

WORD AND WORK

“TO REIGN WITH CHRIST A THOUSAND YEARS.”

Be of good cheer, ye friends of Jesus;
Never succumb to doubts and fears;
Cherish the great and precious promise,
“To reign with Christ a thousand years.”
To reign a thousand years with Jesus,
Free from all trials, toils and tears—
This is the Father’s precious promise,
“To reign with Christ a thousand years.”

Be of good cheer: earth’s night of sorrow
Shortly will close, with all its fears;
Then shall arise the glorious morrow,
The reign with Christ a thousand years.
To reign a a thousand years with Jesus
More than requites for our tears;
This is the sure and gracious promise,
“To reign with Christ a thousand years.”

Be of good cheer: ten thousand ages
Perfect in bliss and free from tears,
Soon will begin their endless cycle,
Reigning with Christ a thousand years.
Ten thousand times ten thousand ages,
Freedom from sin and death and tears—
What an “eternal weight of glory”
Comes with that reign of a thousand years!

—L. H. Jameson.

PREPAREDNESS.

“Proclaim ye this among the nations: prepare war; stir up the mighty men; let all the men of war draw near, let them come up. Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning hooks into spears: let the weak say I am strong. Haste ye and come, all ye nations round about, and gather yourself together; thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Jehovah. Let the nations bestir themselves and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat; for there will I sit to judge all the nations round about, thrust ye in the sickle for the harvest is ripe; come, tread ye, for the winepress is full, for the vats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! for the day of Jehovah is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon are darkened and the stars withdraw their shining. And Jehovah will roar from Zion and utter his voice from Jerusalem, and the heavens and the earth shall shake; but Jehovah will be a refuge unto his people. . . ” (Joel 3:9-16).

WORDS IN SEASON.

THE "NUISANCE OF OPTIMISM."

Recently a strong protest was voiced by English statesmen and seconded by some of the foremost English papers against the "Nuisance of Optimism." From the beginning of the war there has been a contingent of talkers in England who persistently looked on "the bright side of things;" and who found it pleasant and popular to speak confidently of how easily the brave Britishers would clean up the foe, and that the war would quickly be settled with victory on the Allies' side, and so forth. A year passed by, a year of hard fighting, of enormous expenditure, and of terrific loss and bloodshed; and as one of the statesmen expressed it, the enemy was not seriously crippled, not even seriously affected, and that they were facing a long and hard struggle against a bitter and powerful and determined foe. The optimistic talk was still going on; but the nation was growing weary of it. It was found in fact that the easy-going spirit at home was traceable to this false "optimism," and that a representation of the prosaic facts was badly needed to rouse the people to a realization of the need and the danger. Truth is better than "optimism" if the latter has no basis in truth. It has been well said that to stop the fire-bell does not put out the fire. If there is a fire I want to know. The lure of hell is swathed in the golden glow of a false optimism.

IS IT PEACE?

Unfounded optimism is, if anything, an even greater curse in the spiritual sphere. The false prophets were optimists of that sort. They said, "Peace, peace," when there was no peace, and the people liked it. It put them at ease, and left them to go on in their track of sin and self-indulgence unperturbed and ever hopeful. All men spake well of those false prophets. As Lord Chesterfield wrote to his son, "Make people pleased with themselves and they will be pleased with you." They say continually unto them that despise me, 'Jehovah hath said ye shall have peace;' and unto every one that walketh in the stubbornness of his own heart, they say: 'No evil shall come upon you.' " (Jer. 23:17). But when a true prophet arose and cried aloud and spared not, they said, "Prophesy unto us smooth things!"; and they scouted and flouted the prophets, and called them croakers and calamity-mongers. And thus their judgment overtook them unawares. The church at Laodicea, she who was neither hot nor cold, was made up of such optimists. "We are rich," they said, "and increased in riches, and have need of nothing," and doubtless they had heaped to themselves optimistic teachers who upheld them in that view. But the Lord Jesus Christ said, "I will spue thee out of my mouth."

IS THE WORLD GETTING BETTER?

When the question is discussed whether the world is growing better or worse, men compare and compare—today with a hundred years ago; our era with the middle ages; our times with the situation in Christ's day—just as if all men had always stood on the same footing, and the verdict depended on simple comparison. Now *God never judges that way*. With Him the first question is not, "How have certain people conducted themselves?" but, "How much light did they have?" For that is an essential factor in determining the relative moral value of conduct. Chorazin and Bethsaida, were clean, quiet, orderly, moral Jewish communities; infinitely cleaner, it would seem, than ancient Sodom and Gomorrah, whose very names are an execration. Yet the Lord Jesus said that Sodom and Gomorrah would fare more tolerably in the judgment than Chorazin and Bethsaida; and He who knows how to estimate comparative wickedness, judged Chorazin and Bethsaida worse than Sodom. That is how God looks at it; and from His judgment there is no appeal. This must be taken into consideration in estimating the present condition of the world.

HOW MUCH LIGHT?

We are living in most remarkable days. The situation is so complex as to allow of a variety of estimates. Has the world grown better? In answer we are pointed to progress, invention, discovery, civil improvements, education, philanthropies, benevolent schemes and institutions; the progress of temperance movements, and so forth. Another on the other hand, points out the frightful increase of crime, pleasure-seeking, fashionable immodesty, and the horrors of a world-war which is filling the earth with violence. Neither of these sets of facts however can of themselves determine the real status of the world. First of all we must ask, "How much light has the world today?" And to this there is but one answer: *More than ever before*. Consider only this one fact that fifteen million copies of the Scriptures in about five hundred different languages are sold and distributed annually. Take now the most favored parts of the world and estimate the average life, moral and spiritual, and the principles that control the communities. If we are to measure guilt by the amount of light available, the result leaves no chance for optimism. Surely if the judgment does not hang heavier now over the world (not to discuss the case of the professing churches) it is because God has changed His ways—which certainly He has not. And if this is so, we ought to know it. Decision days are upon us. The one hope lies in a coming out for Christ, and walking in separation, lest we also be overtaken in the overthrow of the guilty world.

"THEY KNEW NOT UNTIL—"

In Noah's day the world had become wholly corrupt in God's sight. Again, and again we are told in the sixth chapter of Genesis how full to the brim was their cup of iniquity, and the condition beggared language to describe it. (Gen. 6:5, 11, 12, 13).

But we shall make a fundamental mistake if we suppose that the world was *aware* of its extreme condition. Little would he understand the blinding power of sin who would think that the world understood its depravity. Probably if you and I had visited them we should have seen much the same decent outward appearances the world wears today. Probably we would have heard just such familiar talk of their living in the grandest era the world had ever seen. Had they not their great men, leaders, geniuses, inventors, artists, composers, poets, organizers, generals, mighty men of renown, to whom they could point with pride? (Gen. 6:4). Was not the face of nature fair, and did not every morning's sun smile the Creator's approval upon them? They were well pleased with themselves. Noah's voice of warning was passed up with a smile. God bring a flood! How preposterous! How unscientific! How blasphemous even, to think that God would do such a cruel thing! But behind it all stood God's word of judgment: "I will destroy the earth with every living thing." And steadily, silently gathered the clouds. But "they ate and drank, and planted and builded and bought and sold, and married and were given in marriage, and they knew not until the flood came and took them all away." *"Even so shall it be in the day that the Son of Man is revealed."*

TRUE OPTIMISM.

Nowhere is a more profound and indomitable optimism to be found than in the word of God. But it is not an optimism that rests upon confidence in man or hopes for any good that may develop out of human nature, nor holds out any bright expectations as to the world or the flesh. But it is an optimism that is securely founded upon Truth. The Lord has sworn and will not repent. Whatever may be the appearances to the contrary, however rare true faith and devotion to God, however small the minority of God's true servants, however manifest the failure of their work, however overwhelming the opposition of Darkness--God will not fail nor grow weary, nor is it at all His way to give up His purpose. In fact it is working out all along, the very wrath of the enemy being made to contribute toward its final success. The Lord has designed that "all the earth shall be filled with the glory of Jehovah." (Numb. 14:21). It is in His program that every enemy shall be put in subjection under the feet of His Christ. And there shall be a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, and sorrow and death shall be no more. Yet sin must first run its course. Human rebellion must culminate in its awful climax. Judgments such as the world has never yet seen must fall. But the darkest hour will presage the Day. Jesus Christ shall prevail. "They also shall prevail who are with Him, called, chosen, and faithful." Their labor is not in vain. Those who trust in Him shall never be confounded. And meanwhile He makes all things to work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to His promise.

So thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!

JEWISH NOTES.

The following interesting matter touching Jewish missions has kindly been furnished by a Hebrew Christian of our acquaintance:

A BIT OF INTERESTING HISTORY.

The history of Russia records that in A. D. 800 there were Christians in Russia who baptized as do the Greeks (by immersion) but that they baptized only believers, that they had no hierarchy, no particular set creed, and that their churches were governed by the members of the individual congregations, and that they had no central church government. The same historian reports "these peculiar congregations" had mostly converted Jews as preachers. Can the readers guess what denomination would lay claim to these Christians? We care little, the facts remain that Russia had real Christians at an early date, and some of them were Hebrew Christians. Thank God!



A CHRISTIAN MISSION TO THE JEWS.

Joseph R. Lewek is director of the Chicago Gospel Mission to the Jews. Bro. Lewek is a baptized believer, a member of a small congregation of Christians who claim no denominational affiliation whatever. He receives no salary nor does he ever solicit donations; his work is taken care of by the Lord through His disciples without asking any human being for aid. This mission is doing a wonderfully good work.



A CRISIS IN AMERICAN JUDAISM.

The present crisis in American Jewry, as Prof. Friedlander sees it, says the American Israelite, is division between the different classes of Jews in our country, such as Russians, German and other Jews. The American Israelite says further: "The fact is that in the United States there has never been a period, during nearly a century past, since there was any considerable number of Jews in the country, when there was not a division of opinion among them on what seemed to many of them questions of vital importance. Fierce verbal battles were fought at conferences, essays were written, polemics resorted to, and often epithets exchanged of such nature as a petty ward politician would have hesitated to apply to an opposing candidate."

The only remedy we know, and we guarantee it to be "a sure cure," is the *blood of Jesus Christ* which cleanseth us from all sins, and makes us all one in Christ Jesus.

Are you interested in the salvation of God's own Chosen People—the brethren according to the flesh of the Lord Jesus Christ? If you are we may be able to print some news notes from time to time touching Hebrew missions.



"I say then, did they stumble that they might fall? God forbid; but by their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles.

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KEEP IT UP.

STANFORD CHAMBERS.

I rejoice to learn of the number of subscriptions received last month. Let us "keep the ball rolling." I have heard not one complaint against Word and Work since the change, but have heard loudest praise. Each reader owes it to others to see that they supply themselves with such a feast of good things. Who cannot get up a club of four and thus obtain the magazine for 50c, i. e., for less than five cents a month! Let those who are busy keep busy, and those who are not busy get busy. Let those who are asleep wake up.



DRAW NIGH TO GOD AND HE WILL DRAW NIGH TO YOU.

Jesus' promise to those who ask, seek and knock is verified in the book of Acts. The Pentecostian converts were devout men who had come from every nation to keep the feast according to their Scriptures. They were worshipers. Many of the priests became obedient to the faith. The Ethiopian had been up to Jerusalem to worship. He was a Bible reader. Of Saul the angel said to Ananias, "Behold he prayeth." Cornelius received the angel's message while keeping the ninth hour of prayer, and Lydia was at the riverside in a prayer meeting when Paul bore the gospel message to her. "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled."

"The Lord help us to so order our lives in this life that we may attain unto the first resurrection of the dead, and have an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, is my prayer."—A. J. Hopkins in C. L. December 4, 1900.

NEWS AND NOTES.

Brother Chambers reports the interest at New Orleans growing; church and Bible class attendance the best ever. He spent a few days recently with Brother Hebert, of whom he writes: "He is active, aggressive, successful, growing happy, true, sound; 514 additions to date."

Brother and Sister Freeman Davidson of Louisville, are the proud parents of a baby girl. The readers will remember that less than a year ago they volunteered for the foreign field. This event will suggest one of the things that figured in their remaining here.

Brother Boll's treatment of prophetic matter in the January number was entirely introductory. If you want to follow all his writings on prophet subjects, you should begin with the FEBRUARY issue. In that number begins the first of a series of articles along that line, "Pre-millennialism"—and there also is found the first meeting, for study, of the "Prophetic Enquirers." We are prepared to furnish *the next one hundred* subscribers with the February issue, free of charge, if they make request for it.

The Bible study course which began last November, in rooms built for the purpose at 25th and Portland avenue, are now drawing to a close. We believe the attendance and interest have been the very best ever. Prophetic books have not been featured though there has been an effort to give each its rightful place. Ezekiel and Daniel in the Old Testament; Acts, Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, 1 Thessalonians, and 2 Timothy in the New, have been covered. A fine group of preachers have been in attendance, as well as a number of other Christian workers. The church provides dormitory free of charge, the only expense being for board (club plan), which is very slight. A number of the young men who have come, take advantage of the free tuition at the University of Louisville and the Southern Seminary. We look for still larger classes next winter.

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

All books we recommend and advertise can be had from the Word and Work at publisher's prices. If there is a particular sort of book you want write us about it. We may be able to help you find the very thing you need.

Have you found the Word and Work good and helpful? Do you judge that it will carry light and blessing everywhere it goes? Then do what you can to extend its circulation. Write us for information about agents' commission, or book premiums.

THE WORK OF CHRIST.

Col. 1:20-23.

H. L. OLMSTEAD.

The pre-eminence of Christ, so plainly set forth in Col. 1:15-19, proves His eminent fitness for the great work of reconciliation and peace. His superiorities are such that it can be said of Him that in Him all fulness dwells—the fulness of the God-head. (Col. 1:19; 2:9). Though he is man, there is one mediator between God and man, Himself man Christ Jesus.” Yet the divine fulness so dwells in Him that He is God. It is He who has given Himself a ransom for all (I. Tim. 2:5-6).

