23 But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art a stumbling-block unto me: for thou mindest not the things of God, but the things of men.

John 21:15. So when they had broken their fast, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. 16 He saith to him again a second time, Simon, son of John, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Tend my sheep. 17 He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of John, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

SURVEY OF SIMON PETER'S LIFE.

From the time Simon began to follow the Lord Jesus till the crisis in Matt. 16, where Peter balked; from then on to the Denial, where Peter miserably failed; from that point till he was restored; and the subsequent life of apostolic ministry—these are the four epochs of Simon Peter's life; all rich with wonderful teaching, warning, exhortation, consolation, and hope for those of us who are, like Simon Peter, so very human.

I. SIMON PETER'S EARLY FOLLOWING.

His first acquaintance with Jesus is related in John 1:35-42. At the first sight of him the Lord named him "Cephas, which is by interpretation, Peter"—that is, **Rock or Stone**. Now Peter was no rock: far from it. He came nearer being like Reuben—unstable as water. But he came to Jesus and believed (John 6:37) and the Lord knew right then what He would make of him by His grace and power. In Matt. 4:19, 20 and Luke 5:1-11, the Lord called him more especially; and when the Lord Jesus appointed His twelve apostles (Mark 3:13-19) Simon Peter headed the list. He had the qualities of leadership—quick in decision, prompt and bold in action; always ready and eager both to speak and to go ahead; impulsive, brave, generous, earnest, loyal. But he was to learn that natural character and ability cannot abide the test. The great thing in Peter was that he had a genuine faith and love for the Lord—fine gold though mixed with much dross, but the gold was there. Now for the furnace of discipline to smelt and refine it!

II. THE GREAT CRISIS.

Believing from the first that Jesus was the promised Messiah, the great King of Israel and Ruler of all the world that was to come, Peter promised himself great things from his adherence to Him. "Lord, we have left all and followed thee," he said, "what then shall we have?" (Matt. 19:27).

own head? or had any man told him this? Who had revealed it to him? (Comp. John 6:45).

Verse 18. How did the Lord Jesus now confess Peter? What does "Peter" mean? (See Notes) What would the Lord build upon "this rock"? Was Peter personally the Rock? (think on v. 23; Matt. 26:69-75; Gal. 2:11-14) But was the great truth he uttered the foundation of all? (1 Cor. 3:11). See also vs. 19, 20—the keys of the kingdom of heaven: what are keys for? Did Peter ever use them? (Acts 2 and 10).

Verse 21. What new line of teaching did the Lord Jesus now take up? Had He ever referred to it before? (John 3:14, 15; Matt. 9:15). But had He ever plainly told them?

Verses 22, 23. How did Peter feel about this? Why? From what standpoint did he look at things—man's or God's? What had the Lord Jesus come for? (John 6:38) In trying to hinder Him in this was Peter for the moment Satan's tool?

John 21:15-17. When and where was all this? See Notes.

The gold of true faith and love was there, but encrusted in much dross of self-interest. Peter rejoiced in the Lord's outward success—the great crowds, the notoriety, the glory and honor—as carnal believers will yet. He also cringed at the hostility of the Pharisees. (Matt. 15:12, 15, etc.) When the multitude turned away from Jesus in disgust, and even the disciples forsook Him Peter was evidently greatly distressed; but he said the right word. "Will ye also go away?" said the Lord. "Lord to whom shall we go?" answered Peter. (John 6:66-69).

But when finally the road forked (see Lesson-Text) and Peter saw that the path of Christ must lead through the dark valley of humiliation and suffering, Peter faltered, and with mixed motives, of self-concern and concern for his Lord, he tried to dissuade Him from the way of the Cross. The Lord's rebuke of Peter was overwhelming and withering. Then He called His disciples together and laid down to them the Law of the Path—one law for Him and for all that would follow Him. (Matt. 16:24, etc.) Peter righted up again and continued following Jesus.

III. THE DENIAL.

That was the great catastrophe when Peter's house fell and great was the fall thereof. He had been fairly and fully warned beforehand (John 13:36-38; Matt. 26:33-35; Luke 22:31-33) but in his self-confidence Peter felt sure that this thing he would not do. But under the test his strength and will-power and purpose on which he had trusted collapsed—as merely human strength and resolution always will and must. In God alone is our protection and safety. "And Peter went out and wept bitterly."

IV. THE RESTORATION.

Peter was one of the first, if not the first, to whom the Lord appeared after His resurrection. (Luke 24:34; 1 Cor. 15:5). What was transacted in that interview between the risen Lord and His unfaithful disciple, we know not. But on that morning at the shore of the lake of Tiberias where Peter was openly reinstated (see lesson-text) we see evidences of the great and eager love of one who was forgiven much.

