

THE WORD AND WORK

(Volume XXXVII, SEPTEMBER, 1943)

WORDS IN SEASON

R. H. B.

CURIOUS BOOKS

A Man was reading the "Millennial Dawn" when a friend remarked to him: "You would do better to put in your time reading the Bible." "But this helps me to understand the Bible," replied the reader. "Yes, and it may also help you to misunderstand it." And here is the matter in a nutshell. Not only the Millennial Dawn, but all other religious literature advocating systems and theories are like Moses declared the bribe to be in its effect—"it blindeth the eyes and perverteth the judgment." It is contrary to man's best interest, and any man that values truth and his soul's salvation does well to renounce all this religio-philosophical stuff that is littering the world today. And I make no exceptions. Whenever even simple Christians feel called upon to promulgate theories and build up systems of doctrine, their work also should be discarded. We need no "theology"; or, if we do, let every man construct his own on the Scripture, and have it to himself alone before God, and not put colored glasses before his brother's eyes. I have a book which if a man read (granted he is unprepossessed, open-minded, and not more versed in scripture and dialectics than the average) might make him a Catholic, another which might make him a Mormon, another which might make him a Christadelphian, another which might make him an Adventist. Our minds are plastic clay—let us take heed into what fashioning hands we commit them. Those theories and systems are each and every one subtle and plausible and some even fascinating. Beware! I also have a book which if read and received by an open mind will make a man just a child of God, one of the Lord's people, a possessor of all truth. We know the name of that Book. How far different it is from the theories that have been spun around it, and what the distinction between the teaching of it and the teaching of a theory, may presently be seen.

THEORY SPINNING AND SYSTEM BUILDING

There are few things that hinder the truth more, that darken counsel, warp the eye, and sustain error so effectually as theory spinning and system building. It is easily done. A passage here and a passage there—the two fit admirably. Another passage or two—that is enough for the underpinnings. Upon that we build. Sleepers and joists of plausible conclusions and logical deductions come next. We reason of what can and what cannot be, granted this and that. On hypothetical premises we rear proud structures of absolutely certain

conclusions. It could hardly be claimed that the building goes forward without the sound of saw or hammer, for there is much work to be done. Contrary texts have to be spliced or sawed off, according as they are too long or too short to fit; rebellious passages must be hammered into submission. The plane and the chisel have to be plied, and that which God has not joined together must be united with the glue of human reasonings (that I say not guile), and that which God has joined together must be put asunder with maul and wedge. Then when it stands all finished and dovetailed, the builder wipes the sweat from his honest brow and comes in for merited praise from his admirers. It is so convincing it confirms him, himself, and — alas! — convinces perhaps thousands of others. He glories in it, as Nebuchadnezzar over his fine city: "Is not this great Babylon, which I have built . . . by the might of my power?" And if he could be cured by it, we could wish he, too, would go to grass for seven years.

THE CURSE OF A THEORY

The victim of a human theory, newfangled or old, is injured in many ways—chiefly in that he is robbed of the word of God. The Bible is still in his hand, to be sure, perhaps more than ever; but it is no longer God's word drawing near to his soul to speak to him. The warmth and beauty and fragrance and the personal communion with the Father are gone. The Book has become an arsenal of weapons, a collection of proof propositions, a pincushion full of points to stick somebody with. The beauty has fled from the fairest, sweetest chapter, and it has no longer any worth or relevancy unless it bears in some way upon the theory. Like a buzzard who sweeps over a wonderful landscape and has eyes for nothing except a carcass, so the man poisoned with a theory sees just that in God's sublime revelation which goes to confirm his theory and enables him to meet some one's objection to his system of doctrine. Alas, poor man. As a worm gnawing at the root of a vine makes it to dry up and die, so is your theory doing its deadly work in your soul; and from a living, warm-hearted child, you have grown to be a dry, disputatious, argumentatious, talkative dogmatist, whose world revolves around the idol theory your mind has conceived or seized. Your fountain of life has dried up. You will grow no more. Never again shall you hear (if indeed you have ever heard) the heart beat of your Father's love, except by some means you be delivered from the snares in which you are taken captive. "Who steals my purse steals trash"; who "filches from me my good name" has done me a greater wrong; but he has done me the immeasurable harm who robs me of the word of God.

HOW THEORIES ARE MADE

I said above that this theory spinning and system building is easy. Let me point out the method of making a new theory—not, I hope to aid any one in constructing one, but to ex-

pose the poor little secret of them all. First, it may be from a partial glimpse of God's word, or from some suggestion received from man's wisdom, or out of his own philosophy, a man conceives a certain idea or scheme of doctrine; second, he goes to the Bible to find support for it; third, he goes about to explain away any text of scripture that conflicts with the theory and which might be used against it; fourth, he tries to make the new theory which has been thus established an absolute essential of salvation, if possible so far as to baptize people again on the strength of it. For if that latter item were omitted, people would say, "Yes, it is very good," and go their ways; and the poor inventor, having thus lost his patent, remains to blush unseen, instead of becoming "a prominent figure on the ecclesiastical horizon" and the leader of a great movement, and, if possible, the "founder of a new church."

THE EASE OF WRESTING THE SCRIPTURES

As for the task of "explaining away" difficulties, that is the easiest part of all. There never has been a passage so plain that some one could not make it appear to mean something else than what it said, or nothing at all. It takes but a little shrewdness, a little sophistry, a little Greek or Hebrew if necessary, a little imagination and assertion, when—lo!—it is done. "How about the law which is written and engraven on stones, mentioned in 2 Cor. 3:7, and which is spoken of as 'passing away' in verse 11?" I asked a person somewhat taken with Seventh-Day Adventism. "That was not the Ten Commandments," was the reply. "But they alone were written on tables of stone." "But the Adventists make a distinction between 'stones' and 'tables of stone.'" I expected as much. They are simply obliged to make a "distinction" or something, else their theory is exploded. Just so the various stripes of soul sleepers and annihilationists are absolutely compelled to "explain" the story of the rich man and Lazarus. It would never do to let it stand just as it is. It must be "explained"; for if it goes at face value, our theory is done for. So it is made a parable; nay, an old rabbinical myth which the Savior but relates and applies; nay, a fable which does not and cannot truly represent the state of the dead, for this grave reason or that; nay, an allegory in which Lazarus was the Gentile, the rich man the Jew; etc.—anything, only so this passage is got rid of and the precious theory saved. If it should be a plain term that stands outright in the way, it can be made figurative. You ask how? Well, let us assume it is the word "all" that must be removed to save the doctrine. Turn back now and see how "all Jerusalem and Judea" went out and were baptized of John. Now there "all" did not mean "all." It was used figuratively to mean "a great part," "many." Therefore "all" does not mean "all" here; do you see? And he smiles in his triumph over the obnoxious word. But wisdom is justified of her children. I could pledge myself to "prove" anything at

all, if I am allowed to deal with the Bible in that way.