It is God's good pleasure that in Him all this fulness should dwell but not only so for it is God's pleasure as well “to reconcile all things to Himself through the blood of His cross”. (Col. 1:20). “All things” is a very inclusive phrase and must be restricted, not by any theory of our own, nor by any arbitrary interpretation, but only by God's word. We are sure that Satan and his angels are not included, for there is “fire” reserved for them. Likewise the “fearful,” “unbelieving,” “abominable,” dogs “sorcerers,” “whoremongers,” “murderers,” “idolatrous,” “whosoever loveth and maketh a lie” are shut outside the gates of the heavenly city (Rev. 22:15). Yet we are taught here that it is the good pleasure of God, by the cross, to reconcile all things unto Himself, “whether upon the earth or in the heavens.” Perhaps we could paraphrase it thus: “It is the good pleasure of God to reconcile all things (that will be reconciled) to Himself, by the blood of the cross.” The chief idea being that it is only by the blood of the cross that reconciliation comes. However, Romans 8:19-22, teaches that “the creation itself shall also be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God.”

Reconciliation looks manward and it is man, not God who must be reconciled. To reconcile means “to turn thoroughly to,” hence to be reconciled to God (2 Cor. 5:20) is to turn thoroughly from that which has led us away from God—sin. “And you being in times past alienated and enemies in your mind in your evil works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh, through death, to present you holy and without blemish and unprovable before Him.” (Col. 1:21-22). From enmity and alienation in mind they had turned thoroughly to love and trust in God. The death of Christ, which in its Godward aspect, had propitiated for their sins—Christ having become a curse for them—had worked a change in their attitude toward God.

The power of the cross to transform life rests first of all upon propitiation. It satisfies the law of God, redeems from the curse of the law. Christ “made to be sin for us” or in our behalf, is the great dynamic which turns men from enmity to reconciliation. Without the doctrine of propitiatory sacrifice there can be no reconciliation. The “word of reconciliation” (2 Cor. 5:19) derives its power from the doctrine of propitia-

tion. Without it the gospel is shorn of its moral force, and he who preaches a gospel which does not make prominent the redemptive feature of Christ's death preaches "another gospel." What God through His grace does because of what Christ's death has accomplished, is the great theme of the gospel. Like, the inward life which controls the outer life, is transformed in proportion as one grasps the meaning of the "kindness of God our Saviour in Christ." To know the requirements of God is essential to a life well pleasing to God, but to know the things that produce obedience is none the less essential. To preach the conditions of the gospel is not enough, nor is it preaching the gospel to stop there. Back of and beyond these are the real fundamentals, the first principles, God's being, His justice, love, grace, mercy. The divinity and incarnation of Christ, His life, His death, His coming and their meaning to men. The preaching of the cross in such a manner as to bring about a genuine reconciliation to God of the minds and hearts of men.

The Colossians, by reason of their reconciliation to God, were to be presented holy, without blemish, and unreprouvable before Him, only on condition that they "continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and not moved away from the hopes of the gospel." Col. 1:21. "The faith" means not some man's conception of the gospel, some creed, somebody's position or time-worn customs, but the system of revealed truth concerning Christ and his redemptive work with its ordinances and commandments. "The hope of the gospel" may be seen in such passages as the following: "Redemption of the body" and resurrection (Rom. 8:23-24; 1 Cor. 15:23) Raised in the likeness of Christ (Phil. 3:20, I John 3:2) (3) Glory (1 Cor. 15:43. 1 Cor. 4:17, Rom. 8:17). (4) To reign. (2 Tim. 2:2). (5) A crown. (2 Tim. 4:8). (6) A throne (Rev. 3:21). (7) Rest (2 Thess. 1:7.) These are some of the things to which a Christian may look forward, for which he may hope. They all cluster around one great event, the coming of the Lord. It is therefore, "That Blessed Hope" (Tit. 2:13). "Set your hope perfectly on the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." (1 Pet. 1:13). Being holy, without blemish and unreprouvable, depend absolutely upon a continuance in "the faith" and a steadfast hope. All other means proposed to bring about holiness of life and character are delusive and lead nowhere, but away from God. It is the blood of the cross that must reconcile men to God.

In the cross of Christ I glory,
 Towering o'er the wrecks of time,
 All the light of sacred story,
 Gathers round its head sublime."

"He who has much to teach must suffer much; and he alone can speak of the deepest things in the economy of God who has sooner or later entered into fellowship with the suffering of God."—G. Campbell Morgan.

TWO PLANS FOR PRESERVING PEACE.

E. L. JORGENSON.

Two plans are suggested for preserving peace and unity in the churches. The first is, that no doctrine even though true, should be taught if it disturbs the churches—unless it is fundamental. The second is, that no church need be disturbed by any doctrine, though some brethren may consider it untrue—unless it affects the essentials. I propose to show that the first “doctrine” or basis for unity is unscriptural and sectarian, and that the second is scriptural and Christian.

If it is true, or if the brethren can be led to believe that it is true, that any doctrine, true or false, ought not to be taught if it disturbs the churches, unless it is essential, then any group of men who have any influence at all can completely control the faith of the church. No creed could so absolutely define the limits of belief and hold the churches down to what the leaders believe. For if the churches are once convinced that a “non-essential” doctrine should not be taught if it causes trouble, then all the leaders have to do is to see to it that it *does* cause trouble, which they could always easily do if the doctrine crosses their views. There you have it. Read that over; *think* it over. Could any creed so completely regulate the faith of the churches as that? Upon the face of it could such a system be right? I propose now to show that it could not.

First then, it is a doctrine that cannot be stated in Bible language. It is an interpretation, an uninspired conclusion, and as I believe, an opinion pure and simple. An opinion too, which can easily be pressed to the disruption of the churches. It is based on Romans 14 and 1 Cor. 8; but clearly the apostle is there speaking of things indifferent; things which, if we do, we are no better, and which if we leave off, we are no worse. (1 Cor. 8:8). The teaching of any part of God’s word *cannot* be prohibited by these chapters for “*every* Scripture inspired of God is also profitable,” not only for private meditation, but “for *teaching*, for *reproof*, for *correction*, for *instruction* which is in righteousness that the man of God may be complete.” That the apostle is speaking of things indifferent—that is, things which, though right are not required, which Christians are asked to omit on the ground of love (things which are not right are prohibited on other grounds) is clear from the apostle’s statement, “All things indeed are clean;” the things which Christians are here urged to give up for love’s sake are then of themselves “clean.” They are *rights*; but believers have the higher right to forego them for love’s sake. So then Paul has no reference to *false doctrine* here; and that he could not have reference to true doctrine we have already seen. True doctrine makes men “better,” is “profitable;” but Rom. 14 and I. Cor. 8 deal with things that of themselves make men neither “better” nor “worse.”

In the second place it is a doctrine which crosses with the

Bible teaching on the subject, conflicting with these and other passages:

"Arise and speak unto them *all* that I command thee; be not dismayed at them lest I dismay thee before them. Jer. 1:17.

"Man shall not live by bread alone but by *every* word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Matt. 4:4.

"We cannot but speak the things which we saw and heard."

"Speak in the temple to the people *all* the words of this life."

"I am pure from the blood of all men, *for* I shrank not from declaring unto you the *whole* counsel of God." Acts 20:27.

"Now I beseech you, brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak (not be silent on) the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you." 1 Cor. 1:10.

"*Every* scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness." 2 Tim. 3:16.

"Preach the word; be urgent in season, *out of season.*"

"We have the word of prophecy made more sure; whereunto you do well that ye take heed, as unto a lamp shining in a dark place." 2 Pet. 1:19.

"Ye should remember the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and the commandment of the Lord and Saviour through your apostles." 2 Pet. 3:2.

"I, Jesus, have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things (the things in Revelation) *for the churches.*" Rev. 22:16.

Reader, how do you reconcile such passages with the view that a doctrine, even though it be true, must not be taught if it disturbs? Will you believe these words of God or will you believe this opinion of men?

In the third place I am prepared to show that this doctrine conflicts with the practice of the inspired apostles. I shall not attempt to develop this argument now; but let me ask, did the apostles preserve the unity of the church by avoiding those topics concerning which there was a difference in the local congregation, or by teaching *the truth* on those subjects? Read the Corinthian letter; read almost any letter and answer this question for yourself.

The second basis of Christian fellowship may be stated in this way: That a doctrine, even though some may not accept it as true, ought not to disturb the unity of the churches unless it be fundamental. It is hardly necessary to elaborate this statement; for if the other plan falls, this one stands, unless God has arranged no plan for unity except that of absolute intellectual agreement. Let us suppose that A disagrees with the teaching of B. He urges B to withhold his teaching for unity's sake; but B contends that his teaching is true; that it is taught in the word of God, and that by reason of the passages demanding a presentation of *all* truth, it ought to be preached. But A informs him that he, and others, do not consider it true, and that there will be a division unless he desists; but B replies that inasmuch as the teaching in question is not fundamental, there

need not be any division, that A is factious; for A could conscientiously worship where B presents the teaching in question (since it involves him in no act which is wrong, or which he believes to be wrong), but B could not conscientiously withhold the teaching which he believes to be true. B proposes to use judgment, since he cannot present all subjects at the same time anyhow; but holds that the judgment must be *his own*, not another's, that he must be free. He feels conscientiously barred from entering into any such agreement with A; from assuming any attitude that would logically lead to the permanent withholding of some things that are true. He proposes to teach the truth *in love*, ever striving to do as he believes Jesus would do if He were in his shoes. And the privileges which he claims for himself he freely grants to A; he never excludes, disfellowships, or draws the line on him, even though A continues to teach *his* convictions on the question; but he holds that to believe *and teach*, as they do respectively, should be no bar to fellowship and co-operation, because mutually they are not involved in any act which they believe to be wrong. In the light of God beloved, whose attitude is sectarian and unscriptural, and whose is Christian and Biblical? If A says to B, "You may present your teaching *in Bible language without elaboration*, it would be sufficient for B to answer, "You must present the teaching by which you would thus limit me *in Bible language without elaboration*, before I agree to your plan. Please do not attempt to shut out what you consider *my* "opinion" by thrusting *your own* opinion upon me."

OUT OF THE ABUNDANCE.

E. L. J.

"Lord, give us more speech." So prayed an earnest German brother who "loves to tell the story." "Lord, give us more speech and help us to deliver thy message." It was David's prayer over again: "Lord, open *thou* my lips and my mouth shall show forth thy praise." Why are Christians so empty of testimony? It must be because they are empty of the word of God; because they have not handled the word of life; because the word does not dwell in them richly. "Out of the abundance of the heart," said Jesus, "the mouth speaketh." If the heart is full of business, it is business you talk; business, trade, cash, deposits, stocks, bonds, losses, gains, markets. If your heart is full of farming, it is farming you talk; corn, corn, hogs, houses, lands, real estate. If the heart is full of politics, it is politics you talk; primaries, elections, nominees, candidates. If the heart is full of pleasure, it is pleasure you talk; parties, clubs, dances, balls, theatres, opera. If the heart is full of fashions, it is fashions you will talk; styles, models, dresses, bonnets; but I tell you if the heart is full of Christ, it is *Christ* you will talk.

KEEP THYSELF PURE.

CARL MATTHEWS.

What a strange command from the word of God. To us who are living in this world; who never knew anything but sin and its consequences, God says, "Keep thyself pure." (1 Tim. 5:22.) It is almost like calling to a man overboard, "Keep thyself dry." It is something far beyond his own power, something he could not even do even though he had desire.

But God knows the circumstances. He knows how powerless we are to free ourselves from the bondage of sin. For if man could have cleansed and purified himself: then God would not have raised up salvation for him. It was only after Jesus had finished washing the disciples' feet that they were clean every whit. And after he had freed us from sin, he knows how weak we are—how prone to do wrong. He knows what is in man. He knows too, the power of the enemy—that Satan is in dead earnest when he deceives and damns the sons of men. Satan is not fighting for pastime. As he hates God, so he hates God's children. And for a little while, God permits him to tempt and trouble them. For God's children dwell in Satan's territory. It was Satan that corrupted the earth. To him the world is indebted for its sin. Therefore, sin has covered the earth, "as the waters cover the sea." Satan has done as he pleased, and things have never been favorable for the living of the Christian life.

The Christian life is not a natural life—it is supernatural. It is contrary to nature. The natural course is a sinful one. The divine a righteous one. To those of us who have named his name, God says, "Keep thyself pure." When he spoke these words He expected nothing else. The Christian life is a struggle—a battle. We must fight until the close of the day. Although we must fight, God wants us to know, once for all, that the victory must come from Him. If we are kept He must keep us. Our own strength is weakness; our goodness sin. Who has power to make himself good? When God said keep thyself pure, He knew that we could not do it in and of ourselves. "I thank Him that enabled me," writes Paul. This shows where Paul got his strength to live the Christian life. It was the power of God. As it abounded in Paul's case, it can abound in yours. No man is so weak, but that God can transform him into a faithful Christian. "My grace is sufficient for thee."

The secret of a pure life is to be led by the Spirit—the mark of the sons of God. "If we live by the Spirit, by the Spirit let us also walk." If we are filled with the Spirit, then there is no room in our lives for sin. Through the Spirit we are enabled to keep sin on the outside. The world is wrapped in sin; we are wrapped in Christ. As long as we abide it cannot besmirch our souls. We receive grace day by day, as our need may be. And we believe that He is able to establish us, that we may be found "without spot and blameless in his sight."

WHY NOT BE JUST A CHRISTIAN?

R. H. B.

THE ADVANTAGE OF IT.

In these days of many sects and conflicting teachings it is a great advantage to be simply a Christian, and nothing more than a child of God, a follower of Jesus Christ.

"But," you ask, "is such a thing possible under the religious circumstances of our day?"

How is the average man ever to find his way where so many paths cross one another, and each one seems as good as the rest? where so many guides shout, "Come this way!" and "Go that way!" and "Lo here!" and "Lo there!"

It does indeed seem impossible; and many who would be glad to be uncompromisingly on the right ground before God, have despaired of the undertaking.

Some have concluded that none are right and have settled down in indifference. Some think that we are right, and drift on, compromising and without convictions. Some, weary of the problem, have found a false rest in trusting in an "infallible church," and an "infallible" Pope who settles all questions by his simple dictum. Another says, "I go to hear them all, and when I find the right one I will accept it." That latter way seems fair to the average man. But what an impossible task it would be to investigate *all* the creeds and doctrines! Time would fail, and head and heart be confused and bewildered if anyone should seriously attempt it. It usually terminates in the man's accepting the first thing he happens to meet that seems good and plausible. Barring the case of many who lack the interest and sense of need to make any personal, independent search after truth, it is the general way for a man religiously inclined, to take up the first view that strikes and pleases him, or else with whatever sect or denomination with which he has happened to have been thrown in contact. Having identified himself with the said view or sect, he considers himself thenceforth bound to loyalty to that party, and is henceforth set for its defense, and super-sensitive to any criticism of it.

