

# WORD AND WORK

## LET US TALK BUSINESS.

Look at the top of this page. If you see a blue stamp, "Your Subscription Has Expired," be sure to read this page through; for that matter read it anyhow. It concerns you, and gets interesting as you go. Four hundred subscriptions are out, and *we intend to drop every one of them—unless*; unless you say "continue," or some friend continues the paper for you. We do not say "Remit," but we do say "Renew"; in other words, we drop no names because the subscription price is not forthcoming; but we do drop those who have not the interest to ask a continuance. We do not say that we do not care whether you send us money now or not, for we could use it mighty well; and while 75c means but little to you, it means much to us—when you multiply it by four hundred; nevertheless, believe us beloved, we "seek not yours, but you" primarily; and we judge that those who have not the interest to *renew* (whether they remit now or not) have not the interest to *read*.

We are just now working out a new and improved mailing system, bringing it right up to the minute—among other things, linotyping our subscription list. We propose to rewrite your name *now—if* you are in arrears—or else drop it. Without a doubt, the Word and Work is worth what we ask for it on its merits, and it costs us all we ask too, though none of the editors receive a cent for service; still we are disposed to make you additional inducements, because we want *immediate* results.

### RATES: SINGLE, CLUB AND AGENT'S.

The rate for a single subscription is 75c a year. In clubs of four or more, 50c. The club rate is also the rate to agents. That is, agents may take subscriptions at 75c each, and remit in groups of four or more, 50c each. Thus any one may act as agent, collecting 75c and sending us 50c; whereas the clubber collects 50c and sends us the whole amount. *Regular* agents with whom we are in correspondence, may send us *less* than four names, at the agent's rate.

### WORD AND WORK FREE

with every subscription to the Sunday School Times, at the regular rate, \$1.50 a year, if request is received by December 15. (Free also with every order for Revised Bible No. 174 or No. 2173).

### ATTRACTIVE COMBINATION OFFERS.

Word and Work one year to new or old subscribers with R. H. Boll's book, Lessons on Hebrews, \$1.25; with Outlines of Bible Study, by G. Dallas Smith, \$1; with B. W. Johnson's noted book, "Young Folks in Bible Lands," \$1. This last book sold for years for \$1 but the publishers are closing out the edition and have made us a price that makes this proposition possible.

By whatever bargain you choose to renew, DO IT NOW.

## WORDS IN SEASON.

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### "HOW READEST THOU?"

In a casual glance at an article on Reading, in a current magazine, I made note of two or three sentences that struck me as being sensible and valuable. Said the writer, "It is not the quantity of your intellectual food, but the products of your intellectual digestion that count." This is certainly true of all reading for intellectual improvement. If we apply it to *Bible-reading*, which is not merely, nor primarily, for intellectual improvement, but was intended for food for the *spirit*, we need only to substitute the word "spiritual" in place of "intellectual." Again, the writer speaks of a man "whose mind is less like a digestive apparatus, and more like a cold-storage warehouse;" and says concerning him, "You might explain to him for an hour; but instead of trying to understand what you meant, he would be trying to remember what you said." Now all this strikes center as to the matter of Bible-reading as well as in reading for merely mental profit. No book in the world requires chewing, digesting, assimilating like the Bible. There is much profitless Bible-reading—mechanical reading, dutiful and well-meant, but only the reading of so many words, a hundred, or a thousand, or several thousand without much regard as to their meaning and connection. Again there is a sort of Bible knowledge that glories in a mental catalog of truths and facts, and dates and localities—a cold-storage accumulation of texts and data; which may leave its proud possessor unaffected in spiritual life. There is just one ground for which even the mechanical reading of so many chapters, and the catalog-accumulation of Bible facts might be encouraged; and that is that even in the use of such irrational methods a bit of God's truth will sift into the heart now and then. And that is vastly better than nothing. But much better than that is the true method of Bible-reading which regards the Bible as the word of God, spoken to *us*, nay, to *one's self personally* like a letter from mother, commanding interest, devotion, appreciation, affection and submission. The product of the spiritual digestion of the Bible is faith and obedience.

### HOW TO UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE.

The "understanding" of the Bible lies in its practical application. A criminal who was to be executed in the presence of the king, requested a drink of water before his execution. When the drink was given him his hand shook so that the water was spilling. "Drink it calmly," said the king, "you have my word that you shall not be executed till you have drunk it." Instantly the condemned man flung away the cup of water and said, "I take the king at his word." And he was not executed. Now it is just such a seizing upon the practical import of God's word in faith and in action that constitutes the true "understanding" thereof. For what did the Lord mean when He said, "When anyone heareth the word of the kingdom and understandeth it not, then cometh the evil one and

snatcheth away that which is sown in his heart. This is he that was sown by the wayside." (Matt. 13:19). It was not intellectual apprehension such a one lacked. He may even have been one of that "wise and prudent" class, against whom intellectual pride had shut the door of the kingdom. But this lack of understanding manifests itself in a failure to believe and to turn. (Matt. 13:15; Luke 8:11).—that is in failure to take practical hold of the truth God offers us. To seek another illustration—a school-boy noted in his text-book of United States History the statement that John and Sebastian Cabot showed the court of England beautiful pearls they had gathered near the mouth of the creek where their ships had been anchored on the North American shore. The boy rightly surmised that if there were pearls in that creek *then*, there would be now; and in his vacation-days he went there, sought for pearls, and found several hundred dollars worth. Now of all the thousands of school children who had studied that same history, this one alone really "*understood*" in the Bible sense of the word.

#### GUIDANCE.

As sane and sensible words on this subject of guidance in matters of every day life as it has been my privilege to see are these of George Muller's, which set forth the principles and directions which controlled him in this matter:

#### HOW I ASCERTAIN THE WILL OF GOD.

BY GEORGE MULLER.

##### *Surrender Your Own Will.*

1.—I seek at the beginning to get my heart into such a state that it has no will of its own in regard to a given matter.

Nine-tenths of the trouble with people is just here. Nine-tenths of the difficulties are overcome when our hearts are ready to do the Lord's will, whatever it may be. When one is truly in this state, it is usually but a little way to the knowledge of what His will is.

##### *Do Not Depend on Feelings.*

2.—Having done this, I do not leave the result to feeling or simple impression. If I do so, I make myself liable to great delusions.

##### *Seek the Spirit's Will Through God's Word.*

3.—I seek the will of the Spirit of God through, or in connection with, the Word of God.

The Spirit and the Word must be combined. If I look to the Spirit alone without the Word, I lay myself open to great delusions also. If the Holy Ghost guides us at all, He will do it according to the Scriptures and never contrary to them.

##### *Note Providential Circumstances.*

4.—Next I take into account providential circumstances. These often plainly indicate God's will in connection with His Word and Spirit.

##### *Pray.*

5.—I ask God in prayer to reveal His will to me aright.

*Wait.*

6.—Thus, through prayer to God, the study of the Word, and reflection, I come to a deliberate judgment according to the best of my ability and knowledge, and if my mind is thus at peace, and continues so after two or three more petitions, I proceed accordingly. In trivial matter, and in transactions involving most important issues, I have found this method always effective.

**"A FEDERATED CHURCH."**

Under this head the *Western Recorder* (a Baptist Journal, published in Louisville, Ky.,) prints the subjoined extract, with a few caustic comments which, in this case, seem well deserved.

"In Collegeport, Texas, is a Federated church in whose membership are represented at least twelve different denominations.

"Doctrinal subjects are seldom mentioned in the church, and a member hardly knows to what denomination his neighbor formerly belonged.

"It is estimated that fully three-quarters of the population of the town and surrounding country are members, and there are often more men than women in attendance at the services.

"Rev. M. A. Travis has been the pastor and leader ever since the church was organized in January, 1910. He was formerly a Baptist minister in one of the Northern States, but became weary of denominational discussions and dissensions, so when he moved to Texas he organized the Federated church.

"Holiday celebrations, banquets, parties, socials and picnics have found the church parlors very convenient.

"When Mr. Travis was asked recently what was his chief doctrine he answered, 'Don't scrap.'"

"It will be noted," comments the *Western Recorder*, "that twelve different denominations are represented. If they still represent the various denominations, why not have remained where they probably belong? If, to the contrary, they have ceased to believe with their respective denominations they no longer represent, but rather misrepresent them."

"How beautiful to behold brethren dwell together in a simulated unity—

"Twelve souls with not a single thought,  
Twelve hearts that beat as one."

"We are not at all surprised that doctrinal subjects are 'seldom mentioned.' It is hardly probable that the pastor of this unique union aggregation would, or could, preach doctrine, especially of the Bible variety. Doctrine is teaching, and teaching implies something to teach, and since this ecclesiastical hybrid has nothing in particular to teach, therefore, 'doctrinal subjects are seldom mentioned in the church.'

"According to the account, the church's creed is 'Don't scrap.' Dead folks don't scrap, for the peace of death is theirs, and even so of an ecclesiastical cemetery. Now, that this 'formerly Baptist

pastor' has told us what he does not believe, we would be delighted for him to tell us what he really does believe"

This "Federation" movement is not the Unity of Believers for which the Savior prayed, but the counterfeit and travesty of it. It rests upon no conviction, but its very basis is that lack of conviction which holds truth as a cheap thing and indifferent. There is a brotherhood of unbelief as well as a brotherhood of faith. Let no man be deceived.

"STUDIES IN RECENT ADVENTISM."

This is the title of a little book which although coming from a quarter of "destructive criticism" notoriety (University of Boston) may nevertheless do some good in its able handling of various and sundry errors, such as are found in Mormonism, Russellism, Seventh Day Adventism, etc. The author is however, handicapped, being himself in error. He is evidently a postmillennialist, and is striving to confute and condemn everything which interferes with that view. There are some things which he arraigns under the head of Premillennialism, which were taught as far back as we have any record of Christian faith and doctrine, and indeed are set forth in the New Testament itself. If by Adventism the author means doctrines touching the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, then he is striking hard at a number of doctrines which in no sense belong to *recent* Adventism. In fact, his own doctrine of Postmillennialism which he tries to defend, is one of the most recent doctrines in the realm of Adventism, having been formulated and promulgated in definite form no later than about A. D., 1750 by David Whitby, an English clergyman, reputed to have been a Unitarian. The doctrine has had a blighting effect. It put "the evil day" (and the good day, likewise) far off, and took away the spur and practical power of the hope of the Lord's return. For if there must be a millennium of peace and righteousness first, the coming of the Lord is not near enough in sight to be reckoned with as an influence in practical life. It is to be regretted that this baneful theory has met with so wide acceptation; and doubtless the church of Christ suffers unto this day from its adverse influence. At a future time we may present a more detailed review of the little book referred to.

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While in Lucknow at the hospital, Umrao Singh sat in the street for hours preaching the Gospel and distributing the *Glasgow Interpreter* to English speaking people who came within reach, while Sister Umrao Singh pursued others with the paper. And this after an almost fatal illness! Brethren, Bro. Umrao Singh is not a dead one—are you? Will you not speak the word to those within your reach?—*E. S. Jelley, Jr.*

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"Wherefore my beloved brethren be ye stedfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

# WORD AND WORK

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WHOLE COUNSEL OF GOD.

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

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

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## NEWS AND NOTES.

H. N. Rutherford of Lynnville, Tenn., has had a good meeting at Roberson Fork—nine additions to the Lord the first week. We have not heard since.

A fine little daughter at D. L. Cooper's home, born Sept. 23.

Stanford Chambers baptized two at Seventh and Camp street, New Orleans, lately.

The Word and Work is mailed on Tuesday before the second Sunday in each month. The November issue, for instance, contains the first Lord's day lesson of December, and the December issue will reach you in time for the second Lord's day lesson. Copy should reach us eight or ten days before mailing, but news may be sent up to the last moment.

E. L. Jorgenson's meeting at Albion, Neb., turned out to be a sort of Albion-Roselma meeting. Roselma is a church six miles out of town. These brethren co-operated nobly with Albion and shared somewhat in the fruit. Fine attendance and interest, twenty additions, seventeen of them unto the Lord in baptism; \$25.00 a month promised by Albion-Roselma brethren for India missions.

T. B. Clark reports seventeen baptisms in the meeting conducted by A. W. Young at McMinnville, Tenn. Brother Clark is now making a final call for information suitable for the "Church Directory," which is to be ready the first of January. 25c in advance buys the book.

We will accept a single subscription to Word and Work at 50c *in connection* with a subscription at the regular rate to any of the following: Christian Worker's Magazine, \$1; Our Hope, \$1; The King's Business, \$1; Record of Christian Work, \$1; and we will give

S. O. Martin and his splendid Christian bride left Louisville, October 23, and are now on board steamer for India, intending to visit Brother McCaleb on the way. Two Christians sounder in body, in mind, or in soul, it would be hard to find.

S. L. Pope of Rosedale, Ind., says: "I appreciate Word and Work because you have kept it clear from personalities, and I have heard it complimented often on that account."

Word and Work from now until the end of 1917, to old or new subscribers, at the regular year rate—75 cents single subscription; 50c in clubs of four or more.

Mrs. Anderson, 522 Buckeye Avenue, Abilene, Kan., would be glad to meet believers there, especially those who desire to imitate the original Christians.

R. H. Boll has just closed a fine meeting at Sellersburg, Ind. Sellersburg is a great church, and Clinton Davidson who ministers there, is a hustler, no mistake. There were a dozen confessions or more.

More straw. We are short on January and October, 1916, issues. Send us any you can spare. We will extend your subscription accordingly and be obliged besides.

Louis Patmont, whose home is in Minneapolis, has spoken in a number of Louisville and nearby churches, the past month. From here he went, by invitation, to visit a number of Indiana churches. We are impressed that Patmont is a true man of God and we were thrilled with his report of thousands upon thousands of true Christians, following the Apostolic order in Russia.