"HARMONIZING" THE SCRIPTURES

There is another vicious principle of Bible interpretation constantly adopted by theorists. It lies in the "harmonizing" of apparently conflicting texts. Here is a passage making a statement; over there is another which seems to declare the opposite. Now for those who simply believe God's word it is not difficult to see that there must be a higher harmony between the two which does violence to neither, and that we are at liberty to believe and preach both these passages just as they stand—and that whether or not we are able to perceive the tie that unites them. But with the theorist it is otherwise. One of these passages is for him, the other is against him. One of them, therefore, is accepted at what it says and strongly emphasized; the other has to be knocked out of commission. I do not have to tell you which one it is that will be demolished and which one will be saved. Thank God that a Christian needs not learn the serpentine arts which those who have a theory to defend are obliged to practice.

* * *

THE LIBERTY OF THE CHILDREN OF GOD

To be a Christian, to be a member of the church of God, simply and only—this means that the word of God is ours; for the church of the Lord teaches nothing officially. She is content to let God do His own teaching through the simple word. The Christian has no positions to force, no one-sided notions to sustain, no meanings to import into God's word. All the truth belongs to him by birthright. If any sects have any truth (and they all have, some more, some less), it already belongs to the Christian; but he does not have to go to the sectarian teacher for it. Standing on the Rock, Jesus the Christ, having confessed and received Him as "it is written," he already possesses all the truth in the universe, and finds it his sweet privilege to explore this great mine in which all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden (Col. 2:3)—and that not with intent to unearth curious doctrines that he may shine before men as a great Bible scholar; but to know and do the will of God, leaving the deeper mysteries that baffle the mind to solve themselves in the future, here or beyond, and seeking the things that profit. And such a man, if he will diligently study the word, will also in the end have a deeper insight into God's ways and plans than all the creedists and theorists of the world. For the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant. (Ps. 25:14.) And we belong to no man's following. With freedom hath Christ set us free—let us stand fast in him, and not be entangled in any man's bondage. "For all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." (1 Cor. 3:21-23.)

NEWS AND NOTES

Dennis Allen is assisting the small church in Helena, Mont., for the summer.

The "Golden Gospel" radio resumes "remote control" broadcasting on Sept. 5. That is, the entire program, with living chorus present (as well as speaker), will go out from the church auditorium. This method (over our former studio method) has greatly improved the singing.

Wm. Wayne Allen, of Junction City, Kansas has entered the army Chaplaincy. Brother Main, of Sylvia, Kansas, succeeds him in the Fort Riley mission work.

Potter Orphan Home will rebuild the plant that burned, and is now receptive to gifts for building. Address, Bowling Green, Ky.

Sellersburg, Ind.: "We are now in the midst of an interesting and inspiring revival. Brother H. L. Olmstead, our evangelist, is bringing gripping messages to a fine audience. Some have already turned to the Lord and we hope to reach others. Our attendance last Lord's day at both Sunday school and church was the best in our history.

"From July 12 to 25 I enjoyed a fine meeting with the Antioch church near Frankfort, Kentucky. Eleven souls were added to the church during this effort. Pray for us."—Howard T. Marsh.

D. H. Friend just closed a short tent meeting in the Hazelwood section of Louisville. Two were baptized into the Lord.

Brother O. D. Bixler will hold a meeting at the Camp Taylor church of Christ beginning September 13. Those in that area are urged to attend.

Brother A. C. Reader of the Jefferson Street church of Louisville is announcing a revival meeting to begin at the church on September 27. O. D. Bixler is to do the preaching.

Jacksonville, Fla.: "Yesterday I preached for the Woodstock Park church here in Jacksonville. Bro. Adams is away, conducting meetings in Tennessee. Bro. J. N. Lee, one of the faithful workers at Woodstock, was in my place at Max-

ville. The Woodstock church seems to be thriving spiritually under the leadership of Bro. Adams."—J. Edward Boyd.

Lexington, Ky.: "The work at both Cramer and Hanover and Melrose churches seems to be recovering from a slight case of summer slump. Attendance and interest are better of late. We are in the midst of a tent meeting in which good interest is manifest. We are attempting to evangelize another section of the city in this meeting and hope for good results. The brethren here are much interested in not only expecting the sinner to hear and believe the gospel, but in taking the gospel to the sinner. Perhaps our greatest and most fruitful endeavors in the future will be in such mission work."—Orrell Overman.

Winchester, Ky.: "One has been added to the Main Street church by membership since our last report. The church is planning a meeting to begin Sunday, October 3, with Orell Overman of Lexington as evangelist.

"At present I am assisting the Fisherville, Ky., church in a Gospel meeting. Crowds are good and some have responded to the invitation of our Lord with others in prospect. Ben Rake is the minister of this good congregation of Christians. We have enjoyed the hospitality of many good Christian homes."—J. R. Clark.

Jonesboro, Ark.: "Aug. 11, 1943, closed our meeting at Oak Grove. Baptized one man of 70, a Catholic from infancy. There was one restoration. The prospect for return and more fruit as a result of this meeting is good."—F. S. Spaulding.

Dugger, Ind.: "I am back home from a meeting at Campbellville, Tennessee. There were no visible results during the meeting, but from the expressions of the brethren the sermons were helpful and strengthening to them. It was with joy that I visited among the brethren at Campbellville. There are some faithful souls there who carry on from week to week.

"The meeting with the Summer-

ville brethren started Sunday. Gasoline rationing hindered many from attending their annual home coming day Sunday. Attendance and interest have been good thus far."—Maurice Clymore.

Johnson City, Tenn.: "The tent meeting in Pekin, Ind., lasted for 18 days, and resulted in 14 baptisms, 5 placed membership, and quite a number of Christians made public their desire to rededicate their lives to the Lord. Brother Spaulding, minister at Borden, and wife, and a number of the Borden brethren gave unusually fine cooperation. Russell Martin and family also were a blessing to the meeting, and cooperation from surrounding brethren, in general, was splendid. J. R. Clark, Orell Overman and William Cook were with us one night.

"We are now in the midst of our second tent effort this summer here in Johnson City, with local forces. We have pitched the tent in a section of town quite some distance from the church building, and are making many new contacts. We pray for definite good to be accomplished. God willing, I go to Dallas, Texas to be with J. E. Blansett and Fair Park church, beginning September 5.

"R. G. Moreland was with the brethren here one week-end while I was in Pekin, Ind., and brought splendid messages. E. H. Hoover was here one Saturday during my absence to conduct the funeral of Frank Corzine, whose three daughters are faithful members with us at Locust St. I have lately learned that Winston Allen is to be in Knoxville this winter, and will no doubt help out in the work in this part of the country."—Robert B. Boyd.

Ft. Collins, Colo.: "Our Sunday school here is growing. Work was started at Loveland Sunday with five members. Fort Collins helping. We ask prayers of the Word and Work readers for this work."—L. C. Healy.