Such are the usual courses men pursue in regard to religious views and affiliations. But that none of these ways will lead a man to the truth ought to be clear to any man who will think a moment. It is a mere chance game. And the chances are not as good as one out of a hundred. In fact truth is never obtained by blind grabbing, or by following the plausible teachings of men.

Instead of trying to examine and decide upon any or all beliefs and teachings extant, there is a shorter and better way. That way can be summed up in one word:

"CHRIST."

"Come unto ME AND LEARN OF ME." (Matt. 11:28, 29) There is an instant relief in the very thought. We can set aside the whole troublesome tangle of religious beliefs and go straight to

Him who is "the Way, the Truth, and the Life." (John 14:6). He alone is right and true, and everyone who would be his disciple must come directly to him and learn of him.

But after the first flash of light and hope such a thought would bring, there rises a misgiving. "Do you suppose that *I* could understand, that *I* could find the one, true way by taking the matter up personally with the Lord, through His word? Have not others done so and failed? Is there not vast room for differences and misapprehensions? Where so many good people have erred and strayed can I hope for better success? I am not learned: where the scholars and doctors differ, how can I know I am right?"

We can see this much, however, to set out with, that in this thing (like the four lepers of 2 Kings 7) we have nothing to lose, and at least a chance. For if we abandon ourselves to the easy current, we have no promise (Prov. 2:1-9). In the next place we note that it is not a matter of scholarship, or of man's wisdom and ability, but a question of *Attitude* and of *Trust*: of trust, in that we can not afford, like Peter, to look at the winds and waves of difficulty (Matt. 14), but we must rely on the goodness and faithfulness of the Lord that calls us, that He will let no true soul perish in its quest of Him and His ways; and it is a question of attitude, because it is not to the wise and prudent that God shows His ways (Matt. 11:25; I Cor. 1:26, etc), but to the poor in spirit, the humble, the hungry and thirsting after righteousness; to those who will to do His will, to the "sheep" who hear his voice. (Matt. 5:3-6; John 7:17; 10:4, 27). It was in this very connection in which Jesus stated this, that He invited the weary and heavy laden to come to Him that He might give them rest; and to assume His yoke and to *learn of Him*. (Matt. 11:25-39). This then is the one great step, for every man who would find the Way: Commit your life with all its hope and prospect to the Lord Jesus, and address yourself to learn from Him. There is a sphere in which scholarship is helpful; and I do not say that men may not help one another; but the true help consists ultimately in pointing us to the word of the Lord that there we may find and see for ourselves what is the will of God in Christ Jesus to us-ward.

THE RESULTS OF THIS STEP.

If everyone should do this it would be fatal to many a thriving business and institution. The religious philosophers who for ages have darkened counsel with learned words; the theologians; the "infallible" dogmatists; the theorists who spin out "systems of truth"—they would find little market for their wares. True unity would come. It has been feared all along that if every man should go to the Word of God for himself independently, confusion and division would result. Not so. The divisions come by departing from the word, by adding to it, taking from it, setting up men's one-sided views for standards. And, above all, the divisions are kept alive because the vast majority of professed believers blindly follow their religious lead-

ers, and have almost all their religious knowledge at second hand. But those who with open, desirous hearts come directly to Jesus for light, have such a view of truth, such a mutual consideration, and such a free scope for growth that they will tend more and more to be one with one another because they are one with Christ.

THEY HAVE A RIGHT TO ALL TRUTH.

Every theory, every system, every sect has *some* truth. But *the Christian* has all, has a right to all, and access to all. If any sect in the world holds any portion of truth, the Christian has the greater right to accept and proclaim it. He does not need to join the sect in question to get what truth it may happen to have. He does not even need to sift through the chaff of those human theories. In Christ he has all beforehand. It is his good and pleasant task to explore the rich mine of truth, Jesus Christ "in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden" (Col. 2:3). At the same time he does not say, "I am right," in the sense that he knows all about everything; but he says "the Bible is right: Christ is right." He holds his mind open. Every day he comes to the truth revealed to get juster ideas of what he learned before and to learn more. He has no "ax to grind"; no position to force; nothing to "harmonize" or to "explain away"; no theories to promulgate; no human creed to defend. The truth makes him free. He calls no man "Rabbi," no man "Father" upon the earth: One is his Teacher and Master, even Christ; and One is his Father: God (Matt. 23:8-10). No man may bring him into that bondage of human theory and creed which is today so gravely affecting the religious world.

A minister of a certain denomination once said to one of these simple Christians, "I should like to have a talk with you—I think I could make a —ist out of you." "How would you go about it?" asked the Christian. "Why, I would show you where you are wrong," answered the preacher. "But that would not make me a —ist. It would just make me a better Christian," he replied.

These simple children of God come to the Bible with new, fresh minds, divested of all human preconceptions as far as they can know, with open hearts, to drink in the teaching of the Lord. They strive to give Him a clean tablet to write on, not one already scrawled over with opinions of their own or other men's. They are not so foolish as to let some theory-spinners and system-builder prepossess their thoughts by filling their hearts and minds with his specious reasonings wherewith he hopes to build his sect. A gentleman was reading a volume of the "Millennial Dawn."* "Why do you not read the Bible, my brother?" said

*By Charles T. Russell. Of recent years these books, six in number, wear the name "Scripture Studies." With an admixture of truth (some of it neglected truth) sufficient to lend it plausibility in the eyes of the average reader, this work promulgates a theory of vital error concerning the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ, and His coming, and as to Future Retribution and other matters.—Editor.

a friend; "it is a great deal better." "But this book helps me to understand the Bible." "Yes, but it may also be helping you to misunderstand it." For when we commit ourselves to a human teacher and leader, we lose the voice of the true "Rabbi" above. And the prepossession resulting may easily be fatal. It puts colored glasses before the seeker's eyes, and insinuates basic notions and opinions which ever after he reads into the text of the Bible, and which he thinks thenceforth he sees standing out on every page, although they exist only in his mind. It is needless to say that a man who has any regard and desire for just pure, unbiased truth will not allow his judgment to be affected before hand by putting himself under the influence and dominance of some man's plausible theories. "And this I say lest any man should beguile you with enticing words," says Paul. "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord so walk ye in Him; rooted and builded up in Him and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding in thanksgiving. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy or vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world and not after Christ. For in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in Him." (Col. 2:4-10).

THE SERIOUS SIDE OF IT.

Now if it were only a matter of preference and taste as to what a man should religiously believe and be, no man would need to be greatly troubled over this question. One could adopt whatever belief he likes best and follow it sincerely and the outcome would be safe. But "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man but the end thereof are the ways of death." (Prov. 14:12). "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." (Jer. 10:23). Most people think that any course honestly pursued will lead to glory; which is but another proof that man's ideas of religious things are usually wrong. Jesus declared that many would come to Him "in that day" and protest that they had prophesied in His name and done many wonderful works; to whom He will confess "I never knew you: depart from me ye that work iniquity." "Therefore," He adds, "Whosoever heareth *these sayings of mine* and doeth *them* (not what some one else has said and commanded) "I will liken him unto a wise man, who built his house upon a rock." And vice versa, "Every one that heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them not shall be likened unto a foolish man who built his house upon the sand." (Matt. 7:21-27).

It is not by what some man said you ought to do, nor by any human teaching or theory (no matter how correct it seem, and how perfectly it "fits in") that we shall be measured "in that day," but by what Christ has said, "The word that I have spoken the same shall judge him in the last day." (John 12:48). He that rejects the word of Christ today does so at terrible loss and infinite peril, all comfortable theories of the "judgment" notwithstanding.

HOW CAN WE BECOME CHRISTIANS?

The reader who would become a Christian, a simple child of God and follower of the Lord, can become such in exactly the same way that men were taught of God to pursue in the days of the apostles. In Acts, chapter two, verses 36-41 an account is given. Read, believe and obey. "Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly, that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Brethren, what shall we do? And Peter said unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For to you is the promise, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call unto him. And with many other words he testified, and exhorted them, saying, Save yourselves from this crooked generation. They then that received his word were baptized: and there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls."

The path here marked out is not only infallibly right, but exceedingly simple. It is *God's* way. Follow its simple pattern, and it will solve the great initial problem for you. For thus men became Christians, and members of the true church 1900 years ago, under the preaching and direction of the inspired apostles. And evidently the man who takes these steps of faith today, will be nothing else, and belong to nothing else. Afterward he may "go on unto perfection, to find milk and meat in the word of Christ, and to grow in His likeness. (I Pet. 2:1; 2 Cor. 3:18).

The Book of Acts is replete with teaching and illustrations on this point. Any one perplexed on the matter of baptism should get a concordance and by means of it hunt up every passage in which "baptize" and "baptism" occurs. The word of God will leave the right impression on the unprejudiced mind. In fact it is hardly a matter of disagreement, for it is generally acknowledged that whatever else may or may not be "baptism," immersion certainly is baptism. And we should want nothing else than what is certainly right.

As to church-relationship, there is but one church mentioned in the Scriptures. To this God will add him as He did "those who should be saved" in the apostolic day (Acts 2:42). On any question the word of God will shed true light, and as much light as is needed. So shall a man stand on a firm rock, and be responsible directly to God alone, and deal with Him at first hand through his word, free from all fear and bondage, except the fear of God and the yoke of Christ, which is easy and light, and he shall find rest for his soul. This is the exalted privilege and calling of the simple Christian. Let every man see that he fall not short of it.

A FEW DAYS WITH HEBERT.

STANFORD CHAMBERS.

In answer to a call by wire I joined Brother Evariste Hebert Saturday, February 12, and spent some days with him in meetings among his people. The occasion of my receiving the special call was that his flock at Evangeline was menaced by the modern "Tongues" fanaticism, which had gotten a hold there among the Americans before Brother Hebert went there with the gospel to the Acadian French. In a revival of theirs these "Tongues" preachers were teaching that since baptism in Acts is "in the name of Christ," the only name in which there is salvation, therefore those baptized "into the name of Father, Son and Holy Spirit" (as Hebert had baptized) were not scripturally baptized and must be rebaptized, and the word went out that "second baptism" would be given about one hundred persons there the second Sunday. Not knowing just how much this might confuse his converts, and feeling somewhat at a loss to meet the preachers who spoke only in English, Hebert sent for me.

Saturday night I spent at Crowley with Brother Hebert and family. With great interest we talked and read and prayed together. Our first appointment was at ten Lord's day morning at Robert's Cove, some six miles, to which we drove. The weather was threatening but the box chapel was nearly filled. All but one besides myself were French, about one dozen of whom scarcely understood English. Brother Hebert addressed them in French and I gave a lesson on the New Testament church in English. Prayers were offered in both French and English, and hymns were sung in both languages, most of them however in English, due to the fact that scarcely any of the few who can read at all can read French. The communion service was conducted by Brother Hebert in French. It was a quiet, worshipful, sacred service.

Thence we drove (without dinner) some sixteen or eighteen miles to Evangeline to help them in an afternoon communion service, and to be on the ground at the time of the great baptizing announced. Bad roads made us late. Our people had come, waited and gone. Nevertheless we went to the meeting place, and within a few minutes the people, seeing us, began to come from different directions until nearly one hundred were present for the afternoon service, late as it was. We soon got a report from the "Tongues" that their one hundred to be baptized dwindled down to seven—a preacher and six others.. It turned out that our French people took no stock in it. A young man confessed Christ at our night service which was well attended and lasted two hours and a half, without complaint, despite uncomfortable weather, and plank seats without backs. Three meetings Monday, three Tuesday (besides a baptizing), and one at seven Wednesday morning, were the extent of our labors at Evangeline. Baptism and tongues were dealt with

quite vigorously, both in French and English. I have no fears for Hebert's work on those lines.

This visit gave me an opportunity to observe these people in their new relation, so recently liberated from Rome. They were happy in the Lord. They have come into a new life in a new world. Many would die before they would go back to their old thralldom. They say, "Why, we didn't know *anything!*" I asked, "What particular thing was it that turned you?" They said, "Why, just as soon as we listened to Brother Hebert read to us in the Bible we saw we were sinners and didn't have Christ. Then he read to us how to find Christ and we believed and he baptized us." A widow said, "Every time we attended Catholic services we had to pay for a seat else we were accused of being thieves. We didn't steal anywhere else and I'm sure we didn't want to steal at church." Another woman said, "I was a Catholic but I was *mean*. I had a terrible temper. Any one will tell you I was mean. I cursed. I would fight; I smoked cigarettes. But when I heard Brother Hebert read the word of God I had some terrible feelings. I never felt that way before, but when I obeyed the gospel I was happy and have not said a bad word since." Then she related how later on she asked the Lord to give her power to quit smoking; that she threw her cigarette in the stove and has not lighted one since. I saw men, young and old, who had quit tobacco (Brother Hebert does not make it compulsory) and I saw men hand over to him their pokes and pipes, saying they were done.

It is wonderful the number of songs these Christians have learned in the few months they have been in the Lord. And how they do love to sing! "I'm Happy in Jesus" is one of their favorites. "Happy Day," "Wonderful Love," "Jesus, The Light of the World," and "Calling the Prodigal," are others. They sang, "Blessed Assurance" for me the last night and asked me to have it sung in New Orleans when I returned. True, they sing only by rote and their execution would hardly be pronounced artistic, but they make up in spirit and would put to shame some old congregations I have visited. They told me they did not know a hymn before their conversion! And they said, "Nothing else, only to go to church and hear the priest read in Latin, and pay pew rent."

SOME PITIABLE CONDITIONS.

These people are nearly all poor but far worse, few, except the children who are now being provided schooling, can read or write. This is a great handicap to Brother Hebert's work. What have these people to thank Rome for anyway? No wonder the gospel is so sweet to them that over 500 have embraced it in so short a time. Worse still, their dark ignorance led them into the most complicated marriage relations. Many men and women are living together who are not legally married. Many are separated from former companions and living with others. Some cry over their condition not knowing how to extricate themselves. There are children who do not know who their

fathers are. I said to Brother Hebert, "This is your problem. The 'Tongues' menace is nothing to compare with it." He is not idle in regard to it. In all cases where those living together have a lawful and scriptural right to marry he urges it and has an arrangement with the Clerk by which he can obtain free license to marry them. Several cases have been straightened up.

THE PRESENT NEED.

