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CHRISTIAN'S LIBRARY.

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VOL. X.

LONDON: JAMES CARTER,
THE CLARENDON TRACT DEPOT,
ALDINE CHAMBERS, 13 PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.
1908.



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Address to our Readers.

IN commencing another year we desire to do so with thanksgiving to God. From many quarters we have received most cheering words of encouragement, which makes us feel the desirability of continuing this little service to our Lord and Master as well as to His people.

A few have expressed disagreement with one or two statements. We are sorry to find ourselves in conflict with any, but we are responsible to the Lord alone for what has been inserted, and it would be a sad day indeed if we were forbidden to write freely for fear of causing offence. The Scripture is profitable for reproof and correction as well as for doctrine. Let us not refuse its searching us through and through! We would assure our critics that the truth is as dear to us as ever it was, and for this reason we deplore all sectarian narrowness.

We have discharged our conscience in the matter, and though we may not have pleased all men, we believe that even in this we have sought to serve Christ. There we leave it.

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We feel more encouraged than we can say to find in these days of increasing apostasy and indifference a real revival in the hearts of our young brethren and sisters. We would encourage with all our heart the desire for a deeper and fuller knowledge of the Scripture, for a closer walk with God, for greater fruitfulness in Christian life, and for more definite service to the Lord. These things have been implanted in them not by any human influence, but, we are persuaded, by the power of the Spirit of God.

We would appeal to all our elder brethren to do all that in them lies to further this fruit of the Spirit's action, and not in any way to check these buddings of the divine life. Never shall we forget the encouragement received many years ago from a veteran servant of the Lord. We had just commenced to take up definite work in the gospel, and asked this old preacher to give the opening address in a certain place. "Certainly, my lad," was his reply, "we older ones should do all in our power to encourage the younger." After thirty-four years that night's meeting remains indelibly impressed on our memory, for many gave evidence of being blessed.

On the other hand we well remember some years afterwards an ardent young soul just brought into fuller light, with overflowing heart, asking an older Christian if there were not some little service she could undertake for her Saviour

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—teaching in the Sunday school, or something of the kind.

“**Work** isn’t everything,” was the cold and stern reply from one who soon became one of the greatest troublers of the Lord’s people, and, as to the other, we know not whether she ever recovered the rebuff.

No, work is not everything, but no one will walk worthy of the Lord without being fruitful in work for the Lord and increasing in the knowledge of God.

“Herein is My Father glorified that ye bear much fruit” (John xv. 8). ED.

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“All seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ’s.”—PHIL. ii. 21.

BECAUSE of this sad condition of soul among the professed followers of the Lord Jesus, the apostle had no one else but Timothy to send on Christian service to the saints at Philippi.

The presence of an apostle, even of the devoted Paul, did not prevent the self-seeking of those in professed fellowship with him. How sad, too, to think that this departure from living fellowship extended to so many. It was not that a **few** were pleasing themselves to the dis-

honour of Christ, to their own loss of joy and blessing, and who shall say how much to the neglect of the salvation of men, but **all** were seeking their own.

Such was the condition of things even in apostolic times, but are there not many, and, moreover, true believers in Christ, to whom the same words may equally be applied to-day? Some who did run well, run well no longer. Some have allowed their work, or their brethren, or the lack of apparent success to discourage them. Love in their hearts for God, for His service, for His children, and for all men has lost its fervent power. The "things of Jesus Christ" have depreciated in their eyes, and "their own" things have, to their unspeakable loss, gone up in value.

But this departure as to living communion in "the things of Jesus Christ" is a most serious symptom of soul to discover, whether in ourselves or in others. It is a flat contradiction of what Scripture teaches of Christian life, Christian experience, and Christian service. It is a denial by our ways of the Lord who bought us. Unless one is recovered from this state of soul where will he be ultimately landed? What Scripture is there to hold out a course finished with joy to one who continues to seek his own and not the things which are Jesus Christ's? There are always those who whisper complacently to themselves that they shall have "peace though they

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walk in the stubbornness of their hearts," but such persons misuse or misunderstand Scripture. God will render to every man according to his deeds.

"To them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory and honour and immortality (incorruptibility), eternal life. But unto them that are contentious and do not **obey the truth**, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile.

"But glory, honour, and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile."

While we maintain that salvation is by grace and through faith, and not in any sense through works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through the "blood of Christ," we understand salvation to be from the love and practice as well as from the dreadful guilt and divine judgment of sin, for

"We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph. ii. 10).

Less than this would not be salvation in the full scriptural sense of the word (Phil. ii. 12).

"By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts, and by it he being dead yet speaketh."

These words give us but one side of Abel's salvation. The reason Cain was not accepted was because he did not do well (Gen. iv. 7), and

on the other hand we know that Abel was one who "did righteousness."

"Whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother."

Abel is called in Scripture "righteous Abel." The reason why Cain slew him is plain :—

"Wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous" (1 John iii. 12).

It is of the last importance to have eyes to see and ears to hear these things. But if in Old Testament times those true saints who came to God by faith were in their manner of life righteous men, what shall be said of those in Christian times, who, while they profess to know God, in works deny Him, who have a form of godliness but deny its power? We are commanded to turn away from such.

Those in living communion with God have to beware lest they fall from their own steadfastness. It is not all and everything to own Jesus as a Saviour. We must own Him as Lord too, and be ready as well as willing to keep His commandments. But we are not in this state of heart when we "seek our own and not the things which are Jesus Christ's." Peter warns us in his first epistle that we are sanctified, not only to the sprinkling of the blood but also, to the obedience of Jesus Christ, and in his second epistle would have us give diligence to make our calling and election sure. There is no uncertainty about that calling and election on

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God's part. Romans viii. 29, 30, makes this plain. But ought there not to be questioning, and unhappiness too, in the case of one who has so allowed the world or anything else to overpower him as to be spoken of as seeking his own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's? The government of God comes in here, no doubt, in the case of true saints, and by painful, though sometimes secret discipline, restores God's children to living and lasting communion with Himself. God chastens for our profit that we may be partakers of His holiness. Even the fruit-bearing branch is purged that it may bring forth **more fruit**. And the object before Him in John xv. is "fruit," "more fruit," and "much fruit." Thus are we made manifest as disciples of the blessed Saviour who redeemed us by His blood.

Is He not infinitely worthy that we should rise by the power of His Spirit into the reality of these things? Thus, as another has written on 2 Peter i., "Walking in the ways of God we have part in that kingdom, entering into it with assurance, without difficulty, without that hesitation of soul which is experienced by those who grieve the Holy Ghost and get a bad conscience, and allow themselves in things that do not accord with the character of the kingdom, or who show by their negligence that their heart is not in it. If, on the contrary, the heart cleaves to the kingdom, and our ways are suit-

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able to it, our conscience is in unison with its glory. The way is open before us. We see into the distance, and we go forward, having no impediments in our way. Nothing turns us aside as we walk in the path that leads to the kingdom, occupied with things suitable to it. God has no controversy with one who walks thus."

May we be increasingly stirred up to do the will of God and not to please ourselves!

T. H.



From Childhood to Manhood.



THE childhood state of Christian experience is one that is guarded and cherished most tenderly by God, and, in the simplicity of its devotion and confidence is, perhaps, the most delightful of any through which we pass.

The young believer, but recently brought to know God as Father and the joy of His salvation, is constantly and rapidly meeting with new discoveries in the Word of God, which arrest his renewed mind and fill with deepest joy his purified heart. Difficulties which cross the path of those further on in the way are but little known, and temptations that assail more advanced believers are but little felt. He is a new-born babe in Christ, and he has divine life, which has its consciousness in knowing the

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Father, and its exercise in loving the Father. Helplessness, dependence, simplicity, and humility mark the child life, and what believer of maturer years and experience but contemplates with deepest interest and admiration the artless affection and habit of a babe in Christ? As recently born into the kingdom and family of God, he is the object of God's special care and love, and woe be unto him who would offend or cause one of these little ones to fall!

The deliverance and exodus of the children of Israel out of Egypt answers to the time of this child state, and in figure speaks of the quickening, forgiveness, and deliverance from the world, now to be known and enjoyed by the youngest believer in Christ.

"When Israel was a **child** then **I loved** him, and **called** My son out of Egypt . . . **I taught** Ephraim also to go, taking them by the arms . . . **I drew** them with the cords of a man, with the bands of love . . . and **I laid meat** unto them" (Hos. xi. 1-4).

It is not that God as Jehovah did not always love Israel, for even in the last and most trying days of their past history, when the returned remnant had again lapsed into a state of disobedience and indifference to Jehovah and His service, did He assure them of His eternal and unquenchable love in these words:—

"I have loved you, saith the Lord" (Mal. i. 2).

And in a similar but more striking way can it be said to-day that the Father's deepest and

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most constant love goes out after the least of these little ones, who believe in Jesus and who therefore love Him. But let us observe the beauty and attractiveness of God's grace shining out through these endearing words just referred to, applicable as they are, and beginning with the child or babe in Christ.

He loves, and in that love we have bound up, as it were, all that God can be to us, and all that He can do for us, in the Lord Jesus Christ.

He calls, and this call is from out of Egypt, or the world, not now unto the land of Canaan, which in type speaks of heaven, but He calls us unto heaven itself, even unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus (2 Pet. v. 10); this call is attended by the quickening by the Spirit of the one who believes God's Word, whereby he obtains the life that is in Christ Jesus, which life becomes his own. But how, may we ask, shall this call become effectual in separating us from this present world, that we may be practically holy, as set apart unto and for Himself? For this, God Himself must teach us.

And so we observe here, **He teaches**, not at first the way in which we should go, but He teaches us at the beginning *how* to go, taking us, as a fond and loving parent would, by the arms. And when we have learned how to walk for Him we find how He conducts us on in the path He chooses for us.

He draws us with the cords of a man, with

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the bands of love. He does not compel or coerce us to walk in His chosen path for us. When once we are able to walk, He leaves it with us, to *choose* His path to walk in it. He draws us, and we respond to this drawing, and thus only is there progress in learning of Him and becoming morally like Him.

"Then shall we know if **we follow on** to know the Lord" (Hos. vi. 3).

But there is one thing still which must claim our attention, and God is very careful not to forget it or omit it. His love provides for our daily food. **He lays meat** before us, He feeds us with the finest of the wheat, and thus He makes us to lie down in green pastures. And if we "will to do His will," if we yield ourselves to Him and His loving drawing, we shall indeed have a continual desire or hunger for this living bread of God, the meat that endures unto life eternal, which, by partaking of, we not only have eternal life, but by feeding on it we grow up unto perfect manhood in Christ (John vi. 51-57).

The next stage in this wondrous divine experience is that of young manhood. And the apostle John, in addressing the family of God, takes special notice of these young men—

"I write unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one" (1 John ii. 13, 14).

This is a condition of development in the

child of God, characterised by strength or vigour, and one that is especially needful in meeting and turning away from the attractions of this Egyptian world, and also in overcoming the enemy in this wilderness world. It was this strength or valour displayed in a carnal or natural way which Israel needed in the wilderness. Therefore it says,

“Choose us out **men**, and go out, **fight** against Amalek” (Exod. xvii. 9).

The young man does not lose those attractions or graces which properly belong to the infantile state, such as helplessness, dependence, simplicity, and humility. But he has now grown out of that state, and has become strong in the Lord, strong in His grace, and stands ready, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ, to resist and overcome the enemy. But his strength comes by the Word of God *abiding in him*, and it is this word which, as a sword to be wielded by the power and direction of the Spirit, is his fighting weapon against the enemy.

Of the greatest dangers perhaps that beset the young man, *pride* is the one most to be avoided—the pride that leads on to self-sufficiency and independence of God. The danger would be lest, being lifted up in the very consciousness of our strength, we should forget the secret of it by ceasing to depend absolutely upon God. For one step in pride away from God leads to utter weakness, for we are where

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He can no longer succour and support us, but where He must *resist* us (1 Pet. v. 5).

Again, the world in which Satan hides himself to deceive men glitters with attractiveness before the young man, and therefore he is even more than the child warned against loving it. The freshness and fervency of first love having waned in some measure, the enemy finds his coveted opportunity of insinuating into his heart the love of the world in exchange for the love of the Father so well known and enjoyed in the simplicity and devotedness of the child life. And some have fallen by the way who were in the very strength and vigour of their spiritual manhood, being removed by the Father's hand because the Father's heart was no longer confided in. To meet these dangers and temptations peculiar to the young man, it appears quite clearly to be the love of the Father, as the writings of John fully attest. This love would preserve from the love of the world, while love to the children of God would preserve from self-love, and prove at the same time the reality of God's love dwelling in us.

And again, 1 Corinthians xiii. may teach us of the wondrous practical workings of this love among the children of God, commended, as it is, to us as the only cure for a state which, alas, is only too common to-day, where the soul's inward growth or enlargement has not maintained a proper balance, or corresponded with its out-

ward adornments or induements, which God in His gifts, and according to His grace, may have bestowed. And yet with this love, what soberness of judgment, according to the truth, is enjoined by the apostle in contemplating the very scene of this love's activities, a world that lies in the wicked one.

"For all that is of the world . . . **passeth away**, and the lust thereof."

But this love maintains one in God's will, which, if done, brings the obedient one to an eternal and blessed issue.

"But he that doeth the will of God **abideth for ever**" (1 John ii. 16, 17).

The man of full growth, the man of God perfected, is the one who has "known Him that is from the beginning"—"the Man, Christ Jesus." And he who has so known Christ is a **father**.

"I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known Him that is from the beginning" (1 John ii. 13).

To know Christ, this is the acme of all moral perfection. Than this there is no higher or more advanced spiritual state to be attained on earth. And this is the attainment of the father—to have known Christ long and well, to have comprehended enough of the infinite fulness and moral glory that is in Him, so that the expression of what He is shines out more perfectly than in either the child or young man. And with this expression we should expect to find a

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rare softness and beauty of spirit peculiar to one who was more intimately acquainted with His mind and heart than any other.

To know the Father is characteristic of the child or **babe** in Christ.

To be strong and valiant, as abiding in the will and word of God, belongs to the **young man**.

But to know Christ in His wondrous person as revealed on earth, and, at the same time, to possess the littleness, the gentleness, and the sweetness of the child, the subdued yet firm strength of the young man, forms the rounded outline and the mature stature of the **father**.

And, beloved, whatever our attainments may be, by His grace at the present time let us still go on unto the perfection of knowing Him* that was from the beginning! Let our one desire be to know and to learn Him, counting increasingly as loss everything which, when compared to the excellency of His knowledge, would appear as nothing and be counted as refuse! May He lead us on, and may we abide in the freshness of childhood while we go on to learn the experience of manhood!

* [We do well to note the different lines of truth in the epistles of John and Paul. John speaks of knowing Him that was "from the beginning," this takes us back to Christ as He trod this earth; Paul speaks of knowing Him in resurrection glory. Both most important lines of truth, though distinct.—ED.]

And some day, when we awake in His likeness, and He comes to take us to be with Himself at home, we shall know that richer and fuller experience, that perfected state of "knowing even as we are known," which belongs to manhood's full estate in the glory of God, where His abiding love shall be the better known by us in its own happy abode (1 Cor. xiii. 8-13). G. B. E.



Notes on the Temple—No. 1.

(Read 1 Chronicles xvii.)



THE ultimate thought of God is His own glory as manifested in the person of His beloved Son. Just as this is kept before our minds in the reading of the Scriptures, as the person of the Lord Jesus, the brightness of divine glory, is kept distinctly before our view, we shall find light thrown upon the various subjects which God has set before us in the Scriptures of inspired truth.

Christ as the manifestation of God is the centre sun which illuminates every hope, the substance of every shadow, the focus to which all the lines of divine truth converge, as well as the centre whence they emanate and spread. Whether we look at persons or things as typical, in order to understand these types of God, we

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must connect them with the person of the Lord Jesus.

When reading about David or about Solomon, we may ask, Why were their histories written? Why were they written as they are written? Why were certain events taken from their history and given at length, whilst others are passed over almost in silence. The answer is, For the manifestation of God's glory in the person of His beloved Son. A greater than David and a greater than Solomon is in this chapter, if we have eyes to see and hearts to respond.

David was a type of the Lord Jesus Christ, the meaning of his name is, "The Beloved"; and David as he stands in connection with this portion of God's Word is the type of the Lord Jesus Christ in humiliation, in suffering, and in death here below.

David's thought, as set before us in this chapter, was to build God an house. He sat in his own house, and while there the thought occurs to him that he was dwelling in a house of cedars, but the ark of the covenant of the Lord was under curtains. But David was not permitted to build a house for God. To understand what corresponds with that now, I feel it is far better to deal with facts connected with the Lord Jesus, and learn the meaning of types by those facts, than simply to attempt to find a spiritual significance from the types themselves.

What is the fact in the history of the Lord Jesus? How does Christ by the Spirit of God Himself express it?

“I have laboured in vain. I have spent My strength for naught, and in vain” (Isa. xlix. 4).

So far from building a house for God, Israel was not gathered. He Himself was rejected. He was in the world, and the world knew Him not. He came to His own and His own received Him not.

But what did God say to David? He promised to establish and plant Israel, to subdue all David's enemies, and then, as we read in the tenth verse, he says :

“Furthermore, I tell thee that the Lord will build thee an house.”

And that in point of fact has resulted as regards the Lord Jesus. The kingdom was not established when the beloved Son of the Father was here, as the result of all His labours. But God brought out the exact purpose and intention of His own heart, and accomplished it too. He has built a house for His beloved Son, as we find in the third of Hebrews,* where Christ is seen as a Son over His own house.

This reminds us of several other types foreshadowing the same great precious truth. Moses thought that his brethren would have understood that God by him would have accomplished the

* [In the Epistle to the Hebrews it is the tabernacle and not the temple that is before the mind of the Spirit.—ED.]

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redemption of Israel, but they understood it not—he was rejected ; but in his rejection God built him an house, he had a wife and family. Joseph was rejected by his brethren, but in his rejection seated at the right hand of Pharaoh he has a house.

David hereupon goes in and sits before the Lord, responds to the divine thought, and lets go his own way, takes his place before God, saying as it were, Well, let it be so, let Him bless me to His heart's content.

We pass on to 1 Chronicles xxi. (read verses 1 and 2, and 7 to 30). It may be asked—What was the harm in David's numbering the people? One thing is, that it was done at the suggestion of Satan. We learn from the Epistle to the Hebrews that the types and shadows which set forth the Lord Jesus are to be looked at in contrast as well as in their similarity. There are similitudes and there are contrasts. If we take David as a type of Christ we see both. In some things we find most remarkable similitudes, in others as remarkable contrasts. I will just mention one instance. When the Lord Jesus was tempted in the wilderness, the devil tried hard to induce Him to act upon suggestions, but the Lord Jesus never did. After forty days' hunger, the devil said, "Make these stones bread," and he gave Him a plausible reason. He was to do it as a proof that He was the Son of God, but He would not act upon the suggestion of Satan—

David did. There is another thought, and that is connected with the command of God on the subject of the people being numbered. I refer to Exodus xxx. 11.

"The Lord spoke unto Moses, saying, When thou takest the sum of the children of Israel after their number, then shall they give every man a ransom for his soul unto the Lord when thou numberest them; that there be no plague among them when thou numberest them. . . ."

"The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less, than half a shekel when they give an offering unto the Lord to make an atonement for your souls" (verse 15).

God's people are to be numbered *as a ransomed, a redeemed people.*

Bible Study.

WE have now reached the end of the second year of this little work of studying the Scriptures together, and we can certainly thank our gracious Lord and Master for whatever He has given us by it, and ask Him to continue His mercy to us for this year that lies before us. "Of Him and through Him, and to Him are all things."

We are commencing the subject of the **sacrifices**. Shall we then take a verse from the Epistle to the Romans and pray that it may guide our path during this year—

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"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God" (Rom. xii. 1, 2).

A living sacrifice is a strange thing—it combines two opposite thoughts, for a sacrifice is by death. What does it mean? We are not left to guess, but the apostle goes on to show how God has purposed that we should discover by practical experience the change from a multitude of jarring, restless wills to that one perfect will of God. In full keeping with the object of the Epistle to the Romans, the body of Christ is shown here as the way in which we are each to learn what a living sacrifice means. As members of one body in Christ each individual, instead of being moved by a will of his own, is to be moved and controlled by the will of God. Just as our hands and feet do not move at their own will, but only as they are moved by the will that has its seat in the brain, so we who once by our own wills yielded our members as the instruments of sin, are now, by the reckoning of faith and the mercies of God, to be moved only by the will of the Head, but that is none other than the will of God. In this way we become living sacrifices, and actually **prove** by experience what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. It will not profit us much to know about the

sacrifices as mere knowledge, if we do not learn actually what a living sacrifice means, nor may we forget that it is not by living and acting and feeling as members of **a** body, some body of our own choosing, but as members of **the** body, even **the whole body of Christ**, that we can prove this.

Leviticus.—In beginning the study of Leviticus the following outline may be found of help in showing how the various subjects fall into their places in God's plan of the book.

i. **The Offerings** (cc. i.-vi. 7).

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| (a) Burnt Offering. | } This part of the book is wholly taken up with the offerings in relation to God. |
| (b) Meat Offering. | |
| (c) Peace Offering. | |
| (d) Sin Offering. | |
| (e) Trespass Offering. | |

ii. **The Law of the Offerings** (cc. vi. 8-vii.).—This takes up the responsibilities and privileges of the priesthood in connection with the offerings.

iii. **The Priesthood** (cc. viii.-xv.).

- (a) Consecration of the Priests.
- (b) The Priesthood in exercise, and the blessing following.
- (c) The Failure of the Priesthood.
- (d) External cleanness. Clean and unclean animals.
- (e) Internal cleanness. Cleansing of defilement of birth, leprosy, and issue.

In all this we find God's holiness, man's defilement, and the exercise of the priesthood to meet the need that arises from the dwelling of a holy God in the midst of an unclean people. But

the failure of the priesthood raises deeper questions, for what remains if that breaks down? This leads up to the central point of the book.

iv. **The Atonement** and its consequences for the people (cc. xvi.-xvii.).

v. **The Law of Holiness** (cc. xviii.-xxii.).—The principle of these chapters, both for people and priests, is summed up in xix. 2, "Holy shall ye be, for I Jehovah, your God, am holy."

vi. **The Feasts of Jehovah** (c. xxiii.).—This fully unfolds the blessing in the heart of God, His purpose to rest in the blessing of His own with Himself.

vii. **The Government of Jehovah** (cc. xxiv.-xxvii.).—These chapters unfold the principles of God's government among the people whom He has redeemed and blessed. In the end all is found to rest on redemption.

This is very brief and summary, and in no way a final division of the book, for other students may divide it from other points of view. But it will at least serve to give those who are beginning to study the book some idea of how perfectly God has arranged it. We can find a surer principle of order than the scissors and paste of generations of unknown editors! It may also be helpful to point out a remarkable thing, which we shall have occasion to speak of again when we come to the 16th of Leviticus. It is that each of the three books, Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, presents a **crisis**, a point where everything hopelessly breaks down, and God's mercy comes in to show how blessedly He is over all the results

of man's sin. In Exodus this is found in cc. xxxii.-xxxiv. In Leviticus in c. x., answered by c. xvi. In Numbers in cc. xiii.-xiv.

The Burnt Offering.—The moment God takes up His dwelling in the place prepared for Him (Exod. xl. 34, 35), His first words from the tent of meeting are concerned with the manner of approach to Him. He takes it for granted that His redeemed people will want to draw near to Him, and will want to bring Him something. He does not command them to do so, He counts upon it, for **worship is from the heart.**

The only question raised is, "What is acceptable to Him?" And the 1st of Leviticus is wholly occupied with the way in which one who is vile and unacceptable may be accepted before God, and bring into His presence what is perfectly acceptable to Him. Hence the chapter, in every detail of its types, speaks of Christ and His infinite value to God in offering Himself to accomplish the work of Calvary.

The whole subject is **God's estimate** of the Person of Christ, not man's estimate. In worship we do not bring to God our thoughts of Christ, our estimate of the value of His Person and work, but we bring to God **His own** thoughts of Christ, **His** value of Christ, expressed by the Holy Ghost, who alone can utter the worship that delights the heart of God.

So the three divisions of this chapter do **not**

bring out different measures of our estimate of Christ, but three different aspects of God's estimate of Christ, all absolutely perfect in sweet savour to Him, and all of which may be brought before our hearts when we draw near to worship the Father. Space will not allow of our entering into the details of each aspect, but the student will find no sweeter or richer pasture for his soul than these unfoldings in type of the perfection and preciousness of Christ to God.

The main differences will be pointed out, and the rest left to each to study for himself.

1. **The Offering from the Herd.**—The main points peculiar to this offering are that the entrance of the tent of meeting is mentioned as the place where the offering is to be presented; the offerer lays his hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it is accepted for him to make atonement for him. There are other details, all deeply interesting, but the main point is that this aspect of the offering and of the presenting of the blood is connected with the **entrance** into the holy place where God dwells, and with the **acceptance** of the offerer according to the value of his offering.

Thus it is the largest of the offerings, that which speaks of **the full measure of the Father's satisfaction in Christ** and His work, that gives the offerer entrance and acceptance before God. This is the foundation of all worship. There can be none until the place of

acceptance in the Beloved, and the title to enter into the holiest are known.

2. **The Offering from the Flock.**—Here the place where the victim is **slaughtered** is emphasised, and we have the head and the fat mentioned in connection with the cutting up of the victim into its pieces ; the words, "the priest shall present it all," are also special to this part. The question of entrance and acceptance is not raised here, but we have instead the side of the altar northward, **the place of judgment**. It is the aspect of Christ's offering as meeting God's judgment in order that nothing might ever arise to touch the believer's acceptance and eternal security. Here, too, taking the place of man in his ruin and responsibility, and offering Himself wholly to God, the blessed Lord is presented as perfect, a sweet savour.

[The force of the **north** side as connected with judgment may be seen from such passages as Jer. i. 13, 14, iv. 6, xlv. 10 ; Ezek. i. 4, &c.]

3. **The Offering from the Fowls.**—Here we find the head is pinched off and burnt separately, the blood is pressed out, not sprinkled, the crop and feathers are cast beside the altar **on the east**, into **the place of ashes**, and finally the bird is to be split open at the wings, but **not divided asunder**. Here the details speak, not of acceptance and entrance, not of judgment met and satisfied, but of the personal sufferings and anguish of the blessed Lord's heart at the cross

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where He gave Himself for us, and where His perfect obedience and love to the Father came out fully. We remember that the Holy Ghost descended upon Him in bodily form as a dove, at the commencement of His pathway, when first the Father's voice was heard, "Thou art My beloved Son, in Thee I am well pleased." We find in Heb. ix. 14, that it was by the Eternal Spirit that He offered Himself without spot to God. Hence this aspect of the offering is specially the Spirit's estimate, as He presents the sufferings of Christ to the heart for worship. But in the crop and feathers cast into the place of ashes, we may see what the blessed Lord's heart found in this world. It was the place where God's judgment lay on all, and His heart could find nothing here to rest in. This, too, the Spirit presents to us that the world may be to us what it was to Him—a place of ashes. But that leads on to the glory. The sufferings and the glory of Christ are always found together, and the Spirit leads our hearts by the way of Christ's sufferings to the Father's answer in the glory. The place of ashes is on the east side of the altar, **the side of the glory**. Nor is this all. He will not be alone in the glory. While the cross had severed every link for Him with a world which crucified and cast Him out, still His love, stronger than death, held fast, "having loved His own which were in the world He loved them unto the end." We shall be with Him in

the glory, that is the supreme display of His love. Hence we have, "shall **not** divide it asunder."

So this three-fold presentation gives us the full value of Christ as the object of worship, the delight of the Father's heart, and the One whom the Holy Ghost presents to the affection of our hearts, that worship may flow out. Much more, infinitely more, might be gathered from this wonderful chapter, but these slight outlines must suffice.

Answers to Questions.

- i. This question has been answered above.
- ii. The actual cases in which burnt offerings are explicitly said to have been offered up to the time of Lev. i., are : Noah, Gen. viii. 20 ; Abraham, Gen. xxii. 13 ; Jethro, Exod. xviii. 12 ; the youths of the children of Israel, Exod. xxiv. 5 ; idolatrous offerings to the golden calf, Exod. xxxii. 6 ; Moses, Exod. xl. 29. It does not say that Abel's offering was a burnt offering, but the description is that of a burnt offering.
- iii. Seven times, Ps. xx. 3, xl. 6, l. 8, li. 16, 19, lxvi. 13, 15.
- iv. Lev. vii. 8.

For next month (D.V.) the subject of study will be :—

The Peace offering, Leviticus iii. The following questions may be answered or searched out :—

- i. What is the chief difference to be noted between the burnt offering, the meat offering, and the peace offering ?
- ii. What was the priest's work in the sacrifice of the peace offering, and what was his portion ?
- iii. What had the offerer to do in connection with the peace offering ?
- iv. What was done with the fat of the peace offering ?

B.S. ED.

Notes and Comments.

The extraordinary movement ***Korea and Christianity*** now taking place in Korea is one that may well be taken advantage of to spread the truth of the gospel in its saving power. Twenty-two years ago there were only ten Christians in Korea ; to-day there are upwards of one hundred thousand. In the Kong-ju district one man and his family were baptized eight years ago. That one family has multiplied into sixteen thousand five hundred converts, represented in eight hundred villages.

In the providence of God He has so ordered it that Japan, and not Russia, has the controlling influence in this Far Eastern kingdom. This has thrown the country open to missionary enterprise, an opening which they have not failed to make use of. In less than a quarter of a century the prejudices and antagonisms of centuries have been overthrown, and it is estimated that in less than half a generation the whole of Korea will be a professedly Christian nation. Of course this does not mean that all will be converted people, any more than in our own so-called Christian land. But it does mean that the whole country is open to hear about the Saviour.

Personally, one cannot but regret the element

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of excitement that seems to prevail somewhat after the fashion of the revival in India. At the same time one cannot lose sight of the difference in temperament that exists amongst the various nations of the earth, nor can one forget the manifestations that accompanied the Spirit's working, as recorded in Acts ii., iii., and iv., nor the physical accompaniments of the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, and of the unbeliever spoken of in I Corinthians xiv.

Whatever we may say to these things we cannot ignore them, nor deny that God is throwing open the door in India, China, Korea, and Japan in a way hitherto unknown. "Who will go for us?" Are there any who will reply, "Here am I, send me?"

It will no doubt interest our readers to know how this extraordinary revival began. An eye-witness writes :—

"In January 1906, meetings were commenced in Pyeng-yang, where Dr Johnston had told the story of the revival in India. On the Monday evening a meeting was held, the like of which none who were present had ever seen before. When the usual time for closing the service came, those who desired to go home were invited to do so, and the meeting was reduced to some five or six hundred persons. Man after man rose, confessed his sins, broke down and wept, and then threw himself on the floor, often beating it with his fists in a

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perfect agony of conviction. Sometimes after a confession the whole audience would break out in audible prayer, sometimes in uncontrollable weeping, and this confession, weeping, and praying went on until two o'clock the following morning.

“In this manner began a work of God which spread like a flame from place to place, so that, as one of the Koreans said, ‘Soon we shall all be Jesus-believing people.’”

What Aquila and Priscilla will be raised up to expound unto this people the way of the Lord more perfectly? ED.

Abounding in the Work of the Lord.

NO Christian who is in a healthy state of soul will ever be idle in the work of the Lord. The love of Christ when known and enjoyed in the power of the Holy Ghost will fill the heart with praise and the life with earnest and devoted energy in the service of God.

It is refreshing to read of one like Epaphroditus that, “for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death” (Phil. ii. 30), and of Timotheus, that “he worketh the work of the Lord” (1 Cor. xvi. 10); and of Paul, who could speak of a whole assembly in such language as this, “Are not ye my work in the Lord” (1 Cor. ix. 1).

What was seen in such large measure in the

devoted lives of these servants of the Lord, was also found characterising whole assemblies of saints. The Corinthians were "always abounding in the work of the Lord" (1 Cor. xv. 58).

Paul prays for the Colossians that they might be "fruitful in every good work" (Col. i. 10), and with a thankful heart he prays for the Thessalonians remembering without ceasing their "work of faith, and labour of love" (1 Thess. i. 3).

Thank God! days of ruin such as these need be no excuse for spiritual idleness, and though much of what is called "Christian work" at the present time appears likely to be burned up in the day when "the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is" (1 Cor. iii. 13), yet it has been our privilege to know many who have gone forth in the energy of faith, and in the mighty power of the Spirit of God, to preach the gospel of Christ, not only in places where that gospel has been preached for long years, but also in lands where Christ had never yet been named.

In connection with the subject of work for God, we would draw our readers' attention to Nehemiah iii. We have recently been much struck with this portion of the inspired Word, it will well repay a close and prayerful study. It describes a day of deep failure in Israel. There had been a time of revival and blessing described in the Book of Ezra. Men of God had been raised up who devoted themselves whole-heartedly to the work of the house of the Lord. Though

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Jerusalem was a heap of ruins, they set themselves right with God and "builded the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt-offerings thereon, as it is written in the law of Moses, the man of God" (Ezra iii. 2).

Joy and gladness filled the atmosphere, praising and giving of thanks resounded on all hands. True, the ancient men wept who had seen the first house, for no revival can ever bring things back to their original condition. What God sets up in perfection, man utterly fails to maintain in power; God then, in His grace, gives times of revival in answer to His people's cry, yet never restores as it was at the beginning, but carries forward the heart in faith to a future day when He will establish all in immutable righteousness and eternal glory.

Though weeping was heard, yet joy exceeded it all, and so it ever is where a true ministry in the power of the Spirit is found. The one who serves Christ most acceptably is the one who helps forward the joy of God's redeemed people, and not the one who plunges them in sadness and sorrow. It is easy to make the saints sorry with a rod of discipline, but better far to be helpers of their joy (2 Cor. i. 24).

We do not dwell further upon this gracious movement of God's Spirit in the days of Ezra, but pass on to a similar season of refreshing under Nehemiah. It is striking and instructive to see the influence for good that one man

may exercise when apprehended of God and spiritually fitted for the work. This is most manifest in the case of Nehemiah. The work started some years previously as described in the Book of Ezra had received a serious check, and the restored remnant appears to have settled down helplessly to endure the reproach and affliction in the midst of which they found themselves at Jerusalem; the wall was broken down, and the gates were burned with fire.

Once again God raises up an instrument to accomplish His work of blessing. Though far away in Shushan, Nehemiah's thoughts were with his people at Jerusalem, and his heart was moved with sorrow at the tidings which reached him of their low estate. But he needed to be morally fitted for the work God was calling him to—he “sat down and wept, and mourned, and . . . fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven.”

It is beautiful to see the attitude of his soul before God (chap. i. 4-11). He prayed night and day, he took the low place in confession, but pleaded the unalterable word of God. “If ye transgress, I will scatter,” had been Jehovah's threat; this alas! had proved itself true. But Nehemiah's faith lays hold of Jehovah's promise, “If ye turn unto Me . . . I will gather,” reminding Jehovah that this people full of afflictions and reproach were His servants, His people, and had been redeemed by His great power.

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Yet what a sight met his gaze when he reached his beloved city, and by night surveyed the ruins of what had once been so fair and beautiful. Nehemiah seems to have been much alone in his estimate of the state of things at Jerusalem. Ezra even, it would seem, so prominent in the revival that had taken place twelve years before, had fallen in with much that filled Nehemiah with the deepest concern. There are times when faith has to act alone, and so Nehemiah in solitary sorrow goes forth to view "the walls of Jerusalem, which were broken down." The rulers, the priests, and the nobles were slumbering whilst this man who sought the welfare of the children of Israel was groaning at the reproach in which they lay. Something must be done, for "ye see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lieth waste, and the gates thereof are burned with fire" (chap. ii. 17).

Is there not a voice for us to-day in all this? Have there not been most gracious revivals in the past? Is not the power and joy of one of the greatest of these still fresh in the memory of the present generation? But—"ye see the distress that we are in."

This distressful condition is found in the whole Church of God. The enemy has come in like a flood. Evil men and seducers have been at work. Apostasy has swept over Christendom in mighty torrents; and there where love and

confidence once reigned, envy, suspicion, and bitterness are found. The work of the Lord has ceased. Thank God! there are bright spots of exception; but, speaking generally, a state of paralysis exists; preaching rooms are deserted, conversions rarely heard of, and the spreading of the work of the Lord into ever-increasing new districts, such as some of us can remember in the seventies and eighties, seems entirely to have ceased.

Shall we settle down contentedly into this state of things? Are there none who will mourn, and fast, and confess, and pray as this man did? Ezra's revival may have lost its vigour and freshness, will a Nehemiah spirit of faith and energy be vouchsafed to call upon us to shake ourselves from the dust?—"Come and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach."

In saying this we do well to guard against any spirit of sectarianism. It is the state of the whole Church of God that should weigh upon our consciences: it is the well-being of the whole Church of God that should lie close to our hearts. Nothing less or narrower than this can at any time meet with the Lord's approval. "**Love to all the saints,**" and conflict **for all the saints** in prayer is never more needed than it is to-day.

Nor do we mean that anything can be built up to-day in the shape of special testimony. It is a very individual day indeed, but a day when

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individuals may greatly help to lift up the hands that fall down, and to strengthen the feeble knees, and to make straight, or even, paths for weary feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way.

Brethren, hearken to the Spirit's touching appeal, "**Let it rather be healed**" (Heb. xii. 12, 13). Let envy, suspicion, strife, and bitterness drop off like autumn leaves, and let the fruit of the Spirit abound in "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance" (Gal. v. 22, 23).

(To be continued.)



The Day of Salvation.

"Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."—2 COR. vi. 2.



IT is in connection with these words that the apostle entreats the saints not to receive the grace of God in vain. "For He saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in a day of salvation have I succoured thee." No doubt the thought is suggested that saints may so fully avail themselves of the salvation spoken of as not to give an occasion of stumbling in anything, that the ministry be not blamed; but is this all? In the earnest emphasis of these

words, "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation," may it not be that the apostle is reminding believers not only to profit by, but also to pass on the word of salvation?

When we are indifferent to the salvation of our fellow-men, when not awake to the responsibility of being our brother's keeper, when Scriptures which press the preaching of the gospel to every creature are practically a dead letter to us, are we not to a painful extent receiving the grace of God in vain? Saints for their service, as well as sinners for their salvation, need continually to be reminded that "now is the accepted time," "now is the day of salvation."

The apostles were slow to perceive that the gospel was to be preached to the Gentiles as well as to the Jews. After our Lord's resurrection "He was seen of them forty days," and spoke of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. Much of what He said during those forty days is evidently not written, but the Holy Spirit is careful to record that Jesus taught them that they should be "witnesses unto Me . . . unto the uttermost parts of the earth." In Matthew they are commanded to make disciples of **all the nations**, in Mark to "go into **all the world** and preach the gospel to **every creature**," in Luke "repentance and remission of sins" was to be preached in Christ's name unto **all the nations**. Peter, quoting from the prophecy of

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Joel, said, "It shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh." Yet, notwithstanding Christ's words after He was risen, and Peter's own application of Joel to the day of Pentecost, Peter himself was slow to receive what Christ had said about preaching to the nations, slow to realise the force of his own words from Joel as to **all flesh**.

It needed a special vision from God on the housetop at Joppa, as recorded in Acts x., and a visit from the servants of Cornelius inviting him to Cæsarea, before he was fully prepared to open wide the door of mercy to the Gentiles. Surely all this suggests how easy it is to forget Christ's words, for it cannot be said that Peter and others had not heard them before the Saviour ascended, and this, too, apart from the force of the words Peter himself used on the day of Pentecost. It is solemn in the light of all that had gone before to notice how this same Peter tries to evade the force of the vision of the great sheet let down from heaven, as recorded in Acts x., and how he almost resisted the message of God then given. Why this tardiness to embrace the Gentiles? The apostles were slow of heart, even after the day of Pentecost, to believe all that Jesus had spoken. For not only is this true of Peter, but the apostles and brethren afterwards contended with him for opening the door of faith to the Gentiles; in other words, for doing what God

almost compelled him to do. He and they showed themselves childishly slow to apprehend the extent and reality of the day of salvation in which they lived. Thus slow is Christian experience ever, even at its best, to arrive at the breadth and fulness of the Word of God on every matter. It failed in apostolic times, has failed since, and is failing now to respond to the universal outgoing of the heart of Christ, to aid in sending or carrying the message He has given, at the cost of His own blood, to the perishing millions everywhere. Is not forgetfulness of this service which we owe to Christ, and the increasing indifference of our hearts thereto, one of the "secret faults" for which we need to cry to God, so that we may be henceforth thoroughly cleansed from them? (Ps. xix. 12).

All men need to hear of a Saviour, for "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." The day of judgment will soon be here, and there will be no day of salvation then. The day of glory will soon dawn. We shall all reign in that day, and the opportunities of gospel ministry will soon be over. But it is not the time to "reign as kings" **now**. This is the day when God is working, when Christ is working, when the Holy Spirit is working, and all the saints who have "fellowship in the gospel" are working too.

It is not the day of salvation for England only, or for the countries where to some extent

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Christ is named in a national way, but it is the day of salvation also for Africa and India, and for Japan and China. The "every creature" to whom Christ commands us to preach the gospel includes the four hundred millions of China, who are about one-fourth of the entire human race. That repentance which God enjoins on "all men everywhere" is to be enjoined by human lips on all the Chinese. The "all men" for whom we are under obligation to pray, include every one of China's millions. To-day is especially the day of salvation for **China**. God's servants during the last century have been waking up a little to their privileges and responsibilities—to preach the gospel to the Chinese. The Old and New Testament Scriptures have been translated into the difficult language of that people. Hundreds of devoted Christian men and women, some from England and some from the continent of Europe, some from America and Canada, and some from Australia lived and died for Christ in China during the latter half of the nineteenth century. A number of these lived in the interior of the country. They lived lives of loneliness, yet of active service. Some of them died natural deaths, while others were killed at the hands of cruel men, yet the labours of these Christian confessors were not in vain. If not in one way, yet in another they bore fruit which remains.

Not a few Chinese have been brought to Christ

in Christian schools, others in Christian hospitals, and many by the more direct work of preaching the gospel. It has pleased God to own the various methods that His servants have adopted. Love for souls is often ingeniously inventive of methods of work. The fervent Christian will "by all means save some." Therefore, Christian ladies, who cannot preach as men do, have found ways and means to open schools in China for young and neglected girls. Even in childhood some of these have been brought to Christ. Then again, Christian doctors, not always specially gifted as speakers, have opened hospitals far from the coast. Patients have carried away from such institutions Scriptures and tracts, together with a living token of Christian love in the medical treatment received, shown to them in a Christian way. Many of these medical men work seven days in the week, and each day put in a full day. Other servants of Christ itinerate, distribute the Scriptures, and preach. Where there is a heart for Christ there will always be a way to serve Him.

Numbers of Chinese are, themselves, actively engaged in making Christ known to their own countrymen. While one preaches another invites neighbours and friends to hear him. The homes of such Chinese Christians as these are cleansed from every trace of the idols which once defiled them, and righteous lives are being lived in place of a corrupt past.

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We who live in this country are not by any means awake to the providential way in which China is open, and is still being opened to the gospel. There is no edict at present forbidding Christian "conventicles," as was long the case in England, but the European Powers have secured such treaties with China as enable not only the missionaries to preach, but also the Chinese to confess and practise the Christian religion, without fear. There is in that country to-day no compulsion to any form of national religion, but the open door for preaching the Word there just now is most significant. None of us are fully realising the opportunities at present given.

The Chinese Government allows the servant of Christ to travel throughout the length and breadth of the land. Nay, it gives him a passport which prevents delay in travelling, and affords him the valuable protection of native officials in every locality. Compared with the many past centuries, during which the Chinese Empire has been closed to foreigners, the present open door there is best accounted for by recognising the hand of God working in this way for the salvation of Chinese millions.

The spirit of inquiry just now amongst the Chinese is universal. Preachers report their halls filled with Chinese who interrupt with inquiries about all sorts of questions. The old narrow system of education has, during the past few years, been universally abolished, and has

been replaced by colleges and schools with a plan of instruction after the patterns of Europe and America. Who can tell how soon this open door may be closed? A revolution in China, or a great European war might close it. Now is the time to go forth with the message of grace. May not God be calling some who read these lines to go? Let us bear in mind that "the night cometh when no man can work." T. H.