Louisville, Ky.: "The Fisherville church has entered the second week of its meeting. Bro. Clark has delivered some forceful messages and the attendance and interest have been encouraging. Thus far there have been nine responses, seven for

baptism, one for membership and one for a closer surrender to the Lord. There are still a number who should give their lives to the Lord and others who should place membership with the church here. We are continuing to pray that each of these may be convicted of their individual obligations."—Ben Rake.

The Fisherville meeting closed with sixteen responses, ten baptisms, five for membership and one restoration.

The Sellersburg, Indiana meeting, with H. L. Olmstead as evangelist, closed August 29 with fourteen baptisms and ten added by membership, mostly adults. A glorious meeting indeed!

Brother Boll reports a good meeting with the church at Henning, Tennessee.

Brother Sterling Yeager, minister of the Ormsby Avenue church, Louisville, announces that Brother Howard Marsh is to hold their protracted effort beginning September 27.

The Word and Work staff appreciates gifts and subscriptions which have been coming in of late, relieving somewhat the financial tension of this season of the year.

Some Suggestions

The next Word and Work Quarterly will soon be out. It is concise, scholarly, and to the point, and will help you to a better understanding of the word of God. Order now. Nine cents per copy.

How would you like to have a little illustrated booklet containing pages on Faith, Repentance, Confession, Baptism, New Birth, Gift of the Spirit, Church Attendance, Giving, Soul Winning, and Christian Growth, with a beautiful Baptismal Certificate on the center pages? We have it. Ideal for new converts. Order "Discipleship" by Murch. 15¢ each; \$1.50 a dozen.

We can still fill a few orders for the Boll-Boles debate. Price \$1.00.

Have you read "Lessons on Daniel" by R. H. Boll? Price 50¢ each or three for \$1.00.

We can order out to you any book or Bible at regular retail price.

Read the fine articles in this issue of Word and Work. Please renew promptly.

THE CHURCH

R. H. B.

"Glorious things of thee are spoken, Zion, city of our God." So says one of our old hymns. But more glorious and wonderful things than ever were said about Zion are in God's word spoken of the church of our Lord Jesus Christ. The church is not much accounted of in the world today, and even among religious people it is not too highly esteemed. The emphasis is placed on personal and individual salvation—and certainly too much emphasis could not be given to that. But in emphasizing one side of the truth, the other side is often lost sight of. "The church will not save you," is a slogan often heard; which is quite true, if rightly understood. But the impression is left that the church is of small moment and of no special importance, and is in no wise connected with our salvation. And that is *not* true: As for the world's estimate of the church, we need not wonder. The world neither knows the Lord nor does it know what the church is, nor its purpose and mission in the world. It seems often to be thought of as a club of good people (or of people who pretend to be good, but are not always good); or as a sort of benevolent society, or social service organization, that is (or should be) engaged in all sorts of philanthropic or political enterprises for the betterment of the world and the general uplift of humanity. The world's low estimate of the church may also be partly due to present day conditions in Christendom. It is an easy solution of a complicated problem, to sweep the whole thing aside as of little consequence. The claims of the multiplicity of sects and denominations, ancient and modern, is to say the least, somewhat confusing, and an inquirer would hardly get any clear idea of the New Testament Church out of that situation. And so it happens that the church is little set by, and the true teaching of God's word concerning the church is little known or understood.

It is a vast subject, and in this present article I can only point out a few outstanding facts concerning the church. The word, in the original, is "*ekklesia*," a word in common use at the time, and designating an "assembly"—a *called* assembly, as the meaning of the word would indicate. As in many other cases, God selected an ordinary word, but gave it a new and richer content and meaning. His "assembly" is the number of His elect, His redeemed ones, called out of the world through the gospel, and united by vital bonds one with another and with Jesus Christ their Lord. It is not an institution of the world, for it is not of the world even as He is not of the world; yet it is *in* the world and that for a purpose. The church is represented in the New Testament in various aspects, of which I select three outstanding ones.

1. The Church is the House of God. "The church of God,

which is the house of God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:15). It is called the house of God because He is the Builder and the sole Owner of it, and also dwells in it. In the Old Testament dispensation God dwelt in the Tabernacle and later in the Temple which Solomon built, though not in the full sense of that word; for "God dwelleth not in temples made with hands" a fact which was even at that time well understood. The temple of Solomon was the most magnificent and the costliest building ever erected on the earth. The materials were of the most precious, and every stone and every piece of timber were cut to measure in forest and quarry; and the house went up without sound of saw or hammer.

"No workman's steel—no ponderous axes swing—
Like some tall palm the noiseless fabric springs."

When finally the building stood complete, Solomon offered the great prayer of dedication; and when he had finished praying the glory of the Lord came down and filled the house. Then and thenceforth it was the House of God. But this new house of God, the church, is built of rarer and costlier material and for which a price far exceeding the fabulous sum of the cost of Solomon's temple was paid. It is a spiritual house built up of living stones built upon God's own Foundation (for other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ, (1 Cor. 3:11) and indwelt by the Holy Spirit. "Know ye not that ye are a temple of God," says Paul to the church in Corinth, "and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man destroy the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy and such are ye" (1 Cor. 3:16, 17). For this temple He paid a staggering price—nothing less than the blood of Christ; for it is "the church of the Lord, which he purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28). Nothing in all the universe of God ever cost so much nor could anything else cost so much again. Clearly then we cannot rate the church as an unimportant thing. And like the temple of old, the church, when it is what God wants it to be, is the pivot and center of God's work in the earth, the point of contact between God and man.

2. The Church is the Body of Christ. "He is the head of the body, the church" (Col. 1:18). God "put all things in subjection under his feet and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all" (Eph. 1:22, 23). This is a greater and more wonderful conception than even that of the temple. The Head and the Body constitute a living whole, not only an organization but an organism. To Him who sits on the right hand of God far above all principality and power and every name that is named, the humble church is united by a vital bond, even as a man's body is joined to his head sharing the same life and the same Spirit which animates both head and body; and whatever affects the body affects the head—yea, chiefly af-

fects the head. Saul had the first intimation of that on the road to Damascus, when the Lord of glory spoke from heaven and said to him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" and "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." The persecuting of the church of God was felt by the Head in heaven, as a thing done unto Him; nor can any good or ill be done to Christ's church without doing it to the Lord Jesus Christ. As His body, the church is His instrumentality for doing His work in the earth. The work He would do, the work He wants done in the world He must do through the church, and can do through the church alone.

3. The Church is the Bride of Christ. Among the Jews, matrimony had two distinct phases: (1) the betrothal, which was far more than the "engagement" signifies among us: it was in fact a preliminary marriage. Thus Mary, though only betrothed to Joseph, is called "his wife"—"Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife." The church, though as yet imperfect, is already bound to Jesus Christ as His betrothed. "I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy," wrote Paul to the church at Corinth—"for I espoused you to one husband that I might present you as a pure virgin to Christ" (2 Cor. 11:2). In a great passage, Eph. 5: 22, 23, the apostle commingles the thought of the body and the bride in one picture—seeing that the two are in wedlock "one flesh." Here he states that "the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, being himself also the savior of the body." Again, "Husbands love your wives even as Christ also loved the church"; and "Even so ought husbands also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself: for no man ever hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as Christ also the church; because we are members of his body. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh. This mystery is great: but I speak in regard of Christ and of the church."