Already the work is so enormous and the field widening so that Hebert can not do justice to it. His great need is helpers. But they must be of the same race. We can do little more than advise and encourage with word and prayers and means. Our brother realizes this need and has two boys with him studying the Bible. A few others would thus begin preparing themselves but lack the means even to feed and clothe themselves while doing so. We are earnestly praying the Lord on this matter. Hebert has been offered good salaries by denominational boards, but he says they demand his subscribing to their creed and he can not do that. His last word to me was, "I'll never belong to anything but the Church of Christ." May the Lord lead us to stand by this faithful fellow-servant in his marvelous work.

PERENNIAL FRESHNESS AND YOUTHFUL VIGOR.

CHARLES NEAL.

THE DEW OF YOUTH.

"Thou hast the dew of thy youth." Ps. 110:4.

Swift-winged Time is bringing to each of us snow for the hair, winter for the blood, dimmed eyes, wrinkled face and halting steps. The Fountain of youth sought for in the land of flowers into which the aged and diseased might plunge and come again with the freshness of the morning has never been found. What is impossible now to the physical man is, or may be, a blessed reality to the spiritual. The text speaks of our Lord Jesus Christ. The vigor and freshness of our Lord is perennial and eternal. The same is true of His word. This same freshness should characterize every child of God. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit with the word of God and every "means of grace" are helps upward giving this freshness and vigor, but it seems to be the special work of the Spirit as an ever present helper to minister this "dew of youth."

THE SPRINGING WELL AND FLOWING RIVER.

In John 4:14 the Spirit is represented as "a well of water springing up unto everlasting life." In chapter 7:39 the Spirit is set forth as "a river of living water" flowing from within one. In the first passage the figure reaches no further than the ministering of freshness to the individual. In the second the freshness having invigorated the individual flows forth to others. What could represent freshness and vigor better than "a springing well," "a flowing river," and "the dew of youth." This renewal of the inner man we are told is from "day to day."

If we would have that freshness and vigor we must, like the

children of Israel with the manna, gather it fresh from God's hand every day. There is no such thing as storing away great treasure chests of freshness. We need constantly the invigorating, freshening power of an unhindered Holy Spirit in our lives. We are told that the Holy Spirit rides most triumphantly in His own chariot which is the word of God. Daily reading of the Scripture, quiet meditation and the closet prayer puts one in the position for the Holy Spirit to cast upon him "the dew of youth" and refresh in him the "springing well" and thus refreshed he may go forth to minister freshness to others from His overflow. He who would minister to others must learn to tarry in the presence of God, allowing the Spirit to take of the things of Christ and show unto him.

OBSTRUCTING THE FLOW.

Springing wells may be obstructed and the flowing river river become a stagnant sea. The wells of Abraham had to be "dugged again" in the days of Isaac and the freshness of Jordan is lost in the Dead Sea. The refreshing truths which sprang up at the father's faithful digging are often stopped before reaching the son. The flowing Jordan of truth may become the Dead Sea of formalism in the next generation. After half a century of the Ephesus church had passed into history no outward fall had marred her testimony. But the keen sense of our blessed Lord discovered the lack of freshness. Her well had been obstructed, "the dew of youth was gone—she had left her "first love." May this not be true of many Christians and churches today? In this day of spiritual deadness formalism abounds. A. J. Gordon has truly said: "The chill of winter has settled over the church; instead of melting penitence, the tears of other days have frozen into icicles, and are hanging about the sanctuary—cold and glittering formalities taking the place of that holy tenderness which pleads with God 'with strong crying,' and warns men 'night and day with tears.'" Who of us have not had our fervor chilled and spiritual growth retarded by sermons, prayers, singing and exhortation upon which "the dew of youth" had frozen, and from which the freshness of the morning had fled? How many of us but what in one way or another has been guilty of afflicting others in the same way—giving them stagnant water and casting frost into their lives?

A BETTER WAY.

Let us get out in the open. It will be refreshing to get out of the confines made by our own hands into the great meadows of God and allow the dews of heaven to distill upon us. Let us dig again the wells of Abraham and drain the stagnant pools. Perhaps we need to learn that the freshness of the Lord's giving comes only to us to the degree that we allow ourselves to be channels of blessing. Let us give ourselves unselfishly to the work of the Lord. "Give and it shall be given unto you" is our Master's own rule. The Galilee that receives Jordan and pours it out again is itself refreshed. The Dead Sea that receives it only to hold is by its holding made dead.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD.*

"The kingdom of God" means the realm subject to the rule, or reign, of God. It embraces the universe. The world was created as a part of that kingdom, subject to the rule of God. The world was intrusted to man as the under ruler for God. Man betrayed the trust and turned the rule of earth over to the devil, the rival and enemy of God. God determined to rescue the world from the rule of the devil and to bring it back to his own rule and authority. This process of bringing it back has not yet reached its completion. Much of the work was preparatory to the re-establishment of the kingdom; and after its re-establishment, the work of bringing the world into subjection to this kingdom has been slow.

Many different steps have been taken. Some have miscarried through the unfaithfulness of the servants of God, through whom he proposed to accomplish the work. Before Christ came, the steps were preparatory to the formal re-establishment and opening of this kingdom. This new rule, or kingdom, was to be spiritual. It was to enlist the spirit, the inner man; to be built upon the affections and purposes of the heart. Through this inner man God proposed to control and guide the fleshly, or outer, man. The first rule was addressed to the outer, or fleshly, man. It failed. The material things, even the law written in stone, pass away; that written in the heart, the spiritual man, unseen to mortal eyes, will endure forever.

The preparatory state and stages for this kingdom are given us in the Old Testament. After Adam sinned, Seth and his family, ending in Noah, were developments preparing for this kingdom. The flood swept the ungodly from the earth, and Noah and his family were commissioned to repeople the earth. Soon they went astray; but the second cycle was run, of which Abraham was the outcome. To him the promise was made: "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." The separation of Isaac and Jacob and his family, the transgression of his family, the giving of a temporary law through Moses, and the dealings of God with this family under the law of Moses were successive steps preparing for and eventuating in the birth of Jesus, the Christ, the Son of God. His special mission was to overcome the devil, restrain his power, and re-establish the reign of God on earth. The re-establishment of that kingdom could not take place until the devil was conquered.

To make the victory over the devil complete, Jesus suffered himself to be bound hand and foot, to be carried down into the

*The above article was written by David Lipscomb, and published in the *Gospel Advocate* of May 21, 1903. It is here reprinted not because the editor agrees with every item of the views therein set forth, but for the sake of the notable and characteristic fairness and breadth of vision with which the "grand old man" handled the subject.—The Editor.

grave by the power of the devil; and as a prisoner in the grave, the prison house of the devil, he struggled with the devil ("him that had the power of death"), overcame him in his own prison house, burst asunder the prison bars of death, and came forth a victor over death and hell and the grave. (Heb. 2:14, 15). After Jesus had thus conquered death, He organized and opened to men the great spiritual kingdom he had been from the beginning preparing to establish. This kingdom now established will yet pass through successive stages of development until it ends in "the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ." The kingdom in its present stage is not called "the everlasting kingdom," but it will grow into it. It is the same kingdom in a lower stage of growth and development.

With this glance at the growth and development of the kingdom from the first preparatory stage until its final and perfect growth, the understanding of all these prophecies and their fulfillment seems not difficult. The blessing on the family of Abraham (Gen. 22:18); the raising up of a Prophet like unto Moses (Deut. 18:18-22), the Prince of the house of David that should reign on his throne forever; the establishment of "the mountain of the Lord's house. . . . in the top of the mountains" and the going forth of the law from Jerusalem, as told by Isaiah (2:14) and Micah (4:1-4); the making of the "new covenant with the house of Israel" (Jer. 31:31); the setting up of the kingdom of heaven "in the days of these kings" (Dan. 2:44); and the pouring out of "my spirit upon all flesh" (Joel 2:28), culminating in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost after the resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ, ought to be easily understood as successive steps in the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth.

The statements concerning the beginning, development, and growth of the same kingdom, given in the New Testament, ought to be equally clear and plain. The kingdom was established and opened to men on the first Pentecost after the ascension of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit came to earth to give this kingdom laws and to take up his abode in these laws and guide that kingdom in its future growth to its final and perfect development, when the kingdoms of the earth shall become the kingdom of God and his Christ, when the will of God shall be done on earth as it is in heaven, and when earth itself shall become heaven and God shall dwell with his people and be their God and they shall be his people. Instead of seeing this connected and glorious growth and development of the kingdom of God through successive preparatory stages of the past and of growth for the future, we insist on disjoining it and looking upon each separate stage as a distinct kingdom, or government. If we would try to view revelation as a continued, but connected, revelation of God, and the different phases and stages of his kingdom as stages and developments of one harmonious, connected whole, it would enable us to understand these things better and to see a beauty and Godlike grandeur that without this we cannot see.

STUDIES IN PROPHECY.

“Behold the Bridegroom cometh in the middle of the night!
 ‘And blest is he whose loins are girt whose lamp is burning bright
 ‘But woe to that dull servant whom his Master shall surprise,
 ‘With lamp untrimmed, unburning. and with slumber in his eyes.”

WAITING, WATCHING, LOOKING.

In the following letter by an esteemed brother, a difficulty is raised which may have occurred to others also. But it is not a difficulty that cannot be resolved, or that need to occasion any doubt or question to the servant of the Lord, as to God’s plain teaching on this subject. Says our brother:

‘If it is a senseless thing for one to ‘wait for,’ ‘watch for,’ and ‘look for’ an event that is at the very least a thousand years in the future, would it not be more senseless for the Lord to instruct and entreat us to ‘wait for,’ ‘watch for,’ and ‘look for’ an event that He Himself knew would not come for nineteen hundred years, at any rate? If it is vain for people to watch, wait and look for a thing which is a thousand years away is it not more vain for our God to require persons to wait, watch, and look for a thing in their day that He knew at the time He required it was something like two thousand years off?

“While it is a fact that neither we nor the angels, not even the Son Himself, know just when the second coming of the Christ will be, the Father knows, knew nineteen hundred years ago when Christ would return the second time. Matt .24:3-6. How could the Lord teach His children centuries and centuries ago to look for,’ ‘wait for,’ and ‘watch for’ the return of Christ in their day when He knew positively well that it would not occur then, that it would not come for nineteen hundred years at the least? To me the above reasoning shows conclusively that you have injected into the expressions quoted a meaning that is very improper and untenable.

“I see not how you can, with your views of the second coming of Christ, represent God otherwise than mocking His children by telling them long centuries ago to ‘wait for,’ ‘look for,’ and ‘watch for’ this event when He knew positively well at the time He told them that it was useless for them to look for it in their day, for He knew it would not come for at least nineteen centuries. It is not a matter of what we can read into the expressions, wait, watch, look for, neither is it a matter of what we can read out of them, but it is exceedingly important that we use them in such a way that we do not involve the Lord in a stupendous difficulty of teaching people to wait and watch for something that He knew only too well would not occur in their day. Do the expressions under consideration mean anything more than ‘BE READY?’”

I note especially the question: “How could the Lord teach His children centuries and centuries ago to ‘look for,’ ‘wait for,’ and ‘watch for’ the return of Christ in their day when He knew positively well that it would not occur. . . . for nineteen hundred years at the least.”

But the fact remains that the Lord *did* so teach. The question, “How could he?” is secondary and waits upon the question which should be first in order, “What *did* He teach?” It is not at all difficult to determine that latter point. The word of God

did from the first (and does yet) most plainly direct Christians to "wait for," "look for," and "watch for" the Lord's coming. A few passages establish that.

The Thessalonians, under the preaching of an apostle, "turned to God from idols"; and that for a two-fold purpose: (1) "To serve a living and true God"; and, (2) "to wait for His Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivereth us from the wrath to come." (1 Thess. 1:9, 10). And that the apostle clearly intimated that this event *might* (for aught any one knew) occur within the life-time of those then living, despite the fact that some had already fallen asleep from among them, appears in 1. Thess. 4:13-17; especially verse 17, "Then *we that are alive* that are left, shall together with them [the raised dead] be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air."

As to "looking for"—"The grace of God hath appeared . . . instructing us" to do two things, or rather to do the first, while doing the second: (1) That "denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world"; and (2) "Looking for that blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ." (Titus 2.11-13).

As to "watching for:"—"Watch therefore, *for ye know not the day nor the hour.*" (Matt. 25:13). This latter passage shows clearly that if the time had been known this watchful attitude would not have been possible. The very ground upon which he exhorts them to watch is their ignorance of the time. He did not, indeed (as our brother ambiguously puts it) teach them to look for "the return of Christ in their day"; but he taught even them in their day, to look for the return of Christ. For so far as they knew he might have come any day. The Lord left the impression that, seeing it must occur sometime, and the time was not revealed, it might happen at any time, and that therefore it behooved us to be on the look-out constantly. He implied that it *might* be in their day; and he also implied that it *might* be a long while off (Matt. 25:19; Luke 18:1-8); but he left the matter open, that so the Christian's vigilance might never be relaxed, and that this impending event might always exert its powerful pull on all Christians of whatever period during their Lord's absence.

That this was strictly God's design in reserving the date of the Lord's coming appears plainly from the parable of "the good man of the house." (Matt. 24:43, 44). If the "good man" had known that the thief was surely coming, but did not know *at what hour* the thief would come—he would thereby be compelled to watch all the long night through. And we might add, as a point for us who live in these latter days, that as the night wore away his expectation should become keener, and his watchfulness, instead of relaxing, would grow more intense. If anything the words of the Lord Jesus Christ come upon us with greater force: "Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not

when the time is. It is as when a man sojourning in another country, having left his house, and given authority to his servants, to each one his work, commanded also the porter to watch. Watch therefore: for ye know not when the Lord of the house cometh, whether at even, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or in the morning; lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto you all, Watch." (Mark 13:33-37).

— Instead of "mocking" his people, therefore, as our brother mistakenly infers, we have here just another evidence of the wisdom and goodness of God in that he left us uninformed as to the time of the Lord's return. For whether we wake or sleep it is only so that we shall be ready for His coming when it occurs. Those who looked for Him in days past, and closed their eyes in this expectancy, were not deceived, nor had they lost anything. People are never the worse or losers for doing exactly as God tells them. To those early Christians their constant, earnest watching and looking for Christ's coming gave that unearthly turn to their Christian lives, kept them in the right attitude before the Lord; and as they "fell asleep" looking for their Savior, they shall be at no disadvantage when he does come (1 Thess. 4:13-17). But those who, for whatever reasons or reasonings, were *not* looking in their day for the Lord, shall be losers indeed.