V. PETER'S APOSTOLIC MINISTRY.

Peter's ministry was two-fold: (1) to him were given the keys of the kingdom. He opened the doors for the Jews when he preached the first gospel-sermon under the dispensation of the Spirit (Acts 2); and for the Gentiles when under his preaching the first Gentiles were brought in. (Acts 10; 15:7, 14). (2) Peter was commissioned to establish his brethren (Luke 22:31, 32); to feed the Lord's lambs and to tend His sheep. (See lesson-text). This he does yet through his two epistles, in which also he opens the doors "of the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." (2 Pet. 1:10). Peter had to die a martyr's death as the Lord foretold him. (John 13:36; 21:18, 19).

PETER'S PLACE IN THE CHURCH.

Peter was never "the head" of the church. The church had never but the one and only Head, Jesus Christ (Col. 1:18; Eph. 1:21); and Jesus Christ never appointed any Vicar to take His place during His absence except the Holy Spirit. (John 14:15-17). Peter was no pope. He does not seem to have been even the chief apostle any more after Pentecost. (Acts 8:14). As an apostle he was eyewitness of Christ's suffering and resurrection. (Acts 1:21, 22; 4:33). Peter had no successor: a witness can have no successor. The apostles' work was done once for all. (Eph. 2:20). Though his name signifies a Rock or Stone, he was not the Foundation on which the church was built (1 Cor. 3:11) but only the exponent of the great fundamental truth that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. ("... the distinction generally observed in classic Greek... between *petra* the massive living rock, and *petros* [which was Peter's name] a detached but large fragment." (Thayer). See also 1 Pet. 2:4-8. Peter was married, and took his wife around with him on his preaching trips (1 Cor. 9:5) which certainly wouldn't do for a Roman pope. He calls himself a fellow-elder along with ordinary elders, and tells them not to lord it over God's heritage. That is sufficient.

QUESTIONS ON THE LIFE OF PETER.

Where did Peter meet the Lord? (John 1). Where did the Lord afterward call him? (Matt. 4 and Luke 5). What does the name Peter mean? What important crisis is given us in the lesson-text? What did Peter confess there? What did Jesus call him? Was he the foundation-rock himself? (1 Cor. 3:11)—or was he only the first one to lay the great Foundation? (Cp. 1 Cor. 3:10). When Jesus began to foretell His sufferings, what did Peter say? What did the Lord say to him? Where and when and how did Peter fall? Where and when and how was he restored? What ministry did the Lord entrust to Peter? (Matt. 16:19). When did he use the keys? (Acts 2 and 10). What other ministry did the Lord give him? (Luke 22:32 and lesson-text). How did he discharge that? How did Peter die? Is there any resemblance between Peter and a Roman pope? Is Peter ever called "head of the church"? Does the scripture speak of Peter having a successor?

FOURTH LORD'S DAY LESSON OF JULY.

Lesson 4.

July 22, 1923.

JOHN THE APOSTLE.

(A survey of the Life of John the Apostle).

Golden Text: God is love; and he that abideth in love abideth in God, and God abideth in him.—1 John 4:16.

Lesson Text: Luke 9:49-56; John 19:25-27; 1 John 4:7, 8.

Luke 9:49. And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out demons in thy name; and we forbade him, because he followeth not with us. 50 But Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not: for he that is not against you is for you. 51 And it came to pass, when the days were well-nigh come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem, 52 and sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him. 53 And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he were going to Jerusalem. 54 And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we bid fire to come down from heaven, and consume them? 55 But he turned, and rebuked them. 56 And they went to another village.

John 19:25. These things therefore the soldiers did. But there were standing by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. 26 When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold, thy son! 27 Then saith he to the disciple, Behold, thy mother! And from that hour the disciple took her unto his own home.

1 John 4:7. Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is begotten of God, and knoweth God. 8 He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

SURVEY OF THE LIFE OF JOHN THE APOSTLE.

The story of John begins with his first contact with Jesus. It was his relation to the Lord Jesus Christ that gave him his eminence and makes him the subject of our note and interest. It is always so: a man is nothing and will be nothing through all eternity, except in connection with Christ the Lord. We have before us for study:—

- I. John called, and chosen to apostleship.
- II. John during the Lord's earthly ministry.
- III. John's ministry after Pentecost.
- IV. John's gospel and epistles.
- V. The Revelation of John.

I. THE CALLING OF JOHN.

John and James were sons of one Zebedee, Galilaeans, and fishermen by occupation. When we first meet him he is a disciple of John the Baptist—

one of the two heard John the Baptist's testimony: "Behold the Lamb of God," and thereupon followed Jesus. (John 1:35-39). He was one of the four at the shores of the lake of Galilee that received the special call to follow (Matt. 4:18-22) and again at the occasion of Luke 5:1-11, which see. He was one of the twelve whom the Lord Jesus separated to Himself to be His apostles (Mark 3:13-19). An apostle is a personal witness of the Lord's resurrection, and a fully empowered messenger, representative and ambassador of Christ. (2 Cor. 5:18-20).