As the bride of Christ, the church's paramount trust is that she be true and loyal to her husband. The friendship of the world is spiritual adultery, James tells us (Jas. 4:4). The true church which holds by her Lord in this world cannot expect to be loved by the world that hated Him and cast Him out. She is called to share His reproach and rejection. As He is, so is she in the world. Inasmuch as "He suffered without the gate," it is her lot also to "go forth unto him without the camp, bearing His reproach. For we have not here an abiding city, but we seek after the city which is to come" (Heb. 13:12-14). If then He was despised and rejected of men, His church can never expect great things in the world. It is "Through many tribulations" that she must enter into the kingdom of God. (Acts 14:22.) All the teaching and exhortation directed to

the church in the New Testament, envisions her as a poor, weak, suffering church; and never as glorious, triumphant and powerful. The day of her glory is future. It is tied up with the return of Christ. "When Christ who is our life shall be manifested, then shall ye also with him be manifested in glory" (Col. 3:4). And "the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed to usward" (Rom. 8:18). So, the bride waits daily for the coming of the Bridegroom, and her hope is set on Him. In that day He will "present the church to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing," but as "holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:27). "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess. 4:16, 17). Forever with the Lord! John heard a great chorus of joy in heaven, as the voice of many waters, as the voice of mighty thunders, saying, "Let us rejoice and be exceeding glad, and let us give the glory unto him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready" (Rev. 19:6, 7). That is the celebration of the heavenly nuptials, when the perfected church is joined in unbreakable wedlock to Him and to be with Him for ever, evermore.

Surely the church is something different and infinitely greater than men know and to be in it and of it is as high a privilege as man can have. It seems indeed as if the great enemy had gone to special lengths to corrupt and misrepresent and degrade the church in the eyes of men. But Christ is over all and in His own time He will bring the hidden things to light, and show His finished work. Meanwhile His saints find comfort and strength for the way in His sure word of truth and anticipate their morning of joy. True indeed are the beautiful words of our hymn:

"The church's one Foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord;
She is His new creation by water and the word;
From heaven He came and sought her to be His holy bride;
With His own blood He bought her, and for her life He died.

"Elect from every nation, yet one o'er all the earth,
Her charter of salvation, One Lord, One Faith, One Birth;
One holy Name she blesses, partakes one holy food,
And to one hope she presses, with ev'ry grace endued.

"Mid toil and tribulation and tumult of her war,
She waits the consummation of peace for evermore;
Till with the vision glorious her longing eyes are blest,
And the great Church victorious shall be the Church at rest."

BIBLE QUERIES ANSWERED

J. Edward Boyd

Request has been made for an explanation of Matthew 12:43-45: "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation."

Accused by the Pharisees of casting out demons by Beelzebub the prince of demons, Jesus replied with denunciations and warnings, of which this passage is a part. The case of the man into whom the unclean spirit had returned was used for an illustration. He had been wonderfully blessed in being freed from the demon; but when, after fruitless effort to find other habitation, the demon returned it was to find his former dwelling still uninhabited and inviting—"empty, swept, and garnished." There was nothing to prevent his moving back with his seven evil companions; and the man's condition became worse than before.

So it was to be with that generation. Jesus had brought great blessing to them; yet it was becoming increasingly evident that He was to be rejected. It could not be the same with them as it was before, if they did that. They were responsible for their use of the opportunity that had come to them. Later they fully accepted the responsibility for refusing it when they cried, "Let his blood be upon us and our children." Later they refused the offer of salvation brought by the Holy Spirit, driving out those who proclaimed it. Speedily judgment came upon them; their last state was worse than the first.

So is it with all who hear the gospel. It cannot be the same with them as it was before. Added opportunity brings increased responsibility. If they believe, obey, and walk therein, well; but if they reject, they must suffer heavier judgment. Their last state is become worse than the first.
Maxville, Florida.

"The ghost of tomorrow haunts many persons. They fear the future. They sorrow about what the days may bring forth. And by this worrying and fretting care they incapacitate themselves for bravely meeting tomorrow when it does come. The Master wants us to trust Him for the tomorrows. They are His, stored up by His hand, and therefore laden with nothing but good for His disciples. So let trust take the place of trembling, and faith the place of fear."—Ellis.

WHEN GOD'S JUDGMENTS ARE IN THE EARTH

Ralph Wilburn

Nothing is more certain than that we are living in a period of world crisis. There is no nation under heaven but that is now gripped with a sense of the uncertainty of things. Everywhere man is beginning to realize, often in the wake of tragic destruction, that things simply cannot go on as they are, that something must be done, a radical change is necessary if life is to issue forth into a meaningful and benedictory existence. In such a period those whose living and thinking are determined to any degree by a God-consciousness can scarcely restrain the thought that forces itself upon us, that God's judgments are in the earth. Our thought skips back to pick up a statement of Isaiah, the great prophet of Israel. The prophet prays for security in Jehovah, reminding himself as he prays that "when thy judgments are in the earth the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness."

When God's judgments are in the earth! That, beloved friends, is a momentous truth, a truth that in one way or another affects every one of us, for sooner or later our sins bring us under the severe experience of the chastening judgments of God. It is that thought that lay at the heart of the deepest conviction of Israel's prophets in the days of Amos and Hosea, of Isaiah and Jeremiah. Perhaps a brief mention of Israel's condition in those days would help us to a greater appreciation of the spiritual significance of the statement of Isaiah that God's judgments are in the earth. Politically of course the kingdom of the Hebrews was divided, the northern kingdom known as the kingdom of Israel, and the southern as the kingdom of Judah. Those two kingdoms were warring with each other half the time, which of course used up their natural resources of national power so that when the Assyrians from the north or the Egyptians from the south or the Chaldeans from the east threatened their political security they felt the need of entering into alliance with many of the pagan Canaanitish nations about them, which indeed they did.

But such alliance had its effect not only upon the political life of Israel, but it also proved disastrous to her religion. In the middle of the 9th century B. C., Ahab, king of Israel, married Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal, priest-king of the Sidonians. Of Jezebel and her ambitious scheming we are all familiar. She not only tried to adapt political life in Israel to her pagan ideal of tyrannical monarchy, but she also saturated the worship of Israel with the idolatrous and licentious worship of Phoenician Baalism. Athaliah, her daughter by Ahab, she succeeded in getting married into the Davidic house at Jerusalem, and she did in Judah on a small scale what her pagan mother, Jezebel, had done in Samaria on a magnificent scale. It is this curse of Baalism that seemed to be fastened

like a leech to Israel against which Amos is crying when he ironically declares at the altar at Bethel, "Come to Bethel, and transgress; to Gilgal, and multiply transgression.