One fails to see how, to give the Lord's words their plain and evident meaning is "reading something into them." And again it is not convincing to my mind that if the Lord had said, to them in that day, "Be ready," instead of telling them to wait, watch, and look for, the coming, that he would have been "mocking" them any less in the former case than in the latter. For what should they be *ready* for, except the event of His coming? And why should they be "ready," unless it were that this coming were impending? But God meant that constant readiness to result from our constant looking for, watching for, waiting for the coming of the Lord, as the passages before quoted abundantly prove. We can do no better than to fall in with His word and will.

Finally—if the coming of Christ were post-millennial, it would put a thousand years at least, between us and "the blessed hope and appearing" of our Lord. It takes no doctor to see that that view would kill all expectation of Christ's return, and all direct preparation for it. It would then become a far distant event of no immediate and practical significance to us. The hour of death would be vastly more important; and the "unfaithful servant" would be well justified in view of this doctrine, to say, "My Lord delayeth his coming." The doctrine condemns itself. The uncertainty in which the Lord left the time of His return, while yet representing it as imminent, keeps His people watchful and prepared. But he who teaches that Christ will not come until after the millennial years, sets his seal to this, that the second coming of Christ is a thousand years and more off, and therefore not now to be reckoned with.

WALTER SCOTT ON THE SECOND COMING.*

(From Wm. Baxter's Life of Scott.)

"I shall never forget his attitude, as with face upturned, and hand outstretched, he stood describing the scene he really seemed to behold. I have often wondered since how any speaker could even venture on such an attitude as he assumed, and wondered that even he could maintain it so long—but the end was not yet; he cried out: 'It reminds me of a scene in the mountains of my native north!' and then dash off into a life-like description of the gathering of the clans of the Highlands of Scotland at the call of some renowned and beloved chief. On a mountain summit stood the chieftain, and as the wild notes of the bugle-horn re-echoed from rock and ravine, and spread over the valley, the whole plain below was in a moment filled with his devoted followers, who, wrapped in their plaids, had been concealed in the blooming heather; every eye in that host was turned to the chief whose summons they had heard, and whose form stood out clearly defined on the mountain top, and upward to him in a living stream they went; he shouted a welcome as they came, and back from the thronging host came an answering shout, for they were not only his soldiers but his kinsmen, and when they reached the place where their leader stood they were happy and invincible. "This was the figure used to illustrate the glad awakening of those who had long slept in the dust and their rising to meet the Lord in the air."

AN EXTRACT FROM SCOTT ON MILLER'S TEACHING.

"It is important to the character of those who have entered upon discipleship to Christ by obedience to the true gospel, that they have their hopes elevated to the appearing of Christ, and fixed upon the purity, perfection and glory of his kingdom; but whether an attempt to accomplish this by appealing to an exact and fixed chronology would not, if successful, be followed by a reaction disastrous to their morals and religion, in the event of a disappointment, deserves some deliberation. For the consideration of all the faithful, it ought to be noted that the chronology of the New is in all its important features precisely that of the Old Testament. The chronology of Revelation is Daniel's chronology and affords no additional light on this part of the question, touching the appearing and kingdom of Christ. Let us then who advocate original Christianity, preach to the saints, for their perfection, the second coming of Christ, with all its adjuncts, for its intrinsic merits, its own divine importance alone, and leave the chronological question where Christ and the apostles left it; that is, let us leave it in the moral uncertainty in which they left it, and in the hope of its speedy occurrence, purify ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, that whether he comes at midnight, at cock crowing, or in the morning, we may be accounted worthy to stand before him."

*It may be necessary to inform some of our readers that this Walter Scott was a well-known pioneer preacher, co-laborer with Alexander Campbell.

THE PROPHETIC ENQUIRERS.

R. H. B.

"CAN PROPHECY BE UNDERSTOOD?"

"This question is bound to relate to *unfulfilled* prophecy," said Apollos; "for it can hardly be raised as to fulfilled prophecy. In fact a prophecy could not fairly be called such if after it had been fulfilled, its fulfillment would admit of any doubt. We are to determine then, whether we can know what a prediction means before it has come to pass; and whether from a Bible-prophecy we are able to tell with certainty what shall be. What say you brethren?"

"It seems clear to me," responded James, "that in this lies the essence of the whole prophetic question. For if unfulfilled prophecy can be understood then its import must certainly be helpful, and the study of it worth while. But if it cannot be understood, it could be of no practical value to us now, and we could employ our limited time better in the study of such portions of scripture as we are now in position to understand and get the benefit of. After a while when the unfulfilled things come to pass we shall recognize them . . ." "How could you Brother James, if you had not studied them previously?" broke in Bereus. James colored a bit. But he went on. "Now brethren, I feel assured that unfulfilled prophecy cannot be understood. The Jews did not understand their own prophets, and they did not know their Messiah simply because they had put a mistaken interpretation on the prophecies. Peter shows in the first chapter, verses 10 to 12, that the prophets did not understand themselves. And we could want no better proof that people today do not understand the prophecies than the many curious and conflicting interpretations that are abroad. A plain man like me would say that if any man who would undertake to say what an unfulfilled prediction means, he would be speculating."

Bereus, like Elihu in the book of Job, was well filled up, and could hold back no longer. "Brother James, I am but a babe, but I am able to see that with all your experience and scripture-knowledge, your speech could not stand before a school-boy's criticism. One proof you bring up is that the Jews did not understand the prophecies. Did not the Lord blame them for their lack of understanding? Did He not call them 'fools and slow of heart' for it; did He not say, 'Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and tell what sort of weather we are going to have; how is it ye cannot discern these times?' And the apostles indeed say that the Jews did not understand; but always with the idea that they could have and should have understood. Perhaps there were men among them who thought prophecy unprofitable, and told the people they could not understand it anyway. And I would be very much surprised to see where Peter said that the prophets did not understand. The verses you cited say simply that they inquired about *the time*, and the Lord ex-

plained that to them. And your point about the many conflicting interpretations has been up once before. We do not let that disturb us in our search in other lines of truth. I believe the very way to discredit the many false views is to find the true doctrine, and certainly not by giving up and saying it cannot be known." Bereus spoke with considerable animation, as indeed he always did when matters of concern were under discussion. Brother Simeon looked a trifle worried over the young brother's impetuosity, which almost bordered upon disrespect. But Brother James showed that, however mistaken he might have been as to his prophetic views, he was no babe in love and Christian forbearance. "Let us hear from Brother Apollos," he said simply. "Brethren," said Apollos, "but a moment ago I might have made some of the same points Brother James made; and I confess our young brothers' little polemic staggers me. I have not considered it in that light, and I must think a bit. I am a learner among you and with you, you must remember. Brother Simeon, tell us your mind."

"I might have dressed my thought in softer words than our dear young brother," said Simeon pleasantly, "but aside from that I would not differ from him. I really fear that we have been a bit imposed upon by the theologians in this thing. Somebody must have found it extremely difficult to make the prophets harmonize with preconceptions, and it is only natural to relieve oneself of difficulty by sweeping everything into the waste-basket. The idea is easy and welcome, and became general, and it has been drilled into us also, we hardly realize when or where. But regard for God's word compels at least an independent examination of the matter. Why should a prediction be harder to understand than any other statement? Now the instances of predictions in the Old Testament which were understood quite well before they came to pass, are numerous. And in the first pages of the New Testament we read how chief priests and scribes showed Herod from the prophecies that Christ must be born at Bethlehem. (Matt. 2:1-6). They took the prophecy at its simple face value and were correct. Had the Jews stood by that principle they would have understood and recognized their King, even in the carpenter's dress, and His humiliation would not have staggered them. But like ourselves they were tempted to explain away such parts of the word of God as were not agreeable to them. It was only for this cause that they failed to recognize their Lord. Prophecy has some difficulties peculiar to itself; but we must never abandon the bed-rock principle of all Bible interpretation, namely *that God said what he meant*, if we want to understand prophecy or any other portion of the word of God. If you will permit me I will read you the few brief rules which I have adopted for myself, and which commend themselves to me as fair and safe:

1. *Interpret literally.*—The first presumption is always that God meant just what He said. The prophecies that were fulfilled were fulfilled literally and exactly.

2. *As to Figurative Language.*—Make the same allowance for figures of speech in prophetic writings as in all other scripture and literature. But consider nothing as figurative without valid reason.

3. *Symbolic Prophecy.*—Symbols can not be understood except as the scripture itself explains them. But regard nothing as symbolic without clear reason. Be sure also that the "explanation" is true and scriptural before you adopt it and rely on it.

4. *Double and Manifold Fulfillments.*—Prophetic predictions had frequently a near fulfillment, and perhaps several subsequently all of which are typical, limited, and incomplete. A fulfillment is not necessarily *the fulfillment*. If any prediction has not been completely fulfilled God will yet fulfill it and redeem every word of His.

5. *General Suggestions.*—The understanding of God's word is granted to humble, honest, God-fearing hearts. Be poor in spirit. Let *God* teach. Do not force the word to agree with your own previous ideas. Do not nullify or cripple one passage to make it harmonize with another. Do not be arbitrary in your interpretations. Where God has not spoken, or left things unexplained, let us remember Deut. 28:29 and Psa. 131.

"Perhaps," continued Simeon, "we should do well to consider these suggestions, and discuss them at a future conference. But it seems that time has passed more rapidly than we realized. I make a motion to adjourn. Let us think and pray over these things. I hope we may soon agree sufficiently as to the need of the study of prophecy and as to the principles of interpretation, to take up some of the prophecies themselves." And the visitors rose up, and took cordial leave of Apollos, and left the preacher's house.

AFTERMATH.

The street-lamp that shone upon the three as they walked homeward revealed the anxious expression on the face of Bereus, as he turned toward James. "Brother James," he said in a low tone, "My heart pains me. I fear I have overstepped the bounds of respect and Christian courtesy toward you this evening. Your hair is gray, and I am young—younger than I ought to be for my age and opportunities; and, while it was not in my heart to do so I spoke almost impudently in the heat of the argument. I would be glad to be freed from the conceit and over-confidence often manifest in young people, and I am heartily ashamed of having transgressed toward you."

There was a tenderness in James' voice as he replied, "Brother Bereus, my interest in the teachings we discussed left me no room for personal feelings. I know your heart, my dear young brother, and that is enough. You know the old proverb, 'Old men for counsel, young men for war.' We need them both, and both are apt to fall into their peculiar faults at times. Where you are concerned not to slip into the common defect of the young, I am equally fearful of the natural danger of the older. I have

known some old brethren who had become petrified and useless in the thought that they had the sum of all wisdom, and that what they did not know was not worth knowing; and seemed to believe that the chief end of their older days was to "take down" the young men. The good book says, 'Better is a poor and wise youth than an old and foolish king who knoweth not how to take instruction any more.' And Paul said to Timothy, 'Let no man despise thy youth.' If you feel that you have spoken too briskly to me, I'll gladly pardon it. But do not feel hampered in the future from speaking out all your heart. And pray that I may not cross that fatal dead-line of the aged, and may not despise thy youth, nor that of any other precious young spirit among us."

No words of rebuke could have humbled Bereus as this kindly speech." "Pray for *me*, Brother James," he answered. "I am the one that needs it."

"Brethren, I cannot keep from saying, that I love you both unspeakably," said Simeon. "I have long counted that you both adorned the good word of our Lord, and that you have been hands and feet and eyes and backbone to the Body. I know it the better now. Of all precious things in the Lord's kingdom there is nothing that equals Brotherly Love. Not even the knowledge of the prophecies could compare with it." And upon that the three parted and went to their several homes.

(To be continued).

BIBLE STUDY COURSE.

R. H. B.

"The words of Jehovah are pure words;
'As silver tried in a furnace on the earth,
'Purified seven times."

"More to be desired are they than gold,
'Yea, than much fine gold;
'Sweeter also than honey, and the droppings of the honey-
comb
'Moreover by them is thy servant warned:
'In keeping them there is great reward."

In order to get the full benefit of the study we have put on the book of Genesis we must now take a fresh and sweeping view of it. It is only in this manner that we can clinch the good we have so far received. The book of Proverbs says that "the sluggard burieth his hand in the dish, and will not so much as bring it to his mouth again"—by which it is not meant that the "sluggard" will not eat when he gets a chance (for from it!) but, in a figure, that he will, for sheer slackness fail to avail himself of a benefit when it is actually within his hand. So may we sometimes, for the lack of a slight additional effort, lose the full

benefit of past work. Let us not fail therefore to give the book of Genesis a good looking over, before we proceed to Exodus.

FIRST DAY.

See if you can *think through* the book of Genesis now. I do not mean remember every detail, but in its main features. Chapters 1 to 3 cover a dispensation; so do chapters 4 and 5, and 6 to 9 belong to it as an aftermath. Chapters 10 and 11 comprise what may be called the "post-diluvian" ("after-flood") epoch; and with chapter twelve begins what may strictly be called the "patriarchal dispensation. Get the birds'-eye view of these three first epochs.

SECOND DAY.

The "patriarchal" era begins with the call of Abram. We cannot fail to notice the change of the character of the narrative from chapter twelve on. Up to that point God dealt with the race of mankind. Now he takes up an individual, and deals with individuals, members of one certain family, to the end of the book. So here we have the two great divisions of Genesis I from creation to Abraham, chapters 1-11; and II from Abraham to Egypt, chapters 12-50. How many chapters are taken up with Abraham? In which chapter is his name changed from Abram to Abraham? Which chapter records the birth of Isaac? Where does Jacob come in? Can you make a list of Jacob's sons with their respective mothers?

THIRD DAY.

To understand God's purpose in abandoning his dealings with the race of mankind, and seizing upon an individual, note carefully what he says to Abram in 12:1-3, as to what He wanted to do with him and for him and through him. Meanwhile: Acts 14:16, 17. So, although dealing with one man, God never lost sight of the great, sin-cursed suffering *world*. (John 3:16, 17). Think this over. What do you remember from your *general* Bible knowledge that goes to show that God means to bless all the world? And do you think He will ever accomplish it? (Isa. 11:9). And that accounts for the careful and patient labor God put upon Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Jacob's sons; and afterward on the nation of Israel; then on the church, whose mission is world-wide (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15, 16).

FOURTH DAY.