Notes on the Temple—No. 2.

(Read 1 Chronicles xvii.)

THERE is a distinction between the Tabernacle and the Temple. In the account given us of the Tabernacle, we shall find that God begins with the ark, but in the account of the Temple He begins with the altar. What is the Tabernacle the type of? The Church on earth in the wilderness. In looking at the Church down here — God's Tabernacle — what is the first thought connected with it? The person of the Lord Jesus Christ. The ark represented the Lord Jesus Christ as the centre of gathering to the people of God.*

* Might we not also add, that the great central truth that the Church or assembly maintains before the world concerns the person of the Lord Jesus Christ? (see 1 Tim. iii. 16).

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“Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them.”

But when you come to the Temple the ark is not the first thing mentioned, it is brought in the last of all. The account of the Temple begins with the altar, sacrifice, the burnt-offering ascending up before God. The site of the foundation of the Temple was to be where sin had been visited by judgment, and judgment had been met by sacrifice, and the sacrifice accepted by God himself.

I will call attention to one thought as connected with this, and I hope to revert to it again and again. It is this, the apparent discrepancies of Scripture turning out to be divine perfections and inlets to fuller truths. I will point you to one of these apparent blemishes and contradictions in the Word of God, for they are but apparent. We read in verse 25—

“So David gave to Ornan for the place six hundred shekels of gold by weight.”

But in 2 Samuel ii.—

“So David bought the threshing-floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver.”

There is an apparent contradiction. In Samuel it is fifty shekels of silver, in Chronicles six hundred shekels of gold.

Let us look at the accuracy of the Divine Word and we shall see the enigma solved. According to Samuel, David *bought* the thresh-

ing-floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver, that was their value and that he gave. He said, "I will not accept it as a gift, I will buy it at its full value." But in Chronicles we see that David "*gave*" not "*bought*."

"David gave to Ornan for the place six hundred shekels of gold by weight."

In one place it is price paid—the full value—in the other case, it is what David gave of his royal bounty.

I want to make this an illustration of another thought, silver and gold. They are suggestive words. What is the thought connected with silver? Redemption and redemption price, and communion on the ground of redemption accomplished. We saw that just now in Exodus xxx., the souls were redeemed with pieces of silver. So the Lord Jesus Christ has paid down the redemption price in His own most precious blood. He has satisfied all the demands of divine justice, so the full price has been paid.

But, then, do the wonders of redeeming love cease there? No. What does gold represent? What is the thought suggested? Divine righteousness and glory—that which is divine, divinely precious and divinely glorious. Christ in the work of the atonement has paid redemption's price to the full, but he has not stopped there. Oh, if He had redeemed our souls from hell by His precious blood, He would have done much,

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we would have blessed and praised God for ever for redeeming grace and love, but He has not stopped there. That atoning work of the Lord Jesus has not only satisfied justice, not only redeemed our souls from eternal woe, it has done infinitely more! it has glorified God in the highest. Divine grace has not stopped with taking the beggar from the dunghill; it has put him among princes and made him inherit the throne of glory.

We want to realise not only what we are redeemed *from*, but what we are redeemed *to*. Now, I believe these two thoughts are suggested by what David *paid* in shekels of silver, and what David *gave* in shekels of gold. I just throw that out as a thought by the way. How these apparent blemishes in Scripture when they are examined let us into fuller and larger unfoldings of the divine thoughts, the riches of divine grace.

“David built there an altar unto the Lord, and offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, and called upon the Lord, and He answered him from heaven by fire upon the altar of burnt-offering” (vers. 26, 27).

The sacrifice is offered and accepted, and what comes next? The Lord commanded the angel, and he put up his sword again into the sheath thereof.

“And David lifted his eyes, and saw the angel of the Lord stand between the earth and the heaven, having a drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem.”

We have seen the sword stretched out. Then we have seen the demands of justice typically met, and divine grace glorified. And now what do we hear? By the command of Jehovah Himself that sword is put up again into the sheath thereof. To every soul that has come by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ under the shadow of that atoning blood, what a sweet thought that is—The sword is sheathed, and that by the command of Jehovah Himself. “Put up the sword into the sheath thereof.” When that sword had taken effect,—

“Awake, O sword, against My shepherd, and against the man that is My fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts,”—when that sword had done its work, what is the next word? “Put it up unto the sheath thereof.” How precious that is to the soul!

If we are nominally numbered amongst the people of God, and yet not redeemed by the precious blood of God's beloved Son, there is the sword stretched out—the sword of divine justice, of divine wrath. We are reminded of Egypt here. The sword of the destroying angel passing through the land, and every first-born in that devoted country not under the sheltering blood of the paschal lamb coming under the stroke of the sword, and that is true of every soul that is not under the shelter of the blood of the Lamb—it is under the unsheathed sword.

Have you not read that account given us of a certain king inviting a person to a feast, and

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suspending over his head as he sat at the table, which was spread with the choicest viands, a naked sword, hung from the ceiling by a single hair? That is a striking figure of every soul that is not sheltered by the precious blood of the Lord Jesus. How could that man feast happily upon those viands, though it was the king's own table, furnished and spread worthily of a king, with a naked sword suspended over his head? That is exactly the condition, I say, of every unsaved soul in this land. They are in a land of privileges where God Himself has spread the table with the richest blessings, the largest, richest privileges. Yet if they are not sheltered by the precious blood of the Lord Jesus, the sword, the naked sword of divine justice—the unsheathed sword—is suspended by a single hair, as it were, over their head, and one of the ten thousand accidents of life may plunge them into eternal woe.

When the soul flies for refuge to the precious blood of the Lamb and realises redemption through faith in that precious blood, what does faith hear? The voice of God Himself, saying, "Put up the sword into the sheath thereof." It is God's own word—God's own command. He Himself says, "Put it up," just as He said when the atoning price was paid, "Deliver Him" (see Job xxxiii. 23-28).

That was the place for God's Temple to be built where sin was visited by judgment, judg-

ment met by sacrifice, the sacrifice accepted, and the sword sheathed. David said—

“This is the house of the Lord God, and this is the altar of the burnt-offering for Israel” (chap. xxii. 15).

That is the place, that is the ground fixed by God Himself.

Bible Study.

THE opening verses of each of the first three chapters of Leviticus help us to understand in what spirit we should approach the subject of them. These chapters are not commands to bring certain offerings. They start with the movement of heart produced by a sense of God's grace and goodness towards those who deserve nothing from Him. “When any man of you presenteth an offering to Jehovah” (i. 2); “when any one will present an oblation to Jehovah” (ii. 1); “if his offering be a sacrifice of peace-offering” (iii. 1). They begin with a man who has been so filled with a sense of God's goodness in coming to dwell amongst His people, His grace in redeeming them, His mercy and truth in His dealings with them, that he wishes to bring a present to God. If I wish to give a present to a friend, my first thought is, naturally, “What would he like?” So worship is not a matter of certain regulated or traditional forms and ceremonies, but flows from the desire to bring to God something that shall be acceptable to Him. And the heart that wishes to worship will be truly prepared to listen to God's description of what is acceptable to Him, His thoughts of Christ that shine out with Divine brightness in every detail of these three chapters which take us into the secrets of worship. But unless they are read with the desire to get just what they were written

to give, we shall end by a mathematical analysis which will leave our hearts quite cold. On the other hand, if they are studied in a worshipping spirit, the order, fulness, and infinite variety of the details will only give fresh themes for worship the more minutely they are examined.

The meat-offering is the second of these pictures which God gives, through the types, of Christ and His work. The name is rather misleading, as "meat" has now a rather narrower meaning than it used to have. It should be rather "food-offering," or, as the new translation renders it, "oblation," something offered up. The first chapter of Leviticus showed us the various ways in which the perfect offering of Christ on the cross is brought home to the heart for worship, that which will delight the heart of God.

This chapter takes up the perfect offering of His life in all its sweetness to God. This offering also is presented in three different aspects, like the burnt-offering, from which it cannot properly be separated. Before looking into these three ways in which the Holy Ghost presents the life of Christ as an offering, we may notice two main points in which the second chapter differs from the first :—

(a.) We have no mention of the blood in this chapter, while in each of the offerings of the first chapter the blood is emphasised. There are many to-day who would like to have the second chapter without the first, but God's order is the only possible one. No one who has not come by

way of the burnt-offering can have any right to share in the oblation, nor has he any power to enter into God's thoughts of Christ's blessed pathway of obedience and service.

(b.) The priests have a share in the oblation, but the burnt-offering is wholly for God; all is burnt, and none may be eaten by the priests. There is a special reason why the priests had this as part of their food, a reason which will come out later when we get to what is called "the law of the offerings"; but this at least we may gather from the contrast between the first and the second chapter, that the blessed Lord was alone in His atoning work, and that no one but the Father could know all its value. We enjoy the results, but have no share in the work. But in the blessed Lord's obedience and pathway we are called to tread, not in a vague indefinite sort of way, but in a remarkably clear and definite way. In fact, there is no other way to walk without losing the way. We have been sanctified "to the obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. i. 2).

Now, if we read carefully through the chapter, and I hope that no one will venture to read anything that is written here without first reading the second chapter of Leviticus carefully several times, its divisions will soon appear.

i. **The Uncooked Oblation** (vers. 1-3).—This consisted of fine flour, the very choicest part of wheat flour; the worshipper was to pour oil upon it and put frankincense on it, and then to bring it to the priests. No question of the amount is raised. The point is, not the meeting of some special need or circumstances, but what sort of offering will delight God's heart. The worshipper's hand is to be filled with the flour, oil, and **all** the frankincense. Then the handful, called "**the memorial**," a touching name, is to be burnt like incense on the altar. The word

used for "burn" does not convey the meaning of the consuming power of the fire, as in the case of the sin-offering (Lev. iv. 12), but brings out the thought that the testing of the fire only causes the sweet savour of the offering to ascend as incense before God. This offering, then, gives us a picture of the perfect service of the Lord Jesus as man upon earth, doing the Father's will. He entered a body prepared for Him, He was born of the Holy Ghost, He was anointed by the Holy Ghost for service, all that He did was obedience in the power and energy of the Holy Ghost, all was holy, no unevenness, like grit in the flour, marked His ways of grace. We are all marked by some strong characteristic, most of us with strong wills, some with passions and emotions ruling, others intellectual, but the blessed Lord had no will, no thoughts, no feelings, that were not of the Father, and who may ever know what this was, is, or for ever will be, to the Father's heart? May He give us to fill our hands with this !

ii. **The Cooked Oblation** (vers. 4-10).—The remarkable thing about this form of the oblation is that before it reaches the fire on the altar it has already been subjected to the action of the fire in three different ways, the oven, the cauldron, and the pan.

This is a wonderful type of the sufferings of the blessed Lord during His pathway, especially those sufferings which arose from His taking a place in the midst of Israel, and being afflicted in their afflictions. One of the most important things to bear in mind in reading the Old Testament is that God has given us in the history of Israel a history of His government. The principles of this government were laid down in Exodus xxxiv. 6, 7. And all the sorrows that Israel, as God's people, passed through were the consequences of God's mercy and judgment dealing with their sins and with them, in order to carry out His own will, and to bless them in the end. Now when the blessed Lord entered on His pathway to do

God's will, all this had to be taken up by Him. He did take it up, and went right through all that the oven, the cauldron, and the pan are symbols of; and this He did, not for Himself but for their sakes, and also for us, that we might learn, where alone it can be learnt, **how to go through the government of God in the spirit of Christ now.** This is immensely important, and gives balance and stability to our poor, light, flighty hearts. So we find that the priests partook of this offering, with a special object, as we shall see when we get to the law of the offerings. Some of the Psalms express, by the Holy Ghost, the feelings and experiences of the blessed Lord Jesus in going through all these things, as they led up to the consummation at the cross. And the epistles of Peter apply these experiences, and this aspect of the Lord's pathway to our own, and teach the beginning of wisdom, "the fear of the Lord," to the new-born babes who feed on the sincere milk of the Word.

Parenthesis (ver. 11-13).—Attached to this second form of oblation, and closely connected with it, is a parenthesis dealing with three things:—

(a.) **No leaven or honey** was to be used in making the cakes which formed this second kind of oblation. Human nature has been corrupted, human relationships have been spoilt by sin, so that natural feelings or natural ties which may be right and sweet in themselves may only serve to corrupt and hinder the accomplishment of God's ends. Hence neither of these things were found in the motives that guided the blessed Lord in His pathway of obedience. God's heart delights in One who knew no other motives, no

other ties than those which flowed from the doing of the Father's will (*cf.* Matt. iii. 15, xi. 25, 26, xii. 48-50).

(*b.*) **The First-Fruits.**—These were the two loaves of Leviticus xxiii. 17. They were a **new** oblation, a new kind, not to be burnt at all, but to be waved before the Lord. What they mean we shall find when we come to Leviticus xxiii., but leaven was put in here to show the contrast. There was no leaven in the blessed Lord. We shall never get rid of it till we are at home with Him; but grace links us together with Him. What grace, and what a contrast!

(*c.*) **Salt.**—It is “the salt of the covenant of thy God.” That is the great point that must lay hold of us. Our God, whose grace has brought such poor, wretched things as us so near Himself through Christ, is a consuming fire. The fear of God, not a God afar off, but One with whom we have to do, produces judgment of evil according to God's thoughts, evil in ourselves. “Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.” How many strifes would cease if this were so!

iii. **The Oblation of First-Fruits.**—Like the other two, this oblation was to have oil and frankincense, but unlike the other two, it does not say that it was a sweet odour to Jehovah, nor does it mention that the priest had a part of it. I believe that this offering closes the picture of the blessed Lord's Person as Man on earth in all the power of the Holy Ghost, and all the acceptance and fragrance of His devotedness and obedience in divine perfection to

the Father. It closes it by showing the Lord in His connection with the whole race of Adam. It shows Him as the first-fruits, the only fruit that God ever had from man, but cut off before His time (Ps. cii. 23), it was **green ears, beaten out**. The only perfect fruit to the Father's heart, thrust out of this world at the cross! That is the climax and end of man's history, **looked at from God's standpoint** in this picture. We know Christ after the flesh no more, but God has known such a Christ, and the memorial is an eternal sweet savour to Him. But the wave-sheaf, followed by the wave-loaves, tell the story of resurrection-life and the new man. Christ is there the first-fruits **from** the dead, not so here.

Again, I must say what I feel, that we must earnestly seek from the Lord grace and mercy to let these things sink down into our **hearts**, that they be both the spring of worship, and the food of our soul's life. To have them in the head alone only brings greater condemnation.

Answers to Questions.

i. Lev. viii. 28 is not called an oblation, but a consecration offering, *cf.* Lev. vii. 37. The first is Lev. ix. 4, then Lev. xiv. 10, 21; Lev. xxiii. 16, 18, 37.

ii. See Num. xxviii. 3-8. Mentioned in 2 Kings xvi. 15; Ezra ix. 4, 5; Ps. cxli. 2; Dan. ix. 21. The same is referred to in 1 Kings xvi. 29, 36.

iii. and iv. have been answered in the Notes.

Subject for March.—The peace-offering, Leviticus iii. The following questions may be answered:—

i. What are the main points of difference between the sacrifice of peace-offering and the two previous offerings?

ii. What point of connection do you find in this chapter between the peace-offering and the burnt-offering?

iii. Trace out the history of the peace-offering in the Old Testament.

B. S. ED.

Notes and Comments.

Early in 1819, while waiting to ***What a Tract*** see a patient, a young physician ***can do.*** in New York took up and read a tract on missions, which lay in the room where he sat. On reaching home he spoke to his wife of the question that had arisen in his mind. As a result, they set out for Ceylon, and later, India, as foreign missionaries. For thirty years the wife, and for thirty-six years the husband, laboured among the heathen, and then went to their reward. Apart from what they did directly as missionaries, they left behind them seven sons and two daughters. Each of these sons married, and, with their wives and both sisters, gave themselves to the same mission work. Already have several grandchildren of the first missionary become missionaries in India. And thus far thirty of that family—the Scudders—have given 529 years to India.

Another missionary well known to us writes :—

“ We are having a ‘ revival ’ in Travancore such as I have never witnessed nor any one else here. Thousands of nominal Christians are professing to be saved, and thousands are coming out from heathenism into Christianity. During three months no less than 2,500 have been swept into the Salvation Army alone, so it is reported.

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One particular feature of the 'revival' is dancing. Nightly meetings are being held in hundreds of places, and towards the close the men will dance together and the women together. The excitement is more than I have ever seen. The doctrine is : Only those who are filled with the Spirit should dance ; and sometimes in large meetings upwards of 500 will be found dancing. At a workers' meeting I felt it absolutely necessary to speak upon the evils of excitement and the foolishness of seeking to work up a dance at the conclusion of meetings. None of our workers have danced, and neither do they encourage others. There have also been many who have had 'visions,' and strange things are reported to have been seen, which we with our Western training have never heard or witnessed. Personally, I am of a very sceptical disposition concerning these things. Prayer is much desired for wisdom to know how to deal with this work, and able and spiritual men are needed to guide the 'revival' and lead it in a right direction. We are looking to the Lord for help to carry on His work in the midst of this wonderful movement. I am now endeavouring to work without an interpreter, visiting daily, and having meetings from house to house, and public meetings in the evenings.—E. H. N."

We can quite understand the reader passing severe criticism upon much that is here described. It is to be deplored that any should encourage

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such demonstrations amongst excitable people. So much the more reason why intelligent and sober-minded Christians should devote themselves to the work in those lands. Much prayer is needed for those actually on the spot. ED.

**Abounding in the Work of
the Lord—No. 2.**

NEHEMIAH was a man of prayer ; he was definite in his petitions ; he knew what he wanted, he asked for it, and he got it, for he had to do with the "Lord God of heaven."

When tidings of the low state of things at Jerusalem reached his ears, it drove him to God in confession and prayer, and it was there that he derived all the power for the service he was afterwards called to.

"Let Thine ear now be attentive, and Thine eyes open, that Thou mayest hear the prayer of Thy servant, which I pray before Thee now, day and night, for the children of Israel Thy servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel, which we have sinned against Thee : both I and my father's house have sinned" (Neh. i. 6).

But if there is a time for prayer and humiliation, there is also a time for energy and action. The dangers at the hand of man were great. The people of God themselves, through long years of listlessness and inactivity in the work

of the Lord, had grown accustomed to their low estate, and needed to be aroused to a sense of the responsibilities and possibilities of the hour. The man who had just been linking himself in all sincerity with the sin of the whole people—**“we have sinned”**—now rises in the individuality of faith.

“O Lord, I beseech Thee, let now Thine ear be attentive to the prayer of Thy servant, and to the prayer of Thy servants, who desire to fear Thy name: and prosper, I pray Thee, Thy servant this day, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man” (chap. i. 11).

Some have compared Ezra and Nehemiah, and have wondered why Nehemiah did not go up to Jerusalem at the first; they have thought, too, that there was a lack of faith in God inasmuch as Nehemiah asked letters and protection at the hands of the king (Neh. ii. 5-10), whereas Ezra refused the king's help (Ezra viii. 22). It is easy to sit at home in the ease and security of one's own study and to judge others who are battling in the forefront with the passions and hate of evil men against them. There is a tendency in some minds of becoming more theoretical than practical, but such persons as a rule prefer the quieter and safer paths of service rather than those of bodily danger and possible martyrdom.

It would be difficult, in the Christian dispensation, to find one who understood practically what faith in God meant better than the apostle Paul,

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and yet we find him claiming the rights of Roman citizenship (Acts xxii. 25, xxiii. 17, &c.). Nehemiah, at any rate, gladly accepts the favour of the king as a direct answer to his prayer to the God of heaven.

“Grant him mercy in the sight of this man. . . . And the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me” (chap. i. 11, ii. 8).

Arrived at Jerusalem Nehemiah views with deep concern the broken walls, the charred gates, and waste spaces in the city. Neither the rulers, nor the priests, nor the nobles, not even Ezra appear to have known anything of the deep exercises of his soul. He had been alone with God about it all, but now had come the time to speak and to act.

We cannot but be struck with the grace, the wisdom, and the tact displayed by this man who had come “to seek the welfare of the children of Israel.” No words of harshness, of censure, nor of severity; no giving the impression of superior faithfulness on his part, and want of it on theirs—no, all was gracious association with them in the work, and encouragement to drooping spirits—“Come and let us build up the wall.”

Nehemiah links himself with them in their distress, and he links them with him in his service.

“Then I told them of the hand of my God which was good upon me; as also the king’s words that he had

spoken unto me. And they said, Let us rise up and build. So they strengthened their hands for this good work" (ver. 18).

How beautiful is all this! Nehemiah dwells upon the remarkable evidences of God's hand in all the exercises through which he himself had passed. How doors had been opened, hearts touched, and his own path made clear. All this was traced to its proper source in God. His testimony instils fresh vigour into the hearts of his hearers, and he who a little while previously stood alone, now finds a band of willing helpers. "Come, let us build up the wall of Jerusalem" had been his earnest appeal, and now what joy must have filled his heart as he hears echoing back from all sides the response, "Let us rise up and build" (ver. 18). "So they strengthened their hands for this good work."

Here was evidence of the finger of God, and a much-needed lesson may be learnt by us all. Some there are who are always finding fault, and ready to throw cold water upon everything that others may be seeking to accomplish. They have no word of encouragement for any one, or anything. Nobody is exactly right, and nothing just as it should be. Doubtless they are perfectly right in so thinking, and quite sincere in so speaking, but it does not help anybody, neither, as a rule, are they themselves accomplishing much. If the salvation of the lost around them depended on them, few would

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be saved, as was once said in the writer's hearing—"God pity the world if all the Christians in it were like ——." Thank God the salvation of the lost does not depend upon man at all, and yet there is such a thing in this connection as being "pure from the blood of all men" (Acts xx. 26). May the writer and the reader consider these things.

Certainly we are all liable to make mistakes, and we are not pleading for liberty so to do. It has been aptly said that the man who never makes a mistake is the man who never attempts anything. But a censorious, criticising, and fault-finding style will only alienate the hearer, whereas an encouraging word in spite of his mistakes will open the way to his heart, and most likely incline him to listen to words of instruction.

No one likes to have their faults exposed in public. We have known of some who have been driven away from Bible-readings by the harsh words of others. Truly we need to earnestly contend for the faith, but an intolerant attitude towards one who may not have the same intelligence is much to be deplored. Some seem to think that they alone can possibly be right in all things, and have no patience with any who may be of a different opinion.

Brethren, let us "provoke one another unto love and good works."

A. H. B.

(To be continued.)

XCIX. 2

Seven Questions.

THERE is evidently an analogy between the close of the Jewish and of the Christian dispensations, and hence the last voice of inspiration in the Old Testament, the prophet Malachi, has a special interest for us.

We live in days marked by much the same features as those which distinguished the returned captives among the Jews, from the time of this prophet until the first coming of our Lord ; and the seven questions to which we refer show the moral condition of the professing people of God at that time.

1. **"Wherein hast Thou loved us?"** God begins by reminding them of His love—a free sovereign love on His part, for He loved them "because He loved them" (Deut. vii. 7), at the beginning of their history, and He loved them still, in spite of their shameful failure and ingratitude. But, alas ! they had lost the consciousness of His love to them ; and hence their love to Him had grown cold. So it was with the Church at Ephesus—"Thou hast left thy first love," says the One who can read the heart as well as the outward life. In truth this is the root of all failure ; for when Christ ceases to be the absorbing object for the heart ; when the beams of His divine love fail to penetrate our souls as once

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they did, we soon grow cold, and other things take the place He should have in the affections of His people.

2. and 3. **"Wherein have we despised Thy name?" "Wherein have we polluted Thee?"** These questions come from the priests, who ought to have taught God's Word and maintained His truth. They were insensible to their own real condition, and to the claims the Lord had upon them. They were offering to God the lame and the blind out of their flocks, when His Word expressly stated that there was to be no blemish in His offering (Lev. xxii. 21-24). Mark, it was not that no offerings were made at all—they had plenty of religion—but utter indifference as to what was due to God. It was as much as to say, anything will do for Him. Is there not an abundance of this spirit abroad in Christendom, and are we not all in danger of being affected by it?

4. **"Wherein have we wearied the Lord?"** They had no lack of words, for they had wearied the Lord with their words ; but behind it all they were characterised by a spirit of infidelity, for they were saying, "Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and He delighteth in them ; or, Where is the God of judgment." Was it not terrible hardness of heart to attribute a delight in evil to Jehovah Himself? Yet this is what the heart of man, and even religious man, is capable of. Faith knows that God takes

knowledge of everything, and that He is a God of patience and forbearance: unbelief, on the other hand, says, "Where is the God of judgment?" But He will sit as a refiner's fire, and He will come near to judgment to these very people, great though His patience may be. And if the spirit of rationalism was to be found amongst the professing people of God in Malachi's time, it is no less to be found now. Our so-called Christian Churches are leavened with a spirit of infidelity, showing itself in all kinds of unbelief in God's Word and His authority over the soul. We need to be kept in humble dependence on the Lord, far removed from the withering influence of unbelief.

5. **"Wherein shall we return?"** Here the Lord appeals in wonderful and surpassing grace to His erring people, and says, "Return unto Me, and I will return unto you." How ready He is to meet the first motion of the heart towards Himself in repentance! But, alas, they are quite unconscious of their distance, and they say, "Wherein shall we return?" The same is true of the professing Church, as we see in Laodicea; the Lord says to them (Rev. iii.), "Anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see." Oh the need of being kept humble and dependent, learning in the Lord's presence our own weakness, but His grace and sufficiency, so that we may get from Him wisdom and spiritual eye-salve to see!

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6. **“Wherein have we robbed Thee?”** It was in tithes and offerings. They were thinking of themselves and their own interests; but neglectful as to the claims of the Lord.

7. **“What have we spoken so much against Thee?”** They had multiplied words, saying, “It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept His ordinances,” &c. So also we read in Zeph. i. 12, of those settled on their lees, who say in their heart, “The Lord will not do good, neither will He do evil.” It was as much as to say, “God is absolutely indifferent: we may do just what we like.” And, further, here in Malachi, they were calling the proud happy, and even saying that those who worked wickedness and tempted God were delivered. This was indeed the climax of unbelief and hardness of heart.

But an unbelieving Christendom is even more guilty, because of the much fuller revelation of God now, and the far greater light and privilege since Christ died and rose. And we all have lessons to take to heart, for we must never suppose that we are not in danger of being affected by the moral atmosphere which surrounds us. The spirit of infidelity may affect even the true children of God. It produces indifference to God's Word, lack of attendance at prayer meetings, lack of earnest pleading with the unsaved as those who really believed in a God, a heaven, a hell, and an eternity, as

well as many other symptoms of spiritual deadness.

In striking contrast with the dark background of unbelief, the prophet closes with the bright witness of faith on the part of the remnant. "**Then**," he says, "then"—in such a state of callous indifference and dark unbelief—there were those that "feared the Lord," and "spake often one to another." How precious to the heart of the Lord to find those who loved and revered His name, and who were drawn together by one common object and centre! He took note of it, and recorded it in His book of remembrance. And He says, They shall be Mine, as a precious treasure, "in the day that I make" (or prepare) (chap. iii. 17). It is the day of the Lord, a day which He prepares for judgment (chap. iv. 3), and it will burn as an oven, and the proud and wicked unbelievers will be as stubble—this will be their terrible end.

How striking the contrast for those who fear His name! For **them** the Sun of Righteousness will arise with healing in His wings, to usher in the "day" of millennial glory and blessing. This is His promise to the remnant of Israel, and it is with this He closes the inspired volume of the Old Testament. In like manner He closes the New Testament by presenting Himself to His Church—to the watchers during the long night of His absence—as "the bright and morning Star."

Can we not pray, "O Lord, keep us so far

from the spirit of unbelief and cold indifference, so conscious of the depth and reality of Thy love by the power of the Holy Spirit, that the cry may go up increasingly from the hearts of all who know and fear Thy name—Even so come, Lord Jesus.”

F. G. B.

A Plea for Prayer.

“Ye also helping together by prayer for us.”—2 COR. i. 11.

THESE words are, without question, addressed to all saints, and express a most important way in which all believers may acceptably help in the service of God—in the ministry of His Word.

It is certain that in answer to the prayers of God's people, His servants have had rich blessing in their work. In answer to prayer, calamities of all kinds have been again and again averted; freshness of soul has been maintained in the ministry of the gospel; the counsels of the Achithophels have been turned into foolishness; Scripture has been taught without admixture of error; power has been given to win souls to Christ; and guidance in the pathway of service to the Master.

As Christians, we are all interdependent upon one another's prayers, though the fact of

our brethren praying for us does not relieve us of the necessity of praying for ourselves.

We read in Acts xii. 5 that "Peter was kept in prison, but prayer was made without ceasing of the Church unto God for him." Was it not in answer to this prayer that Peter was able to **sleep**, though in prison, with man planning to execute him on the morrow, and with guards keeping the door of his cell? "God giveth His beloved sleep," and so relieves them of all kinds of suffering and sorrow. In answer to prayer the angel of the Lord stood by Peter, and "a light shined in his cell." Light still shines upon our ways in answer to prayer. Peter's chains fell off from his hands, "the iron gate opened of its own accord," and thus, through the prayers of God's people, His servant was "delivered out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the Jews."

Was it not in order to teach Isaac his dependence upon God, and the importance of prayer to Him, that God allowed Rebekah to be barren? (Gen. xxv. 21). It would have been as easy for God to give a son to Isaac straightway, without prayer, as He does to others, had He so chosen to do. But we read, "Isaac intreated the Lord for his wife because she was barren, and the Lord was intreated of him." Were not our own lives, since we believed, barren and unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, because we ceased to pray? Continued, prolonged,

believing prayer to God is the great remedy for barrenness of soul in Christian life and service. Prayer that prevails is suitably expressed in such words as these, "Our eyes wait upon the Lord our God **until** He have mercy upon us" (Ps. cxxiii. 2).

It is not possible for the poor in this world's goods to help largely in the work of the Lord by their monetary gifts, though some have been generous beyond their power. It is often the case that the rich among God's people can plead that they have no special gift of teaching or preaching, and therefore are excused from going forth themselves to labour in the mission field. It often happens that saints of God are very feeble in body, for "those members of the body which seem to be feeble are necessary," but while some of the children of God may be excused from giving money, others from preaching or teaching, and the feeble with others lawfully detained from our public assemblies, can any Christian be rightly excused from helping by prayer? We must **all** pray—for others as well as for ourselves—if we would continue to be blessed in our own souls. Even the **feeble** members must pray. May it not be that they often do pray more than most, and that bed-ridden saints have frequently been the direct cause of showers of blessing.

But this is not to the credit of those who have the full use of their physical powers. All

servants of God whether at home or abroad, if Scripture is to be heard, are dependent, in a very real sense, upon the believing prayers of the saints. Is this fact, call it privilege or responsibility as we may—and it is both—taken sufficiently to heart? Ministry for Christ, written and spoken, whether for saint or sinner, is largely effective in answer to prayer. May we have grace to see this and obey! There were those in apostolic as in later days who learned this salutary lesson. Thus we read, “Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, **always labouring fervently for you in prayers**, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God” (Col. iv. 12).

Without lessening the claims in this respect of labourers in the homefield, let us ponder how all foreign workers deserve our attention. When one of these labourers reaches China he finds that for months at least, after arrival, not knowing the language, his mouth must be closed. Before going forth on that distant service his mouth had been opened wide to preach the gospel of God to his own countrymen. It will be easily understood that all foreign labourers had a call to labour at home, before being called abroad. It is their service at home that guides their brethren in encouraging them to go forward. Not being able to preach immediately on arrival, after having found unspeakable joy in such service at home must be a severe trial to most.

It is wholesome to find out our own limitations, but we are best sustained in this and all such humbling discoveries by prayer. In thinking of those newly arriving in a foreign field let us bear this in mind, and strengthen them through the temptations of this period by earnest prayer.

Again, at home they enjoyed the privileges of Christian fellowship. They know in some measure the value of uniting together with their brethren in praise and prayer. The ministry, the exhortation, the kindly admonition and criticism of their brethren were appreciated. But when separated unto the gospel in China they must forego much of this happy fellowship, and are directly cast upon God for the edification they formerly enjoyed in intimate association with their brethren. If all need the help of the Spirit of God, do not such need Him in a very special way? Without His divine control how easy for them to go astray doctrinally, and in other ways too, in a heathen land where a subtle, strong enemy is everywhere in force, and marks out God's servants for certain destruction. Yet light shines upon their ways, and they are kept by the power of God in answer to the prayers of God's people on their behalf.

Think next of the isolation involved. If, as another has said, "Every one of us that has been called of God finds more or less that he is isolate to Him that called him," consider how isolated a missionary in the great interior of

China must be. There is not much in common, especially at first, between him and the heathen among whom he has chosen to live. He learns by experience what it is to be "a stranger in a strange land." He often misunderstands the people, and is by them misunderstood. Moreover, he is not dead to nature. Natural longings for home and kindred (not to speak of deep desires for the converse of God's saints) strongly reassert themselves at times. Should we like this to be otherwise? Such natural longings are quite consistent with full confidence in God. The missionary in these remote regions enjoys the Lord's presence, and often proves that He can make every burden light, give "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness"; but he learns, too, that he is indebted to the prayers of his brethren, together with the "much incense" of the Saviour's intercessions.

The work among heathen peoples is always slow and very difficult. They have not been prepared for the truth as have those to whom we preach—say, in England. There are all kinds of advantages of a Christian kind in this land which are denied to the Chinese. There is everywhere here the help which universal Bible instruction and the circulation of Christian literature gives. Do preachers at home sufficiently appreciate the way in which the ground has been prepared for their cultivation? Let all of them

ponder the loss it would be if Bible teaching in our great public schools were to cease. Sermons and gospel addresses would not be as well understood as they are now. We need to pray earnestly for God to avert the threatened famine of the Word of the Lord in England. But we need to pray, too, for labourers in China, whose work is slow because there is no foundation of scripture knowledge in the minds of the Chinese on which to build. This necessitates the using of heathen illustrations instead of scripture types and Old Testament histories. Further, it is not easy in a heathen land, where faithfulness demands that the popular religions be condemned, to be faithful without giving offence, to conciliate prejudice without compromising, to speak the truth in the right way. The Epistles of Paul are largely interspersed with the free expression of his dependence on the saints for their prayers. But his requests are by no means mere sentiment. They are deeply felt needs, which the apostle is led of the Holy Spirit to express, which can really be met only by God, yet always by Him, in answer to our cry. Does not this having to learn a foreign language of great difficulty, not knowing the ways, the habits, and the customs of the people—then the people themselves not having been prepared by family teaching or by education in schools for Christianity, and the fact that the person who teaches is at best a **foreigner** — does not all this show that the

work must be slow and difficult, and does it not appeal to all our hearts as a case which calls for our most earnest prayers?

It often takes a long time to secure tangible results. We must not forget that "the kingdom of God cometh not with observation" (Luke xvii. 20; *margin*, "outward show"). But there are always results beyond what is seen. Did not our blessed Lord find results to be slow during His earthly life? It was as if there were none! "I have laboured in vain, and spent My strength for naught."

It cannot be denied that faithful servants of Christ have again and again laboured long in lonely and distant parts of China, and other lands, without seeing many definite conversions to God, yet, as in the case of Noah, who was a preacher of righteousness, without seeing many "results," their labour was not in vain in the Lord. We can best help these lonely and suffering servants of Christ, not by harshly criticising them, not by questioning the reality of their call to the work, not by being indifferent to their needs, but by a loving ministry of intercession, and a consideration of the possibilities of prayer on their behalf. Let us ask God to fill them with His Spirit, and with new courage for His work. Let us ask Him to manifest Himself to them continually in their loneliness, and to speak through them the gospel of His grace. And, oh, may the voice of their dire need reach the

depths of our inmost hearts, and stir us all up to come in the way of believing, importunate prayer, "to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty." T. H.



Notes on the Temple—No. 3.

(Read 1 Chron. xxii. ; 1 Cor. iii. 9-17 ; 1 Peter ii. 4, 5.)

IN these Scriptures we find the figure of the temple used by the Spirit of God as illustrating the present work of God in the Church.

It may be we are somewhat more familiar with the types of the tabernacle than with those of the temple. Believers may be looked at as seen in the Epistle of Peter, as "strangers and pilgrims" here, or we may look at them in the light of Ephesians, as raised up together with Christ and "seated in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."

Again, the temple may be regarded either in preparation and progress or in perfection. We find that there was a David-provision time for the temple, afterwards a Solomon-preparation time, and then a Solomon-building time. In the second chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians we read—

"In whom (that is, in Christ) all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord."

It is a progressive work. In type, the work was begun and the preparation made for it by David, and it was completed by Solomon. So there is a work going on now, to be completed in glory.

The site having been fixed upon where judgment had been executed for sin, and the sacrifice offered and accepted, then comes the word:—

“This is the house of the Lord God, and this is the altar of the burnt-offering for Israel” (1 Chron. xxii. 1).

In gathering together in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, our first object should not be simply our own edification. Not to find, as it were, a place where we may meet together for our souls' blessing as our first object, but to meet together in obedience to the will of the Lord Jesus and for His glory. We often aim too low. I am persuaded we should have more real blessing if we had a higher object in view—if it was not simply seeking our own edification, but doing the will of Christ, seeking His presence, and keeping the glory of God in view as our ultimate object. Now, David—blessed type as he is of the Lord Jesus, the beloved One—points out and fixes the spot: “This is the house of the Lord God.” When the disciples would keep the pass-over they do not look out for the most convenient spot for themselves. They go to the Lord; they say to Him, “Lord, where wilt Thou that we prepare for Thee?” We want more of that

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spirit. David says, "This is the house of the Lord God." He does not simply say, "This is the place for Israel," but for "the house of the **Lord God.**"

There is another thought connected with that. If it is the house of the Lord God, it takes in all God's people. It is here that the narrowness of human thought manifests itself. Take any sectarian system you please: it is necessarily circumscribed. But when we say, "This is the house of the Lord God," then comes, "This is the altar," the place of accepted worship—"the altar of burnt-offering for Israel"; not for **Judah** simply: it takes in **the whole**. That is what we want—to meet in obedience to the will of Christ, as "builded together"—"living stones"—"a habitation of God through the Spirit," upon ground that will embrace every child of God, and every obedient, devoted disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In the second verse is David's provision:—

"David commanded to gather together the strangers that were in the land of Israel; and he set masons to hew wrought stones to build the house of God.

"And David prepared iron in abundance for the nails for the doors of the gates, and for the joinings; and brass in abundance without weight.

"Also cedar trees in abundance; for the Zidonians and they of Tyre brought much cedar wood to David.

"And David said, Solomon my son is young and tender, and the house that is to be builded for the Lord must be exceeding magnificent, of fame and of glory

throughout all countries : I will therefore now make preparation for it. So David prepared abundantly before his death."

There we find David, a type of the Lord Jesus, making provision. What was it that consumed the Lord Jesus when He was here upon the earth? The glory of God in the redemption of our souls. As He says, "The zeal of thine house hath eaten Me up." He lived and died and gave His life a ransom for many. He redeemed our souls by His own precious blood. But what did He want to do with those living stones? What was His object in getting them? When David prepared, and when Solomon afterwards employed quarrymen to get those stones out, and, as it were, to honeycomb the ground under Jerusalem for that purpose, what was the object in getting those stones out of the quarry? Simply to get stones out of the quarry? That was a means to an end; but what was it for? To build a house for God.

"Ye, also as lively (or living) stones, are (being) built up a spiritual house."

**"Let Thy work appear unto Thy servants,
And Thy glory unto their children.
And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us :
And establish Thou the work of our hands upon us :
Yea, the work of our hands, establish Thou it."**

(Ps. xc. 16, 17).

Bible Study.

THIS month we complete the first section of the Book of Leviticus, that part which speaks specially of those offerings expressing God's satisfaction in Christ. The burnt offering, the oblation, and the peace offering were offerings which a man **might** bring, the sin offering and trespass offering were offerings which he **must** bring, in the case of sin or trespass. The first three tell of communion between God and the worshipper, with Christ as the common object. The fourth and fifth show how communion might be restored when broken, and again Christ is found to be the means of restoration.

From the later history of the people it would appear that very little of all this perfect order of offering was ever carried out, but it is a touching thing to think of God cherishing all this in His heart as to His intercourse with rebellious man, "yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them." Before ever the journey from Sinai was recommenced, to end in such disaster, God had unfolded these rich thoughts of Christ, so perfect in their order and beauty, though He knew that they would lie hidden and unheeded, save where the Holy Ghost might light up here and there the heart of some saint in trial and sorrow, even passing through the consequences of his own sin, to teach him that there was One who knew and understood these things, and that there was a sympathy that flowed like the water from the rock of old, "and that Rock was Christ!" Such are the ways of God in His Word, and blessed is the man that has ears to hear.

The Peace Offering.—The name does not very well express the meaning of the offering; a French version gives it more nearly—*sacrifice de prospérités*. It is a sacrifice which speaks, more than the other offerings, of the blessings which the worshipper enjoys as the fruit of God's dwelling with His people.

In the burnt offering **all** was for God, neither priest nor worshipper ate any of the burnt offering. In the case of the oblation, a memorial handful, with all the frankincense, was burnt, the rest was eaten by the priests, but the worshipper did not partake. But here, in the offering which speaks more of the blessing flowing from Christ's work, we find that God has His portion, the priest has his portion, and the offerer feeds upon the rest. This, however, comes out later, and in Leviticus iii. we are only concerned with God's portion in the peace offering. As in the case of the burnt offering and oblation, the subject is divided into three parts :

i. **The Offering from the Herd.** In this offering the victim might be either a male or a female, whereas in the burnt offering it might only be a male. If the use is traced out in Scripture it will be found that generally the male represents the responsible person, the one who does the action, while the female represents the state resulting from the action. These are two sides of the need which has to be met by the work of Christ, and which must be met in order that the heart may be set free. Then the feature that specially characterises the peace offering, in whatever aspect it is viewed, is brought out in verses 3 and 4. It is the offering of the **fat**. The fat that covers the inward parts is burnt as a sweet savour. It speaks of what controls and governs the inward feelings and desires, the springs of action, the will. The blessed Lord wholly surrendered His own will, that He might do the Father's will. All the springs of man's thoughts and actions have been perverted through the working of his own will in independence. Hence the blessed Saviour, though He never willed anything that was not in perfect accord with the Father's will, yet, as man, surrendered His own will that the will of God might be done. People sometimes pray that their wills may blend with God's will. Our wills can never blend with His will, it is impossible, and this is why the blessed Lord thus gave up

His will as part of the sacrifice ; that we might be sanctified, not to do our own will, nor to blend our wills with God's, but to prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Finally, we have the point which is peculiar to this aspect of the offering in verse 5. The fat was burnt **upon the burnt offering**. The burnt offering must come first, as the ground of acceptable worship.

ii. **The Offering of a Sheep.** The same general difference between the offering of a bullock and the offering of a sheep, already spoken of in the burnt offering, holds good here. The first shows more the full value of the work of Christ for acceptance before the Father, the second more the work of Christ in meeting judgment. So, in this second offering, the one point which is peculiar (ver. 9) speaks in a remarkable way of the offering of the tail, "the whole fat tail." It may be that this apparently strange detail speaks of the closing up of the history of the old man in rebellion and self-will at the cross. As through the disobedience of the one man the many were constituted sinners, so through the obedience of the One the many were constituted righteous (Rom. v. 19).

iii. **The Offering of a Goat.** When the sheep is offered we get more the picture of the blessed Lord in patient obedience suffering both from the hand of man and from God all that was needed to do the will of God. In the goat we see more what He was made for our sakes in bearing sin and being made sin. How terrible to think of the blessed sinless One, the Holy One of God, having to touch sin, to bear it, to know its terrible consequences ; it is by this that God would teach us what sin is in its horror, and what is the love of Jesus. So this aspect closes with the only thing special to it, in verse 17, that no fat and no blood was to be eaten. It was an everlasting statute in the dwellings of God's people. The surrendered will in the agony of Gethsemane, the poured-out life-blood when all was ended, to consummate the sacrifice,

these were for the Father's heart alone, though we enjoy the fruits.

So we see that the general outline of the offering is simpler ; we have not the whole meaning of this offering here, but only what completes the unfolding of those things which are acceptable to the heart of God, and which we may bring to Him to delight Him.