Israel's worship grew idolatrous, morally corrupt and highly ritualistic. To parallel this there was a tragic decline in the ethical life that characterized the Hebrews before they gave way to these pagan influences of their Canaanitish neighbors. The rich men and women of the courts were growing richer at the expense of the increasing poverty of the poor. Taxation was terrible, almost to the breaking point. Cruelty and merciless selfishness was manifest in the plans and rulership of the aristocracy. They would purchase the poor for silver and the needy for a pair of shoes. They would sell the refuse of the wheat. The immoral luxury of the courts, the licentiousness, the unceasing revelling and drunkenness—all of this together with the corrupt politics, the ungodly alliances with the pagan nations, instead of a steadfast reliance upon God, and the almost hopelessly corrupt estate of religion, brought down upon Israel from the prophets the ringing pronouncements of the judgments of God. God's judgments are upon us, cried the prophets. Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel, cried Amos.

Beloved friends, these messages are not restricted in their validity to the days of antiquity. The prophets of Israel have something to say to our day. In much of what they say one might almost think they were passing judgment upon our 20th century civilization. Think of where we are as a people. Think of the condition of our culture from a spiritual point of view. Corrupt politics! Formality and non-ethical ritualism in religion! A growing decline in morality and spiritual values as evinced by multiplicity of juvenile delinquents, our adolescent criminals, the laxity of sex relations, our earthly and materialistic philosophies of life! Ah, we need but mention these things to become keenly aware that our plight to-day runs closely parallel to that of Israel long ago. Even so we need to stop and listen when the prophets tell us that God's judgments are in the earth. It may even now be too late. It may be even now God will no longer turn back the punishment of righteous judgment. It may be we have already sown the wind and are beginning to enter the reaping of the whirlwind. In any case our only hope is to stop and think, to see ourselves as we really are in the face of eternity, to learn the inescapability of man's destiny when God's judgments are in the earth.

The first thing the prophets of Israel have to say to our generation is that God is ruling in the affairs of men, that it is Jehovah with whom we are face to face amidst the stern realities of life. Oh no, my friends, let us not be deceived by the familiar misconception that holds that the ordinary affairs of life, business, social, and domestic, carry no reference to

God; a misconception that regards God as a mysterious somebody with whom we come into relations only when we go to church on Sunday. No indeed! the messages of Israel's prophets are with us today to correct such a false notion, and to remind us that human life in all of its phases is bound up with God, the living God, whose righteousness spells judgment for every people laden with iniquity, for every company of evil doers. The supreme ethical value of the prophets of Israel finds its root right here in the insistence that the world and human history are inseparably bound up with God.

In many ways we must come to see God as He is present in the world. He is, to be sure, the great fountain of life, the creative ground of all life, as the Apostle Paul indicates when he agrees with the Athenian Stoics that "in him we live and move and have our being." He is also in the world in the sense that He is the spiritual force of righteousness at work in the hearts and lives of humble followers of the gentle Jesus, for "it is God who worketh in you," writes Paul, "both to will and to work for his good pleasure." But God is also in the world in the form of divine and righteous judgment, a truth which perhaps is the reverse side of the truth of the divine force of righteousness at work in the world, a truth therefore equally inviolable and inescapable. It is this last truth, the truth of God's judgment upon iniquity, with which we are here directly concerned. To clarify and emphasize the implications involved we might ask three questions. First, what is the judgment of God? Secondly, how does it fall, or what are the instruments of divine judgment? And thirdly, What is its purpose? We will now attempt to clearly define the nature of divine judgment.

When God's judgments are in the earth—precisely what does that mean? What are the judgments of God? What happens to man when he brings them upon himself? Well, we can define divine judgment in two ways. We can look at man's situation now from one perspective and now from another. We can describe it in natural terms or we can describe it more completely in supernatural terms. Looking at the situation from the natural side we see the world as founded upon and controlled by God in the sense that the world is literally shot through with divine principles which humanity can ignore and disobey only with inevitable tragedy. "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof," wrote the Psalmist, "the world and they that dwell therein, for *he hath founded it upon the seas and established it upon the floods.*" *God* has created man. *God* has determined the nature of finite beings. The principles of human life and the destiny of the human soul are fixed by *God*. "Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why didst thou make me thus? Or hath not the potter a right over the clay?" How long will it take man to become aware of the creaturely nature of his

own being? How long before he realizes that he cannot go against God and get away with it? The earth is the Lord's and so is man. God will not tolerate him who raises himself against Him—He cannot and still be God.

Human life is thus caught in the meshes of the divine, and man can break through only to his own destruction. The righteousness of God is the only thing that really works in the long run. Sin is both destructive of others and self-destructive. The cup of sinful pleasure has its tingling sensations as one first begins to sip, when pleasure sparkleth in the cup, but at the bottom of the cup there is always that which biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder. This is the message of the word of God from the beginning to the end; that sin always bears its fateful yield and the reaping is unspeakably bitter. Think not that the hard-heartedness and brutal force that now rules the day will escape. The judgment of God will simply be all the more awful and severe when it falls, and fall it will. That is the message of the prophets. He who sins and continues therein, as E. Stanley Jones has put it, will finally break himself on the hard facts of the universe, because God is God and He will not, He cannot, be mocked by man.

That leads us to the supernatural side of this tremendous truth. To be sure, man has to do with the unchangeable moral fabric of the universe, but this moral fabric of the universe is but a description of the way in which God is working in the world, the way the world stands related to God's eternal being. It is not simply the world and its natural functioning with which man has to do; it is God, the great divine cosmic Being who is ruling and overruling, who stands over against human life, who judges us, yea who redeems the penitent in Christ Jesus our Lord. So the phrase, "the judgment of God," is not simply descriptive of blind forces operative in the world. Rather, the prophets remind us, it signifies an omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent Being who is working in and through history as a divine operative reality, condemning and defeating all evil in the end, and approving and bringing to victory all good. It is not simply judgment in which man involves himself when he lives in sin, it is the judgment of *God*.

In defining the thought of the judgment of God therefore we should say with the Psalmist that, "Jehovah hath established his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all." (Ps. 103:19.) We should say that all things follow from the necessity of God's righteous and eternal being; that sin in the last analysis finds its meaning and definition in reference to the principles of the righteousness of God; that right and wrong are eternally fixed and determined by the nature of God's being itself, rather than by any arbitrary decree of His will, and that it is God's righteousness which judges us,

yea which condemns us and which in the long run will destroy us, except we all repent and turn again to a new life in Christ Jesus our Lord. The judgment of God means, beloved friends, that we simply cannot sin and get by with it. "Be not deceived," said the Apostle Paul, "God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth unto his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap eternal life." No, my friends, we cannot, we must not, we dare not sin against God, for it is God with whom each one of us must ultimately come to terms. It is God whom each one of us must face, yea whom each of us is facing right now in all that we say and do. Wherever one turns, there is God. "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in Sheol, behold, thou art there." (Ps. 139:8.)