I heard somewhere a statement to the effect that Genesis is "a history of the world from creation to Joseph." It is a narrative of the historical order in the main, with liberal biography intermingled. But it is neither the history of the world, or of any part of it; nor specially the biography of any man or men. *It is a book with a purpose.* And all the history, biography, and other matter it contains is subservient to that purpose. The author gets through in a very few words with such stupendous events as Creation, and the Flood; the rise and fall of nations is passed over with bare reference, or no mention at all; centuries are swept over without remark—and then a dozen or more chapters are devoted to the affairs of an obscure old man from

Chaldea, and his son, who by all measure of man, was but a very mediocre person; and his grandson, shepherd by occupation, and the latter's wives and sons. This phenomenon is accounted for by the fact that this book has a specific *purpose*, and the nature of that purpose, which is not to record important world-events, but to trace the outworking of God's plan to redeem a ruined world.

Take a glance over the book, and note the evident selection of persons and events. Of Adam's two sons he traces Cain's posterity for a few generations—sufficient to show their kind and character, and drops them forever. But Seth's line runs down to Noah. Of Noah's three sons, small notice is taken of Ham and Japheth, and the peoples which descended from them; but Shem's posterity is carefully traced along one line, which culminates in the name of Abram. Abraham had a son by a bond-woman; and other sons later by Keturah; but they are briefly dismissed, and Isaac stands in the lime-light. Isaac has two sons, Jacob and Esau; and of these Jacob holds the interest, while Esau disappears. So likewise the historical records—whatever lessons they may carry incidentally—are all brought in for the sake of the main theme—just as the scenery of a play does not exist for itself, but to furnish the back-ground for the actors. Look the book of Genesis over with this idea in view. In the light of that can you see why so much space and detail is devoted to the story of Joseph?

FIFTH DAY.

Exodus, chapter 1. Compare with this Gen. 15:13-16. Note the rapid increase of Israel v. 7. As to verse 8, secular history tells us that a change of dynasty had intervened. The mid-wives were not commended for their prevarication, but for showing mercy to God's people because they feared God. Compare Josh. 2:1-15. It was an expression of faith. It is *never* right to lie. However conscience was not so keen or so well enlightened then as with us. And even with us there are even Christian people who contend that it may be right under circumstances to vary from the truth. (See Van Dyke's "The Other Wise Man"). They are certainly wrong about it however.

SIXTH DAY.

Exod. 2.—A deliverer prepared.—Read in connection, Heb. 11:23-26, and Acts 7:20-29. What do you see in this chapter of God's providence? Was it good training for Moses' future work, to take care of a flock of helpless, foolish, sheep? In what respect does Moses' career as set forth in this chapter and the two references above given, resemble that of the Lord Jesus Christ? Vs. 24, 25, do not mean that God had not before noticed, or had forgotten; but that he was now taking cognizance and was ready to intervene.

SEVENTH DAY.

Exod. 3.—The Call of Moses.—How old was Moses now? (Acts 7:23, 30). Read Acts 7:23-35. Compare Acts 7:25 with Exodus 3:11. Any change in Moses' attitude? Note God's

Name, vs. 13-15. What encouragement was given to Moses? V. 12. Comp. Matt. 28:30. In verse 22 the King James' version has "borrow"; the Revised, "ask." The latter is correct. The burning bush is a beautiful similitude of God's people, specially Israel: always burning in affliction, never consumed. And out of the midst of them *God* speaks.

EIGHTH DAY.

Exod. 4.—Moses and Aaron.—Moses carries his reluctance too far. He would have been both king and priest in Israel (Deut. 33:4, 5) but now was the office divided; and as always when God gives in to men, harm resulted.—Note the three credential signs God gave Moses. The episode of vs. 24-26 seems mysterious to most of us. Yet this is plain that God brought pressure upon Moses which endangered his life; and that Moses fully understood that it was because of his failure to observe the rite of circumcision. The fact that Zipporah performed the act points to Moses' inability to attend to it himself.

NINTH DAY.

Exod. 5.—First clash with Pharaoh. It was like a meeting of heaven and hell; the representative of God confronts the representative of Satan. V. 2. Pharaoh is correct: he certainly did not "know Jehovah. Men still refuse God's commands because they do not know Him. 1 John 2:4. V. 3. The request is put mildly, so as to provoke a minimum of opposition. Note the result of this first conference. It still happens that in the beginnings of salvation Satan redoubles his wrath. (Luke 9:42). The people blame Moses and he takes his burden to the Lord (20-23).

TENTH DAY.

Exod. 6:1 to 7:13.—Renewed Commission and Promise; in answer to Moses' cry. Vs. 2, 3 do not mean that they had never *heard* the name "Jehovah," but that they had never found out in real experience what that Name signifies. It is God's covenant-name. Have we found out what God's name means to us? As to 7:3, we must not suppose that God arbitrarily hardened Pharaoh's heart; on the contrary God gave him every chance. But when men begin to refuse God's word, its very kindness and mercy tends to harden their hearts. See 2 Cor. 2:14-16. And delusion is superadded; vs. 8-13; 2 Thess. 2:11, 12.

ELEVENTH DAY.

Ex. 7:14; 11:10.—the first nine of the Ten Plagues. Note their progress: 1st involves the water-supply; second, third and fourth result in great discomfort; fifth affects the live-stock; sixth, the person of men; seventh and eighth cuts off food supply; ninth, the supernatural darkness, strikes the souls with terror. Much heavier and more terrible things are in store for the whole world when the Day of Vengeance breaks (Ex. 34:10; Rev. 6-19). Note that the first three plagues seem to fall upon Israel and Egypt indiscriminately. The distinction is first made in 8:21-24. Note further how, by imitation, the magicians withstood Moses, (Satan tries to subvert both by opposing, and by

counterfeiting the works of God) and how their folly became manifest (read 2 Tim. 3:8, 9; Matt. 24:24; 2 Thess. 2:9, 10). The river Nile and some of its live contents; frogs and beetles and cattle were held sacred by the Egyptians and were worshipped. (Ex. 12:12; Num. 33:4). Exod. 9:16 explains the significance of Rom. 9:17.

TWELFTH DAY.

Exod. 12:1-36.—The Passover.—Note Ex. 4:22, 23. God led up to this final and most terrible judgment by steps, offering repentance and mercy between. In wrath he remembers mercy. Not only the lives of the first-born, but *all* lives were forfeited to God, because of sin (Ezek. 18:4). He did not execute full judgment but partial, when he took the first-born. The first-born of Israel came under the same sentence, for they were equally worthy to die. But here we begin to perceive what it means to have Blood between us and judgment, and what a blood-covenant avails. Are you in the Blood-Covenant of God? (1 Cor. 5:7; 1 Pet. 1:18, 19.) The passover-lamb is a type of our Lord Jesus Christ. Trace the resemblance. Compare v. 46 with John 19:36; and v. 11, with 1 Pet. 1:13.

THIRTEENTH DAY.

Exod. 12:37; 13:16.—Israel departs from Egypt. V. 38—That "mixed multitude" caused trouble later. So it is in the church also. Note purpose of the feast 13:5-10. Read Ps. 78:1-8; 12:43-52. Note especially Ex. 13:1, 2. This principle runs through the Bible: *to be blood-saved is to be blood-bought*. From the time God saves us by blood, we are His property. "For ye were bought with a price." (1 Cor. 6:19, 20).

FOURTEENTH DAY.

Exod. 13:17; 14:31.—Israel's complete deliverance.—He led his redeemed ones, 13:17-22. Trace their course on a map if you have one. Their salvation was completed after the passage of the Red Sea. Read 1 Cor. 10:1, 2.

FIFTEENTH DAY.

Exod. 15.—The Song of Praise. Unless Job 38:7 is an exception, *angels never sing* so far as the record shows. The privilege of song is reserved for God's redeemed whom he has snatched from the jaws of perdition. This song of gladness and gratitude was the best and really the only pay that saved Israel could render to Jehovah. (Ps. 69:30, 31). Israel will repeat it some day in a grander key (Isa. 12; Jer. 17:14, 15) and John hears its cadence again when the redeemed sing the song of Moses and the Lamb, around the sea of glass mingled with fire. (Rev. 15:1-4). That will be singing! The song of our chapter looks forward as well as backward. Like David after he had recounted the gracious care of his Shepherd then looks onward and says, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever—so does Israel now prophesy of God's good purpose yet before them. (verses 13, 17, 18).

ON FOREIGN FIELDS.

DON CARLOS JANES.

The S. S. Persia, with mail aboard, sank on her way to Bombay the first of the year. Mail for Bros. McHenry and Jelley which was posted the last of November may have been lost.

Sister Vincent, of Tokyo has been ordered to bed for thirty days by the doctor, though her condition is not regarded as dangerous. "The Japan climate is greatly against her, so she has to be very careful," writes her husband.

Bro. John Sherriff, a stone mason, is chief promoter and general overseer of the Forestvale and associated missions in South Africa. The work is in its ninth year. He greatly needs a teacher for the day school (with work to the fifth grade now) and for religious instruction too. The government rates the day school as first class and granted about \$80 to its support last year.

Sister Sarah Andrews writes from Tokyo: "I am happy to tell you I am safe in Japan. Had a very successful as well as a pleasant trip. * * * Sent Bro. McCaleb a wireless on Thursday before landing on Sunday, January 16, and he made all arrangements before I arrived."

A balance of about \$1,200 is needed to enable Bro. Vincent to close a deal for a building site for the church house. The matter should be promptly attended to, but it cannot properly be done by "switching" what otherwise would be personal-support money to the lot fund. He still has to eat and wear clothes, so don't take away his personal support and apply it to the lot fund.

Last year two of Bro. McCaleb's children were graduated and one was married. He would have enjoyed being here with them, but remained at his post in the "Island Empire." Bro. McCaleb's support should not be neglected.

Sister McHenry helps her husband with the printing work and thinks it very fascinating.

The brethren in Japan are giving religious instruction to about 500 children.

"Missionary Work" is a free four-page leaflet by the writer of these notes which is suitable for enclosing in your letters and for handing out at church. Send postage (4c a hundred) for a supply and put them to work.

Experience has shown that "the churches will do more when they are taught more." One great cause of our missionary littleness is a lack of information. If the preachers and other public speakers in the church will tell the brethren more of the needs of mission fields and the teaching of the Bible they will respond in larger measure to the urgent needs of those fields. (And the home work will not be impoverished either).

Brethren report two hundred and forty-five baptisms in India last year.

LETTING GOD HAVE HIS WHOLE SAY.

Try this experiment the next time you are with two or three Christian people. Ask them what they believe is a Christian's duty on some fundamental matter,—like Sabbath observance, or going to war, or woman suffrage, or whether a lie is ever justified, or capital punishment, or any one of a dozen other questions that constantly come up for discussion. They will give their views readily. Ask them what the Bible teaches on this subject. Some one will be pretty sure to quote a Bible passage with the quiet conviction that that settles the matter.

Then ask one more question: Has any one of them ever gone clean through the Bible to make sure that he knew all that it had to say on the matter under discussion? A painful silence may be your only reply. Or you will hear quick, protecting excuses,—why, of course, they have never done that! "Really, you'd hardly expect a busy man or woman, living under the pressure and duties of modern life, to do it, now would you?"

Certainly very few do it. And if, in such a group of persons, one quietly says in answer to your question, "Yes, I have done that. Some time ago I devoted all the time I had for Bible study, during several months, to going through the Bible on that one topic, and my present conviction was reached only after I had done this,"—then notice the look of new interest on the faces of the others as they stop urging their various positions and show their respect for the opinion of one who has done what they never dreamed of doing; whose position, therefore, has a weight, an impressiveness, a power that lifts it out of the class of their opinions. If this one is willing to tell a little more of what he found in his Bible study of the matter, and why, in view of God's Word, he believes as he does, he will get an interested, respectful hearing. For he has evidently been honestly trying to let God have His whole say.

HOW THE BIBLE IS BUILT.

Stop a moment and think what the Bible is. It is a book written by one Author from beginning to end; in this book that Author, God, has given the full and final revelation of his will for men in this life. He has dealt fully, completely, and finally with every matter upon which it is necessary that man should know God's will.

But for obvious reasons God has not in any one place in the Bible said all that he has to say about any one subject. The Bible is a large book,—though not at all large as compared with many other literary works of merely human origin that men study through. God commenced his revelation concerning one or another important truth early in the Bible, and then, as he went on supernaturally inspiring men through the centuries in the writing of this his book, he carried forward that truth, always throwing more and more light upon it, until he had finally said the last word he needed to say for the full, complete, safe illumination and guidance of us all.

SCRAPPING.

How thoughtless, and superficial, and lazy it is for any of us to quote one verse or another from God's Word, or even two or three verses, and say that we thereby know his will! For the Bible often seems to say directly opposite things, in different places, about the same matter. Untold harm has been done by isolating God's words from his other words on the same subject. When we begin to do our Bible study on the only safe principle, going through the whole Bible to make sure that we have God's completely given and completely rounded truth on a single point, the Bible will begin to yield up its riches of pure gold to us as we never dreamed they existed.

A CASE IN POINT.

A fine young American college and seminary graduate went out to India as a Christian missionary. In his mission station there he met a number of English missionaries; before they had been together long he found they were deeply interested in the subject of our Lord's return,—far more than he. His views differed radically from theirs as to the time and manner of our Lord's return. The whole theme was so big and so real to them that it was prominent in their conversation; and when they found

that he did not agree with their position they kept after him pretty vigorously. He held his ground manfully against them. But they had a way of quoting Scripture passages that seemed to uphold their view. He knew they were mistaken, but he was not familiar enough with the whole message of Scripture on the subject to answer them with Scripture that showed their mistake. Finally, he couldn't stand it any longer, so he decided to load up with material that would forever silence them, using their own ammunition against them—the Word of God.

He started in to study the Bible on the subject of Christ's second coming. He went through the Bible systematically, reading and making notes freely on every detail of the subject, setting down what passages seemed to indicate one thing, and what another. After some six months of this study he had finished, and, as he told the writer, he was now ready to talk with his missionary friends on their own ground, that of the Word of God. "The only trouble was," he said with a smile, "I had now discovered that I was on their side. There was no other side to it when I really found out what the Bible had to say."

All the seemingly conflicting and confusing Bible passages on the great subject of our Lord's return had resolved themselves into a clear, unquestionable, unmistakable message to this man who, college and seminary graduate and missionary as he was, had until then superficially and complacently been in ignorance of what God has to say on one of the most precious truths in His priceless revelation of truth.

HOW CAN WE DO IT?

How can we do this sort of Bible study for ourselves? A good reference Bible, a good concordance, a good Bible text cyclopedia that groups many or all the passages of Scripture under topics—that is about all the equipment we need, if to it we add surrender to the will of God, invariable prayer for God's speaking to us, and a resolute, systematic carrying through of this kind of Bible study.