II. JOHN DURING THE LORD'S EARTHLY MINISTRY.

We catch only occasional glimpses of him in the course of the life-story of Jesus; but these glimpses are very instructive

1. The Character of John.

The Lord called him and his brother "Boanerges," that is, "Sons of Thunder." John was a man of intense temperament, of strong force and feeling. He was intense in love and hate, in his desires and his repugnances. He was a highly complex character—that is he combined in himself many qualities, some of which appear contradictory. Some men are gentle but lack force and determination; and some are firm and strong, but are void of tenderness and affection. But John had all these attributes and many more. Above all he was passionately devoted and loyal to Jesus Christ, his Lord. He belonged, with Peter, and with his brother James, to the inner circle of the three that stood nearest to Jesus, who beheld His glory in the Mount of Transfiguration, and His agony in Gethsemane.

The printed lesson-text gives us four glimpses of John's character. 1. how intolerant he was in his deep convictions and his jealousy for the Lord (vs. 49, 50); 2. how hot-headed over the affront shown his Lord by those miserable Samaritans (vs. 51-56). Then, 3, we see him standing with Mary the mother of Jesus at the cross—brave and loyal to the last, and no truer heart could be found to whom the Lord could commit the care of his mother. (John 19:25-27). Finally, 4, we have a word from John, the fervent apostle of love in 1 John 4:7, 8.

We see more of John in the story of Jesus' sufferings. We see him leaning upon Jesus' bosom: "the disciple whom Jesus loved." (John 13:23). When the Shepherd was smitten and the sheep scattered abroad, when "all his disciples forsook him and fled," John was the first to rally and follow. It was he that obtained entrance for Peter into the highpriest's house where Jesus was tried. (John 18:15, 16). And we see him present at the Crucifixion—a brave friend, dauntless and unashamed of his Lord in the hour of His humiliation; and he stayed till the spear opened the side and there came forth blood and water, and Joseph took the body down and carried it to the sepulchre. On the resurrection morning John and Peter ran at their utmost speed to the open tomb and he "outran Peter;" and at the lake of Tiberias it was John's quick eye that first recognized the Lord. (John 19:35; 20:4; 21:7). All in all, what do you think of John?

III. JOHN AFTER PENTECOST.

After Pentecost he was for a time intimately associated with Peter in his ministry. (Acts 3:1; 4:13; 8:14). Then he is lost to view. Tradition reports that for many years he resided at Ephesus. We know from Rev. 1, that he was exiled in the isle of Patmos for the sake of the word of God. Of his death we know nothing, though uncertain tradition reports that he suffered martyrdom under one of the Roman emperors.

IV. JOHN'S GOSPEL AND EPISTLES.

The efforts of the enemies of the truth to discredit portions of the Bible has led to renewed investigation and deeper confirmation of the genuineness and authenticity of the records. Among them the beautiful and marvellous gospel of John—so simple, so profound. It presents in the main—a side of the Lord's teaching and a portion of His ministry not recorded in the other three. It selects just a few days of His ministry, a few special works of Jesus also and teaching connected with them, to serve for "sign" and testimony. Read John 20:30, 31, giving the purpose of the gospel. In the gospel

of John, John never refers to himself by name, but always as that "other disciple" or "the disciple whom Jesus loved," etc.

The Epistles of John, like the gospel, are very simple in language, but profound and full of spiritual significance. Fellowship in the light, and in the eternal life, with the Father and the Son, in the Spirit, is the great theme; and love the chief points of emphasis.

V. THE REVELATION.

This book was written by John about A. D. 96. John was very old then. It is the inspired record of the Divine visions granted him in his exile on Patmos. The chief theme of this book is the Second Coming of the Lord (1:7) with the circumstances preceding and following. In the Revelation we have the fullest answer to the Savior's promise of the Holy Spirit's work: "He shall declare unto you the things that are to come." (John 16:13).

QUESTIONS ON THE LIFE OF JOHN THE APOSTLE.

When did John first meet the Lord? (John 1). How was he specially called to follow Jesus? (Matt. 4; Luke 5). What was John's occupation? His father's and brother's name? As to John's character—see lesson-text—was he fiery of temperament? intolerant? hot-headed? What name did the Lord Jesus give him and his brother? But was he strong? brave? loyal? affectionate? (Give reason for your answers on each point). How did he conduct himself during Christ's suffering? Where was he when Jesus hung on the cross? What great trust did the Lord commit to him? With whom was he especially associated after Pentecost? For what did John write his gospel? (John 20:30, 31). Does he name himself in it? What is the keynote in John's epistles? Who wrote Revelation? Where was John at the time, and why was he there?

FIFTH LORD'S DAY LESSON OF JULY.

Lesson 5.

July 29, 1923.

MATTHEW THE PUBLICAN.

Golden Text: I am not come to call the righteous but sinners.—Luke 5:32.

Lesson Text: Matt. 9:9-13; Luke 5:27, 28.

9 And as Jesus passed by, from thence, he saw a man, called Matthew, sitting at the place of toll: and he said unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed him. 10 And it came to pass, as he sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with Jesus and his disciples. 11 And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Teacher with the publicans and sinners? 12 But when he heard it, he said, They that are whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick. 13 But go ye and learn what this meaneth, I desire mercy, and not sacrifice: for I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.

Luke 5:27 And after these things he went forth, and beheld a publican, named Levi, sitting at the place

Verse 9. The Call of Matthew. What was Matthew doing as Jesus passed by? Was that considered an honorable occupation? (See Notes) Of what two simple words did the call consist? Was that enough? Does that call come to us also? What did Matthew do? Did he follow him only at the time? Did he go back to his business? (See Luke 5:28, below). What was Matthew's other name? (v. 27 below). What did Matthew Levi immediately do? (Luke 5:29). Verse 10. Whom did he invite to the great feast? Did the Lord Jesus hesitate to sit down with this motley crowd?

Verse 11. Who found fault? Did they often find fault? What was their objection this time? (Comp. Luke 15:1). What did they call Jesus? (Matt. 11:19).

Verse 12. What reason did Jesus give

of toll, and said unto him, Follow for going among the sinners? Who me. 28 And he forsook all, and rose is the good Physician? What can He up and followed him. heal?

Verse 13. What does God appreciate more highly than sacrifice and religious observances? Were the Pharisees strong on the latter? But did they have much mercy? Ought we to have mercy upon the lost and erring? How did the Lord Jesus show His mercy toward them? Did He associate with sinners on equal terms—as we say “hail fellow well met”? For what definite purpose did He go among them?

MATTHEW THE PUBLICAN.

This lesson concerns itself especially with the man Matthew. What we know of him is mainly found in this short account of Jesus' calling of him. He was a **publican**—of a class and occupation that was heartily despised by everybody. Publicans, like harlots and criminals, were social outcasts. They were hated for two reasons: (1) they hired themselves out to the Roman government to collect the taxes (which were very heavy and cruel) for it from their own brethren, the Jews; and (2) they generally, if not always, extorted more from the people than was right (Luke 3:12, 13) and enriched themselves by such robbery and oppression. They were like vultures and wolves preying upon their own kind. From such a place and life did the Lord Jesus call Matthew, who, at the summons of Jesus, “forsook all and rose up and followed him.” Matthew became one of the twelve apostles and he was the writer of the “Gospel of Matthew.”

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW.

The especial interest of “Matthew the Publican” lies in the fact that he was chosen of God to be the inspired penman of the first gospel. He was peculiarly fitted for this. The publicans were shrewd, sharp, hard-headed business men. They were habituated to deal with the false testimony, lies, subterfuges, of a people who were above all unwilling to pay tax to Rome. They knew all twists and tricks and were not easily fooled. The life, the claims, and the works; the death; burial and resurrection, of the Lord Jesus were so abundantly sustained against every doubt that the Publican deeply convicted, must set down his testimony.

THE JEWISH GOSPEL.

The gospel of Matthew has been called the “Jewish Gospel.” That may not be a very happy name. It is not Jewish in the sense that it was for Jews and not for us, certainly. But it is specially designed to reach the Jewish heart and mind. It forms the true link between the Old Testament and the New. Its very first verse hooks on to the Old Testament prophecy and covenants of promise that God made with Abraham and David. In the genealogy we have, as it were, an epitome of the Old Testament history. Matthew shows at once that Jesus is the long-promised and long-looked for Christ, the King of Israel. Matthew also quotes more from the Old Testament scriptures than the other gospels.

GREAT SPEECHES IN MATTHEW.

Matthew's gospel is also distinguished for the full report of our Lord's speeches on various occasions. Prominently we have the “Sermon on the Mount,” chapters 5, 6, 7; His charge to the Twelve, chapter 10; the seven Parables of the Kingdom, chapter 13; and the Olivet Discourse in chapters 24 and 25.

QUESTIONS ON MATTHEW.

On the Call of Matthew, see questions alongside of Lesson-Text. What was a Publican? For what is Matthew most noted? Why was he peculiarly fitted to bear testimony to the truth of Christ's work and resurrection? Why is “Matthew” called the “Jewish Gospel”? What are the characteristics of Matthew's Gospel? Think on what the Lord Jesus did for Matthew Levi, the publican—where He picked him up and to what great place of service He exalted that poor lost man. Can he do a similar thing for you and me? Are we willing, like Matthew, to rise up and follow Him?

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