That, beloved friends, is the message of Christ. His mission is to bring each of us face to face with the tremendous reality of God; to reveal not only His righteous judgment but also his redemptive mercy and grace unto every penitent soul, unto every soul who purifies his soul through obedience to the truth, as the Apostle Peter puts it. "Except ye repent," said Jesus, "ye shall all likewise perish." There is no other alternative. The Redeemer of mankind today, as always, stands with outstretched arms awaiting the turning, awaiting the coming of every penitent soul.

(Radio Sermon, "Golden Gospel" program, June 27, 1943.)

BEN'S BUDGET

Ben J. Elston

When real, enlightening investigation is desired, it is well to set forth one's understanding of a passage or subject. But I intend no personal, public attacks on others for the reason that, in my opinion, it does irreparable harm, even if I were sure it could be justified on any grounds. How great the damage often, even when intentions may be good. A thing may be absolute truth, grasped by another before it is plain, or even thought of by me. Advantages for learning are not afforded in the same measure to all. Capacity to seize and rightly appropriate information varies greatly. One has ability to judge as to timeliness and need to emphasize certain features of truth more than another. Many things must needs be left to individual judgment, and no one must arbitrarily (try to) decide for another. There is a Final Arbiter. Let us not forget it. Biting and devouring are not commanded. Even zeal needs watching.

"We are cowed by opposing numbers, and forget the fact that the Bible is a long history of the triumph of very small minorities."—Shelby.

THOUGHTS WORTH WHILE

D. H. F.

"JUST BRASS"

Howard W. Pope, in the *American Messenger*, says: "When Major D. W. Whittle was in business, before he gave all his time to a Christian work, a woman came into his office one day and said: 'Major Whittle, my husband was greatly impressed with the services last night, and he promised me that he would come down and see you this morning. Did he come?' 'Yes,' said the major. 'Well, what did he say?' 'Why, he just asked the price of brass, and talked around a little.' 'Oh!' said the wife, 'that was just an excuse for his coming; but what did you say to him?' 'I am sorry to say,' said the major, 'that all I talked about was just brass, too.' 'That was a lesson to me,' said the major, 'which I can never forget.' And it may be that all of us can learn a lesson from a mistake."

ROBBING GOD

A Chinese preacher, speaking of robbing God, used this illustration: "It came to pass that a man went to market with a string of seven coins. Seeing a beggar who asked for alms, he gave the poor man six of the coins and kept one for himself. The beggar, instead of being thankful, followed the good man and stole the seventh coin also. What an abominable wretch! Yes, and would you, to whom God has given six days, steal the seventh also?"—*The Presbyterian*.

YOUR PHOTOGRAPH HAS BEEN TAKEN!

Did you ever have your photograph taken? You went to the photographer and posed for a picture. You got all fixed up before you went, and then fixed up again after you got there. When the photographer took your picture and a little later gave you a proof [that is a strange name for it], he hurriedly assured you that the picture wouldn't be anything like the proof, and on that assurance you ordered a dozen. Sure enough, he rubbed out the wrinkles here and a wart there, and straightened you out until the photograph looked much better than you do. You bought that dozen to distribute and you gave one to a dear friend. The dear friend said, "It looks just like you," *but he lied, and you knew he did, and you expected him to.* That is the kind of a picture we like, but in the Scriptures we have another kind of a photograph.

Here is a picture of the human heart taken by the Spirit of God, printed on the parchment of this scripture: "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one; there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way; they are together become

unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips; whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; their feet are swift to shed blood; [this is a full length photograph, you see] destruction and misery are in their ways; and the ways of peace have they not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes." And then, lest we misunderstand, and the photo be dimmed, He dips the photo in this solution to make it set, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."—Will H. Houghton.

BIBLE BULWARK

A physician, bright but critical, went to hear D. L. Moody. Although he had no thought of such a result, he was converted. When asked the reason for his change of heart, he said, "I went to hear Mr. Moody with no other idea than to have something to laugh at. I knew he was no scholar, and I felt sure I could find many flaws in his argument. But I found I could not get at the man. He stood there hiding behind the Bible, and just fired one Bible text after another at me till they went home to my heart straight as bullets from a rifle. I tell you, Moody's power is in the way he has his Bible at the tip of his tongue." Jesus didn't convert the devil; He did not set out to, but He defeated his purpose, and in just the same way that Moody defeated the physician.—*Christian Instructor*.

SOUL WINNING NEGLECTED

I remember once holding a series of meetings in Paris, Ill. In walking down the street with one of my assistants, I heard him talking with a young man, asking him to be a Christian, but he made no impression upon him. I heard him say: "Your mother wants you to become a Christian, does she not?" And the young man began to cry. Then I heard him ask: "Your father wants you to become a Christian, does he not?" And there was no answer. But I soon heard him make this statement: "*My father is an officer in the church, and my mother is a leader of the work of the women's society in the church, but neither of them has ever spoken to me about my soul.*"—J. Wilbur Chapman.

THE BOOK THAT SPEAKS

William Canton tells in one of his books of how a Bechuana tribesmen stood puzzled before a family group in the kraal. "What are those things you are turning over and over?" he asked. "Is it food?" "No, it is the word of God." Why do you talk to it?" "We do not talk to the Book; it talks to us." "Does it speak?" "Yes, it speaks to the heart." There is no book like the one Book for reaching the heart's hidden depths with the most wonderful message that ever was given for our learning and comfort.—*Christian Herald*.

LESSONS IN EPHESIANS

R. H. B.

THE THEREFORES AND WHEREFORES

The Christian life and conduct described under the head of the "Wherefores" and "Therefores" grows out of the blessings and privileges of which we learn in the first three chapters. This must be kept in mind continually, for we are too prone to seek for the strength of those virtues and graces among our own abilities and resources.

The first of the "therefores" (4:1) led to a discussion of the subject of Christian unity. Unity requires the display and exercise of *all* Christian virtues, and of all the items that make up the "fruit of the Spirit." (Gal. 5:22.) "The works of the flesh" are disruptive. (Gal. 5:19-21.) "Whence come wars and whence come fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your pleasures that war in your members?" (Jas. 4:1.) This is the genesis of wars, whether they be private brawls, family disturbances, church-troubles—all have their inception in conflicting selfish desires. But love (which is the all-inclusive "fruit of the Spirit") "suffereth long and is kind . . . envieth not . . . vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, . . . seeketh not its own, is not provoked, . . . beareth all things, . . . endureth all things." (1 Cor. 13:7) This is the spirit of Christian unity. It followed naturally therefore that the first "therefore" based upon the gift of Christ should lead to a consideration of our unity in the Lord.

The exhortation introduced by the second "therefore" (Eph. 4:17-24) is general; the "wherefore" that follows it takes up particular points. (4:25-32.)

In the general teaching he reminds them of the way of the Gentiles in which they themselves had once walked (2:2), but now no longer. "For," as Peter writes, "the time past may suffice to have wrought the desire of the Gentiles, and to have walked in lasciviousness, lusts, winebibbings, revellings, carousings, and abominable idolatries." (1 Pet. 4:3.) Another such list of Gentile vices is found in Col. 3:5, and Paul adds, "wherein ye also once walked when ye lived in these things." The cause back of the Gentiles' walk is *the vanity of their mind*—the emptiness, worthlessness, frivolity, of their thoughts; and this, in turn, was due to the fact that they were "darkened in their understanding," and "alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them." Such are "the Gentiles who know not God." (1 Thess. 4:5.) And this ignorance was "because of the hardening of their heart," which is always the result of the rejection of light. (Rom. 1:18-32.) Being thus "past feeling"—beyond all appeal and consideration of honor, truth, purity, love, goodness, or any other high and noble motive, they "gave themselves up to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness." Thus he portrays the awful wreck and ruin of the Gentile world.

Ah, if this picture represented only those Gentiles of old! But, alas, there are myriads of the present day, not in heathen lands alone, but in our country also and in our midst who answer exactly to this same description. Such is the life without God, whether then or now; whether it manifests itself in coarse vices or in more refined ways of selfishness and self-gratification. Out of such a world, out of such a life and walk, had the Ephesian saints been called by the gospel. The new life is summed up in "Christ." They had learned *Him*; *Him* they had heard, in *Him* were they taught, "even as truth is in Jesus." And what they saw and heard and learned and were taught in *Him* was, that now, (having become children of God by faith in Christ Jesus) they should *put away* "the old man that waxeth corrupt after the lusts of deceit"; that they *be renewed* in the spirit of their mind; and "*Put on* the new man that after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth." For (as Paul says elsewhere) "the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us, to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in the present world . . ." (Tit. 2:11-12.)

PUT AWAY — PUT ON

The expressions "put away" and "put on" are striking. The former implies that we can shuffle off the fleshly personality, as one would cast off an old garment and dirty rags; and "put on" implies that a new personality, like a new robe, is all prepared for us and ready to be put on. In Colossians (which is the companion letter to Ephesians) he speaks of this as of an already accomplished fact—"seeing ye have put off the old man with his doings, and have put on the new man, that is being renewed unto knowledge after the image of him that created him. . . ." (Col. 3:9, 10.) That is quite in keeping with Paul's teaching: at one time he tells us what, by position in Christ, *we are*; and then again he exhorts us to realize that high position which we have in Christ. Thus, in Gal. 3:27,—"*As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.*" But in Rom. 13:14 he exhorts the same class of people *to put on* the Lord Jesus Christ: "*But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.*" The "renewing of the mind" is "the renewing of the Holy Spirit," mentioned in Tit. 3:5, 6. The words "Thou sendest forth thy Spirit: they are created; and thou renewest the face of the ground" (Ps. 104:30) can be applied to the dead and sin-blasted souls of men also. The "old man"—the old fleshly self—"waxeth corrupt after the lusts of deceit." There is no improvement or cure for him, no prospect but deepening corruption. The old man must be put off; he must be slain (Rom. 6:6). But in the "new man" lie all the possibilities of growth and development into the full image and likeness of Jesus Christ: he must grow and be nurtured.

THE CHRISTIAN'S CONDUCT

The "wherefore" in v. 25, still building on what has been granted to God's own people in chaps. 1-3, takes up particular instructions: (1) against lying (comp. Col. 3:9) — (2) against unrighteous anger — (3) against compromise with the evil one — (4) as to stealing — (5) corrupt speech. (Eph. 4:25-29.) It may seem strange to us that the members of such a good and true New Testament church as that of Ephesus, of which and to whom such glorious things were spoken, should need such teaching—but, having just been delivered out of heathenism, such fundamental moral teaching was necessary. And indeed it is *not unnecessary* even now and among us. Note the apostle never stops with a negative. When he tells them what *not* to do, invariably he goes on to show them *what to do*.

Perhaps there is no more tender and beautiful injunction in all God's book than that of Eph. 4:30—

"And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, in whom ye were sealed unto the day of redemption."

This word "grieve," says G. Campbell Morgan, is a *love-word*. The Holy Spirit dwelling in us is our Comforter, the Companion who fills the place of the absent Lord. Grieve Him not! When the Christian sins he grieves the Holy Spirit—wounds His feelings, causes Him sorrow. This is a great and high motive to the child of God to walk carefully. If we can grieve the Spirit, we can also please Him. In the tender and earnest exhortations of verses 31 and 32 we see how the Spirit of God who dwells with us and in us (John 14:17) would have us to walk.

But note also that in this Spirit we are "sealed unto the day of redemption." The seal is the mark of ownership and by it those who are Christ's will be recognized. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his." (Rom. 8:9.) This will make all the difference between, "I know you not," and "I never knew you," on the one hand, and "Come ye blessed of my Father," on the other, in that day. "Ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is an earnest of our inheritance, unto the redemption of God's own possession . . ." (Eph. 1:13, 14.) In Rom. 8:23 Paul speaks of this same day of our redemption, mentioning especially "the redemption of our body," which takes place when the Lord comes to receive His own.

PERSONAL THOUGHTS AND NOTES

Walk. How frequently he uses this word! Once we walked in our trespasses and sins, according to the course of this world and according to Satan, "the prince of the powers of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience." (Eph. 2:2.) But now—"walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called," (4:1), no longer as the Gentiles walk (4:17); "Walk in love" (5:1); "Walk as children of light" (5:8) and "look therefore carefully how ye walk." (5:15.) See also what he says in Col. 1:10 and 1 Thess. 2:12.

What is "walking"? The regular and constant daily life and conduct. The Christian's walk is the patient and steadfast continuance, day by day, in the ways of the Lord. Sometimes the eagerness and readiness of obedience is represented as "running." "I will run the way of thy commandments when thou shalt enlarge my heart." (Ps. 119:32.) "They that wait for Jehovah shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint." (Isa. 40:31.)

How are you walking? Where, and in what direction? Every road has its terminus. There is the way that leads home. If ye live after the flesh ye must die." (Rom. 8:13.) But "walk by the Spirit and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh." (Gal. 5:16.) And "the path of the righteous is as the dawning light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." (Prov. 4:18.)

It is high conduct which the apostle sets before us. But if God furnishes the wherewithal we can meet the demands. "Give what thou requirest, and require what thou wilt," was the prayer of the old-time saint. Certainly with such a Highpriest, and access to the throne of grace where daily and often we may receive mercy and find grace to help us, we can do all things. (Heb. 4:16; Phil. 4:13.)

Giving vs Stealing. "Some people," said one, "say they tried to be good, but by that they mean only that they tried not to be bad. And that is poor business." The teaching of the gospel is not negative, but positive—negative only to make room for the positive. The vacancy must be filled. When the evil spirit goes out of a man and, returning, finds the house empty, he will come back in force. It is not just "quit your meanness," but "cease to do evil and learn to do right." The best cure and preventive of wrong is to do the opposite right with all the heart. Have you been a thief? (says the apostle) — then get clean over on the other side and do the opposite—labor working with your hands that you may have something to give to those who are in need. Such revolution can the grace of God work in human lives.

Kindness vs Ill-temper. Bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, railing, malice—how very, very common they were in the heathen life; how common they are in the world today! And what unhappiness these things cause! Put them far away, ye children of God—clean out of your life and program. What then? "Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, even as God also in Christ forgave you." Yea—those who have been thus forgiven can forgive; and those who have been so loved can love in turn. (1 John 4:19.)

SISTER PENNISTON

It is with sorrow, yet with a great satisfaction, that we record the home-going of Sister Penniston, a beloved sister of the Portland Avenue congregation: sorrow because of our loss and bereavement; but satisfaction because of the blessed assurance we have concerning her in Christ. Sister Penniston was a great woman. In November, 1903, when first I came to Portland Ave. she was among the faithful few there. Through all the years she continued with us in faith and love, always abounding in the work of the Lord. She lived a humble, lowly life, without ado or ostentation, hard-working, faithful and true. She loved the Lord; she loved the church; she loved the souls of men; she was always good to the poor and, like Dorcas, full of good works and almsdeeds which she did. Thus she continued throughout the many years. She brought her husband to the Lord some thirty years ago; she watched over him in his last illness fifteen years later. Her son surviving, is a member of the church. She bore her burden and did her work uncomplainingly; she was patient in suffering, faithful to every duty, rich in labors. In fact she was one of those "lights along the shore that never grow dim," an example of God's grace and workmanship "created in Christ Jesus unto good works"; and her works live after her and will follow her. She was above eighty years of age when she fell asleep in Jesus. With Him she is at rest until the day of the crowning and resurrection when He shall come again to receive His own.

R. H. Boll.

ON FOREIGN FIELDS

D. C. J.

The wonderful, marvelous love which God manifested to a wicked and sin-cursed world when the blessed Lord Jesus hung upon the Roman cross with nails in His hands and His feet and a world's sin upon his heart properly calls for a response and that response should not be too meager to contain a good, sincere interest in giving out the good news which never could have been told except for the sufferings on Calvary. Does the reader of these lines find a genuine, praying and giving interest in the perishing in heathen lands and in our own lands?

Bro. Thomas Hartle, of the Woodstock church, Cape Town, faithfully reports their doings in the U. S. and Scotland. A special Bible school anniversary was observed on March 27th with the Brittells participating. ** In a March letter from Bro. Alvin Hobby which reached us June 14th, he reports they would have twenty-nine pupils to take the government examinations. ** At this writing, the *Gripsholm*, a Swedish ship, is expecting to sail as soon as safe conduct is guaranteed by Japan to exchange western hemisphere nationals with Japan. Perhaps the missionaries from the Far East, or any of them that may be included in this transaction, will reach the U. S. in December.

Kamboli, one of the African evangelists baptized eighteen the latter part of last year. Peter Mukuni, another preacher, was reported as likely to go blind from cataracts. The doctor said operations on young persons were rarely successful. ** "We finally got a battery charged and now get to hear the news. The propeller to the wind charger was broken by the wind and Alva had to get one made."—*Margaret Reese*. ** One way to get \$500.00 to Cape Town, So. Africa, in a hurry costs \$10.00. It was sent safely and quickly at a cost of \$5.20. ** There is a very commendable interest in church extension, missionary work, in the home land and a lot of evangelizing is being done, but there is a much vaster amount being left undone. ** Picture that poor woman who sews and who has faithfully sent \$5.00 for missions month after month for years. Then consider the *congregations* (containing many members as able or more able than she) *who never give a cent* for foreign missions—especially think of that church which voted to put \$1,500.00 of its about \$2,000.00 in the treasury into war bonds. ** We have made repeated efforts to communicate with missionaries isolated in Japanese-controlled territory without receiving any response whatever. Red Cross forms were used long ago; later we followed the form directed by the State Department; and our last mailing under these covers was returned with the notation, "Service Discontinued." We can easily understand that after being a-

broad more than a year without a remittance, as most of them have been, there will of necessity be need for a lot of money to cover the needs when the way opens as it may for some, several or all of our stranded workers who may come home on the exchange ship. We have little expectation of the Davises (4) and Sister Bernard's coming as at last report they were far inland in China.

A LETTER FROM GEORGE M. SCOTT

"Wife and I are not in the very best of health, but thanks to God we are able to be up and about most all the time, and we manage to get quite a bit of light work turned off most of the time.

"I bapized two old women week before last, one a leper. We have converted several lepers, and I have never known one to turn back. We wish this could be said of the rest. Some of these older members have been holding on for years and then when we think they are developing the qualifications for bishops they take unto themselves another wife and spoil things.

"We are relieving the Brittells while they take a rest at the Cape. They both were pretty well run down. She had been in the hospital a month before they left. The doctor couldn't help her and advised her to go. In fact, all Europeans are supposed to go to the coast or at least out of here a few weeks every year.

"The Shewmakers were up to Kalomo for a couple of weeks. He and Brother Hobby are visiting the out-stations around those missions up there. Brother Hobby is on a language committee. Various denominational societies are working on a New Testament translation into the Tonga. A Mr. Hopgood is assisting and the government is helping get the language somewhat centralized. He travels among the villages in many parts of the district. The language is so limited that it is hard to find words that will express the New Testament meaning. Mr. Hopgood finds some words that are used by the people in one section that another section does not know and by putting all these words together he has enlarged their vocabulary."—George M. Scott.

"A FUNCTIONING ELDERSHIP," an attractive booklet by W. R. Walker, is published by the Standard Publishing Co., Cincinnati, Ohio. It contains ninety-six pages of helpful material to all who would "seek the office of a bishop" and for ministers and teachers.

This excellent treatise falls into three logical divisions. 1. The Introduction: under which two chapters are given to the discussion of "Historical backgrounds," and "New Testament Words Describing the Eldership." 2. The Selection of Elders: under which such themes as "Scriptural Qualifications," "Congregational Responsibility," "Preparation of Elders," and "Suggestions as to Election Procedures" are ably discussed. 3. The Work of the Elder: in which discussions of the elder's part in teaching, discipline, evangelism, missions and other activities are given.

Some readers may find occasion to differ with Mr. Walker's article on Scriptural Qualifications of Elders; but as a whole this book is a much needed work and well worthy of consideration. I heartily commend its prayerful study to all who feel the necessity of our arising to new alertness in this much neglected teaching of our Lord. Paper, 35¢
Orell Overman.

"Every call of God to His people is a call to those in whom He delights. Therefore they should know that do difficulties need daunt them. They are not called to meet them in their own strength. He will be with them in the path of obedience."—Campbell Morgan.