Certain reference Bibles, of which there is more than one on the market, by a system of references carry the reader from the first Bible-mention of a topic, passage by passage, through to the end of the entire Bible.

A Bible Cyclopaedia that is of exceptional value because of its high spiritual plane and the attitude of its writer on fundamental Bible truths is Fausset's. This work brings together a wealth of Scripture, classified for reference, under a wealth of topics.

One other working tool has special value,—a concordance that gives the original meanings of the Hebrew and the Greek words. In this way an English reader who knows nothing of the Hebrew and Greek can do the most stimulating sort of Bible study by comparing passages that seem to say the same thing or different things, and discovering from the original meanings of the words just what may or may not be the evident meaning of God's Word. For example, we find that the word "destroyed" in Romans 6:6, "that the body of sin might be destroyed," does not mean actually annihilated or even made dead, but "made of none effect," which is a very different thing. Our body of sin is never annihilated in this life; but Christ can make it of none effect, or inoperative. Young's Concordance is the standard help of this sort on the original meanings of the words.

God is longing to have his whole say to us all. He has made it possible; he has given us his Word. Are we using that Word intelligently? How much more most of us think of our own opinions, based on our superficial knowledge of this or that verse in the Bible, than of God's fully revealed Word. And we can, if we will, secure such a clear assembling of God's own words on any fundamental subject as will remove the whole matter from the unsafe realm of human opinion and put it safely into the realm of God's utterance. Of course there will always be room for differing personal interpretations of some things that God has said. But these differing interpretations will be reduced to a minimum if we really give his Word the right of way.

If we would like our words to have weight with others, may we let God's words have weight with us.—Charles Gallaudet Trumbull, in *Sunday School Times*.

“THOUGHTFULNESS FOR OTHERS.”

MRS. H. C. DE GREY.

(The following article appeared in Word and Work in May, 1910. On February 4, 1916, she who penned it and almost perfectly lived the unselfish life it portrays, was called from us to be at home with the Lord. Seventh and Camp Streets church, of which she was a beloved member, together with many other Word and Work readers, weep with Brother DeGrey and daughter, and other relatives and friends, and likewise rejoice with them in that blessed hope. Her good life will help all who know Sister DeGrey and her good words all who read them.—Stanford Chambers.)

“Thoughtfulness for others and usefulness to them are great beautifiers. Perfection of skin and feature will not make up the lack of a lovely expression and a sweet nature.

But if you cultivate an interest in those about you, if you try to make the world happier for those with whom you are brought into association, you will not fail before long to get a pleasing expression that will make the physical defects be forgotten or to seem charms because they are part of a lovely and genuine personality.

“We need to consider and dwell more and more on the rights of others and less upon our personal rights; more upon the duty we owe to those about us and less upon the demands we make of them.

“Selfishness is a fearful blight, it tarnishes character and shrivels the soul; it hardens and ruffles the life of its subject and makes rougher the tiresome way someone else is traveling. Selfishness drinks up the beauty of life and leaves its victim only the dregs and sad regrets. Let us be alive to the fact that

“We live in deeds, not years, in thoughts, not breaths;

In feeling, not in figures on a dial,

We should count time by heart throbs,

“Who thinks most, feels most, acts the best.”

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

Dear Cousins: Our Boys and Girls Department has been discontinued for the present. In order to close our work I have sent prizes for the best answers to Puzzles and Questions in October, November and December Word and Work to: Mary Ground, 15, Linton, Ind.; Ruth Maddox, 13, Linton, Ind.; Amy L. Hinton, 15, Spencer, Ind.; Nina Titus, 13, Linton, Ind.; Cecil Russell, 13, Arcola, La.; Travisnih Jelley, 13, Dayton, Ohio; Jessie Laughhunn, 13, Linton, Ind.; and honor cards to: Guy Brown, 14, Sheffield, Ala.; Lois Chambers, 13, New Orleans, La.; Arno O. Hawkins, 12, Rondo, Ark.; Ozro A. Hawkins, 10, Rondo, Ark.; Herman Hinton, 13, Spencer, Ind.; Lloyd Chambers, 11, New Orleans, La. There were also many others whose answers were very good.

Good bye and love from

“COUSIN ELLEN.”

THE SECOND LORD'S DAY LESSON OF MARCH.

Lesson 11.

March 12, 1916.

HEROES AND MARTYRS OF FAITH.

Golden Text: "Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and perfecter of our faith." Heb. 12:1, 2.

Lesson Text.*—Heb. 11:1—12:2; Memorize 12:1, 2.

1. Now faith is assurance of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen. 32 And what shall I more say? for the time will fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah; of David and Samuel and the prophets: 33 who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, 34 quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness were made strong, waxed mighty in war, turned to flight armies of aliens. 35. Women received their dead by a resurrection: and others were tortured, not accepting their deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: 36 and others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: 37 they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, they were tempted, they were slain with the sword: they went about in sheep-skins, in goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated 38 (of whom the world was not worthy), wandering in deserts and mountains and caves, and the holes of the earth. 39 And these all, having had witness borne to them through their faith, received not the promise, 40 God having provided some better thing concerning us, that apart from us they could not be made perfect. 12 Therefore let us also, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, 2 looking unto Jesus the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising shame, and hath sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

from us?

12-1. In what sense are we compassed about, etc.? What two things shall we lay aside? What is sin? What is a weight? Are there things not wrong in themselves which yet may hinder? Can we afford to carry weights when we run a race? (Cp. 1 Cor. 9:24-27). May a Christian have

1. How are we assured of the certainty of the things for which we hope? How are we convinced of the reality of things we cannot see? See how this was true in the case of Noah (v. 7) Abraham (v. 8) with Isaac and Jacob (vs. 13, 17-21) Moses (vs. 24-28). 32. Were there many such examples? How did all the God-approved men of old obtain their "good report"? (vs. 2, 39).

33-34. Nine great achievements mentioned in these verses. Who subdued kingdoms by faith? (Josh. 1:1-8; Jdg. 5:6). Who "wrought righteousness?" (Heb. 11:5; Gen. 6:9, Moses, David, Samuel, prophets) "Obtained promises?" (Gen. 15:5, 6; Heb. 6:15; See life of David). "Stopped the mouths of lions?" (Dan. 6). "Quenched the power of fire" (Dan. 3). "Escaped the edge of the sword?" (Heb. 11:31; Ps. 27:1, 2). "From weakness were made strong." (Jdg. 6:15, 16; 7:7; 16:21-30). Were some (at least) of these feats beyond the mere power of man? If so by whose power were they accomplished? On what principle were these things done? How does "faith" always come? (Rom. 10:17). What is to do anything "by faith?" (Luke 5:5; Gen. 12:4; Jdg. 6:25-27). Does God's power always back up the act of faith? (Matt. 14:28, 29; Acts 14:8-10). On what principle is the victory of Christian life obtained? (1 Jno. 5:4).

35-38. The things enumerated in v. 33, 34 were successes. What are the things described in these four verses? Which is the harder test—the test of achievement or of endurance? Is the power of God (obtained through faith) sufficient for both or either? (Phil. 4:13; 2 Cor. 12:9).

39-40. Was their promise fulfilled before Christ came? Has God provided a better thing for us than for them? Will they obtain their promise apart

to give up things quite legitimate in themselves in the interest of this race? Is there in the case of most of us a sin which besets us more easily? To what sin are we all specially prone? (Heb. 3:12-15).

2. Upon whom must we fix our eye while running this race? If we look at ourselves what will result? (123). If we look at the dangers and difficulties? (Matt. 14:30). Who gave us an example of this in this lesson? (Heb. 11:27). Who is the originator of our confidence? Will he also be the finisher and fulfiller of it? Did he himself walk the way of faith here below? How? At what goal did he arrive?

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NOTES ON LESSON 11.

This lesson of Faith is taken from the letter to the Hebrews, and was originally addressed to a people in Christ who were passing through a trial and crisis so severe that only an unfeigned faith would enable them to pass through it. Therefore this letter abounds in exhortation and warning concerning Faith. (3:12-4:3; 6:11-20; 10:37-39). The eleventh chapter is wholly devoted to this theme. There is a similar great need of true faith today.

The first verse of the lesson (Heb. 11:1) is not a definition of faith, but rather tells what faith means to us in practical life. The unseen things of which we hear in God's word and promise, as it were, a higher sense of sight, by which we perceive things which eye hath not seen, so that we may act as in view of those things. Run over the list of "Heroes and Martyrs" given in this chapter, and you will note that this was the secret of their actions in every instance. Noah by faith saw a flood coming, and prepared against it; Abraham saw a land of inheritance and "a city which hath foundations" for the sake of which he was glad to forsake his home, country, and kindred. By faith Joseph saw the tribes of Israel leaving Egypt, and, practical man that he was, gave commandment beforehand concerning his bones. By faith Moses, on the threshold of a most inviting earthly career, beheld a "recompense of reward" with which all the glories and treasures, and pleasures of the world were not worthy to be compared: on account of which, with great good sense, he renounced those, and took the promise of God for his portion. By faith amid dangers and distresses he looked up and saw God and was encouraged and strengthened, so that he stuck to his post and didn't give up. And so forth. Faith, to be worthy of the name, must be such a conviction in the actual truth and reality of the things of which God tells us, that our lives and actions shall be shaped and controlled thereby.

Verses 32 to 38 present a remarkable sum-up of both heroes and martyrs—or to be more exact, heroes of faith who won great successes, and other heroes of faith who endured, and endured to the end, great sufferings and trials. Not all the valiant heroes come home victorious under flying banners: some as brave and strong and true as any remain dead on the field of battle. God has called some of us to grand achievement; and some of us to silent, patient, faithful endurance. But for either task his power is sufficient (Phil. 4:13) and faith lays hold of the power of God. That is to say, when trusting in God through his word we act upon that word, there comes to us a power not our own, and our achievements, or as the case may be our steadfastness under suffering, or both, will be greater than our merely human strength and ability could account for.

Finally, as to 12:1, 2, the course and conflict of the Christian life must be of faith, cleansing ourselves of all defilement of flesh or of spirit (2 Cor. 7:1), laying aside all that hampers and hinders, we run our race "looking" with the eye of faith, "unto Jesus." For, as in the case of Peter's walking on the water (Matt. 14) our power does not lie in ourselves, but in him who calleth us. When Peter began to look at the winds and the waves, he became afraid and sank. The Lord's rebuke "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" shows plainly the cause of his failure. And for us also the secret of success and victory lies in looking unto Jesus."

THE THIRD LORD'S DAY LESSON OF MARCH.

Lesson 12.

March 19, 1916.

PHILIP AND THE ETHIOPIAN.

Golden Text.—"Understandest thou what thou readest?" Acts 8:30b.

Lesson Text.*—Acts 8:26-40; Memorize verses 28-31.

26. But an angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza: the same is desert. 27 And he arose and went: and behold, a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was over all her treasure, who had come to Jerusalem to worship; 28 and he was returning and sitting in his chariot, and was reading the prophet Isaiah. 29 And the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. 30 And Philip ran to him, and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? 31 And he said, How can I, except some one shall guide me? And he besought Philip to come up and sit with him. 32 Now the passage of the scripture which he was reading was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; And as a lamb before his shearer is dumb, So he openeth not his mouth: 33 In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: His generation who shall declare? For his life is taken from the earth. 34 And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other? 35 And Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from this scripture, preached unto him Jesus. 36 And as they went on the way, they came unto a certain water; and the eunuch saith, Behold, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? 38 And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. 39 And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip: and the eunuch saw him no more, for he went on his way rejoicing. 40 But Philip was found at Azotus: and passing through he preached the gospel to all the cities till he came to Caesarea.

26. Did Philip know what the object of this errand was? Did he stop to ask for explanation? Is this the right sort of obedience?

27. Was this a man of high station? Why had he made so hard and long a journey? What was he doing at the time Philip met him? Why was he doing this?

29. Who now took a hand in the matter? To whom did the Spirit speak? Did Philip's approach seem like a mere accident? Is it not possible that many things that appear to us accidental are providentially ordered of God? Does God feel sufficient interest for one soul to go to all this trouble? Why? Luke 15.

30. Did the eunuch understand Isaiah? Why then was he reading Isaiah? Are we wasting time when we read portions of the word of God we do not understand? Ought we not wait till we understand it before we read it? Or push the part we do not understand aside? What is the best preparation for a future understanding of the parts of scripture we do not understand now?

31. What disposition did this high official manifest when he asked the wayfaring preacher to come up and sit with him? Is the kingdom of God open to the proud?

32. Of what does this verse (taken in itself) draw a picture? Where in Isaiah is this passage found? (Isa. 53. Read the whole).

33. What is it to take away a man's judgment? Did they deprive Jesus of a fair hearing, and of rights and justice? What is a man's "generation?" Did Jesus have any "generation?" (i. e., descendants). Does this verse show why not?

34. Precisely what was it the eunuch wanted to know? Was this an intelligent question? Did the eunuch appear to believe the prophet's words? Was he taking them at their plain meaning? Did he make a mistake in that?

35. What did Philip preach to the eunuch? What was the theme of Peter's sermon and speeches in Acts 2, 3, 4, 5? What the subject of the sermon preached to Cornelius? (Acts 10:34-43). What is the great topic of

mon preached to Cornelius? (Acts 10:34-43). What is the great topic of

the gospel? (Rom. 1:1-4) If we preach Jesus to a man, to whom will he be likely to be converted? But if he is brought in on dry doctrinal and controversial discussions, what sort of convert is he then?

36. What had Philip evidently mentioned to the eunuch? What made the eunuch ask this question? Can we preach Jesus without preaching baptism? If one surrenders to Jesus will he be willing to be baptized? On the omission of verse 37 see Notes.

38. How much water was there? Why did John baptize at Enon? (John 3:23). As what is baptism described? (Col. 2:12).

39-40. What evidence of God's hand was shown the eunuch now? Was Philip supernaturally removed? Why did the eunuch go on his way rejoicing?

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NOTES ON LESSON 12.

The first thing we observe in this lesson is the **great concern of God for one soul**. Philip called away from successful evangelistic labors for the purpose, as it developed, of speaking to **one man**. An angel of the Lord spoke to Philip; and Philip, with soldier-like promptness obeyed. God had in providence so timed the eunuch's journey from Jerusalem toward Gaza and Philip's journey from Samaria to the intersection of the eunuch's road, that the two travelers met; and the Holy Spirit said to the preacher, "Go near and join thyself to this chariot." Therefore God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, an angel, and man, all co-operated to effect the salvation of this soul.