See our "Book-shelf" for bargains. A number of additions in the list this month.

The editor's Bible classes in the Portland Ave. class rooms, begin November 7.

Smith's Bible Dictionary (see full page advertisement) was by far our best seller this month. Buy one yourself.

Christmas is coming! You can befriend us while befriending your friends by ordering your gifts from our book list. Some Bible or Testament, Smith's Bible Dictionary, Lessons on Hebrews, Word and Work for a year, Fanny Crosby's Story, On the Rock—these and many others, suitable for presents. We will mail you a full description of any Bible or other book, or send you a Bible catalogue upon request.

Do notify us if The Word and Work, or anything else you order from this office fails to reach you, so we may duplicate your order. We *desire* to do so.

We would like to have the address of Bro. Albert Lawrence.

PREMIUM OFFER.—We will send B. W. Johnson's excellent book, Young Folks in Bible Lands—originally a dollar book—free for two subscriptions; or we will send Word and Work one year and this book for \$1.

Frank G. Kessler, of Olathe, Kan., desires to know of any believers who are lovers of plain, apostolic Christianity, in or near that place.

## DILIGENCE.

H. L. OLMSTEAD.

The word above is used quite frequently in the Word of God. It means "steady application." In Prov. 27:23; Eccles. 9:10, and perhaps in Rom. 12:15 it is used in connection with business or secular affairs. It is hardly necessary in these days of "big business" to exhort Christians to more steady application to the matter of accumulation. We would be, almost, if not quite, right in saying that the majority of professed Christians are already very steadily applying themselves to "looking well unto their flocks and herds." In fact, business, both big and little, has the right of way, while things of grave importance are side tracked. Business has well nigh become the most sacred thing to the hearts of many who should be giving diligence in other directions. So sacred has this thing of business become that almost every question is decided by how it will affect business. Business must not be hurt or lost, regardless of what moral principle is sacrificed or how the cause of Christ suffers.

Now there are certain other things to which we must give diligence. They are the "first things" and "first" things things first" must be the motto of all who stand with Christ on salvation ground.

1. *Diligence in keeping the heart is enjoined.* Deut. 4:9; Prov. 4:23; Heb. 12:15. Steady application must be had at this point lest we forget the good things which God has done for us, and they "depart from our hearts all the days of our lives." The issues of life are from the heart and the heart must not be hardened for fear it may become an "evil heart of unbelief."

2. *Diligence in keeping the commandments of the Lord* is also necessary. To be steadily employed at this is wholly and altogether contrary to all fleshly instincts and desires. To keep and diligently obey the commandments of God is not possible for those who are in the flesh. "They who are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit if so be that the Spirit dwelleth in you." (Rom. 8:8-9). The great lack of diligence in keeping the commandments of the Lord is not so much due to our ignorance of those commandments as to the absence of the Holy Spirit in our hearts to give us the disposition so to do.

3. *Diligence in doing the work of the Lord.* The great work of the Lord in this dispensation is that of evangelizing the world that He may "call out a people for His name." It is strange that many of us have concluded that the most scriptural way of doing this work is the least systematic way. God has given us a "hurry up" call in this matter. Every generation of Christians has had a wide-world full of unsaved to whom they are sent with the gospel of the grace of God. Nothing short of steady application (diligence) can perform this stupendous task. The Church of God has no time to waste in becoming purveyors of vaudeville entertainment for the amusement of a world that is already gorged with that sort of thing. It has no time to lose in pulling off slapstick comedy

for the benefit of men and women who are sinking upon a wrecked vessel. Those who are Christ's should not waste time over hair-splitting when a lost and ruined world, with the death rattle already in its throat, is perishing before their very eyes. It will not do for Christians who are Christians indeed, to stop and consider the whiners and objectors who endeavor to block all efforts of true Christian progress. Either they must get on the train and ride or else get off the track or be run over. All this because "the night is coming when no man can workk." John 9:4. And "the time is short." 1 Cor. 7:9. This work should be done in abundance for "our labor is not in vain in the Lord." 1 Cor. 15:58.

4. *Diligence* in adding the virtues or "graces" of the Christian life. We are certain that by grace we are saved, not by "graces" but we are told to give diligence to add them. (2 Pet. 1:5). They belong to the position to which Christians are raised by grace, and they are possible in the life of him who has become a new creature in Christ Jesus. They are more than the mere keeping of the law. They are qualities. There are many rigidly chaste, honest, honorable, righteous men who are neither patient, kind, loving, truly temperate, godly, or loving. Steady application is necessary for the cultivation of these virtues which are God implanted in the new nature.

5. *Diligence in making our calling and election sure.* Election is according, 1st, to the foreknowledge of God; 2nd, sanctification of the Spirit; 3rd, belief of the truth. These three things are what has placed us among God's elect. But in order to have the *assurance* there must be a life which gives diligence in all the things herein mentioned. None of us can have the assurance that we are among the elect without th fruitage which comes from a spiritual union with Christ. 1 Pet. 1:2; 2 Pet. 1:10; 3:14.

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## THE GALLATIN MEETING.

"Our meeting resulted in a general awakening in the congregation here. Much interest was shown by the membership in the great work of soul-saving. Three cottage prayer-meetings were held daily at 10 a. m., all of which were well attended. Two services were held daily at the church house at which we had fine attendance. C. E. Holt, of Knoxville, Tenn., did the preaching. Brother Holt's preaching was plain, forceful, illustrative and above all, scriptural. The 'Sinfulness of Sin,' the great redemptive work of Christ and the grace of God were the points emphasized during the meeting. In a kindly manner, free from partyism, Brother Holt pointed out the way into God's grace. The importance and place of prayer were also emphasized and the necessity of true motives for the Christian life were held out. W. G. Klingman led the song service and the singing was most excellent. The meeting lasted two weeks. Twenty-one persons became Christians, one was restored and one added 'by membership.' Rejoice with us over the victory God has given. H. L. OLMSTEAD."

## LET US NOT BE DIGRESSIVE.

STANFORD CHAMBERS.

Bible readers will not likely deny that though the Lord gave us a perfect Church in doctrine and worship men have sought for many improvements and have wrought out many changes. Are innovations pleasing to God?

In answering, let us distinguish between spiritual and material things. The church and the church house are not the same. The light for the building and the light for the soul are not the same. One's seat in the building and his position in heavenly places in Christ Jesus are not the same. The Lord created the church, men erect houses. The Lord gives spiritual light, men provide the light for the building. Now man may improve upon his own provisions but he cannot improve upon what the Lord provides. Moreover, to substitute the human for the divine provision or to attempt to supplement the divine with the human, would be to insult God. Other things being equal you may remodel the upper room at Troas, move to the ground floor or to another location, or even rebuild. You may substitute electric lights for the "many lights" they had. You may come on a fast steamer or an aeroplane instead of the slow sailing vessel in which Paul came. No matter as to that, but let no man dare preach any gospel other than Paul preached. Let no one substitute for the Lord's day nor change the sacred ordinance they met to observe on that day. Surely there is a difference. It is written of the Church, fresh from the Lord's creative hand, "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers." In these things were provided their soul-nourishment and exercise. They occupy the whole ground and preclude everything else. In all the Scripture relating or referring to acts of worship in the various congregations we find nothing divinely approved which is not summed up and comprehended in either the teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread or prayers. Reading, admonition, exhortation, discoursing, singing spiritual songs—these have to do with the Word and are embraced in the teaching. Giving is comprehended in fellowship. The cup as well as the loaf, and the giving of thanks therefore are comprehended in "the breaking of bread."

Lecturing on the latest scientific discovery or on the latest work of fiction, is embraced in neither "the apostles' teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread or the prayers, and is therefore excluded. It would be an innovation disallowed indeed of God, notwithstanding it would not necessarily be wrong in itself at some other time or place.

On the same principle merchandising in the house of God "to raise money to support the church" is excluded; milk and honey or even a cup of water have no part in the Lord's supper, nor the burning of incense in the prayers whatever, is neither teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread or prayers, is excluded as Christian worship. The lighting of candles, the sprinkling of "holy water,"

the burning of incense, the speaking in unknown tongues without an interpreter—these are all excluded by the same principle.

Now, doesn't it seem strange how many good people can see the truth of the above and can not see that instrumental music is excluded by the same principle? Just as there is not a New Testament example of the above in Christian service, so there is not of instrumental music. Why then this innovation? And if we accept and practice one innovation in worship, why not another, or all of them? About as good a reason as I have ever heard given for the adoption of instrumental music in the services is "because we like it and want it and are going to have it." As much can be said by others of the candles, the incense and the holy water. The Roman Church wanted all of them and introduced them long ago. Protestants started without them all but many have since digressed so far as to adopt instruments of music, and in so doing have made it easy to digress at many other points. A principle is at stake which those who would speak as the oracles of God cannot ignore. Let us not be digressive.

#### TO ILLUSTRATE.

At Robert's Cove, La., is a congregation of people who until a few months ago, were Roman Catholic. Hebert, the man who established the church, began studying the Bible. As he learned he taught his people. As they heard the Word they learned that they were engaged in many false practices, and as they learned they changed. Full well they had been rejecting the Word of God to keep their own traditions. Coming to realize this fact they were ready and willing to give up their many innovations for the things divinely taught. Their candles, their incense, their holy water, their human priesthood, their material crosses, their rosaries, etc. all must go. Instead, they have "the apostles teaching and fellowship, the breaking of bread and the prayers." For their infant christening they have believers' baptism. Their practices now correspond to the apostolic way.

Question: This move of theirs, is it a backward or a forward one? Digressive or progressive? Progressive to be sure, as is every movement toward the New Testament way, and likewise is every move away from the New Testament a digressive one. Suppose, then, I should lead them to bring in instrumental music, would the step be progressive or digressive? Digressive, to be sure.

We all admire these people for the noble change they have made and for what they have given up for the sake of being right. Let all other digressives go and do likewise.

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People talk a great deal in a critical way about Billy Sunday receiving a large free-will offering at the close of an evangelistic campaign, which renders a great service to society. But no criticism is made for those who receive large sums without rendering real service to society. Charlie Chaplin gets \$670,000 yearly for silly buffoonery.—*Selected.*

## WORDS BY THE WAY.

E. L. JORGENSON.

It is well known that the High School and University professors of our land have often no settled, certain faith in the Bible. They are willing to compliment the Lord Jesus highly. He was "a good man," "a model man," "the great example," "the great teacher," perhaps "a teacher sent from God," or even "a prophet" in a sense. Was He inspired? "O yes—as Milton and Shakespeare were inspired." Was He divine? "Oh yes—as we are all divine; sparks off the divine anvil." "More conscious of His divinity than some of us are." In a word they are ready to accord Him anything—except His rightful place as the Son of man (John 1:51); The only begotten of God (3:16); Messiah (4:26); The sole Judge of men (5:22); The Bread of life (6:48); The light of the world (8:25). The inconsistency of it! That he could be a teacher "sent from God," or anything *else* sent from God, and at the same time the biggest liar that ever lived! And such He was unless He was *exactly* what He professed to be.

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But the unfortunate side of it all is this: that our boys and girls sit at the feet of these professors, hear them express such sentiments, and believe them; because *they think these men know!* O yes, they are smart—but in what? They know—but what do they know? The Bible? Not by a long shot. They have been too busy with Physics, Matematics and all the other "ics" and "tics"; with Geology, Zoology and the rest of the "ologies" to read the Bible aright; and verily, all that is required to become an unbeliever is to leave the Book alone; whereas all it takes to make a believer is to read it. What does a man like Edison, for example, know about the Bible? A man who has been too busy with science to eat or sleep almost, what *can* he know about it? But people do not discriminate. If a man knows electricity, they think he must know religion! The student has been impressed that his professor *knows*; he is far smarter than father and mother, smarter perhaps than the preacher or Bible teacher—in what? Why, in Geometry or Chemistry to be sure; but then the boy does not discriminate. So educated a man must be right in religion also; and thus our youth are fooled.

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To suggest a remedy in the case is not so easy. Yet two courses are open to parents who are concerned about the right education of their children. One is to select the school that is free from the faithless professors; the other is to supplement the public school instruction with the Word of God in the home and church; or best of all to combine the two methods. It is a matter that Christian parents may well take to heart before it is everlastingly too late. "O Timothy guard that which is committed unto thee turning away from. . . . the knowledge which is falsely so-called."

## THE OLIVET SERMON.

R. H. B.

The Olivet Sermon was delivered on the Mount of Olives to four of His apostles by the Lord Jesus, in answer to their questions concerning the future. The disciples had in passing by the temple, called his attention to the magnificent structure and beauty of the Temple. But He, instead of sharing their admiration, answered them, "See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down." This transpired as they were on their way to Olivet. Upon arrival there, the Lord sat down. Peter, James, John and Andrew came to him and asked him privately, saying, "Tell us when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world [the consummation of the age]?" These three questions which called forth the discourse must furnish the clew to the parts and structure of the discourse, and direct us in the unravelling of its meaning.

The Olivet Sermon is recorded with characteristic variations in three of the gospels: in Matthew, in Mark, and in Luke. Matthew's record (Matt. 24, 25) is the fullest and most methodical in arrangement. Luke's (Luke 21) has some distinctive features which supplement and explain Matthew's account. Mark's record (Mark 13) is brief and pointed, but not sufficiently different from the other two to require separate study for our present purpose. We shall therefore take up Matthew's and Luke's record; and because it is the simpler and points out some valuable landmarks, we shall take up Luke's record first.

