

THE WORD AND WORK

(Volume XLVI, May, 1952)

LORD OF MINE

I met Thee in the Sunlight, Lord of mine,
They told me I must love Thee, but the wine
Of young, glad life throbb'd in my veins, and I,
Content with flowers and sunshine, passed Thee by.

I met Thee in the Shadow, Lord of mine,
And in Thy patient face saw love divine;
But hard my heart had grown with loss and pain,
And, in my grief, I passed Thee by again.

I met Thee in the Valley, Lord of mine,
And now I know what loss and pain were Thine;
For me Thou bearest it; to Thee I cry:
My Savior and my God, pass me not by!

Whate'er Thou sendest, blessed Lord of mine,
Or life, or death, may all thy glories shine,
While I on Thine assurances rely
That Thou hast e'en forgot I passed Thee by.

Henceforth for grace to serve, O Lord of mine
I ask Thee. O may my weak heart entwine
About Thy strength, till Thou shalt bear me high
Where, nevermore shall any pass Thee by.

—Katherine Porter

WORDS IN SEASON

R. H. B.

THE SIN OF DESPAIR

There may come a time in a man's life when he thinks that he has gone too far in sin, and that henceforth nothing will make any difference. The elders of the house of Israel in the last days of Jerusalem reasoned that, seeing they had cut themselves off from Jehovah, that He had left them to themselves, and paid no more attention to their doings. So they felt free (fatal freedom!) to do whatever evil they might choose to do. "For, they say, Jehovah seeth us not; Jehovah hath forsaken the land." (Ezek. 8:12.) This was the last and decisive sin. For, let the past have been what it may, if the sinner will yet turn from his sin and turn to God, there would be forgiveness and help. The man who reasons as did those elders of Israel, deliberately cast away the mercy of God.

Thus did King Saul also, who, when he was rejected and forsaken of God, added yet this to all his sin that he went to the witch of En-dor. That filled up the cup of his iniquity. In 1 Chron. 10:13, 14 it is implied that the longsuffering of God had not been

wholly exhausted till he did that; and by this deed, Saul sealed his fate. He "died for his trespass"—his past sin—*but also* for that he asked counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to inquire thereby . . . therefore he slew him." The recklessness of despair is the final fatal climax of man's sin.

Again we read that "when the Lord Jehovah called for weeping and mourning,—“behold joy and gladness, slaying oxen and killing sheep, eating flesh and drinking wine: Let us eat and drink for tomorrow we shall die.” God's answer to this was: “Surely this iniquity shall not be forgiven you, till ye die.” (Isa. 22:12-14.)

THE CASE OF JUDAS

The tragic end of Judas Iscariot was one of the most awful examples of the recklessness of despair. "What matters it now" he must have thought (if indeed he was not past thinking) "What could it matter any more what I may or may not do?" So he went away and hanged himself. Would the story have ended differently if he had gone to Jesus, say in Pilate's judgment hall, or even at the cross, and cast himself at His feet, penitent and pleading for mercy and forgiveness? Who could doubt what would have been the result? But he did not. "He *could not*" you say? In one sense that is true; but it was not (as some think) because he was predestined to such a fate. But God's will for *all men* is that they may be saved. (1 Tim. 2:4.) Clearly it is not possible for God to predestinate anything that is contrary to His own will.

"Can it be true, the grace He is declaring?
Oh let us trust Him, for His words are fair,
Man, what is this, and why art thou despairing?
God shall forgive thee all but thy despair."

"YET EVEN NOW"

Three precious words in Joel's prophecy—somewhat obscured in the King James translation, stand out brightly in the Am. Revised Version: "*Yet Even Now*" (Joel 2:12.) Judgment was already on the way, nay had already begun. But "even now," said the Lord. What even now? The answer is, "Turn ye unto me with all your heart . . . and rend your heart and not your garments, and turn unto Jehovah your God; for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, and repenteth him of the evil." That was the door of hope. It is the same to the sinners today. Do you say I am hopelessly bound in the chains of my iniquities? Unhappy Israel talked like that—"In them [in our sins] have we been of long time, and shall we be saved?" (Isa. 64:5.) Whatever may be your state, your condition, your guilt—God says "*Yet even now* turn unto me with all your heart." The four lepers at the gate of Samaria wisely weighed their chances. "Why sit we here till we die?" they said one to another—"If we go into the city, then the famine is in the city and we shall die there; and if we sit still here we die also. Now therefore, come let us fall unto the host of the Syrians: if they save us alive we shall live; and if they kill us we shall but die." (2 Kings 7:3, 4.) They had nothing to lose and all to gain. So they took their one chance. The old-time hymn summed up the meaning of it:

“Come humble sinner in whose breast
A thousand thoughts revolve,
Come with your doubts and fears oppressed
And make this last resolve:

“I’ll go to Jesus, though my sin
Has like a mountain rose,
His kingdom now I’ll enter in,
Whatever may oppose.”

then this:

“I can but perish if I go,
I am resolved to try,
For if I stay away, I know
I shall forever die.”

But in our hymnbooks they altered it—and did well to do so. Now we read it thus:

“I *cannot* perish if I go,
I am resolved to try,
For if I stay away, I know,
I shall forever die.”

If a sinner friend or an erring brother should chance upon these lines, O may he take the courage of faith and turn to the Savior, regardless of everything, for He is able to save to the uttermost.”

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SLANDER

From the word “slander” the devil derives his name, for that is the meaning of the Greek term “*diabolos*,” translated—transferred, rather—into the English as “Devil.” Now a slander is a falsehood told to the hurt of another’s good name, a defamation, a malicious misrepresentation. It is the Devil’s special and particular line of activity, and he is a past-master of it. He slanders God and slanders men. He slandered Christ and still does so; and there has never been a faithful and earnest Christian who has not come in for his mead of slander at the hands of Satan’s servants. For all the devil’s children bear that family resemblance, as if it were branded on their foreheads. “Ye are of your father the devil” said the Lord Jesus to the Jews, “and the lust of your father it is your will to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and standeth not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own, for he is liar, and the father thereof.” (John 8:44.)

God’s people must give special heed to shun this grievous sin. Under the influence of evil passions—anger, wrath, enmity, envy, jealousy, hate, the soul is thrown out of its balance and the lips utter what the evil heart dictates. The blinding, overpowering influences of religious prejudice and strife must especially be guarded against. One of the hardest things is to avoid misrepresentation in religious controversy. Some appear to think that slander is all right if it is done in the interest of “the cause” or of “sound doctrine.” But God will bring such things into judgment, and all liars shall be cast into the lake of fire.

RIGHTEOUSNESS vs RELIGIOUS POLITICS

In the midst of theological issues and controversies old-fashioned righteousness is too often lost sight of. It is a bad day when questions about mint, anise, and cummin, take precedence over justice, mercy, and faith. It is a bad day when doctrinal soundness holds a value apart from personal purity and uprightness. It is a bad day for the church when it has so many interests, and "politics" to see after that the chief question about any matter that comes up is not "Is it true," or "Is it right," or "Will it please and honor God," or "Is it kind and good"—but "Is it expedient," and "What will such and such people say," and "What advantage will it be to us." You may be as orthodox as Satan (for doubtless he knows the true doctrine) and yet the Lord may have to say to you, "Depart from me ye that *work iniquity*," and you may have to go into that eternal fire which was prepared, not for you, but for the devil and his angels, because you are of his kind and order. Those who side with God will go to God. And that's more than a mere doctrinal proposition.