Answers to Questions.

i. The chief difference is the one mentioned above, that in the burnt offering **all** was for God, in the oblation the priest had a portion, while in the peace-offering the offerer and the priest partook of the sacrifice.

ii. The priest's work in the peace-offering was—

(a) to sprinkle the blood (iii. 2).

(b) to burn the fat (iii. 5).

Note that in none of these offerings does the priest slaughter the victim.

The priest's portion is given in Leviticus vii. 34.

iii. The offerer had—

(a) To lay his hand upon the head of the victim (iii. 2).

(b) To slaughter the victim (iii. 2).

(c) To present the fat (iii. 3, vii. 30).

Note the last reference especially.

iv. Leviticus iii. 5.

For next month (D.V.) the subject will be :—**The Sin-offering, Leviticus iv.** The following questions may be answered :—

i. What are the main divisions of the fourth chapter of Leviticus, and what points do you specially notice about each ?

ii. What cases occur in the O.T. of a sin-offering for the whole people ?

iii. Where is the sin-offering mentioned in the N.T. ?

iv. What happened to the first sin-offering for the people ?

B.S. ED.

Notes and Comments.

By a somewhat strange coincidence *By Faith* two printed papers were put into our *Ye Stand.* hands at the same moment a few days ago. Both were anonymous. The shorter of the two, "Government in the Assembly," seems scarcely likely to help towards the "healing" desired in its closing paragraph. Government there may be, and alas, has not infrequently been, and that, too, in the House of God, which, nevertheless, could in no way be said to be according to God. It was so in apostolic times. There was government (or rather misgovernment) in the days of Diotrophes, who not only refused himself to "receive the brethren," but forbade them that would, even casting them "out of the Church." All this brought dishonour on the Lord, and distress to the saints, who had to suffer until such times as the Lord gave power and grace to rectify it.

The larger pamphlet* we are glad to see reprinted after sixty years. Had its instructions been heeded, how much of sorrow might have been spared us! We heartily commend it to our readers' notice. It most powerfully and strikingly brings out how anxiously the apostle

* "By Faith Ye Stand." Price 1d. James Carter, 13 Paternoster Row, E.C.

Paul laboured to bring the conscience of the saint into living contact with God Himself, and to interpose no authority other than that of His Word between the soul and God—not even the God-given authority of the apostle himself. “We do all things, dearly beloved, for your edifying” (2 Cor. xii. 19).

“According to the power which the Lord hath given me to edification, and not to destruction” (2 Cor. xiii. 10).

Abounding in the Work of the Lord.

No. III.

THERE is nothing Satan tries more earnestly to accomplish than to set the people of God striving one against the other. When this is so the work of the Lord ceases.

Sometimes Satan endeavours to hinder by means of persecution, but oftentimes this only serves to give an impetus to the work. The blood of the martyrs has watered the seed of the Word of God, and the ingathering of souls is always far greater after a time of fiery persecution than before. Since the Boxer riots in China, when so many devoted men and women laid down their lives for Christ's sake, the number of converts has far exceeded what ever was known before in the history of the Gospel in that land. Thus Satan outwits himself.

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A far more effectual method of paralysing the work of the Lord is to set the people of God at variance one with the other. Questions arise often over the most trivial matters, sometimes of a personal nature; then sides are taken, parties formed, and alienation, if not division, ensues. Then those who a short while before had gone on happily together in worship, prayer, and service, are found in antagonism. The world looks on and takes note, yet the Christians are surprised that "the interest in the gospel" has ceased! "How does the work of the gospel prosper with you?" we asked of a Christian man recently in a town where divisions, one after another, had done their sad work. "It is heartbreaking," was his reply, "when I knock at a door and invite the inmates to come and hear the gospel, they answer, 'Why, somebody has just asked me to another hall in the same street!'"

We are far from saying that all divisions are wrong. There have been occasions in the past, and these may arise again in the future, when the truth of God has been assailed in such wise that the only right course is to purge oneself from the evil. False doctrine persisted in, and moral evil tolerated, necessitate separation from those who will not judge these things. True Christians may be left behind involved in the evil that has driven the others out; however sad it may be to find division necessary, it is

nevertheless sometimes incumbent upon all who desire to be faithful to Christ, for he that bids "God-speed" to the evil man is "partaker of his evil deeds" (2 John 11).

But while insisting upon this, and all the more so as evil increases in the professing Church, yet must we ever be on the watch lest the flesh should burst forth amongst the people of God, lest roots of bitterness should spring up causing trouble, and thereby many be defiled (Heb. xii. 15). Here we need to look diligently, and check the first symptoms of jealousy, malice, envy, and evil speaking.

"Do all things without murmurings and disputings :

"That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world ;

"Holding forth the word of life" (Phil. ii. 14-16).

When the people of God are in a right state they will

"Stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel" (Phil. i. 27).

They may be weak and contemptible in the eyes of men, they may be scorned by the enemies of the Lord, but with God on their side victory is assured.

So it was with Nehemiah and the feeble remnant in Jerusalem. When in faith they strengthened their hands for the work, then Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem laughed them to scorn, despised them, and said, "What is this

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thing that ye do?" But God was on their side, and faith presses forward to the work undaunted and undismayed by all the opposition of the enemy.

"Then answered I them, and said unto them, The God of heaven he will prosper us: therefore we his servants will arise and build: but ye have no portion, nor right, nor memorial in Jerusalem" (Neh. ii. 20).

Most instructive are the details given of the work in Nehemiah iii. The New Testament words, "to every man his work" (Mark xiii. 34), might well be written over this remarkable page of inspiration. As at Jerusalem in that day, so in this day in which our lot is cast, each individual in the household of faith has a work to do, and needs to do it with watching and prayer.

First and foremost in the work we find Eliashib, the high priest, and his brethren, the priests. They did not plead their priestly office in order to shirk the toil and labour of building the wall. They might have argued that it was their business to attend to the sanctuary and worship. They surely did not neglect these, but in addition are found in the forefront of the work building up the wall and setting up the gates. And of them it is fittingly added that they "sanctified" their work.

It is interesting to notice how all through this chapter it is a question of building and repairing, and not of breaking up and scattering; this is

worthy of our special notice. Further, each one had his work to do. They did not interfere with one another's work, nor waste their time fault-finding and condemning what their brethren were doing. The times were too serious, the dangers from without were too great, for those within to be crippling one another by adverse and disparaging criticism. In these days can the servants of the Lord afford to do otherwise?

The "men of Jericho" come next in order; they did not belong to Jerusalem, yet they none the less shared in the work. Of Zaccur it is simply stated that he "builded," yet is not this to his credit through grace?

We are not told whether Hassenaah (ver. 3) had died before this glorious revival took place, or whether he was too old to take an active share, but his sons were in earnest, and entered minutely into the details of their work—beams, doors, locks, and bars.

Others followed with special energy, for, not content with one piece (ver. 4), Meremoth undertook "another piece" (ver. 21), his effort being not to do as little, but as much as possible in the "good work." Might not this zeal have been awakened by the way in which his neighbour Baruch "earnestly repaired" at his side? (ver. 20). Certain it is that earnestness in one spreads to others. It is interesting to notice how these two earnest workmen were found in close proximity to Eliashib, the high

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priest, who was the first to rise up and build, and whose work was specially noted as "sanctified."

It would be impossible to enter into all the details of this most interesting chapter, but again we notice the zeal of the Tekoites, who also repaired "another piece" (ver. 27), even though their nobles set them such a bad example when they "put not their necks to the work of their Lord" (ver. 5). What solemn words! It was not merely the work of their brethren that they despised, but "the work of their Lord."

There was nothing derogatory to the dignity of any to take a share in the work, as is seen in the case of Hur, who "repaired" like the rest, even though he was "ruler of the half part of Jerusalem" (ver. 9).

The ruler of the other half part of Jerusalem, Shallum, was not behind him in zeal, and of him it is added that "his daughters" shared in the work (ver. 12).

Of the priests it is said that they repaired "every man over against his house" (ver. 28). Their zeal was manifest at home as well as far away, a much needed point to observe. Meshullam, too poor to own a house, repaired "over against his chamber" (ver. 30). As with giving, so with work, "if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not" (2 Cor. viii. 12). Lastly, let us notice "Hamur,

the sixth son of Zalaph" (ver. 30). Why are the five passed over in silence? "Were there not ten cleansed, but where are the nine?"

We may profitably compare Romans xvi. with Nehemiah iii. God takes notice of everything in connection with the service of His people, and in the coming day "every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour" (1 Cor. iii. 8).

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor. xv. 58).

A. H. B.

Fruitful Ministry.

AFTER the most earnest efforts we can put forth for the salvation or restoration of souls they at times remain unmoved so far as we can judge. We may "speak love's message low and tender," but the heart seems still untouched. We may pray earnestly and long for some particular soul to be saved, and yet not see the answer to our prayers. In such cases it is surely wise to trust these beloved objects of our hearts to the will of Him who is perfect in all His ways.

But sometimes, before we have scarcely spoken a word, or dared to hope in the case of others, they have surprised us by their faith and love.

Sovereign grace chooses infinite ways of working. In one case a line of a hymn, a text of Scripture, a word spoken in season, and the lost one is saved. In another case a conversion is seen as the outcome of persevering prayer, and is the result of years of patient waiting.

But the divine and varied workings of God's grace owned and understood ought not to affect our earnest work for the salvation of men, nor to enfeeble our vision as to what faithful and fruitful ministry truly is in the sight of God. We can know from God's Word the kind of service which He values, which He owns, and that which He disowns and rejects. We can find there instances of men who were faithful, and therefore successful, in service for Him, as we can find, alas, the eternal records of others who were not.

In Hebrews xi. 35, it is said that "through faith . . . women received their dead raised to life again."

In 1 Kings xvii. 22, a widow's son is raised to life by the ministry of Elijah, and in 2 Kings iv. 35, a woman's son is raised to life by the ministry of Elisha. Careful study of the two cases will show that Elisha learnt much that was of value from Elijah. How happy when the younger can thus learn from the elder for weal and not for woe. Elijah and Elisha are illustrations of living ministry, while Gehazi answers to ministry which is barren and unfruitful.

In this work of raising the dead it is all important to notice the place where the work was done. It was not a public place with others looking on, but in both instances a *private chamber or closet*. Let us heed this.

“He took him out of her bosom and carried him up into a loft (*R.V.*, the chamber) where he abode, and laid him upon his own bed” (1 Kings xvii. 19).

“He went in therefore, and shut the door upon them twain, and prayed unto the Lord” (2 Kings iv. 33).

Is it not thus in the seclusion of their own closets that God's faithful servants ever prevail? Elisha's shutting to the door is most significant, and full of suggestion as to the value of private prayer. (Compare Matthew vi. 6.) When Gehazi was sent with the staff of Elisha to the closet where the dead child was laid, there was no shutting to the door for prayer. How different the behaviour towards the dead child of the two men, Gehazi and Elisha!

Gehazi reminds us of those nowadays who, as it were, put too much of the work upon God. As we sometimes hear people say in reference to the conversion of souls, “We must leave that to the Lord.” It is quite right to count on God fully, but not, in an indolent way, to leave everything for Him to do. He insists that we through grace shall serve Him really. “Loose him and let him go,” was a service which human hands could render Lazarus, and thus there was no need for Christ to extend the miracle to the

removal of the grave clothes. It is possible to be asking God to do for us what He has already told us in His Word to do for ourselves ; and the talent that ought to be in circulation and gaining interest is sometimes hidden in a napkin.

Gehazi returned to Elisha with the message, "The child is not awaked." Had he done all he might to awake him? Had he placed, by his indifference, too strict a limit on the letter of his master's instructions? Was his heart concerned in the quickening of the child? Perchance he had not the time to spare! But there was that about Gehazi which seems to mark him out as a type of the stranger referred to in John x. 5. The woman whose child was dead said to Elisha, "I will not leave thee." She would not follow Gehazi. He inspired no confidence in himself. In this she illustrates Christ's sheep. "A stranger will they not follow, . . . for they know not the voice of strangers." On the other hand, she *could* trust Elisha. There was evidently no reserve or distance or coldness about him, but fullest sympathy for the sorrowful.

It is usual to put the dead in a spare room, but in the cases before us they were both deposited on the prophets' own beds. Does this not suggest an intimacy which is important in the work of ministering in the gospel. God does not commend those who hide themselves from their own flesh (Isa. lviii. 7). In preaching the gospel to men, there is danger of not getting

near enough to them. Visiting in homes, and inviting to our own in order to reach souls is highly to be commended. On one occasion two disciples of John were following Jesus. They addressed the Lord saying—

“Rabbi, where dwellest thou?” “Jesus said unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where He dwelt and abode with Him that day” (John i. 38, 39).

The Lord was not in a hurry to get rid of them. We must be careful that our engagements with man do not collide with our service for God.

Fruitful ministry will adapt itself to the capacity, the prejudices, the feelings, and the measure of those it seeks to serve. We read of Elisha that—

“He went up and lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands” (2 Kings iv. 34).

“He measured himself (margin) upon the child three times” (1 Kings xvii. 21).

There is a vast difference between the stature of a prophet and the stature of a child. The prophet made himself small for the child's sake. In the family of God there are the little children, the young men, and the fathers. But they have not all the same degree of intelligence. In the world around us there is a limitless variety of material to work upon, and we cannot reach all men for Christ in the same way. The apostle Paul was ever ready to adapt himself to the capacity, the weakness, and the prejudices of

those he sought to win. Not that in doing this, however, he ever compromised the essential truth of God. Yet he "measured himself," so to speak, upon the dead souls around him. He writes :—

"For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all that I might gain the more.

"And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews ; to them that are under the law, as under the law (not being myself under law), that I might gain them that are under the law ;

"To them that are without law, as without law (being not without law to God, but under law to Christ), that I might gain them that are without law.

"To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak ; I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.

"And this I do for the Gospel's sake," &c. (1 Cor. ix. 19-23).

What a study this scripture presents for the servant of Christ! The apostle knew what it was to be under the law. He had groaned out his wretchedness in that condition. There seems to be a sea of pity in his heart when he writes, **"That I may gain them that are under the law."** But he knew by experience the strength of a Jewish prejudice, and that it could only be overcome in others by adapting himself to their measure.

Paul had no *special* testimony to stand for. In addressing the elders at Ephesus he says, "I have not shunned to declare unto you **all the counsel of God**" (Acts xx. 27). Our fruitful-

ness in ministry may be impaired if we, as servants of Christ, take a narrower ground than the apostle took. At certain periods of the Church's history the Holy Spirit may choose to emphasise certain truths, but we must be on our guard against getting into a rut, and pressing one-sidedly what the Spirit of God is not.

Elijah measured himself upon the child *three times*. To Orientals three times carries with it the force of perseverance. In China, to say one has pressed three times for a favour means that an unlimited number of appeals has been made. Who has not failed in service through lack of perseverance? Elisha, too, like his master Elijah before him, made repeated efforts for the restoration of the child :—

“He returned and walked in the house to and fro, and went up and stretched himself upon him” (2 Kings iv. 35).

Resolute continuance is plainly taught. Let those who labour for the Lord ponder Acts xx. 31 :—

“Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.”

Have we all remembered this? This was something like the prophet having the dead child on his bed, and measuring himself upon it over and over again. A verse like this just quoted from the apostle's farewell address at Ephesus suggests the thought of very arduous

labour, and it kills the idea that the service of Christ is an easy-going profession; but to the apostle himself the time may not have seemed so long before he came to reflect upon it. Time is not much thought of in a service of love. Thus we read:—

“Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed but a few days to him, for the love he had to her” (Gen. xxix. 20).

Love for souls, for Christ's sake, and for their own too, is the secret cause of fresh unwearied labour in the service of the Lord. Such labour is “not in vain in the Lord.” It came to pass that

“The flesh of the child waxed warm” (2 Kings iv. 34).

There must be something wrong in any ministry which drives away the young. A little love will touch their hearts. The cold dead body of the child received heat from the warm living body of the prophet. Love filling our hearts for the young can alone win them for Christ, and make them attentive to grave questions. At the same time we must adapt ourselves to their measure, to what they can understand, what they can speak of, and what they can do. May not all this be suggested by the manner of God's prophet in repeatedly embracing the dead body of the child?

There was much which called into practice the patience of the prophet. “The child sneezed seven times.” We have on the one hand to see

that "all things be done decently and in order," but on the other hand, is it not possible to be decorous over much?

Sometimes one would like to see young people more active for Christ. The little they can say for Christ may often prove helpful to others, while saying that little will do good to themselves. Preaching the gospel is an incentive to the person himself who preaches it. The young are at a disadvantage if they are deprived of this. It would be a temptation to some to go back to the world, if forbidden to tell to others what they know and feel of the love of the Lord.

The Holy Spirit has been infinitely patient with us all, and this ought to make us patient with one another when we make mistakes, and especially with beginners. Perhaps we should not all be prepared to say that a man could be mighty in the Scriptures who only knew the baptism of John. Yet this is what the Spirit of God does say of Apollos, even in Christian times, in Acts xix. 24. How continually we need grace to be able to appreciate at their true value the feeblest attainments of any! It is possible to dishearten young beginners in their service for the Lord at a very difficult period of their lives. But may it not be that young workers are sometimes kept back by imagining their elder brethren are not in sympathy with them, when all the while their elders are ready to help them on?

THE GOD OF MY SALVATION.

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But all this energy of prayer and perseverance in service, seen in the cases we have been considering, may be attributed to faith. "Through faith . . . women received their dead raised to life again." Faith, no doubt, on the part of the women, but faith, too, on the part of the prophets. Now true faith leads to activity. This is seen in every instance of it recorded in Hebrews xi. It was faith that sustained the energy of the two prophets, and it will ever make us active and earnest, persevering before God until the blessing be given.

"Faith if it hath not works is dead, being alone" (James ii. 17). T. H.



The God of my Salvation.



THOU art my joy, Lord Jesus,
 For the Father rests in Thee ;
 Thou art my peace, Lord Jesus,
 Thou didst give Thyself for me.
 Ere the closing race be run,
 Ere the crown of life be won,
 Thou art my joy ;
 Thou art my shield from condemnation,
 Thou art the strength of my salvation.

Thou art my strength, Lord Jesus ;
 Power belongs alone to Thee ;

Thou art my song, Lord Jesus,
For Thy grace sufficeth me.
Till the tears of time be o'er,
Till the tempter tempt no more,
Thou art my strength !
Thou art my song in tribulation,
Thou art the horn of my salvation.

Thou art my bread, Lord Jesus,
Evermore I live by Thee ;
Thou art my wine, Lord Jesus,
For Thy blood was shed for me.
In the battle's deadly fray,
In the coming glory day,
Thou art my bread !
Thou art my wine of consolation,
Thou art the Rock of my salvation.

Thou art my light, Lord Jesus,
And I love to gaze on Thee ;
Thou art my life, Lord Jesus,
Thou art throned on high for me.
Though the lesser lights may pale,
Though my heart and flesh may fail,
Thou art my light !
Thou art the Sun of God's creation,
Thou art my light and my salvation.

Thou art my hope, Lord Jesus,
I am waiting here for Thee ;
Thou art my gain, Lord Jesus,
Thou art all in all for me.
Thou art my joy, and food, and might,
Thou art my peace, and life, and light,
Thou art my hope !
Thou art my Lord, mine adoration,
Thou art the God of my salvation.

Redeemed, Gathered, Satisfied.

(Psalm cvii.)

I WAS much struck in reading this psalm with three words in it, spoken of those whom the Spirit there exhorts to give thanks and praise to the Lord.

1. Redeemed. "O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy endureth for ever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom He hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy."

We, blessed be the Lord's name, are redeemed (*a*) *from* the hand of the enemy. The enemy's power is broken by Him who by death has destroyed him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and the captive has been set free. As with Israel of old, who saw *all* their enemies dead on the sea shore, so with us the deliverance is full and complete, and we can truly sing—

"His be the Victor's name
Who fought the fight alone,
Triumphant saints no honour claim,
His conquest was their own."

This perhaps is the aspect of redemption that appeals to us first, and yet the other is even more blessed. We are the redeemed of the Lord: redeemed (*b*) *to God*, as that blest company spoken of in Rev. v. 9, who will sing by and by, "Thou hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood." He has made us His own treasure, a treasure the value of which in His sight can

only be measured "by the precious blood of Christ" (see I Pet. i. 19).

Well may the thought of this preciousness in God's sight lift up our hearts in adoring worship, while we muse in wonder as we listen to our blessed Saviour telling His Father, Thou "hast loved them as Thou hast loved me" (John xvii. 23).

2. Gathered (ver. 3). He "gathered them out of the lands, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south." If God redeems us individually, it is not His thought to leave us as isolated ones in the midst of a scene that has rejected Christ. Caiaphas spoke the truth when he said that Jesus "should gather together in one the children of God" (John xi. 52).

God loves to gather His redeemed ones, as in Matt. xviii. 20, (*a*) *in* or *to* Christ's name, that One in whom His own soul finds its perfect and unchangeable delight, that we, too, may have "great delight" as we sit under His shadow (Cant. ii. 3). Thus the centre of God's affections has through His grace become our centre also. Oh! that we might walk more worthily of Him, and more constantly and truly seek His glory. For if God caused the houses of Israel and Judah to cleave to Him that they might be to Him "for a people, and for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory" (Jer. xiii. 11), how much more so has Christ now taken us to

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Himself as a peculiar people, making us one with Himself, and giving us to bear His name.

But, further, in Matt. xviii. 20, we find that by the Holy Spirit we are (*b*) *gathered together*, that walking in the light—the place that, as believers, we have been set in by God—we might have fellowship one with another, “and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ” (1 John i. 3 and 7).

How different to the “good fellowship” of the world!

Holy communion with the Father and the Son and with one another in the power of the Spirit of God, to be only truly enjoyed while we remember that it is “in the light” that we walk, so that everything in us which is manifested by that light as being contrary to God may be at once judged and confessed.

It is remarkable how often in these days of failure we hear of “walking in love” in such a way as would seem to indicate that we must not be too exclusive.

Let any who would so use it note the force of that passage in 1 John i. 7, that the place of our fellowship—where indeed we shall most truly manifest divine love the one to the other—is “in the light” in which we are at all times.

Did we more realise this we would no doubt more earnestly strive to be found walking according to that light.

The apostle John, who, more than any other, speaks of love, yet writes, "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth" (3 John 4).

3. Satisfied. "He satisfieth the longing soul" (ver. 9). God loves to satisfy the longing soul with the One who satisfies His own heart. Can we not say—

"God is satisfied with Jesus,
We are satisfied as well"?

Yet we go on longing, for the more we know of Jesus the more we want to know of Him, and God will go on satisfying us with Him until in glory we see Jesus face to face. He will then be satisfied with the fruit of the "travail of His soul," and we shall be for ever satisfied when we awake with His likeness.

"O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good."

W. H. S. F.

The Lord's Supper.

NOT its doctrine, though what more instructive to the heart (the seat of all learning in the divine life): nor yet its consequences, and how practical are they! But the **attitude** of the soul in this precious hour will engage our reflections for a little now.

First, It is **repentant**, for the hour of the institution of the festival was, "The night in

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which He was betrayed"; and the renewal of the commemoration has revived in the soul the sense of the treachery and weakness of man, of self; and touched the conscience of the saint, causing discernment of the condition of the heart towards the Lord. .

"Preparation for communion," in the ordinary sense of seeking to produce a worthiness to partake of the supper, is foreign to the blessed consciousness we possess of a meetness to be there, already ours in the Beloved; but equally so is a previously unexercised heart, nor can we properly fail to catch the solemn spirit of a scene which was marked by the exposure of the hearts of all connected with it. (Read Matthew xxvi. 1-56.)

Second, It is **thankful**; its exercises have ended; they preceded the occasion. It has no prayer to make now, nor confessions either.

"The murmurs of the wilderness," if they have been heard, are, ere this, silent, and the busy week of earthly (rightly appointed) toil has closed—'tis the Lord's Day.

The daily recurring representation of our necessities has ceased too, it has no place at the table of the Lord; nor during this strange hour: strange and unearthly indeed, the vivid contrast to all we have left for its enjoyment.

We may resume prayer presently. He prayed after the hour in the "guest chamber" (see John xvii., and again, Luke xxii. 40). But when

there, He "gave thanks." May we enter into this sacred and becoming spirit! If the moment be eucharistic, how important to be free from all that would burden heart or conscience.

Third, It is **memorial**, of a Person, the Lord Jesus: whose memory extinguishes our personal recollections and supersedes our sorrows. We have only one link with the past, the remembrance of the betrayed, rejected, the dead Christ; and finally it is **expectant**; it comes repentant, it leaves the scene in expectation of the fulfilment of its only hope—His return.

R. H.

Bible Study.

IN a recent number of the *Christian's Library* in the Bible Study on Exodus xxx., the question was raised whether the altar in Leviticus xvi. 18 was the golden altar or the brazen altar. In reference to this we have received the following notes from a correspondent whose judgment is of much weight:—

i. The expression "before the Lord" is moral rather than topographical, and decides nothing in this case.

ii. Leviticus xvi. 33 proves that the altar in question is the brazen altar, for it stands in contrast with the tabernacle as a whole (*cf.* Ezekiel xl. 45, 46, &c.).

iii. Exodus xxx. refers to God's order *before* the failure of the priesthood, and is really prophetic, carrying us on to the last days in principle. There was *no* prohibition then to the high priest against entering into the most holy place.

iv. In Leviticus xvi. all depends upon the *failure* of the priesthood, as the opening verses show, when the order of Exodus xxx. was *set aside*; and it shows God's provision for this failure, introducing Christ's *present* place in glory consequent upon this failure, and a full redemption made because of it. In the future day, the separation between the Most Holy Place and the Sanctuary will be maintained by folding doors (whether open or shut occasionally does not appear)—no vail. That being *rent* refers to the *present* time, and Christ's actual place in glory. See Ezekiel xli. 23, 24, as compared with 1 Kings vi. 31, 32, and 2 Chronicles iii. 14 gives the vail which was to be rent.

Students can weigh these points for themselves. These pages are for *study* of the Scriptures, and the great thing is to see what Scripture actually says. Our need and desire is to learn from God out of His Word. It is an important thing to go on reading, over and over again, not troubling greatly if everything is not clear at once, and not making laborious mental efforts to get things clear. **By reading the Scriptures and seeking to walk with God, all things necessary for us will become plain as we go on.**

The Sin Offering.—This subject commences a fresh section of Leviticus, marked by the words, “And Jehovah spoke to Moses.” The first three chapters are taken up with worship in its different aspects, as it is acceptable to God. This section from iv. 1 to vi. 7 takes up the question of sin and trespass, interrupting communion and preventing worship.

We need to bear in mind, as all through Leviticus, that the point of view is God's dwelling in the midst of His people. Exodus shows how this wonderful fact is made possible and actually carried out. Then follows the question of what will suit God and meet the needs of such a remarkable state of things.

This chapter naturally falls into four sections :—

i. **The Sin Offering of the Priest.**—This comes first, for the priest is the link between God and His people, and all the order of approach to God in His house breaks down if the priesthood goes wrong. We do not always, perhaps, remember the importance of this side of things. Hence the most striking points which specially belong to this section, are concerned first with the entrance into the holiest, viz., the sprinkling of the blood seven times before the veil of the sanctuary, and the placing of it upon the horns of the altar of fragrant incense (vers. 6, 7); and second, with the complete judgment of the sin in its root, fruit, and principles, before God (vers. 11, 12). It is here specially that we get the great principles of the sin offering. The blood taken in to secure the right of entrance, the fat removed and burnt on the burnt offering, and lastly, the whole victim burnt outside the camp.

Hebrews xiii. 11, 12 shows the importance of the bringing in of the blood and the corresponding burning of the victim outside the camp. The 16th of Leviticus is the only case of the blood being actually brought into the holiest, but in the first two sections of this chapter the blood is to secure the entrance there, and so the victim is burnt outside as in the case of the sin offerings of

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Lev. xvi. The one exception to this is in Lev. ix. 7-11, where the blood is not said to be brought into the sanctuary, although the bullock is burnt outside the camp.

ii. **The Sin Offering for the Congregation.**—Here everything is according to the first sin offering, only the principles are, so to speak, taken for granted, and the special point is the work of the priest in applying the results of the sin offering to the need of the congregation when sin has broken the link of communion with God. We have the first mention of forgiveness resulting from atonement. “The priest shall make *atonement* for them, and it shall be *forgiven* them” (ver. 20).

iii. **The Sin Offering of the Prince.**—Here we have a case of one in special responsibility with special intelligence, for the two always go together. But the general state of things is right, the priest and the congregation are supposed to be in their right state. Hence we do not have the full measure, the bullock, nor the blood brought into the sanctuary, nor the victim burnt outside the camp. It is the question of the restoration of an individual to his place as a worshipper, not of the whole foundation upon which acceptable worship must rest. So we have the goat, a male, speaking specially of responsibility, slaughtered by the offerer at the place where the burnt offering was slaughtered, and the blood is put on the horns of the altar of burnt offering.

We shall see in a later chapter what becomes of the body of the victim. Thus again we find that “the priest shall make atonement for him to cleanse him from his sin, and it shall be forgiven him.”

iv. **The Sin Offering of the Individual.**—Here we have not the same responsibility or intelligence as in the case of a prince, and the victim is a female of the goat or sheep. It is only here out of the four sections that the fat is spoken of as “a sweet odour to Jehovah.” In other details the offering corresponds to the prince's sin offering.

These are the great principles of the sin offering. I

do not say much about their application, as our object is not to apply, but to find out what Scripture says about these things. It should be noticed that in each case the sin is looked at as "inadvertent," not wilful. When God has redeemed His people to Himself and come to dwell among them, He does not expect them to sin, even if in mercy that knows their feebleness, He provides for the sin. In each case, too, it is the commandments of Jehovah that are in question.

We shall come on other points connected with the priestly work in the sin offering later on.

Through an oversight the questions for both January and February were set on the Peace Offering. Hence we shall go on to the March questions now, and this will enable us to answer each month's questions in the following issue in future.

Answers to Questions.

- i. Answered above.
- ii. 2 Chron. xxix. 21-24 ; Ezra viii. 35. These are the two actual cases. Lev. xvi., the day of atonement ; Num. xxviii. and xxix. for the feasts, and Neh. x. 33, for the custom of those returned from exile.
- iii. Heb. i. 17, v. 3, vii. 27, ix. 7, 13, 25, x. 3, 6, 8, 11, xiii. 11 ; Luke ii. 24 (from Lev. xii. 8). The offerings for the cleansing of the leper included a sin offering.
- iv. See Lev. x. 16-20. The failure of the priesthood throws back the responsibility in type, upon Christ. Instead of being eaten, the goat of the people's sin offering is burnt. This becomes the established order in Lev. xvi.

Subject for April.—The Trespass Offering, Lev. v.-vi. 7. The following questions may be searched out :—

- i. What are the things which constitute **trespass**, in this portion of Scripture ?
- ii. What different words are used for sin in its various aspects in Lev. iv. to vi. 7 ?
- iii. What is the principal difference between the sin and the trespass offering according to Scripture ?

B.S. ED.

Notes and Comments.

There is a ring of true faith in
A Royal the Lord Jesus Christ in the
Proclamation. proclamation made by the new
 King of Sweden to his people.
 It is truly refreshing in these days of departure
 from the truth. Let us continue in prayer for
 kings and all in eminent places, according to
 the exhortation of the Scriptures (1 Tim. ii. 1, 2),
 not only that we may live quietly, peaceably, and
 honestly, but that the saving knowledge of God's
 grace in Christ may be experienced by many
 amongst them.

"God's mercies are new every morning. It is because
 of this that we, though feeling the burden of sorrow and
 the weight of responsibility that is put upon us, yet with
 confidence and hope bring to you, at this change of year,
 our Royal greeting.

"While we think of the overwhelming loss which we
 and all our people suffered when the highly gifted, lov-
 ing, and, in his work as ruler, deeply experienced prince,
 King Oscar II., was called hence; and besides, look back
 over the past year, and all the lights and shadows that
 spread themselves over the memories of it, yet it is the
 goodness of God that shines most brightly before our
 eyes. With mercy God came to the dearly beloved father
 of us and of our country to give him deliverance and
 peace.

"Therefore, let us give thanks for all to our God and
 Father in the name of Jesus Christ.

"We show poor gratitude to God if we are disobedient
 to Him and reject His best gifts. Our consciences accuse

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us of manifold disobedience against God; and in our country, even during the past year, startling individual outbreaks of crime have occurred, and the habitual sins of our nation seem undiminished. The divisions among the people have continued, and have assumed even more threatening aspects. 'Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Or why then is not the health of the daughter of My people recovered?'

"The great cure for our wounds is to be had. God's mercy, given through Jesus Christ, removes the guilt of sin, subdues the power of evil, gives treasures more precious than gold or earthly power, and brings forth a love which breaks down barriers, and levels unequal lots. But few heed it. Few have patience to wait for the quiet working of inward powers to overcome difficulties.

"There is widespread indifference to Christ, and even blasphemy against Him may be heard. No one among us can say that he has with word and life so earnestly opposed evil and witnessed for truth and right that he has no share in the responsibility for prevailing sins; and heavy is the responsibility which rests upon a people which rejects God's saving grace. Changes and improvements are indeed sought after in our times, but the most important change and improvement is a universal conversion to God. Let us, each for himself and unitedly, confess our sins, and ask God, for Jesus Christ's sake, to forgive our iniquities and heal our diseases.

"By the Reformation the subjects of heart-conversion and God's unspeakably great Gift to broken hearts were emphasised with a clearness which shines out in the history of the world. May, therefore, the memory of the Reformation be blessed amongst us! Let us follow its exhortations, to hold to the Word of God, seek the righteousness with which God clothes us, and aim at such a development and activity of life as shall be like a plant growing out of love and faith in the heart. The gospel of Jesus Christ, which the Reformation brought anew into

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the light, like the gold of truth, cleansed from the dross of the inventions of man, shone clearly for Gustavus Adolphus, his people, and army, and it has lost neither its glory nor its power.

“In spite of much enmity shown towards the gospel of Christ, we see it, even in our times, bring about blessed effects, both in Christendom and in the heathen world. As living seeds are borne over the sea and germinate on foreign shores, so does the gospel of Christ come to heathen lands. Since we also assist in this work, may it be done with such truth and love as will show that we deeply desire to present to our fellow-men in far-off countries a gift which has for ourselves a priceless value !

“The chief condition for all uplifting of the soul, and the gathering of our people into a solid unity and to strenuous effort towards high ends, is that what has in itself an imperishable worth should also be dear to our hearts. The zeal of many to make the Fatherland precious to the Swedish people is rich in promise ; but still more promising will it be if we as well, and before all else, have one and the same precious faith, one hope, one Saviour, and one God who is the Father of us all. Then we may expect the Lord's help for the country and ourselves in the days to come ; and we may be certain that during the new year and at its close we shall have abundant cause to thank our God for spiritual or temporal blessing.

“So we command and admonish you all—clergy and laity, young and old, men and women, who in our kingdom have your habitation, dwell, and live, none excepted, of whatsoever estate and condition he may be, who is not by absolute necessity prevented—that you, on four days for general thanks-giving, fasting, repentance, and prayer, which we, according to good and ancient custom, have appointed and ordained to be kept in the year 1908—Sundays, 8th March, 10th May, 12th July, and 18th October—set aside all worldly occupation, and early, with

one accord, betake yourselves to the House of God, and there unitedly consider His Holy Word in the specially appointed portions, with prayer and songs of praise."

A Christian friend writes: "There has been a great revival here in Los Angeles. Daily there have been four to five open-air meetings in daylight, not going out from any particular church, assembly, or meeting, but every one was addressed on the principal streets, and any one could speak, preaching Christ. Many have been converted, not only through this, but through the evening papers giving what the speakers said. In this way the gospel was broadcast. It reminds me so much of what Paul says in Phil. i. 18. Another mission held meetings in three places every night. Those places were in front of theatres and saloons, or public-houses as you call them in England, and during last year they recorded from this so-called street mission over 300 converted. Though this is in weakness we can rejoice and thank the Lord for it."

Another friend informs us of a great movement in Philadelphia, whereby about 30,000 people have been gathered every day, and have been listening to the gospel more or less clearly preached. Hundreds have already professed conversion. We cannot be insensible to the fact that God is calling upon men in these closing

days of the dispensation to repent and believe the gospel. Some may see much to find fault with in the methods employed by others, but we surely cannot but thank God that in these days of increasing infidelity so many of His people are being wakened up to care for the masses around them. Surely the coming of the Lord draweth nigh !

Another writes to us of the wide-open door in Italy. The people are breaking away from the bondage of priestcraft, and the Bible is being circulated as never before. We are personally acquainted with several earnest and sound labourers in that land who desire prayer for guidance and help at this crisis in the religious history of Italy.

England, on the other hand, is returning to the darkness of Rome. Infidelity and superstition are rapidly on the increase. A friend writes from a small country district near the east coast : " Last week we were all amazed to see, on the high road facing the Roman Catholic chapel, a life-size figure of our blessed Lord on the cross. The figure was dead white, on a black cross, and *on the road* ! It was so terrible to look at that every one was quite upset, and Mr — and Mr — went to the priest, and requested him at once to remove it, or they should do so. He did so, and it now is against

the back of the chapel facing the road! It is so painful, and the feeling is so strong about it, which is a blessing. What a bold, insolent move on the part of the Roman Catholics! It only shows what they mean."

With all the enemies of Christ and the gospel marshalling their forces, how sad to see the Christians often quarrelling with one another; instead of shoulder to shoulder, heart to heart, and hand in hand, striving together for the truth of the gospel.

ED.

Fruit-Bearing.

(JOHN xv.)

MANY find difficulty in the interpretation of this passage. The importance of it cannot be over-estimated from the point of view of practical Christian life, for are we not told that

"Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples.

"As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you: continue ye in My love.

"If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love.

"These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.

"This is My commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay

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down his life for his friends. Ye are My friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you" (John xv. 8-15).

What a cluster of precious fruit is found in this second group of seven verses in our chapter, the practical result in experimental Christian life of the truth developed in the first group of seven verses! May every reader, young and old, meditate upon them in the quiet of his Saviour's presence!

Verse 8.	{	The Father glorified. Much fruit borne. Manifested discipleship.
Verses 9, 10, 11.	{	Obedience in exercise. The Saviour's love enjoyed. Fulness of joy.
Verses 12, 13, 14.	{	Mutual love enjoined. The pattern of love. The obedience of friendship.

"I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman. . . . I am the vine, ye are the branches."

In Isaiah v. 1-8 we learn that Israel had been Jehovah's choicest vine; but when He looked that it should bring forth grapes, it brought forth wild grapes. Fruit-bearing is the main thought in connection with the vine. In John xv. our Lord takes the place of Israel as the *true* Vine. Israel had been the vine brought out of Egypt and planted in the land of Canaan (Psalm lxxx.). But now this vine was broken down, wasted, and devoured, and Jesus, the Branch, was made strong for God and His glory.

Israel had failed, and was about to be laid aside in judgment. The Branch has now become the true Vine. Not Jehovah, but the Father was the husbandman. The disciples, and not the Jewish nation, were the branches.

The figure here used is that of a vine growing on the earth with its branches and its fruit, and not a body on earth united to a Head in heaven. Clearly the two figures are different: the vine with its branches, and the body with its members. Some object to apply the term *union* to the connection between the vine and its branches; union, they say, is that kind of connection which exists between a body and its head. Yet we should remember that the expression "union" is nowhere found in Scripture, while the connection between the vine and its branches is a very close and real one indeed.

True, there is nothing in John xv. about the "one body"; and how clear it is possible to be intellectually upon the subject of the "one body" whilst bearing very little fruit, indeed, of the kind spoken of in this passage of Scripture.

If Christ Himself is the vine, who then are the branches? Is not this clearly answered in verse 5? "I am the vine, ye are the branches." To whom was our Lord speaking? Was it not to the eleven? Judas had gone out (John xiii. 30). Whilst *he* was present with the little band of disciples, Jesus had said, "Ye are clean, but not all. For He knew who should betray Him; therefore, said He, **Ye are not all clean.**"

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But now, Judas having gone out, Jesus says, "**Now ye are clean** through the word which I have spoken unto you" (chap. xv. 3).

"Ye are clean . . . ye are the branches." Does not the Lord intend that we should learn from this that there is that sort of connection between Himself and His people which exists between the vine and its branches? When he said, "Ye are the branches," were any others there present besides His own which were in the world? Judas, we repeat, had gone out.

Does not this help in the understanding of verse 2?

"Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit He taketh away." Solemn words indeed! Let not their edge be blunted for our consciences. Does the reader say, "Oh, these are only professors!" We do not wish to dogmatise, but personally we believe these words have a very solemn application to true believers. Let us never forget the purpose for which we are here; it is that we might bring forth fruit. This is individual, but intensely practical. Many at Corinth were fruitless, they were taken away. They were not lost, but they were removed from the place where testimony could be rendered to Christ. They were being taken from the scene of their own failure and fruitlessness, to the heaven procured for them through their Saviour's sufferings and death.

There is a sense in which branches may be

taken away other than by death. A life of carelessness, worldliness, and sin on the part of a true child of God removes him altogether from the sphere of practical testimony for Christ. The same may be said as to a company of God's people. The assembly of Ephesus was warned to repent, otherwise its candlestick would be removed out of its place. This does not mean that they would all die, but so far as light-bearing for Christ in this world was concerned, they would be set aside. We have heard of a company of saints disorganised and set against one another through disagreement as to reception amongst them of one desirous of remembering the Lord in His death, not because there was anything to disqualify doctrinally or morally, but owing to some supposed technical defect in the manner of his application. It is possible to be very nice in points of detail, whilst the weightier matters of fruit-bearing and light-shining for Christ are neglected.

Oh, brethren, awake! Sinners are perishing, saints starving, the work of the Lord languishing. This is no time for petty discords and ecclesiastical scruples. Whilst you are disputing over questions and trifles, others with, it may be, less light and less intelligence, are bringing their sheaves home with joy.

"By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John xiii. 35).

"Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit, so shall ye be My disciples" (John xv. 8).

Do we want the Father to be glorified? Then let us bear much fruit. Do we want the world to know that we are Christ's disciples? Then let us love one another. But if the fruitless branch is taken away, the fruit-bearing branch is otherwise dealt with.

"Every branch that beareth fruit, he cleanseth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

"Already ye are cleansed through the word which I have spoken unto you."

It is the Father's government of those who profess allegiance to Christ. We have seen His action with regard to the fruitless branch—what will He do with the branch that beareth fruit? He cleanseth it that it may bring forth more fruit. And how does He cleanse it? Specially, no doubt, through the Word, though it may be also by chastisement, as Hebrews xii. makes clear.

While the blood cleanses in the sense of atonement and expiation, the Word cleanses in the sense of purifying. The purifying was done at the start by the Word in new birth (see John iii.)—"already ye are cleansed"—it is also required all along the Christian course, day by day. A most important truth this is, the continued cleansing by the Word that we may bring forth **more fruit**. Most earnestly would we press this upon ourselves and our brethren—" **more fruit**."

(To be continued.)

The Provision of Grace.

WHEN sin becomes, as it does, to those who are under its conviction, exceeding sinful, the remedy for it becomes exceedingly precious. Men think lightly of Christ, and of His atoning work, because they have shallow convictions of sin.

The death of Christ is a provision for a felt need. Its preciousness, to the believer, is in proportion to the reality of the need as it is felt. Christ in His atoning work is intended to meet a case like that of the publican, who, "standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner." Here is a man in sore distress. Persons under ordinary circumstances do not *smite their breasts*, they do not feel too sinful to raise their eyes to heaven, nor do they stand *afar off*. In the case of the publican this was in no way pretentious but real. He had discovered that he was a sinner, and the cry to God for mercy rises of necessity and without effort from his distressed heart to the ear of God. There is ever for such sinners a full provision of grace in the atoning death of the Lord Jesus. When the necessary divine judgment of all sin becomes a reality to those who have a conscience of sins, the sufferings of the Saviour are valued beyond expression.

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But the working of the truth in our hearts—it may be the law of God through the power of the Holy Spirit—by which we learn our state, is no less a provision of grace than is the gift of the Saviour Himself. The way we are led up to a full sense of our need, the weariness we feel of the world and its ways, the conviction of what is due to God, the desire to be right before Him, the wounding as well as the healing of the spirit of a man are all the outcome of His grace. God is to be praised for every sigh we heave for better things. The hunger for righteousness in us, as well as the righteousness for us in Christ which satisfies that hunger, are both alike the fruit of God's grace.

The gospel of rest is offered to the weary and heavy laden, but none are weary and heavy laden, in this sense, who have not been made so by the Spirit of God. The world and its pleasures would satisfy us still, we should still smile at and with those who are rebels to God, and should in fact be rebels ourselves, if divine grace did not ordain otherwise. We have nothing that we have not received. A crucified and risen Saviour is a divine provision for a divinely prepared condition of heart. It is because men's hearts have not been prepared that they neglect the great salvation.

It is great mercy for God to give us the Scriptures, but is it not great mercy that He should open our understandings that we may

understand them? Who gives us the disposition and the intelligence to read with profit the Word of God?

“The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned” (1 Cor. ii. 14).

We are in danger of forgetting that what is to us more precious than thousands of gold and silver is only foolishness to men of the world, while it is of sovereign mercy that we receive His Word. If we remembered this we should not be surprised at the rejection of our message, and that what seems a weary burden to others, should afford the greatest joy and refreshment to ourselves.

If we study the building of God's tabernacle in the wilderness we shall see how completely all things connected with it were of God. The pattern was God's pattern, not only in general outline, but in minute detail. The offerings of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen were brought by those who gave willingly with their hearts; so was it with all the material—more than enough—brought by the people for the sanctuary and service of the Lord. But the material was originally belonging to God, and each might well say, “Of Thine own have we given Thee.” Not only so, but **the willingness** to bring for the service of God the good things which they possessed, whether in the case of

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men or women, whether gold, or silver, or precious stones, was not a natural willingness, but a willingness given to them of God, as it is written—

“Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power” (Ps. cx. 3).

But this teaching holds good not only in the case of those who brought the material, but also in the case of those who made all the furniture, covering, and vessels of the sanctuary. It is an interesting study how Bezaleel and Aholiab made everything—from the altar of incense to the outermost ring of the curtains, according to all that the Lord had commanded; but the secret of it all is, that these men were inspired by God to do the work. When Moses received the pattern of the tabernacle from God the question may well have arisen in his mind, “How is all this wonderful work to be done?” But God had an answer for this question, as He had and has for every other.

“See,” saith the Lord, “I have called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri. . . . And I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship. . . . And I, **behold**, I have given with him Aholiab . . . and **in the hearts of all that are wise hearted I have put wisdom**, that they may make all that I have commanded thee” (Exod. xxxi. 2, 6).

But when all the various things in their separate pieces were completed, then the tabernacle was reared by Moses, and everything was

put in its place according to the divine commandment. As to this we read—

“Thus did Moses : according to all that the Lord commanded him, so did he” (Exod. xl. 16).

But it will not be denied that God's power made Moses willing, and directed him, too, in this final and perfect completing of the tabernacle of the Lord.

In the realm of the new creation “all things are of God.” The Saviour and His work ; the reconciliation to God, which is the outcome of His atonement ; the great doctrines of the righteousness of God, and justification by faith alone ; the divine records of these things handed down to us ; the inspiration of apostles to give to us the mind of God ; the great unfolding of the truth as seen in the teachings of the apostle Paul ; the miraculous powers to witness to the truth as seen in the historic account of apostolic times ; the natural providential deliverances as well as the seeming miraculous ones, of His servants engaged in His work ; the eager attention given by men to the message, the message itself to which men were made ready to listen—all these things were of God. Human helplessness, apart from God's help, is never more displayed than in the lives of the servants of God. Even Christ Himself became a perfect pattern of dependence upon God. It pleased Him to spend the night in prayer before He called unto Him the disciples. The words which He gave to His

disciples were the words which His Father had given Him, and it was through the Holy Ghost that He gave commandment unto the apostles whom He had chosen. He would make manifest that all things were of God in the life of the man Christ Jesus, who was indeed in Himself the God-man.

It was necessary that God's servants should have the sentence of death in themselves—otherwise they would be found trusting in themselves, instead of in God who raiseth the dead. Are we fitted to serve God before we thus know ourselves? Can we tell how much we have needed, and perhaps still need, trial and discipline to teach us this lesson? The apostle could do all things through Christ who strengthened him. He could be content in whatsoever state he found himself, he knew how to suffer need, as well as to abound. He could endure to be abased as well as to be honoured. He could stand, forsaken by his brethren, to answer charges before the world-emperor; but he tells us he was strengthened by the power of Christ for all these things, and he is careful to admit, concerning the sufferings he endured, and also regarding the more abundant labours in which he was engaged, that these sprang not from himself, but were because of the grace of God that was with him.

This is the secret of all Christian devotedness, of the faith, too, which God's people have exer-

cised, and of the loveliness seen in the lives of saints, whether in the Old Testament or the New, or in all the Christian centuries until now.

The apostle James is moved to deplore the sin which he may have known in himself, and which he saw manifested in the people around him. Appealing to the Word of God he asks,

“Do ye think that the Scripture saith in vain, ‘The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy’?”

He saw envy on every hand, and knew that what Scripture said was true, for envy was generally characteristic of human nature. Scripture is everywhere latent with this truth about man, as well as the truth about God. But the apostle did not therefore despair as some do, of himself and others, but goes on to say, “**But He giveth more grace**” (Jas. iv. 6). Envy, therefore, need not be in exercise in the lives of Christians. It ought not to be—shall we not say, it *must not* be?—while there is the rich provision of divine grace to subdue and control our otherwise envious hearts. And grace, too, to show us that as children of God all things that are true and abiding and good are ours; while that which is earthly, even life itself here, is but a vapour which appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away.

But grace is not for the proud.

“God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble” (Jas. iv. 6).

“Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He shall lift you up” (Jas. iv. 6).

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It is something to learn practically that we are not sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves, and that we are only earthen, and therefore brittle, vessels ; that we can only be a channel of blessing to others, and that all the excellency and greatness are of God and not of us.

It may well be that our want of greater success in service for the Lord, our slowness to see the great possibilities of blessing in the Christian life, and, still more, our slowness to attain to those possibilities, all arise from the lack of a true knowledge of ourselves. Not that we do not know the teaching of Scripture on the subject, but that the Scripture knowledge has not become experimental. It is good to frankly and honestly own before God our helplessness, and then as frankly and honestly believe in the Word of His grace.

Christian life and service was not a mere ideal, as we have seen, to the apostle Paul. The teachings of Jesus throughout the Gospels are not meant to be only ideals. Unlike heathen religions, there is the provision of grace in Christ for the disciple to practise all that the Master has taught. The one who hears the sayings of Jesus and does not practise them is likened unto a foolish man who

“built his house upon the sand, and the rain descended and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house ; and it fell ; and great was the fall of it.”

Christ insists on being obeyed, because He is stronger than the strong, and because there is no reason why we should not obey Him. Our inability as believers to obey is removed by virtue of the new life that we have in Him; then again because our old man was crucified with Him and also by the gift of His Spirit. His disciples know that "His commandments are not grievous."

Let us, as those who confess we have been redeemed by His blood, fully own to the Lord, and to one another, if need be, wherein we have failed as living witnesses for Christ. Let us tell Him that, in view of the ample provision made for our life and service here, we are without excuse when we disobey. The best obedience we can render is a poor response to what He has done for us. Our failure was in no case because He was not abundantly able to save. His glory and His service require our fullest devotedness.

Christian life is not to be less strenuous because it is not legal. But we must see plainly, and believe fully, that

"His divine power hath given us all things that pertain unto life and godliness through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue." T. H.

"Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. v. 18).

Notes on the Temple—No. 4.

DAVID is here (1 Chron. xxii. 5) setting forth, if I may so speak, in type—the object of the Lord Jesus Christ in life and death—to build, in eternal glory, a house for God. And as the type was to be “exceeding magnificent,” this was to be a monument to God’s glory worthy of God—worthy of the Lord Jesus Christ—a monument to the glory of God that shall bring praise to God from the whole intelligent universe throughout the countless ages of eternity.

David is the type of Christ in life, in His affliction, sorrow, and suffering here, and in His death; while Solomon is the type of the Lord Jesus in resurrection and ascension glory.

“Now, behold, in my trouble I have prepared for the house of the Lord a hundred thousand talents of gold, and a thousand thousand talents of silver; and of brass and iron without weight, for it is in abundance; timber also and stone have I prepared; and thou mayest add thereto.

“Moreover there are workmen with thee in abundance, hewers and workers of stone and timber, and all manner of cunning men for every manner of work.

“Of the gold, and the silver, and the brass, and the iron, there is no number. Arise, therefore, and be doing, and the Lord be with thee.”

Let us look at this provision a little in detail.

A talent is about 114 lbs. weight, and a talent of gold is computed at £5,475 sterling. This will amount to £547,500,000! There is not only a hundred thousand talents of gold,

but there is "a thousand thousand talents of silver." A talent of silver is computed at £342, so that a thousand thousand talents of silver would amount to £342,000,000. Now, I ask, why are all those figures put here?

There is something to be learned; there is something of Christ, something of God. There is something for our souls; for comfort; for exhortation and encouragement. Let us put these two sums together, and what do they amount to? There is: gold, £547,500,000; silver, £342,000,000—total, £889,500,000. This provision in gold and silver was four millions more than the National Debt of Great Britain in 1816. **"Now behold!"** That was the provision of David **in his trouble**. Well might he call attention. He says, moreover, to Solomon, **"And thou mayest add thereto."**

If David in his trouble could prepare this, what might Solomon add in his riches, honour, and glory? And so of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Antitype; if a suffering Christ here has procured thus largely, if I may so speak, for bringing honour and glory to God as connected with the salvation of poor sinners, what will be added to it by a Christ in resurrection glory! The Lord tells us that each soul outweighs in value the whole world.

"For what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Bible Study.

AMONG the many passages of Scripture which speak of the various uses of the Word of God, none is more solemn and searching than Hebrews iv. 12, 13. It presents an aspect of the Word of God not always sufficiently weighed. Moreover, the effect is made more intense by the position in which the passage occurs. "Lest any man fall by the same example of disobedience, **for** the Word of God is living and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword."

What is "**the same example**" giving such terrible emphasis to the "for"? It is the carcasses of those disobedient Israelites strewing the wilderness, a silent witness to the living power of the Word of God. As we find in Zechariah i. 6, "My words and My statutes . . . did they not take hold of your fathers?" so again here, the danger of neglecting to give earnest heed to the things which we have heard is driven home with tremendous power. Just as surely as all the blessing belonging to obedience is certain, so the consequences of disobedience are inevitable: "There is nothing hid from the heat thereof" (Ps. xix. 6).

But then, lest we should faint and be discouraged—for why should we prove more obedient than these children of Israel?—we find a great high priest, **Jesus**, who knows what the path of obedience is. He has marked out every

step of this path from beginning to end, He can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, He has borne the yoke that we might learn to bear it, and so find rest to our souls. "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." If God's ways do not change, neither does He who is the Apostle and High Priest of our confession.

The Trespass Offering.—There is no sharp break between the sin offering in ch. iv. and the trespass offering in ch. v. Both offerings are concerned with the question of sin, but in a different aspect. In ch. iv. the question is raised of approach to God, the foundations are at stake, and the great principle is brought out that without shedding of blood there is no remission. In the first two cases the blood is taken into the sanctuary; in the last two it is placed on the brazen altar. But here, from Leviticus v. 1 to vi. 7, while it is still a question of sin, we find that sin has another aspect—it is a trespass. This was shown already in iv. 3. The word trespass means "guilt." It is the breach of some definite relationship. Not only must the sin be atoned for, but the wrong done, the trespass, must be made good, in order that full communion may be restored.

The section falls into three parts:—

i. **Sin as Trespass** (Lev. v. 1-13).—This is really connected with the previous chapter, and shows that sin has also the character of guilt,

when God has entered into relationship with His people. In each case the offering brought for the trespass is called a sin offering in this part of the chapter.

We have four kinds of trespass, or rather four ways in which a man may become guilty :—

(a) By covering up the sin of another when he is adjured to make it known—he bears his iniquity.

(b) By touching any unclean thing—he is unclean and guilty.

(c) By touching the uncleanness of man—he is guilty.

(d) By swearing—he is guilty.

The special points in connection with the way in which this guilt must be met are :—

(a) **Confession** must be made. This comes in here for the first time in connection with the sin offering.

(b) A sin offering must be brought, according to the principles of ch. iv.

(c) In bringing this sin offering we find, also for the first time, a distinction made. “If his hand be not able to bring.” The offerings for trespass are connected with confession, and hence different estimates of the sin may arise, according to the poverty of the soul. This is graciously recognised by God, although often forgotten by those who deal with the confession of others.

Accordingly we have three grades of trespass offering, according to the ability of the offerer :—

- i. The female from the sheep or goats.
- ii. The two turtle doves, or pigeons.
- iii. The tenth part of an ephah of fine flour, without oil or frankincense.

But even the lowest estimate, where we find no blood at all, is still the measure of God's thoughts of Christ. “An omer is the tenth part

of an ephah" (*cf.* Exod. xvi. 36). In even the feeblest sense of what guilt is before God, there must be the sense of what it was to Christ to be forsaken.

Then we come to a more special consideration of trespass, not as sin, but as a wrong done, either to the Lord or to one's neighbour. This is the second division of our section.

ii. **Trespass against Jehovah.**—Here the question is not of confession, as in the previous part, but of **restitution** when possible. Alas, it is not always possible.

So we have two cases :—

(a) Where restitution is possible. Here it is a case of neglect. A child of God has been lacking in consideration for the things that belong to God. It might be failure in tithes or some such thing. The order is, first, the ram for the trespass offering, valued according to the shekel of the sanctuary. Then, restitution of the wrong done, with an added fifth. Not till then do we find atonement and forgiveness.

(b) Where restitution is not possible. Here disobedience against the commandments of Jehovah is in question, and restitution is out of the question. We cannot make good the consequences of disobedience, even though inadvertent. The mercy of God remains for that. But the ram valued against the trespass must be brought, and on that forgiveness rests.

Then we get the last division :—

iii. **Trespass against a Neighbour.**—Here the order is, first, restitution with the added fifth to the person wronged ; then, and not before, the ram according to valuation for the trespass offering. Then come atonement and forgiveness.

So we get in this section God's thoughts about sin in this aspect. When the special aspect of trespass is in question, the trespass offering is in each case a ram. The ram, in Genesis xxii., taking the place of Isaac, seen as the obedient one, seems to present specially the aspect of the obedience of the blessed Lord. He was, and is, "the righteous One," the only obedient man on earth, even to death. Hence in meeting the consequences of our continual failure, as well as for consecration, it is the ram that is the suitable offering.

But we may not forget the lesson of restitution. We find in Psalm lxix. 4, where the blessed Lord is in the place of the trespass offering, that He takes this up, and makes good what He had never taken away.

This marks true repentance. A man who professes to be sorry for a trespass, but shows no desire to make restitution, is not sorrowing with a godly sorrow. That is why the Lord insists on this in Matthew vi. 24.

Then lastly, the spirit of restitution is found in the added fifth, the sense of the need of mercy.

It must not be the pharisaical spirit of making good any inadvertent wrong, that we may be able to say, "Now we are quits." After we have made good as far as possible what was deficient, there remains the need of mercy; we are only objects of mercy at the best, for what shall we say to those things where restitution is impossible? "His mercy endureth for ever."

Answers to Questions.

- i. Answered above, see Lev. v. 1-4.
- ii. The different words are—
 - (a) Sin—a missing the mark, or getting out of the line.
 - (b) Trespass, or guilt—breach of relationship or failure in responsibility.
 - (c) Iniquity, *i.e.*, sin viewed from the standpoint of the government of God. A man must “bear his iniquity.”
 - (d) Acting unfaithfully.
- iii. Answered above. The sin offering takes up the fundamental principles of the shedding of blood, bringing the blood into the sanctuary, and the removal of the sin from before God. The trespass offering brings in the question of confession, various estimates of sin; and restitution. It takes up the question of sin as it affects the relationship formed by God. The duties and affections belonging to these ties of grace cannot be neglected without loss and sad consequences. There is, however, a word of encouragement and a way of escape in Psalm xxxiv. 22. “None of them that trust in Him shall bear guilt.” Encompassed by failure, in many things liable to offend, this is a way of rest and deliverance from trespass.

Subject for June.—The Law of the Offerings (Lev. vi. 8-vii.). The following questions may be searched out:—

- i. What is the difference between the law of the offerings in this portion of Leviticus, and the ordinances already given in chaps. i.-vi. 7?
- ii. In what order are the offerings treated in this portion of Leviticus?
- iii. What added details do we find concerning the sin and trespass offering, and what do they mean?

B. S. ED.

Reviews, &c.

There is nothing new in this book. The plain teaching of *"Where are the Dead?"* Scripture as to sin, salvation, and judgment to come is falsified while pretending to cleave closely to it. The faulty views and expressions of otherwise sound Christians are set up as the standard of orthodox belief, and then demolished sometimes by what is true, more often by what is infinitely worse than that which is under criticism.

If all Christians held the author's views, the 90,000 heathen that he tells us, on page 9, are dying every day would be left to their fate in this world, to say nothing of the next. Such views paralyse all efforts to seek the eternal blessing of souls. It is either universal salvation or annihilation; why, therefore, trouble about ourselves or anybody else? "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." Such writers always treat the perdition of the lost as God's foreordination instead of as man's deliberate choice. Where does Scripture ever say that anybody is "hopelessly doomed to an eternity of woe"? Man is warned of the consequences of continuing in sin; he is distinctly informed of the holiness of God, His horror of sin, and the utter impossibility of that holy God allowing sinful beings to dwell in His presence in heaven;

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he is also told of a Saviour ready and willing to save any sinner, even the vilest and the blackest. But man **will not** believe :—

“Ye will not come unto Me that ye might have life” (John v. 40).

“If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins” (John viii. 24).

Imagine anybody with the Bible open before him penning such words as these: “It is **after** the people come forth from their graves that God will save them”! Revelation xx. teaches something very different, and Isaiah xxv. is speaking of a national resurrection of Israel just prior to the millennium, and not that of the dead for judgment at the close of that period.

The writer is a “millennial dawnist.” He tells us, “By the end of the millennium all mankind will have had restored to them the perfection which was lost by Adam,” &c., but entirely ignores the solemn judgment of the great white throne when the thousand years are finished, when those who have died in their sins will be judged for their sins and cast into the lake of fire.

Briefly put, according to this writer all men will eventually be saved, only **not through Christ**—“justice did not demand Christ's death” he tells us—the testing of the millennium will do this for everybody, though how he does not inform us! Still there will be a loosing of Satan, even he must admit, after the millennium

is over, but this is airily passed over, for our author does not expect many to be deceived ("comparatively few will follow Satan"), and this in full view of the distinct and awful utterance of Scripture, "the number of whom is as the sand of the sea."

It is trifling with men's deepest and eternal concerns. ED.

This ably written pamphlet is "*The Gates of Jerusalem.*" one of quite a crop of papers and books along similar lines that have appeared of late. The "ecclesiasticism" complained of had been condemned by not a few for many a long year. Strangely enough some of those now writing against it did more than any others to build up the very system of which they have now grown weary. A reaction was bound to come, and the danger lies in the swing of the pendulum to the opposite extreme.

We cannot find fault with the spirit in which this pamphlet is written, and a great deal of it is unquestionably true. The forcing of unscriptural discipline and its dissemination to the ends of the earth has done much of the mischief. At the same time there is such a thing as the assembly's responsibility to exercise scriptural discipline, and this locally done should be universally recognised. This we believe to be clearly taught in Matthew xviii. 18.

In matters of **doctrine** each Christian is himself responsible to judge what is the truth in the light of an open Bible, "Hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error" (1 John iv. 6). Our author admits the gravity of attacks upon the truth in the early centuries of Christianity, and the necessity of standing firm, even to the point of division. There are very many who see in a more recent attack something far more than a "storm of controversy" on "matters of no concern to ordinary Christians" (page 27). While on the one hand avoiding sectarianism, it surely is the bounden duty on the other to contend earnestly for the faith, and as evidence that both these sides were recognised in the movement of the early part of last century, we append extracts from two important letters relating to those deeply interesting times :—

"I feel daily more the importance of the Christians at P——, and I do trust that you will keep infinitely far from sectarianism. The great body of the Christians who are accustomed to religion are scarce capable of understanding anything else, as the mind ever tends there. If they become so in their position before God, they would be utterly useless, and, I am persuaded, immediately broken to pieces. You are nothing, nobody, but Christians, and the moment you cease to be an available mount for communion for any consistent Christian you will go to pieces or help the evil. Pray much to God that you may be kept from concessions, acts, in which Satan may get an advantage over you in it. The church at L—— have so multiplied that they must seek some place of meeting, and one has offered, and the hour they talk of changing

to twelve, the hour for other places—previously it has been eight. This is a cause of anxiety to me whilst I wait on the Lord's will, for I feel the importance of the moral character of the step, for, unless called for, it would have the same tendency" (J. N. D., 30th April 1833).

"Nevertheless I am convinced that even at that time (1829) we should no more have tolerated false doctrine, through God's grace, than now. The comfort of many who loved us, but were not with us, was our staunch orthodoxy, as regards the mystery of the Godhead, and the doctrine of grace and godliness" (E. C., July 1871).

If there was a needs be for care in the matter of false doctrine in those early days, who with an open Bible before him, and with any knowledge of the present state of the professing Church, could minimise its importance in these days? If we are to be known as "those whose one bond is Christ and whose only law is love" (page 66), to be of any avail it must be as abiding "in the doctrine of the Christ," and exercising "love in the truth" (2 John). ED.

Fruit-Bearing.

BUT how can fruit be borne? There is but one answer—"Abide in Me and I in you." Dependence on Christ, communion and intimacy of heart with Him is what we understand by this abiding in Christ and Christ in us. It must be borne in mind that we are not here considering how salvation is obtained, nor how

eternal life may be procured. Other Scriptures abundantly testify that these become ours by faith in Christ. But how can those who are already saved, and who already possess eternal life, how can such bear fruit? Only in one way, and that is by a life of dependence on, and communion with Christ.

The branch cannot bear fruit of itself—it **cannot**, it is an utter impossibility. Apart from that vital connection with the vine whereby the sap in its richness and fulness can flow into the branch, no fruit can be borne. In like manner, “no more can ye, except ye abide in Me.” We may have our minds stored with truth, we may be able to discuss the most intricate theological questions, we may occupy the most correct ecclesiastical position, but *fruit*, FRUIT, yes **fruit**, is the whole subject here before the mind of the Spirit, and fruit can only be borne when we abide in Christ.

“I am the vine, ye are the branches.”

How clear this is: Christ was the vine, those whom He addressed were the branches. And who was He addressing? Primarily, no doubt, the eleven apostles, for Judas had gone out. Those to whom He speaks were already cleansed—“already ye are cleansed through the Word which I have spoken unto you” (verse 3). In this sense they represent all who are really born of God. But for fruit-bearing, the branch must abide in the vine, for, severed from

the vine, it bears no fruit ; and so it is with the disciple, "separated from Me ye can do nothing." Oh, how needful it is to learn and practically experience these things ; and how it lifts the soul above the withering influences of our pilgrim pathway ! It matters not what others may say or do, to walk with Christ day by day, to seek His glory in all things, to aim at being well-pleasing to Him, this should be the main business of the Christian's life, and thus only can he bear much fruit. Note the stages : fruit—more fruit—much fruit.

Another has said, "Christ and Christ only is the dwelling-place for the soul in this world of snare and danger, in this desert where no water is. Make Him the resource, make Him the object ; and the sap, as it were, flows without hindrance, and fruit is borne. Without Him no teaching avails, and all religious excitement fails ; bring Him in, confide in Him, and, no matter what the difficulty or the pain or the shame, no matter what the opposition or the detraction, He sustains the heart, and fruit-bearing follows. Apart from Him we can do nothing ; with Him, all things."

And as yet another has written, "the illustration of the branch and the vine will help us to understand what abiding in Christ must mean. The branch draws its life, its strength, its nourishment, from the vine, being entirely dependent on it for all that it needs in order to be fruitful. So believers are as really dependent on Christ

to bring forth fruit for God. 'Without Me,' says the Lord, 'ye can do nothing' — a word to be remembered by each one. The new birth is one thing, fruit-bearing is another. Salvation from the wrath to come is a wonderfully blessed portion, but fruitfulness, it should be remembered, is God's desire for His people, and the Lord would provide for that. To be receivers, without caring to bear fruit, would indicate neglect of God's gracious provision for the outflow of life down here. On the other hand, if we abide in Christ, we know He abides in us. All that we need we can therefore receive. Life in its fullness, wisdom, and strength, all are in Him for us. And he that abideth in Him bringeth forth much fruit. Habitual dependence on Christ will result in fruitfulness indeed."

But in verse 6 a notable change occurs in the language. Our Lord does not now say, "If ye abide not in Me," as though He were addressing one of those already cleansed by His word, but, "**If a man** abide not in Me." This is much more general—

"If a man abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned."

How carefully it is avoided calling such an one "a branch." The mere professor no doubt takes the place of being a branch, but the Lord does not call him a branch—"he is cast forth *as*

a branch." Many a soul, ill-taught in the gospel, has trembled before this verse, as though a true child of God might be lost. But this is not the teaching of the passage. It is a warning to the professor, but not a source of dread to the true believer.

The true believer has even now eternal life; moreover, he will never perish, as John x. 28 so clearly and so blessedly assures us. No true believer, then, will ever be cast forth and burned, but a professor, if to the end he remains a mere professor, will be thus treated. What a warning this is, introduced as a parenthesis between verses 5 and 7, which are addressed to the eleven. A true believer can never be lost, but a mere professor may be.

Once again the Lord addresses the eleven:—

"If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

"Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples."

Communion, obedience, and prayer—these are the conditions for fruitfulness and practical discipleship. All this is intensely real, but it is simple and unartificial.

An aged servant of Christ lay dying. It had been our privilege to watch at his bedside for nearly two months. "What were you reading this morning?" he asked, as we entered his room. At family prayers we had been read-

ing John xv., so we replied, "We were reading about 'abiding in Christ.'" "Ah," said he, "that's just what I was not doing last night, for I lost my temper with ——."

And so communion may be interrupted — angry words, idle gossip, evil speaking, jealousy — all such works of the flesh, just as much as those that may appear worse in the eyes of men, will hinder communion, and rob us of all power to bear fruit.

But communion is not a mystical thing, of sitting down to try and think oneself into an ecstatic state; it is simply doing those things that please Christ, and avoiding that which is not according to His mind. And how shall we learn these things? By His Word. And thus it is added, "If ye abide in Me, and **My words abide in you.**" The Word of God becomes my food, my strength, my delight, and my guide.

"If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love" (verse 10).

Thus abiding in Christ in communion, and His word abiding in us, giving us intelligence in His mind and desires, our thoughts flow in sympathy and unison with His, so that when we pray we have the confidence that God hears and will grant our petition.

Let it be the desire of both reader and writer to be fruitful branches in the vine, and true disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ! A. H. B.

"BE OF GOOD COURAGE."

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"Be of Good Courage."

ONWARD ! though our foes assail us,
Strength from God will e'er avail us,
Grace from Him will never fail us
All our journey through.

Home in glory lies before us,
Christ our Saviour watches o'er us,
Ever ready to restore us
Should our courage fail.

Stayed by faith, on Him believing,
Daily grace from Him receiving,
He from fear our hearts relieving,
Cheers us on our way.

When by troubles overtaken
Let not trust in Him be shaken ;
Never shall we be forsaken
By our loving Lord.

Raise we, then, the voice in singing
Songs of praise, with fervour ringing,
Blessing Him for ever bringing
Grace from God to man.

Praising God for love which sought us,
For His Son whose blood has bought us,
For His Spirit who has taught us
Free salvation's way.

U. U.

Individual Blessing and Responsibility.

JESUS has been glorified, the Holy Ghost has been given. The body of Christ is a fact on the earth. Every believer in Jesus is a member of that body, and shares in its corresponding privileges and responsibilities. All this is absolute as the purpose of God. Nothing can prevail against God. The gates of Hades shall not prevail against the Church which Christ is building, though Satan is sure to prevail against all that is not of the Spirit of God.

Let the Christian be clear in his mind as to the dispensational character of the Church. How that it began at Pentecost. How that, as a spiritual body on the earth, composed of all believers in Christ, it began to exist then, and that it is here in the world to-day, and will be here until it be caught up in its entirety—whether from the grave or those changed at Christ's coming—to meet the Lord in the air. Further, it is the privilege of every Christian to assemble with the saints of God, according to the scriptural principles which underlie this great truth, and the fact of the Holy Spirit's presence in our midst.

The affections of Christ can flow forth in this way as in none other. Fellowship of the Spirit, comfort of love, tender mercies and compassions abound when hearts are truly "knit together in

love unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding" of these heavenly things. It may be doubted whether a Christian who does not enter into these things has a clear conception of what Christianity really is. Many who believe in Christ, who are assured of the forgiveness of sins and of the presence of the Holy Ghost with them in an individual way, do not act as if there were any body of Christ on the earth. They exhibit no sense of corporate privilege and responsibility. Yet they are none the less members of Christ, and therefore equally with all Christians members one of another. It is not for us to judge their motives. Most likely such have not yet seen how the Christian Scriptures bear upon the Christian's position, walk, and ways. Perchance if they did see they might be more in earnest about the matter than those who do. But no Christian is able really to go beyond what he sees for himself in God's Word, and patience towards each other is ever needed.

For the truths of the Church, of the presence of the Holy Ghost baptizing all believers into one body, and of the corporate relations which exist in consequence, do not conflict with the Christian's individuality. Though a member of the body of Christ, he is an individual still. God still deals with souls as individuals. There are peculiar dangers which begin or increase in proportion as what is called the truth of the Church is seen and enforced. Is it as easy to

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deal with what is wrong in those with whom we are in the tenderest associations as it is to resist it in strangers? There are friendship, position, and unity to defend in the one case which do not exist in the other. We are to be diligent in keeping the unity of the Spirit, but as individuals we are also to exercise ourselves to have a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man. Individual liberty of conscience must ever be fully maintained.

The apostle Paul, who is used of God to reveal the truth of God as to His Church, is also used more than any other to instruct us as to the importance of the individual conscience. There is not a stronger personality to be found amongst the sons of men than that of Paul. Yet he was ever ready to respect conscience in others. It was he who wrote: "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind" (Rom. xiv. 5). Apostle as he was, he would not have dominion over another's faith, but only desired to be a helper of his joy.

We are bound to yield to the judgment of others, when we know in ourselves that they are right and ourselves wrong. Resisting their judgment, if they are clearly right, will give us a bad conscience. Happy is the man who esteems a right judgment of greater value than his own reputation. But it is a sin to force conscience in others. Conscience is man's moral judgment of right and wrong. If we rob him

of this, what have we left him? Have those who felt called upon to contend earnestly for the faith always remembered this? There have been in the past ecclesiastics who compelled their fellow-men in the professing Church to ignore their own consciences rather than not fall in with some dominant will. It is very far better to resist even unto blood than to allow our souls to pass into slavery so shameful, which, indeed, might prove eternal. Very much of the light and liberty enjoyed to-day is owing to the exercise of individual conscience in past centuries, and these blessings can only be maintained by a similar exercise.

Every man is directly responsible to God alone, and "every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Rom. xiv. 12). If, by becoming a member of the body of Christ, the believer became less of an individual than he was before, he might well desire the position of an Old Testament saint. This allowance for individual conscience may be one of the reasons why the servant of the Lord is told that he "must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves" (2 Tim. ii. 24, 25). We are not hindered from helping others when they are misguided by remembering that they may have a conscience no less than ourselves.

The gospel is preached to individuals. We can only be saved as individuals. We are not

saved because we belong to a Christian family or because we become separated from the world in an outward way by being born of Christian parents, however true and devoted. On the contrary, these privileges increase our responsibility to accept Christ for our own souls, and if any one thus favoured reject or neglect Him, he thus increases his own condemnation. Faith is strictly individual. The apostle Paul writes sometimes almost as if he were the only person to be saved. For instance, he says, "He loved me and gave Himself for me" (Gal. ii. 20). The absence of faith in any one, no matter how he may have been favoured outwardly, marks that person as an unbeliever, and, remaining such, his final portion will be with the lost.

God's dealings with His children are chiefly individual. "It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall be all taught of God.'" This might seem to indicate collective instruction for the mass, but the Lord Jesus individualises from the passage as follows :—

"**Every man** therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto Me" (John vi. 45).

The Father teaches individuals. He speaks to us one by one through His Word. One by one we mourn apart on account of our sins. In solitude we fight our greatest battles, and in being left alone, as Jacob was, we wrestle to the breaking of the day (Gen. xxxii. 24). It is meet that this should be so, and that God should thus

deal with the secrets of men. All souls are His, in ways that they could not belong to any one else. We would not have it otherwise, and we may be thankful that God only (not even Satan) knows the hearts of the children of men (2 Chron. vi. 30).

“The heart knoweth its own bitterness, and a stranger doth not intermeddle with its joy” (Prov. xiv. 10).

Thus Christians in the closest intimacy with one another are often strangers to many of each other's deepest joys and sorrows. Yet in all this God knows us better than we know ourselves. In all these things are we taught of God and led to feel our need of Christ, and learning of God we come, one by one, each for himself to Christ, remembering that He hath said:—

“Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out” (John vi. 37).

For another to come in between the soul and God is a rude assault on God's divine prerogative.

The individual aspect of things is fully before us in John xiv. 21:—

“He that hath My commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me; and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him.”

Here is individual knowledge of God's mind, individual obedience, individual love to the Saviour. The love of the Father is personal to the one who obeys, and so is the love and mani-

festation of Christ. Corporate relations rightly understood will not conflict with all this. They ought to contribute to its strength. That which is collective and that which is personal are always meant to be in harmony. They are so presented in Scripture; but that which is individual must always be maintained. For while some secret sin will deprive one Christian of communion with the Lord, this does not prevent another going steadily on with Christ. One may for the time being become involved in the government of God, and another meanwhile goes on rejoicing in the God of grace. Such an one will desire to share the burdens of his brethren. It is not the man that trembles at God's Word, and who is individually in communion with Him, that is likely to be a real hindrance to his brethren in any way. But, let it be observed, it is especially in connection with the Spirit at Pentecost that the promise of individual blessing comes in.

"He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake He of the Spirit which they that believe on Him should receive; for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified" (John vii. 38, 39).

According to this scripture it is from the individual believer that rivers of living water are to flow, as a result of receiving the Holy Ghost. For the one who believes in Christ thus shall it be. For the one who believes in Christ's blood,

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for the one who believes in Christ's glory, "rivers of living water" shall flow out of his inmost being to others. Thus does God make us "channels of blessing."

What a contrast all this is to that which proceeds from the natural man !

"For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these things come from within, and defile the man" (Mark vii. 22, 23).

These things are not by any means "rivers of living water," and where faith in Christ and the Holy Ghost are not, they still, as of old, proceed from within out of the heart of man. Unbelief, murmurings, complainings of one's lot in life, hard-heartedness, distrust of the future, an unforgiving spirit, strife with our brethren, and such like things—can these things be called "rivers of living water"? Nay, but they grieve the Spirit of God in us and may quench Him in others.

This wonderful promise of Christ is not limited to one that has some special gift. There may be a tendency to limit the outflow of blessing to certain specified servants of Christ, such as evangelists, pastors, and teachers ; but Jesus said, "**He that believeth** on me . . . out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." This must be taken to include every believer, whether brother or sister, whether young or old.

In the sevenfold presentation of the professing

Church, as seen in the second and third chapters of Revelation, there is much for the individual ear. "He that hath an ear, let him hear." Throughout the history of the Church overcoming is seen to be an individual thing. The promises are to the individual. It is the individual who is given to eat of the tree of life in the midst of the paradise of God. The individual overcomer eats of the hidden manna, and receives the white stone which no one knoweth but himself. The same is to be said of the one who receives power to rule over the nations and of the believer who sits down with Christ on His throne.

Our present joy and fruitfulness and our future reward and blessedness are not to be interfered with by the divided state of the professing Church, nor by anything else, but by our own personal sin and folly. Let us learn to watch, and pray, and trust, and may God give us all grace to hold fast that which we have that no man take our crown.

T. H.

The Finished Work of Christ and the Unfinished Work of the Holy Ghost.

IT sometimes happens that souls are kept in uncertainty as regards the question of peace with God, because they do not see the difference between these two things. They are occupied

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with the **unfinished** work of the Holy Ghost in them, instead of resting in simple faith on the **finished** work of Christ for them.

"**It is finished**" were the last words of the dying Saviour as He bowed His head and gave up the ghost. Then "**Peace unto you**" were the words of the risen Saviour when He appeared amongst His assembled disciples as the Victor over death, over judgment, and over every enemy. A completed atonement by His blood lays the basis for a profound and unchanging peace. What brings peace to the troubled soul is to rest by faith on a work done entirely outside ourselves, done by another for us, done so completely that God has shown out before the whole universe His satisfaction with that work by raising His own Son from the dead and crowning Him with glory and honour at His own right hand. We never can get peace by looking **within** ; but simply by looking **without** ; faith rests on an object outside ourselves—on Christ—and He is sufficient.

But when we know what it is to possess "peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ," we can then learn that there is an unfinished work constantly going on within the believer—a work which will go on as long as he is down here. When just about to die, the Lord Jesus told His disciples that He would send them another Comforter, even the Spirit of truth, to take His place, to abide with them for ever, and

to dwell in them. And so it is the blessed work of the Spirit to teach, to instruct, to guide into the knowledge of the truth. It is by the Spirit the love of God is shed abroad in the Christian's heart: the Spirit it is who bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. And, further, there is within the believer the constant warfare between the flesh and the Spirit; for—

“The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh . . . that ye may not do the things that ye would” (Gal. v. 17, R.V.).

Thus the work of the Spirit within us will go on as long as we are in this world; teaching, guiding, instructing, reproofing us if necessary, so that we might walk in a manner pleasing to God, and enjoy the heavenly portion we have in Christ.

But this work of the Spirit within us, absolutely essential as it is in its place, is not the ground of the Christian's peace with God and assurance of salvation. Christ has “**made peace by the blood of His cross**”—this is a finished and completed work to which nothing can be added, and it is the simple and all-sufficient basis of the soul's rest and assurance.

On the other hand, the work of the Holy Ghost within us is incomplete and continuous. He has always some new lesson to teach us; some reproof to bring home to us, it may be; some fresh instruction for the soul's blessing and growth; some new and undiscovered ray of the

perfection and glory of our Lord Jesus to illuminate for our joy, so that we may make progress as long as we are here. F. G. B.

Bible Study.

THIS part of the book of Leviticus from vi. 8-vii. appears to be a repetition of the previous ordinances. But there is no *mere* repetition in Scripture, and this section, which bears the name of "**the law of the offerings**," is occupied with the privileges and responsibilities of the priesthood in connection with the offerings. It was God's purpose that His people should be a "kingdom of priests" to Him (Exod. xix. 6), so that His authority would be carried out, not by a king enforcing obedience, but by the patient service of priests whose business was "to keep the charge of Jehovah" (Lev. viii. 35).

So that these chapters, which are immediately followed by the account of the consecration of the priests, deal with the service of the priests, not with worship, but with the way in which the priest was to carry out the purpose of God in the offerings. I believe that careful study of these two chapters will give remarkable practical help and guidance as to the spirit in which we, who are actually now a kingdom of priests to the Father, are to deal with questions of sin and trespass, as, alas, we are too often called to do.

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A priest's work was not worship, as we often say, although worship depended on the priest, but his work was *service*. "The charge" mentioned in Leviticus viii. 35, implies continual watchfulness over the interests of Jehovah and His people, for the two cannot be separated. The priest not only ministered to the joy of God's people, but had continually to be the servant of their sins and sorrows. He was not a judge, but a servant, as Hebrews v. 1-3 shows in a beautiful way. He was the object of mercy himself, and had to learn this in a special way, in order to be a fitting minister of that mercy.

Now, these two chapters are arranged in a remarkable way, with this thought in view.

In vii. 37, 38, we have a little summary of the chapters which gives the order of the offerings treated of, and shows the close connection between the worship commanded in chapters i.-v., and the law of the offerings which follows.

Briefly, the order of the chapters is three-fold :—

- i. The law of the burnt offering and oblation.
- ii. The law of the sin offering, and trespass offering.
- iii. The law of the consecration and peace offering.

The reason for this order is simple. The central question is that of the sin and trespass offering. This is shown incidentally in a remarkable way by the statement of vi. 17—

"It is most holy, **as** the sin offering and **as** the trespass offering."

That is, the burnt offering and oblation are being considered in relation to the sin offering and the trespass offering. This is further shown in vii. 8-10, where details connected with the burnt offering and the oblation are apparently put out of their proper place, under the sin and trespass offering. But God has put them in their proper place.

So we have the priest's connection with the burnt offering and oblation brought out first to prepare for their ministry in the case of sin and trespass. Not until then is the priest presented as the servant of the joy of God's people, sharing with them in their happiness, where there is nothing left to hinder it.

It would be impossible to go into the details, and we can only give the leading points in the three divisions, but perhaps enough has been said to send students on the lines of this remarkable portion of God's Word, to find out and apply the principles for themselves.

The Law of the Offerings.

i. (a.) **The Burnt Offering.**—Three things constitute the priest's charge here. He is to keep the fire always burning on the altar ; he is to bear the ashes ; he is to put the wood and the daily burnt offering on the fire every morning. This is the source of everything. He is to keep perpetually the remembrance before God of the perfect offering of Christ. The absolute and eternal perfection of Christ's work forms the ground, not only for worship, but for priestly service. God's judgment of sin

was seen at the cross, the full fruit and horror of sin was only to be learnt there, in the ashes to which the fire of judgment had reduced the unblemished Victim. This fire the priest had to keep ever alive and fresh upon the altar with fresh wood every morning, and the burnt offering upon the wood. The only true judgment of the flesh, of self, is the application to it of the judgment at the cross. This is a continual thing, although the offering be perfected and finished for ever. So we see the priest's preparation for the day's need, bearing the ashes, feeding the fire, and keeping ever alive before God the savour of the daily burnt offering—surely a remarkable picture and full of instruction to those who would know how to learn God's way of priestly service.

(*b.*) **The Oblation.**—Here we find what God has given to be the food of those who serve Him in this priestly service. We find later that the worshipper also gives something. But *this* is Jehovah's gift. Those who carry out the solemn and searching services of the burnt-offering must be sustained by the food that God gives. The oblation, speaking of the perfect manhood and perfect obedience of the Lord Jesus in His earthly pathway, is to be eaten by all the males among the sons of Aaron, in a holy place, in the court of the tent of meeting. The handful with all the frankincense is God's portion, the memorial portion, the rest He gives to be eaten by the priests in the scene of their service; for the court of the tent of meeting was the place where they were to keep the charge of Jehovah.

So we find that the two things needed for the work that follows are, first, a true sense of the full character of God's authority seen in the cross, and of the work of Christ as the measure of self-judgment and the ground of **all** forgiveness. Then the feeding upon Christ in His path of obedience to the Father, where all was perfect, and so learning the mind and will of God for the path of priestly service.

In addition to these two things, we have what is only found here, a most beautiful picture of the way in which the whole of priestly service is to be carried out. It is the **continual** oblation. It begins with the anointing of the priest, and goes on for ever. It is that form of the oblation which is baked in the pan, broken into pieces, oil poured on the pieces, and the whole burnt on the altar. It speaks of the absolute perfection of the blessed Lord in His service when the path brought Him to the place of being broken in pieces. Then every thought and word was found perfect, according to the Holy Ghost. Of this oblation half was to be burnt in the morning and half in the evening, and thus the whole life of the priest was, so to speak, enclosed in this offering. The antitype of this is a living sacrifice, an intelligent service, for so can it be proved what that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God is (Rom. xii.).

ii. **The Sin Offering and the Trespass Offering.**—I take these together, because we are told one law is for both (vii. 7). We cannot go into details, as space will not allow, but the first great principle is—“**the priest that offereth it for sin shall eat it**” (vi. 26). We find in x. 17 the reason for this. The priest had to bear the iniquity of the person concerned in the offering. In order that the full value of the atonement might take effect upon the one who needed it, this solemn and weighty service had to be performed by the priest. This was the priest's part, and where failure in this came, though it could not affect the value or perfection of the offering, yet it did affect in the most serious way the order which God had arranged in His mercy for meeting the need of His poor, failing people. So the importance of this is very great. If in dealing with sin or trespass in the people of God I deal with it as a judge, instead of as a priest; if I do not make the sin my own, I actually hinder what God has ordered as necessary for the full restoration of the offender. I prevent the full sense of the judgment of sin,

and of the mercy and grace found in the cross of Christ, from coming home to the heart of the one who has sinned.

This is the main thing. There are other interesting and important details : the place where the sin offering was to be eaten ; the way in which the vessels that held it, and all that came into contact with it, were to be dealt with.

But two very striking things are brought out at the close of the law of the sin and trespass offerings. The first is, that the skin of the burnt offering belonged to the priest who offered it. The second, that while the oblation in general was the common portion of all the priests, the special forms of oblation prepared in the oven, cauldron, or pan, were the portion of the priest who offered them. What these mean, we must look at a little more fully in next month's Bible Study, together with the remaining portion of this chapter.

The answers to all the questions set will be found in the remarks already made.

Subject for July. — Revision of Leviticus i.-vii., with special attention to the place and work of the priest in connection with the offerings. The following questions may be answered :—

i. Where is the high priest first mentioned in Scripture? What services specially distinguished him from the other priests?

ii. Trace out through the Old Testament the stages in the history of the priesthood.

iii. What are the various details of the priest's work in connection with the sin and trespass offering in Lev. i.-vii.?

iv. What can we gather as to the priestly service of believers from the New Testament?

B. S. ED.

Reviews, &c.

Whatever this expression may mean, there can be no question ***Reaching the Masses.*** that the Christian's bounden duty is to carry the gospel to every creature: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." With these words of our blessed Lord before us, it is painful to hear the disparaging way that some have of speaking of the gospel. Again, our risen Saviour and Master, just before leaving this earth to take His place at God's right hand in heaven, opened the understanding of His disciples that they might understand the Scriptures. He showed them from those Scriptures the necessity for the sufferings of Christ and His resurrection from the dead, "that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name **among all nations**, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke xxiv. 47).

We do well to recall the words of the apostle Paul:—

"For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, **that I might gain the more,**

"And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, **that I might gain the Jews**; to them that are under the law, as under the law (not being myself

CIII.

under law), **that I might gain** them that are under the law ;

"To them that are without law (being not without law to God, but under law to Christ), **that I might gain** them that are without law.

"To the weak became I as weak, **that I might gain** the weak : I am made all things to all men, **that I might by all means save some.**

"And this I do for the gospel's sake" (1 Cor. ix. 19-23).

Here was a man whose whole life was given up to the gospel of God's Son, and who lived for the salvation of the lost, whether Jew or Gentile. His great longing desire was that he might "gain the more"; and what hardships he endured, what dangers he braved that he might accomplish that for which he had been laid hold of by God in Christ? Which was most in the current of the Spirit's action, Paul or the ease-loving Christians of to-day? O God! stir us up from our lethargy!

ED.

Whatever pity one must have
Father and Son. for the "son," brought up in such a painfully contracted and bigoted groove, most right-minded people can have nothing but censure for the "man" who, after fifty years, can so expose the mistakes of a sincere but misguided "father." The old proverb of the "ill bird" comes irresistibly to mind. However much the "son" may smart at

the wrong done him by a well-meaning but sadly narrow-minded "father," decency would have drawn the curtain of silence around such a sacred matter, "De mortuis," &c.

The secret of the production of this book is found in chapter xii., where the interview of the "father" with the wealthy banker is described, the "son" being present:—

"This question, 'What is he to be?' in a worldly sense, was being discussed. . . . Mr Brightwen, I fancy, had been worked upon by my stepmother . . . to suggest . . . a query about my future. He was childless and so was she, and I think a kind impulse led them to 'feel the way,' as it is called. I believe he said that the banking business, wisely and honourably conducted, sometimes led, as we know that it is apt to lead, to affluence. To my horror, my father with rising emphasis replied that 'if there were offered to his beloved child what is called *an opening* that would lead to an income of £10,000 a year, and that would divert his thoughts and interest from the Lord's work, he would reject it on his child's behalf.' Mr Brightwen . . . soon left us, and I do not recollect his paying us a second visit."

Here, then, is quite enough to account for four hundred pages of bitterness. The effect upon the "son" was disastrous, and plunged him soon into infidelity. His hatred of the gospel and utter rejection of the atonement prove that there never was real faith in the "son's" soul. It is easy to understand his dislike of the phraseology bordering upon cant, the constant speaking about the "saints," &c.

It is a sad history of apostasy, the natural

enmity of the unrenewed heart against God and His Son, embittered by the recollection of a cold and narrow legalism on the part of the "father," an ignorance of the gospel rarely found amongst so-called "Plymouth Brethren." How different it might have been had the bright and cheerful warmth of grace surrounded the child rather than the rigid, hard legality described in this book. May the grace of God in Christ even yet gain the victory !

ED.

We do not feel much inclined to depart from our usual custom of not replying to anonymous letters. But one such we have received from "Enquirer" relating to the conversions reported to have taken place during a recent mission in this country. "Enquirer" asks—

"What are the marks of a genuine convert to Christ?"

This question of ten words would take as many volumes to answer, but nevertheless is as interesting as it is important. A careful study of the First Epistle to the Thessalonians will throw much light on the subject. Briefly, there was, in the first place, the assurance of their own salvation ; secondly, a walk worthy of the Lord in the power of the Holy Ghost ; thirdly, a living witness for Christ in the spread of the gospel ; and fourthly, the coming of the Lord as an energising hope.

This is an inquiry of a very ***Are Results*** serious nature. Many of the ***Permanent?*** methods employed in recent years in connection with gospel missions are not calculated to produce solid results. The pressure put at the close of a meeting to make public profession, sometimes, no doubt, leads to unreality. At the same time, we have the question, "Who touched My clothes?" which led to immediate confession, and confirmation of faith. Also, "Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?"

Some there are who will always discourage missions, and ask somewhat triumphantly, Where are the results? But these people, as a rule, hold entirely aloof from such special efforts; they, therefore, are not qualified to express an opinion on the subject; nor are they likely, being unsympathetic, to come in contact with the converts when these missions are over, and the work begins of caring for and building up those who, through grace, have believed.

Speaking from personal experience, we have met in all parts of the world multitudes of souls converted during the ever memorable 1859 revival; large numbers also converted at the late D. L. Moody's meetings. Hundreds of converts from special missions are to be found to-day teaching in Sunday schools, conducting Bible classes, working in the slums, preaching in the open air, in theatres and mission halls, living

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and dying amongst the heathen. In fact, if all the converts of special missions were to be taken to heaven to-day, much of the soul-winning work now going on would cease.

We would say to the critics, Do not run down what others are badly doing, but set a better example, and show a more excellent way.

Having said this much, we would earnestly press upon all workers the importance of preaching the Word, prayer, and dependence upon the Spirit of God. Mere music will never convert a soul, though the words of a hymn have often conveyed God's message to the heart.

ED.

"There is many a keel
In this world's wild reel
Has been wrecked on its treacherous shore.
On its victims it smiled,
It lured and beguiled,
Till they perished in its ocean roar."

"Little children, keep yourselves from idols."

Prayer.

PRAYER is expressed dependence upon God, either in the heart or with the lips. The Christian should seek to be *led* in his requests, *i.e.*, to pray in the Holy Ghost, and in a spirit of subjection, but yet with holy confidence. The first allusion to prayer in the Scriptures seems

to be in Gen. xx. 7, when God spoke to Abimelech and said Abraham should pray for him and his house; and we learn, by verse 17, that Abraham did so effectually.

Gen. xxiv. 63 records the fact of Isaac going into the field to meditate (pray, see margin). The first recorded prayer is that of Abraham's servant (Eliezer) in Gen. xxiv. 12, &c., and it is remarkable for its simplicity and directness: moreover, it brought an immediate answer thereto. Moses' prayers were mostly intercessory; see Num. xi. 2, xxi. 7; Deut. ix. 20 (for Aaron), the one exception being found in Deut. iii. 25, 26, which was personal and was *not* granted.

Hannah's prayer (1 Sam. i. 10) was remarkable for its definiteness; and she acted as *we* are exhorted to do in Phil. iv., and went away enjoying the peace of God. Indeed her action accorded more especially with 1 John v. 14, 15, and she was not disappointed. God chose Job to pray for his friends (chap. xlii. 8) and accepted him. Samuel also prayed acceptably (see 1 Sam. xii. 16, &c.). The prayer of Jabez in 1 Chron. iv. 10 is remarkable for its brevity and directness, and was granted.

Jacob's two prayers in Gen. xxxii. 9-12, 24-29, are remarkable for their pointedness, and were both answered. Other notable examples might be given connected with the histories of David, Solomon, Hezekiah, Jehoshaphat, Ezra,

and Nehemiah, Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah (2 Chron. xxxii. 20 to 22), Jeremiah, Jonah, and Daniel.

Much is said in the New Testament about prayer, and many wonderful examples are to be found which it would be very profitable to search out. The Lord's prayers, for instance, from His baptism (Luke iii. 21) onward to the garden (Matt. xxvi. 39, and Luke xxii. 34), with many others; Peter, in Acts ix. 40; Cornelius, in Acts x. 2, 4, 31; Saul of Tarsus, in Acts ix. 11, and xxviii. 8. Prayer and praise (or worship) are distinct exercises, although the latter sometimes partakes partly of the character of the former.

While it is desirable to avoid formality, the question of attitude in prayer should not be lightly passed over. Attitude must of necessity accord with the circumstances of the moment; for example, one may be truly looking to God and praying when walking in the street, seated at the desk, working in the fields, or lying in bed; but, in the privacy of one's own room, or, indeed, whenever convenient, *kneeling* is, undoubtedly, the proper and becoming attitude (2 Chron. vi. 13; Dan. vi. 10; Luke xxii. 41; Acts vii. 60, ix. 40, xx. 36, xxi. 5; all bear this out). In a congregation, *standing* appears to be a very proper attitude for men, and is justified by Scripture, as in 1 Chron. xxiii. 30; Mark xi. 25. Eliezer stood and prayed in Gen. xxiv. 13. *Sitting* in prayer is not so much as mentioned;

and, therefore, not even contemplated in a congregation. Does it not savour of irreverence? If a petition were being presented to the king, every one would either stand or kneel. Should we show less deference to the King of kings because He has been pleased to act in such wondrous grace and make us His children? No one would presume to sit, much less to loll about, when taking part in making petition to Edward VII. Let us weigh these things.

It is of all importance that those taking part in a prayer meeting, viz., when acting as the mouth-piece of others, that they should speak audibly and distinctly. They should therefore stand or kneel in such a position as, if possible, to face the others, so that there might be nothing to obstruct, and that all might hear without effort, and thus be enabled to say Amen, which otherwise they could not do. Furthermore, it should be remembered that some people are afflicted with deafness, in various degrees, and we are exhorted to "consider one another" (Eccles. v. 2; Matt. vi. 7, 8, vii. 7, 8; Phil. iv. 6, 7; Jas. v. 17, 18).

G. R. W.

Whilst cordially agreeing with the writer as to the need of greater reverence both in style and attitude, yet there are some who through bodily infirmity are not able to kneel; especially is this so when the prayers are long, as is unfortunately too often the case. The prayers to which our attention has been drawn in this article were all *brief* and to the point. We are thankful to be reminded of this point of practical detail.—ED.

Dependence upon the Holy Spirit.

THE coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost wrought a great change in the minds and characters of the apostles. The Lord Jesus intimated that this would be so. He announced that many things which His disciples could not bear to be taught while He was yet with them, should afterwards be made known to them as a result of the Holy Spirit's presence. The apostles were not by any means perfect men after Pentecost, but the Peter and John of the Epistles are very different men from the Peter and John of the Gospels.

It is evident from the Epistles of Peter that he finally came to be governed by thoughts of the cross. Thoughts of Christ suffering for us, and our suffering with Him, permeate the writings of Peter, as they do all the apostolic writings more or less. Thus among the first words of the First Epistle we read that the saints are—

“elect . . . unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.”

But “the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow,” do not appear to have seriously taken possession of the apostle's mind during the earthly lifetime of our Lord. New thoughts about Christ's death are given, and Old Testament Scriptures as to Christ bearing our

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sins in His own body on the tree are fully referred to in Peter's Epistles. To him, moreover, Christ's suffering for us meant not only atonement for our sins, but suffering by way of example to His followers also.

"Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow His steps" (1 Pet. ii. 21).

Yet this same Peter at one time had very different thoughts of Christ. For when our Lord began to show unto His disciples His approaching sufferings, death, and resurrection, Peter

"took him and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from Thee, Lord ; this shall not be unto Thee" (Matt. xvi. 22).

A somewhat similar difference in their matured experience is seen in the case of the apostles James and John. They came to Jesus saying :—

"Master, we would that Thou shouldst do for us whatsoever we shall desire. And He said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you? They said unto Him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on Thy right hand, and the other on Thy left hand in Thy glory. But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask" (Mark x. 37, 38).

We know from Acts xii. 2 that James the brother of John died early, but this is the apostle John who wrote the Epistles and Gospel which bear his name. It is inconceivable that he would have come to Christ with a petition like this in his later days. These things are not referred to

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in order to find fault with the apostles. Some, indeed, have used the manifest disparity between the Gospels and the Epistles to discredit divine inspiration. But it all shows that during the Lord's life, and apart from the gift of the Holy Spirit, the apostles did not understand, nor think even, of the truths which they are employed at a later day to teach. And if this is seen to be so in the case of those who were chief among the apostles, it could not be otherwise with their companions (see John xvi. 13).

But the coming of the Spirit, who taught the apostles what they could not bear to be told before, and, as the Spirit of Truth, led them into all truth, fully accounts for this difference. And if we desire to understand true Christian teaching and experience we must learn to appreciate the presence of the Holy Spirit, and to give Him that place in our minds which is manifestly His in God's Word. Now, the Holy Spirit is God, even as the Father is God, and the Son is God. We are baptized in the name of the Holy Ghost, even as we are baptized in the name of the Father and the Son.

The Holy Spirit is presented in Scripture in the closest possible relationship with the life, the service, and the testimony of the Lord Jesus. When Christ was about to be born, the word to Mary was,

“The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee” ;
and we are told that what was conceived in Mary

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was of the Holy Ghost. It was by the Spirit that our Lord was led into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. It was through the Eternal Spirit that He offered Himself without spot to God, and that He gave commandments after He was risen unto the apostles whom He had chosen. Just as the meat offerings were mingled with oil, so the Holy Spirit is related to Christ in His incarnation, and as the wafers of unleavened bread were anointed with oil, so Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit at His baptism (see Num. vi. 15).

“The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”

The entire spirit of the Prophetic Word is aglow with the testimony of Jesus. Testimony to His divine and varied glories, testimony to His sufferings and triumphs, testimony to His kingdom and power. The Holy Spirit is the author of all this testimony. He inspired Moses to write of the types and shadows which prefigure the glory and beauty of Christ. He inspired the Psalmist so to speak of the things which he had made touching the King, as that his tongue became like the pen of a ready writer.

The Holy Spirit creates that rapture of heart which bursts forth from the inspired writers, both in the Old Testament and the New, when Christ is the theme. The glorious and heart-moving names of Christ are all chosen by the Holy Spirit. He is the “Spirit of Jesus.” Truly the apostles did not understand the greatness,

the excellence of the blessing promised when Jesus foretold the coming of another Comforter who should abide with them for ever. It was meet that Christ should say of the Holy Spirit,

“He shall glorify Me : for He shall receive of Mine and show it unto you.”

The Holy Spirit glorified Christ by Old Testament utterances in pre-Christian times, and is here to glorify Him now. The revelation of the grace and glory and love of Jesus to His own is precisely of the nature of the Holy Spirit's work. What we know of these blessings, as it should be known, we owe to the Holy Spirit. He is the unction from the Holy One.

We may well sing concerning Christ :—

“How rich the precious blood He spilt,
Our ransom from the dreadful guilt
Of sin against our God !
How perfect is His righteousness,
In which unspotted beauteous dress
His saints have ever stood !”

But the power of these words, and the melody of heart which they express, do not exist apart from the presence of the Holy Spirit :—

“No man can say that Jesus is Lord, but by the Holy Spirit.”

Let us remember that rejoicing in Christ Jesus, the worship of Christ, and of God in His name, are all, and can only be, by means of the Spirit of God.

But if we are thus entirely dependent on the

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Holy Spirit to understand the glory of Christ, we are equally dependent upon Him for everything that pertains to the Christian life.

We "live by the Spirit." The new nature which entitles us to be called the children of God is His creation. The beginning of our existence in the kingdom of God is coincident with our being born of the Spirit. We owe to Him the godly sorrow for sin which mingles in our repentance with the sweet sense of the mercy of God. It was through Him we cleared ourselves of that which was wrong. He produced in us the indignation and zeal against our wicked ways; for true repentance by means of the Holy Spirit is among the choicest of the gifts of God.

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of faith. He leads us to trust in Christ, and gives us the power to do this. Without Him we could neither look to Jesus nor trust in His precious blood. He, too, is the Spirit of adoption. It is by Him that we cry Abba, Father. The intimacy, and tender approach to the Father which this relationship implies could not be known before the Holy Ghost was given. But we enjoy this privilege now.

Then, what about our prayers? True prayer partakes of the nature of prophecy. It is written of Abraham,

"He is a prophet and shall pray" (Gen. xx. 7).

It has often been a perplexing question with

philosophers, as to how a creature's prayer could affect the laws and providence of the Supreme Being. But the Christian ought not to be perplexed about the matter, when Scripture is so simple as to the Holy Spirit's place in our prayers :—

“We know not what we should pray for, as we ought : but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered, and he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God” (Rom. viii. 26, 27).

It is important to distinguish between what we call the new nature and the Holy Spirit. The new nature is that new creation or inner man which is by virtue of the new birth and may be understood as our divinely begotten selves. But apart from the Holy Spirit's power within us, this new-born life is weak. It needs nourishment, and Christ is the Bread of this new life. But the Holy Spirit is the Creator, He is not a creation, and He is not weak or dependent as we are at our best. He is to the Christian the Spirit of power. Thus, the apostle prays for the saints that they may be strengthened with might by God's Spirit in the inner man. We read too that it is “according to the power that worketh in us” that God is “able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.” But the power that worketh in us is the power of the Holy Spirit.

May the Lord give us to see our entire

dependence upon the Holy Spirit, and so to live that we may not grieve Him by whom we have been sealed unto the day of redemption.

T. H.

Samson's Strength.

“Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts” (Zech. iv. 6).

SAMSON achieved some mighty victories over the Philistines in his life, and these were, for the greater part, victories of *faith* (Heb. xi. 32). And because they were victories of faith, they were accomplished in dependence upon God, and in the power of His Spirit. On two distinct occasions he is seen to call upon God in prayer, and at three different times the Spirit of God is said to come upon him (Judges xiv. 6, 19; xv. 14, 18; xvi. 28).

His life, as viewed morally, may be divided into three parts. The first part, beginning with Judges xiii. 24, and ending with chapter xv., presents to us his brighter side as “a Nazarite unto God,” during which time only it is recorded that the Spirit of God came upon him. The second part, opening with chapter xvi., is a history of sad digression and failure, when God, for the time, appears to have given up His servant that he might prove what was in his own heart. While the third, or closing period,

opens with verse 20 of this chapter, and continues to the end.

But Samson's really great strength, in which he excelled in overcoming for God, was an *acquired* strength, obtained from God through dependence expressed in prayer. It was power by the Spirit of God.

While his *inherent* strength, which may perhaps be called *his own*, was not in itself such as could accomplish victories of faith, if in any wise it were detached from, or used independently of God and His Spirit, yet it was this strength that Samson so grievously abused, and misused, and finally lost. It was the wasting of a strength committed to him, and for which he was responsible to God, which, like water spilt upon the ground, could not be gathered up again.

Looking at his life as a whole, we are only able to dimly recognise his deliverance of Israel, for personal vengeance against the Philistines, and personal deliverances from them appears to have marked his way in general among them. And his achievements bore a strong resemblance in character to the works of the assembly at Sardis, to whom the Lord said, "I have not found thy works perfect before God" (Rev. iii. 2). They lacked by reason of personal and selfish interests. This spirit of worldliness and selfishness, acting as it did upon the saints at Sardis, also proved a snare to Samson, and thus Satan gained an advantage over this strong man's weakness.

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He might make *profession* of his standing as a Nazarite (c. xvi. 17) or "have a name to live," but mere profession, without power for God, only led him downward, until he was reduced to the lamentable bondage of serving the Philistines in the basest way. And therefore God, who knew the end from the beginning, never promised full deliverance to Israel by Samson. It was, "He shall *begin* to deliver Israel out of the hands of the Philistines" (c. xiii. 5). And so his final victory at the end of his life, though remarkable, was really only a part of this beginning of Israel's deliverance, which fact may cast a sorrowful reflection upon his life and the way it ended.

His life exhibited a gradual lowering of moral tone and vigour, until he relinquished every whit of moral and spiritual power. And the crisis that followed, so lamentably destitute of anything like "virtue" (2 Pet. i. 5), proved how great was his fall, and the ruin of his Nazarite character.

His first alliance with a Philistine woman, though against the practice of a faithful Israelite, was nevertheless, in the present case, "of the Lord," and intended as "an occasion against" the Philistines (c. xiv. 4). But Samson failed to make good this "occasion," and fell a dupe to the snare of the enemy. He did not fail because he lacked strength, but rather because he lacked confidence in God in using it, and trusted more in his own strength than in the strength of

Jehovah. He therefore cast away his confidence in God, and gave it to one who deceived him and played the traitor. He yielded to the temptation of the enemy, instead of "resisting, steadfast in the faith" (1 Pet. v. 9), and in place of proving a deliverer, either of Israel or of himself, he became a helpless captive, without sight, in the hands of the enemy. At the opening of chapter xvi., we find him as one no longer "kept by God's power through faith" (1 Pet. i. 5), but as one who, having power in himself, employed it in an inglorious deliverance of himself from grievous circumstances. And he appropriated this power to his own advantage in the interests of self and personal aggrandisement.

His second marriage in this chapter with "a woman in the valley of Sorek" appears to have lacked the least divine sanction, and shows but too clearly where his heart was resting. Under normal and right conditions, nothing would have been abnormal here, but his *love for Delilah* was altogether irregular at this stage of Samson's life. For it is evident that his heart had departed from God, and he was not, therefore, in favour with God (Jer. xvii. 5-10). But perhaps the saddest part of his experience at this time was his vaunted attempt to *display his strength*, which attempt was but the exponent of moral weakness and decay, and proved how little Samson's heart was *hiding* in the *secret* of Jehovah's tabernacle (Ps. xvii. 5).

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And what a lesson is here for God's children! For failure to dwell in this secret of Jehovah means the loss of the secret of His strength for us. And if "the secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him," then, if we once lose that fear, we lose *His Presence* also; our strength departs, and we become "like any other man" (Judges xvi. 17, 20).

And such displayed strength is far from being a true expression of Christ, who, as the apostle told the vain-glorious Corinthians, was crucified in *weakness*. It is when we *think* we stand that we are in greatest danger of falling (1 Cor. x. 12; 2 Cor. xiii. 4).

But how different, and in what contrast, was Samson's earlier "manner of life"! One of his most signal victories was the rending of a kid, with nothing whatever in his hand, and the moral beauty and strength of this victory is seen in the words, "But he *told not* his father or his mother what he had done" (c. xiv. 6).

"But there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared" (Ps. cxxx. 4).

Samson's condition at the close of his life could hardly have been more deplorable or more pitiable. But there was a gleam of brightness that shone through the dark gloom of his last days "in the prison house" of Gaza. It was God's mercy to His defeated servant in response to his humble and earnest cry. He had dis-

honoured his Master, but the Lord remembered His dishonoured servant, and came to his rescue in granting destruction to his enemies towards the deliverance of Israel.

We are told that "the hair of his head began to grow again," and this marked a new beginning with God. It was a revival of power in Samson for God. And it speaks beautifully of returning strength in the fear of God, as Samson endured, but did not despise the chastening of the Almighty. Outwardly all was weakness, but a power was forming within him, which, when used in fullest dependence upon God and supplemented by His Spirit, would accomplish the greatest victory of his life. It was the closing victory of faith, which, in the overruling mercy of God, was accomplished according to His mercy for an empty, helpless vessel. But it was not without a reaping on Samson's part of what he had sown to the flesh. He loses his own life. But his strength of faith now rises above the condition of the broken, shattered vessel, and his soul, bowed down in the sense of its distress and weakness, nevertheless hopes in God, with a striking absence of all display of strength before men. It was, indeed, "a little power" (Rev. iii. 8), but it proved to be "mighty *through* God" in the destruction of the enemy, and in the deliverance of God's people.

Beloved Christian reader, there is warning

and also much encouragement for us in the life of Samson. We need much grace, and we need much patience, so that, "having no confidence in the flesh," we may each one of us learn the secret of how one "out of weakness is made strong" (Heb. xi. 34).

May the Lord and *His joy* (Neh. viii. 10) be our strength continually, as we lean the more confidently and the more contentedly upon "the everlasting arms"! G. B. E.

Bible Study.

"THE man who takes time for communion with God, and who studies continually the portrait of Christ in the Gospels, is he who becomes strong in faith. 'They that do know their God shall be strong and do exploits.'"

That is the right note, and one is thankful to find it struck in a magazine which circulates among the Christian students of the world. It is impossible for us ever to realise how much is stored up for us in the fourfold presentation of the Lord's pathway in the Gospels. Only in Him and by Him was the Father's will ever done on earth as in heaven, and only from Him in that pathway of obedience may we learn how that will is to be done on earth as it is in heaven. It is a wonderful thing to find the Lord putting

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such a thought, such a desire, into His disciples' hearts. He knew that when the utterance of their hearts' desire in those familiar words should make them feel their need, and weakness, and ignorance, their hearts would turn to His path, would ponder it in its meaning. They would recall what He said, how He acted in the various circumstances through which they had passed with Him, and so would learn how that will should be done on earth. This is of special importance in the priest's service. For the priest has to carry out God's will, administer the government in God's House for Him. Hence the priest must know what obedience is for himself.

We saw in going through the law of the sin and trespass offering that two things relating to two other offerings were brought in after the law of the sin and trespass offering:—

1. **The Skin of the Burnt Offering.**—In the 1st of Leviticus we saw that the burnt offering was flayed by the offerer, and that the skin did not form part of the offering; it was not burnt. Here we find that it was the portion of the priest who dealt with the offering. There is a remarkable contrast between the skin of the burnt offering and that of the sin offering. The latter was to be burnt outside the camp; the former was not burnt, but became the portion of the priest.

Now, among the various symbols for **life** in its different aspects, we find that the skin is a remarkable picture of the life with the interests and associations inseparable from it; not the vital principle (*e.g.*, "the blood is the life"), but the life that is lived on earth among men.

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Now, in John's Gospel especially, the Holy Ghost presents the Lord Jesus in His life on earth as One who dwelt in the bosom of the Father, as "the Son of man which is in heaven." His was a life lived on earth in the associations and interests of heaven, of the Father's house. Hence we find in John that there is no change. He comes from God and goes back to God. He lays down His life and takes it again; death does not touch that life. This is why the skin of the **burnt** offering is not burnt. But we also find that when the question of the **sin** offering comes in, the question of the blessed Lord's being made sin, that there is a change of immense importance. The life in which He had to say to sin, taking our place, came to an end for ever at the cross, "In that He died, He died unto sin once, in that He liveth He liveth unto God." This is the ground upon which we are entitled to reckon ourselves dead indeed unto sin, but alive to God through Jesus Christ our Lord. It is because of this great fact that Paul could say, "Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more."

It is a question of two wonderful and important aspects of the person and work of the Lord Jesus affecting our life in every detail. The first is the abiding character of eternal life unchanged and untouched by death, lived here on earth, but belonging to heaven, the Father's house. The second opens up the new creation, where all is new and all of God, the most wonderful new thing ever known, a blessed, living, glorified Man at the right hand of God, the centre of a vast range of new affections and interests. Now, we need **the first** of these; we need to know and partake of that life lived on earth in the secret of heaven if we are to deal with the sin and failure in others that so constantly meets us, and gives occasion to the priestly work that we have spoken of.

The 13th of John illustrates this most beautifully. There we see the blessed Lord Jesus with His heart and

thoughts in heaven occupied with the needs of those He loved with a love that was from heaven, and dealing with them that they might have a part with Him. Then He says, "I have given you an example." He expects us to share in His thoughts and interests, and to act like Him. ~~This~~ This is, in brief, what the skin of the burnt offering speaks of.

2. **The Special Oblations.**—The other thing which is apparently taken out of its connection and attached to the law of the sin and trespass offering is the case of the three special oblations, the three forms of the meal offering. The meal offering in general belonged to all the priests, as we saw last time. But these three forms of the oblation, which, before being consumed on the altar, had already been subjected to the action of the fire in other ways, belong to the priest that deals with the offering, as in the case of the skin of the burnt-offering. Now, if these three symbols, the oven, the cauldron, and the fan be examined in Scripture, they will be found to represent the dealings of God with Israel, His government, and chastisement brought on by their sins. It is of importance to remember that the whole history of Israel is given by God, and was ordered to that end by Him, as a pattern of His government and its principles, starting from Exodus xxxiv.

Now the Lord Jesus, in coming amongst His earthly people, identified Himself with their state, and passed through the sufferings which they were enduring, and will yet endure, in order that they might have a way of escape. This we find fully expressed in the Psalms, and brought out in the First Epistle of Peter as the pattern of the Christian's path and suffering.

So that the Lord Jesus, in taking the yoke, and in learning obedience by the things which He suffered, passing in divine perfection through all the government of God, affords for us **the only means** by which we may learn how to walk through the world under the present

government of God, and how to deal with the failure and sins of others in the spirit in which He dealt with them. This, again in brief, is what these three forms of the oblation, brought in here, speak of. These two things will give abundant food for meditation and profit. It is He who dwelt from eternity in the Father's bosom, and who is also the exalted Man in glory, where never man was before, who says, "Come, ye children, hearken unto **Me**, and I will teach you the fear of the Lord." He teaches what He has learnt by experience. We may thank Him for that.

The remaining part of the chapter must be passed over quickly, although it has many wonderful things in it.

Broadly speaking, it shows the priest as the servant of the joys of the people of God, reaping, too, the return for the sorrow and exercise of heart inseparable from dealing with sin in the true priestly spirit. The priest receives from the worshipper the right shoulder and the breast of the offering for himself. Such blessed affections and divine ties as we find in Hebrews xiii. 7-17, 1 Timothy v. 17, 1 Thessalonians ii. 19, 20, iii. 8, resulting from the appreciation of this service, are rare things now, alas, but they are of God. These scriptures present something at least of what the priest's portion in the peace offering speaks of.

Answers to Questions.

1. Leviticus xxi. 10.—The carrying out of the ceremonies of the Day of Atonement, and the use of the Urim and Thummim, seem to be the special points that distinguished the high priest's service at first. Latterly more than one priest could exercise the high priest's function at the same time.

2. The stages in the priesthood are—

(a) Leviticus viii., ix.—The priesthood before failure.

- (b) Leviticus x.-xvi.—Failure of the priesthood and institution of the Day of Atonement.
- (c) Priesthood of Eleazar and Phinehas during the possession of the land, and subsequent failure.
- (d) Change to the line of Ithamar, and, in Eli's time, final failure of the priesthood as at first set up. Henceforth the priest is subordinate to the king. Compare Numbers xxvii. 21 with 1 Samuel ii. 35.
- (e) After the judgment on Eli's house, which begins with 1 Samuel iv., and closes with 1 Kings ii. 27, the Zadok priesthood begins, and really, in the purpose of God, extends up to millennial times (Ezek. xlv. 15).
- (f) But, under the New Covenant, blessing does not rest upon the failing Aaronic priesthood, but upon the unchanging priesthood of Christ, after the order of Melchizedek.

3. Answered in previous studies.

4. Hebrews xii. and the First Epistle of Peter deal specially with this subject.

Subject for July.—The Consecration of the Priests and the Priestly Blessing (Lev. viii., ix.). The following questions may be answered:—

1. What are the principal points of difference between the directions given for the consecration of the priests in Exodus xxix., and the account of the consecration in Leviticus viii?

2. What was the first work of the priests after consecration?

3. What was Moses' part in the consecration and blessing?

4. On how many occasions do we find that fire came from Jehovah and consumed offerings which were presented?

B.S. ED.

Notes and Comments.

We are constantly being asked, ***After the Revival.*** Are there any remains of the Welsh Revival? We are glad to be able to say that there are. A friend informs us that large numbers of the converts gather together from time to time for conference, counsel, and edification. The existing state of things in many of the so-called churches does not seem to meet their needs. At this we are not by any means surprised, for, owing to the worldliness in the pews, and the higher criticism and unsound teaching in many of the pulpits of Christendom, what help or food can a young convert get?

One of the saddest results of the state of division amongst the people of God in the British Isles is this—that so few are able to come to the help of these young converts. But the Scriptures remain as an infallible guide, and never was there a day when the inspired words of the aged apostle were more applicable than the very day we are now living in—

“And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up,” &c. (Acts xx. 32).

But some may ask, Then do ***Amalgamation*** you advocate amalgamation? ***or Unity.*** By no means. Amalgamation is a fleshly device of "agreeing to differ," or "compromising principles." If mistakes have been made in the past, then no harm can come of owning them frankly. But conscience is individual, and each one must be left free before the Lord in this respect. However this may be, no one, surely, can question the truth of the principle unfolded in Psalm cxxxiii., which doubtless speaks of a future day, and a different dispensation to our own—

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity . . . for there the Lord commanded the blessing."

For an object-lesson we have but to compare the difference between what is seen in England and on the Continent. In the latter place, where the divisions have happily never come, but where grace has been given to dwell together in unity, there indeed the blessing has been vouchsafed in large measure. The work spreads in every direction, new gatherings are formed and old ones increase in size, many conversions take place, the young feel encouraged to tread the path their fathers have trod before them. The constant addition to their gatherings of the young, and the sound and helpful ministry of the Word causes the work to spread in a healthy manner.

May the Lord bless them more and more, and preserve them from the blight of division and other evil until He come!

We wish that all our English brethren could witness with their own eyes what it is our privilege to see from time to time. Joy, and it may be sadness in some measure, would fill their hearts—joy at the sight of what grace has wrought on the one hand; sadness, on the other, at the remembrance of what might have been at home had wiser counsels prevailed.

The same apostle could write in the case of one assembly of “joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ” (Col. ii. 5); of another, “If ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another” (Gal. v. 15), while he exhorted yet another in the following words:—

“But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.

“From whom the whole body”—not a section or sections, however privileged and enlightened, but the Church in its entirety—“fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love” (Eph. iv. 15, 16).

The same apostle **agonised in prayer** for more than one assembly, namely, “for you (*i.e.* Colosse) and for them at Laodicea”; and also for as many as had not seen his face in the flesh—and here, surely, we ourselves are included:—

"That their hearts might be comforted, being **knit together in love**, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God" (Col. ii. 1, 2).

We do not wish to make light of Scriptural discipline, but is there not a danger of being over-occupied therewith? and do not the flesh and party spirit oftentimes obtrude themselves therein? Where such is the case, as in 3 John, the Spirit of God, through the beloved disciple, does not exhort the suffering saints that they should bow to the decision of the assembly, an exhortation which, under the circumstances, could not be given, but beseeches in these words:—

"Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God, but he that doeth evil hath not seen God. Demetrius hath good report of all men, and of the truth itself; yea, and we also bear record" (3 John 11, 12).

The same apostle exhorts to the firm and decided **rejection** of the evil-working heretic on the one hand (2 John); and, on the other, to the **reception** in love and without suspicion of those who have gone forth for Christ's name's sake, for by this means we might be "fellow-helpers to the truth."

"Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers ;

"Which have borne witness of thy charity (love) before the church : whom if thou bring forward on their journey after a godly sort, thou shalt do well :

“Because that for His name’s sake they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles.

“We therefore **ought to receive such**, that we might be fellow-helpers to the truth” (3 John 5-8).

These brethren were strangers, unknown to Gaius ; they were sort of itinerant preachers, but, unlike those of the Second Epistle, they brought the truth. They sought Christ’s glory and had gone forth for His name’s sake, not for filthy lucre’s sake. The apostle exhorts Gaius to show them all brotherly love and fellowship. Diotrophes might refuse them, as he even refused the apostle himself, but Gaius is exhorted to “receive such.”

ED.

Queries.

E. P. asks with reference to Zephaniah iii. 9 :—“Does it mean that all nations shall be turned to one language in that day?”

The passage refers no doubt to the time of the millenium. Some have taken it to mean that at that time only one language will be spoken universally, so as to enable all nations to serve the Lord with one consent.

But speaking of the same time Isaiah xix. 18 tells us that “five cities in the land of Egypt shall speak the language of Canaan,” &c. Why limit it to five if all nations spoke one and the same language ?

It seems to us that the “pure language” (or, lip) is explained by verse 13, “the remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies ; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth.” The object of having one universal language would be to enable the nations to have easy intercourse the one with the other ; but the verse is speaking of their relations with the Lord, and for this the important thing is not a question of philology but of the moral state of the heart, and the sincerity of utterance.

In that day it will not be a drawing nigh with the mouth, and an honouring with the lips, while the heart is far away (Matt. xv. 8).

It seems to refer especially to "the scattered nation," *i.e.*, Israel, for we must not forget that amongst the nations some will only yield a feigned obedience, which would not be a "pure lip" (see margin of Ps. xviii. 44, lxvi. 3). When at the day of Pentecost the company of disciples began to speak forth the wonderful works of God in every language under heaven, this was said by Peter to be akin to what Joel prophesied of in connection with this very same period to which Zephaniah refers, and this leads one to suppose that different languages will then exist. But the Spirit will be outpoured in that day, and we can well believe that those who will go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts (Zech. xiv.) will be enabled so to do it that no discordant note shall be heard. It will be a day for the display of "the powers of the world to come" (Heb. vi.).

Lord, haste the day when all shall own Thy rightful sway !

ED.

The Important Choice.

IT is a fact that we do well to face, that every one is called to make a definite choice whether they will have Christ or the world. It is true that many have attempted to possess themselves of both, but it is always a miserable failure, for such people are never really happy.

Many there are who make a definite calculation as to whether they can part with the world, and they decide that they cannot. They would like to become the children of God, they would like to be real Christians, they would like to have the assurance of salvation, but the cost to

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them seems too great. The world has its attractions, its pleasures and its excitements; they cannot bring themselves to give up its balls, its theatres, its concerts, and its round of amusements.

So thought a young girl with whom the Spirit of God was evidently striving. She had had the advantages of a Christian home and of earnest and whole-hearted Christian friends, but at school she had come in contact with worldly influences, and these had proved too alluring; she had learnt to dance, and she loved it; she felt her whole nature going out towards the world and its pleasures. What was she to do?

"I cannot go into the world and be a Christian too," she said. "I must be one thing or the other." It is a serious crisis in that young girl's life—may God help her to make the best and wisest choice!

"Choose you this day whom ye will serve."

This earnest appeal to Israel of old on the part of Joshua (Josh. xxiv. 15) we would solemnly press home upon all our young readers. Joshua appeals to them upon the ground of all that they had proved God to be for them in the past. Read that chapter through, and see how full it is of God's goodness and love to the people. He "gave" them this, and He "gave" them that; He "delivered" them here, and He "delivered" there. There was no question as to His love,

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He had proved it to them conclusively. The whole question lay now with them—"Choose you . . . whom ye will serve."

In writing this we have specially in view the young people who have had the advantages of Christian training, but have not yet made a definite choice of Christ for themselves—**Choose you**—yes, it must be a choice :—

1. It must be a **definite decision**—no half-and-half measures will do. You know the gospel in your head, you could clearly present it to others, but you have not made the choice. Nay, is this true? You have already made the choice, but, alas! so far it has been the fatal choice. We want you now to alter your decision, and to choose Christ for time and eternity.

The young girl alluded to above knew and understood the gospel; she knew that Christ had died for sinners, and that she could be saved the moment she put her faith in Him; but she felt that it must be a faith of the *heart*, and that if faith was that of the heart it would be accompanied by a change of life, and would lead her to follow Christ consistently.

Let us imagine that two purses are lying on the table. The one contains one farthing, the other one thousand gold sovereigns. A poor and needy man is told that he may have one or the other, but that he cannot have both—would it take him long to decide which of the two he would choose? Could we imagine anybody so

foolish as to give up the purse containing one thousand sovereigns, because he could not bring himself to part with the one containing one farthing? This is but a poor and feeble illustration of the comparative values of the world and Christ. True, the world in the light of eternity, with all its pleasures, its gaieties, its excitements, is worth absolutely nothing at all. But Christ? Ah, tongue fails to tell, pen is utterly unable to write, nor can thought conceive His unsearchable riches!

“Choose you . . . whom ye will serve.”

2. It must be an **individual** decision—choose **you**. No one can choose for another. Christian parents may long and pray for their children's conversion, but conversion is an individual matter. It is possible to be a child of Christian parents, and yet not be a child of God. True, the parents are largely responsible in the way of bringing up their children, but this is not the point under immediate consideration. The choice, so far as the young are concerned, must be an individual one.

Weigh the matter well over, young friend. Place the scale where the light of eternity will shine upon its beam, put the world into the one pan, and Christ into the other, and honestly decide which of the two outweighs the other, then fearlessly make your choice.

In writing thus we are not forgetting that it must be the work of the Holy Spirit. We are

born "not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John i. 13). Perfectly true, and yet while all is the sovereign work of God, the responsibility of the individual soul is as clearly insisted on. The preceding verse declares that "as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the children of God." It may seem hard to reconcile these two statements of God's Word, but there they both are, and both are true.

When Christ is presented to the soul, each one is responsible to receive Him, and, in fact, each reader of these lines has already so far decided either to receive or reject. Which shall it be? Choose **you**.

3. It must be an **immediate** decision. "Choose you **this day**." More people die in youth than in middle or old age. Constantly we hear of sudden deaths by accident and sickness. Be on the safe side, and decide at once! The one who in early life decides for Christ, who wholeheartedly and consistently follows Him, and seeks to serve Him devotedly, is far happier in this life than the one who chooses the world, and then plunges headlong into its pleasures. It is like the lamp to the poor moth; fascinated by its brightness it flies into the flame, and soon lies scorched and crippled on the ground.

The sooner you decide for Christ, the safer will you be in the light of eternity, and the happier will you be throughout your earthly course.

“Choose you this day whom ye will serve.”

And is not Christ worthy of your heart's choice? Think of His love!

“If I were the only sinner in the world,” we were once asked, “would Christ have loved me enough to have died for me?”

The question was a novel one, and set us thinking; but soon our thinking was turned to praising. We thought of Paul, who saw himself, as it were, the only sinner in the universe, and revelled in the thought of the individuality of Christ's love. “The Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me” (Gal. ii. 20).

Himself for me!

what heart-melting words! It was as though all that Christ had, and was, He gave for Paul—all His love He poured out upon him. Yes, we are each one entitled to appropriate all the love of Jesus as though we were its only object; and yet, what He is to each one individually, He is to all collectively.

“Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen” (Rev. i. 5).

He “loved *me*, and gave Himself for *me*,” says Paul. He “loved *us*, and washed *us*,” says John. Both are equally true, both are divinely perfect. What mysteries of redeeming love!

Choose you this day whom ye will serve.

A. H. B.

Notes on the Temple—No. 5.

WE shall have something to say by-and-by about the workmen, so we pass it over now, only just reminding you that though gifts for service were given by Christ in His ascension glory, provision was made for it in His humiliation (see Eph. iv.). "He ascended up on high," but, says the Spirit of God :—

"He that ascended is the same that also descended first into the lower parts of the earth."

He that **ascended** and **gave** was the same also that **descended** and procured. David provided the workmen, and Solomon employed them.

"David also commanded all the princes of Israel to help Solomon his son, saying,

"Is not the Lord your God with you? and hath He not given you rest on every side? for He hath given the inhabitants of the land into my hand";—(not "into yours," that is very striking);—"and the land is subdued before the Lord, and before His people.

"Now set your heart and your soul to seek the Lord your God ; arise, therefore, and build ye the sanctuary of the Lord God, to bring the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and the holy vessels of God, into the house that is to be built to the name of the Lord" (1 Chron. xxii. 17-19).

Here it is not simply **example**, but **commandment**. "David commanded." So it is the will of the Lord Jesus Christ that we should be fellow-workers with Himself, after His own example, in laying ourselves out for the same

object that He had in view, which is God's ultimate and eternal glory in the salvation and building together of precious souls. David commanded all the princes of Israel to help Solomon his son, saying, "**Is not the Lord your God with you?**" "Hath He not given you rest on every side?" If you have not His presence with you, seek it.

Christ before He gave the gifts, led captivity captive. So here David says:—

"The land is subdued before the Lord and before His people. Now set your heart and your soul to seek the Lord your God ; arise, therefore, and build ye the sanctuary of the Lord God."

When David fixes the site he says, "This is the **house** of the Lord God"; but when he speaks to the people here he says, "Arise, therefore, and build ye the **sanctuary** of the Lord God." And that is just how God put it in giving orders for the tabernacle in the wilderness. "Let them build Me a **sanctuary** that I may dwell among them." It is not simply a habitation for God, though that is important ; but if God dwells in a house it must be a sanctuary, it must be a holy place, for "holiness becometh God's house for ever." Further—

"to bring the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and the holy vessels of God, into the house of the Lord that is to be built to the name of the Lord."

Typically, it is to give Christ, the true Ark,

His own proper place in connection with the various services of the house of God.

We will now pass on to chapter xxviii. :—

“And David assembled all the princes of Israel, the princes of the tribes, and the captains of the companies that ministered to the king by course, and the captains over the thousands, and the captains over the hundreds, and the stewards over all the substance and possession of the king, and of his sons, with the officers, and with the mighty men, and with all the valiant men, unto Jerusalem.”

Read also chapter xxix. :—

“Furthermore, David the king said unto all the congregation, Solomon my son, whom God alone hath chosen, is yet young and tender, and the work is great : for the palace is not for man, but for the Lord God.”

There is first a house mentioned, then a sanctuary, then a palace. What honourable, striking, significant terms ! “We are builded together for a **habitation of God**,” so it must be a holy place, and it must be worthy of God Himself—a palace, a royal abode. We must not suppose anything will do for God. I am not speaking about the external structure.

“Now I have prepared with all my might for the house of my God.” Oh, how sweet that word, “my God.” How it reminds us of the language of the Lord Jesus, “I ascend to **My** Father and your Father, to **My** God and your God” ; and in the third of Revelation, how He dwells upon it :—

“I will make him a pillar in the temple of **My** God ; and I will write upon him the name of **My** God, and the

name of the city of **My** God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from **My** God."

And so here it is "a house for **my** God." Put those terms together—a "house for God," a "sanctuary," a "palace," and a "house for **my** **God**." No wonder you get his might thrown into it.

"Now I have prepared with all my might for the house of my God the gold for things to be made of gold, and the silver for things of silver, and the brass for things of brass, the iron for things of iron, and wood for things of wood ; onyx stones and stones to be set, glistening stones, and of divers colours, and all manner of precious stones, and marble stones in abundance." (Compare 1 Cor. iii. 12.)

In the third verse there are certain additions :

"Moreover, because I have set my affection to the house of my God, I have of mine own proper good, of gold and silver, which I have given to the house of my God, over and above all that I have prepared for the holy house."

First he said, "I have prepared with all my might." Then he says, "I have set my affection on the house of my God." There is not only the "work of faith," but there is the "labour of love." How striking every word is ! David was not content to empty the exchequer of the kingdom, if I may so express it, into the treasury of the Lord's house, but he must then throw in his own private property over and above. The work of faith will lead to large contributions, but love leads one to impoverish himself.

We remark, again, when it was "with all his **might** for the house of his God," it was gold and silver and other things "in abundance." Now over and above this, he gives "even three thousand talents of gold (in value £164,455) of the gold of Ophir." Love not only provides richly, but provides the very best. It is "gold of Ophir" now, because he has **set his affection** upon the house of his God. "And seven thousand talents of refined silver." How very striking those little changes are when it comes to a question of affection! Affection not only does with its might, but it does **its very best**—nothing too good. If it is gold, it must be the "gold of Ophir;" if it is silver, it must be "refined silver."



Brief Thoughts on the Prayers in Daniel ix., Ezra ix., and Nehemiah ix.



THESE portions of Scripture ought to be of special interest and profit to us, as the prayers contained in them were uttered at a time analogous, in many respects, to that which now exists in the Church of God.

As to outward unity—Israel was in ruins. The ten tribes had long since been removed from their own land, and the other two had been carried away captive to Babylon. The chasten-

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ing hand of God had been upon His people for their sins. Through God's mercy, the most part of the two tribes had been restored under Ezra and Nehemiah. But, however great might have been the sin and unfaithfulness of the people—even of the restored remnant—yet the faithfulness of God was to be counted on in spite of it all.

It is most instructive to see the position taken by the man of God in such a state of things, as we have it illustrated in the case of these three servants of God. It is the place of deep and genuine abasement and humiliation before God—and this, too, not on account of their own failures so much ; but on account of the whole state and condition of the people of God.

Personally, **Daniel** was a particularly pious and holy man ; yet he identifies himself thoroughly with the state of the people. He says more than once, "*We* have sinned"—not "they have sinned," but "we have sinned." We find him before God in the place of "prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes." There was true and earnest supplication, accompanied by self-denial and humiliation. There was also the fullest acknowledgment of the righteousness and justice of God in all the chastisements He had brought upon the people on account of their departure from Him. And yet the ruined and scattered condition of the people in no wise hindered Daniel from counting

on God for blessing. He could fall back on the unchanging faithfulness of God—on the fact that they were the people of God; and that His name was named upon them. But the mass of the people were not really alive to the true condition of things at all; as Daniel says—

“All this evil is come upon us : yet made we not our prayer before the Lord our God, that we might turn from our iniquities and understand Thy truth.”

When we come to apply these principles at the present time, we find the Church of God in ruins: true Christians scattered amongst all the denominations and sects of Christendom; and even those who own no other name and gathering point but the name of Jesus, scattered and divided amongst themselves. How many are conscious of the real condition of the Church of God, and bear it on their hearts before God in true contrition and self-judgment, as Daniel did in the case of God's people in his day? We live at the close of the present dispensation, and doubtless near the time when the Lord will come for His people. We know from Scripture that the last phase of the history of the professing Church will be characterised by indifference to Christ, boastfulness, and spiritual pride (see Rev. iii. 15-18); these are, therefore, the very principles we should seek to avoid most of all. The very fact that God has graciously recovered much light and truth long lost to the Church, ought to lead to a deeper sense of our failure, in

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responding so poorly to all His infinite grace. But where there is genuine humiliation before God, it is sure to show itself in the practical life and walk—in separation from the world and devotedness to Christ.

The Lord says to the Church at Ephesus (Rev. ii.), “repent,” yet not only “repent,” but “do the first works.” True repentance must ever be accompanied by the practical doing of the Word, not hearing only—in a word, by the manifestation of Christ in the life and walk. This is most important, for we live in a day when there is little or no outward persecution, in these countries at least: and, while we have to be deeply thankful for this, there is the attendant danger of seeking our own ease, and drifting into the world. If we consider the religious world (so-called), we find indifference to Christ, compromises and a giving up of truth. This is a very solemn feature of the times; and truly nothing can be more hateful to Christ than that lack of heart and indifference to Him and His glory which is expressed in the word “lukewarm”—neither cold nor hot.

On the other hand, have we not likewise to deplore that want of forbearance and consideration one for another which fosters party spirit? so that instead of being occupied with Christ and His interests people get taken up with the failings of others, often leading to discord and division, sometimes about matters where no

fundamental question at all is at issue. These things ought not so to be, and they ought to be a real cause of sorrow and self-judgment to all who have at heart the glory of Christ and the good of His people.

It is true there is a desire for unity amongst believers—and surely we should all desire it—but even if it were possible to bring all true Christians together, this even would not meet the case unless the inward moral state which led to the failure, and which rendered necessary the dealing of God in discipline amongst the Lord's people, were really reached and judged in His presence. There must be reality, consistency, practical godliness and unworldliness, as well as the maintenance of the truth in doctrine, if saints are to enjoy communion with God and with one another; and if they are to go on in the light and joy of His presence either collectively or individually.

Turning now for a moment to **Ezra** and **Nehemiah**—we find that they, too, bore on their hearts before God the failure even of the restored remnant of the people. They, too, fully owned the righteousness of God in all His dealings; as they say, "Thou art just," "Thou art righteous." And **we** can add our "Amen" to this, for truly all His ways are righteousness and truth, and even His rebukes are in love and for our good. It is instructive to note how both these men of God, as well as

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Daniel, took the place of confession and humiliation ; and how both insisted on a practical walk and conduct in keeping with their place of privilege as God's people. The true path to restoration and blessing in a day of ruin will ever be found to be the path of confession and humiliation, accompanied by a practical separation from what is unsuitable to Him who is the holy and the true. This principle is ever true.

For example, when God said to Jacob, after all his own shortcomings on the one hand, and his experiences of God's mercy on the other, "Arise, go up to Bethel," Jacob at once became conscious of things allowed in his house which were unsuitable to God ; and so he said to his household—

"Put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments."

As already remarked, to enjoy communion with God, there must be a state suitable to Him ; there must be reality, truth in the inward parts, the word governing the life and conduct and separating from things which are not consistent with His holy nature and character.

There is, truly, a need—a very serious need in these days—for turning to our God in the spirit we find expressed in the words, "prayer and supplications, with fasting and sackcloth, and ashes." May He produce such a state of mind and heart amongst His people increasingly ! At the same time, let us ever count on His un-

changing faithfulness with implicit confidence. God was always ready to respond to the genuine turning of the hearts of His people to Him in contrition and humiliation. His counsels of grace for the glory of His beloved Son can never fail, and this is an encouragement however great the confusion in the Church of God may be. But then we must ever remember that when God graciously gives light and truth from His Word there is all the greater responsibility ; and He looks for a state of soul—of heart and conscience—as well as a practical walk, in keeping with the truth He gives. F. G. B.

Bible Study.

IT is very interesting to observe that in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers we have the account given of what took place on a certain day of immense importance to the children of Israel, and that in each account we have a totally different set of events described by the Holy Ghost. The observing of this difference will help not a little in the understanding of the different lines on which the record given by God is arranged in each of these three books.

The day is that remarkable day mentioned in Exodus xl. 2, 17. In Exodus the divine record shows us the picture of Moses receiving from the

hands of the people the fruit of their labour, blessing them, and then setting up in its exact order, according to the command of Jehovah, the tabernacle with all its vessels. As soon as this is done the glory of Jehovah fills His dwelling-place. Then in Leviticus we find that on the same day, as comparison of Exodus xl. 9-16, Leviticus viii. 10-12, and Numbers vii. 1 will show, another wonderful scene takes place, the anointing and consecration of Aaron and his sons as priests. Finally, in Numbers vii. 10, we are shown the princes of Israel bringing their gifts for the dedication of the altar. So the setting up in Exodus apparently occupies one day, the consecration in Leviticus seven days, and the dedication in Numbers twelve days. This is interesting and suggestive, and helps to bring out what is the special object of God in each of these three books in connection with His dwelling among His people and its basis, the priesthood and the order of His house, His government and its history.

One thing is very striking, that, with the exception of Leviticus xxiv. 10-23, all the history contained in Leviticus is found in chapters viii. to x. It is always important to observe what God selects to tell us, because we can discover from it what is in His mind. For example, when in Genesis we find that God dismisses the mighty Babylonian kingdom of Nimrod in three verses, while He occupies twelve

chapters with the history of a wandering sheep-owner, and twenty-seven more with the history of his son and grandson, we cannot fail to see that the history of the path of faith is of more interest to God than what the world calls history.

So here the selection of this little bit of history coming in between the order of approach to God, and the subsequent details of the holiness suited to God's house, shows that everything depended on the priesthood, then shows that priesthood breaking down in the very thing for which they were appointed, and everything is thrown back upon the unfailing mercy of God.

The order of the chapter (Lev. viii.) is marked out, as in Exodus xl., by the words, "as Jehovah had commanded." We find :—

1. Moses brings Aaron and his sons, the bullock, the two rams, and the basket of unleavened bread to the entrance of the tent of meeting, and gathers thither the whole assembly to witness what Jehovah had commanded to be done. This is what they saw :—

2. Moses bathes Aaron and his sons with water, and clothes Aaron with his garments of glory and beauty. (Leviticus adds here the inner girdle, and the Urim and Thummim.)

3. Moses anoints the tabernacle, the altar, and the laver. Then he anoints Aaron, and goes on to clothe Aaron's sons with the priestly vests, girdles, and caps.

4. Moses offers the bullock of the sin offering. (Leviticus adds the important details that he cleansed the altar from sin, and hallowed it, making atonement for it.)

5. Moses offers the ram of the burnt offering. (Leviticus adds the washing of the legs and inwards in water.)

6. Moses presents the ram of consecration, and

- (a) puts its blood on the right ear, thumb, and great toe of Aaron and his sons. (Here Exodus adds the sprinkling of the garments with blood and oil).
- (b) fills the hands of Aaron and his sons with the fat, shoulder, and bread of the wave offering.
- (c) himself waves the breast of the wave offering.

7. Moses completes the hallowing by sprinkling with the anointing oil and the blood on the altar both Aaron and his garments, his sons, and their garments. They then boil and eat the flesh of the consecration offering and the bread left in the basket at the entrance of the tent of meeting, where they remain seven days, day and night, keeping the charge of Jehovah.

Exodus, occupied with the principles upon which God's dwelling amongst His people depends, adds the details of the continual burnt offering, the handing down of the priestly garments from father to son, and closes with the promise so wonderfully fulfilled in Exodus xl., and Leviticus x. and xvi., "I will meet," "I will hallow," "I will dwell"—most solemn and yet most blessed.

One thing must not be lost sight of, and that is, the place that Moses has in this. Nothing could have been carried out without him. He received the pattern and communicated it. He set up the house. He brings forward the priest and his sons and introduces them, so to speak, to the place where the glory already dwelt. He offers the offerings, fills the hands of the priests, and places them in the position where they were to carry on the whole order of the House of God.

All this was the mediator's work, and must be carefully distinguished from the priest's work. Nothing could be established without the mediator. Hebrews touches both on Moses' faithfulness in his position, and on the importance and meaning of Aaron's office, keeping the two distinct throughout, though both meet in Him whom we are to consider, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession.

After the priesthood is thus established, Aaron in his place, and his sons associated with him, the next thing is the picture of the priesthood fulfilling the office appointed to them, and the result in blessing. It is interesting to notice the occasions upon which blessing is pronounced upon the people in their journey :—

1. Moses blesses the people after they have completed the work of the tabernacle (Exod. xxxix. 43).
2. Aaron blesses the people after he has completed the priestly work ordained in Leviticus ix. 22.
3. Moses and Aaron come out from the tent of meeting and bless the people (Lev. ix. 23).
4. Balaam blesses Israel (Num. xxiv. 9 ; Deut. xxiii. 5).
5. Moses blesses the people before his death (Deut. xxxiii. 1).

Then comes the supreme test of the whole order of the things thus set up, the **glory** of Jehovah appears to all the people, and **fire** comes out from Jehovah and consumes the burnt offering on the altar. This brings out the failure that must be found in everything that depends in any way upon man. The failure is a double one.

1. Nadab and Abihu offer strange fire before Jehovah **"which He had not commanded them."** As ever, disobedience is the cause of the breakdown. At once the very fire which had come out from Jehovah to consume the burnt offering, comes out to consume them; judgment comes from the place whence blessing had come.

2. The goat of the sin offering which should have been eaten by the priests in a holy place, is found to have been burnt. But this had been given to the priests that they might bear the iniquity of the people, to make atonement for them before Jehovah. Hence the very essential part of the priests' service breaks down at the outset.

These two failures are closely connected. Failure in obedience leads to failure in that service which depends on obedience. There are always the deepest reasons for obedience; the character of Christ is always involved, for His obedience always was in type, and is now in reality, the obedience to which we are sanctified. We need not know the reasons for obedience. It is enough to obey, but we may be certain that disobedience will spoil for the time the display of what God counts most precious, and guards most jealously.

But His mercy endureth for ever, and He has a way out of the hopeless breakdown, for it was as hopeless as that of Exodus xxxii. The 16th of Leviticus shows this. Instead of the goat of the people which should have been eaten by the priests, we have the fullest type of the work of the blessed Lord Himself, both in propitiation and in substitution, and it becomes the ground

on which God can continue to dwell amongst His people. Aaron takes the ground of failure, and Moses is content. So ends this brief but wonderful bit of history where we have the pattern of blessing and its source, and the secret of failure, and the mercy of God behind it all.

Answers to Questions—

1. Answered above.
2. The first thing they had to do after having their hands filled (that is the meaning of consecration), was to **feed** on the ram of consecration, and on the bread, and to **wait** at the entrance of the tent of meeting seven days (Lev. viii. 31-36).
3. Answered above. The portion that Moses received, and which he handed over as a perpetual portion for the priests, was the breast of the wave offering (Lev. viii. 29).
4. In Genesis xv. 17 we find the covenant established by the burning lamp passing between the severed pieces of the victims. The other occurrences are Lev. ix. 24, Judges vi. 21, 1 Chron. xxi. 26, 2 Chron. vii. 1, 1 Kings xviii. 38.

Subject for August.—The Law of Clean and Unclean Things (Lev. xi.). The following questions may be searched out and answered :—

1. What are the principal differences between the law in Leviticus xi. and in Deuteronomy xiv.
2. How is the thought of uncleanness taken up by the prophets?
3. What is the Lord's teaching in the Gospels as to uncleanness and defilement?
4. What scriptures show the attitude of Peter and Paul towards ceremonial uncleanness.

B. S. ED.

Reviews, &c.

"A MODERN SLAVERY," BY HENRY W.
NEVINSON.

THIS interesting account of travels in West Central Africa throws a lurid light upon the lives and methods of Government officials and traders. The Congo is not the only part of the Dark Continent where unspeakable horrors abound. Everybody who has travelled in those parts of the world where a few white traders settle amongst savage races for the sake of gain is fully aware that the picture is not overdrawn. Many a time have we heard in such places the missionaries sorrowfully bemoan the deadly hindrance to their work that is found in the lives of the traders, who, as a rule, are characterised by heartless cruelty, disgusting immorality, and insatiable greed.

Mr Nevinson exposes all this unsparingly, so that we do not wonder when we read that "nearly all travellers and traders in Africa" have nothing good to say of missionaries and their work.

Of course there are missionaries and missionaries, but we are pleased to read Mr Nevinson's testimony as to the bulk of those he has met in Africa, that they still believe and teach the Old Testament as inspired of God. Mr Nevinson has lost all faith in this, unfortunately for himself; but it is a little strong to say that "no one
CV.

believes" the Old Testament histories! Here Mr N—— speaks terribly at random when he sweeps Genesis away as "no truer than the natives' own myths"! We quite agree that the natives have a hard problem to reconcile the Christian ideal as taught by the missionary, and the cruelty, deceit, greed for money, and traffic in human beings carried on by professed Christian nations. His chapter on "Savages and Missions" is full of unconscious testimony to the real power of the Word of God in the lives of the noble men and women who labour amongst these savage races, and the effect of such lives upon the native mind. Mr N—— wondered as he beheld a crowd of blacks singing with their whole hearts, and faces aglow with joy,

"Jesus really loves me,

His blood will wash my black heart white."

We felt not only wonder but thrills of joy and praise to God when some years ago we found ourselves in a meeting of Fijian converts, and heard men but recently cannibals singing,

"Jesus loves me, this I know."

Mr N—— wonders how long their teaching would survive if "the missionaries were suddenly removed in a body." He gives them fifty years! But the same question might be asked with reference to England. If every truly converted person were suddenly removed from England, the departure from even nominal belief would be appallingly rapid. This will take place

at the coming of the Lord; the complete apostasy will take very much less than fifty years to develop.

As most of our readers may have little knowledge of what is being done by others in those parts, we append the following:—

“As to the scandals and sneers of traders, officials, and gold prospectors against the missions, let us pass them by. They are only the weary old language of ‘the world.’ They are like the sneers of butchers and publicans at astronomy. They are the tribute of the enemy, the assurance that all is not in vain. It would be unreasonable to expect anything else, and dangerous to receive it. The only thing that makes me hesitate about the work of the order (R.C.) is that many traders and officials have said to me, ‘The Catholic missions are at all events practical; they do teach the natives carpentering and wagon building, and how to dig.’ It is perfectly true and admirable, and, as a matter of fact, the other missions do the same. But a mission might teach its followers to make wagons enough for a Boer’s paradise, and doors enough for all the huts in Africa, and still have failed of its purpose.

“Besides the Order of the Holy Spirit (R.C.), there are two other notable orders at work in Angola—the American Mission (Congregationalist) under the ‘American Board,’ and the English Mission (Plymouth Brethren) under Divine direction only. Each mission has four stations, and each is about to start a new one. . . . All are on terms of singular friendship, helping one another in every possible way, almost like the followers of Christ. Of all sects that I have ever known, these are the only two that I have heard pray for each other, and that without condemnation—I mean they pray in a different spirit from the Anglican prayer for Jews, Turks, infidels, and heretics.”

We are glad of the testimony of an unbiassed man of the world, an unbeliever to boot, as to the difference between the R.C. and the simple Scriptural teaching of the gospel in the lives of both missionaries and their converts. Let us pray earnestly for these brethren and sisters amidst the dangers from climate and murder to which they are constantly exposed. ED.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS OF THE BAPTIST UNION.

We fully sympathise with the converted gipsy who was asked what sect he had joined. "Why, when once a man is joined to Christ, **all the joining's done.**" He had learnt the truth that there was but "one" body, and that all true Christians were members of Christ.

But all Christians are not so far advanced, and hence we hear of the "different bodies," such as Wesleyans, Baptists, Independents, &c. It is quite possible to be a member of a sect without being a member of Christ. This may account for the fact that during the last year there has been a "decrease in membership in the Baptist and Wesleyan bodies" of ten thousand. But we are thankful that this fact is causing deep and godly exercise amongst some of our brethren in the Lord who labour amongst them. There are great searchings of heart as to what may be the cause.

Some are waking up to the discovery that

modern sensationalism and revivalism are not accomplishing the solid work that at one time resulted from a faithful preaching of the Word. The late C. H. Spurgeon mourned that there was a rapid increase in the UN-converted ministry. The effect of this has made itself felt far and wide. A spasmodic revival in a congregation exposed year in and year out to the deadly speculations of a rationalistic and unconverted ministry can accomplish little permanent good.

"Come out of her, My people,"

is God's message to all His own who are found in such places.

To turn a so-called church into a religio-worldly concert hall may for a little while increase its membership, but will not add to its spiritual power. Not a few so-called pastors have added smoking concerts, theatricals, and dancing classes. Horrible!

Infidelity; apostasy with regard to every fundamental doctrine; denying the deity of Christ, His atoning sacrifice on the cross, the immortality of the soul, the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, together with the undisguised spirit of worldliness, has fast developed that condition of things described in the Scriptures under the titles of Laodicea and Babylon the Great.

We are thankful for the words of warning that fell from the lips of the President of the Baptist Union at its Assembly last April.

One striking feature of the address was the

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speaker's own craving after that spirit of worship and the realisation of the presence of God which is sadly lacking, not only in the Baptist Union, but wherever man has substituted the clergy for the free action of the Spirit in the assemblies of God's people.

There can be no question that 1 Corinthians xiv. instructs us **how** the Christian assembly should be conducted. In the past century many of the Lord's people seeing this were led to act upon it. They dispensed with a clergyman, minister, or human president, and proved how much better was God's method than man's. This was a feature, too, of the recent Welsh revival, and great was the blessing enjoyed as the presence of the Holy Spirit, not only in the individual but **in the assembly**, was realised and acted upon.

Agreeing in the main, though not with every expression, we append the closing remarks of the President's address, earnestly praying that he himself may be blessed more and more, and that his words may find an echo in the hearts of not a few for whom they were specially intended:—

How shall we define the function of the Church of Christ? It is manifold, but three important things at least let me emphasise.

I.—WORSHIP.

Not merely preaching, though preaching may be an essential part of it, but prayer and praise and meditation. There is no assembly on earth that can compare for a

moment, in importance and dignity, with an assembly of people met to worship God and hear His Word.

The "Service," as we have come to call it, is too often regarded in the light of a purely human performance, and the performance chiefly of one man who is engaged for the duty, much as a lecturer might be. We talk about going to "hear him," as though that were the primary object of the assembly. There is often a lack of the spirit of worship and reverence. We expect the speaker to be prepared in mind and matter, we rarely think of personal preparation on our own part. We expect to be interested or informed, perhaps moved and thrilled, perhaps entertained. . . .

It is the silence that I must confess I sometimes crave for. Even the hour set apart for worship must be crowded with human words and actions. We are so feverishly restless that we cannot be still and wait for the breath of the Spirit of God.

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III.—EVANGELISM.

Whatever else be attempted, this must not be left undone. It is our supreme mission, the thing for which the Church exists, the sacred charge laid upon our hearts by our Lord. "The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world." The Son said to the men whom He had called out of the world: "As the Father hath sent Me, even so send I you." . . .

I tell you frankly I am afraid of our losing the Evangelistic note and passion—of that which should be subsidiary and subordinate and auxiliary becoming the main thing. I am afraid of our losing sight of the royal prerogative of the Church, that the work which we alone can do, of beseeching men in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God should remain undone; of our losing sight of the fact that the Christian faith is missionary and propagandist. I dread, more than I can tell, our becoming the

mere appanage of any political party or secular society. Whatever else we have to do, we have to bear witness to Christ, to preach the Gospel. . . . And my closing plea is that we shall go on striking that note, and doing it more insistently ; that we shall pray God to send back to our passionless churches a very hunger of desire, that men at home and abroad shall be brought to know and love and follow Jesus Christ. That we shall repel the insidious notion stealing over the thoughts of the Church, that men are all right, and may be left to the mercy of God.

Jottings on Luke iii. 21, 22.

EVERY Christian knows the value of the work of the Son of God, and it is the foundation of His peace. It is an answer to any tremblings in the soul that sometimes doubts even what it has confessed, a firm basis and foundation. But we need to grow, and the Lord ministers to our growth. Our love grows, but His never does, it is always at its height. Our love will have an eternity to develop itself in.

We get to learn our union with Him where He is in the glory of God. But besides that, there is our association with Him in His path down here. He can speak of us as brethren :—

“Go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father and your Father, unto My God and your God.”

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It is not for us to call Him "Brother." In His life down here He was alone—

"Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone"—

—but when He had died, He was no more alone.

Whenever a soul is in the truth of its condition before God, there Christ is. He associates Himself here, not with the ungodly and disobedient people, but with those who owned their sins. He was a perfect Man; He had made the stars and rolled the skies, yet here He is **praying**.

Is it the habit of my soul to be seeking God in prayer? This is not a day of prayer, it is a day of activity; it is not a day of piety. There is no piety without prayer, for after prayer I bear the impress of the company I have been in. Moses' face shone, but farewell to your piety if you think of your face shining.

The Holy Ghost descended upon Christ; do we think of our bodies being temples of the Holy Ghost? The Word says it; let us turn to I Corinthians vi. 19, 20:—

"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body."

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"It is a good thing to be confronted with our privileges. Nothing bows the soul like the sense of grace. I am a son of God, I am in relation to the Father and to Christ. Do I go about my everyday business in the sense of these things?"

May we not only testify of His work, but may there be a brighter testimony for Him in life, and walk, and ways, from the power of this communion.

R. HUNT.

The Nazarene.

SOME readers and interpreters of Scripture seem to have confounded the word Nazarene with the word Nazarite. This is a mistake. It is written:—

"He came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene" (Matt. ii. 23).

These words show that a Nazarene was one who dwelt in a city called Nazareth. If Jesus must be called a Nazarene, it was necessary that He should be "Jesus of Nazareth." The providence of God, therefore, with a view to the fulfilment of prophecy, led Joseph, the reputed father of Jesus, to take up his abode in Nazareth when returning from Egypt after the death of Herod.

But a Nazarite was not necessarily an in-

habitant of Nazareth. A Nazarite was a Jew of either sex, and from any quarter in the land, who bound himself by a vow of special separation to God. (See Numbers vi.)

But there was no particular prophecy, so far as we know, which foretold literally in so many words that Jesus should be called a Nazarene. In Matthew ii. 23 no particular prophet is named, but it may be gathered that the prophets in general predict the Nazarene character of Jesus. For a Nazarene was a despised person. It is necessary to understand the force of the word Nazarene, as it was used in the Saviour's day in order to see the full force of the teaching of the prophets on the subject.

We read that—

“Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?” (John i. 45, 46).

Nathanael's question to Philip shows the disrepute in which Nazareth and the people of that place were held. It was a Galilean town, and this of itself was enough to lead the inhabitants of Judea to look upon it with contempt. But Nathanael himself, who asked the reproachful question, “Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?” was a Galilean, and therefore Nazareth must have been labouring under some special opprobrium in Galilee itself, even to

being the most despised town of a despised province.

But it seemed good in the wisdom of God that our Lord should come to be regarded as a native of this much-despised place.

In Acts xxiv. 5 Christians are called "the sect of the Nazarenes," a term, surely, of great reproach, but none the less it was as Jesus of Nazareth, or as Jesus the Nazarene, that our Lord first revealed Himself to Saul of Tarsus as he was nearing Damascus (Acts xxii. 26). It is plain that our Lord came to be called a Nazarene, that He was much despised in consequence, and that His followers inherited the opprobrious title, and therefore the consequent place of dishonour. The force of the teaching of the prophets as to this seems to be that they foretold in a general way that Christ should be a sufferer, that He should be lowly and despised, "without form or comeliness," "a root out of a dry ground," and, as we know He became, "of no reputation." These humble features of Christ's character are spoken of by more than one of the prophets, and the despised name of a Nazarene appears to be chosen by the Holy Spirit to describe them. It was fitting that the lowly Jesus should be associated with the lowly city called Nazareth. He was entitled, of course, to claim the most elevated places and positions of human greatness, but He did not so choose.

When our Lord was born, David's royal line was in a very reduced condition, and at His incarnation Joseph and Mary were in very reduced circumstances compared with many of their ancestors, including David and Solomon. Nothing is more manifest than their poverty, and it was at this stage that Jesus came in flesh. Humanly speaking, our Lord was exposed to poverty all His life. "He became poor." The enemy, though without avail, sought to turn Him aside from this lowly condition in which He was found by offering to Him, on condition of disobedience to God, the kingdoms of this world and the glory of them.

But any other condition than that of poverty would have been unsuited to the doctrines that Christ taught. As it was, His own earthly position was perfectly consistent with the demand He made upon the young ruler to go and sell all that He had and give to the poor, and also with the charge to the disciples to sell what they had and give alms. This teaching was consistent with the lowly, despised Nazarene life He led, but it would not have been in harmony with a place of wealth and reputation in the world.

By becoming a Nazarene our Lord came into circumstances of life which peculiarly fitted Him to be at the head of a dispensation specially characteristic of suffering. In this He became a pattern for all Christians, and no one of His

followers has departed from the pattern without suffering loss in His own soul. The result of becoming rich and increased with goods, of leaving the despised Nazarene position for one of social standing in this world, is very often blindness, suffering, and misery.

The apostle Paul maintained the despised position to the last, and by his writings, inspired as they are by the Holy Spirit, he sets forth the lowly path of suffering and shame for all Christians in every age.

When Jesus perceived that men were coming to take Him by force and make Him a king, He departed again into a mountain alone. The kingly position in an earthly way was not at that time the will of God for our Lord. It did not correspond with the purpose of God, which was that Jesus should die at Jerusalem for sinful men. Man would arrange that He should be a prophet and then a king, but God's way was that He should be a prophet, **next a priest**, and afterwards a king. But if a priest, then He must die. He could only be a priest by **offering up Himself**. It was thus that He pursued the pathway of separation from the world. He knew nothing, and would share in nothing, of its glory, greatness, and renown. "He was despised and rejected of men." From of old it had been foretold, if not in so many words, yet according to the spirit of the prophets, "He shall be called a Nazarene."

The whole tenor of New Testament teaching brings the Christian into the same position.

The fact that Jesus chose in His incarnation to be named after a despised place like Nazareth, shows the low estimate that God forms of all earthly greatness in its present lost and unredeemed condition, and at times God sets over the kingdom of men the basest among them. Man was lost. Men were all sinners. They all needed to be reconciled to God. They might have great reputation among their fellows, but what did that signify in the sight of God from whom they were alienated.

Jesus did not seek honour from men. He testified against the world that it was evil. His principles could be best enforced in the position of a Nazarene. He testified that a prophet had no honour in his own country, and on one occasion, to avoid the honour which was not of God he deliberately returned to Galilee (John iv. 43).

Not many mighty, not many noble are called. But those called from the higher classes are called to be of the sect of the Nazarenes. The position and principle of true Christianity is Nazarene still. And this is so, not only in a heathen country, but also in the most favoured parts of Christendom. Let the Christian bear witness for Christ in the drawing-room, in the ball-room, at the garden party, or in any place of worldly resort, and he will soon find that he is out of fashion. There is in this world a place

for everything but Christ, but there is little or no place for Him. Men of the world still hate Him. His home-truths condemn their lives. His claims are too exacting for them, because they interfere too much with their pleasures.

It is the will of God that we should be despised as Christ was. Further, that we should **be willing** thus to be. And if we know that His place in heaven is and will be ours, we ought to know also that the place of the Nazarene on earth is our place now. Our enduring substance is in heaven. Knowing these things may keep us from many snares and hurtful lusts, while the poor, the weak, and the despised may learn that their own circumstances are not unlike those of their Lord Himself as a Man in this world.

T. H.

Fellow Workers.

“**D**O you see those women coming along the road? They require medicine, and will receive it at three o'clock. Meanwhile they will hear the gospel. Of course, if their cases were serious I would attend to them at once; but I am not here merely to dispense medicine but to preach the glad tidings.”

The above words were addressed to me as I was leaving a mission hospital in a wealthy city of the province of Kiangsu, China. It was then

about a quarter to one o'clock, so the women would hear in a conversational way a good deal of the gospel story before they left the hospital precincts, and as I bade farewell to the doctor I was much cheered by his remark. He had the welfare of souls at heart, and was being honoured in his service for the Lord as he thus day by day testified for Him while ministering to the bodily needs of those poor Chinese women. What a privilege it is to be a co-worker with the Lord Himself as He is gathering out from the heathen His own sheep! I felt that this doctor was to be envied. But cannot we, too, share in the joy of this work which lies so close to the heart of the Lord? Are we in the home countries to be shut off from all participation in missionary effort? Surely not. There is a vast field for each one of us; our prayers, our pens, our pence may all be used to link us up with the work. It may be that the Lord wants **our lives**, but if we have not heard His call in this direction, there is plenty of opportunity for true service apart from our presence on the mission field.

Our Prayers.—"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." Again and again as I have said "Good-bye" to one and another who have gone forth as the Lord's labourers in His harvest, they have said, "We shall value your prayers." A letter from Huangchow, Hupeh, now lying before me,

reads thus:—"Please do not forget our work in this land. I hope you will pray for us."

The many servants of the Lord on foreign fields are counting upon our prayers. They know their value! Are we withholding what might prove such a blessing to them and to others through them by our lack of intercession? May the Lord awaken us to a sense of our responsibility and privilege in this direction. Prayer for the workers in their isolation; prayer for the native believers who are seeking to tell their own countrymen of the unsearchable riches of Christ; prayer for the young converts who find such forces of evil against them; prayer that the faith of the Lord's servants may not waver when one and another "inquirer" turns back, or when persecution effects a covering of the light of some feeble believer. **Brethren, let us pray.**

Our Pens.—Here is a field for many. Do you know a worker in the foreign field? Send him a letter; get in touch thus with his work. Learn the details so that you will be able to enter into his joys and his trials. It will add greatly to the definiteness of your prayers, but more than this, it will greatly cheer the worker. "Good news from a far country"—a refreshing draught! From letters received from abroad, I can testify to the cheer which missionaries have acknowledged as having received through letters of interest in their work.

“But I know no one to whom I could write.” Is this your reply? Thousands of the Lord’s servants in the forefront of the battle, you abiding by the stuff, part and parcel of the army, and yet you know none of those in the thick of the fight! Surely something is wrong? Let us make inquiries and get in touch with some one, although perhaps unknown to us personally.

If we have spare time I am convinced there is a sphere for co-workers here.

Our Pence.—May the Lord exercise our hearts as to the manner in which we are spending our pence. I was astounded upon making inquiries as to the amount subscribed in a large centre for the Lord’s work in a country where there are many with whom we are in happy fellowship. The sum was ludicrously small, and one smiled involuntarily though filled with shame.

Are we giving a tenth of our income to the Lord? But we are not under law. True, under grace; but would that lead us to give more or less? “There is that scattereth and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.”

It may be that once a quarter there is a collection for brothers labouring at home and abroad. We give such spare sum as we may have during that week perhaps, but how about the preceding twelve weeks of the quarter? Have we been laying up week by week? Thirteen weekly portions usually amount to

more than one quarterly sum. Paul suggests putting aside a **weekly** sum.

I would not offer "unto the Lord my God that which doth cost me nothing." What the Lord has given to us cost Him much.

"Ye know the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ that though He was rich yet for your sakes He became poor that ye through His poverty might be rich."

How much shall I give—a tenth, or more, or less? Let each answer for himself before the Lord as he contemplates the grace of Him who gave **Himself** for us.

"He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart so let him give, not grudgingly or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."

Our own spiritual interests are at stake.

"If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if ye have not been faithful in that which is **Another's**, who shall give you that which is your own?"

"When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Lord of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss
And pour contempt on all my pride.

"Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were an offering far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all."

G. R. R.

Bible Study.

THE subject of this fourth section of Leviticus, the law of clean and unclean, is one which has always been a kind of test of the state of God's people. On the one hand the command, "Come ye out from among them and be ye separate, touch not the unclean thing," is one which must for ever be binding upon the people of God in any age. On the other, nothing is more liable to abuse, nothing so easily crystallises into a mechanical observance of certain rules, leaving the soul without any sense of the holiness of God, and of the grace which has brought the soul into relationship with God.

When we come to examine the details of this law we find that it contains certain principles which are unchanging because they belong to the nature of God. When we trace out the history of the application of these ordinances we find that while the principles remain unchanged, the form in which they are expressed may change in the course of the development of God's ways. We find, further, that the history only proves the invariable tendency of man to turn the fear of God into a commandment taught of men, and to make void the commandment of God by tradition.

From Leviticus xi. to xv. this subject is taken up in four different aspects :—

1. The law of uncleanness in food (chap. xi.).
2. The law of uncleanness in birth (chap. xii.).
3. The law of uncleanness of leprosy (chap. xiii., xiv.).
4. The law of uncleanness of issue (chap. xv.).

The connection between all these minute instructions and the previous subject of the priesthood is shown in chap. x. 8-11. It was a most important part of the priest's work, as representing God amongst His people, to teach those differences between holy and unholy, clean and unclean, which depended upon the character of God so far as He had revealed Himself. Hence the whole law of chaps. xi.-xv. is, in the first place, for the priests. Hence also the solemn responsibility of those who had the mind of God, and the need that they should abstain from anything that would hinder them from discerning the presence and holiness of God in its power over their own souls. This was the failure of Nadab and Abihu.

Tracing out the history of these things we find first of all that in Leviticus xx. 22-26, the principle underlying these directions as to clean and unclean things is plainly stated :

"I, Jehovah, am holy, and have separated you from the peoples to be mine."

By obeying these directions as to abstaining from what was unclean, the children of Israel would be recognising the great fact that God had separated them to Himself, and that He who was "fearful in holiness," dwelt among them.

If He was pleased for His own purposes to separate certain things as unclean, it was the place of the priests to teach these things to the people, and the duty of God's people to follow these directions without question. In Deuteronomy xiv. we find the other side of the wonderful fact of what God had done for them brought out and given as the reason for the observance of these directions :

“Ye are the sons of Jehovah your God.”

The son should be like the father. These two great principles underlie these minute details about ceremonial cleanness, and only the continual sense in the soul of the holiness of God, of the fact that He had redeemed them, dwelt among them, and that they were His sons, could prevent these directions from becoming a mere code of ritual to be observed in a mechanical way, and from being ultimately overlaid with a mass of tradition. When we come to the time of the prophets we find that this has actually taken place. In Isaiah xxviii. 7 we find that the first condition, given in Leviticus x. 8-11, for the preservation of a sense of God's holiness in the soul of the priest, has been discarded, priest and prophet alike have erred through strong drink. In Isaiah xxix. 13 we find that the resulting state of things is that which the Lord Himself takes up in Matthew xv. 8, 9. That holy fear of God which was the underlying motive for the

right observance of these ordinances had become a commandment taught of men, a mere matter of ceremonial washings. Again, in Ezekiel xxii. 26, the failure of the priests to make known the difference between holy and profane, unclean and clean, is dwelt on as the cause of the national apostasy.

This state of things, to which all the prophets bear witness directly or indirectly, existed when the Lord was on earth. The Gospels take up the history of God's ways and the state of things at the point where the prophets leave them. There is no break in the continuity of Scripture. Hence we find the Lord in Matthew xv. using the words of Isaiah xxix. 13, to describe the way in which holiness had become a mere matter of ritual and observance of tradition. He declares to Peter that it is the things that come out of the heart, and not the things eaten, that defile a man. It was the inward parts that needed cleansing, the heart, and all the inward springs and motives of action. The presence of the Lord brought to light what was in the heart, but those who received His word were cleansed.

"Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you."

In Acts x., Peter learns by the vision of a great sheet let down from the opened heavens, and containing all kinds of animals that were ceremonially unclean, that he was henceforth to call nothing common or unclean.

“God hath shewed me that I should call no man common or unclean,”

says Peter to Cornelius, and explains later, in Acts xv. 9, that God had purified the hearts of those Gentiles by faith.

We find, further, that strictest of Pharisees, the former Saul of Tarsus, saying—

“I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that there is nothing unclean of itself.”

And again—

“All things are clean” (Rom. xiv. 14, 20).

The principle that now governed him with regard to such things was “faith working by love,” “the faith of the Son of God” who had loved him and given Himself for him. He abstained from anything of this kind, not for his conscience’ sake, but out of love, lest he should offend or stumble his weaker brother for whom Christ had died.

In Hebrews we find that God’s character has not changed, He is still a consuming fire; it is still true that without holiness no man can see the Lord. But now the word is,

“Let us have grace whereby we may serve Him acceptably with reverence and godly fear.”

It is good that the heart be established with grace, and not with meats. But it is in Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, that this is to be found; He is on the throne of grace.

Finally, in John, the fundamental principle of Christian separation comes out, and we find that it is what we started with.

"Now are we the children of God."

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world; if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

The antithesis for us, as children, is between what is of the Father and what is of the world. It is not a question of legal abstaining from certain things traditionally held to be wrong, but of having the heart set, like the Lord's heart was, to do the will of the Father. Then the motives of the world cannot find a place in the heart. On the other hand, self-will making personal holiness an object in itself, creates a system of monasticism.

This is, very briefly, the history of the way in which God has developed in Scripture the thought of separation. The following is a tabular comparison of the law in Leviticus with the more general statement of it in Deuteronomy:—

Leviticus.		Deuteronomy.	
Clean.	Unclean.	Clean.	Unclean.
Animals.		Animals.	
Cloven hoofs; feet quite split open; chewing the cud.	Camel, rock-badger, hare, swine, "what-ever goeth on paws."	Ox, sheep, goat, seven kinds of deer, and all animals with the three features named.	Camel, hare, rock badger, swine.
Fishes.		Fishes.	
Having fins and scales.	Not having fins and scales.	Do. (as Lev.)	Do. (as Lev.).

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Leviticus.		Deuteronomy.	
Clean.	Unclean.	Clean.	Unclean.
Fowls.		Fowls.	
—	Twenty kinds of fowls.	All clean birds.	Twenty-one kinds of fowls (same as Lev. and one added).
Winged Crawling Things.		Winged Crawling Things.	
Four kinds of locust.	All winged crawling things with four feet; all crawling things; mole, field - mouse, and lizards.	—	Every winged crawling thing.

So God teaches the priest first, and then His people as a whole, to look upon the four divisions of created things, with His eyes.

Whatever of animals has cloven hoofs, and chews the cud, is clean in God's sight. Whatever of fishes has fins and scales is clean in God's sight. Everything having the likeness of the serpent, and crawling, even though it may possess wings and seem to be an inhabitant of the heavens, is unclean in God's sight. Twenty-one kinds of birds, mostly if not all, eaters of carrion, are unclean in God's sight.

The fear of God would cause a man to observe these distinctions without knowing any hygienic or spiritual reasons for doing so.

But obedience leads to the immense blessing of further knowledge of God. That is the great lesson of these things.

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Answers to Questions—

1. These may be seen in the table given above. The great point to notice is the motive assigned in Deuteronomy xiv. 1. It is also interesting to note that seven clean animals are named in the first class in Deuteronomy while none are named in Leviticus. In general, the differences point to the fact that the law in Leviticus is intended for the guidance of the priests, and gives more detailed information as to what is unclean, how it may be known, and under what circumstances persons and things are defiled by contact with what is unclean. The code in Deuteronomy is much briefer, and is clearly intended as a practical guide for the people as to what may be eaten.

2. The main points are mentioned above. The following passages should be referred to as well :—Isa. i. 16, iv. 4, vi. 5, xxxv. 8, lii. 11, lxiv. 6, lxv. 5, lxvi. 17 ; Jer. xiii. 27, xv. 19 ; Ezek. iv. 13, 14, viii. 10, xxxvi. 24-32 ; xliii. 12, xlv. 23 ; Dan. i. 8 ; Hos. ix. 4 ; Haggai ii. 10-14 ; Zech. xiii. 1, 9, xiv. 20, 21. The whole of Malachi is occupied with the fundamental principles of the priest's work in connection with cleanness and uncleanness, and their failure, with the announcement of the coming of the Lord to purify.

3 and 4. Answered above.

Subject for September.—The Law of Leprosy, and the Cleansing of the Leper (Lev. xiii., xiv.). The following questions may be answered :—

1. Trace out briefly the history of leprosy in Scripture.
2. What are the various stages of the cleansing of the leper?
3. In what three cases might the plague of leprosy appear, and what do they seem to point to?

B. S. ED.

Notes and Comments.

Roman Catholic Congress in London. Following closely upon the Pan - Anglican Conference, with its imposing gathering of Bishops, comes the announcement of the still more imposing "Eucharistic Congress" of the Church of Rome, to be attended by numerous Archbishops. Cardinal Vanutelli says: "This Congress will be of great importance as it is the first time that a gathering of this nature has been held in a Protestant country."

Father Doyle, of Washington, is on his way to attend it, "and will take advantage of the opportunity (*sic*) to discuss with Archbishop Bourne the foundation in Great Britain of a Catholic Mission House similar to that over which Father Doyle presides in Washington for the conversion of Protestants to Roman Catholicism."

Rome is making a determined attack upon England, and large numbers of the upper classes will no doubt be gathered into her net. The Bible is the only bulwark against Rome, but the bulk of people to-day are in absolute ignorance of its teaching. Protestantism is utterly powerless before the advance of Rome's superstitions, having abandoned all real belief in the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures.

There are multitudes of people to-day whose faith has become shaken in the Bible through pulpit dreamings about "higher criticism," and who feel the need of something to rest on. These are just the people, adrift from their moorings, who are in danger of being dazzled by the false pretensions of Rome.

***Rome's
Blandishments.*** None but those who wish to be deceived could possibly be taken in by the "soft speeches" of the promoters of this Congress. Protestants need not be alarmed, Rome loves them so! Besides, England is such a free country, and so tolerant. She has altogether forgotten the fires of Smithfield and the horrors of the Holy Inquisition. She is quite ready to give up the Bible which secured her liberties, and return to the tyranny of priestcraft and superstition. And Rome is so tender, just longing to have her wandering child back once more in her compassionate embrace. But Rome never changes; she is always the same. Persecution has marked her in every age, and to the very last "drunken with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus" describes her with an accuracy that few can fail to discern. Her deeds of fire and blood and torture are written indelibly on the page of history, and to this day in every land where she has the power, oppres-

sion and persecution abound, as they do in Ireland, Spain, and the Philippine Islands, &c.

England's Downfall. Poor England! so richly blessed with a noble race of martyrs who were tortured at the stake to give us an open Bible and freedom from clerical and ecclesiastical tyranny. A little band of earnest, even if unwise, Christian men and women are now languishing in Maidstone gaol for gathering a little group of people in the street to seek their well-being both in this world and the next. Drunkards had been saved and blessed, and the whole neighbourhood uplifted morally, as the police themselves have testified; but never mind, to prison they must go for obstructing the thoroughfare. But look at London on 13th September 1908—the whole police force set in motion to clear the streets and divert all traffic so as to allow the papal legate in his robes of scarlet (Rev. xvii. 4) to carry his wafer god through the streets in contravention of all law and custom since the glorious Reformation. And is God unmindful of all this? Nay, verily, idolatry sits enthroned in highest places in the land. England's day of doom is fixed—"except thou repent."

Greater Abominations. And yet there is even worse than Rome and all its idolatrous practices, for many within her borders doubtless have a saving faith in Christ

and His precious blood. But what shall we say of much that is now sweeping over Protestantism. "Campbellism," which voices the theological infidelity that has grown apace during the last thirty or forty years, has eaten its way into multitudes of congregations in cities and even villages. A friend has just communicated the following:—A Baptist congregation in the village of — was without a pastor, and invited a layman to undertake the preaching for a time. The layman was an earnest Christian who preached plainly man's lost condition, his need of conversion, and the atoning sacrifice of the cross, the Lord's coming, &c. &c. After a short while "the three deacons met the preacher to inform him they could not accept his preaching. He replied that he could not vary his message; it was what God said. Thereupon the senior deacon asked, Which God? There are four in the Bible—one they carried about in a box, which, upon being opened, it was found did not exist—(there was much more far too blasphemous to print). In respect to the coming of the Lord, they asked him not to preach such curdling things which made the hair stand on end; they wanted something more comforting."

In that same village the consciences of slumbering Christians have begun to be aroused, and that through the instrumentality of a woman, "a sister in deadly earnest," as my correspondent tells me, adding with, alas! only too much ground

for it, "while we are so many of us *idle*, except to throw mud." This is not the first time that God has used a Deborah! ED.

It is with deepest gratitude we **Answered** acknowledge God's merciful inter-
Prayer. position in frustrating Rome's insolent act of blasphemy against God and His Christ. The bloodless sacrifice of the Mass is a direct dishonour to that one all-sufficient offering of the body of Christ once for all upon the cross. "Without shedding of blood is no remission."

The thousands who on bended knee paid homage to the papal legate forewarn us of what will yet be enforced on pain of death and torture, as in days gone by, when once the woman drunken with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus, sits upon and controls the Beast, the resuscitated Roman Empire. A moment's respite has been given, may we use it earnestly for Christ, and the spread of plain gospel truth.

United States Now that Babylon the Great
of Europe. seems to be in such rapid development, it will not surprise the student of Scripture to learn that steps are already being taken towards a union of the European countries. Sir Max Waechter recently paid a visit to the Kaiser and unfolded a plan for the abolition of war in Europe by the

formation of a sort of United States of the Powers. His suggestions were favourably considered by the Kaiser. Does not this show how easily the Roman Empire will be revived when God's time is fully come. The last phase will be the Beast with ten horns, on which the woman sits.

Two Kinds of Suffering.

SCRIPTURE assures us that it is better, if God should so will, for a Christian to suffer for well-doing than for evil-doing. The possibility of either kind of suffering is very easily understood. For it cannot be denied that there are those who bring suffering upon themselves and others, through acts of self-will, just as there are those who pass through tribulation in the pathway of obedience to God.

It is interesting and profitable to trace instances and teaching as to both these kinds of suffering in the Word of God. In Psalm cvii. 17, we read—

“Fools because of their transgression and because of their iniquities are afflicted. Their soul abhorreth all manner of meat ; and they draw near unto the gates of death. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and He saveth them out of their distresses.”

These words might be easily applied to a man who had never turned to God, or who was not a Christian, but at the same time they fitly describe the experience of believers who back-

slide and suffer in consequence. They may be taken to illustrate the experience, at one time in his life, of a man like Jonah, who was a true prophet of the Lord.

“Now the word of the Lord came unto Jonah, the son of Amittai, saying, Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it, for their wickedness is come up before Me. But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord.”

The avowed reason which Jonah gives for this conduct (iv. 2) may not have been the only reason why the prophet fled from the Lord's presence, as he did. The people to whom the Lord would send him were evidently offensive to him. He had no love for them. Possibly he thought of their difference of speech, of food, and habits of life. No doubt he would have been willing to be sent to one of the cities in his own country, but he did not relish being sent to Nineveh. But the servant of the Lord is not to be allowed to choose his own path. If he seek to do this, he will suffer, and the suffering will be through his own transgression and disobedience.

“The Lord sent out a great wind into the sea.”

It will not be denied that the wind was on Jonah's account. Jonah was choosing a path away “from the presence of the Lord,” and the Lord would see to it that the path chosen in self-will should not be a smooth one. The floods of great waters evidently made the prophet afraid.

The storm which the disobedience of Jonah

CVI. 2.

brought on himself filled the mariners with fear and involved the loss of valuable property, seeing that they

“cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the sea to lighten it of them.”

In chapter ii., the repentant prophet tells out his own experience. He “cried by reason of his affliction.” He was, as it were, in the belly of hell, and all God’s billows and waves passed over him. True, he cried unto the Lord in his trouble, and the Lord saved him out of his distress. But it cannot be denied that he brought the trouble on himself. He knew he was going contrary to the word of the Lord when he took the passage, and went on board the ship for Tarshish. Was he not in all this a “fool” like those described in the Psalm, who “because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted”? Are there not servants of the Lord to-day suffering through a similar disobedience? Some may have been called of God to go to China, or other heathen lands, and have evaded the call to their own loss. “Son, go work to-day in My vineyard,” is a word direct from God which is not always obeyed. In the parable in Matthew xxi. 30, one of the two said, “I go, sir, and **went not.**” It is one thing to talk about going, or even to promise to go, and something very different to go. But **Jonah’s case shows how a servant of the Lord may disobey a call to his own loss ; and suffer in consequence.**

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It is true that Jonah in his sufferings is a type of Christ, but with this difference between the type and the Anti-type, that whereas Jonah suffered for evil-doing, Christ suffered according to the will of God, and in perfect obedience to His commandment. His suffering in obedience is foretold in these words:—

“The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting” (Isa. l. 5, 6).

The disaster to the ship in Acts xxvii. is a further illustration of sufferings which ensue from departure from the word of the Lord. All Scripture readers may not have noticed that the sufferings of that terrible voyage might have been avoided, if the ears of those on board had been open to receive the mind of the Lord. For they were warned by no less a personage than the apostle Paul not to enter on the dangerous part of that journey.

We read in verse 21:—

“But after long abstinence Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, **Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me,** and not have set sail from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss.”

It needs a very attentive ear sometimes to catch the indications which God gives of His mind. Sometimes the manifestation of His will is so apparent that it cannot well be missed.

But at other times it is not so plain, perhaps through a parent or a godly brother, and unless we "hearken diligently" we miss it. Selfishness may have prevented the passengers on the ship, or rather perhaps those who had the management of it, from acting on the apostle's advice. The place was not good enough for them. We read, "Because the haven was not commodious to winter in, **the more part advised** to put to sea from thence" (ver. 12). The advice of the greater number in this case was wrong. What seems a commodious place or a commodious post to one person does not always seem commodious to another. As in this case, many "go further and fare worse."

Israel of old had "the cloud of the Lord" to lead them by day and by night. This cloud is a type of the divine guidance which is given to Christians now. But in the case we are considering, the guidance which God was evidently ready to give from the lips of His apostle was not accepted, and so the "harm and loss" were incurred in consequence. Is not this a warning to us all to take heed to our ways?

But we have seen that our blessed Lord always obeyed, yet the pathway of obedience, for Him, was one of suffering. He received the commandment of His Father to lay down His life for the sheep. He and He alone suffered as a sacrifice for sin. He was forsaken of God on account of our sins. No Christian is called

to suffer in this way. Yet the apostle speaks of his sufferings for the saints, and of filling up that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in his flesh for the sake of the body of Christ, which is the Church (see Col. i. 24). He bore in his body the marks of Jesus. This kind of suffering is fellowship of Christ's sufferings. It is the experience of those who take up their cross and follow Christ.* None trusted in the death of Christ alone as Paul did for salvation, yet none suffered as this apostle did in fellowship with Christ. Some find it difficult to take Christ both as a substitute and as a pattern. Many are in danger of pressing the one truth at the expense of the other. And "who is sufficient for these things"? Yet both these truths which in themselves contain the substance of individual Christian life, were fully taught and exemplified by the apostle Paul.

Thank God that if there are Christians who, "because of their transgression and because of their iniquity," have been afflicted, those have never been wanting who were ready to suffer according to the will of God. This kind of suffering has not been limited to Christ and

* In this passage no doubt the special thought is suffering, not only for Christ's sake, but "for His body's sake." To Paul it was given to be the chosen minister of the Church, and for this he suffered as no other ever did, not even an apostle. It was this that stirred up all the deadly enmity of the Jews.—ED.

His apostles. Not a few of God's devoted servants, in obedience to His will, met their deaths, and are sleeping, until He come, in the dust of tropical Africa and of the empires of the East. And who shall limit the number of those who have suffered according to the will of God (in some cases sufferings worse than death) in all countries, and throughout the Christian centuries, not because of their transgressions, but because of their faith in Christ, and their steadfast service for Him in the confession of His name?

David had his mighty men. Three of them were with him in the cave of Adullam. They heard him express the longings of his heart:

"Oh, that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem."

David did not ask them personally to go. But "the three brake through the host of the Philistines and drew water out of the well . . . and brought it to David" (1 Chron. xi. 17, 18).

The water appeared to David as "the blood of these men." It was to him too valuable to drink, and he poured it out to the Lord. Some of Christ's servants are equally, and even more, devoted than David's mighty men were. They discern the longing of the heart of Christ for souls in far-off lands, which is a far deeper longing than that of David for water from the well of Bethlehem. They hazard their lives in His service. It is for His sake they go forth.

It is written of them, and the words ought to be applicable to all Christians abroad and at home.

“For Thy sake we are killed, all the day long ; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter ” (Rom. viii. 36).

Is it not better to suffer for Christ's sake than to suffer because of our own disobedience. If we are true Christians we may count more or less on the one or the other. Happy the Christian who in all his tribulation is able to maintain a good conscience, and able to say—

“All this is come upon us ; yet have we not forgotten Thee ” (Ps. xliv. 17).

Such was the apostle Paul, and may we have grace to follow him as he followed Christ.

T. H.

Reply to a Letter about “the Evangelical Alliance.”

(Translated from the German.)

DEAR BROTHER,—Forgive me for not replying sooner to your letter. You complain of — for not attending the Conference of the Evangelical Alliance at B——, where about 1,200 children of God were present, from Germany as well as from other countries, and where after the first meeting brothers and sisters of all denominations greeted one another. It is not my place to answer for the —, but at any rate, to my knowledge, they were in no wise forbidden to go,

and whoever had gone, would have had to answer to the Lord individually for his action.

You ask me what position I take with regard to the "Alliance" of which you call yourself a "member." We cannot deny that the "Alliance" sprang from a legitimate recognition of the fact that the children of God are members of "the one body." If we are already children of *one* Father and members of *one* body, why form another alliance? It seems to me that the dear brethren of the "Alliance" have stopped half way. If it is right to manifest the unity of believers during one week of the year (*e.g.*, the week of the New Year), surely it ought to be right to do so throughout *the whole year*.

It is quite true, as you say, that such barriers ought to be removed, but does the "Alliance" in reality remove them? No, for as a matter of fact those dear brethren who belong to it say, "We will only shake hands over the fence." Moravians remain Moravians, Baptists remain Baptists, Methodists remain Methodists, and so on. When the Conference is over they all retire once more behind their barriers. Such a display of unity is defective, and not its full manifestation according to God's Word, for if it were, these brethren would not separate again, but would be like the early Christians who "*continued steadfastly* in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers" (Acts ii. 42). They would come out once for all from

whatever divides them, and would meet together *simply as brethren under the direction of the Holy Spirit and in the name of Jesus* (Matt. xviii. 20). I do not say that outward separation from human systems, evil doctrines, infidels, &c., suffices as testimony for the Lord—on the contrary it does *not* suffice, for there must be also inward separation, that is to say godliness of walk, and the two are united in God's Word. See for example 2 Tim. ii. 21, 22 ; 2 Cor. vi. 11-18, vii. 1. Without this there can be no true worship. The children of this world certainly cannot "worship in spirit and in truth" which is what the Father *seeks* with His children (John iv. 23).

In speaking thus, we do not pretend that a believer who remains in the National Church or a Free Church may not be more godly in his walk, and have a larger heart and warmer affections for the Lord, for His people, and His work, than many others who have come out of human systems, and are meeting according to God's Word with Christians united simply as brethren. But if it is a question of the manifestation of the unity according to Scripture, you cannot assert that it is fully realised in the "Alliance," seeing that the "barriers" against which you rightly protest *still subsist in principle*, and are only broken down for a few days or hours. Moreover, you are not ignorant of the fact that amidst the "Alliance" many *evil doctrines* are tolerated,

some of which *overthrow the very foundations of the truth*, such as non-eternity of punishment, annihilation, perfectionism or supposed deliverance from the *sinful nature* dwelling in us. And yet God claims from His children not only unity, but holiness, and this in doctrine as well as in walk.

Do not imagine, dear brother, that I wish to encourage stiffness, pride, narrowness of heart, or spiritual idleness, wheresoever they may be found, and unfortunately they are to be met with here and there amongst those who profess to be gathered simply to the name of Jesus. This is, of course, extremely sorrowful, and the more so because we there assume to meet on the ground of grace, unity, and truth. On the other hand you cannot call it *narrow-mindedness* if a Christian, walking in the fear of God, refuses out of *love and obedience to His Word* to go and mix himself up with all that is done in the present day, even though it may have prolific results. *God* is above all, but His children are *bound* to His Word.

Under certain conditions and circumstances, we can pray, work, and read the Word with all our brethren even though they be not separated ; and if on the one hand there were fewer proud prejudices with less fear of a certain reproach, and on the other more grace, humility, patience, understanding, and Divine forbearance, in short

on both sides more love for *the Lord*, for *His own*, and for the *poor unconverted* around us, I am persuaded that such a thing would be more often the case and would be for blessing to many or all. But these meetings for prayer, reading, or service would not, properly speaking, be the manifestation of the unity, for this finds its expression at *the Lord's table* (1 Cor. x. 17), where the question of holiness, that is to say of Scriptural discipline, also comes in.

Enough for to-day, dear brother. I salute you with sincere brotherly love, although you are personally unknown to me.

E. D.

Living Water.

THERE are many different ways in which souls are brought into contact with the Lord Jesus Christ. Some are made to feel the burden of their sins, and realising the awfulness of their guilt they flee to Him for refuge from the wrath to come.

It is doubtless most important that a deep conscience-work should take place, and sooner or later the soul must be brought to a sense of its sinful condition.

But there are many who perhaps do not at first feel their guilt in any great degree, who nevertheless become the subjects of the Spirit's work. They have been brought to experience

the unsatisfying character of everything in this world, and they yearn for that which can fill their hearts with joy and peace and rest.

The woman at the well of Sychar was a case in point. She had drunk deeply at this world's springs, but had failed to find that which satisfied her heart.

"There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water."

To draw water! This might truly have been called the very occupation of her life. She was always drawing water, but could never draw enough. She was always coming, but had always to come again. What a picture of a heart ever craving, ever seeking, ever longing—yet never satisfied, never contented, never at perfect rest! The world is full of such, and if only they could come where Jesus is their cravings would be satisfied, their needs would be met, and their hearts filled with joy and gladness.

"You hate the world and have left it," wrote one not long since, "but I love it and adore it." Poor soul! doomed to bitter disappointment she is, though for a brief moment, like a butterfly she flutters her wings in the deceptive sunshine of its smile.

But a living Saviour sat on Sychar's well, filled with a deeper longing than even that poor empty sinner. "Give Me to drink," He says. The longing of His heart was to meet the deep need of hers.

Weary He was with His journey and thirsty too. But it was not for the water in the well that He longed; indeed, we do not read that the blessed Saviour had one drop of that. He yearned and thirsted to meet the need of this poor desolate heart—"Give Me to drink," as though He said, "It is in your power to supply Me with that which can refresh My spirit in this weary world; just let Me win your heart's affection, and fill it with heavenly joy, and this will be a refreshing draught of water to My spirit." Blessed Saviour! Thou art still the same.

But the woman resists—

"How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans."

"**How is it?**" Is not this the language of unbelief? Needy, and in the very presence of the One who could meet her every need; yea, more than meet it for time and eternity. What multitudes there are in this poor world of woe and disappointment who speak and feel just like this! "How is it?" they ask, they cannot think it possible that any should be truly satisfied. Oh, if they only knew!

"Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give Me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water."

The gift of God! yes, this is the character of God revealed in Christ—He is a **giving** God.

Under the law at Sinai, He was an **exacting** God—a God that demanded righteousness from man. But man had no righteousness to give, he was a sinner, cursed by the law. Now, in Christ God reveals Himself as a giving God, not one whit less righteous than He was, but One who comes to **give** all that the sinner needs of life, of righteousness, of joy, and peace; yes, **the gift of God.** And God was there in the person of His own Son, for Jesus was God, and He had come into the midst of a world of sinners, so close to them that He sat there on the well side, and spoke to this poor sinner's heart, and spoke to her face to face.—“If thou knewest . . . who it is that saith to thee, Give Me to drink.”

The same God that once spoke amidst the thunders of Sinai is here speaking in the soft and tender accents of love.

“The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ” (John i. 17).

He does not charge home upon her conscience all the guilt that He knew was there; not one word of reproof. The Pharisees might have had much to say in condemnation of her life, and Jesus knew better than they the full extent of her sins, and all that they were in the sight of a holy God. But He does not raise a question as to them; this conscience-work will come in its due time, and must. But here it is the winning of a heart dissatisfied with the world, and seeking for joy and happiness, yet seeking them in vain.

Living water.—"Thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water." Living water! what is this? Ah, these are waters that never lose their refreshing power—water from springs that never run dry.

"The woman saith unto Him, Sir, Thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast Thou that living water?"

She cannot understand Him, her thoughts still linger round that well; she cannot rise above the idea of earthly happiness. Heavenly springs and divine joy she does not think of. From whence? is now her question. She might have said, I have tried the world in all its forms, and all is vanity and vexation of spirit; all its joys are like the iridescent soap bubble that bursts in one's hands just at the time one thinks to possess and enjoy—**from whence hast Thou that living water?**

"Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

Thirst again!—And is not this true of every spring of earthly happiness? We do not say that there is no pleasure to be found in the paths of sin. We read in the Scripture of "the pleasures of sin," but they are only "for a season." But we do not only speak of the grosser forms of sin. Multitudes there are who plunge into depths of

shameful lusts and unlawful desires. Do they find satisfaction therein? Pleasure for a moment there may be, and then the remorse that oftentimes leads to self-destruction.

But we do not now speak of such. Are there not tens of thousands to-day weary with the world, disappointed with life, and utterly miserable, who yet began with ardent desire for happiness? With light and unsuspecting hearts they glided along the streams of earthly pleasure; the world, already weary and sick of its own woe and disappointment, opened its arms of deceitful and selfish welcome to them, as it had done to millions before. Soon they found themselves swept into its vortex, to learn in their turn the utter emptiness and misery of it all.

We have met and conversed with many who have freely admitted the truth of all this. They **know** that the world and its pleasures do not satisfy, that they never have and never can. But what can they do? They know nothing better, and think they must try like the rest, and is there not always just the chance that they may be more fortunate than the multitudes that have gone before?

But oh, what words of unearthly sweetness now fall upon the ears of this poor, sad, and disappointed sinner!

"Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst."

(To be concluded.)

Bible Study.

“**T**RUTH is not proved by the happiness it brings at the moment of being tested. The real test of truth is obedience to the will of God, whether that obedience involves an experience of hardness or of comfort. The happiness of the Christian is not found in exemption from hard tasks or disagreeable duties, but in the acceptance of these, if it be so, as part of God's will.”

These are good and true words. “He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.” What is true abides. The apostle John has a remarkable word which he uses to express **truth**, not merely of the intellect, but truth brought to the test of experience and found to be **divine reality**. It means “**real**,” rather than “true,” although true is implied also. It occurs frequently, twenty-three times in all, in John's writings, and only five or six times besides. The great passage is in the twentieth verse of the fifth chapter of the First Epistle of John. There the true God, the **real** God in contrast with the unreality in the world, is found to be the Son of God who came down to do the will of God, and give us an understanding that we might recognise the real One in Him.

For us **He** is the real God and eternal life,

for the every day of this life with its needs, and for the day of eternity; in both alike he that does the will of God abides for ever.

In the portion of Leviticus for study this month we have an illustration of the fact that doing the will of God often involves doing unpleasant things, for the duties of the priest in connection with leprosy were both difficult and unpleasant. There were three main forms in which leprosy had to be dealt with:—

1. Leprosy in a man or woman.
2. Leprosy in a garment.
3. Leprosy in a house.

The most important of these, or rather that to which the Word of God devotes most attention, is the first. It would be impossible to go into details, and our object is to get the outlines of these things. Taking, then, these two long chapters as a whole we find that, first of all, as in Leviticus xi., the directions are intended to teach the priests how to discern between what is leprosy and what is not, how to know when a man is clean and when he is unclean. This is important. While there was need of discernment, and discernment does not arise in a day, this discernment was formed by the law of the Lord. The priest did not depend upon his own knowledge and skill, but had to go by what was written, and thus only could he learn to distinguish what was leprosy from what was not.

It is a great thing "not to think beyond what is written." Next we find that in the development and exercise of this discernment there arises the need for much patience. There was not to be haste in judging every appearance of a spot or scab to be leprosy. If all the signs written down for the priests' instruction did not appear at the first examination, there was to be a waiting of seven days, and if at the end of that time a decision according to what was written was still not possible, the time of waiting was extended over another seven days.

Hence the priest's work called for no little exercise of patience, and the patience might often be rewarded by the discovery, under the test of what was written, that the suspicious marks were the scars of some old boil or inflammation that had left its traces in the poor body of clay. Alas! how often may not the want of patience and subjection to what is written have caused that a scar needing tenderness and love should be condemned as leprosy.

The three great signs of leprosy were—that it changed the colour of the hair on the spot affected, it was deeper than the skin, and it showed the unmistakable sign of raw flesh. So the priest was not left to invent imaginary signs. But a remarkable direction was, that when the leprosy covered a man from head to foot, "wherever the eyes of the priest look," so that no part appeared free from leprosy, he was to

be pronounced clean. This is God's way. The man who has nothing concealed, and says, "God be merciful to me a sinner," goes down to his house justified. But when once the question of a man's leprosy is settled, the sorrowful duty of the priest is to see that the directions of chap. xiii., 45, 46, are also carried out. Sin, whether in a believer or an unbeliever, working in the flesh affects the whole life and habits and associations, produces what is contrary to God. Hence the one in whom sin is working unjudged cannot be where God is. The leper is unclean, and his place is outside the camp all the days that the sore is in him.

This is not the end of his history. But before taking up the next part, the happy part of his cleansing, we find the interesting question of the leprosy in garments taken up. The same patience was needed here. If the case was hopeless, the garment was burnt. If there was hope, after washing, the sore was to be rent out from the garment, leaving a torn garment, even if clean. But if the sore still spread, the torn garment was to be burnt. A remarkable picture of Israel's history, and God's ways with them. The plague of idolatry had been rent out in the Babylonish captivity, leaving a sadly torn garment. The Lord did not propose to patch up this torn garment, and make the rent worse.

Then we come to the beautiful picture of the leper's **cleansing**. But we do not learn here

how a leper might be **healed**. The priest could tell when the man was healed, and knew that Jehovah had done it, but the priest could not heal, he could only cleanse. The testimony to the priests who had "erred in judgment" in the Lord's time, was that Jehovah was there. The Lord could heal the leper at His will, and send him on to priests who had forgotten in the mere observance of their ritual that God was behind it all, as a witness of the wonderful fact that God was there, the kingdom of God was among them. • The general details of the chapter are well known. We may observe :—

1. A direction that is more honoured in the breach than the observance, viz., that the priest was to go out of the camp to the leper. Thus may be seen the activity of a love that longs for the return of the poor outcast, even a love that was seen in its fulness in the blessed Saviour.

2. It is the result of the finished work of Christ that is applied in the case of restoring a believer, just as it is the finished work of Christ that first brings a sinner to God, cleansed and made meet. The administration of this cleansing is the priest's work, but it all depends upon Christ's work.

It is often forgotten in restoring those who have sinned that the forgiveness which is administered rests upon the same ground and is the very same forgiveness that we depend upon ourselves. The sense of this would surely save us from a judicial spirit.

3. The last point I want to draw attention to is that there are three stages in the cleansing. First there is the cleansing done outside the camp, which enables the man to enter the camp (xiv. 8). Then there is the cleansing which enables him to enter his tent after seven days

(xiv. 9). Lastly, on the same day, the eighth day, the final cleansing, which enables him to take his place as a worshipper in God's presence, is completed (xiv. 20).

We have lastly the case of leprosy in the house, and here we find the remarkable expression, "**when I put** a leprous plague in a house of the land of your possession." This raises fresh questions. Rebecca's question recurs, "If it be so, why am I thus?" It is the finger of God put upon the whole economy, to raise the question of why God has done so. The city and not the camp is the scene. "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate," stands to us as a monument of the ways of God to which we do well to take heed.

Answers to Questions—

1. The cases of leprosy in Scripture in the O.T. are—Moses' hand, Exod. iv. 6; lepers put out of the camp, Num. v. 2; Miriam, Num. xii. 10; reminder of Miriam's case in Deut. xxiv. 8; Naaman, 2 Kings v.; Gehazi, 2 Kings v. 27; the four lepers at the gate of Samaria, 2 Kings vii.; Uzziah, 2 Kings xv. 5, 2 Chron. xxvi. 20.

2 and 3. Answered above.

Subject for October.—The Day of Atonement, Leviticus xvi. The following questions may be searched out:—

1. Why does Leviticus xvi. 1 go back to the death of the two sons of Aaron?
2. What place has the mercy-seat in the atonement made on the day of atonement?
3. What references are there in the Epistle to the Hebrews to the work of the day of atonement?

B. S. ED.

Notes and Comments.

It has been a pleasure and *The Work in* encouragement to have our *Egypt.* brother Otto Blaedel amongst us for a little while, and to be able to commend him to the Lord in his going forth once again to the field of service God has called him to. The work in that land has long been a subject of thanksgiving for the marvels of redeeming grace amongst that people. Being personally acquainted with not a few of the towns and villages referred to in our brother's remarks at Clapham on Friday, 25th September, it was a joy to learn that the work had made such strides, and that the gatherings, large when first we knew them, had more than doubled.

We were specially interested in *Assembly* the remarks made with reference *Meetings.* to the character of the meetings held in Egypt. Our brethren there have evidently read with profit and intelligence 1 Cor. xiv. It would be well if we did so in this land. In Egypt all the meetings are conducted on the lines of 1 Cor. xiv. When the Church assembles everything is left to the guidance of the Spirit of God. They do not come together for reading meetings or for lectures, not even for prayer meetings. They simply come to-

CVII.

gether and leave it to the Spirit of God to guide what shall be the character of each meeting. Sometimes it partakes more of the character of prayer, sometimes of worship, sometimes of edification, sometimes of reading — but never decided beforehand which it shall be.

We are persuaded that this is where we deprive ourselves of an immense blessing. It has long been our conviction.

It is far easier to attend a

Bible Bible reading than an assembly
Readings. meeting. In an assembly meeting the state of each individual affects the whole meeting. If carelessness in walk, or levity of spirit, or deadness of soul is allowed, then the Spirit's power is hindered, and the whole assembly feels it. This was forcibly brought out by our brother ; a noticeable feature of the recent revival in that land has been that in those assemblies where peace and concord reigned, and where the spiritual state was good, there the conversions were numerous. It is a terrible thing to hinder by discord and strife what the grace of God is ready to accomplish. But Bible readings often become sitting lectures, or dialogues between two brothers.

Let none suppose that we wish Bible readings to cease. We believe that they are most helpful to those who wish to grow in the knowledge of the truth, but we have often felt that they would

be much more profitable if held in private houses, where sisters would have an opportunity of asking questions. In the public meeting room this would be out of place, for there we come together "in the church," and "in the church" it is a shame for the women to speak, but "at home" there is no such restriction.

We believe that if there were more general exercise of conscience as to the true assembly form of coming together, much blessing would result. Bible readings need not decrease in number, but let assembly meetings increase.

We thank God for the blessing
The Work and encouragement received
in China. through the ministry of our
 brother just started to resume
 his work in China. We follow him in prayer
 as he returns to that land with his wife and
 daughter. A sister goes out with them who
 has felt called to the work in that land. They
 need our sympathy and prayers, and value them
 too.

Another brother and his wife also feel strongly the call to devote themselves to the work in China. They wait upon the Lord to open their way when He sees fit so to do. Let us join them in prayer. Another young brother in Germany feels the like call, and desires to come to England to acquire English before starting for China. We rejoice at these evidences of the

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constraining love of Christ, and wish them all "God-speed."

Reforms in Turkey. A contemporary, writing with reference to the reform movement in Turkey, says: "One of the most extraordinary proofs of the tremendous change which in a few brief weeks has passed over the Ottoman world is found in the fact that the question of the rebuilding of the Temple on Mount Moriah has been seriously raised. It is reported from Jerusalem that the chief rabbi of a Gallician town has addressed to King Edward a memorial, soliciting his good offices in securing the permission of the Sultan to undertake the work. This is moving on, indeed."

Prayer for Great Britain and Ireland. That there is a widespread spirit of prayer amongst Christians generally cannot be gainsaid. We rejoice that it is so, and note specially that a call has gone forth "to engage in increasing intercession during the coming winter for the most powerful revival Great Britain and Ireland has ever yet received from our merciful God. . . . Let us see to it that not even a single village or hamlet in the United Kingdom is unrepresented in this great approach to God in so critical a time in our nation's history."

This is a bold petition—the need is great, but the resources of God are greater still, and all is at the disposal of faith. But there must be humiliation and confession of sin on the part of those who pray.

***China's Call
for the
Gospel.***

A friend has sent us the following which we gladly insert:—"Nine or ten years ago he (Dr Broughton) visited a district in the mountains of S.W. Virginia, holding a three days' mission for the deepening of spiritual life. The people were exceedingly poor, but living pure, wholesome lives. He was entertained by a family living in a house of only three rooms, where his deepest interest was awakened by one whom he took to be a daughter of the family.

"She was indeed the most remarkable girl in all that country. She had never had more than three months' schooling in her life, and was not the daughter but only the servant, in receipt of four dollars (16s. 8d.) per *month*. Out of this she gave every month one dollar to her church (being the largest contributor), one dollar to Foreign Missions (being again the largest contributor), two dollars to her family, her father being very poor and the family very large. How, then, did she clothe herself? By taking in work and sitting up far into the night.

The room occupied by Dr Broughton was

this girl's, and there he found her Bible. It was marked on every page, and almost at every verse, but it was at Mark xvi. 15 that he found, as he believed, the secret of her life. Over against the—'Go ye into all the world,' &c., was written in a firm, clear hand, '*Oh, if I could!*'

"He felt he must follow this up, and so he spoke to her about it, whereupon she broke into crying. 'Don't cry, come to business,' said he; but the crying went on all the same, and he had to try again later on, when she told him her story.

"At fourteen she was converted at a meeting, and when she reached home she found a tract lying there entitled, 'China's Call for the Gospel.' Nobody knew anything about it—whence it came, who brought it, or how long it had been there. Yet it was *that* that shaped all her after-life. She showed Dr Broughton the tree where for ten years she had prayed the Lord to send her to China.

"But a great change had come over her recently. Exactly two weeks before Dr Broughton's coming she had come to the conclusion that she had misunderstood the Lord's purpose for her, that, after all, His plan for her was that she should be a missionary for Him *in the kitchen*. At once her prayer became, 'Make me willing to be a missionary for Thee in the kitchen!' She told how the Lord had answered that prayer.

"But now Dr Broughton's first sermon had brought back the old longings stronger than ever. 'I have been so miserable that I almost wish you hadn't come,' she said. His reply was that she must come off at once with him and be trained. He felt so sure that God had sent him to help this chosen servant of His into her true path that he must do it even if he had to sell his own clothes. For seven years she did good work in China, came home on furlough, and has now just returned for her second term of service.

"The point to be noted specially is this: For ten years she had longed for the *big* thing. Then she was brought to willingness to accept the *little* thing—to shine for God in that narrow home as kitchen-maid; and *as soon as* she reached that point, God Himself sent her out to China. 'He that humbleth himself shall be exalted.'"



Notes on the Temple—No. 6.

(Read 1 Kings v. 1.)

IN the last lecture we were occupied with David's provision for the Temple of God. We now come to Solomon's preparation. While David was the type of the Lord Jesus in humiliation, we have in Solomon the type of Him in His exaltation and ascension glory.

In Matthew xvi. Christ says, "On this rock I *will* build My Church." But whatever previous provision was made, the time of the actual commencement was after the resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus and the coming of the Holy Ghost. I believe we have reached that period in type in the chapter before us. We have seen the foundation fixed on, the provision made, and now Solomon takes up the work ; and, for the first time, we get the Gentiles associated. That which characterises the Church is, Jew and Gentile, one body in Christ by the Holy Ghost sent down from Christ in glory.* We find the Jew and the Gentile associated in this chapter in building a house for God. Hiram, King of Tyre, sends his servants to Solomon :—

"He had heard that they had anointed him king in the room of his father ; for Hiram was ever a lover of David.

"And Solomon sent to Hiram, saying,

"Thou knowest how that David my father could not build a house unto the name of the Lord his God for the wars which were about him on every side, until the Lord put them under the soles of his feet.

"But now the Lord my God hath given me rest on every side, so that there is neither adversary nor evil occurrent.

* It is well to observe that the "house" and the "body" are two different aspects of the Church of God.

We take this opportunity to bring before the reader's notice a most valuable volume devoted to the exposition of this important truth—*Christian's Library*, Vol. I. (James Carter.) Price, 1s. 6d.

NOTES ON THE TEMPLE.

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"And, behold, I purpose to build a house unto the name of the Lord my God, as the Lord spake unto David my father, saying, Thy son, whom I will set upon thy throne in thy room, he shall build a house unto My name.

"Now, therefore, command thou that they hew me cedar trees out of Lebanon ; and my servants shall be with thy servants, and unto thee will I give hire for thy servants according to all that thou shalt appoint : for thou knowest that there is not among us any that can skill to hew timber like unto the Sidonians."

Then, in the 7th verse :—

"And it came to pass when Hiram heard the words of Solomon, that he rejoiced greatly and said, Blessed be the Lord this day, which hath given unto David a wise son over this great people.

"And Hiram sent to Solomon, saying, I have considered the things which thou sentest to me for : and I will do all thy desire concerning timber of cedar, and concerning timber of fir.

"My servants shall bring them down unto the sea : and I will convey them by sea in floats unto the place that thou shalt appoint me, and will cause them to be discharged there, and thou shalt receive them : and thou shalt accomplish my desire, in giving food for my household."

I have been very much struck (I just throw it out by the way) with the coincidence between this chapter and the 10th of the Acts—the scene in the commencement of the bringing in of the Gentiles into the Church of God. It is a remarkable fact that a period of full seven years elapsed after the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ before the Gentiles were associated with the Jews in the fellowship of the Church. And Peter needed to have his heart and mind prepared for

co-operation with God in this work by a vision ; and then we get Cornelius sending to that very place where Solomon appointed Hiram should send, that is Joppa.

From the 10th verse of the 5th chapter of 1 Kings we read :—

“So Hiram gave Solomon cedar trees and fir trees according to all his desire.

“And Solomon gave Hiram twenty thousand measures of wheat for food to his household, and twenty measures of pure oil. Thus gave Solomon to Hiram year by year.

“And the Lord gave Solomon wisdom as He promised him. And there was peace between Hiram and Solomon, and they two made a league together.”

“And King Solomon raised a levy out of all Israel ; and the levy was thirty thousand men,” &c.

Jew and Gentile are associated together in the work—Solomon's levy from among the Jews—Solomon's league with Hiram to supply Gentile work.



Living Water—No. 2.



NEVER thirst ! Is such a thing possible in this weary world ? Has anybody ever proved it true ? Have any waters of Marah bitterness ever been sweetened ? Who is it that so speaks and offers these refreshing streams ? Ah,

it is Jesus, the Saviour of lost sinners. To Him you must go, for He only can satisfy the longing soul with good things, **but He can.** And not only can this precious Saviour, the Christ of God, give present joy ; this He does and more. The water that He gives is deep as a well—a well that never can be fathomed, and it is ever bubbling up with freshness, springing up, and that unto everlasting life.

Blessed figures these are of spiritual blessings unknown to the world, incomprehensible to the natural man, but proved to be more real than life itself by all who in simple faith have trusted the One who makes this stupendous offer. It is the soul's enjoyment of Christ in the power of the Spirit, the present and everlasting portion of the simplest believer in Christ.

Give me this water! cries the woman of Sychar's well. A deep longing takes possession of her heart that she may experience for herself what she had never thought was possible in such a world.

"The woman saith unto Him, Sir, give me this water that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw."

That I thirst not! What a confession after a life of searching for earthly happiness! She now admits the worthlessness of the one, and yearns after the possession of the other. The blessed Saviour has brought her to this very point. In matchless grace He has awakened within her a desire after Himself. But stay,

there is another question. What about her sins? Ah, this must be settled, for God is God, and though full of mercy, grace, and love, He yet is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and cannot look at sin—"Go, call thy husband, and come hither."

With what admirable delicacy He probes her conscience, and what perfect knowledge of all her guilt He lets her see that He possesses. She was in the presence of God without knowing it. Her conscience now begins to work, and conscience always brings distress. The One who sat on Sychar's well was a perfect stranger to her, and yet He knows her whole life. All things were naked and open to His eyes. Of what use to try and hide anything? And yet He does not condemn! Not **now** at least, for this was the day of grace, and He had not come to condemn but to save. But the time of condemnation **is coming** for those who refuse the wooings of His grace.

"Sir, I perceive that Thou art a prophet," is now her thought. Not yet does she know fully who it is, but she realises that one is there who puts her in connection with God, and uneasy at this she starts a question as to worship. The Christ of God had been dealing with her conscience as to what her own life had been, and this was personal work, and how quickly we turn away from this to think and speak of others! "Our fathers" did this, and "ye say" that; some

say that this is the place where men ought to worship, and others say that ~~that~~ is the place. And is it not even so to-day?

But in Christianity there lies a deeper thought than the **place** of worship, it is the **Person**. Never before had such a thought been presented as worshipping "the Father." The idea of such a relationship had never entered into the mind of a Samaritan, or a Jew, or anybody else. It is not "the Almighty" as Abraham knew Him, a point beyond which many even to-day never get; nor is it Jehovah, the character in which He made Himself known to Israel. A revelation of an altogether different kind is here, however feebly it may have been grasped by her, or indeed by any since Pentecost, when the Spirit of adoption was given whereby believers can cry, "Abba, Father."

"The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship Him."

What a collection of precious truths we have here. The blessed Saviour was Himself present as the revealer of the Father. This characterises the Gospel of John from its very beginning.

"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him" (John i. 18).

The Son was there in lowly grace revealing that Father as He knew Him. He had come to seek lost sinners, and to put them into the

same relationship with that Father as Himself, and to this poor outcast of Samaria He reveals this profound and wondrous truth. Not to Nicodemus, the learned and deeply taught master in Israel, does He reveal those things, but to this most unworthy member of a despised race. This is God's way, and it fills us with wonder and with praise.

The Father whom He came to reveal was seeking **such**, even such as she, such as **any** of us, either writer or reader, that we might worship Him as so revealed.

True worshippers! and what is this? That there must be sincerity is freely admitted, but is there not more than this implied? None are true worshippers who are not children of God. To worship the Father we must know Him as such, and hence we must be children. It is not now a nation of worshippers kept at a distance, with a priest to draw near in their stead; this was Judaism. Now in Christianity it is God fully revealed in Christ, revealed to us in that character in which the Son knew Him; thus revealed that we might know Him too, and knowing Him as our Father, might draw nigh each one as a child in the full confidence of love. Worship now is not according to outward rites and forms and ceremonies, as it was in Judaism, but they that worship the Father must worship Him "in spirit and in truth." That is to say, Christian worship is in the power of the Spirit

according to the full revelation of God as Father.

How all this strikes at the root of ritualism in all its forms! What place have vestments, crosses, incense, processions, &c., in this worship in spirit and in truth? The truth of the Church is not here revealed, nor the gathering together of the members of the body of Christ, this was to follow in due course. Here it is the knowledge of the Father, each one for himself, and the liberty of heart in the confidence of that Father's love, removing all servile fear, and drawing forth the praise and homage and adoration of the soul. And to this poor outcast of Samaria is all this made known, and for the first time.

"I know that Messias cometh." What feelings of awe and wonderment are now awakened within her breast!

"The woman saith unto Him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ : when He is come, He will tell us all things."

There was something about this stranger that brought to her mind hopes and anticipations of coming glories and blessings connected with Messias' reign. She had heard of Him, and, sinner though she was, had accepted the common belief of her times. This was the belief of the mind, but how different is this from the faith of the heart, and the personal knowledge of the One in whom that faith is placed. To this point the blessed Saviour was leading her.

He had excited desires within her for those living waters which He alone could give. He had aroused her conscience as to guilt which she would feign have forgotten. He now awakens her heart to think of the long-promised Messiah, the bruiser of the serpent's head, the accomplisher of all the promises of God, and then, wonder of wonders! **"I that speak unto thee am He."**

What a moment was this when she stands face to face with the Hope of Israel! The proud Pharisees had rejected Him, Jerusalem with all its dead ceremonial, and its empty form of religion would have none of Him; but here, a poor, guilty sinner receives Him by faith, and is led to behold a beauty in Him which the others had utterly failed to see.

"He came unto His own (the Jews), and His own received Him not.

"But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons (children) of God, even to them that believe on His name" (John i. 11, 12).

The woman then left her water-pot. What else could she do? She had found the spring of living waters, what further need was there for this little water-pot? And so it is with the soul. To give up the world before Christ is possessed and known is the vain effort of the monastic system. But the truly converted soul has fresh and infinitely better joys than all this poor world has to give. But more, the Christian

"AT EVENING TIME IT SHALL BE LIGHT." 297

has a new object in life and fresh occupations.

"The woman then left her water-pot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did : is not this the Christ?"

To spread the fame of Jesus is now the business of her life, and what wages of present joy she reaped, and what fruit of future glory she was gathering for that day of heavenly harvest when sowers and reapers shall rejoice together, and that, too, along with all the company who have received the word through their means!

"Many of the Samaritans of that city believed on Him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did."

Christian reader, the fields are white already to the harvest.

"Where hast thou gleaned to-day?"

A. H. B.

**"At Evening Time it shall be
Light."**

CHRISTIAN, when sunset rays
Across thy pathway blaze,
And show thee that thy days
Below are few,

Lift up thy head on high,
Redemption draweth nigh,
By faith thou wilt descry
The home in view.

A home so fair and bright,
Where there is no dark night,
The Lamb is all the light,
And glory too.

While to thy raptured sight,
At evening time the light
Shall be exceeding bright,
Eternal too.

Our joy may well o'erflow,
To leave this world of woe,
With Jesus Christ to go,
And praise Him too.

Praise Him, whose love and grace
Have spanned our earthly race,
And have prepared our place
In glory too.

* * *

Extracts from Letters.

WE are thankful for the spirit of prayer and fellowship awakened over the meetings for the study of the Book of Daniel. If the Lord will, we earnestly hope that similar meetings may be held later on in a larger room so as to permit of wider invitations.

One writes regretting inability to attend :—

“ I should like to be there, because I have an idea that important truths might easily be met, especially in the Book of Daniel . . . and as to the duration of Gentile

power which I feel sure is closing. The midnight with the Virgins in Matthew, and the midnight with the Voyagers in Acts is also past. The bread has been broken and the Voyagers refreshed, and I deem we are near some new country, and thank God there is no uncertainty about it. I quite expect God has in store some truth with which to revive the drooping expectancy of His waiting Church, and I pray God that you may find it at this very conference. . . . I will confess I am astounded that we are in such a plight with the Holy Ghost down here. It is incredible."

Another writes :—

"The moral condition of that beloved one—Daniel—is very much to be desired. Chapter ix. is wonderful—the spirit of it we much need—word for word. How we need the spirit of verses 5, 6, 8, 10, 13, and many others ! It would be blessed if kings and rulers read such as chapter ii. and had light given to them as to verse 41. We can reach *them* by prayer.

Another again writes :—

"I should be thankful to come (D.V.) and get what God might be pleased to give me, and should think that such a meeting under God's hand might be a means of knitting hearts together. We have been praying about it, and shall continue to do so. I should be very thankful to see others coming, not amongst so-called Brethren ; anything that helps to break through the sectarian habits, and bring us together as children of God simply, to look to Him for what He has to give at the present time, makes one thankful to God."

While yet another refuses to come, because he heard that a certain one might be present of a different "ecclesiastical position" from his own !

Of far greater importance than "ecclesiastical

positions" is the work of God for the glory of Christ in the souls of men, as is forcibly described in the letter of another :—

"I much regret that circumstances over which I have no control have prevented me from being with you at this time to read the Scriptures of Truth. I pray God may abundantly bless your being together over His Word.

"There has just been a medical student in with me to say that such was the infidelity and scepticism he met with, not only amongst the learned (?) in the local Queen's College, but also in the clergy—to whom he applied for help—that he was inclined to throw Christianity overboard as he felt he was no match for them. When we had talked a long time, and some quiet of mind was restored to him, I believe he is a Christian, but among Presbyterians, he asked me pitifully if there was no one to put my views (he meant those which bowed to the Scriptures as the Word of God) before the Churches which were being led to ruin by those who professed to be their guides. I was glad to be able to give him the *Inspiration of the Scriptures* and the *Irrationalism of Infidelity*, which he eagerly took. All this only shows one the character of the days in which we live, 'heaping to themselves teachers having itching ears,' " &c.

Bible Study.

I HAVE just been at a meeting for young men where I heard the words, "Do not follow any course of Bible study which will keep you long away from the Gospels." This is certainly the direction in which the Holy Ghost leads the

heart. Everything is focussed in the Gospels, centred in a person, a man, *the* man Christ Jesus, who nevertheless is much more than a man. There we hear His own words, see Him living and moving on earth, at home in heaven and a stranger on earth, yet bringing heaven down to earth, doing the Father's will, and living by doing it.

But to come to Christ in the Gospels, and to watch His path, to catch the secret of it, will surely not bring us to think that any part of what God in His remarkable ordering has brought together in one book is of little value. Christ lived on earth by "every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God," and there is no other way for us to live here, if we do not wish to find at the end that all our life has been in vain. Still the Gospels will send us back to the Old Testament to learn the development of God's ways, and forward to the Epistles to learn how the Holy Ghost, after Christ was glorified, carried on the purposes of God towards that consummation which we now await.

We shall not find anywhere in Scripture that doctrine is an end in itself, or that to be doctrinally right is the end which God is carrying out by the presence of the Holy Ghost. What we shall find is that God has always sought for *obedience*, subjection of will and intellect to His Word. There is no doubt that a man who is subject, who is obedient as simply

as possible to God, will be found essentially right in doctrine as a matter of course, while it is quite possible for a man to be correct in the minutest points of doctrine, and yet have no part of his life, his habits of will, or his feelings which so largely sway the will, under the control of God in His Word. Yet this is the main thing. We are not told in Acts that Paul went about preaching the doctrine of the Church, although we know that was his special ministry. But he himself tells us that he went preaching *the kingdom of God*, not a dispensational term, but a fact to which every soul of man must bow. This is a thing to be laid to heart in our days.

Now it is this which underlies the sixteenth of Leviticus in a very real way. If the character of God, what He is in Himself, comes out in the details of the dwelling-place which He would have the children of Israel make for Him to dwell amongst them, so does the reality of the rule of God, the kingdom of God, come out in the details of what was done on this tenth day of the seventh month.

It is for this reason that the first verse of our chapter takes us back to a time when that side of God's government which we often think to be its only side, came out in a solemn way. The point upon which stress is laid in Leviticus x. 1 is, "which He commanded them not." And the reality of God's rule is seen at once; He will be obeyed; that is the instant comment of Moses

to Aaron—" *This* is that which the Lord has said." It was a crisis, such as had already been passed through in Exodus xxxii.-xxxiv. The priesthood which God had set up to enable His people to approach Him, and to meet the needs of His people's failures and sins, had broken down; the goat which they should have eaten to bear the sins of the people was burnt; the same fire had consumed two of the very priests who should have taken their part in bearing the people's sins. Aaron associates himself with them, "such things have befallen *me*," and the whole weight of the situation falls back upon God, as it did at Sinai before. There the question was raised whether God could go with them at all, and it was answered in Exodus xxxiv. When Moses hears of a God who is merciful and gracious, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin, he makes haste to secure the presence of such a God. "Let my Lord, I pray thee, go among us, *for* it is a stiff-necked people." Such a people needed such a God, and what was the revelation of such a God given for, save that faith should embrace it at once for such a people.

But now the further question is raised whether God can *dwell* among them; if such are the priests who are the means of approach to God, how can there be any approach, and how can the tabernacle remain in the midst of a defiled and disobedient people?

This is the question which God now answers in Leviticus xvi. We find, first of all, that the position which Aaron took up before God in the end of Leviticus x. is the position in which God now prepares to meet him. It was to Moses that the previous revelation was made, which served as the basis of all God's ways up to the cross and since. But now to Aaron, not as high priest, representing the glory of God before the people, and the people in the excellency of God's thoughts of them before God, but as a sinful representative of a sinful people, to whom, save for this wonderful manifestation of God on the mercy-seat, the way into the holiest was closed, there is given the answer of God's mercy.

These two principal points are brought out in contrast first of all, and form the basis of the chapter :—

1. **“ Speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times inside the veil before the mercy-seat which is upon the ark, that he die not.**
2. **For I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy-seat.”**

On the one hand, it is made clear that Aaron has no title to come into the holiest when he liked, as though it were his home. There was that in him, and in the people whom he represented, which made it impossible for him to be at home in the place where God dwelt. God could not sacrifice His **holiness**. The way into the holiest was not made manifest. On the

other hand, God was going to manifest Himself. That was both the reason why Aaron could not come in, and also the reason why a way must be found for him to come in. God was not going to give up His **goodness**. Hence we go on to find that the goodness declared to Moses in Exodus xxxiv., which meets the terrible situation there, is now to be manifested in its workings to Aaron. "**In this manner** shall Aaron come." Those are the words which tell of a God who will forgive iniquity, transgression, and sin, but will by no means clear the guilty. It was no light thing for Aaron to go in before that devouring fire whose effect he had seen brought home to him in such a terribly real way. But for that very reason he is to go in, not by a way of his devising, but by a way which is God's answer to his silence and humiliation in chap. x. God acts, and man is silent before Him.

So this tenth day of the seventh month was to remain throughout their history as a witness of the reality and meaning of the rule of God amongst them, a witness of the goodness and severity of God. Judgment executed, yet a way provided for man to come in, and for God's dwelling-place to remain in the midst of defilement and uncleanness. We do not always remember that these two last are connected in this way. Before ever a priest had eaten the sin-offering, this lesson had to be learnt first. But as in this scene we find God

acting according to His own thoughts, to meet a situation which man's sin had brought about, we therefore find that all speaks of *Christ*, and looks on to Him. No fuller picture, perhaps, can be found in the Old Testament of the atoning work of Christ upon the cross. It sets forth in shadow how God purposed to justify Himself in justifying the sinner, how He could both forgive iniquity, transgression, and sin, and yet by no means clear the guilty. "**I will appear** in the cloud upon the mercy-seat," is thus the key-note of the chapter.

It is impossible to go into all the details, and unnecessary, for others have dealt fully with them; but, according to our practice, we may just trace the outlines in the light of these main principles already spoken of:—

i. The things needed : verses 3-6. The bullock for a sin-offering, a ram for a burnt-offering, the holy linen garments, two goats from the children of Israel for a sin-offering, and a ram for a burnt-offering.

ii. At the entrance to the tent of meeting, the two goats are presented, and that work which should have been the priest's in chap. x. is now assigned by no human hand, but by God's decision, to one of the two goats ("Azazel" meaning, according to the best authorities, **complete removal**).

iii. The sin-offering for the priest is presented and slaughtered by the priest himself, showing that he is seen as **offerer**, not as priest.

iv. The censer is filled with the fire that had consumed his sons; he fills both his hands with fragrant incense beaten small, puts the incense on the fire, that

the cloud of incense may cover the mercy-seat which is upon the testimony, **that he die not**. The very act which had caused the death of his sons, is now so ordered by God as to be his salvation.

v. The blood of the bullock for himself is brought into the holiest by the priest, and sprinkled upon the front of the mercy-seat eastward, *i.e.*, facing him, and before the mercy-seat seven times.

vi. The same thing is done with the blood of the goat of the sin-offering for the people.

vii. He comes out and puts the blood of the bullock and of the goat upon the horns of the altar "which is before Jehovah."

viii. He then passes out again to the place whence he started, where the goat for Azazel is waiting. There he lays his hands upon its head, and confesses **all** the iniquities of the children of Israel, and **all** their transgressions in **all** their sins. The goat is sent away by the hand of a man standing ready, into the wilderness to bear their iniquities into a land not inhabited.

ix. Aaron washes, resumes his garments, and offers the burnt-offering for himself and for the people, to make atonement for himself and for the people.

x. The whole is completed by the burning of the bullock and the goat of the sin-offering outside the camp, according to Lev. iv. 11, 12.

The full result is the cleansing of the sanctuary, the tent, and the altar from defilement, so that God can continue to have His dwelling amongst His people in spite of what they are in themselves, and also the cleansing of the people from *all* their sins (verse 30).

It presents to us the movement of the purpose of God onwards towards the mercy-seat for the accomplishment of redemption, as we find

throughout Romans iii., and outward again applying the results of redemption, as in Hebrews. This is simply the bare outline, and the great thing is, before inquiring into the typical meaning of all the details, to see the place which the whole scene has in the history of God's ways.

Subject for December: The Law of Holiness. Leviticus xviii.-xxii. (chap. xvii. forms the link). The following questions may be answered:—

- i. What is the refrain of Lev. xviii.-xxii.? In what different forms, and how many times does it occur?
- ii. How is the principle here insisted on applied in the New Testament?

Answers to Questions:—

- i. and ii. are fully answered above.
- iii. Heb. ii. 17 shows Christ, having God's character as seen in *His ways* (mercy and faithfulness), as High Priest, applying the results of His work to meet the needs of the people of God in their journey through the wilderness; iv. 14, the passage of the priest through the different parts of the dwelling-place of God; v. 3, the priest's offering for himself and for the people; ix. 8, the way not open; ix. 12, entry by His own blood; ix. 28, the reappearance of the High Priest to those awaiting the results of His work; x. 3, the yearly remembrance of sins; x. 12, 14, the work done once for all; x. 19, entrance into the holiest by the blood of Jesus; x. 23-25, answering to Lev. xvi. 26-31, xxiii. 26-32; and lastly, xiii. 11, 12, the last act in Lev. xvi., the burning of the sin-offering outside the camp. Hence the sixteenth of Leviticus runs through the Epistle to the Hebrews in a remarkable way.

B. S. ED.

Address to Our Readers.

WE have now come to the end of the tenth year of our labour in connection with the *Christian's Library*. Several reasons suggested to us the advisability of discontinuing the magazine, but then again the remembrance of the rapidly increasing apostasy, the love of many growing cold, the unrest and upheavals everywhere amongst the Lord's people have spurred us on again; and with prayer and casting ourselves afresh upon the source of infinite wisdom, almighty power, and everlasting love, we go forward for another year.

We are aware that we have not always pleased some; on the other hand, many have written their thanks and hearty fellowship in the stand we have felt bound to make in faithfulness to the Lord and His truth—and we must ever remember the words:—

“For do I now seek to satisfy men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ” (Gal. i. 10).

The Lord's people, walking in various paths of Christian fellowship, have been shaken up as never before in the United Kingdom, America, and the Colonies. We wish, if it be possible, to be helpers of all such—not in any spirit of “Stand by thyself, I am holier than thou,” but

CVIII.

as members of one body, servants of one Lord, and children of one Father—pilgrims, too, in the same wilderness, and heirs of the same glory.

We are constantly receiving letters from dearly loved brethren in the Lord, scattered, divided, and separated the one from the other—heart-broken letters, yearning after the fulfilment of our blessed Lord's prayer to His Father :—

“That they all may be one ; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us : that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me” (John xvii. 21).

To all such we would say :—

“Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory ; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves” (Phil. ii. 2).

“Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, loving to the brethren, be pitiful, be courteous” (1 Pet. iii. 8).

We earnestly desire the prayers of all our readers, even if we may not have their unqualified approval, and we would assure all that our one desire is the Lord's glory in the establishing of anxious and awakened souls, and the help of young or old who are seeking to know the will of the Lord more perfectly.

Let the coming year, if the Lord tarries yet a little longer, be one of more prayer, of greater reality, and more whole-hearted consecration to

Him who died for us at Calvary, who lives for us at God's right hand, and who is soon coming to plant us in our heavenly inheritance, never more to grieve Him by our folly, our sins, or our mistakes.

ED.

"The paper you send me emanates *Millennial Dawnism* from the Millennial Dawnists. It is a most hopeless jumble of a little truth and a great quantity of deadly error. I cannot help recalling a remark of a friend as he handed me a stupid letter to read, 'There is a stage at which ignorance becomes perfectly unanswerable!'

"This writer seems incapable of doing anything than inveigh against the doctrine of eternal punishment, and has to confess that 'the tendency with all who abandon this long-revered doctrine is toward doubt, scepticism, infidelity,' and that 'those who have dropped their belief in "hell" are often open infidels, and scoffers at God's Word.' This is the writer's own confession, and is quite sufficient ground to place all such writings in the fire."

ED.

With the January number the Editor will (*D.V.*) commence a **Bible Class** for young Christians. The subject will be the **Book of Revelation**. Let all who join read with much prayer Chapter I. Any questions sent in will receive consideration, and if deemed suitable, answers will be incorporated in the body of the monthly articles.

Physical and Spiritual Healing.

THE subject of healing is a very general one in Scripture, and it appears to be connected with God's testimony on the one hand, and with the display of His mercy on the other, while the body as well as the soul shares in the blessing of this mercy as shown by God.

The subject as now before us may perhaps be sufficiently considered, in order that we may notice certain important principles helpful towards the healing of any spiritual disorder, or disease, existing and working among the Lord's people to-day.

The fifth chapter of James presents fairly the case of bodily healing, united, as it may be, with recovery of the soul from a bad state caused by committed sins.

We first have the general but careful inquiry, "Is any sick among you?" (ver. 14). And this is of Him who exercises His purchase right in looking after the state of the body, as Saviour of it, as well as the soul, ready to answer to any condition where the granting of His mercy might be to His glory.

Sickness and affliction in general bring us to face the realities of life and of death. But more than this, they are often meant to produce in the soul the sense of the reality of having to do with God. And it is a solemn, yet wonderful thing

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to thus be brought to have to do with God directly—it may be in the matter of the soul or of the body, or both.

But here an appeal is made to God concerning the body in the sense of utter helplessness, only to hope in His mercy. Still direct dealing with the soul may be an accompaniment, as often we observe the blessing, or otherwise, of the one to be intimately associated with the other.

The sick person was to call for the elders of the Church in keeping with God's order, when such order could be observed according to His appointment. Faith unquestionably was in exercise in such a call, and as we might reasonably expect the beginning, at least, of an exercise as to one's state of soul before God.

The elders then were to pray over, or intercede with God in behalf of the sick, anointing with oil in the Lord's name—happy emblem of healing and blessing from God, and speaking, as it may, of the fresh and living energy of the Spirit.

The Lord directly undertakes in behalf of the sick one and raises him up, but whether such action is **immediate**, or otherwise, we are not told. God Himself had come in, and was about to work in mercy, and this would leave the soul in peace to abide His time as waiting upon Him.

Deep and thorough exercise of soul doubtless had a large place here, and God would be free to reveal to one what might have grieved Him, as the soul continued in exercise to wait upon

Him. And this would bring the soul, in its communion, still nearer to God, and in turn would give it the happy liberty of confessing to others in all the confidence of brotherly love. And thus such confession would prove helpful in exciting further and more urgent prayer. And this in turn would not fail to move God in showing mercy, perhaps more speedily than otherwise He would be free to do.

The prayer of faith would bring God in as One ready to strengthen and bless, and this, united with confession, would tend to remove from before Him what might hinder such blessing. For it may be needful in order for such blessing that one be not only right with God, but also right with fellow-brethren—if, indeed, love has lost its proper place and exercise with such (see Job xlii. 10).

We may now briefly consider these principles in their relation to spiritual and more general healing and restoration.

There is in all God's ways in creation and with men the undeniable law of cause and effect. We may say that sin, either directly or indirectly, is the cause of all ruin, and of that which is ruinous both to men and to God's testimony on earth. The causes of all the disorders and irregularities in the house of God are multifold. But sin in some form or other has made them possible.

Yet it is useless and unprofitable to seek to charge the responsibility of the existing sorrow

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and confusion, as the effects of sin, upon any except ourselves. We are guilty, and self-judgment becomes those in a general ruin.

Responsibility rests upon us all, but also the manifest hand of God in judgment, as having failed in that responsibility and sinned. If the sense of such failure were felt deeply and individually enough that it became a real **conviction**, it would doubtless work repentance and end in mutual and more general confession and blessing.

But with this conviction, any true-hearted children of God, alike in ruin and owning it, might feel led to come together to offer up to God "the prayer of faith" which He would hear. The ground for this would be one of common sin and shame, to take a common ground before God in repentance and confession. The step could hardly be considered a premature one nor lacking in consistency with holiness. If all were guilty, or could take that place, then all could righteously take such a ground as being only the fulfilment of righteousness.

Conviction comes by the soul's being in God's presence, repentance from the sense and knowledge of His goodness, while confession finds its liberty only in the sense and enjoyment of God's love and of confidence in Him.

Therefore confession to one another of sins and wrongs committed may never be looked for apart from love and confidence being restored

among the children of God. And how shall this confidence be restored among any except there be profound humiliation wrought within by a sense and conviction of guilt, and then, in our common shame and need, refuse not to seek together the throne of grace.

Holiness unto the Lord may be freely granted as the desire of every sincere, loyal-hearted believer to-day. And if the brethren of Christ love one another in a way worthy of Him, true holiness will characterise their ways and works, without any undue pressure from one upon another.

Love is pre-eminently holy as being of God, and it ever seeks, in the spirit of lowliness, the good of others, apart from evil **as not thinking of it**. And it is the lovely and becoming activity of this love that makes way for confession among brethren.

Now true conviction of evil would lead to brokenness and humiliation. And with this there might be a desire most becoming, and an effort to come together with the sincere or pure-hearted to own our state before God, and to seek His face with the "prayer of faith" for one another, as for all saints.

And in such a coming together we have yet to discover what might be regarded as scripturally defiling, or inconsistent with true holiness.

Conviction as to a **general state** is one thing, and conviction as to **causes past or present**, in

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any or all of us, of the ruin and sorrow, is quite another.

Shall we not best leave this latter conviction with God to bring home to us all and arouse in us all, as He may lead us on?

But to require a determination of causes and a renouncing judgment upon the same from our fellow-Christians, as a first essential, before we can come together in the deep sense of our failure and need, over-reaches true righteousness, fails of the grace of God, and ties up the situation as for ever impossible to be remedied or healed.

But God has His way of dealing with His erring people, and grace brings us into His presence humbled and in quest of blessing, allowing Him, and counting upon Him to still work in souls by His grace, deepening by further conviction and confession, if need be, the work He has already begun.

G. B. E.

Different Kinds of Works.

THERE are many people who think that if ever they are to be saved and get to heaven it will have to be by their own works.

This being a matter of such great importance, I felt led to examine what the Bible has to say upon it, for clearly we know nothing about these things, apart from what God has been pleased to make known.

I was surprised to find what a number of different kinds of works we read of in the Scriptures.

1. In the first place there are

"Wicked works."

What are these? And can any hope to be saved thereby?

"And you, that were sometime alienated, and enemies in your mind by **wicked works**, yet now hath He reconciled" (Col. i. 21).

This verse shows us the terrible state we all are in by reason of sin. We are alienated from God—we are enemies in our minds—and we are guilty of wicked works.

But, oh! what amazing grace! The good news of God's love tells us how enemies may be reconciled, and how guilty sinners may be pardoned. And how? Is it by works that the sinner can perform? Nay, verily, but "**in the body of His flesh through death.**" In other words, Christ had to die that we might be reconciled to God—His precious blood had to be shed that our sins, that is, our wicked works, might be cleansed.

2. In the second place, we read of

"Works of righteousness which we have done."

Some may say, clearly our wicked works cannot save us, but surely our works of righteousness can do something towards it. But what says the Scripture?

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“Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost ; which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour” (Tit. iii. 5, 6).

Salvation is not on the ground of man's meritorious works, but of God's free and sovereign mercy. He regenerates the soul through the action of His own Word in the renewing power of the Holy Ghost, and all this He does according to His abundant mercy through Jesus Christ our Saviour. We cannot save ourselves by any works of our own, be they wicked or righteous, and hence it is that God has provided a Saviour in the person of His own beloved Son.

3. But now we read of

“Works of law.”

“Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the **works of the law** : for by the **works of the law** shall no flesh be justified” (Gal. ii. 16).

The whole legal system with its rites, and ceremonies, and religious observances is here proved to be valueless in the matter of justifying the guilty sinner. This, in God's eyes, is a matter of such stupendous importance that three times over in this one verse He sounds in our ears the truth so astonishing to the human heart that justification is impossible by works of law.

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How, then, can a sinner be justified? Three times over does this same verse tell us that it is by faith in Jesus Christ.

4. But now we come to

"Dead works."

What are these?

"How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from **dead works** to serve the living God" (Heb. ix. 14).

This again shows us how unavailing is the whole ritual system in the matter of salvation.

Under the Jewish system, which had been established by God Himself, there were many ordinances which pertained to meats and drinks and diverse washings. There were sacrifices of goats and calves and bullocks. But all these things were "**carnal ordinances imposed on them until the time of reformation.**" That is to say, until Christ came, until He offered Himself in sacrifice to God, until His precious blood was shed by which He obtained eternal redemption, all these things were imposed upon the Jews for their observance; they were carnal or fleshly ordinances, and rites and ceremonies. But they are not needed now, for they were but shadows, and in Christ we have the substance. All these things are **dead works** whether performed by Jews or professed Christians. They have no soul-saving virtue in them.

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5. But are there no such things as
" **Good works** " ?

Yes, there are, but who is it that can perform them? For an answer to this question we must turn to the "good works" epistle. Does the reader know which epistle this is? It is the Epistle to Titus. In this epistle of three short chapters we hear six times about "good works."

In chapter i. 15, 16, we are told that unbelievers are utterly incapable of performing good works. Some people think that prayers and fastings and other deeds are good works, but this is not the case. All such things, if relied on for salvation, are **dead works**. The unbeliever is "unto every good work reprobate."

But Titus was a believer ; he was Paul's son in the faith, and he was exhorted in all things to show himself a pattern of **good works** (ii. 7).

Then those to whom God's saving grace has been made known through Jesus Christ are told to be zealous of **good works** (chap. ii. 14), they are also told to be ready to every **good work** (chap. iii. 1). And lest any should imagine that good works are what unbelievers can perform, or that true believers may be negligent in these things, the Spirit of God exhorts in these words :—

"This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain **good works**" (Tit. iii. 8).

And finally, the whole family of God is urged to maintain **good works** (chap. iii. 14).

Surely this is the epistle of good works, and teaches us most clearly, on the one hand, that unbelievers cannot perform them, and on the other that believers can and must.

I cannot close this article without drawing the reader's attention to the great atoning work of the Son of God upon the cross. In view of that stupendous moment in the world's history, the great centre of the ages when the peerless, spotless Lamb of God was offered in sacrifice for man's sin—in view of that moment and in anticipation of the mighty transaction there to be done, the blessed Saviour exclaimed in prayer to His Father—

“I have glorified Thee on the earth, I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do” (John xvii. 4).

Here, then, is the firm foundation upon which salvation rests.

“Here we have a firm foundation,
Here's the refuge of the lost ;
Christ's the rock of our salvation,
His the name of which we boast.”

What are all the sinner's paltry works compared to His, the Maker and Monarch of all, who being God, became a man that He might die and suffer for His creatures' sins, and who, extended on the cross of shame, endured in those three hours of darkness what no human

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eye could witness, what no human ear might hear, and what no human thought could measure—and then gave up the ghost when He had cried—

It is finished !

And He is risen from the dead ! A. H. B.

Homage to the Son of God.

OUR blessed Lord Jesus Christ has many titles, many offices, and many names. The Christian would be sorry to miss the force, the order, and the instruction of any one of them. Christ is Prophet, Priest, and King. He is God's Anointed, Son of David, Son of Adam, Son of Man, Son of God, and much more besides. We are not limited entirely to language in the New Testament Scriptures to express His Lordship.

In the 2nd Psalm we read—

“Kiss **the Son**, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little.”

Or, as it may be read, “for His wrath will soon be kindled.” Kissing the Son has the force of rendering homage to Him, and to the Son as such. Does it not mean seeing and owning this particular relationship of Son which He is seen in this passage to sustain? In this 2nd Psalm Christ by the Spirit makes Himself

known as Son, and, further, that He is Son by the express decree of Jehovah.

"I will declare the decree, Jehovah hath said unto Me, **Thou art My Son**, this day have I begotten Thee."

This particular passage, no doubt, applies to Christ being Son of God as man in His incarnation, for His eternal Sonship is unmeasured by time, and is before all decrees, being from everlasting. But His Sonship in its divine and human aspects is blended in Scripture, and not separated so as to be defined.

God owns Christ, with a voice from the excellent glory, as His Son; yea, as His beloved Son. Christ is glad to confess this relationship, and not content to let it remain as an unexpressed secret in His own breast. Thus we read—"I will declare the decree."

This language, "Thou art My Son," and again, "I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son," must have filled, yea, must ever fill the bosom of Christ with the profoundest love and joy.

In the 2nd Psalm the declaration of the decree "Thou art My Son," follows what is said about the kings of the earth setting themselves, and the rulers taking counsel together against the Lord, and against His Anointed. And while Peter applies this last scripture in Acts iv. 25, 26, to Herod, Pontius Pilate, and the Gentiles gathered together against Christ, Paul, from the commencement of his ministry, proclaimed that

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Jesus is the Son of God. In this respect the order of presenting Christ's glory in the Book of Acts answers somewhat to the order of this Psalm.

As in this Psalm, so in the Book of Acts. Men may be allowed in the wisdom of God to oppose for a time the setting up of the earthly kingdom of Christ, nations may rage and seek to throw off divine authority, opposing for a time the Son of Man from coming into the possession of His earthly visible inheritance, but in the scene where His rejection and the wrath of man are displayed, Christ falls back upon the still higher relationship of Son of God. "I will declare the decree, Jehovah hath said unto Me, Thou art **My Son.**" This means infinitely more than being God's king upon His holy hill of Zion. The expression "My Son," is something higher than Son of Abraham, Son of David, or Son of Man. And man's rejection of Christ could not for a moment rob Him of the felicity, the communion, the dignity, or the glory of this higher relationship.

"We see not yet all things put under Him," but "the Father loveth the Son." Man loses blessing in so far as deliverance has not yet come to the groaning and travailing creation, but meanwhile God is well pleased with His beloved Son. The Son knows this, and the brightest days of millennial glory, destined in God's time to dawn, cannot compare with the

fellowship ever existing between the Father and His Son Jesus Christ.

Is not the declaration of the decree, "Thou art My Son," the answer of Christ to the opposition and rejection of men? If the Jew will not yet say to Christ, "Thou art my King," and if many sinners will not say to Him, "Thou art my Saviour and Lord," God has said to Him, "Thou art My Son." Oh the sweet and holy consolation of these words to Christ in the day of His fullest rejection! They speak of the inward calm communion of the heart, when outwardly everything is as a raging, angry sea. In the same way the Christian, conscious of His relation to Christ, may be calm when the day of Christ's outward triumph may seem far distant.

But if God has said to Christ, "Thou art My Son," is He not indeed worthy of our homage and praise? It is the will of God that all should honour the Son even as they honour the Father. Besides, God calls upon the angels to worship Christ.

"When He bringeth in the first begotten into the world He saith, And let all the angels of God worship Him" (Heb. i. 6).

It is not some of the angels, but *all* of them that are thus directed to pay homage. Angels of high as well as low degree are thus summoned to render the highest honour to God's first-born. The worship, praise, and adoration of the Son of God are His natural rights in the world

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and from creatures which He has made. During the days of His life on earth the time came when children's voices were raised to utter spontaneously the blessedness of Christ, who came in the name of Jehovah. He came as sent of Jehovah, but surely not only this for His name is Jehovah.

But not only the children,

"The whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen, saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of Jehovah" (Luke xix. 37, 38).

These disciples at this moment were made to see and feel His blessedness, and they could but utter His praise. They could not help speaking forth His honour in the way they did. Are there not times when Christians are like the disciples in this, as they cry out from the depths of their hearts concerning the Son of God, "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless His holy name."

But, "as vinegar to nitre, so is he that singeth songs to one of heavy heart." The praises of these disciples were "as vinegar to nitre" to the Pharisees. They could not bear to hear Christ praised. It is something like Michal, David's wife, who could not join her husband in dancing before the Ark of the Lord, but despised him for doing so.

"Some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto Jesus, Master, rebuke Thy disciples."

Yet, disciples are only in their becoming element when they are praising Christ. But the Pharisees did not know the Lord of Glory. There was, however, One present, unseen alike by Pharisees, little children, and disciples. That One was the Holy Ghost. He it was that "out of the mouth of babes and sucklings perfected praise." Praise is perfected when it is offered to the Son. It was the Holy Ghost who opened the mouths of the children, and of the whole multitude of the disciples too. And praise was forthcoming from the *whole* multitude. Apparently no lips of the disciples were silent. It was a volume of praise to Christ which could not be stopped—

"Jesus answered and said unto them" (the Pharisees), "I tell you that if these should hold their peace the stones would immediately cry out."

Consider these words! Are they not marvelous? Nothing, nor no one shall rob Christ of His glory. If men on that occasion had not shown forth His praise, the stones would have cried out. Does not all this teach us something of the blessedness of Christ to the Father and to the Spirit of God? Nowadays when we think of His love, of His glory, of His dying for us, of His present intercession, of His coming to take us to be with Himself for ever, of His mercy to lost sinners like ourselves, can we be silent?

Christ "received from God the Father honour

and glory," and this not only on the Mount of Transfiguration.

"Unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever" (Heb. i. 8).

In these words God calls Christ "God" in the language of direct address, and asserts the eternal duration of His throne. No wonder that all are exhorted to render homage to the Son. Further, God owns Christ as Creator—

"Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of Thy hands" (Heb. i. 10).

All this is addressed by God Himself to the Son. As we read scriptures like these, let us ponder and contemplate the heart of the Eternal, enlarged infinitely, and filled with the divine greatness, glory, and moral loveliness of Christ. Blessed, indeed, are those who praise Him, and, "Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him."

T. H.

Our Substitute.

"**I**N Him was life ; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness ; and the darkness comprehended it not" (John i. 4, 5).

"Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" (Matt. xxvii. 45, 46).

"Ye are all the children of light, and the children of

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the day; we are not of the night, nor of darkness"
(1 Thess. v. 5).

"Darkness had the world enshrouded—
Dire result of Adam's fall;
We, his children, in that darkness
Wandered guilty, helpless all.
But Thine eye, Thou God omniscient,
Looked in tender pity down,
And Thy Son, Thy heart's Belovèd,
Thou didst spare from heaven's throne.

Jesus! Thou amid our darkness
Camest down, the heavenly light,
But we would not have Thee, Saviour,
Choosing still the shades of night.
We despised Thee and rejected,
Nailed Thee to a cross of shame,
Basely mocked Thy dying anguish,
Jesus, patient, holy Lamb!

Then unto Thy God appealing,
E'en from Him no answer came:
Night concealed the heavens above Thee,
Wrath o'erhung the spotless Lamb.
There amid that awful darkness,
God-forsaken, man-despised,
Thou wast bearing our transgressions
All alone, Thou blessed Christ!

Thou didst call, and wast not answered,
Lord, that **we** might answered be;
That **we** might with joy behold Him,
God must hide His face from **Thee**.
Loud doth mercy boast 'gainst judgment—
Mystery of love divine!
Sin-condemned and God-exalted
In that wondrous cross of Thine. . . .

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Lord, the gloom is past for ever !
 We are with Thee in the light—
 Children in a Father's presence—
 Now no more the sons of night.
Thou hast done it ! Thou hast ransomed
 Many brethren by Thy blood :
 Low we bow the head and worship
 Thee, Thou glorious Son of God."

C. H. VON P.

Bible Study.

THIS month's study brings us to the close of another year, the third year of such study together as we have been enabled to do. When we started first, with somewhat of a flourish of trumpets, students in multitudes appeared, but like Gideon's army their numbers soon thinned, and a few persevering students alone have continued to send in answers and studies.

But I think we have most of us learned something. God have mercy upon those who have learned nothing during these three years. Perhaps we have learned most—I have—from our own mistakes. We have found out in a fresh way that the Word of God **lives** and **abides for ever**. That it is not a book of which we may set to work to master the contents intellectually, but that through it the authority of God must find its way to the entire mastery of us. True knowledge of the Scriptures consists in having been brought under their power.

We have also found out, too, during the past three years, at least in a dim sort of way, that we who are younger must have to do with God personally for ourselves, both by His Word and in the experience of the various paths into which God has put us. Some of us may have found out that many things which we thought as fixed as the everlasting hills have cracked and crumbled under our feet, but the removing of the things which can be shaken only proves what cannot be shaken. We have found, gradually perhaps, but with an increasing and thrilling conviction, that **God remains**. He cannot be shaken. Our business is to **obey Him**, let things crack and crumble as they may. He has Christ's interests in His keeping, and through all the ways in which the Spirit of God has wrought or may yet work in the Church, He holds fast to His purpose, "to head up all things in Christ." So that we need not fear, the things that cannot be shaken will remain without the assistance of our feeble hands.

To sum up briefly the ingathering of the past three years, it is the discovery that God rules, and has been ruling from the throne from the beginning, that has influenced many lives more profoundly than any previous spiritual experience. Nor is this experience confined to the small circle of the readers of these pages. It is plain to the watchers, to those who look for the signs of the times, that God has been

bringing this lesson home to all classes of His children, in all countries, in all the various divisions of the Church. Now God never works in vain, and the crying need of the time is for surrender to Him, for waiting upon Him, for quiet and patient prayer that we may be ready for Him.

It is time to clear the decks. Party strife, ecclesiasticism such as thwarted our blessed Lord's pathway in doing His Father's will on earth, envies, jealousies, and many a bitter fruit of man's will—all such hideous, unlovely, and unchristlike forms of evil must disappear before God's presence in power. The restlessness, too, and impatience, that, feeling the presence of these things, would fain put forth eager hands to remove them, are stilled and quieted when the reality of God's rule, His progress to the sanctuary, as in Psalm lxxviii., is known.

May God then give us younger ones, to whom I speak, for the coming year, a fresh sense of His government and its reality; may He enable us to go on quietly in the paths in which He has put us, each doing His will, waiting His time, serving Christ as He pleases and not as we please, seeking for a knowledge of His mind and His light upon the state of things in the Church and in the world, loving all saints and caring for them according to the love of Christ. Then we shall not be ashamed before Him at His coming.

As for the Bible Study, it may be that it has served its purpose in its present form. Hence we shall close this year with an outline of the remaining portion of Leviticus. Whatever may take the place of this Bible Study will, if the Lord permit, be announced in the January number of the *Christian's Library* for 1909.

Leviticus xvii.-xxvii.—The contrast between the portion of Leviticus which comes before the 16th chapter and that which follows it, is very interesting. Up to the 16th chapter the great question is of the manner of approach to God in the place where He dwells. Hence what suits Him, what is of sweet savour to Him, is dealt with first, then the question of all the things that hinder approach to God, and the way in which their defiling effects may be removed, is dealt with. Then, when the great question of how God can continue to dwell at all among such a people has been settled in the most wonderful way, in the 16th chapter, the question of the maintenance of God's authority and the display of His character in His people among whom He dwells, is taken up. Where God dwells two simple things must follow; first He will be obeyed, then His people must be like Him. Where these conditions are fulfilled the result is joy and divine order, "righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." Where these conditions are not fulfilled the result is disaster. God's government is a

reality. These are the subjects of the last ten chapters of Leviticus. The outline of them is as follows :—

(i.) c. **xvii.**—Here, when the fact of God's dwelling among His people has been established, we have first the assertion of God's supremacy. In Genesis ix., "every moving thing that liveth" had been given by God into man's hands for food. Now, the source of that authority is owned. They are to bring all their sacrifices to the place where God dwells that God may have His portion. It is a decision between God, their God who brought them out of the land of Egypt, and the demons (ver. 7) after whom they had wandered in their lusts.

Secondly, they had been forbidden to eat blood in Genesis ix. 4. Now, they are told that it is the blood that has been given to them upon the altar, to make atonement for their souls. It is the whole ground of the relationship between God and His people. It may not be eaten, but must be poured out. These two great principles follow directly from c. xvi., and form the link with the remainder of the book.

(ii.) cc. **xviii.-xxii.**—We might say that these chapters are the counterpart, at this period of God's ways, of Matthew v.-vii. Their great principle is that God will have His people like Himself. He has chosen them, and has caused **His Name** to dwell among them, in order that they may display His character, show forth His praise (Isa. xliii. 21). This, the keynote of these five chapters, is struck in xix. 2, and appears in the refrain, "I am Jehovah your God." They were not to be like Egypt, they were not to be like Canaan, but like Jehovah. This principle is applied first to individuals, then to the assembly, and then to the priests.

(iii.) c. **xxiii.**—Here we find that God's object in making us partakers of His holiness is to bring us into His rest. But the rest being broken, we have, in the seven feasts—

passover, unleavened bread, wave sheaf, Pentecost, trumpets, atonement, and tabernacles—a wonderful picture of the way in which God triumphantly rises above the effects of the fall, sin, and death, and through Christ brings in the joy and blessing of a new creation, and the eternal rest of God.

(iv.) c. **xxiv.**—Here we have a picture of the order and government following on the accomplishment of God's purposes in c. **xxiii.** So we find in Zechariah first the removal of iniquity in c. **iii.**, then the golden lampstand, and the government of the Lord of the whole earth in the hands of Zerubbabel (c. **iv.**); and lastly, the curse that cuts off the evil-doer without mercy (c. **v.**).

(v.) cc. **xxv.-xxvii.**—We have in the closing chapters the great principle, upon which alone hope and confidence can rest, reasserted. First the jubilee proclaims God's right by redemption. The land is **His**, and the people are **His**. They may not do what they like with the land, nor with one another, because they and their land alike belong to Him. Then the long history of the jubilee is gone over prophetically. The blessing of obedience, then the curse of disobedience, and the **discipline** of God (xxvi. 23) with its solemn results. But the end is hope, because God is God. There is an appointed end. "If they accept the punishment of their iniquity"—striking and significant words—"I will remember My covenant."

Finally, the question of God's title to everything is taken up in c. **xxvii.** (*cf.* Isa. xlv. 5). We find man hallowing what he possesses to God, and the recognition of God's claim and sovereign title to all.

May God give us to learn in His own way these lessons, and to know what that means—"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the **Most High** shall abide under the shadow of the **Almighty.**"

B. S. ED.