## LUKE 21.

Luke does not give the disciples' questions in full as Matthew does; but stops with the first item of their inquiry. "When therefore, shall these things [the destruction of the Temple and of Jerusalem] be? and"—for Luke gives this first question more fully than Matthew—"what shall be the sign when these things are about to come to pass?" And as shall be seen, Luke sets forth that part of the Lord's prophecy that deals with the then impending destruction of Jerusalem most clearly and definitely. But it also reaches far beyond that event and deals with the questions regarding "the end" and the "signs of Christ's coming" which (as we learn from Matthew) the disciples asked at the same time.

## WARS AND THE GREAT WAR.

The discourse opens like it does in Matthew and Mark, with a warning against false teachers and false Christs who shall come "in my name" saying "I am he;" and "the time is at hand." "Go ye not after them." This then is the mark of the *false* Christs and false prophets—not that they would say simply, "The time is at hand"—a thing declared all along by the apostles themselves (1 Pet. 4:7; Phil. 4:4) but, joined with this is their claim, "I am he." A second caution is this: "When ye shall hear of wars and tumults, be not terrified: for these things must needs come to pass *first*; but

the end is *not immediately*." The news of wars and up-risings are in themselves, no ground for alarm, or anticipation of an immediate end. Such things are destined to come to pass all along; and they are not in themselves a sign that the end is upon us. The next two verses, however, (Lukka 21:10, 11) describe another situation—similar to that of verse 9, yet differing in degree and significance.

*"Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. . . ."*

The way this statement is introduced marks it as distinct from the common condition spoken of in verse 9. For there he had already spoken of wars and tumults. If the above quoted predictions were a prophecy of the same thing as that before mentioned in verse 9, why should he so particularly introduce it with such words as these: *"Then said he unto them. . ."* He manifestly enters upon a new line of prediction at this point. Previously he had spoken of wars here and there, and tumults—troubles without special significance, and such as would all along mark the course of the world's history. But now he takes up a special situation. This is an international, a *world-war*. Accompanying and following this phenomenon are other calamities:

*" . . . . . And there shall be great earthquakes, and in divers places famines and pestilences. . . ."*

These latter things indeed have also occurred all along. But what he is saying here is that at the time of the great world-war these other things would figure prominently, and, connected with these things, "there shall be terrors and great signs from heaven." These are the portents that presage the nearing end.

At this point (close of verse 11) the course of prophecy of the end-time is interrupted. Before he goes on to tell more about those awful, final days, he reaches back and tells of some things nearer at hand: things that must come first. This portion of the discourse comprises verses 12 to 24 (of Luke 21) and is set off by these introductory words:

*"But before all these things. . ."*

So here we have a string of events that must transpire *before* the time of verses 10 and 11, before the world-war with its accompanying earthquakes, famines, pestilences, and terrors and great signs from heaven. What are these things that must come first? Without quoting in full, I mark three chief features: first the persecution of the disciples; second, the fall of Jerusalem; and third, a following oppression of Jerusalem by the Gentiles.

1. As to the persecution of the disciples (vs. 12-19), this has been abundantly verified and fulfilled.

2. The fall of Jerusalem occurred about forty years after the Lord had uttered this prophecy.

3. The "treading down" of Jerusalem by the Gentiles describes her condition ever since her fall. Incidentally we are told that this condition will continue "until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."

The prediction of the fall of Jerusalem challenges particular

notice. It is extremely important to a proper understanding of the discourse, as we shall see later. A glance over this passage (vs. 20-24) shows that it is very simple and easy to understand; and we find that it has been fulfilled in such a clean-cut and outright manner that it leaves no difficulty. The sign which they had asked for, of the impending destruction of Jerusalem is given in verse 20: when she should be compassed with armies then the Lord's disciples were to know that her desolation was at hand. The next verse instructs the disciples to flee from the city at that signal. If it be asked how they could quit a city surrounded by armies—that was God's difficulty, not theirs; and He handled it satisfactorily when the time came. Josephus informs us that after having encircled the city with his armies, the Roman leader, for no apparent reason, withdrew them again. The Christians in Jerusalem, taking advantage of the opportunity, fled to safety in the mountains of Pella. Then the armies drew their cordon again about the doomed city and the great Vengeance began—a time of terrific distress, so great as to appall in the end even the hardened Romans who were the instruments of God's wrath. The inhabitants of the doomed city "fell by the sword" until the streets ran blood; and they were carried captive until the glutted slave-markets refused them, and they were cast away and left to perish as refuse merchandise. Ever since then Jerusalem has been "trodden down" by the heavy foot of Gentile rule, awaiting even yet the great "until" that always marks and limits Jacob's time of affliction; the "until" of Jerusalem's happy release, when the Lord shall turn the captivity of Zion and the nations shall say in awe, "Jehovah hath done great things for them." (Ps. 126).

With verse 25 the Lord resumes the description of the end-time, where (at verse 11) he had left off. In order to get a continuous view of the picture He draws, let us read now verses 10 and 11, and go right on with verse 25, omitting the verses between. And how does He finish the picture?

"And there shall be signs in sun and moon and stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, in perplexity for the roaring of the sea and the billows; men fainting for fear, and for expectation of the thing which is coming on the world for the powers of the heavens shall be shaken."

Immediately upon the heels of this world-wide distress, and heralded by the celestial portents comes *the King*, the Son of man Himself.

"And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory."

But the next words contain instruction of the highest moment to His disciples—words of supreme importance to Christians of this day:

"But when these things *begin* to come to pass, look up, and lift up your heads; because your redemption draweth nigh."

This sentence from the Lord Jesus Christ is enlightening and instructive indeed. In the first place it is clear that He expected us to get a good grasp upon the things He had set forth, so that, as these things were beginning to come to pass we should be able to recognize them instantly and should not (like the rest, 1 Thess. 5:4) be in darkness concerning their significance. It is also evident that He meant for us to know the approaching end-time by means of these, his instructions; and as he held the Jews responsible for not knowing the times when He walked among them (Luke 12:54-56) so He now expects his disciples to keep their eyes open. Just as by the budding of the trees we perceive that summer is knocking at the door, so these things, as they begin to transpire, are to be to Christ's followers the sign of the near consummation of the age. And we would put very special emphasis upon the word "begin"—"when these things *begin* to come to pass, look up and lift up your heads" Whether in the light of the unprecedented world-war of the past two years, with the attendant earthquakes, famines, pestilences, we are justified in saying that these things have, to say the least, *begun* to come to pass—I leave without fear to the faith and sound sense of all true children of God. This I know, that if indeed these things have begun to come to pass, it is time for us to *look up*, with all that command implies of unearthly life and true administration of our stewardship, and to *lift up our heads* to greet with hopeful gaze the rising of the Morning-Star and the dawn of the breaking Day—the day of our full redemption. For "even we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan within ourselves, waiting for our adoption, to wit the redemption of our body. For we are saved in hope." And this other thing I know—that if indeed these things have begun to come to pass, the devil will bend every energy, and use every agency available, conscious or unconscious, good or bad, secular or ecclesiastic, to suppress the light that would enable Christ's people to perceive it, and would, as His wont has always been, heap ignominy and persecution upon the faithful servants who are turning men's minds upon these deeply important truths

#### THE KINGDOM OF GOD COME NIGH.

The "Kingdom of God" is a term of wider range far than many have understood. The "church" is no definition of the kingdom. It could not be substituted for the word "kingdom" in half the passages where the latter occurs. It would be foolishness, for example, to say, "Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the church"; to substitute it in the promise that we shall be heirs—"heirs of the church," instead of "heirs of the kingdom." The church is not the kingdom; although all who are in the church are also in God's realm, "translated into kingdom of the Son of his love." They are of it, pertain to it now, are under its rule, are its representatives, and are destined to be rulers (not mere subjects) in the kingdom in the day when it is revealed in its glory. This much needs to be said in order to a fair understanding of verse 31 of our present chapter (Luke 21).

"Even so ye also, when ye see these things coming to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh."

It must be clear to any man that "the kingdom of God" cannot possibly refer here to the church. Even if this prophecy (as some have mistakenly thought) reached no further than the destruction of Jerusalem, it could not, even in that case, possibly refer to the church. For the church had been established for nigh forty years *before* Jerusalem was destroyed. But the context shows plainly that the "things" which were to indicate the nearness of the kingdom of God are the signs of the end, which are to culminate in the Lord's glorious appearing. The kingdom of God is that glorious world-wide rule of the Messiah which the prophets foretold, in connection with which His "saints" should "receive the kingdom which previously had been held by the selfish, rapacious "beasts"—the Gentile world powers (Dan. 7) and the dominion *under the whole heaven* should be the Lord's and his people's. That there is such a kingdom in store, and that the church—the faithful ones in Christ Jesus—shall exercise authority over the earth in that glorious reign, is equally plain from many New Testament passages. (Luke 19:17-19; Acts 14:22; 1 Cor. 6:2; 2 Tim. 2:12; Rev. 2:27; 3:21; 11:15; 20:6). These signs of the "end," i. e., of the "consummation of the age" (Rev. Vers. Margin) are therefore likewise the signs of the near approach of the kingdom. "When ye see these things coming to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh."

The simplicity of this passage and indeed of this whole prophetic discourse, has been marred by an unnecessary narrowing down of the meaning of the word "generation" in the verse next following: "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away till all things be accomplished."

Now to be sure if the word "generation" is to be taken in the sense (which is indeed, a regular sense the word bears) of the natural life time of the people living in the day when this prophecy was uttered, the prediction must long since have been fulfilled. But this is evidently not the case. Verse 24, for example, has not yet run out. Verses 25, 26, 28 cannot have been fulfilled, and verse 27 certainly not. But when we find that *every* Greek-English Lexicon (so far as I have examined) presents among the primary definitions of the word "gennea," (the Greek word translated "generation") the meaning of "stock, race, breed," the difficulty vanishes entirely. That stock of Israel is with us yet. And we can see the reason why through the most fearful storms and vicissitudes of fortune the Jews have been preserved in national purity. For, "Heaven and earth shall pass away; but my words shall never pass away."

#### THE WORD OF WARNING TO THE DISCIPLES.

The sermon, as Luke records it, concludes with an admonition, solemn and earnest, but radiant with a glorious hope.

"But take heed to yourselves lest haply your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness and cares of this life, and that day come on you suddenly as a snare: for so shall it come upon all them that dwell on the face of all the earth. But watch ye at

*every* season, making supplication, that ye may *prevail to escape* all these things that shall come to pass, and to *stand before the Son of Man.*"

I have italicised some of the words in this passage in order to call especial attention to them—the contrast between the "you" and the "them," and the prospect of escaping the great troubles which shall precede that great Day, and of being transferred to that high place in the presence of our Lord which is promised to those who watch and pray.

Let us now, for clearness' sake, and to help us later when we compare Luke with Matthew, tabulate what we have found, according to the time-order indicated in Luke. The Lord said, in sum that.

1. All along there would be wars and tumults, which, so far as indicating the end-time, would be without significance. (v. 9).

2. "First," the disciples would be bitterly persecuted (vs. 12-19).

3. Jerusalem would be destroyed (vs. 20-24).

4. Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles. A time-limit is indicated (v. 24).

5. World-war, accompanied by earth-quakes, famines, etc., should arise. (v. 10).

6. Heavenly portents and ensuing great distress of nations should come (vs. 11, 25, 26).

7. The Son of Man would come in glory. (v. 27).

Thus stand the future events in their sequence, as shown by Luke's record of the Savior's prophetic discourse on the Mount of Olives.

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### "GIVE US A CRUMB OF JESUS."

"O, my friends, give to the people in every land this Book. Many years ago, before I went to Central Africa, I was in Basutoland traveling with a party of missionaries. As we were anxious to get home we rushed through one village without stopping, and as we cantered away on our horses an old woman came out of the village and shouted to us, and what she said was this: 'You missionaries, why do you pass us by in this manner? Return and give us a little crumb of Jesus.' My friends, you have the whole loaf: do not grudge to these benighted children of God a little crumb of Jesus."—*T. W. Smith.*

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Otoshige Fugmori writes from Shimousa, Japan:

"By the grace of the Lord I baptized three young men yesterday. Hoping to have more soon. My niece Okei is now working Sawara Mission as a Sunday school teacher. The attendance is 70 to 80. She was educated by some American ladies. Will some one help to support my Okei. She needs about \$8 a month. Our financial condition is not good. We ask you in the name of Christ."

## THOUGHTS WORTH WHILE

D. H. F.

## THE STRENGTH OF EVIL.

"In a gun-factory a great bar of steel, weighing five hundred pounds and eight feet in length, was suspended vertically by a very delicate chain. Near by a common bottle-cork was suspended by a silk thread. The purpose was to show that the cork would set the steel bar in motion. It seemed impossible. The cork was swung gently against the steel bar and it remained motionless. But it was done again and again for ten minutes, and lo! at the end of that time the bar gave evidence of feeling uncomfortable; a sort of nervous chill ran over it. Ten minutes later, and the chill was followed by vibrations. At the end of half an hour the great bar was swinging like the pendulum of a clock. No man is mighty enough, in his own energy of will, to feel secure, if he is exposed to a constantly repeated influence for evil."

## SPELLING SIN.

Most people do not realize what the worst factor of sin is. Some one in speaking to an audience of young people about sin described the word very effectively as follows: It contains three letters, he said. The first is S, and that stands for Serpent—who brought sin into the world. The last letter is N, and that stands for Nothing—for sin is emptiness; there is nothing worth while in it. But between its beginning and its ending is a great big capital letter I. It is because of this I in me that I am sinful. The I is my sinful human nature; it is hopelessly bad; calling it "the flesh," the Holy Spirit says of it that it is enmity against God, is not subject to the law of God, and cannot be. So the only safe thing to do with this heart-center of sin in our lives, the I, is to put it to death; let it be crucified with Christ, so that it is no longer "I" that live, but Christ liveth in me. Not until that miracle is wrought—the death of self and its replacement by Christ—are we safe from sin.—*S. S. Times*.

## REALLY WORKING.

It is only the "work of faith" that counts. Not a work as a substitute for faith, but the work that results from faith. Paul gave thanks to the Thessalonian Christians," remembering without ceasing your work of faith." "Work out your own salvation." The only way to obey this is to remember the clear statement of the method, as given in the same passage, "for it is *God* who worketh in you both to will and to work" (Phil. 2:12-13). Having yielded our lives completely to the mastery of Christ, that he may put us to death, we are then to trust Him to live our life for us literally and completely, so that it is no longer we that live, but Christ liveth in us. That is faith; then the "work of faith" can begin through us. And then we shall work as we never did or could before, for we shall have the very energy and the efficiency of God.—*S. S. Times*.

## THE BACKGROUND.

A jeweler salesman, noticing his hands to be somewhat soiled,

said, "This is very trying on me. Of all persons I should have clean hands. It is awful to offer a diamond or pearls, or jewels of any sort, to a possible customer when my hands are not white and tidy. It makes a repulsive background for a piece of jewelry."

The Christian should have clean hands and a clean life. Whoever he may be, minister or not, he recommends Jesus Christ and His salvation to the world. His life should not be an ugly and repelling background. (Matt. 5:16).

#### KILLING ENEMIES.

"A king, before he ascended the throne, declared that he would destroy all his enemies. Afterward the people were surprised that he treated them with all kindness. Some of his friends reminded him of what he had said. "And have I not destroyed my enemies?" he asked. "I have changed them all into friends."—See Romans 12:20.

#### THE CHRISTIAN'S ANTIDOTE.

"A Christian met another man who was the picture of despondency. When asked what was the matter the man said, "I have no friends; I am lonely." "I have an antidote for that," answered the Christian, and he began to sing, "Abide with me, fast falls the eventide." The lonesome man heard him through, and then said: "Why, so you have. If that song is true, you have company all the time."—See Heb. 13:5-6; Ps. 23.

#### HOW A SKEPTIC WAS ANSWERED.

A skeptic once sought to destroy the faith of a believer. "Who told you that that Bible is the Word of God?" he asked. "God told me Himself," was the reply. "God told you? Impossible. How did He tell you? You have never seen Him or talked with Him." "Sir, who told you there is a sun yonder in the blue sky above us?" "Who told me?" said the man, smiling contemptuously. "Who told me? The sun told me this about itself. It warms me, and I love its sight. That is telling me plainly enough." "Sir, you have put it right for both Bible and sun. This is the way it tells me about itself. I read it and it gives me warmth and light. I love it and no one but God gives such light and warmth through a book. It must be His. I don't want more telling. As sure as the sun is in the heavens, so sure is God shining through the Bible." The skeptic was silenced. The believer's heart experience of the power of God's Word was an evidence which he could not gainsay.

#### THE RESPONSIBILITY OF HIGH CLAIMS.

It is positively dishonest to call people out of the sects into what is merely another sect on the pretense that they must become members of the one, only church of God. Of all religious teachers those will come in for heaviest condemnation who sail under the flag of the church of Christ while in reality they are building up what is as much a sect as anything under heaven. Those who are "Christians only" are under the highest obligations to maintain a truly non-sectarian position and attitude. They have not always done it! Send for the tract, "Why Not Be Just A Christian?"

## JESHURUN WAXED FAT AND KICKED.

So Moses said of Israel, who is Jeshurun in the "Song of Moses," which is in the thirty-second chapter of Deuteronomy. This statement, in the fifteenth verse, is the watershed of the song. In one side the tide rises to it as Moses recounts the goodness of God to His people and the gracious benefits that He bestowed on them. This being done, the tide flows down on the other side, in the second part, which announces disaster and desolation resulting from the displeasure of God because of the kicking of Jeshurun. The happy story flows to the point at which the next thing said seems about to be that Israel responded faithfully and joyfully to the generous treatment of Jehovah, when the "but" comes in: "But Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked."

The plain English of it is, as the whole song sets forth, that Jeshurun's prosperity was too much for him. He was too well fed for his digestion. The blessing of God was turned into cursing for him by his own perversity. If he had not been so well treated, he might not have become conceited and rebellious. When he failed, however, to show appreciation of his prosperity, by recognition of the Giver and service of the Source of it all, his humiliation and suffering followed. The goodness of God ought not to have hurt him, but it did. The explanation is in Jeshurun himself, and is no credit to him.

In this experience, the kicker here reported, is representative of humanity on so large a scale that it may be called universal. The almost infallible test of human beings is in the way that they take prosperity, and the test ends badly for them because they abuse the prosperity that they ought to use for the glory of the Giver. On the contrary, they forget or despise Him, utilizing the prosperity for their own comfort or glory; and then their glory turns into shame, into wormwood and gall. So it comes to pass that human history is a continued story of favor as the forerunner of folly, of tyranny as the product of power, of dissipation as the answer to provision and of failure in the higher things by fatuity in the understanding and use of the lower. Humanity may be justly likened to a man with a rope around his neck ever searching for some hook of privilege on which to hang himself. Hereabout is the philosophy of human poverty, pain and multiplex suicide. Sin has made man such a fool that the surest way to destroy him is to give him what he wants and a little time to work out his own destruction under the operation of invariable laws which are designed for construction. Any wise observer of mankind must always be a pessimist in relation to the natural man so long as he has what he desires and so uses it that he thinks he "is having a good time," which is the way he always does.

How difficult it is for even Christians to be prospered in material things, increased in goods, without being swerved by the increase of the goods or swamped by it. God does not punish His people, but He has to chastise them constantly and severely in order

to save them at all. When wealth comes to a disciple of Christ and does not upset his spiritual poise, showing in him the same signs of "old Adam" that appear in the unbeliever, then we are surprised.

But so far we have not reached the inner layer of the Jeshurun heart. Strange as it may seem, it is painfully true that prosperity in spiritual things has in it the same dangers that are in the other kind. Good ground appears, in the light of observation and experience, for the judgment that God advances His people on earth so little as He does because they cannot properly appropriate and apply the greater spiritual gifts and graces, cannot endure to be made wise in the spiritual things without becoming fools through pride on account of that which should humble them. Spiritual pride is the most subtle and sinful. How many of us can endure praise for the virtues we have or seem to our shortsighted friends to have? How easily we are puffed up and pulled down and upset! If names were given true to character and experience, I apprehend that a large number of preachers and teachers of religion, to say nothing of others, would be named Jeshurun and surnamed Kicker. This may explain why so many of us do more good, as well as get more praise, after we are gone where we cannot see the results of our work or hear the praise that is spoken. The Lord lets us do a little good, but conceals it from us because the knowledge of it would tickle the vanity in us. He may even withhold brighter visions and superior revelations and sweeter experiences for the same reason. Old Adam, in a saint as well as elsewhere, is a boss and a blusterer on small provocation, therefore the good in us that would become provocative of his activity, is clouded to us and our associates, lest the boss and the blusterer in us should wax fat and his kicking spoil the whole connection.—*Western Recorder*.

#### A LITTLE HINT FROM NATURE.

Oh, de rain it come a-fallin',  
 An' de clouds is mighty black,  
 An' de lightin' staht a-shootin'  
 An' you hyuh de thunder crack;  
 An' you hyuh de stohm a-braggin'  
 As it come a-sweepin' pas';  
 "I reckons, Mustuh Sunshine,  
 We has done you up at las'."

But de sunshine come a-laughin',  
 Jus' as cheerful as befo';  
 De chillun clap deir han's to see  
 Him shinin' at de do'.  
 So keep yoh temper, honey,  
 Yoh manners try to mend,  
 'Case sunshine allus gwine to win  
 De victory in de end.

—*Washington Star*.

# BIBLE STUDY COURSE.

## THE BOOK OF JUDGES.

This is the Book of Israel's Failure and of God's Patience. The body of the book runs in a number of periodically recurring series: (1) *Failures*; followed by (2) *Chastisement*, and then (3) Israel crying to God, He gives them (4) *Deliverance*. Then comes relapse, severer chastisement; again they cry to God and God delivers them. There are seven such cycles in this book.

**FIRST DAY.**—The Cause of Failure. Judges 1. Consider how grand was the start and the accomplishment recorded in the Book of Joshua; and how does the failure described in Judges contrast with it? Do God's people ever arrive at a point so high and safe that they may cease to watch and fight and pray? 1 Cor. 10: 13; Phil. 3:12, 13. What caused Israel's failure in the Land of Promise? Vs. 1-20 show the same strain as Joshua. God was with them yet, and would have given them victory to the end. The cause of failure was disobedience—not a disobedience of rebelliousness, but of neglect and slackness and of fear and weakness which sprang from unbelief. See verses 21, 27, 29, 30, 31, 33, 34. This was directly counter to God's orders. (Deut. 7:1-5). Inability no excuse: when God commands He enables us to perform if we believe and go ahead. Consider whether there is not a like reason for failure in the Christian life. Instead of reckoning ourselves to be dead unto sin (Rom. 6:11) and absolutely *putting to death* the deeds of the body in the power of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:13) we attempt to retain and control them—not giving them up for good, and ever, but with intention to keep them in bounds and subjection. We make provision for the flesh, and allow room to the devil. Hence failure, and a low type of Christian life.

**SECOND DAY.**—God's Dealings With a Failing People. Judges 2.—Vs. 1-5. Recall what we have learned of Gilgal (Josh. 4 and 5.) Gilgal is exchanged for Bochim ("Weeping"). It is always so when God's people live beneath their calling and privilege. From verses 6 to 23 we have a sum up of the whole situation, and this explains the Book of Judges. It is in many respects a sum-up of the history of *the professed church* also. Comp. vs. 7 and 10 with Acts 20:29-32. The rounds of failure, punishment, and God's mercy, are marked off in verses 11-13; 14, 15; and 16-19 respectively. V. 19 tells of the invariable relapse. Vs. 21, 22 show how the nations that were left became in God's hands, the means of testing and discipline of disobedient Israel. Is not our failure to put off sin entirely, and to "slay utterly" the deeds of the body (which thing God gave us command and power to do, just as He gave Israel both the command and the power to drive out the nations without compromise)—is not our failure to act thus from the first in the power of faith, responsible for the defeated lives some of us are living? Like Israel we did not utterly cast out the evil passions but intended them, as Israel meant to keep the inhab-

itants subject jto task-work; and we were overcome by that which we should have cast out. Then we cried to God, and God's unfailing mercy responded, we had seasons of refreshing, and again—Read in this light Rom. 6; Rom. 8:5-14; Col. 3; Gal. 5:16-24.

THIRD DAY.—Failures and Deliverances: Judg. 3 and 4—Verses 5 and 6 (of Judg. 3) show Israel's flat and flagrant disobedience to God's oft-repeated injunction. The first definite punishment, 8 years in length (v. 8); their cry to God, v. 9; the first savior-judge, v. 9. (Note the part the spirit of God takes, here and later.) Then the deliverance, and 40 years' rest. (vs. 10, 11). The second cycle—vs. 12-30—with 80 years' rest after 18 years' oppression. V. 31 mentions the third judge. In Josh. 4 the severest chastisement thus far—20 years Jabin "mightily" oppressed Israel. His power was immense. A woman was prophetess—an exceptional circumstance. Her call of Barak (vs. 6, 7) who was willing to go—but not without Deborah; for which we cannot condemn him: the risk was great, and he had not had *direct* communication with Jehovah. The slaying of Sisera by Jael *absolutely considered* would be only a vile deed; but taken in its setting, considering the circumstances, and Jael's (probable) sympathy with God's oppressed people, and her motive in the matter, leaves only her method open to censure.

FOURTH DAY.—The Song of Deborah and Barak—Judges 5—A beautiful song of praise and triumph. Verse 2 might be the prelude of the account of any great achievement in the Church. Vs. 4, 5 recall the former glories of God. Vs. 6-8 the disordered conditions in Israel. The Call and the Muster of Israel's hosts is described in vs. 9-18. The conflict itself is poetically portrayed in 19-22. This great battle of God was fought by the waters of Megiddo. On the mountain of Megiddo (Har-Mageddon) will the last world-power assemble its hosts to battle, to meet with a like defeat. (Rev. 16:13-16; 19:19-21). Meroz took no part for Jehovah and came in for a curse. (v. 23.) The last part of the song celebrates the distinction that had fallen to Jael's share, and exults in the poetic justice in which God returned Sisera's cruel and vindictive purpose swiftly upon his own head. V. 31 sets forth the significance of this victory. It is not merely a wish and a prayer, but indeed a prophecy of Jehovah's ultimate triumph and the certain defeat of all His enemies.

FIFTH DAY.—The Call of Gideon.—Judg. 6.—The next chastisement was not so long in duration but exceeded in intensity. See v. 6. Then they "cried" to Jehovah—and *He heard*. (Ps. 107:10-22). The rebuke of vs. 8-10 is the prelude of the deliverance. "*The angel of Jehovah*" appears on the scene. God has picked Him a man through whom to effect the deliverance. What sort of man? V. 15, cp. 1 Cor. 1:26-29. Verse 14 reveals the source of true power. Now mark verse 16 specially. It is a promise and prediction, intended to call forth Gideon's *faith*. All depends now on whether Gideon will *believe* it in such a way as to *act* upon it. See promises made *to us*. 1 Cor. 1:8, 9; Rom. 14:4; Jude 24; 1

Pet. 1:5. And in our own case also all depends on our faith, Heb. 10:38, 39; 1 John 5:4. Gideon wants to make sure that this is "the angel of Jehovah." Was that sensible? "Jehovah-Shalom." Comp. Eph. 2:14, 16, 17. Verses 25-27 show a preliminary test of Gideon's faith. Faith *always* involves risk and peril. Faith ventures out upon God's sure word of promise, regardless of apparent dangers or difficulties. How did he get the name "Jerub-baal"? On v. 34 see the foot-note (in the Am. Rev. Version) and consider what that could mean. Is there a connection between faith and this endueing of power in the Holy Spirit? Gal. 3:14; Eph. 3:16, 17. Note once more Gideon's careful test (36-40). This was neither unbelief, nor making trial of God; it was the endeavor to make sure of his foundation.

SIXTH DAY—Gideon's Victory. Josh. 7.—Consider why God cut down Gideon's army. Read again 1 Cor. 1:26-27. Also Ps. 8:2; Zech. 4:6; 2 Cor. 4:7. God gives Gideon another encouragement. It was a great and fearful undertaking that lay before Gideon, and its success depended upon Gideon's unwavering faith in God's promise. So God gave him strong confirmation. Note in v. 13—a cake of barley bread—an absurdly inadequate thing. The effect of this last sign on Gideon v. 15. The victory was practically won when the rest of Israel arose to take a hand in the fight. (23-25). Consider what terrible odds the weak Christian has to face. Eph. 6:12. But the battle is the Lord's. Read Heb. 11:32 to 12:2 and consider its bearing on our everyday life in Christ.

SEVENTH DAY.—The Completion of the Victory.—Judg. 8.—The men of Ephraim were great bullies. Gideon employed the soft answer this time. But another time (under Jephtha) when they tried the same tricks again, they got what was coming to them. Vs. 4-17. The towns that in their unbelief and cowardice would not aid Gideon before the victory was complete are like the men today who will not bow the knee to Christ nor aid His cause while as yet His name is held in contempt on the earth and His power not yet manifest. Gideon would not be made king, v. 22, 23. We see here the beginning of that desire which found full expression in 1 Sam. 8. God presently gave them a taste of a "king." But Gideon made two serious missteps; the first, vs. 24-27; the second indicated in v. 29-31. Out of both of these grew trouble and disaster.

EIGHTH DAY.—The Episode of Abimelech.—Judg. 9.—Jotham's fable is very beautiful and striking. Its point is that the men who are greedy for authority and power are not the ones that would minister blessing to the people. This ugly affair of Abimelech marks the beginning of the sentiment that resulted in the choice of a king.

NINTH DAY.—Jephthah.—Judg. 10-12. Two other judges are briefly mentioned in 10:1-5. Verses 6-9 record a renewed and deeper relapse into sin, and v. 10 their usual cry in the time of distress. The Lord at first speaks sternly and refuses to help them. But upon their humble repentance and confession (v. 16). He again

sets Himself for their deliverance. "His soul was grieved for the misery of Israel." What a revelation and meaning lies in this verse! Comp. Isa. 63:9. Does He feel *our* distresses with us? Again God chooses a man—a social outcast, but a faithful and bold man for all that. His brethren who had rejected him went after him in their time of need; which, as in the case of Joseph, is a premonition of Israel's attitude toward the Christ. The King of Ammon's speech was based upon falsehood and misconception. Comp. Judg. 11:13 with Deut. 2:18, 19. Jephthah's reply is an instance of "words fitly spoken." The matter of Jephthah's daughter has occasioned much controversy. I prefer to take it at its simplest face value and leave the difficulty with the Lord. It was a rash vow and strange, that Jephthah had made. Considering the times, environment, and ignorance, the sacrifice of Jephthah's daughter is nothing less than highly probable. That the sacrifice was not of Jehovah's ordering is plain. That human sacrifices were never countenanced by Him is abundantly shown in His word. But through this awful affair shines out the heroic faithfulness of Jephthah, and the not less wonderful and heroic sweetness and submission of his daughter in her gratitude of her father's victory. Ch. 12—the men of Ephraim come in for their just recompense now. The "Shibboleth" has become proverbial. Alas, even in the church of Christ which stands for the true liberty and tolerance in the Lord, there are those who would cut one's head off if he cannot frame to pronounce "Shibboleth" exactly as they pronounce it. Three other judges are briefly mentioned.

TENTH DAY.—The Rise of Samson.—Judg. 13, 14. Samson was one of the five "children of promise." (The other four: Isaac, Samuel, John the Baptist, The Lord Jesus Christ). He was a Nazirite from his birth. See Numb. 6 for explanation. Christians are by position separated unto God, and must of choice maintain that position. (John 15:19; 17:14-19; Rom. 12:2; 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1). Manoh's wife exhibited both faith and good sense in her reply to her husband's fears. (v. 23). Verses 24, 25 tell of the birth and growth of the child Samson. Note the activity of the Holy Spirit in and by this man who is "set apart," though only ceremonially.

As to 14:1, it does not necessarily follow that Jehovah moved him to seek one of the Philistine women, but rather that He permitted and used Samson's wrong inclination to the damage of the Philistines. The same is true of all the rest of Samson's moral error. God is not the Author of moral evil, nor can He be; but He avails Himself of the mistakes and sins of men to further His ends. (2 Tim. 2:20, 21). The first act of supernatural strength was not witnessed by man. (14:6.) In this and in some other feats we can trace a haunting resemblance between Samson and the true Hero that was to come, the Lord Jesus Christ. V. 11 reports what was probably meant for an imposition upon Samson. He in turn imposed as trickily upon them—and they outwitted him; but after all to the loss of the Philistines. It must be kept in

mind (as to v. 19, etc.) that it was God's righteous purpose to punish and destroy the Philistines. To this end God had called Samson. The immediate occasion each time was not of the Lord's devising, but was Samson's perverse doing. Only when it came to the actual point of executing Divine vengeance upon the Philistines did the Spirit of God move and enable Samson. The slaying of the Philistines was God's aim and work of righteous judgment; and in that alone did He lend His power to the human instrument He used thereto. But with the disgraceful circumstances that led to the conflict each time God had no complicity.

**ELEVENTH DAY.**—Samson's Work and End.—Judg. 15, 16. Judg. 15:18 shows that Samson understood his mission, and in his work of executing vengeance upon the Philistines was moved *by faith*. (Heb. 11:32, etc). He is not to be excused for his moral delinquencies on that account. Had he been a cleaner, truer man, God could and would have used him in a far greater work. Samson seems more like the vessel that marred in the potter's hand, and was made over into an inferior vessel. (Jer. 18:4). In 16:3 Samson's typical resemblance to the Lord Jesus appears again. (Comp. Eph. 4:8). Samson's loose moral life brought its bitter reward at last. (Judg. 16:4-21). What a picture of the Christian who has lost his power for God through compromise with the world! (Jas. 4:4). When the sign of his separation was gone, Samson became weak as other men. The Philistines rejoiced; God was blasphemed; Samson suffered terribly. There is much pathos in the last sentence of v. 20. Many a preacher who struck hands with the world, for example, has kept right on in his work, and knew not. . . . But Samson's hair *grew again*. Herein lies a hope for some. In his death Samson accomplished more than in all his life—again typical of Jesus Christ. Samson did indeed only "begin" to save Israel (13:5). He completed nothing. Alas—it might have been better!

**TWELFTH DAY.**—Confusion and Ignorance—Judg. 17, 18. The last five chapters reveal the amazing state of affairs in Israel. Chapt. 17 gives us a sample of lawlessness and folly of the religious doings—the counterpart of which can be found abundantly in our own day. Chapter 18 continues the story, with depredation superadded. Think this over. Does any sort of worship please God? Matt. 15:9. Is "sincerity" sufficient? If we believe a thing is acceptable to God—is it therefore acceptable?

**THIRTEENTH DAY.**—Benjamin's Punishment—Judg. 19-21. —These chapters reveal an almost incredible moral degradation in Israel. It parallels Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 19). God made Israel its own scourge, both in the defeats which they suffered at the hands of Benjamin; and the terrific blow which they dealt to that tribe, almost exterminating it.

**FOURTEENTH DAY.**—A Retrospect upon the Book of Judges.—Read 17:6; 18:1; 19:1; 21:25. This describes conditions. No recognition of law, human or divine, except every man's own will and desire: that is lawlessness and anarchy. "There was no king"?

Yea—there was One. But Him they ignored and despised. So He let them go—go after their own will (Ps. 81:11, 12) that they might taste the fruit of their way. (Jer. 2:19). Note the downward trend throughout the whole story. Such is always the way of man. Every dispensation ends in failure, so far as man is concerned. But God moves on to sure, final victory.

#### THE BOOK OF RUTH.

**FIFTEENTH DAY.**—God's Remnant.—Ruth 1—Compare this book's beautiful picture of faith, hope, and love, with conditions described in Judges. See 1:1 for the *time* in which this book is laid. Consider here Rom. 11:2-5. Again God makes man's unfaithfulness contribute to His good plans. Elimelech, Mahlon and Chilion were in the path of disobedience. Consider what a woman Naomi must have been; why would her daughters-in-law have wanted to go with her at all? Why should they have become interested in Naomi's God? Are our lives among strangers such as to interest them in our God and Savior? Verses 16, 17 are exquisitely beautiful; no poetry of earth surpasses it. It is the heart's own voice of utter devotion and love. Consider what it meant to Ruth to leave her people and go among the people of Israel.

**SIXTEENTH DAY.**—God's Work and Purpose.—Ruth 2-4.—The character of Boaz appears in part in 2:4. Vs. 11,12 throw more light on Ruth's choice; 3:11 upon her good name, due to her faith and wisdom. Again the haunting suggestion of Jesus Christ. He is the near kinsman (Hebrew, Goel) the Redeemer of the forfeited inheritance. Ruth—the foreign bride (Ps. 45:10,11; Eph. 5:22, 23). Boaz “purchased” her (Acts 20:28). The great end and aim of God's work through Naomi, Ruth, and Boaz, was toward the bringing in (when “there was no king in Israel”) of a king after his own heart: David; and, more especially, “great David's greater Son”—the Lord Jesus Christ (Ruth 4:17-22; Matt. 1:1-6, 16).

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#### LOGIC OF SELFISHNESS.

Why should we give money to save heathens abroad when there are heathens in our own country to save?

There are other “Why's” equally logical.

Why should I give money to save those in other parts of this country when there are needy ones in my own state? Why should I give for those in other parts of the state when there are needy ones in my own town? Why should I give to the church when my own family wants it? Why should I waste on my family what I want myself?

Why? Because I am a Christian; not a heathen.—*A. B. Upham.*

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There are Christians who will not believe their eyes when they see a statement in the Bible, until they have consulted some of the powers that be, and have been assured by them that the statement is really true.

## UNIVERSAL WAR.

D. M. PANTON.

Universal War is to be one of the final judgments of God. Jeremiah had pleaded with the nations for twenty-three years, and had met with no repentance; now, in the fatal year of Carchemish, the battle that threw Palestine into the arms of Babylon, Jehovah's patience is exhausted; and God says to the Prophet, "Take the cup of the wine of this fury at My hand, and cause *all* the nations to drink it." Jer. 25:15. God has said through Ezekiel, 14:21, "I send My four sore judgments, the sword, and the famine, and the noisome beasts, and the pestilence;" and so here, under the figure of a cup circulating round a banqueting table, a cup of which all the banqueters *must* drink, God announces this form of judgment to the nations at the End: "I will *call for a sword upon all* the inhabitants of the earth." Our Lord also prophesied it: "*For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be famines and earthquakes in divers places: but these are the beginning of travail.*" Matt. 24:7. That is to say, at the End, after the removal of the Holy Spirit, and the Church, war—universal war, war involving all nations, and war on a scale, and with a ruin, never before contemplated—will fill the world. How fearful a judgment war is has been expressed by one who knew it best—Wellington—who said that rather than have one month of civil war in his nation he would sacrifice his life. And the characteristics and immediate results of God's judgment wars will be most remarkable; they are just the characteristics and results which, on a fainter scale, are astounding so many observers today. The diplomacy of their statesmen will become fuddled and blundering—"Drink ye and be *drunken*;" the whole economic structure of the State, and its political stability, will become unsafe and insecure—"They shall *reel to and fro*;" the national policy will become insane—"Reel to and fro, and be *mad*;" and the whole nation, stupefied by war, becomes helpless and powerless, and involved in disastrous ruin—"Be drunken and fall, and *rise no more*;" and all this "*Because of the sword which I will send among you.*" Exactly as Nebuchadnezzar, the supreme example of all Gentile dominion, becoming intoxicated with power, trampled right under might, and then followed insanity and ruin.

But this prophecy reveals a most remarkable fact; the nations, no doubt taught by such experiences as they are now going through, refuse the Universal War. "And it shall be that if they *refuse* to take the cup at thine hand, then shalt thou say unto them, Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, Ye shall *surely* drink." God has foreseen the nations' profound skepticism of this prophecy; calling in the aid of the Higher Criticism, they will pronounce Jeremiah's predictions ridiculously incredible, and will make stupendous efforts to create a world-peace by organized international effort. This very refusal of the Cup had been in process of careful organization for years before the Great War. With an endowment of two million

sterling a peace propaganda is being pushed through all nations; a Peace Palace costing millions sterling has been built at The Hague, with a library on international peace of 75,000 volumes; all known cases of arbitration have been codified, and an international committee of eminent statesmen formed; and a body of permanent judges, eminent jurists, sits at The Hague for international arbitration. All nations have conspired in the erection of this magnificent palace. The grand stained glass windows in the Court of Justice come from England; the massive gates at the park entrance from Germany; the gorgeous marbles of the interior from Italy; the silk tapestries in the Council Chamber from Japan; the priceless porcelain vases from China; a marble throne from Greece; Gobelins tapestries from France; a vase of jasper from Russia; marble statuary from the United States; costly carpets from Turkey, with minor gifts from all the minor States of the world. How it reminds us of that Day and City when "The nations shall bring their glory and honor into it!" But what is this peace worth? *Five of the monarchs and presidents whose pictures hang upon its walls have been assassinated since the palace was built.* How like a prophecy are these words of Lord Curzon, uttered years ago: "The great rulers of Europe set up an International Tribunal of Arbitration at The Hague, and built a magnificent marble hall for the delegates to deliberate in; but alas! when the moment of crisis comes, when unruly passions are inflamed and international friction arises, conventions and treaties are alike broken and disregarded, and recourse is had to the primeval method of settling differences by the clash and conflict of arms."

So the cup has to circulate among all the banqueting kings of the whole earth; the very oneness of the world, of which the modern is so proud, will make the judgment universal. "All the kings of the north, far and near, one with another, *and all the kingdoms of the world, which are upon the face of the earth.*" As a fierce storm starts up the horizon, and spreads over the whole heavens, so "Evil shall go forth from nation to nation," until the whole world is involved. How remarkable were these words of a leading London journal (*Daily Telegraph*), uttered on July 10, 1907: "The last assembly at The Hague was followed by great conflicts; we can only pray that the present assembly may not be succeeded by calamities among the most terrible in the history of the world." It is a keen observer's prediction which has been exactly fulfilled, and reveals God's estimate of peace without righteousness: *the third Peace Conference was due this year.* If this prophecy was difficult to believe a year ago, all difficulty has vanished in the object-lesson which we now have before our eyes. In August thirteen declarations of war occurred in one month; five out of the eight greatest powers of the world are at war; masses of men, utterly unprecedented in history—sixteen or eighteen millions—are being hurled at each other; and literally half the world—nearly nine hundred millions of mankind—are involved in a murderous conflict by land, air and water. When the Russo-Japanese War

broke out, the Czar who had inaugurated the first Peace Conference, burst into tears; it is said (*Times*, December 16, 1914) that the Kaiser, when signing the declaration of war on Russia, exclaimed, "Gentlemen, you have compelled me to sign, but you will live to rue it." For all *must* drink. So the yet greater War to come will rage over the whole earth: it will be God pleading with all flesh; until the roar of the Lion of the tribe of Judah shall be heard in the Heavens; and "The Lord shall roar from on high, He shall give a shout, as they that tread the grapes, against all the inhabitants of the earth." With the awful ease of a man treading the purple vats, which squirt their blood beneath the mere weight of his descent, so the Lord, descending, creates Armageddon, which is not the fratricidal fury of the Nations, but their solid phalanx hurled against God, (Rev. 16:16), and crushed forever. "When they are saying, *Peace* and safety, then sudden destruction cometh." 1 Thess. 5:3.

For no Hague Conferences can evade the righteous judgments of God. God asks, as in surprise, "*Should ye be utterly unpunished? Ye shall not be unpunished.*" God's judgment wars are not arbitrary, or vindictive: they are cause and effect; *it is God's shaking of the nations to rouse them to their fearful peril of Hell.* "The Lord hath a controversy"—a lawsuit—"with the nations;" and there can be no peace between the litigants pending the settlement of the suit. That controversy is over Calvary: the angels sang above the cradle in Bethlehem, "On earth peace, good-will toward men"—but that peace is solely concentrated *in Christ*; all peace apart from Him, and from His atonement for sin, is peace establishing wickedness, and making men happy and prosperous in iniquity. "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked," Isa. 57: 21: if there *is* peace to the wicked, it is a wicked peace; "As for the wicked, *He will give them to the sword.*" So God has no choice. Nor does He create war: all He has to do in order to plunge a fallen world into chaos is simply to withdraw His own restraining influences. For "Whence come wars, and whence come fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your pleasures that war in your members? *Ye lust*"—empire-lust, glory-lust, commerce-lust, power-lust—"and have not: ye kill and covet, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war." Jas. 4:1, 2. So all minor judgments on nations all down the ages inevitably lead to one great final judgment: as national wrongdoing increases, so the cup of wrath is filling; but the supreme and unappeased offense, the frightful sin against Heaven and righteousness, is the Cross. *All nations, by refusing the sacrifice, indorse the Crucifixion*: therefore they may refuse the draught of His love, but they will not be able to refuse the cup of His wrath.

Yet how gracious is the Most High! Even in the midst of the rush and roar of the last battles, and by means of them, "He will plead with all flesh:" it is in the context of the closing sanguinary judgments that Jehovah says, through Joel 2:32, "And whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered." So God is

pleading with the world at this moment, and the only Great Power in Europe which has stood outside the conflict has been visited by the deadliest earthquake of modern times. The King of Italy said to Signor Marconi: "I have visited all the earthquake disasters in Italy of my time, and this surpasses all, including even Messina, as only two or three per cent. of the population have escaped, while in Messina thirty per cent. survived." Thirty thousand persons and sixty towns vanished in half a minute, and of one sleeping town of 11,000 inhabitants, not a thousand survived; and a telegram from Rome (*Times*, January 18, 1915) reveals a startling similarity to a phenomenon of our Lord's descent. Zech. 14:4. "Mount Pizzodeta, whose height is above 6,000 feet, has been sharply cut in two by the earthquake; and the opening is so wide that it can be seen clearly from a great distance." How like that Day, crowded with famine, pestilence, earthquake and war, which only waits for the disappearance of the midnight watchers, and how near it all brings Him whom our souls love!

Let the door be on the latch  
 In your home,  
 For it may be through the midnight  
 He will come.

—*Trusting and Toiling.*

## THE PROPHETIC ENQUIRERS.

Apollos was honored with a strange visit during the week. Caiaphas and Alexander called on Apollos in order to discuss his prophetic views. But whatever the various motives of this interview, it is to be feared that the desire to hear, to weigh fairly, to learn, or even to criticise helpfully, played no part in their coming.

The visitors explained that they felt no little solicitude for Apollos personally—"an anxious concern for your usefulness and welfare," Caiaphas put it—and also for the church, lest some unfortunate root of bitterness should spring up to trouble the church, and perhaps the brotherhood at large; and that their fear was occasional by certain rumors of divers and strange doctrines Apollos had lately adopted, notably in the sphere of prophecy—views which none of the fathers had held, and which were creating some stir among brethren. Would Apollos explain these prophetic views to them?

Now Apollos was not of a suspicious turn. Himself guileless, he was apt to take other men at bona fide valuation, and deal with them on a basis of simple confidence, which the event not always justified. He was somewhat on his guard however, in this case but their opening words completely disarmed all his suspicions, and he saw now only a most welcome opportunity to tell these brethren his real views, nothing doubting that that would settle all their fears and allay all their concern. Beginning with the controversy between James and Bereus, he related in detail how his attention

was directed to the prophetic teachings of the Word of God—a vast part of the Scriptures which he, like most others, had thitherto overlooked and neglected; how compelled by the request of the brethren, and then impelled by a growing interest, he had studied those prophetic themes, and that upon exactly the same principles of interpretation on which he had always studied the Word of God; and how, as on every other Scripture-matter he had presented privately and publicly such things as he had found the word of God to teach.”

“What were some of those things you found in your investigations?” asked Alexander. “That is a pretty general question,” answered Apollos smiling; “but you heard me preach on those themes. I came to the conclusion that the prophetic portions of God’s Word, are like all the rest of Scripture (2 Tim. 3:16) profitable, and not to be neglected; that they should be studied and taught in the proper way. As every portion of God’s word serves its purpose, so the prophecies have a value all their own, and the ignoring of them will cause some important defect in our Christian life and work, and leaves the Christian character stunted at some point. Especially I felt alarmed when I noted how great an emphasis and prominence the Holy Spirit gave the doctrine of the Coming of the Lord, throughout the New Testament; for I had greatly neglected this—had rarely mentioned it and never preached on it. It amazed me to find that *never*, not so much as once, is the approach and certainty of Death made the basis of appeal to God’s people to right living and preparedness; but that the imminent coming of the Lord Jesus was constantly held up before them as the motive to every virtue and sacrifice. Now I had been pointing my exhortations with the prospect of Death, and had not thought of the Lord’s return as being of such immediate importance, as to have any practical force. I am resolved now that—while I shall still consider it proper on occasion to remind Christian and sinner of the brevity of life—to follow the Gospel in giving the Lord’s Coming the prominence and emphasis it there holds. The view I had often expressed that to a Christian death was in effect the same thing as the Lord’s coming, I now regard as an unwarranted human opinion. God does not say such a thing. Death may indeed intervene before the Lord comes, and those who fall asleep in Jesus shall be at no disadvantage in that Day (1 Thess. 4:15)—but death is not the Christian’s goal and prospect, and it must not be allowed to take the place of the true hope. We must fix our eyes upon the Return of our Lord. This, I feel certain, will profoundly affect our attitude and the spirit of our service.”

“What is the view you have adopted about the Kingdom of God? Some one told me that you do not believe that the Church is the kingdom, and that Christ is not King,” Alexander again broke in.

“Christ is certainly King,” answered Apollos. “All authority in heaven and on earth is His, and He sits enthroned on the right hand of God, the position of honor and power of the universe. If

anyone understood me otherwise it must be corrected. Moreover He has a kingdom."

"Now?" interrupted Caiaphas. "Yes, now," answered Apollos, "and Christians are in it. So it stands recorded in Col. 1:13; and I stand by that." "You say then that the Church is the Kingdom?" Caiaphas queried. "Does God say that?" asked Apollos, in return. "Does He?" asked Caiaphas. "I have not seen the statement," answered Apollos, "and until I do I shall not maintain that. I had inferentially established that conclusion—so I thought—but felt compelled to surrender it. Our inferences are often not as sound and solid as we surmise." "But you just said that Christians are in the kingdom." "Quite true; the Book says that." "Well, then why is the Church not the same as the kingdom?" "Brother Caiaphas, you are in my house just now, are you not? But is the reception hall the same thing as the house? I do not say that the illustration sets forth the full case; but you can see by that that a Christian may be in the Kingdom, and yet how the Church is for all that not identical with the Kingdom of God. It is only through the church and in the church that the kingdom of God is at all accessible today. But a fair study of the propnets will reveal the fact that the Church does not answer to description of the Kingdom as God promised it to them. When the Kingdom of God as the prophets foretold it (and as indeed the New Testament itself predicts it) shall be manifest, the Church will not constitute the *subjects* of it, but it will be the governing body, and enthroned with the Lord Jesus Christ, shall rule with Him."

"Do you believe the Jews will go back to their land?" said Caiaphas. "That is what the prophets say," Apollos replied. "And the temple will be rebuilt?" "Does the Book say so?" asked Apollos in return. "I am asking you," Caiaphas replied sharply: "I have heard that you believe something to that effect." "You have heard wrong, Brother Caiaphas. I have never expressed myself on that point at all," answered Apollos. "You will *have* to: your position logically involves that." Caiaphas was pressing hard. "My 'position,' Brother Caiaphas, is to take God at His word. I am ready to do that and to assume all consequences. I do not know everything that is in the Bible, and do not understand everything, and I am far from professing infallibility. But whatever I see and learn there I feel free to believe, and as occasion requires to speak." "But if I remember aright the prophets speak freely of the restoration of Jerusalem, and the rebuilding of the temple, and even of the resumption of bloody sacrifices. Are those things to be taken literally or do you believe them to be yet unfulfilled?" Caiaphas was staking all upon this throw. He was following the suggestions of Diotrephes. If Apollos would answer so as to leave even room for an inference, Caiaphas knew that a most damaging case could be made out. But Apollos was aware of no predicament. His guilelessness sustained him.

"As stated before," replied Apollos, "I have never expressed myself on this, and expect to give it careful study and consideration

before I do. I can only tell you what my principles are, and assure you that I will stand by them. I am not afraid of anything God says on this or any other subject. Furthermore I shall not put myself to the task of 'spiritualizing' or of explaining away the plain import of God's Word in order to help God out of a difficulty. He needs no such help from us. I remember what happened to a man named Uzzah, who, in his concern for the safety of the Ark put forth his hand to steady it."

Caiaphas sat silent, turning Apollos' speech over in his mind. There was precious little in it that could be taken hold of; but perhaps it would furnish some basis after all. Alexander now took up the string. "These things will cause trouble, Brother Apollos," he said. "Everybody likes you mighty well, and we would be mighty sorry, both on the Church's account and on yours to have any trouble, and maybe to lose you from among us." Apollos was half amused. "As for your 'losing' me—whenever it is to the advantage of the Church that I leave this place, you could not even induce me to stay. But why should this cause trouble?" "It *will* cause trouble, Brother Apollos," said Alexander. "The brethren will not stand for it. You will disturb the Church by introducing these controverted subjects and you are in good way to become a 'troubler of Israel.' Brother Diotrephes, whose scholarship and knowledge of the Bible is fully as good as any man's on earth, says he will be with us in the fight to extirpate such notions as yours. I tell you there will be trouble."

It flashed upon Apollos in a moment. That was astonishing news. So these brethren who had come to find out what he believed had already arranged to fight before they really knew what it was they were fighting and had consulted with Diotrephes over it. Well! But Apollos kept his head.

"If I understand you then, brethren," he answered, "the case is that unless *I* should cease teaching what I find in God's word, *you* will cause trouble, and then *I* shall be a disturber of the churches and the troubler of Israel. Is *that* what you mean?"

Alexander gritted his teeth. "As you please, sir; the brethren will find out who the troubler of Israel is." And the callers rose up and spoke some cordial words to cover the bitter taste of the meeting and departed.

#### TWIXT PRINCIPLE AND EXPEDIENCY.

On the next evening Apollos was in consultation with James and Simon. Already the report was out, James told them, that when questioned straightly by Caiaphas, Apollos had "admitted" that we should have to go to Jerusalem again to worship, and that bloody sacrifices would be re-instituted in the Temple by way of celebrating the death of Christ. Apollos' face portrayed blank amazement at the news. "I said nothing like that, brethren," he said, and his voice labored as he spoke. "I was absolutely non-committal. Surely those brethren did not send out such a report." And Apollos went over the conversation he had had with Caiaphas on the point. "It was not well, Brother Apollos," said Simeon,

“that you allowed yourself to be drawn into a discussion. It would have been wiser to have refused to say anything at all to those brethren. They had not come to weigh and consider. You are in a place now where the harmlessness of the dove must be seconded by the wisdom of the serpent. However, I would not take that report too seriously as yet. Reports grow as they pass from mouth to mouth, and when we find out what is really at the bottom of it, it may after all not be so grievous.” Apollos was evidently relieved at the suggestion. His conference with the brethren was chiefly on “What do next?” He suggested leaving the work and the city of X. Simeon and James turned the idea down with indignation. “You cannot go now,” they told him. “To do so at this time would be as much as a surrender of the principle for which you have to fight. Besides the whole church will not only be unwilling for you to leave, but will demand that you stand your ground, as soon as they realize the situation.”

The next question was, should the Enquirers' meeting be discontinued? It had assumed a shape and proportion not at first contemplated Apollos argued. Would it make for peace to discontinue it? “Yea,” answered James; “the sort of peace that surrenders right and light, and leaves our children to fall into a bondage of ecclesiastical tyranny. That may do in the case of a sect. We are *Christians*—and a Christian is nothing if he be not free. We can show love and consideration, but ‘peace at any price’ is not of God’s mind. ‘The wisdom that is from above is *first* pure, *then* peaceable.’ Even granting that the Bible teachings in dispute were unimportant—which we can by no means concede—even an unimportant matter can become important when a principle is involved. But although I am not as clear in these doctrines as you are, I can see that these things are bound to be important, no matter which way the decision goes. I am thoroughly with you in your earnest and truth-seeking attitude. You are in a fight for principle, as well as for truth; and I have no fears that you will not quit yourself like a man.”

So it was decided that the Enquirers' meeting should continue; that all care and wisdom should be exercised to avoid all just ground for criticism and to provoke, if possible, the very enemies to love, while in no wise surrendering the right and liberty of common Bible investigation and teaching of Truth.

(To be continued.)

There are Christians and even congregations who boast of their high estate in undenominational Christianity—truly there is no greater privilege nor higher ground!—and that they stand on the word of God alone, and are free from human ecclesiasticism. But how few truly stand upon that ground! Many are just as much under the thumb of some set of men, as any sectarian ever was under the yoke of a creed; and are ready to turn for or against any brother without valid investigation, whenever their religious paper gives them the signal to “wig-wag.” That is the travesty of the simple faith!

## THE SECOND LORD'S DAY LESSON OF NOVEMBER.

Lesson 7.

November 12, 1916.

## "WORLD'S TEMPERANCE SUNDAY."

Golden Text.—"It is good not to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor to do anything whereby thy brother stumbleth." Rom. 14:21.

Lesson Text.\*—Rom. 14:13—15:3. Memorize 14:16, 17.

13 Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge ye this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock in his brother's way, or an occasion of falling. 14 I know, and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus, that nothing is unclean of itself: save that to him who accounteth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean. 15 For if because of meat thy brother is grieved, thou walkest no longer in love. Destroy not with thy meat him for whom Christ died. 16 Let not then your good be evil spoken of: 17 for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. 18 For he that herein serveth Christ is well-pleasing to God, and approved of men. 19 So then let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another. 20 Overthrow not for meat's sake the work of God. All things indeed are clean; howbeit it is evil for that man who eateth with offence. 21 It is good not to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor to do anything whereby thy brother stumbleth. 22 The faith which thou hast, have thou to thyself before God. Happy is he that judgeth not himself in that which he approveth. 23 But he that doubteth is condemned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith; and whatsoever is not of faith is sin. 15 Now we that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. 2 Let each one of us please his neighbor for that which is good, unto edifying. 3 For Christ also pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell upon me.

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ing God in these great things? Did the apostle mean that we should sacrifice truth and principle in order to then? (v. 13; 1 Cor. 8:13).

Verse 19. Shall we give up personal privileges and liberties for a brother's benefit? With what shall we edify one another?

On the first twelve verses of this chapter see Notes.

Verse 13. What does he mean by "judging one another?" (See vs. 2, 3). Is it easy to criticise? What ought we rather to judge, and whose conduct ought we to guard in critical light? Is that so easy? Why not? What special point ought we to watch?

Verse 14. What did Paul know? How did he know it? Was he speaking of everything or only of meats? (See context and 1 Tim. 4:4; but Gal. 5:19-21). But if we ate meats which we believed to be (religiously) unclean, would it be a sin? Does this rule work both ways—that is, if we regard anything to be right, does that make it so? (Prov. 14:12).

Verse 15. How could I "grieve" my brother with meats? How could I destroy my brother with meat? 1 Cor. 8:9-13. If I am free to eat, am I not equally free not to eat? Can I exercise my liberty both ways therefore? Does it make me any better to eat? (1 Cor. 8:8). Is it not then a matter of indifference? Is that true (as some have imagined) of the teaching of any portions of God's word—as prophecy, for example:—does it make no difference at all whether such a great portion of God's word is taught or not?

Verse 16. If I eat hog meat, for instance, is that right? (1 Tim. 4:4, 5). But if it should give others offense, and provoke evil criticism should I risk that?

Verse 17. What are the essential features of the kingdom of God? Is it the will of God that Christians (who are in the kingdom) should exhibit these features in the sight of an on-looking world? Should they sacrifice these great things just so they may have their way about meats, etc.?

Verse 18. What is the good of serving the apostle mean that we should sacrifice peace? What does he mean

Verse 20. How can a man for meat's sake overthrow the work of God? See above on verse 15. What is "the work of God?" Eph. 2:10; Phil. 1:6.

Verse 21. While then there is no Divine prohibition of meats and drinks, what shall we do if it carries a bad influence upon others or diminishes our influence for good? Apply that to questionable practices of today.

Verse 22. What "faith" is he here speaking of? Faith in the Bible? The faith that was once for all delivered to the saints? (Jude 3). Or the faith he expresses in verse 14, namely, that it is permissible for a Christian to eat meats? How does he mean for us to have it to ourselves? (v. 21).

Verse 23. If a man is doubtful as to whether an action of his is pleasing to God and yet he engages in it—what is the result? Why? What general principle, therefore does Paul lay down for us? May a Christian engage in anything concerning which he is not assured that God approves?

Chapter 15. Verse 1. Who are the strong? (See 14:1, 2. 1 Cor. 8:1, 7). If we have better light than others, under what obligation does that put us? Comp. Gal. 6:2.

Verse 2. Is it right to please men? 1 Cor. 10:33. For what end should we please men? What is the wrong sort of men-pleasing? Gal. 1:10.

Verse 3. Did Christ use His superior power and wisdom to please Himself? Did He not bear reproach both on God's and man's account?

#### NOTES ON LESSON 7.

##### The Attitude Toward Weak Brethren. Rom. 14:1-12

It is plain from the connection that the brother who is "weak in the faith" is the one who has not as yet understood that in Christ he is emancipated from carnal ordinances, such as meats, drinks, keeping of Sabbaths and holy days and seasons. (Col. 2:16, etc.) The "strong" therefore are those who realize their freedom and standing in Christ. (v. 2). Our treatment of such a weak brother should be marked by utmost consideration. It is not at all said that we may not teach him better at the right opportunity, in wisdom and gentleness. But, first of all, we must not exclude him from our fellowship; and, secondly, we must not set upon him, and try to decide his scruples for him; and thirdly, we must watch our own conduct for his sake, lest he might imitate us in our free practices before he has really settled his own scruples—which would mean disaster for him. (Read the similar teaching of 1 Cor. 8).

Both the weak and the strong have a point to watch. The "strong" may be tempted to despise the foolish scruples of the weak, and to "set him at naught." The "weak" on the other hand, will be inclined to judge and condemn those who do not feel themselves bound by his scruples. The Holy Spirit warns both. (Vs. 4, 5). Then He lays down the bed-rock principle of Christian freedom and mutual tolerance: namely that first of all each Christian is personally responsible to the Lord alone: to the Lord he must render account of himself; and the Lord alone is his Judge. (v. 12). This fact, however, while delivering us from the jurisdiction and possible tyranny of men, does not (as some seem to think) leave us irresponsible. It binds us hard and fast to "the law of liberty," which is the law of love toward Christ, and love to the brethren.

##### Days and Meats.

Take for example the case of the Sabbath-keeper. "One man esteemeth one day above another; another esteemeth every day alike. Let each man be fully persuaded in his own mind." (V. 5). This statement of the case by the apostle confutes at one stroke and forever the contention of the Seventh-Day people of our day, that the Sabbath is binding and obligatory on the Christian. Had it been, Paul could never have written this verse. Furthermore the context shows that the Sabbath-keeper is the "weak brother" in the case. But now—granted that this weak brother is willing to meet with the other brethren on the first day of the week to break bread, and otherwise work with them in harmony—if he does not judge and condemn us for not observing the Sabbath, we are not to set him at naught for observing it. The same holds true about meats and the like.

## THE THIRD LORD'S DAY LESSON OF NOVEMBER.

Lesson 8.

November 19, 1916.

## FROM MELITA TO ROME.

Golden Text.—“I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth.” Rom. 1:16.

Lesson Text.\*—Acts 28:11-31. Memorize verses 30, 31.

11 And after three months we set sail in a ship of Alexandria which had wintered in the island, whose sign was The Twin Brothers. 12 And touching at Syracuse, we tarried there three days. 13 And from thence we made a circuit, and arrived at Rhegium: and after one day a south wind sprang up, and on the second day we came to Puteoli; 14 where we found brethren, and were entreated to tarry with them seven days: and so we came to Rome. 15 And from thence the brethren, when they heard of us, came to meet us as far as The Market of Appius and The Three Taverns; whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage. 16 And when we entered into Rome, Paul was suffered to abide by himself with the soldier that guarded him. 17 And it came to pass that after three days he called together those that were the chief of the Jews: and when they were come together, he said unto them, I, brethren, though I had done nothing against the people, or the customs of our fathers, yet was delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans: 18 who, when they had examined me, desired to set me at liberty, because there was no cause of death in me. 19 But when the Jews spake against it, I was constrained to appeal to Caesar; not that I had aught whereof to accuse my nation. 20 For this cause therefore did I entreat you to see and speak with me: for because of the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain. 21 And they said unto him, We neither received letters from Judaea concerning thee, nor did any of the brethren come hither and report or speak any harm of thee. 22 But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest: for as concerning this sect, it is known to us that everywhere it is spoken against. 23 And when they had appointed him a day, they came to

Verse 11. This lesson begins where the lesson of Nov. 5 left off. A brief glance therefore at the “First Lord’s Day Lesson of November” will give us the connection.

Verses 11-15. What in these verses shows the preciousness of brotherly love and Christian fellowship to the servant of God? Do Christians need one another for encouragement and mutual strengthening?

Verse 16. Had Paul been shown favor and good treatment all along while prisoner? 22:29; 23:10, 23, 24; 27:3, etc. What privilege was granted him in Rome?

Verses 17-20. To whom did Paul always preach first? What, according to this speech, was his object in calling the leading Jews together? Had Paul come to Rome to accuse his nation? Why was Paul really bound? Did Israel have a hope? What was it? 24:25; 26:6-8; Luke 1:69, 70. It is still “the hope” that calls forth more virulent opposition against those who maintain its place and importance, than almost any other feature of the gospel. Titus 2:13.

Verses 21, 22. What did they desire to hear of Paul? Did they seem to regard Paul’s conviction as his mere “think so?” And how did they estimate the church of God? Is God’s church a “sect?” Should believers in Christ be members of “sects?” Gal. 5:20; 1 Cor. 1:10-13. Can a man be a member of the One church (Eph. 4:4) without joining any sect? How? Acts 2:37-42. Was God’s church “spoken against” on all sides then? Will that always be more or less the case? (Luke 6:26; 2 Tim. 3:12).

Verse 23. How long did Paul preach on this day? What was his theme? Comp. Acts 8:12; 20:25. From what did he draw his proof and authority? Why?

Verse 24. Was Paul the right sort of preacher, with the right message? Did they all accept his preaching? Does it follow that when the truth is

him, into his lodging in great number; to whom he expounded the matter, testifying the kingdom of God, and persuading them concerning Jesus, both from the law of Moses and from the prophets, from morning till evening. 24 And some believed the things which were spoken, and some disbelieved. 30 And he abode two whole years in his own hired dwelling, and received all that went in unto him, 31 preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, none forbidding him.

preached in love everyone that hears it will accept it? Why not? (John 5:40). For verses 25-29 see Notes.

Verses 30, 31. How long did this ministry in Rome continue? Consider here Phil. 1:12 and Rom. 8:28. Remember Acts 23:11. What did Paul preach and teach all this time? What quality marked his preaching? Eph. 6:19, 20.

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### NOTES ON LESSON 8.

This lesson closes the study of the Book of Acts. Paul's journey to Rome is accomplished. His first move was to call the Jews and explain the manner of his arrival and to express his desire to set his case before them. They responded favorably, and so, on a set day, the Jews came, and from morning to evening Paul thought them concerning the kingdom of God and the Lord Jesus Christ, adducing the testimony of the Old Testament at every point. (Comp. Luke 24:44-47). The result was disappointing as on every previous occasion, and in every other place, the Jews at the world-center (Rome) also failed to accept the word of Christ with anything like unanimity. "Some believed and some disbelieved." It was then that the Holy Spirit pronounced upon them again the passage concerning the willful blindness and doom of Israel which had first been spoken by Isaiah. "Go thou unto this people, and say," etc.

#### Three Stages in Israel's Career.

Three times are these remarkable words uttered regarding Israel, in the New Testament; and each time at an important crisis. When first the Jewish leaders had decided upon the murder of the Lord (Matt. 12:14) thus avowing their absolute and bitter rejection of their Christ—Jesus "withdrew" (Matt. 12:15) and subsequently took up a new method (parables) of teaching truths thitherto unrevealed; and justified His course by this quotation from Isaiah. (Matt. 13:10-15). Again on the eve of Christ's crucifixion, summing up in retrospect Israel's failure, John quotes this same passage from Isaiah. (John 12). And, then, the third and last time, in this present lesson; after God had long waited for Israel and had tried them out, and a limit and crisis had been reached for the nation. Israel as a nation now enters into their long rejection. The gospel goes out to the Gentiles. Thus do men trifle with the truth and refuse the light; and thus does God patiently wait and forbear—not by any means slack concerning his promise, but long-suffering, not willing that any should perish, but that all might come to repentance. (2 Pet. 3:9). When the judgment comes it falls with terrible and inevitable force. So it was with Israel; so is it yet and so will it be with men today who have not received the love of the truth that they may be saved. (2 Thess. 2:12, 13).

#### The Abrupt Close of "Acts."

We have followed the course of this great book now to its end. On the first page of it we saw the plan of it outlined: "Ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 1:8). We have observed the order of progress—in Jerusalem up to chapter 8; then into Judea, and Samaria; and from chapter 13 to the end spreading far and wide in all the world. Rome was the earth's center and capital. When the Apostle reaches the Imperial City and performs his task there, the task of the writer of the Book of Acts is also done, and the record is closed.

## THE FOURTH LORD'S DAY LESSON OF NOVEMBER

Lesson 9.

November 26, 1916.

## A LIVING SACRIFICE.

**Golden Text.**—"Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service." Rom. 12:1.

**Lesson Text.**\*—Rom. 12. Memorize verses 6-8.

1. I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service. 2 And be not fashioned according to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God. 3 For I say, through the grace that was given me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but so to think as to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to each man a measure of faith. 4 For even as we have many members in one body, and all the members have not the same office: 5 so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and severally members one of another. 6 And having gifts differing according to the grace that was given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of our faith; 7 or ministry, let us give ourselves to our ministry; or he that teacheth, to his teaching; 8 or he that exhorteth, to his exhorting: he that giveth, let him do it with liberality; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness.

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Verses 6-8. What different gifts does he use for examples? Are the Christian gifts and aptitudes today also "according to the grace of God?" Does he mean that any Christian is exempted from teaching, ministering, or giving, because he can rule or exhort? Or does he mean that, while willing to do anything that needs to be done at any time, a man should make a specialty of doing his own peculiar work? (1 Tim. 4:13-16). How prophecy? (1 Cor. 14:3). How minister? (1 Pet. 4:10, 11). For Rest of This Chapter, See Notes.

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 NOTES ON LESSON 9.

**"I Beseech You Therefore."**

The teaching of this chapter is not given to tell people of the world what to do or not to do. It is exclusively directed to those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, and have become recipients of His wondrous mercies. If a man has not first received from God the blessings which are above all

price. God does not ask him to bow his neck to this yoke of loving surrender. In fact no man could present his body as an acceptable sacrifice, until God had first washed him and made him acceptable. "If then ye were raised together with Christ" (Col. 3:1) you may come and "present yourselves unto God, as alive from the dead." (Rom. 6:13). So God's great mercies come first (and middle and last too, for that matter) and the appeal is based upon those mercies which God has so freely and graciously bestowed upon us. Our bodies belong to God twice over; first by right of creation; second, by redemption; for we are bought with a price. But not until I come and bring my body does God take it and accept it. He will not have it by force or by mere right; but He says, as it were, "I have made you and bought you: you are mine. Will you come and be mine?" Nor is it a passive surrender God asks of us, as if a man should merely lie down and say, "Lord, do with me what you please"—but an active surrender, to know and to do all the will of God, and it alone. So shall we find out how sweet and good and adorable the will of God is.

#### The Rest of the Chapter.

We shall understand it best when we remember that from verse 3 on he describes that surrendered life, and itemizes that "spiritual service" and unworldly, transformed walk of which he speaks in verses 1, 2. After the verses of our lesson (3-8) he takes up one more personal conduct in verse 9. Love must not be feigned, hypocritical. Ponder that. From sin we must shrink as one would from a snake—for that is what the strong word "abhor" means; but to that which is good we must swing with might and main. Verse ten shows what love of the brethren means; verse eleven sets forth the energy of action, and the burning glow ("fervent") of the spirit which pleases God in His service. Through all the vicissitudes of life He would have us to rejoice, be patient, and pray constantly. (v. 12). To saints in need we must open our storehouse (1 John 3:17); and seek the very chance of hospitality. (v. 13, margin). Those who persecute us we are to repay with blessing—and under no circumstances pronounce a curse upon anyone. He wills that we should share the joys and sorrows of others with them, in tender sympathy; that we be of an agreeing turn of mind toward one another—not contrary; that we should not be snobbish but content to be lowly among the lowly; and not think ourselves that we are smart and wise. (vs. 14-16). From verse 17 to the close he takes up chiefly the problem of our attitude toward our enemies. We must not pay them back in their own coin. We should give care not to give even a chance for suspicion. (v. 17). As far as our part of it goes we are to be peace with all men. Nor is it our business to take vengeance on those who wrong us—for the right to do that God has reserved entirely to Himself. But our orders is to treat our enemies with utmost kindness. So shall we "heap coals of fire upon his head." Instead of letting the evil done to us by others embitter our hearts and lead us into resentment and retaliation (thus being "overcome" by it) our God wills that we should meet evil with good, and so overcome it—as light will vanquish and scatter darkness.

These exhortations run right along through the thirteenth and fourteenth and part of the fifteenth chapter, and set forth the beauty of the heavenly life on earth—not that we admire it only, but, enabled in God's grace, may live it.

## THE FIRST LORD'S DAY LESSON OF DECEMBER.

Lesson 10.

December 3, 1916.

## JESUS CHRIST THE FIRST AND THE LAST.

**Golden Text.**—"Fear not; I am the first and the last and the Living one; and I was dead and behold I am alive for evermore." Rev. 1:17, 18.

**Lesson Text.**\*—Rev. 1. Memorize verses 4-6.

1. The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show unto his servants, even the things which must shortly come to pass: and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John; 2 who bare witness of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, even of all things that he saw. 3 Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of the prophecy, and keep the things that are written therein: for the time is at hand. 4 John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace, from him who is and who was and who is to come; and from the seven Spirits that are before his throne; 5 and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the first-born of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loveth us, and loosed us from our sins by his blood; 6 and he made us to be a kingdom, to be priests unto his God and Father; to him be the glory and the dominion for ever and ever. Amen. 7 Behold, he cometh with the clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they that pierced him; and all the tribes of the earth shall mourn over him. Even so, Amen. 8 I am the Alpha and the Omega, saith the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty. 17 And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as one dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying, Fear not; I am the first and the last, 18 and the Living one; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades. 19 Write therefore the things which thou sawest, and the things which are, and the things which shall come to pass hereafter; 20 the mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks are seven churches.

will be glad in that day? (Isa. 65:13,14; 2 Thess. 1:8-10).

Verse 1. Why is this book called a "revelation?" (Comp. Amos 3:7). From whom did this revelation originate? From whom did all true revelation come? (Heb. 1:1, 2). For what purpose was this revelation given? (Comp. John 16:13). For whom was it given? Through whom?

Verse 2. Of what two elements does this revelation consist? Did John study this out, or did he simply "see" and "bear witness?" (Comp. John 21:24).

Verse 3. Upon whom is a blessing pronounced? Is that true of all the other books of the New Testament also? Why then would he specially point it out in the case of this book? What particular reason does he give to show the great benefit of this book?

Verse 4. To whom is this book addressed? To those seven only or to all the churches? 22:16. Who is the first mentioned Divine Person, the One "who is and who was and who is to come?" (v. 8. Note Exod. 3:13-15) with footnote [Revised Version]. Who are the seven Spirits? Why seven? (Eph. 4:4; but comp. Isa. 11:2).

Verse 5. Who is the third Person mentioned? What three things are said of Him? Which was He first? John 3:32-34. When did the second title come to Him? When does He come into actual possession of the third? (Rev. 11:15). What is His attitude toward us? (John 15:9). What was the evidence of that love? Which came first—the love or the redemption?

Verse 6. What else did His love do for us? Comp. Exod. 19:5, 6; 1 Pet. 2:9; Rev. 5:10. In this kingdom of the saints, are the saints merely the subjects, or did God constitute them to be the governmental body, rulers and co-rulers with Christ? Rev. 2:26, 27; 3:21; 1 Cor. 6:2, 3; 2 Tim. 2:12. Is all this then a present fact or is it true in promise and prospect? (Rev. 20:4-6).

Verse 7. What event does the book of Revelation center upon? When Jesus comes in His glory upon the clouds of heaven who shall see Him? (Matt. 24:27-30). Who will mourn, and who

Verse 8. Who else bears the title, Alpha and Omega? (22:13). How can the Son bear this title also? Col. 1:15.

Verse 17. What effect did this vision of Christ have upon John? What shows that Christ was in judgment-array? (v. 15, 16; 2:5, 16, 22, 23; 3:3; 19:11-16). How did the Lord comfort and reassure John?

Verse 18. What other title does the Lord assume here? On what grounds? (Comp. John 11:25, 26; 14:19). How is He the First? John 1:1; Col. 1:16, 17. How the Last? Heb. 1:2, 10-12. Who has control of the prison-house of death and Hades now? (Cp. Heb. 2:14).

Verse 19. What threefold commission to write is given to John? Where does the record of "the things that shall come to pass hereafter" commence? (Rev. 4:1).

Verse 20. What did the seven stars symbolize? How were "stars" used symbolically elsewhere? (Gen. 37:9, 10; Isa. 14:12; Dan. 12:3; Rev. 8:10; 9:1; 22:16). What is the fitness of the symbol of the candle-sticks? (Matt. 5:14-16; 1 Tim. 3:15). When are candlesticks in use, and when do stars shine? (Rom. 13:12).

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### THE GOOD AND EVIL OF LESSON HELPS.

We need hardly waste words to prove that anything that really helps us to get a better grasp on the word of God is a benefit. The benefit of the right sort of helps, is, I think evident to all. But the wrong use of them turns them into a real evil. Too often the "helps" take the place of personal study of the lesson. Too often what should be the teaching of the word of God is turned into a sort of reading and recitation of these "helps" and "comments." It would be far better to use no helps at all than to let them supplant the personal study and direct teaching of the word of God.

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## MISSIONARY NOTES.

DON CARLOS JANES.

“The blessed gospel is for all.”

S. O. Martin, of Smith's Grove, and his wife, are now enroute for India to be associated with Brother Jelley in the work of the Lord.

An experienced missionary writes that at least one good man is needed “to travel among the churches all the time to stir up, to bring to remembrance and to train the churches in the things that are wanting on the missionary question.” Every preacher and all elders can have a hand in this work and it will bring results, for—*The Brethren Will Do More Missionary Work When They Are Taught More.*

There are perhaps a million primitive disciples in Europe. In all Russia, Brother Louis R. Patmont says, there is but one Church of Christ using instrumental music in the worship.

In the matter of the native workers' support, Brother McHenry inquires: “Unless each contributor continues his offering or gets a substitute, what will be the result?” What do you say?

“Almost all the churches receive me kindly. I feel that some have been misinformed and many not informed at all regarding our foreign work. The churches as a rule, I find, are willing, yea, are even glad to have some part in our work.”—*C. G. Vincent.* Sister Vincent is reported as doing well.

Brother Jelley has rented a house in Dehra Dun, U. P. on the strength of S. O. Martin's promise to go to India. Our brother was due to sail on November 4.

Brother McCaleb reports twelve baptisms at Zoshigaya this year. His supporters should stand by him faithfully for he stands by the work faithfully. He needs funds for literature and other purposes.

If you wish to help Miss Sarah Andrews pay her tuition in the language school where she is studying Japanese, send your gift to I. B. Bradley, Dickson, Tenn.

And still there is need for a co-laborer for Brother Sherriff in South Africa! Who will go?

“We always pray for Sister Vincent and you,” writes one of the Japanese Christians to Brother Vincent.

Has it occurred to you that no church that opposes missionary work is fully sound, truly loyal?

Orville Bixler writes from Emporia, Kansas: “I am still in the notion for the foreign fields. I am taking a course in Science looking forward to the medical course as a preparation for the work.”

# THE MONTH'S BOOK SHELF

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God's Gift and Our Response (Rom. 5:12-7:25) .....	.50
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The last three are by Mauro, and cover Romans.

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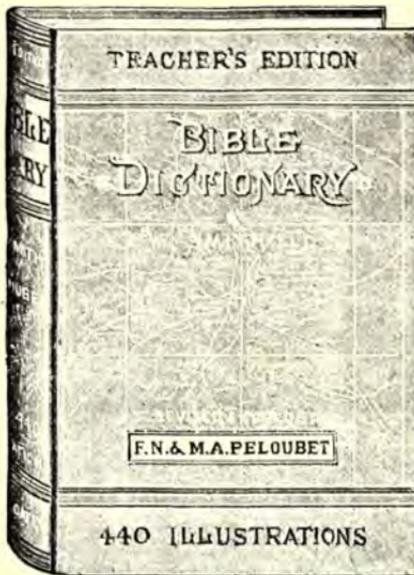
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thyself, and mark, and  
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