THE IMPORTANCE OF YOUTH

What you do in youth is exceedingly important. There is nothing falsier nor shallower than the talk often heard, "Oh well, he is young, and young folks will be young folks, etc." Let no one lead you to think that your choice and actions in your youth are of no consequence. At no other time of life are your actions of more or of as much importance. Here are three reasons:

1. Because whatsoever a man soweth he shall also reap. And youth is distinctively the sowing time.

2. Because habits and character are formed in youth. As the sapling bends so the tree grows.

3. Because your youth may be the only time you will ever have. You have no guarantee that you will grow old, or that the future will bring you any opportunities after the present is lost. God loves you now. He seeks and wants you now. And here and now you need Him whatever the future may bring. Remember therefore thy Creator in the days of thy youth!

THE AWFUL IMPORTANCE OF THE BIBLE

If a document involving the inheritance of a large fortune in which I am concerned should fall into my hands, I could not be indifferent in the matter. I would examine the document closely and carefully, and I would try by every means to determine the genuineness and validity of the paper, if any doubt were raised about it. Still more deeply and solemnly would we feel if some writings claiming some supreme governmental authority and involving a life-or-death question for us or others, should come our way. Would we not study it earnestly and intensely? *Should* we not do so? Would it not be inconceivable levity to neglect that sort of message? But the Bible involves far more than that. The very *claim* of the Book, if we knew nothing else about it, would be a challenge to us. It demands that we should faithfully and carefully look into the matter, and see whether indeed this Word has come from God, and what its great message is, and its answer to the supreme question of eternal life or death.

NEWS AND NOTES

Louisville, Ky.: "I was in Lima, Ohio, with the little group where John May lives and labors, over Lora's day, April 13. John and his devoted Catherine have chosen this difficult field—or rather, as they believe, have been providentially chosen of the Lord to labor there. John was with Brother Ruthertord in Lexington, Ky., in a meeting. The Lima group is just as faithful and sacrificing as they come, and those having fellowship with the church there will reap dividends in Eternity."—E. L. J.

The Hollywood Hotel, now advertising in April, May, and June issues of this journal, is the hostelry in which the Boulevard church has assembly quarters. Brethren who visit the area over Sunday on business or vacation should ask at the desk for the church of Christ chapel, as there is another chapel on the (same) first floor; or ask for chapel room No. 100.

Song Leaders' Training Course

Song Leaders' Training Course, Evenings, May 12-16: Will the young men who wish to take this work (whether local or distant), or the churches that plan to send a man, kindly notify any one of the three instructors at earliest possible date? This is particularly important if we are to find lodging places for any of them. Thanks.—E. L. J.

Tell City, Ind.: "Brother H. L. Olmstead is to hold a series of meetings at Lilly Dale church from June 23 to July 6. Pray for us."—Preston Winchell.

Louisville, Ky.: "Two young people were baptized recently at the Ormsby Avenue church. We plan a Vacation Bible School the last half of June. Our next meeting is scheduled to begin Sunday, August 3, with Paul Clark as evangelist. Ormsby is blessed with a fine inner-circle of spiritual Christians."—J. R. Clark.

Louisville Chorus to Give Concert

A group of singers known as the **Christian A Cappella Chorus** under the leadership of Dale Jorgenson plan to give a concert of sacred songs at the Ormsby Avenue Church of Christ, 622 East Orms-

by, Louisville, on Tuesday, May 27, at 7:45 P. M. This group of about forty singers from various local churches of Christ has been meeting at the Jefferson Street church each Tuesday night for several months. This will be their first public appearance. Admission is free. Those in and near Louisville would do well to mark this date on your calendar. We think this is an outstanding chorus.

New Orleans, La.: "Brother N. B. Wright speaks for Oak Grove church on the second and third Sundays of each month. Brother Wright's house-to-house campaign in New Orleans has already brought many visitors to church"—Richard Ramsey.

Brother Richard Ramsey announces the following schedule for meetings: Oakdale church in Louisiana, April 14-20; Amite, April 27 to May 4; Johnson City, Tennessee at Locust Street church, May 7 to 18.

Abram Lee Stults

"Friends of the Congress Street Church in Portland, Maine, mourn the passing of Brother Lee Stults, a faithful brother in the church for fifty-two years. He was 86 years of age. The Word and Work was a great pleasure to him. He read it two or three times over each month. We miss Brother Stults, but have the consolation of knowing that he is with his Lord and Savior, whom he loved and served."—Allen C. Harrington.

Johnson City, Tennessee, Work

Sunday, April 6, marked Brother Kenneth Istre's, and wife Betty's, first anniversary with the Locust Street Church in Johnson City. Also, on January 1, 1951, Brother Paul Clark came to this section to work with the Mountain View brethren, and, in addition to that, worked with the Locust Street brethren until Brother Istre arrived in April. We feel that we are indeed fortunate to have these fine young people in our midst, and believe that it is the work of the Lord in making possible their coming and directing them unto us.

Previously, we had been able to support only one minister on the field to work with both congrega-

tions, but now with the Lord's blessings, we are supporting two full-time ministers; one for each congregation, and under their leadership, we have seen both congregations grow numerically and spiritually. In addition to this, the Lord has blessed us in a material way, especially at Locust Street. During last year we were able to make several improvements to the building, which now makes it a much more commodious place in which to worship. Often when work was started, we did not see how we were going to meet the financial obligation, but God in His goodness has always supplied our need and we have not lacked for anything.

All in all, we feel that last year was a good and profitable one in the service of the Master, and we are looking forward with eager anticipation for His continued blessings. Brother Richard Ramsey will be with us in a revival in May. This will be directed primarily to the youth of the congregation, but may the Lord use it to bless all who attend. Our young people form a large nucleus of both congregations, and Brother Istre and Brother Clark are both doing a wonderful job of keeping them interested in the Lord's work."—The Elders and Deacons of the Locust Street Church, by L. A. Singleton

Flood Threat Over

A word from one of the brethren in Omaha states that several members of the church there were evacuated in the flood threat, but that all are now moving back into their homes without loss of life or property.

Attention, Song Leaders

See April Word and Work for the daily schedule of the **Song Leaders' Clinic**. This is a fine opportunity for young men who are interested in song leading and for older song leaders who have not had the advantage of instructions under such competent men.

E. L. Jorgenson is compiler of a fine hymnal; Dale Jorgenson has done an excellent work in the music department of Kentucky Bible College; Willis H. Allen has had many years of experience in song leading and chorus work in the churches of the Lord.

This short school is from May 12-16 at the Portland church of Christ, 2500 Portland Ave., Louisville, Ky. In addition to music instructions you will enjoy a Bible class each day under R. H. Boll. Plan to come! A mixed audience of local singers will be needed to participate in the singing each day.

Louisville, Ky.: "There has been a total of seven responses (three for baptism, two for membership, and two restorations) at the Parkland Church since the last issue of Word and Work."—J. L. Addams.

New Orleans, La.: "New Orleans has surely been blessed by five nights of song and sermon services led by Brother Paul Clark, minister of Mountain View church, near Johnson City, Tenn.

"His work with the singing was a great help to us, while his sermons were spiritual and inspirational. The whole church was edified and two souls were baptized into Christ."—Richard Ramsey.

Kentucky Bible College

The Kentucky Bible College is announcing closing exercises to be held in the Portland church auditorium Friday, May 30, 8 p. m., at which time two-year certificates will be presented to the graduating students.

The College Chorus has just returned from a highly successful trip, visiting points in five states.

Friends of the college will want to know how the school is faring financially. The Lord has blessed this venture of faith in a wonderful way, supplying needed funds from week to week. At the present time the college treasurer announces insufficient funds to pay teachers in full for the first time this year. May the Lord stir the hearts of His people to remember this good work and to enable the college to end the year without deficit. The college treasurer is Dennis Allen, 2631 Bank St., Louisville 12, Ky.

Ministers would do well to recommend K. B. C. to their High School Seniors, and to send names of prospective students to Winston Allen, 2630 Montgomery, Louisville 12, Ky.

Order supplies for Vacation Bible School from Word and Work.

R. C. HOWELL

Late in the evening of March 25 word came that Brother R. C. Howell, ninety years old prominent Perry County resident and pillar in the Lilly Dale church of Christ had gone to be with the Lord. He was born in Monroe County, Ohio. November 30, 1861. At the age of six, Mr. Howell with his parents went to Missouri and when he was fourteen he came to Indiana and settled in the same neighborhood where he spent the remainder of his-life.

Brother Howell was baptized into Christ at the age of twenty-one. On October, 1889 he was united in marriage to Miss Jenny Malone. He taught school for 38 years and was 72 years of age when he retired. He served as elder of the Lilly Dale church for thirty years. Brother Howell was a fine Christian man with the highest moral and spiritual principles. He was an inspiration to the church and to me especially. I often found strength and encouragement as I sat at his feet, listening to his words of wisdom and experience.

He is survived by his wife, three sons, two daughters, ten grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren. Funeral services were conducted by E. C. Ringer and the writer.—Preston Winchell.

CLARENCE ELMORE SUELL

On March 25th, the South Louisville Church suffered the loss of one of her elders, Brother C. E. Suell. The passing of Brother Suell came as no surprise, for he had been in declining health for well over a year. He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Gladys D. Suell; a son, Glenn E. Suell; father Charles O. Suell; sister, Mrs. Margaret E. Beyrodt; two brothers, Robert O. and James F. Suell.

Brother Suell was an active member of the South Louisville Church, having served at one time or another during the past six years as teacher of the high school class, chairman of the business meeting, deacon and elder, and as Director of the Kentucky Bible College.

Brother Suell was a good man in the fuller sense of the word good. He believed in the Lord, and trusted implicitly in the work and word of God. He lived a life that expressed this faith. Humble, yet always loyal to those things that counted most for God; patient, and especially resigned to the will and purpose of the Lord in his prolonged illness; his memory is a monument of faith and unselfishness.—N. Wilson Burks.

CONTEMPT FOR "ORTHODOXY"

We believe that the present common contempt for "orthodoxy" is largely due to iniquity perpetrated in the interest of sound doctrine, real or supposed. People of the world, despite their spiritual blindness, can see the inconsistency of upholding truth by means of falsehood, and serving the interests of a holy God by trickery, oppression, and wickedness. And they rightly conclude that *such* orthodoxy is worth nothing. They go too far in their conclusions generally: they conclude that orthodoxy itself is not worth having, or even that there is no such thing; and that uprightness alone is sufficient without faith of any sort. But lay such errors at the door of scheming hypocritical evildoers, professing to be servants of the Most High God. "Will ye speak unrighteously for God?" asked Job of his argumentative friends, "and will ye talk deceitfully for *him*?" (Job 13:7). "For thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness; evil shall not stand in thy sight; thou hatest all workers of iniquity. Thou wilt destroy them that speak lies." "Whoso privily slandereth his neighbor him will I destroy. . . He that speaketh falsehood shall not be established before mine eyes." "For Jehovah is righteous; he loveth righteousness; the upright shall behold His face."—R. H. B.

PAUL'S GOSPEL II.

R. H. B.

It was shown in the preceding article that Paul's gospel was not essentially different from that preached by the rest of the apostles. But because Paul's apostleship was more especially to the Gentiles certain truths came into prominence, and certain questions arose, which it fell to Paul to answer and expound. Thus in Paul's teaching the grace of God came in for special notice, as we have seen. Also that the mystery of the Church was made more fully manifest through Paul's ministry, when everywhere Gentiles became fellow-members of the Body, fellow-heirs, and fellow-partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus. All this was brought out in last month's article on "Paul's Gospel".

Other facts concerning the nature of the Church, and her distinctive calling came into fuller light through Paul's teaching—namely (1) that the Church is an "election," and (2) that she stands in a unique and exclusive relation to her Lord, the Lord Jesus Christ.

THE CHURCH AN ELECTION

Not nations as such, neither the Jewish nation nor any Gentile nation, but individuals chosen from among all (that is, such as respond to the call of the gospel, 2 Thess. 2:13)—these make up the church. The very word "*ekklesia*" means "a called out assembly." "God visited the Gentiles [mg. "the nations"] to take out of them a people for his name." (Acts 15:14). Thus in the Apocalypse it is said that the Lamb purchased unto God with His blood "men of every tribe and tongue and people and nation" (Rev. 5:9, 10). That is "the church of the Lord which he bought with his own blood" (Acts 20:28).

In this we see the refutation of the wide-spread notion that the church is to convert the world, and that in this way all the world would ultimately become the church. Throughout the present dispensation, far from becoming world-wide, universal, and dominant, the church will ever be an elect minority chosen out of the world. Paul's work was not "by some means to save all," but "by all means to save some." Even though (as in Corinth for instance) "many, hearing, believed, and were baptized"—these were never more than a small company in comparison to the great populace. In the cities where the gospel was preached, the vast multitudes went heedless on their way. Moreover the small company which was called out was destined evermore to be the object of the world's hatred and persecution. Like her Lord (for "as he is so are we in the world"), she must walk in the way of the cross, poor, despised, and rejected of men. For "all that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (2 Tim. 3:12). Nor would there be any change for the better in the course of time, but the last days will be the worst of all. (2 Tim. 3:1; 4:3, 4; Luke 18:8). The faithful church will never before the Lord's return be triumphant. It is her lot evermore to go forth with Him without the gate, bearing His reproach; for she has no abiding city here; she looks for one to come (Heb. 13:13, 14). Not by mass-gatherings, but by the election of individuals is the church formed.

The church is the house of God, Paul tells us, a holy temple, the habitation of God by the Spirit (1 Tim. 3:15; Eph. 2:20-23; 1 Cor. 3:16; comp. also 1 Pet. 2:5). An even more exalted position Paul ascribes to her: she is the Body of Christ, united to the living Head in heaven. (Eph. 1:20; Col. 1:18.) From Him she derives her life and power, and by His will and direction she acts. As once He used His physical body while on earth, so would He use His spiritual body for His ministry in the world.

In another relation, the church is *the bride of Christ*, destined to be joined to Him in eternal, indissoluble wedlock, in the day when He shall present her to himself without spot or blemish, a glorious church, "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing." (Eph. 5:27.) As in Israel there were two steps in marriage—betrothal and wedding—so the church is now espoused to Christ as His bride; but to be married to Him for ever in that day (Rev. 19:7-9). "I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy," Paul writes to the church in Corinth, "for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a pure virgin to Christ" (2 Cor. 11:2). She is thus betrothed to Him now. The present is the testing-time. Will she be true to her Bridegroom? "But I fear lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve in his craftiness, your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity and purity that is toward Christ" (2 Cor. 11:3). For, in her case, the friendship of the world is as spiritual adultery (Jas. 4:4). But it is also written that He is working now for her perfecting—cleansing her "by the washing of water by the word." He is able to keep us from stumbling, and to present us before the presence of His glory without blemish in exceeding joy (Jude 24); and we shall be like Him when He shall appear.

Such is the teaching given through Paul of the wonder and glory of the church. There will be a function for that Temple when its building is finished; of that Body when at last it is complete, and of that Bride when she is finally gathered out and joined to her Lord in glory for ever. And this we know, that in ages to come He will show the exceeding riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus (Eph. 2:7). Eye has not seen, nor has ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for them that love Him.

It fell to Paul also to explain and to vindicate God's dealings with the Jews. This we shall take up in the next article.

THE INSPIRED WORD

The Scriptures teach, they judge the heart, they correct, they discipline according to righteousness, in order that the man of God may be perfect, that is, thoroughly instructed in the will of God, his mind formed after that will and completely furnished for **every good work**. The power for performing these comes from the actings of the Spirit.
—J. N. Darby.

SPIRITUAL DEMANDS

The surrendered man sees things as never before. To him the Word of God becomes a new book. It thrills; it quickens; it convicts of failure and of un-Christlikeness; it searches and lays bare the innermost depths of the soul; it discloses the holiness of God; it begets new aspirations; it stirs to zeal and service before unknown.—James H. McConkey.

DESPISE NOT SYMBOLRY

Stanford Chambers

Our Lord makes great use of symbols. They are to be found in His book from Genesis to Revelation. Are they there for our mystification or for our illumination, to keep us in the dark or to lead us to the heights and depths of His vast truth? Some have an aversion, even seem frightened at the thought of attempting to get at the meaning of Bible symbols, and some, even preachers, all but boast that they do not waste their time trying to interpret the symbolical Scriptures. What is that but to hold in contempt things God has put in His holy Book? Any one should know there is something wrong there.

Few realize how much symbolry there is in the Bible, and fewer still appreciate how enriching it is. From Abel to Christ the altar with its victim was a symbol. The ark of the covenant was a symbol; the tabernacle was a symbol, also the temple, of course; the sabbath rest was a symbol. The vine, the vineyard, the shepherd, the sheepfold, the field, the soil, the seed, the sower, the reaper, the harvest, each is a symbol, none the less real therefore, and the thing symbolized none the less real. For a thing to have been symbolized does not make it a vague, abstract or shadowy something or nothing.

"Upon this rock I will build my church." Rock is a symbol; is it mystifying or enriching? "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven." The term keys is used symbolically; is it confusing? Is it a waste of time to seek its depth of meaning, whose depth who has yet sounded? Marriage, bridegroom, the bride, the virgins, all are enriching symbols. To take them away from God's book would be to impoverish it to that extent. The lamb, the oxen, the doves; the fig tree, the cedar, the giant oak; the priest, the shewbread, the candlestick, the incense, the mercy seat. The wheat, the tares; the sheep, the goats; the lion, the bear, the leopard, the serpent, the dragon; women, the bad like Jezebel with her children, the scarlet woman and her daughters, the chaste virgin espoused to one Husband. Would any consent for the Bible to be robbed of this symbolry? A symbol like a picture gives more information than many words, especially the prosaic kind.

Confusion has been created over the distinction between the "literal" and the "spiritual," so they say. Perhaps it is nearer the truth to say it has arisen from an undue amount of allegorizing. Origen launched forth on that line when historical developments and the prophecies did not seem to harmonize. Swedenborg and Russell of modern times have gone farther on that line than any others, but many there are who have adopted more or less of Whitby, though they repudiate Russell and Swedenborg. There is a wide difference between the theory of interpretation which assumes, a priori, that when the prophets say one thing he means something else; that his whole forecast is allegory if perchance it contains some symbolry, and that interpreting which considers the language figurative only when the sense and the context require it.

Just what things are the literal things? Is the fire of Gehenna

literal? It is not our kind of fire, which destroys "the body and after that hath no more it can do." It might be pertinent to ask, Is our kind of fire the literal or is that kind the literal? Be that as it may, each kind is very real. The gold of heaven, is it literal gold? It is different from our "gold that perisheth." Is our kind the literal and heaven's kind only figurative? What if it is the other way round? What if it should turn out that our kind is gold only in an accommodated sense? Change the term gold to the term riches, and our statement could hardly be challenged. Isn't it true that whatever the symbol, the thing symbolized is a thing that is real, not some shadowy or airy nothing, a thing which to try to understand is a waste of time?

Our Lord's table is a symbol. Is it a waste of time to try to sound its depths never yet fathomed? Emblematic (Symbolic) of His sacrificed body and shed blood, we say. But how easy to be saying little more than words, never thinking below the surface, therefore lacking in appreciation! Baptism is a symbol, symbolizing the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. That is as far as some have gone, and they think they know all there is of baptism. And that is short of even the first principles of baptism! Baptism touches death, His and yours; it touches life, His and yours; it identifies the two, and who knows or can know fully what it means? The preciousness is more and more ours as we seek its deeper meaning, and the newness of life never grows old. The pillar of cloud, the Shekinah, was a guide to Israel by day and a light by night, and all the while it symbolized the glory of Jehovah and His actual presence, a thing that should be more real to faith than anything is to sight. "The things that are seen are temporal, the things that are not seen are eternal."

"I counsel thee to buy of me gold refined in the fire, that thou mayest become rich; and white garments, that thou mayest clothe thyself, and that the shame of thy nakedness be not made manifest; and eyesalve that thou mayest see."

"These are they that have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

Try to express these truths and convey their richness using your own plain prosaic language, and then surely you will appreciate our Father's well-chosen symbols to convey to us, His beloved children, truths in their breadth and length and height and depth which are our own possessions, which we ought to go on in to possess.

"Outgushing beneath the throne of God,
And of the blest Lamb at His right hand,
Thence runs the crystal stream of life,
A fountain of joy in that glorious land."

THE LIGHT OF GOD

In the light we can walk and work. We walk in the light and become entirely children of light. We let our light, the light of God, shine, so that men may see our good works, and glorify our Father in heaven. As we give ourselves to transmit the light of God, so unceasingly it shines into us. Our one work is to admit, then transmit the light of God in Christ.—Andrew Murray.

"HIS CRAFT AND POWER ARE GREAT"

Ernest E. Lyon

In his fine old hymn, "A Mighty Fortress," Martin Luther makes the above statement of our adversary, Satan. It is certainly no overstatement of the facts; for, as Luther goes on to say, we could not resist him if we had to strive in our own strength. But thanks be to God, we do not have to strive in our own strength.

I have been thinking lately about the many ways Satan tries to break through the Christian's armor and make him fall. One of them that occurred to me is Satan's habit of striking at men in what so often seems to be their strong points. In Old and New Testaments and in personal history we have many examples of that seemingly odd point.

Take Peter for example. Was not Peter the one who was the most ready to confess the name of the Lord? Was he not one who came to follow the Lord early in His ministry, the one to first make the great confession of Jesus the Christ, the leader of all the apostles in their service to Him? Yet it was Peter who denied the Lord, Peter who cursed and swore he never knew Him, Peter whose words on that fatal night were in the exact reverse of his words at Caesarea Philippi when the Lord had asked the apostles, "But who say ye that I am?" Yes, when Satan asked to have Peter to sift him he tempted him in a strong point, one so strong that Peter had said, "If I must die with thee, I will not deny thee."

Or take Noah for another example. Of him it was written, "Noah was a righteous man, and perfect in his generations; Noah walked with God." Yet there is one very bad picture of Noah given, and look at that one: "Noah began to be a husbandman, and planted a vineyard; and he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent." Righteous Noah so drunk that he lost all sense of decency for the moment (though, to his credit, he remained in his own tent). He that walked with God filled himself so with strong drink that he could not even walk with men. His temptation had also come in a strong point.

There are many Old Testament examples. Moses was the meekest man on the face of the earth, one who walked before the people only in the strength of God and who was ready to proclaim his complete dependence upon the Lord. Yet at Meribah he smote the rock twice with his rod as if he had brought forth the water, and said: "Shall we bring you forth water out of this rock?" How unlike him; and how like Satan to tempt him in his greatest strength. So we can expect the same thing in others: Abraham, the man of faith, failing to look to God to save his life when he went into Egypt, lying about Sarah to "save his skin"; or David, who followed God's ways and abided God's time so much that he would not kill his greatest enemy because he was God's anointed, yet took another man's wife and then killed the innocent husband.

Examples could be multiplied but the lesson should be learned before now. "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1 Cor. 10:12); and, "He hath said unto me "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my power is made perfect in weak-

ness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my weakness, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." (2 Cor. 12:9). Whenever a Christian feels that he is so strong in some point that he cannot fail in that thing, so strong that he need no longer bother God about that matter, then he is in great danger, for Satan takes note of such over-confidence and is ready to cast a stumblingblock in his way, hoping thereby to cast him into utter despair. For one could reason, if I fail so in my strong point think how badly I shall do in my weak ones; there is no hope, one might conclude.

Now the point in all this is that we need to realize that we are nothing, that Christ is everything. We need to take up our cross daily, proclaiming our death, realizing that a dead man has no strength, and then living in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me. He gave himself up for me because I was in such need; I could not help myself. Now let me lay aside self and allow Christ to fill and use me to His honor and glory.

A Lesson in Socialism

As a teacher in the public schools, I find that the socialist-communist idea of taking "from each according to his ability" and giving "to each according to his need" is now generally accepted without question by most of our pupils. In an effort to explain the fallacy in this theory, I sometimes try this approach with my pupils:

When one of the brighter or harder-working pupils makes a grade of 95 on a test, I suggest that I take away 20 points and give them to a student who has made only 55 points on his test. Thus each would contribute according to his ability and—since both would have a passing mark—each would receive according to his need. After I have juggled the grades of all the other pupils in this fashion, the result is usually a "common ownership" grade of between 75 and 80—the minimum need for passing, or for survival. Then I speculate with the pupils as to the probable results if I actually used the socialistic theory for grading class test papers.

First, the highly productive pupils—and they are always a minority in school as well as in life—would soon lose all incentive for producing. Why strive to make a high grade if part of it is taken from you by "authority" and given to someone else?

Second, the less productive pupils—a majority in school as elsewhere—would, for a time, be relieved of the necessity to study or to produce. This socialist-communist system would continue until the high producers had sunk—or had been driven down—to the level of the low producers. At that point, in order for anyone to survive, the "authority" would have no alternative but to begin a system of compulsory labor and punishments against even the low producers. They, of course, would then complain bitterly, but without understanding.

Finally I return the discussion to the ideas of freedom and enterprise—the market economy—where each person has freedom of choice, and is responsible for his own decisions and welfare.

Gratifyingly enough, most of my pupils then understand what I mean when I explain that socialism—even in democracy—will eventually result in a living-death for all except the “authorities” and a few of their favorite lackeys.—Thomas J. Shelly, teacher of Economics and History, Yonkers (N. Y.) High School.

Encroachments of Romanism

From “Christ’s Mission, Inc.” (160-5 Ave., New York, N. Y.) the following article is sent to us, as to other Protestant publications, for “release.” It is well worth consideration. The “Christ’s Mission” is an organization composed chiefly of converted priests and other converts from Romanism. Its monthly magazine bears the title, “Converted Catholics.”—Ed.

Facts and figures proving that the Roman Catholic Church is gaining control of the Labor Unions in the United States were presented in an article which appeared in the February issue of The Converted Catholic Magazine. The article, by Angelo Lo Vallo and entitled “Roman Catholic Church and Labor,” points out that Roman Catholicism is today as great a threat as Communism to American Labor Unions.

Mr. Lo Vallo states that the attitude of the Roman Catholic Church toward labor has undergone a radical change in the past 20 years or so. In the early part of the present century the American Roman Catholic Church was entirely indifferent to the rights and plights of the laboring class, because of its desire to gain the support of capital.

However, when the church realized that Communism made its biggest appeal to the working class and that the church was losing much of its labor majority to left-wing elements, the American bishops made a sudden reversal, and the Roman Catholic Church became known as the “Church of the Working-Man.”

Mr. Lo Vallo demonstrates how, through the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists, which is under the guidance and direction of the Roman Catholic clergy, the church is taking over the American Trade Unions. He points out the danger of this situation. The ACTU is controlled by Roman clergy who are in turn controlled by the Pope. As the pope is recognized by Roman Catholic clergy and laborers as the supreme authority, not only in spiritual matters, but in social-economic matters as well, the Pope is actually in direct control of the Roman Catholic laboring class. The fact that the C. I. O. is 60% Roman Catholic and the Transport Union of the C. I. O. is 90% Roman Catholic, demonstrates what a powerful influence the Vatican is able to wield in the social-economic affairs of our nation.

ONCERS, TWICERS, THRICERS

Robert B. Boyd

Every congregation has within its group those who feel duty bound to attend church once per week. These usually attend the Sunday morning worship serv. ce. However, some folk aren't to

choicy, and sometimes they attend on Sunday night. But they attend on Sunday night **ONLY** on such occasions that found them absent on Sunday morning. Or maybe they select Sunday night as the **ONE** time most convenient to them, and therefore usually attend the Sunday night service. Of course in case they find it possible on occasion to come on Sunday morning, you need not expect them back on **Sunday night!** These are apparently dyed-in-the-wool "oncercs." It is very difficult to conclude that these folk attend church because of the joy it affords, or because they love it. Apparently they find it a burdensome, grievous thing. We do well to spend more time in prayer for these, for something is lacking. And, of course, those who aren't even conscientious about attending once per week are in serious need of our prayers too! Now, we recognize the fact that there are some "oncercs" who are that out of necessity, and not by choice. These would be "every-timers" if health, or other circumstances permitted. God knows such.

Then there are the "twicers." You can count on them both Sunday morning and Sunday night. Many twicers are doing the best they can. They love to be with God's people, and desire to see the Lord's church grow. Twicers will oftentimes become "thricers" or "every-timers" if, and when, the opportunity presents itself.

Next we have the "thricers." These attend with regularity Sunday morning, Sunday night, and Wednesday night. You can usually count on these to include Sunday School as a part of their Sunday morning attendance. And if it is at all possible, these also are "everytimers." These are the people that everyone expects to see whenever anything is going at the church building, or at a special meeting in a home, whether it be a worship service or a social gathering.

Now, why is it that the "thricers" (one more than that counting Sunday School) are the ones who can be counted on to be the "every-timers"? Why is it that those who spend more time than anyone else attending services of the church are the very ones that aren't too busy to attend extra meetings, social and otherwise? It isn't because they are not as busy, or that for them it is more convenient. It is because the Lord's work with them comes **FIRST!** Conviction is the basis of their service unto God—*not convenience!*

EVERY NEED MET

Your thirst is very great, is it? Then the Fount is all the more for you. You are absolutely lost, and cannot find your way? Then the Light of the World is all the more for you. You are so hungry that you are in a deadly hunger? Then the Bread of Life is for you. Remember that not your merit but your misery was the magnet that drew Jesus from the skies.—Dr. A. T. Pierson.

"Laziness grows on people; it begins in cobwebs and ends in iron chains. The more one has to do, the more he is able to accomplish."

"Temptation, remember, is the price which we pay for all spiritual progress. The fact that you are capable of being tempted means that you are capable of resisting temptation, that you are capable of discovering in **Jesus Christ** the **resources** necessary to meet and conquer the temptation, and in that discovery there lies all the promise of progress for the future."

THE FIFTH LESSON IN ROMANS

Rom. 3:9-31

R. H. B.

THE HEART OF THE GOSPEL.

In the key text of the epistle to the Romans (Rom. 1:16, 17) it is implied that all men are in need of the salvation, and of that faith-righteousness which is revealed in the gospel. The apostle takes time and space to show that this is so. In 1:18-32 he turns the light on the spiritual ruin and the condemnation of the world in general. In chapter two he takes up the case of those who boasted themselves of a superior light and privilege (which meant most especially the Jews) and shows how they also have sinned against their light, and are subject, therefore, to the same just sentence of God's judgment—the sentence unto condemnation. This has been brought out in previous lessons.

Now open your book at Romans 3:9-20.* Here he sums up the case of both Jew and Gentile. "We" (that is, the Jews) are no better than the Gentiles. All alike are under sin. (Compare 3:23, 24—"for there is no distinction; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.") The quotations that follow (vs. 10-18) are gathered from various parts of the Old Testament scriptures—five from Psalms, one (or perhaps two) from Isaiah. (See references in Revised Version margin.) They all speak of universal sinfulness and corruption. The picture is terrible; but it is indisputable. All the items specified may not apply in any one case; but all are true when all is summed up. Such is lost humanity. Note especially the sinful use of the organs of speech: "throat," "tongue," "lips," "mouth" (vs. 13, 14). "The law" (that is the O. T. scripture generally) says these things; and of course they refer first of all to them "who are under the law," the people of Israel. And if such is *their* condition, then is the rest of the world also ruined and condemned. For the Gentiles were admittedly inferior to the Jews; and what was said to the Jews, applied even more to Gentiles. The Jews' works of law could not justify them; for the very law under which they worked was that which exposed their sins and condemned them. (v. 20.) And so *every* mouth is shut, and all the world stands guilty and convicted before God.

OUT OF DARKNESS INTO LIGHT

Here suddenly we step out of the darkness of ruin and despair into the light of hope and wondrous salvation—the glorious light

* The first eight verses of Rom. 3, form a parenthesis, interrupting the argument. Paul stops to glance at some objections the Jew would be sure to raise, and answers them briefly. In view of what was said in Rom. 2:25-29 the first objection, put in the form of a question, is quite natural: "What advantage then hath the Jew? or what is the profit of circumcision?" Paul's answer is unexpected and amazing: Instead of saying "None whatever," he says "**Much every way.**" He mentions one, the chief advantage, namely that to them the oracles of God (i. e. the O. T. scriptures) were committed, and shows that the unfaithfulness of some will not keep God from fulfilling His pledged word. The matter is more fully discussed in Rom. 9.

of the gospel, shining in the face of Christ:

But now apart from the law a righteousness of God hath been manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ unto all them that believe." (Rom. 3:21, 22.)

When Paul says "*But now*" it always means a complete change and reversal of the situation. (Comp. 6:22; 7:6.) What is the fact which turns the night to day? "A righteousness of God has now been manifested"; namely "the righteousness of God which is through faith in Jesus Christ"; and which is bestowed "unto all them that believe." This is the special revelation brought to us in the gospel, for in it "is revealed a righteousness of God from faith unto faith." (Rom. 1:16, 17.) This "righteousness" is now and here "manifested" and "revealed."

He tells us three things about it: (1) that it is "apart from the law"—i. e. has no relation to the law or law-keeping; (2) that it is witnessed by the law and the prophets." It is by no means a novelty: for from of old it had been "promised afore through his prophets in the holy scriptures" (Rom. 1:2). And (3) it is by faith in Jesus Christ, to everyone that believes. (Compare this with Philipians 3:9.)

But where does the law and the prophets bear witness to such a "righteousness" as this? Ans.—In every promise and prophecy concerning Christ; in all the types; especially in the sacrifices of the Old Testament; sometimes also by direct mention, as in Jer. 23:5, 6; Isa. 54:17; 61:10.

Next he explains what this "righteousness" really is to us. It consists (he says) in our "*being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.*" (Rom. 3:24.) Here we find several important words. They are (1) "justified"; (2) "freely"; (3) "grace"; (4) "redemption." We shall not be able to understand the apostle's teaching unless we get the meaning of these words.

1. The word "*justify*" never means to "make righteous": nor does it mean "to pardon." It is really a legal term. It means always to absolve from the charge of guilt, "to pronounce righteous." We read of God's being justified (that is, shown or declared to be righteous) in all His ways and judgments. (Rom. 3:4.) In Rom. 2:13, "the doers of the law [if there had been any such] shall be justified," because such would be declared righteous, or (as in R. V. margin) "accounted righteous." Abraham was justified, not by works, but by faith, because he "believed God and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness": and so are the saved under the gospel said to be "justified by faith." We shall find this word frequently; and, as applied to us, it means that by God's own judicial sentence we are declared righteous—that is in so far as any guilt or charges against us are concerned. It is the exact opposite of condemnation. The righteous life and character grows out of this state of perfect acceptance with God, but that is not the point as yet: here he speaks of God's verdict by which we are pronounced "righteous," that is, clean and clear of guilt.

2. "*Freely.*" This means "without charge," "free of cost," for

no consideration or compensation given by us—simply “free gratis,” or “gratuitous.” The term in the Greek is derived from the word “gift.” Our justification is a free gift from God.

3. “Grace.” Grace is always set in direct contrast to merit and desert, meritorious works, or reward of law-keeping—with worthiness or anything on man’s part by which he might have earned or deserved the thing he received by grace, or might in any wise have compensated for it. Note the contrasts in Rom. 4:4, 5; 11:6; Eph. 2:8, 9; Tit. 3:5; 2 Tim. 1:9.

4. This, through the “redemption” that is in Christ Jesus. The term redemption always involves a price paid for the retrieving of something which once belonged to us, and was lost. The redemption-price Christ paid for us was His own blood. “In whom we have our redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our sins, according to the riches of his grace.” (Eph. 1:7.)

We may wonder here how God can so justify a sinner. He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the righteous, both of them alike are an abomination to Jehovah.” (Prov. 17:15.) How then can God “justify the ungodly”? (Rom. 4:5.) The answer lies in this redemption wrought by Christ. His sacrificial death for us; by which it became possible for God Himself to be “just and the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus.” (Rom. 3:26.)

Here let us review our lesson. It has brought us into the very heart of the gospel. From this vantage-point we can look backward, and forward to Rom. 5:1.

THE RIGHTEOUSNESS WHICH IS BY FAITH (Rom. 3)

Paul in Romans 3:22 speaks of the “righteousness of God through faith in Christ Jesus.” The expression in verse 24 that we are “justified freely by his grace” explains this. For to be “justified” is to be “accounted righteous.” A justified man is one whom God pronounces righteous, and who therefore stands on the ground of righteousness before God. If the man by life-long perfect obedience had merited that standing (which no man ever did) his righteousness would be a righteousness of his own (See Rom. 2:13 and Phil. 3:9)—the reward of which would be due him as a matter of debt, not as of grace (Rom. 4:4; comp. 10:5). But if, though a sinful man, he was forgiven and pronounced righteous because of his faith in Jesus Christ, then the righteousness he has is from God, and is not his own. It is a gift freely bestowed upon him (Rom. 5:17) and it is by grace, that is to say, wholly unmerited. (For *grace* has to do only with the sinful and unworthy, never with people who, either wholly or in part, *deserve* the gift of God.) Therefore the “righteousness of God by faith” is the “being *justified freely, by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.*” The terms here used have been explained above. Let us note again and more especially this last clause:

“Through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.”

This is the ground on which God effected this marvellous justification. Upon this “redemption” depends God’s moral right to justify the sinner. For God must do all things rightly and justly. However great His love for man, He can do nothing in an unrighteous

eous, arbitrary, unprincipled fashion. Hence the necessity of *redemption*.

Now when you speak of redemption there is always a *price* involved. When you redeem anything you must pay the dues on it. So here also: the redemption that comes to us so freely cost God a price incalculable and incomprehensible—the greatest price He ever paid out for anything, and in the nature of things the greatest price that could ever be paid for anything. What is that price? The blood of His own, His only begotten, beloved Son—"in whom we have our redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace." (Eph. 1:7.)

The next two verses (Rom. 3:25, 26) further take up this solemn matter. Here we learn:

1. That God set forth (exhibited openly) His Son "to be a propitiation, through faith, in his blood. A "propitiation" is an atoning sacrifice, a sin-sacrifice. The words "in his blood" can grammatically be connected either with "set forth" (then it would mean that God set Him forth in His blood to be a propitiation); or with "by faith" (in which case the thought would be that He becomes a propitiation to those who have faith in His blood. The former connection is surely the correct one. In His blood (that is in the shedding of His blood) God set His Son forth as a propitiation. But it is by faith in Him that this propitiation (sin-sacrifice) becomes effective to every one of us.

2 God did this in order to show His uprightness in the matter of passing over sins done aforetime—that is, in former ages. That was a serious point—almost a reflection on the character of God. All His saints of former days—Abraham, for example, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, Samuel, and the prophets, were sinners. Yet God accepted them and dealt with them (and many others) as though they had not sinned. (Ps. 32:1, 2; 51:7.) How could He do that? The angels looked on and wondered. Satan himself must have been astonished—and perhaps ready to blaspheme. Is there unrighteousness with God? But when His Son was set forth in His blood as God's own propitiatory Sacrifice, brought by Himself, the matter was cleared up for ever. (Heb. 9:15 also refers to this aspect of the death of Christ.)

3. Not only with reference to "the passing over of sins *done aforetime* in the forbearance of God" did the death of God's beloved Son demonstrate God's integrity, but also "in this present season"—during which He deals with sinners in pure grace, justifying freely all who believe.

4. All this was in order that God might Himself be just while justifying them that have faith in Jesus.

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"Where is boasting then? It is excluded. This is aimed specially at the Jew, the inveterate boaster (Rom. 2:17-19). But this way of salvation (by faith, not by works) leaves him no ground to boast on. Since he, like all others is a sinner (3:22b, 23) and is saved by pure mercy and grace on the ground of faith—and that exactly like all others, exactly like the Gentiles—he has no room for glorying. Compare Eph. 2:8, 9. That the Gentiles have no ground of

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"Where is boasting then? It is excluded. This is aimed specially at the Jew, the inveterate boaster (Rom. 2:17-19). But this way of salvation (by faith, not by works) leaves him no ground to boast on. Since he, like all others is a sinner (3:22b, 23) and is saved by pure mercy and grace on the ground of faith—and that exactly like all others, exactly like the Gentiles—he has no room for glorying. Compare Eph. 2:8, 9. That the Gentiles have no ground of

boasting needed no argument. And since God is one and God over all alike, He justifies all alike (Rom. 10:12) on the same plane—namely “by faith, apart from works of law” (3:28, marg.; 29, 30.)

One more word concludes the chapter. The charge might have been brought against Paul (and no doubt, was) that by his doctrine of faith he made the Law vain and void. To this charge Paul enters a fervent denial. (“God forbid” in the Greek; “May it not be!” or “Perish the thought!”) So far from making it of none effect, he *establishes* the Law. In contradiction to Paul’s clear and emphatic teaching elsewhere (Rom. 6:14; 7:1, 6; 2 Cor. 3; Gal. 3:10; 4:21-23) some have tried to prove by this that the Law is binding today upon all, and that Christians are under the Law—an idea utterly opposed to, and subversive of the whole principle of the gospel. But if in answer to the demand of the Law, God gave His Son to pay the penalty of its violation by man’s sin—certainly the claim of the Law was established and not made void. Moreover in regard to every individual Paul’s teaching establishes the claim and the testimony of the Law—for the Law convicted all men as sinners (Rom. 3:19, 20) and at the same time it witnessed to the glorious gospel which Paul preached (3:21). This is the true place and function of the Law; and thus it became “our tutor to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith is come we are no longer under a tutor.” (Gal. 3:24, 25.)

ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS

To whom does the sum-up in 3:9-20 apply—to Gentiles only? to Jews only? or to all men? What great new revelation comes in at 3:21, 22? What three things does he tell us about “the righteousness of God?” What does “justify” mean? What is meant by “freely?” What is “grace?” What is the meaning of “redemption?” How can God be just and yet justify the sinner? If a man had attained to righteousness by his own work and merit, what sort of righteousness would we have? (Phil. 3:9.) But on what principle are *we* justified? (Rom. 3:24.) What does “redemption” always involve? What was the redemption price God paid for us? How did God demonstrate His uprightness and integrity in the matter of forgiving sins in times past and in the present time? Why was all this great Sacrifice made? How is boasting excluded? How did Paul “establish the law?”

MAINTAINED FELLOWSHIP

“If I am not enjoying this place of maintained fellowship with the Father and with Jesus Christ, when did I depart therefrom? What word of His have I disobeyed? To that point let me return, whether it be but an hour ago or years ago, and there let me surrender at whatever cost, and to do **whatever God requires** however irksome it appears to be.”—Dr. G. Campbell Morgan.

THE WORD OF COMFORT

“The close study of the Word of God may require all our highest powers, and all our freshest energies; but the consolation of that study no tongue of man or of angels can fully tell. While we are so engaged, **light breaks** around our path. **Hope burns** brighter, **love waxes** warmer. Around and about us we feel the deepening influence of the Son of God.”—Bishop Ellicott.

“FAITH OF OUR FATHERS”

E. L. J.

We conclude here the article begun last month:

IS DAVID'S THRONE A “CARNAL” RULE?

R. H. B.

When it is contended that the Throne of David means now what it always meant — the Divinely delegated sovereignty over the nation of Israel — some will think there is something low and carnal and materialistic in such doctrine, something unworthy of our glorious Lord. The idea that Christ will “sit on a throne in Jerusalem and rule over the Jewish nation” (as some put it) easily lends itself to caricature and ridicule. It suggests “that old dirty town,” and a residence palace, and a chair of state on which the Lord is supposed to sit wielding and iron rod; and presumably other premises — bedroom, dining room, and general living quarters. Of course, no thoughtful, fair, and serious man would draw such a picture or charge such teachings to any one unless those teachings were avowed. There are also terms in current use about that Throne of David that exhibit similar misconceptions — such as “fleshly,” “earthly,” “temporal,” “carnal,” “political,” “worldly”; some of which would be very good if we didn't read something into them that does not necessarily belong to them. If by a “worldly” throne you mean that it is *in* the world — well; but if you mean that it is *of* the world — *no!* The church also is in the world, but it is not of the world. If by “earthly throne” you mean a throne that is *on* the earth, and a sovereignty over the earth — yes; but if the idea is that it is *of* the earth, earthly — no. If by “fleshly” were meant a rule over human beings in the flesh — well; but not if anything that is of the flesh is meant. All those epithets can be and generally are used in a false sense, which misrepresents the Biblical idea.

It will help us if we remember that God once did rule over the nation of Israel. Himself, in a special sense. Israel was His province and domain. He was their King. It was an “earthly,” “political,” “temporal” throne and sovereignty. If there was nothing essentially debasing and destroying in that then, there could be nothing debasing or derogatory in it if He assumed the same or a like sovereignty over Israel again.

Then there came a time when Israel rejected God as their King and asked for a human king. God acceded to their request, but did not abdicate His right and sovereignty over them. He Himself selected the king, commissioned him, and delegated His authority over Israel to him. The king of Israel was always a sub-ruler under Jehovah, whom he must obey and consult. The first man chosen of God to serve as Israel's king was Saul. (Some have erroneously represented that Saul was *the people's* choice, not God's; the Bible shows the opposite). He was rejected for his disobedience to Jehovah, and David, the son of Jesse, was anointed by God's orders to be king. To David and David's house God granted the

sovereignty over the house of Israel in perpetuity, by oathbound covenant (2 Sam. 7; Ps. 89). Thus "the throne of David" meant the exercise of God's sovereign rule over the nation of Israel, as delegated to David and his descendants for ever. It still means just that, and nothing else. To change its meaning from that specific rule over the land and nation to a "spiritual" rule in the "hearts" of a different people of no particular land or race, is juggling terms. Let that latter rule and reign be called whatever it may — it is not that of the throne of David, nor can it be.

The throne of David belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ by right of Davidic descent and Divine choice and appointment of Him as king of David's line. It is a throne to which even He would have no personal right if He were not "of the seed of David according to the flesh." For it is that particular sphere of sovereignty which God delegated and swore for ever to David's house and dynasty — namely the rule over the nation of Israel. But (after the type of His father David) the Lord Jesus will not assume that rule till the nation wants and welcomes Him as their king. Then will God send Him (Acts 3:19-21). Then will Israel be a converted and regenerate nation — a spiritual Israel. ("Spiritual Israel" is not the church, but that contingent of the natural Israel, ultimately embracing the whole living nation, that accepts Jesus as their Prince and Savior). So shall all Israel be saved, and the receiving of them shall be as life from the dead to all the earth.. (Rom. 11:15, 25, 26.)

The center and capital of that Davidic rule which is to be exercised by David's greater Son, will be Jerusalem. It is His resting place for ever (Ps. 132) and it will be *glorious* (Isa. 11:10) when the Lord shall have cleansed away its filth and blood "by the spirit of justice and by the spirit of burning." Over the whole habitation of Mount Zion shall hang a canopy of cloud, like the pillar that guided Israel through the wilderness of fire by night, and for a shade in th day time; and like the Shechina that hung over the Tabernacle, the symbol of the presence of God. (Isa. 4:4-6.) There is nothing debasing or "materialistic" in such a conception. At any rate, that is the way *God* says it is going to be. Let us hope that nobody will object! Note too that in these predictions it is always Jerusalem that once was sinful, defiled, cast off, that is restored — not the New Jerusalem in heaven, nor the church (Isa. 60:10-17).

Finally, from Jerusalem as a center God will rule, in the Person of Jesus Christ, to the ends of the earth. Thither will the nations flow for light and instruction, and there will He sit and arbitrate for them; and then there will be disarmament and peace (Isa. 2:2-4; Isa. 11). Thither, too, as in the days of Solomon (1 Kings 10:23-25), the nations will bring their willing tribute from afar (Isa. 60:5-11), and through the restored People, under Christ's benignant rule, the light of truth shall go out into all the world, and the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea (Ps. 67). We believe it will be even so, as God hath said; and that the zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform this. Such is the Biblical conception of the Throne of David, as it will be when its one and only living Heir shall occupy it.

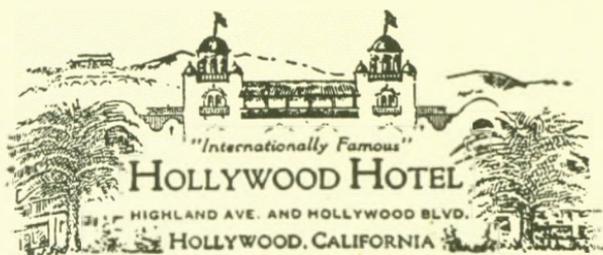
R. C. Bell's Encomium of J. A. Harding

I received Brother Bell's kind permission to reprint here his warmhearted lines concerning J. A. Harding, printed first in the autobiographical sketch of Bell's life that appeared by request in *Firm Foundation* Nov. 6, 1951. This encomium should have appeared, along with Brother Scwell's, in juxtaposition with the Harding reprints; but better late than never. Only regret is the lack of space to reproduce the portion about Brother Bell's own full and faithful life. It is a beautiful and inspiring story in itself.—J.

"At the age of eighteen years, I entered the Nashville Bible School, Nashville, Tennessee, to alternate for five years attending this institution and teaching in the rural schools of Tennessee. Under the influence of David Lipscomb and James A. Harding, I soon saw that Paul's description of some who would hold a form of doctrine, but deny its power, fit me. Especially, Brother Harding's living, magnetic contagious faith in God as a real personal friend matched the wave-length of my spirit. I slowly enough imbibed his enthusiasm for God's fatherly care of individual Christians, for Christ's brotherly sympathy and fellowship with them, and for the empowering Holy Spirit's residence in them. In other words, for Brother Harding's conception of Christianity as a "divine-human encounter," in which spiritual communion between God and man, the sweetest of human experiences, was enjoyed.

"I gradually came to realize, however, that the spiritual power of the church was contingent upon the actual personal presence and working of the triune God in and through Christians. More and more the conviction grew on me that Brother Harding's interpretation of Christianity, which was Paul's too, was needed to save the church from being merely a human organization with a formula to follow, a prayer to recite, and a dull, demagnetized program to render; with professional preachers in her pulpit mechanically saying dead words detached from the living realities of which they spoke, dealing in trite moralizings, threadbare platitudes, and heartless preaching about the heart and passion of Christ. This kind of a church instead of being the divine organism, instinct with the life and power of God, as designed by her Founder! In short, Brother Harding's interpretation was needed to save the church from changing divine dynamics to human mechanics.

"This fuller understanding of revolutionary Christian truth began to turn my "world upside down," and to open up for me a new world of worship, of work, and of values in general. Consequently, when Brother Harding started another Bible School at Bowling Green, Kentucky, to be known as Potter Bible School and asked me to become one of his teachers for the fall of 1901, I, believing that God was guiding, eagerly accepted. Thus began my half-century of teaching Bible in our Christian schools. Every member of Brother Harding's faculties was expected to teach at least one class in Bible daily."



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