Note God's manner of working. He neither spoke to the eunuch directly (though he could have done so, of course) nor did he send an angel to him, nor did the Spirit directly work with him or address him. The work must be done through human instrumentality. After preacher and sinner had met, all depended upon Philip's faithful, earnest, loving presentation of the gospel, and, on the other side, on the eunuch's willingness to accept it. We shall again see in later lessons that God will show sinners the way of salvation only in the appointed way—not by angels, visions, dreams, or direct communication from Himself, or direct action of the Holy Spirit, but always through the instrumentality of one of his servants to whom he has committed "the word of reconciliation." (Rom. 10:13-15).

Next let us note carefully **how the eunuch was saved**. The first actual step was that Philip "**preached unto him Jesus**." The eunuch **believed**. This is evident from the eager willingness with which he himself proposed baptism. That he **repented** is not mentioned; but it is always understood and involved. In the case of a man like the eunuch repentance would consist in a turning to God, a giving his life to God in the purpose of living thenceforth no longer unto himself, but unto the Lord who for his sake died and rose again. The King James Version, in verse 37, represents the eunuch as **confessing his faith in Christ**. A careful examination of the ancient manuscripts revealed the fact that this verse is a later addition, and was not in the original writing. That verse is not however on that account false or misleading. For the addition was found to have been made very early, probably to fill in what appears to be a gap between verses 36 and 38; and it is in itself the very best evidence of what from the earliest times was required of candidates for baptism. The confession is in the scriptures elsewhere set forth. (Rom. 10:9, 10). Finally, the eunuch **was baptized**. In preaching Christ, Philip had necessarily preached baptism. (Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 2:38). The Lord had bound it upon men as a condition of salvation (Mark 16:15, 16)—not in addition to faith, but rather as the act and expression of faith, on the same principle as the blind man had to wash his eyes (John 9) Israel had to march around Jerich (Heb. 11:30) and Naaman must dip himself seven times to be cured of leprosy. (2 Kings 5). In all these cases the efficacy lay in the faith which expressed itself in an appointed act. Having thus accepted the gospel, the eunuch was **saved, received the Holy Spirit, and was added by the Lord to the one only true church**. Men can be saved, and added to the Body of Christ, and receive the Spirit today in precisely the same way. (Acts 2:38, 41-47; Gal. 3:26, 27; 4:6).

THE FOURTH LORD'S DAY LESSON OF MARCH.

Lesson 13.

March 26, 1916.

REVIEW: THE GREAT MULTITUDE.

Golden Text.—“They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun strike upon them, nor any heat: for the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall be their shepherd, and shall guide them unto fountains of waters of life: and God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes.” Rev. 7:16, 17.

Reading Lesson.*—Rev. 7:9-17.

9. After these things I saw, and behold, a great multitude, which no man could number, out of every nation and of all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, arrayed in white robes, and palms in their hands; 10 and they cry with a great voice, saying, Salvation unto our God who sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb. 11 And all the angels were standing round about the throne, and about the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, 12 saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen. 13 And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, These that are arrayed in the white robes, who are they, and whence came they? 14 And I say unto him, My lord, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they that come out of the great tribulation, and they washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. 15 Therefore are they before the throne of God; and they serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall spread his tabernacle over them. 16 They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun strike upon them, nor any heat: 17 for the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall be their shepherd, and shall guide them unto fountains of waters of life: and God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes.

The object of the selection of this reading-lesson for the Review is plain: it is intended to show the ultimate success of the gospel. Although the passage in its strict connection has reference to a specific company which came triumphantly out of that tribulation period which is particularly designated as “the great tribulation”—the present application of it to the hosts of the redeemed does no injustice to the facts. There will be a great assembly in the end, even of the saints of this age. Though never very many of them at any one time (for the Lord is not sweeping nations into his kingdom now, but taking out from among the nations a people for his Name); and although in the last days especially the true faith will be rare enough (Luke 18:8; 2 Tim. 3:1)—yet the great aggregate number of God’s elect will not be small. God never fails. God is never ultimately foiled in His plans. His purposes cannot be thwarted. His word does not return unto Him void. (Isa. 55:13). While some of it indeed falls upon the way-side, and upon rocky and thorny ground; while to some it is a savor of death unto death—it nevertheless singles out the ready humble hearts, the “good ground,” and becomes a savor of life unto life to the Lord’s true sheep. The gospel which began to be preached on Pentecost will accomplish its purpose; which turns out to be, not indeed a universal salvation (though it freely offers salvation to all) but the outgathering from among all peoples, Jews and Gentiles, of a people for God’s Name: the Church of the Living God, the Body of Christ. (Rom. 9:24; Acts 15:14)—A partial

conception of what will be the relief and release, the happiness and glory of that people in the day of their great redemption may be got from this wonderful passage. Their sorrows, and the tribulations through which they needs had to pass (Acts 14:22) are now forever forgotten like a dream of the night. There is no pain nor crying, nor death, nor separation. And for their salvation and victory they give the praise and glory to Him to whom it is justly due. (Eph. 2:8, 9). It was this passage that Henry M. Stanley

read to the African chief Mtesa, at the latter's court. After Stanley had left, some runners from King Mtesa overtook his party returning all the presents he had given the king. Stanley feared trouble. "Is not the king satisfied?" he asked. "No," they answered. "Does he want more knives, or hatchets, or beads, or guns?" "None of those things." "Then what does Mtesa want?" "He wants that Book—that Book!" they cried. So Stanley gave them the Book which contained those marvelous words. Truly the benighted heathen chief had a finer appreciation of the comparative value of things than some enlightened folk at home.

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REVIEW OF THE QUARTER'S LESSONS.

1. **The Ascending Lord.** (Acts 1:1-14). Golden Text: Eph. 4:8. Wonder why the Lord had to go away? Where did He go, and for what? What is the promise? Read Heb. 9:21-28.
2. **The Coming of the Holy Spirit.** (Acts. 2:14-47). Golden Text: 1 Cor. 3:16. Why was it so necessary for the Holy Spirit to come? Who sent the Holy Spirit? What did the Holy Spirit do for the apostles? What does He do for the world? Read John 16:7-15.
3. **Peter's Sermon at Pentecost.** (Acts 2:14-47). Golden Text: Acts 2:21. Why did Peter preach the first sermon? Did he speak from himself? What was his sermon about? What did he tell enquiring sinners? Read Matt. 16:13-20.
4. **The Spirit of Life.** (Rom. 8:12-30). Golden Text: Rom. 8:14. Lessons 2 and 3 show what the Holy Spirit does for the world: this lesson shows what He does for the Christian. What is that?
5. **The Lame Man Leaping.** Acts 3). Golden Text. Acts 3:6. Why was this lame man able to obey the command "Rise up and walk?" When God commands us anything, no matter how impossible it may seem, can we look to Him and obey? What does He command all in verse 19 of this chapter?
6. **The Boldness of Peter and John.** (Acts 4:1-31). Golden Text. 1 Cor. 16:13. Here was the first persecution. Why such need of boldness now? Do we need boldness? Why? How did they obtain more boldness? Read Isa. 41:8-14.
7. **Humbled and Exalted.** (Phil. 2:1-11). Golden Text. 2 Cor. 8:9. How high and good a place did the Lord Jesus forsake to come into the world of men? At whose will did He do this? For whose benefit? What did it involve of humiliation? What does the Spirit of Christ in a man always lead him to do? What is the outcome of such a course?
8. **The Christian Brotherhood at Jerusalem.** (Acts 4:32—5:16). Golden Text. 1 Pet. 1:22. What made it possible for that multitude of believers to be so united? Was it an outward union, or was it a unity of heart? Had the devil sown tares among the Lord's wheat?
9. **The Seven Helpers.** (Acts 6). Golden Text. Gal. 6:2. What sort of men does the church need to administrate its business? See how many things Stephen was full of. Read Gal. 5:22, 23.
10. **The Death of Stephen.** (Acts 7:1—8:3). Golden Text. Rev. 2:10. Stephen's speech was a summary indictment of the Jewish nation. Did Stephen lose much? Would he have lost more or less if by compromise and hedging he had kept the good will of the Jews?
11. **Heroes and Martyrs of Faith.** (Heb. 11:1—12:2). Golden Text. Heb. 12:1, 2. What is it to do a thing by faith? Are all the victories of the Christian life won by faith? Are all its sufferings successfully met and endured by faith? Faith avails itself of the strength of God. See 2 Cor. 12:9; Phil. 4:13.
12. **Philip and the Ethiopian.** (Acts 8:26-40). Golden Text. Acts 8:30b. At the beginning of this lesson an unsaved man traveling homeward; at the close a saved man pursuing his way rejoicing. How had it happened? Go thou and do likewise.

THE FIRST LORD'S DAY LESSON OF APRIL.

Lesson 1.

April 2, 1916.

CONVERSION OF SAUL.

Golden Text: "Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all acceptance that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." 1 Tim. 1:15.

Lesson Text.*—Acts 9:1-31. (Compare also Gal. 1:11-17; 1 Tim. 1:12-17). Memorize vs. 17, 18.

1. But Saul, yet breathing threatening and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, 2 and asked of him letters to Damascus unto the synagogues, that if he found any that were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. 3 And as he journeyed, it came to pass that he drew nigh unto Damascus: and suddenly there shone round about him a light out of heaven: 4 and he fell upon the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? 5 And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: 6 but rise, and enter into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. 7 And the men that journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing the voice, but beholding no man. 8 And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw nothing; and they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus. 9 And he was three days without sight, and did neither eat nor drink. 10 Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and the Lord said unto him in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. 11 And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go to the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one named Saul, a man of Tarsus: for behold, he prayeth. 17 And Ananias departed, and entered into the house; and laying his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, who appeared unto thee in the way which thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mayest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit. 18 And straightway there fell from his eyes as it were scales, and he received his sight; and he arose and was baptized; 19 and he took food and was strengthened.

*Amer. Stand. Rev. Version..

1. Against whom did Saul breathe threatening and slaughter? Why did he do this? John 16:2, 6; 1 Tim. 1:13; Acts 26:9-11.

2. Did he show extraordinary zeal? See Gal. 1:13, 14; Phil. 3:6. Is there any benefit in "zeal without knowledge?" Is a man's conscience, untaught by the truth, sufficient guide to him? Comp. Acts 23:1 with Golden Text. Who were they who were of "the Way?" Comp. v. 1. What was that "Way?" John 14:6.

3. Compare this with Acts 22:6 and 26:13 and note—what time of day was it? Was the light as bright as the sun? Was it a real light, or an inward experience? (v. 8). Did the others perceive the light also? (22:9).

4. Was the voice he heard a real voice? Did the others hear the voice also? (v. 7). Did they hear it in the sense of understanding it? (22:9). In what tongue did the voice speak? (26:14). How was Saul able to persecute that Exalted Being? Can we do good or ill to the Lord's people without doing it to Him? Why not? Eph. 1:22, 23; 1 Cor. 6:17.

5-6. Imagine Saul's dismay when he heard the Glorious One say, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." What did Saul ask immediately after this? 22:10. Was there something he must do? What was that? 22:16. Even after he had seen that real light, and heard that real voice? What shall we think then of those who think to have seen an imaginary ("subjective") light, and heard an inward voice, and on the strength of that consider themselves saved, and exempt from the requirement of baptism?

9. Why would Saul refuse food and drink those three days? Why such grief and contrition? What was he doing? v. 11. When at last did he take food? (v. 19)

10. Was this a prominent disciple? Was he mentioned any more after this? When is a sinner's prayer of avail? Could Saul have done anything more than pray up to that

time? Note Ananias' reluctance, its cause, what the Lord told him. (vs. 12-16).

17. Had Saul seen anything more than a light? What? Why did the Lord Jesus himself appear to him? 26:16. What was one of the essential functions of an Apostle? (Acts 1:22; 2:32; 4:33). Did Saul afterward refer to this in defence of his apostleship? (1 Cor. 9:1). How and when did Saul get his gospel and his commission? (Acts 26:16-18; Gal. 1:12, 15, 16). Did the laying on of Ananias' hands result in Saul's receiving sight, or in his receiving the Holy Spirit? If Ananias told Saul what he "must do," then Saul in taking that step received the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:38).

18. How was Saul baptized? (Rom. 6:4. Note the "we.")

NOTES ON LESSON I.

This lesson begins where the last left off and leaves off where the next begins. Its subject is Saul, of whom we have already had three glimpses: caring for the garments of those who stoned Stephen, consenting to that good man's death, and laying waste the church. This last he is yet doing in our lesson. Acts 22:19 and 26:19-11, show how he went about it—"Even unto foreign cities." He thought he "ought" to do it—which didn't make it right. Yet, because he "did it ignorantly" he "obtained mercy" (1 Tim. 1:13), mercy that came to him in this life, and in the form of light to save him.

We have three records of Saul's conversion: Chapters 9, 22 and 26. Each adds something to the others. It was at noon, when the eastern sun is very bright, but above that brightness shone a heavenly light casting Saul and his company to the ground. A voice inquired in Hebrew—Saul only distinguished the words—"why persecutest thou me?" The saints are the body of Christ, His hands and feet so to say; and to persecute them is to persecute Him. "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these, my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me." At once he receives his commission as a minister and witness to save the Gentiles; yet the words by which he should himself be saved were not spoken by the Lord but by Ananias, who had been prepared for the task by special instruction in a vision. Jesus will not himself speak the actual saving words, nor will he permit angels to do it. O, to know the responsibility of it, that the salvation of men hangs on the message we are holding!

Ananias was no more than a "certain disciple;" but in God's estimation he was a suitable preacher and administrator of baptism. He had shrunk from the task because he "had heard how much evil he (Saul) did "to the saints at Jerusalem. (Think how the gospel turns men upside down spiritually and makes them over! It was for these same saints at Jerusalem that Saul afterwards tenderly collected gifts throughout Galatia and Macedonia). But reassured of the Lord he seeks out Saul, that he might receive his sight, be filled with the Holy Spirit, be baptized washing away his sins, and receive further instruction for his ministry.

Saul's conversion was supernatural and extraordinary. His opportunity was unusual and his responsibility afterwards was in proportion. He was obliged to preach the gospel. Necessity was laid upon him. He was miraculously seized upon to be a carrier of the gospel to others and preach to others he must, or woe be unto him! But he did this work readily and willingly "Wherefore, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision."