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#1. Right Division.

From time to time, as new readers are added, it becomes necessary that a word should be given so that the beginner in these studies may not feel himself quite unprovided for.

We feel it unnecessary, we are thankful to say, to elaborate the first great fundamental, namely, the absolute inspiration of the original Scriptures, an inspiration extending to the very words and letters. We cannot conceive of any who deny the inspiration of Scripture finding much to their liking in *The Berean Expositor*. The fundamental that we would lay before the reader just now is contained in II Tim. ii. 15, “rightly dividing the Word of truth”.

Accepting the Scripture as the Word of truth, we must exercise diligence to “rightly divide” them. This division has special reference to the varying dispensations under which man has been placed. What was true under the dispensation of Law, may be false under the dispensation of Grace. One has only to read such epistles as Romans, or Galatians, to realize how true this is. The differences also that are mentioned as found under the Old Covenant and the New, are emphasized in the epistle to the Hebrews, and II Corinthians iii. & iv. The teaching of the Gospel according to Matthew, with its emphasis upon the gospel of the kingdom of the heavens, is entirely different from the gospel say of the Epistle to the Ephesians. The *presence* and service of miraculous gifts, as recorded in the Gospels, the Acts, and the early Epistles of Paul, and the *absence* of such gifts in his prison ministry, demonstrate again the fact that under different dispensations God has been pleased to deal with men in different ways. The hopes of varying periods, too, differ in important details. The hope of Israel was centred in the Personal presence on the earth of the Messiah, and vitally connected with the throne of David. The hope of Abraham, and all who, like him, obtained a good report through faith (see Hebrews xi. & The Book of Revelation), was connected with “the city which hath the foundations”, “the new Jerusalem, the holy city”. The hope of the church of the one body is, that when “Christ, Who is our life, shall be made manifest, we shall also be made manifest with Him in glory” (Col. iii. 4).

The various ordinances that were enjoined at different times constitute another witness to the need for right division. Circumcision was enjoined very emphatically, as also the keeping of the Sabbath, yet one has only to read Paul’s epistles to find a complete and drastic change. Baptism in water was once essentially connected with the gospel proclamation, repentance, and remission of sins. Water baptism, however, does not constitute a part of the teaching of the Word that relates to the church of the mystery. The Lord’s Supper, with its inseparable link with the New Covenant, has no place in the dispensation of the mystery.

The order of Apostles, and the ministry generally, differ under different dispensations. Priesthood and sacrifices have ceased, and have no place at present with us. The Apostles of the Lamb do not include in their number the Apostles of the mystery connected with Paul. The organized gatherings of believers differ also. God’s “people” are Israel, they constitute, or will constitute, a kingdom. An election from among them will constitute “a royal priesthood.” The church formed during the period covered by the Acts of the Apostles will, together with an elect remnant of Israel, constitute the Bride (as distinguished from the Wife, who is to be restored after a long period of separation). The Church formed by God during the period covered by Israel’s rejection commencing with the end of the Acts, constitutes not the Bride of Christ, or the subjects of the kingdom of the heavens, but the Body of Christ, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.

Now the reader who has not studied the Scriptures very fully, will perhaps have a host of objections and questions which he would interject were we speaking to him instead of writing. We sympathized with all such, and the preparation of this series is our tangible expression of that sympathy. In this article we have called attention to the need for right division. In subsequent issues we shall hope to take up point by point, and show the teaching of the Word concerning it. It will be our endeavour to write

simply, and to confine ourselves as far as possible to one subject at a time, avoiding the tendency to use parenthesis, which we find is somewhat characteristic of our pen.

Letters from those for whom the articles are written will be appreciated, and will indicate what are the special difficulties with which we ought to deal.

#2. The Bible a Book of Purpose.

Having considered the fact that there are many and great differences in the various dispensations, it will be well to observe that all these different lines of truth are united, inasmuch as God is working out a mighty purpose, affecting heaven and earth, and that these changes of dispensational dealings instead of indicating experiment or caprice, are so many links in a wondrous chain. None but a superficial reader of the Bible will assume that the Scriptures are given to explain everything, or to answer all the enquiries of the human mind. There are some things which God kept secret for thousand of years, never revealed until He committed them to the Apostle Paul (*see* Ephesians iii.). There are some things concerning which we are told hardly anything. Take for example the Bible record of Satan. His first introduction into the page of Scripture is as a *fallen* being (Genesis iii.). No explanation is offered, no reason is given. We start the record of the purpose of God as pertains to man with the revealed yet unexplained fact. As it is with Satan's beginning, so with the last we hear of him. In Revelation xx. he is put into the lake of fire there to be tormented unto the ages of the ages. What happens to him at the end of that period Scripture does not say. Satan may be referred to under the figure of the king of Tyre in Ezek. xxviii. 11-19, but it may refer to some other being, and cannot be used as a definite argument.

The nearer Scripture approaches that section of God's purpose that is connected with Israel, the plainer and more definite it becomes. Israel's history fills the bulk of the Bible. The Nations have a comparatively small space, while the Church occupies a small portion of the New Testament. The things in heaven, the spiritual powers, are concerned with the great purpose unfolded in the Word, yet we know very little of what their place in that purpose will be.

There are many references in the Scriptures to the fact of a purpose, and it may be well for us to establish this before we proceed to enquire into the details of that purpose.

Romans viii. 28, ix. 11, Eph. i. 11, & II Tim. i. 9 are sufficient to show that the [salvation of men is part of a purpose](#). The word *prothesis* means "a placing before", and indicates a well-considered plan. That this plan or purpose is unalterable Eph. i. 9 and Jer. li. 29 will be sufficient to prove.

The words in II Tim. i. 9, "before the world began", are not strictly true as a translation. The original reads *pro chronōn aiōniōn*, and should be rendered "before age-times." Another occurrence of this same expression is found in Titus i. 2, where a somewhat parallel doctrine is discovered. Before the age-times, then, the purpose of God was formed, and in harmony with this is the teaching that the members of the One Body were "chosen in Him *before* the foundation of the world" (these words will be dealt with shortly, D.V.). Not only is it important to see that the purpose or plan of God was made before the age times, but that the very ages themselves are necessary part and platform for the unfolding and ripening of that purpose. Ephesians iii. 11 (A.V.) speaks of an "eternal purpose". Now while the thought in these words is very majestic, the teaching of the passage is not strictly rendered by them. The word "eternal" is an adjective, whereas in Eph. iii. 11 it is not the adjective *aiōniōs* that is used, but *aiōn*, "age". The true rendering of the passage, therefore, should be, "according to a purpose of the ages".

The Bible is occupied with that purpose. The Bible spans the ages. What was *before* the ages, and what lies *beyond*, is not strictly within the scope of the Book. Men labour to explain and emphasize *eternity*. Philosophy may burden the mind with the effort to grasp "that which has neither beginning nor end, that which has neither centre nor circumference", but the Bible does not. Scripture commences

with, "In the beginning God". From that basis, the Scriptures commence to unfold the purpose of the ages.

Having surveyed the Scriptures with regard to the *fact* of the purpose, we next consider some passages which relate to its *fulfilment*. Here at once we learn that the accomplishment of God's purpose does not rest with the creature, but with God Himself. Ephesians i. 11 is emphatic on this:--

"Being predestinated according to the purpose of Him Who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will."

Isaiah xlv. 9-11 also shows that the O.T. equally with the New demonstrates this fact:--

"I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure yea I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it."

We will not multiply passages, the Bible is insistent on this grand fact that the God Who purposes is the God also Who fulfils. This was the secret of Abraham's faith, for it is recorded in Rom. iv. 17-21:

"Before Him Whom he believed, even God Who quickeneth the dead and calleth those things which be not as though they were being fully persuaded that what He had promised He was able also to perform."

Nothing is so strengthening to faith, even in the small details of daily life, as this glorious fact that God is the fulfiller of His own will.

The next truth we would bring to notice is that the great centre of the purpose of the ages is the Lord Jesus Christ. Going back into the past we find that creation is the work of the Son of God. John in chapter i. of his Gospel speaks of Christ as the Word, Who was God (verse 1), Who became flesh, the only begotten of the Father (verse 14), and says:--

"All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made" (John i. 3).

Hebrews i. 10 says of Him:--

"And Thou, Lord, in the beginning has laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of Thine hands."

Colossians i. 16 speaks further of the creation, not only of visible but of invisible and mighty beings in the heavens, yet all the creatures of the Son of God. The first man Adam is "a figure of Him that was to come" (Rom. v. 14), and is placed in contrast with "the last Adam", Who is a life-giving Wpirit, "the second Man" Who is the Lord from heaven (I Cor. xv. 45-47). The promise of the seed of the woman (Genesis iii.) finds its fulfilment in the Person and work of the Son of God. All typical events and institutions, such as the Ark built by Noah, the Passover Lamb, the Tabernacle, the Offerings, the Priesthood, all find their anti-type and fulfilment in Christ.

Every prominent figure of the Old Testament pre-figures either Christ or Antichrist. We have only to think of some like Joseph, David, Moses, Pharaoh and Joshua to see how fully this can be demonstrated. However stupendous may have been such interferences with the course of nature at the Flood, the redemption from Egypt, the giving of the Law from Sinai, or however important such events as the fresh start after the flood, the entry into Canaan, the setting up of David's throne, yet all these events but lead on to one point called by God "the fulness of the time", marked by the most wonderful event made known to men:--

“When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law; to redeem them that were under the law” (Gal. iv. 4, 5).

So the purpose unfolds, ever revealing more and more the central place that the Son of God holds in its development, until we read of its fruition and full accomplishment when the Son, having brought the purpose of the ages to a glorious consummation, hands over to God a perfected kingdom, that God may be all in all (I Cor. xv. 24-28).

Not only have we the fact, the fulfilment, and the glorious centre of this purpose, but we further learn that all creatures are in some way agents in the mighty plan. So far as mankind is concerned it is divided into three classes, two of them racial and one spiritual. First, we have the two national divisions of Jew and Gentiles. Israel’s agency in the great purpose may be summed up in three particulars: (1) a chosen people, (2) a city (Jerusalem), and (3) a king (David typically, but Christ really). The Church, the spiritual agency, made up of an election from Jew and Gentile, constitutes the third agency. These three divisions run along the appointed ways without fusing, but draw near together by two great outstanding events, namely, the first and second coming of Christ.

Satan works along lines that closely resemble the working of God in some particulars, and his activities constitute a great opposing feature, overruled and made to contribute finally to the outworking of the purpose of the God of all grace.

After we have made clear, in another paper, the meaning of the purpose of the *ages*, we shall then be able to take up a little in detail the dispensations into which it is subdivided.

#3. The Ages. The words *aiōn* and *olam*.

Much has been written regarding “eternity.” Some teachers and preachers give one the impression, by their emphasis and repetition, that the soundness of their doctrine, their estimate of salvation, and their abhorrence of sin, will be largely gauged by the frequency and the vehemence with which the words *eternity* and *eternal* are employed.

We hear not only of eternal life, eternal punishment, eternal gospel, eternal purpose, etc., which, as they are quoted from the A.V. may in some degree be excused, but we hear also of eternal sin, eternal death, and other phrases which find no warrant even in the A.V. Those for whom these papers are written should acquaint themselves with the fact that the words rendered eternal, everlasting, for ever, etc., signify a period or periods of time, which have had or will yet have a beginning, and which have had or will yet have an end; which are not only spoken of in the singular, but in the plural. In volume I, pp.82-86, we touched just briefly upon the meaning of the Hebrew word *olam*, and the Greek word *aiōn*, words translated as of eternity, but words which by meaning and usage are limited to time. Our object then was a consideration of the teaching of Scripture relative to punishment; our object now is to consider the teaching of Scripture which is connected with these words themselves so far as they are fundamental to dispensational truth.

In the great majority of cases the word translated “everlasting”, “eternal”, “for ever”, are renderings of the Greek *aiōnios*, *aiōn*, and the Hebrew *olam*. The A.V. renders *aiōn* by “world”, “course”, “age”, “eternal”, and, in conjunction with various prepositions, etc., “since the world began”, “while the world standeth”, “world without end”, “from the beginning of the world”, “for ever”, “for evermore”, and “for ever and ever”.

The translation of a word that ranges from a world which had a *beginning* and will have an *end*, to an eternity which confessedly has neither beginning nor end, is too wide to be of service, especially when the choice of translation largely depends upon the bias of the translator. *Olam*, the Hebrew word, comes

from a word meaning something hidden or secret (*see* “secret faults”, Psa. xix. 12), and indicates a period of undefined limits. *Aiōn*, the Greek word, is used by the translators of the Septuagint to render the Hebrew *olam* into Greek, and this is the only true consistent meaning that we can give the word.

Students of the purpose of the ages will often find themselves turning the pages of Ecclesiastes, realizing in THE PREACHER one whose problems and experiences with regard to these things are often much like their own. In Ecclesiastes the word *olam* occurs seven times, and is translated by the A.V. as follows:--

- i. 4. “The earth abideth *for ever*.”
- i. 10. “It hath been already of *old time*.”
- ii. 16. “There is no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool *for ever*.”
- iii. 11. “He hath set the *world* in their heart.”
- iii. 14. “I know that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be *for ever*.”
- ix. 6. “Neither have they any more a portion *for ever*.”
- xii. 5. “Man goeth to his *long* home.”

Here we have “for ever”, “old time”, “world”, and “long” as translations of the one word *olam*. Such a variety of renderings gives no connected thought, and consequently the evident relation of these passages is missed. Supposing we take the original word in each passage and translate it by the word “age”, we at once realize that seven such references may contain much helpful teaching. Their order and connection likewise are made apparent, and their claim upon our attention is emphasized.

***Olam* in Ecclesiastes.**

- A | i. 4. The earth abideth to the *age*.—The passing generation.
- B | i. 10. It hath been already in or to the *ages*.—Nothing new under the sun.
- C | ii. 16. No remembrance of the wise more than of the fool to the *age*.—
Forgotten in the days to come.
- D | iii. 11. He hath set the *age* in their heart.—
Beginning to end of God’s work past finding out.
- C | iii. 14. Whatsoever God doeth, it shall be to the *age*.—God’s work remains.
- B | ix. 6. Neither have they any more a portion to the *age*.—No portion under the sun.
- A | xii. 5. Man goeth to his *age* home.—The passing generation.

Leaving these passages until we are more prepared to consider their teaching in detail, we pass on to another cluster of seven, this time in New Testament, namely, in Ephesians. There the word *aiōn* is translated as inconsistently as we found its parallel *olam* in Ecclesiastes.

- i. 21. “This *world*.”
- ii. 2. “The *course* of this world.”
- ii. 7. “The *ages* to come.”
- iii. 9. “From the beginning of the *world*.”
- iii. 11. “*Eternal* purpose.”
- iii. 21. “Throughout all *ages world without end*.”
- vi. 12. “Rulers of the darkness of this *world*.”

Here we have a strange assortment. This *world*, which had a *beginning*, but which has *no end*, the *course* of this world, and the *eternal* purpose. Translate the word *aiōn* consistently, and order, light, and instruction take place of human tradition and confusion.

Aiōn in Ephesians.

- A | i. 21. Rulers of this and the coming *age*.—
Subject to Christ in resurrection.
- B | ii. 2. The *age* of the world.—Satanic energy (*energō*).
- C | ii. 7. *Ages* to come.—Display of divine grace (future).
- D | iii. 9. Hid since the *ages*.—The mystery.
- C | iii. 11. The purpose of the *ages*.—Display of divine wisdom (now).
- B | iii. 21. The generations of the *age* of the *ages*.—Divine energy (*energō*).
- A | vi. 12. Rulers of the darkness of this *age*.—
Withstood by believers in resurrection power.

All lovers of the Word must see how great is the loss which we all have sustained through the traditional translation. “The eternal purpose” sounds very grand, it gives a certain sound of reality and indefectibility to the purpose of God, yet it is a double violation. The noun *aiōn* is translated as though it were the adjective *aiōnion*, apart from the mistake of putting eternity where age should have been. What we have to learn is that the Bible does not speak of eternity. It was not written to tell us of eternity. Such a consideration is entirely outside the scope of revelation. Many, many undreamed wonders will doubtless be unfolded when the ages are no more. What they will be and what they will involve is idle and profitless speculation. The Word of God as it has been given is a complete system of teaching *for us*; it does not treat fully of the creation around us, much less of the time before or after. While we acknowledge that there is much which our curiosity would tempt us to ask about, we do most heartily bow before the divine boundaries of our studies, realizing that by the repeated emphasis upon the teaching of the *ages*, and the absence of teaching concerning *eternity*, that the Lord is still showing us (as is expressed in Ecclesiastes) that the time has not yet arrived when we may “find out the work that God maketh *from the beginning to the end*.”

We have already, in *Answers to Correspondents* (page 79), indicated that our minds are likely to bring unscriptural notions along with the words “age” and “age-long”, beside the fact that *aiōnios* means something more than *length* of time. Therefore, while retaining in the title the English “ages”, in the articles themselves we shall transliterate the word and use *aiōn*, allowing the reader the same liberty and scope that he would have were he reading the original.

#4. The Ages made and adjusted.

“God, Who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by (His) Son, Whom He hath appointed heir of all things, through Whom also He made the ages” (Hebrews i. 1, 2).

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For in this the elders were attested. By faith we perceive the ages to have been adjusted by a declaration of God that the things which are seen have not come to pass out of things which are apparent” (Heb. xi. 1-3).

Here in the epistle to the Hebrews we find two important passages that must not be passed over hurriedly by the earnest student. The ages were *made*, the ages were *adjusted*, the existing economy did not arise merely as a matter of course. The contexts of the two passages must be considered. In the first, the wondrous glory of the Son of God shines forth; in the second, the faith of the overcomers, leading on to the author and finisher of faith (Heb. xii. 2), is prominent. In both, the final word is either, “sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on High”, or, “is set down at the right hand of the throne of God”, and in both there is a reference to redemption, “purged our sins”, and “endured a cross”.

It will be necessary to make the meaning of these passages as clear as possible in order that subsequent consideration may not be rendered ineffective.

Before looking at the contexts, and gathering up the teaching of the verses quoted above, we must endeavour to settle the meaning of one or two words.

Dia hou, "Through whom."—Some translators have rendered these words, "For whom", and as it is of great importance to understand which of these two phrases is the true one, we will give a little time to their study.

Dia, followed by the genitive case, signifies the efficient cause, through or by; followed by the accusative, the final cause, for, on account of. Such is the grammatical rule. It can be easily illustrated from the New Testament usage. With the genitive:-- Rom. i. 5, "*Through Whom* we received grace"; v. 1, "Peace *through* our Lord Jesus Christ"; iii. 24, "*Through* the redemption"; John i. 3, "all things were made *through* Him". With the accusative:-- I Cor. ix. 23, "This I do *for* the gospel's sake"; Rom. iv. 23-25, "*For* His sake but *for* us *on account* of our offences *on account* of our justifying". These few instances will be sufficient for a general view. The distinction between *dia hou* and *dihon* is made for us in the very epistle we are considering. Hebrews ii. 10, "For whom (accusative) are all things and by whom (genitive) are all things". While we believe it to be true that the ages were made *for* or *on account* of Christ, yet that is not the truth of the verse before us. Just as John.i.3 declares that all things were made *by him* (*dia autou*), and Col. i. 16 that all things were created by Him (*dia autou*), so Hebrews i. teaches us that the ages are a part of His work. He made them. They form a part of the great purpose that necessitated them. The quotation from Heb. xi. 3 is more difficult to apprehend, and a few helps to its understanding may be welcomed.

The word translated "framed" (*katartizo*) is used elsewhere in Hebrews, namely, Heb. x. 5, "A body hast Thou prepared Me", and Heb. xiii. 21, "make you perfect". The word occurs thirteen times in the N.T., and the first occurrence, Matt. iv. 21, "*mending* their nets", conveys one of the principal ideas of the word, namely the restoration, mending, or readjustment of parts; the idea of "fitted" seems best in Rom. ix. 22, "fitted to destruction".

We shall probably obtain most help by a more careful study of the use of the word in Hebrews itself. In Heb. x. 5, "a body hast Thou prepared Me", cannot convey the meaning of restoration, which sometimes attaches to the word *katartizo*. The verse is a quotation from Psa. xl. 6, yet when we turn to that passage we read, "mine ears hast Thou opened" (margin, Heb. "digged") instead of "a body hast Thou prepared me". "Opened" is misleading; the passage does not refer to the "hearing", but to the custom of Exod. xxi. 6. It was the sign of willing submission. This is carried out in the parallelism, "I come to do Thy will, O Lord". Hence, while Heb. x. 5 is not a literal *quotation*, it is an inspired *commentary*, and the "prepared" body of the Lord is referred to in Phil. ii. 7, "made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the *form* of a servant", in contrast to the glorious "form" of God. The same sense will apply to Heb. xiii. 21, and it would seem that we must keep to that aspect of its meaning in Heb. xi. 3, "By faith therefore we understand that the ages were prepared and adjusted by the word of God".

We must not confuse the expression "by the word of God", with *the Logos* ("The Word") of John.i.1. The word here is *rhema*, and occurs in Hebrews four times, the first passage being Heb. i. 3, "Upholding all things by the *word* of His power". He who can thus uphold all things, also perfectly adjusted the ages by the same word. This perfect adjustment, among other reasons, had the one in view which is written here, "that the things which are seen have not come to pass out of things which are apparent". The succeeding verses contain illustrations of this truth. Noah prepared an ark when warned of things "not seen as yet"; Abraham, going out "not knowing whither he went"; Moses endured "as seeing Him Who is invisible". The secret of their faith was that they did not judge by outward circumstances. They understood that the ages were perfectly fitted together, knew they were all

prepared by God, and they relied upon His unalterable word. Even the dispensations which are within the ages have somewhat the same character. The dispensation of the mystery certainly would never have been anticipated by any before its revelation. The purpose of the ages, and the making of the ages are both in His hands, and we rest content that it is so.

#5. The Dispensations.

We have seen that the Bible records the purpose of the ages, and that those ages are the periods during which various phases of that wondrous purpose are developed.

In a great house there are rooms set apart for different purposes, the performance of which is proper in their place. In an army, or a kingdom, there are varying ranks and duties. So also it is with regard to the development of the purpose. The ages are not only characterized by some one covering title, viz., “this evil age”, “the age to come”, etc., but are also subdivided into what we may call dispensations. The word is not used of all these divisions in the Scripture, but we use it because no other word seems so fitting. Nothing is included in the Scriptures that is irrelevant to the unfolding of this purpose. *Creation* is a part of this great plan. To grasp this will alter to a great extent our outlook. Traditional orthodoxy seems to teach that having created man upon the earth, and man having failed, God then devised the scheme of redemption. We shall find that this is not so. Redemption, as a part of the purpose of the ages, was settled before man was made.

Creation must be considered in two aspects. First there is the primal creation recorded in Gen. i. 1. Although the earth is full of the geological remains of a creation prior to that of the six days, no details are given in the Bible. We must not suppose, however, that this primal creation of heaven and earth has no place in the purpose of God. It was in that creation that angels and principalities were created. In that creation Satan had a place of honour and that creation ended with darkness and judgment. Hebrews.ix. tells us that the heavenlies need the cleansing of redemption as well as the earth. As that early creation, however, has not so much to do with the first revealed truth concerning man, two short verses suffice at the commencement of the Bible. The creation that follows is given with more detail; the six days’ work ending with the seventh day’s rest being typical of the earthly and manward development of the purpose of the ages. Earthly we say, by way of excluding that calling (which was kept secret since the ages) enunciated in the prison epistles, but not earthly to the exclusion of the heavenly calling as set forth in Hebrews, I & II Peter, and Revelation. The term, “the heavens and the earth”, opens the Bible. Genesis i. 1 tells us of the first which ended in the darkness and chaos of verse 2. Gen. ii. 1 tells of the second which continues until the day of God; while II Pet. iii. 13 tells us that there shall be a new heavens and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.

It is necessary to make a distinction between the “earth” and the “world”. The word “world” indicates arrangement and order, and it has been pointed out to us that II Pet. iii. 6 tells us that the “world”, not the earth, perished in the time referred to by Peter.

Covering the great span of the ages we find “times and seasons”. “Time” (*chronos*) conveys the idea of periods that are measured of, within which certain events take place, whereas “seasons” (*kairos*) speaks rather of the fitness of those times to the event. We use two words in English with similar distinction, The *time* that some event happened may be 30th September at 4p.m.; the *season* would be summer. Several “days” are mentioned too. There is “man’s day”, translated “man’s judgment” in I.Cor.iv.3, there is also the day of the Lord, the great and terrible day of the Lord, the day of God, and there is also (hidden by our A.V.) the day of (the) age (II Pet. iii. 18). Coupled with this we read of “the acceptable year of the Lord and the day of vengeance of our God”.

When we examine in greater detail these various phases of the great outworking, we shall see that the six days’ creation, followed by the seventh day’s rest, is the great initial foreshadowing of the purpose in

boldest outline, afterwards filled in with more and more detail during the various “times”, “ages”, “seasons”, & “days”, and including the heavens and the earth, time past, present, and to come, until the cycle of the ages shall have become completed in the new heavens and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.

These times, seasons, ages, and days are subdivided into what are termed “dispensations”. Do not use the terms “dispensation” and “age” as though they meant the same thing. During one age many dispensations may have run their course. During one age two or more dispensations may be running side by side. The very fact that God has a purpose of election will necessitate this. It is not pretended that the following series of dispensations is necessarily true either in number or in the period covered. All we can hope to do is to point out obvious changes in God’s administrations, leaving an open mind for further light and fuller detail. Perhaps it would be more correct if we say that this series keeps close to the central thread of the purpose, closely following its development along the line of election of man, nation or church, leaving nations and individuals who are outside the elective sphere unaccounted for.

For instance, during the time that the dispensations covering Israel’s existence were in operation, there was a distinctly different dispensational attitude toward the nations. It was a period when God *condoned* (“winked at”) their ignorance. Following, however, the main line of purpose from Adam, through Seth, to Noah and Abraham, we shall find the following sub-divisions to be helpful in our study, and fairly close to the division that Scriptures indicate.

The Dispensations.

- 1st. The six days’ creation to the fall of Adam.
- 2nd. From the fall of Adam to the flood.
- 3rd. From the renewed world after the flood to the call of Abraham.
- 4th. From the call of Abraham to the Exodus from Egypt.
- 5th. From the deliverance from Egypt to the entrance into Canaan.
- 6th. From the entrance into Canaan to the setting up of the kingdom.
- 7th. From David to the Babylonian captivity.
- 8th. From the captivity to the birth of Christ.
- 9th. From the birth to the death and resurrection of Christ.
- 10th. From the day of Pentecost to Israel’s rejection in Acts xxviii.
- 11th. The *prison* ministry of Paul called “the dispensation of the mystery.”
- 12th. Commences with the recognition of Israel and is characterized by wrath.
- 13th. Occupies the thousand year reign of Christ. The millennium.
- 14th. Occupies the period that follows the millennium unto the great white throne.
- 15th. Completes the series commencing with the new creation and ending with “God all in all.”

In one sense of course numbers 4-10 might be included under one head, i.e. from the call of Abraham to the rejection in Acts xxviii. 28, but we feel that the divisions suggested will make the unfolding of the purpose clearer. While we keep before our mind the divisions of the Word, and note the different aspects of truth that are peculiar to each dispensation, it will be well to remember that underlying all dispensations are one or two items of the greatest importance that enter the first dispensation and remain until the last. We refer to sin and death. Without the awful presence of sin and death the dispensational unfolding of God’s purpose could never have taken the form it has done. Accompanying sin and death are varying manifestations of law, grace, mercy and judgment. In some dispensations one will be found more prominent than another, so that one dispensation will be known as that of law, although grace and mercy are very evident in many of the dealings recorded.

We shall devote our attention, the Lord willing, to the consideration of these fifteen dispensations, and we believe that when these are seen in their large outlines, the difficult and detailed study of the dispensation more closely to do with ourselves will be entered with greater profit.

Without promising to reply personally to letters on this subject, should any point need further clearing up as we go along, a card or letter from any enquirer will be kept in mind and if possible dealt with in its place in the series.

#6. The Primal Creation (Gen. i. 1).

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen. i. 1).
 “We according to His promise look for a new heaven and a new earth,
 wherein dwelleth righteousness” (II Pet. iii. 13).
 “And i saw a new heaven and a new earth” (Rev. xxi. 1).

Between these two sets of Scripture rolls the great purpose of the ages, occupying “the heavens and the earth which are now” (II Pet. iii. 7). Genesis i. 1 is severed off from the rest of the Bible. It is unique. At Gen. i. 2 we enter into a sphere of darkness and chaos, which will never be removed until the true light of righteousness shines forth in the new heavens and earth where the “former things” have passed away. For the sake of those for whom these “fundamentals” are written we must explain Genesis i. 1 & 2 a little more in detail.

Graphically it may be considered thus:--

Genesis i. 1.	Genesis i. 3 to Revelation xx.	Revelation xxi.
<i>Creation.</i>	<i>The creation of the six days.</i>	<i>The new heavens</i>
	Sin and death enter. Sin and death destroyed.	<i>and new earth.</i>
Past.	The ages span this section.	Future.

The creation referred to in Gen. i. 1 must not be taken necessarily as referring to the creation of the six days that follow.

To those who find suggestions in the numerical phenomena of Scripture it may be interesting to note that the words, “The heavens and the earth”, occur in the Hebrew Bible fourteen times. Thirteen times with *eth*, a particle that lends emphasis, and once without. Thirteen indicates rebellion while fourteen is suggestive of perfection. Perfection is further stamped upon this first verse by the fact that the Hebrews words used are 7 in number, containing 14 syllables (2*7) and 28 letters (4*7).

The creation “in the beginning” and the creation “in six days” are divided off from each other by the chaos and darkness of the second verse. As the words in verse 2 stand in the A.V., “The earth *was* without form and void”, they seem to support the false idea known as the *Nebular Theory*, which supposes the gradual evolution of the earth from a gaseous chaotic mass. The words, “without form and void”, are in the Hebrew *tohu va bohu*. In Isa. xlv. 18 we read of the earth, “He created it not *tohu*”. The word “was” in Gen. i. 2 is translated “became” in Gen. ii. 7, “Man *became* a living soul” — he was not such before, and in iv. 3, “It *came to pass*” is the reading. Genesis i. 2, if rendered “The earth became without form and void”, brings the verse into line with Isa. xlv. 18 and gives the sense of the passage. There is an indication of judgment in the words, “without form, void and darkness”. Notice the way Jeremiah uses the expression in a context of judgment.

“I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was without form and void; and the heavens, and they had no light I beheld, and, lo, there was no man I beheld, and, lo, the fruitful place was a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down at the presence of the Lord, and by His fierce anger” (Jer. iv. 23-26).

Isaiah xxiv. 10 speaks of the city of “confusion” (*tohu*), and in verses 1, 3, & 19 are such parallel expressions as:--

“The Lord maketh the earth *empty*, He maketh it *waste*, the land shall be *utterly emptied* and *utterly spoiled*, the earth is *utterly broken down*, *clean dissolved* and *moved exceedingly*.”

The reason is given in verses 20, 21:--

“The transgressions thereof shall be heavy upon it The Lord shall punish the host of the high ones on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth.”

Here it will be observed the punishment of “high ones on high” (“the powers in the heavens” that are to be “shaken”, Matt. xxiv. 29) is connected with judgment falling upon the earth. In Isa. xxxiv. 11 we meet *tohu* and *bohu* again in a context of judgment, “the line of *confusion* and the stones of *emptiness*”. This judgment is likewise connected with judgment in the heavens. Verse 4 says:--

“And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll.”

Allusion to the tokens of judgment that followed Adam’s sin is found in verse 13 in the words, “thorns, nettles, and brambles.” Burning pitch and brimstone indicate Sodom and Gomorrha as further types. Verse 4 already referred to makes us think of II Peter iii. and Rev. vi. 14. In II Pet. iii. 10 we are told that “the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise”, and again in verse 12, “the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved”. This third chapter from verses 3 to 13 is entirely occupied with lessons drawn from the heavens and the earth, past, present, and future. These verses correspond in the structure of the epistle to II Pet. ii. 1-22. In chapter ii. the flood in the days of Noah, and the destruction of Gomorrha in the days of Lot, are instanced as examples of future judgment. A still earlier judgment is referred to in the third chapter. Verse 4 takes us back to “the beginning of the creation” — clearly Gen. i. 1; verses 5 & 6 speak of this beginning under the terms:--

“The heavens of old and earth having its subsistence out of water and in water, by the word of God, through which (waters) the then world, deluged with water, perished” (II Pet. iii. 5, 6).

The *then* world refers to the complete order of things connected with the heavens and earth of II Pet. iii. 5. It is evident that the *world* that then was refers to the order of things pertaining to the first heavens and earth, because the parallel to the *world* that then was is the *heavens and earth* which are now, which came into being in Genesis i. & ii. The *types* of both are found in II Peter ii., as already mentioned. The flood of the days of Noah did not destroy the heavens and the earth, neither did the fire in the days of Lot, but they both set forth in type the judgment and time of the end. It is evident that a close parallel is instituted between the judgment on the first heavens and earth, and that on the second. The one by the word of God is destroyed by water; the other is to be destroyed by fire. The darkness which was upon the face of the deep (the waters whereby the then world perished) is another token of judgment. II Peter ii. 4 and Jude 6 speak of darkness in connection with the judgment of the angels that sinned. Darkness was one of the plagues of Egypt, even as it will be in the days to come upon a greater Pharaoh (Exod. x. 21, 22 and Joel ii. 2, 3). What we learn from the Scripture leads us to see that into the creation of the beginning sin entered, and in its train came confusion, vanity, and darkness. Man was as then uncreated. Angels and spirit beings there were, and angels sinned and fell. The tempter of Eve was already a fallen *one* (being) before Adam’s transgression. There is a deeply important lesson to be learned by considering how little is told us in this part of Scripture (indeed in any part of Scripture) regarding the primal creation and primal sin. It is possible that the six days’ creation is very much more limited in scope than that of Gen. i. 1, yet it is set out in detail.

The Bible is written as a revelation of God to MAN, and many things outside his sphere, though subjects of his enquiry and curiosity, do not come within the scope of Scripture.

When man, looking out into this wider sphere and thinking of the destiny of angels and principalities, or of the possibilities that lie beyond the ages to come, when man asks as Peter did, “what shall this man do?”, he too is reminded of the need to keep to the things revealed concerning himself and to find his employment and delight not in adding to the unrevealed things of God, but in seeking a full and clear understanding of what is written.

The present creation, the sphere of man’s sin and redemption, is the first great stone in the foundation of the purpose of the ages as pertains to man. This, therefore, will occupy our attention in the next article of this series.

#7. The Six Days of Creation.

The first act of God that is recorded as taking place in the present order of things is an act of restoration, an act of giving life out of death, and light out of darkness. This present creation was ushered in by an act of grace, even as it will be followed by the fruit of glory. Many of our readers may remember arguments designed to adjust Genesis i. with geology. Genesis is God’s revelation, geology is man’s imperfect discovery. We do not need to adjust God’s revelation to man’s imperfect discoveries. We have to be careful, however, to distinguish between *God’s* revelation and *man’s* interpretation.

Here geology and theology stand more upon equal terms. The one is the finding of erring men in the records of God’s *works*, the other the finding of erring men in His *word*. These findings may continually disagree, but between *His* works and *His* word there can exist nothing but harmony. One set of interpreters tell us that the earth was brought into existence, was created in the absolute sense of the term, about 6,000 years ago. Another set tell us that they require countless millions of years to account for what they see in the crust of the earth. Some demand a period wherein the fossilized remains of extinct animals, and the fossilized forests that make the coal fields, shall have lived and flourished. Others, by reason of their attachment to another interpretation, have gone so far as to assert that the rocks were created with the fossils in them just as we find them! The microscope turns the chalk cliffs of Dover into masses of minute shells, shells which once contained living organisms. When once we have seen that the present creation which occupied six days in making is a *successor* to one that was created “in the beginning”, the demands of the geologist for as many million years as he may require make not the slightest alteration necessary in the revelation of God. The six days’ creation is set out in detail, and the order and arrangement as given seem to be purposely designed to foreshadow the sequence of events that constitute the outworking of the purpose of the ages. Six days are occupied in work, one in rest. That there is some definite arrangement may be seen in the following.

1 st day.	A Day and Night. Division. Light.
2 nd day.	B Waters. Division. The Firmament.
3 rd day.	C Earth. Division. Grass, herb and fruit.
4 th day.	A Day and night. Division. Light bearers.
5 th day.	B Waters. The Firmament.
6 th day.	C Earth. For cattle, grass. For man, seed and fruit.

It will be observed that the first three days complete the extent of creation, that is to say, they deal with light, heaven, and earth. In the second set of three those creatures that are to appropriate and enter into the creation already brought forth are created. The light of the first day is concentrated on the fourth day; there we have not light, but luminaries or light-bearers. The day and the night which were divided from one another in the first day, are ruled over by the moon and the sun, respectively, on the

fourth. The waters and the firmament are dealt with on the second day. The waters already exist (they are not created on the second day), but a firmament is made which divides the waters from the waters. Some of the waters with which “the world that then was perished” have been lifted up above the firmament which God called heaven. These waters are referred to in Psa. cxlviii. 4, “Praise Him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be *above* the heavens”, and again in Psa. civ. 2, 3, “Who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain (the idea of the word firmament); who layeth the beams of His chambers in the *waters*”. There is something here that has not yet entered into astronomy. The waters that were left on the earth are made to produce not only sea creatures, but also “fowls to fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven”. So the fifth day completes the second. The third day deals with the earth. First its separation from the waters, and then the fruitfulness of the earth, spoken of as grass, herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself. The sixth day sees the creation of beast and man. To the lower animals is given every green herb for meat. To man, the herb bearing seed, and the tree in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed.

Thus the whole creation is rounded off, all is adapted and prepared for its use, from the sun that rules the day to the provision of the green herb for the creeping things on the earth.

The seventh day God ended His work which He had made, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. The two words translated “finished” (Gen. ii. 1), and “ended” (ii. 2), are translations of a word which indicates totality. The creation thus brought about was finished and ended. Any subsequent work or creation that may be attributed to God must therefore be of another creation than this present one. Where it speaks of God resting, it is “from all His work which He had made”, and “created and made” (Gen. ii. 2, 3). The work of the seven days occupied in the creation and making of “the heavens and the earth which are now” contains all the elements and provide the platform necessary for the outworking of the great plan of the ages.

We must be prepared to learn many lessons that may at first prove hard, by a recognition of this fact. On every hand we are faced with the fact that there are not only wonderful creatures, animal, vegetable, and mineral, that easily typify all that we mean by the word “good”, but that created by the same hand there are countless other creatures, animal, vegetable, and mineral, that aptly typify all that we mean by the word “evil”. The venomous snake is the creature of the same One who fashioned its harmless victim. The One who so marvellously sealed up the fruiting bud to preserve the precious life within, also created an insect armed with the necessary boring appliances to pierce through that protective covering, and deposit an egg which should produce devastation. These things are mysterious and are unanswerable upon any basis that ignores the purpose of the ages. That purpose definitely moves on beyond this present life. Vanity is written from beginning to end of this creation, and the teeming life, with its types of good and evil, its sheep and its goats, its serpents and its doves, its thorns and its figs, its darkness and its light, these speak plainly of the moral and spiritual state through which the creation is passing and urges us onward to “the rest that remaineth”. When pursuing various lines of research into the purpose of the ages, we are apt at times to fall into the error of laying down a law as to what God can and cannot do. While we know that He can do nothing unrighteous, we should be very careful that our standard is not self originated. In many instances when the Scripture brings us up against some problem, we are definitely faced with a fact that silences much argument, viz., GOD IS CREATOR. A well known instance is that reply of Paul given in Rom. ix. 20. Who among us has not had searchings of heart before the revelation of the purpose of election. Who has not felt at one time or another a questioning spirit that would, if allowed to go on, arraign the great God before the bar of our understanding? Or, when attempting to meet the objections put forth by others, how many times have we elaborated the argument concerning the sovereign grace of God? The Apostle embarks upon no long reasoned explanation. The questioner is taken immediately into the presence of the Creator, “Nay but, O man, who art thou that disputest with God? Shall the thing formed say to Him that formed it, Why hast Thou made me thus?”. Another typical example is found in the case of Job. Stoutly and persistently Job

argues his case against the three friends. Job had “justified himself rather than God”, and Elihu proceeds to reprove him. Job had complained that God had unjustly sought occasion to afflict him (xxxiii. 8-11). What is Elihu’s answer to this? “Behold, in this thou art not just. I will answer thee, that *God is greater than man*” (12). Here is a strange answer, not God is more righteous than man, but *greater*, and that He giveth not an account of any of His matters. Elihu returns to this statement again in xxxv. 5, and again in xxxvi. 26. Then from the storm Jehovah spake to Job, and again there is the direct appeal to the stupendous work of creation. Job is overwhelmed with the appalling greatness of the One against whom he had dared to murmur. “Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?” “Hast thou searched the secrets of the deep?” “Where is the way where light dwelleth?” “Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades?” “Doth the hawk fly by thy wisdom”. Job is brought low by this first utterance of the Lord, saying, “Behold, I am vile” (xl. 4). Again the Lord addresses Job, and again there is an overpowering exhibition of the strength of the Creator. The Lord draws Job’s attention to the Behemoth (probably the hippopotamus) and to Leviathan (probably the crocodile). There is no reference to God’s righteousness in the passage, but simply the impotence of any to stand against Him. Of the crocodile God can say, “None is so fierce that dare stir him up”, and follows that remark by saying, “who then is able to stand before *Me*?”. Again the Lord continues His description, and again, without one word of teaching concerning the question of whether God *can* rightly do this or do that with His creatures (the case in point), Job utterly breaks down. Job answers (we quote from the beautiful metrical version of the late Dr. Bullinger):--

“I know, i know, that Thou canst all things do:
 No purposes of Thine can be withstood.
 [Thou askedst (xxxviii. 3; xl. 2)] — ‘Who is this that counsel hides,
 And darkens all, because of knowledge void?’
 ‘Tis i! I uttered things i could not know;
 Things far too wonderful, beyond my ken.
 Hear now, i pray Thee: let me speak this once.
 [Thou saidst (xl. 2)] — ‘Tis I who ask thee: Answer Me.’
 I heard of Thee by hearing of the ear,
 But now mine eye hath seen Thee, i abhor
 [myself]. In dust and ashes i repent” (xlii. 2-6).

The reader will call to mind many other passages where the Lord refers in a similar way to the great initial and unanswerable fact of creation. To say that because the term righteousness is not mentioned by the Lord, that therefore it is excluded, however, is not true. If we will only think for a moment we shall see that the creation involves righteousness as a fundamental.

If an engineer does not act righteously in design and construction, his machine will fail. Scrupulous care in measurement, adjustment, and material are first principles in successful work. The fact that creation has come into being so perfectly adapted for its multitudinous functions, so true in its response to the “laws of nature”, reveals to the anointed eye righteousness on every hand. Instead of endeavouring to frame an *abstract* standard of righteousness, and then bringing to that standard the actions and purposes of God, we shall, when we have the closer acquaintance with God that Job had, realize that those very works and deeds that at first we hesitated not to question, carry with them their own justification, for if they were not right they could not be. While this view will simplify the issues in one respect, it will increase the problem in another, for we shall learn with chastened Job that in saying what God can or cannot do with the work of His hands, we have uttered things we could not know; things far too wonderful, beyond our ken.

Job xxxviii.-xli. asks us questions which deal with the realm which is within the bounds of scientific investigation, and, with all our boasted knowledge, what can we answer to the questions of the Lord. This, scripturally, should close our mouths from uttering what God will do in ages yet to be.

#8. The Firmament; its relation to the Ages.

There are one or two items of importance that must be observed before we pass on from the creation of the six days as a whole, to the creation of man in particular.

On the first day God said, "Light be, and light was", and "God saw the light that it was good". This last expression follows the appearing of the dry land and gathering of the waters into one place (Gen.i.10). Again, on this third day the expression occurs after the earth brought forth the herb and the fruit tree (12). The appointment of the sun and moon ruling over the day and night is also "good" (18). The creation of the inhabitants of the waters and of every winged fowl is pronounced good (21).

The sixth day saw the earth bring forth cattle, the beast and the creeping thing, and these are pronounced good (25). Man, too, is created on this day, and he is blessed (28), while the sixth day does not end without the record, "And God saw everything that He had made, and behold it was very good". Seven times in the six days therefore do we find the word "good". Twice does the expression occur on the third day, and twice on the sixth. The one day where the word is not recorded is the second, the day when "God made the firmament" which He called "heaven". The question arises immediately as to why the Lord did not say that this was good.

The reader will observe that while the first verse tells us of the creation of both the heavens and the earth, verse 2 goes on to speak of only one section of that creation, namely, the earth. It is the *earth* that becomes without form and void, and it is upon the face of the *waters* that the Spirit of God moves. The heavens are not mentioned here. We are not told that the heavens became involved in chaos, nor, if they were, that they were brought through into light again. When we come to the second day we read that God makes a firmament, and this firmament He "*called heaven*". This means the heavens that are now are not the heavens of Gen. i. 1. There has come in a temporary "heaven", which is to last only for the course of the ages. Its first name is "a firmament", this name is descriptive of its nature, and in the A.V. margin is given "*Heb. expansion*". The Hebrew word is *rakia*, and comes from *raka*—"To stretch forth". Job xxxvii. 18 uses this word, "Hast thou with Him *spread out* the sky, which is strong, and as a molten looking glass?" Exodus xxxix. 3 keeps close to the meaning of the word in the passage from Job, "And they did *beat* the gold into thin plates". So again in Isa. xl. 19, "the goldsmith *spreadeth it over* with gold". *Rakia* occurs 17 times in the Old Testament, being always rendered "firmament". Genesis i. contains nine of these occurrences.

Let us endeavour to find out all that is written concerning this firmament, the heavens of the present, which were not seen to be "good" in the eyes of the Creator. Genesis i. 6 makes the primary purpose of the firmament plain. (1) It was to be "in the midst of the waters", and (2) it was to "divide the waters from the waters". Verse 7 shows that this purpose was put into operation, "and God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so". "It was so." When we look out over the "expanse" (*rakia*) away to the blue sky, however far the extent of that expanse may be, we know that above it are waters, and that it was made to divide the waters. Further, verse 8 tells us that God called the firmament *heaven*. It appears, therefore, that while the creation of the six days is in view, "the heavens" always refer to this firmament. The next reference to the firmament, by the use of the "Genitive of Apposition", draws our attention to this "the firmament of the heavens" of verse 14, meaning the firmament which is the heavens. In this firmament God placed two great lights, for signs and for seasons, and for days, and years, to give light upon the earth. Verse 20 concludes the references to the firmament by telling of the fowls that fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.

The next time we meet the word the limitation of the term is prominent. "*The heavens* declare the glory of God; and *the firmament* sheweth His handiwork" (Psa. xix. 1). The sun, placed in the firmament according to Genesis i., is here seen running his appointed course "from the end of the

heavens, and his circuit unto the ends of it” (Psa. xix. 6). Psalm cl. calls for praise to God (1) in His sanctuary and (2) in the firmament of His power. Ezekiel and Daniel alone of the Prophets refer to the firmament. A careful study of Ezek. i. 22-26, a highly complex passage, will, we believe, reveal that the firmament of Ezekiel i. is not that of Genesis i., but that it gives us *in symbol* what the firmament of Genesis i. is with regard to God and the outworking of His purposes.

Ezekiel i. 22 commences, “And *the likeness* of the firmament”. Likeness figures largely in the descriptions given in this chapter. Instead of saying, “Out of the midst thereof came four living creatures”, we read, “... came *the likeness* of four living creatures” (verse 5). The likeness of the firmament was upon the heads of the living creatures, and under the firmament were their wings. Above this firmament was the likeness of a throne, and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness of the appearance of a man above upon it. Here, this likeness sets forth hidden realities and their import. Above the firmament upon a throne sits One who is like man — this is none other than Christ, the Image of God. Beneath the firmament are four living creatures, called Cherubim in chapter x.

Daniel xii. 3 is the only other reference. It is to this firmament that Scripture refers at the time of the flood when it says, “The windows of *heaven* were opened”, and we have been told already of the waters that are above the firmament. Here for the time is the throne of God (Psa. xi. 4). His glory, however, is above the earth and the heavens (Psa. cxlviii. 13). At verse 4 in this Psalm reference is made to the waters that are above the firmament, and to the heavens of heavens, which is the higher sphere of God’s activity, beyond the limitations of “the heavens and earth which are now”. To this age limit refer all the references of Ecclesiastes, “under the heaven”, and “under the sun”. To this refers Dan. iv. 26, “After that thou shalt know that the heavens do rule.” Here also is “the kingdom of the heavens” of Matthew, and here also the scenes of the Revelation.

On many occasions the Scriptures speak of God “stretching out the heavens”. Psalm civ. 2, “Who stretched out the heavens like a curtain”; also Isa. xl. 22; xlii. 5; xlv. 12; li. 13; Jer. x. 12; li. 15; Zech. xii. 1. These passages should all be read with their contexts, noting how closely they are connected with the theme of God’s purpose, as though the act which formed the firmament, the heavens of the present creation, was connected with the purposes that have this creation for its sphere, limited as it is by the creation of Gen. i. 1, and the new creation of Revelation xxi. When we grasp the significance of the firmament, and the purpose that is carried out within its expanse, we may then see the perfect fitness of the statements of Ephesians, where in the words “the heavenly places” (*epouraniois*, a word which literally means “upon the heavens”), we are taken beyond the firmament. Some blessings outside the scope of Ephesians are heavenly, but none are said to be “*in the super-heavenlies*”. We remember reading a letter from a well taught servant of God, who characterized our teaching as erroneous and dangerous, and he sought to dispose of the teaching we have given from Ephesians by saying that the 1st chapter of the 1st Epistle of Peter is so identical that to read it is to be convinced that they both teach the same thing. We hope later on to institute a comparison, but for the time we note one point. Ephesians always speaks of the blessings of the one body as being in the *epouraniois*, the sphere *above* the heavens. Peter, however, does not pierce the firmament, the inheritance he speaks of is reserved “in the heavens”, not in the sphere above the heavens. Before the overthrow of the world (A.V., foundation of the world) and before the age times (A.V., times eternal) there was *no firmament*, and the blessings that Scripture connects with that period are not so limited as those which are from or since the overthrow of the world, and since the ages. We do not know what Astronomy has to say about the firmament and the waters that are above it, but we have the revelation of Him who “stretched out the heavens like a curtain: Who layeth the beams of His chambers in the waters”, and we know His Word is Truth.

#9. “For Signs and for Seasons.”

Any attempt to indicate the bearing that the six days’ creation has upon the purpose of the ages, would be lacking in completeness if no reference was made to the work of the fourth day. We considered in our last paper the object for which the firmament was made, and the present paper deals with the heavenly bodies that were appointed therein to rule the day and the night, to give light upon the earth, to divide the light from the darkness, and to be for signs and for seasons, and for days and for years. The familiar name *sun* does not occur in Genesis i., indeed not till Genesis xv. is the name referred to. The name *moon* is not mentioned until Genesis xxxvii. The titles of Genesis i. are “the greater light” and “the lesser light”. It must be remembered that the stars are linked with these two great lights in connection with their appointment. It should not read as in the A.V., “*He made the stars also*”, as though the stars are a kind of afterthought; the words, “the stars also”, must read on from the words, “to rule the night.” This is seen to be true by reading Psa. cxxxvi. 8, 9:--

“The sun to rule by day: for His mercy endureth for ever. the moon and the stars to rule by night: for His mercy endureth for ever.”

The sun is mentioned six times in Genesis, and each reference has special relation to the covenant purpose of God. There is no ordinary every day reference to the sun in this book. The first mention is in Genesis xv. The sun is going down, and the darkness which follows is symbolical of Israel’s night in Egypt. Genesis xix. 23 speaks of the sun’s rising — here it is blessing. Lot enters Zoar and is safe. Again the sun sets. In Gen. xxviii. 11 Jacob has left his home, and becomes a stranger and a wanderer. In his sleep he has the vision of the steps up to heaven; here he receives the blessing and covenant of Abraham, and he calls the place Bethel. Genesis xxxii. 31 ends the night of wrestling, Jacob newly-named Israel passes over Penueel, the sun rises upon him and he is safe. The last reference is that which comes in Joseph’s dream. The sun, the moon, and the eleven stars make obeisance to him, foreshadowing not only his own personal elevation to the throne of Pharaoh, but that of the Lord Jesus Christ at His second coming.

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The number of times the Hebrew word *kokab* (star) occurs is 37, the Greek *aster* occurring 24, and *astron* 4.

Chammah (Hebrew “sun”, “heat”) occurs 6 times, *cheres* 3 times, and *shemesh* 118 times.

The Greek *helios* (“sun”) occurs 30 times.

The symbolic meaning of the sun setting, and the sun rising may be gathered from such a passage as the following:--

“Thy sun shall no more go down ... for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light” (Isa. lx. 20).

“But unto you that fear My name, shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in His wings” (Mal. iv. 2).

When the Lord spoke to Job, He spoke of the “ordinances of heaven”. Dr. Bullinger’s metrical version of Job xxxviii. 31-33 reads:--

“Canst thou bind fast the cluster Pleiades (seven stars)?
Or, canst thou loosen (great) Orion’s bands?
Canst thou lead forth the Zodiac’s monthly Signs (twelve)?
Or, canst thou guide Arcturus and his sons (The Bear)?
The statutes of the heavens: Know’st thou these?
Didst thou set their dominion o’er the earth?”

The certainty of the “ordinances of the heavens” forms a basis for proclaiming the equal certainty of God’s promises (see Jer. xxxi. 35-37, and xxxii. 20-26 which should be read).

The ordinary seasons of the year “seedtime and harvest”, “summer and winter”, are not the only seasons that are indicated in Genesis i. The word *moed* (seasons) means “an appointed time”, and that there are such appointments in the purpose of the ages the Scripture abundantly prove.

Take Daniel’s prophecy as an example. “At the *time appointed* the end shall be”, (viii. 19; xi. 27, 29, 35). “A time” (xii. 7).

Genesis i. 14 says also, “let them be for signs”. “The signs of heaven” according to Jer. x. 2 caused dismay among the heathen, and there are many indications that the signs of the heavens were originally understood by men. To set out the witness of the sun and the stars to prophetic truth would necessitate a volume. Such a volume is Dr. Bullinger’s *Witness of the Stars*, of which a most useful abridgement may be found in the *Companion Bible*, Part I., Appendix 12. Psalm xix. is the great Scripture classic on this subject. It is divided into two main sections, the first dealing with the witness of the sun in the heavens, the name *El* (God) being used; in the second section the witness of the Word is the theme, and the name *Jehovah* (Lord) is used. There we read that the heavens are telling the glory of God without audible speech, and that their witness extends to the ends of the world. In these heavens the sun goes through his revolutions. Psalm cxlvii. 4 (R.V.) says:--

“He telleth the number of the stars, He giveth them all their names.”

Here is an inspired statement to the truth that God both numbered and named the stars. Some of these names are given in the Bible, others have come down from antiquity; many have been corrupted or lost. *Ash*, *Cesil* and *Cimah* (Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades) (Job ix. 9). Job xxxviii. 32 says, “Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his season?”. The margin gives it “the twelve signs”. In the sign *Virgo* (the Virgin) is preserved the ancient name *Tsemach* (“The Branch”), a prophetic title of Christ as the virgin’s seed, and many interesting prophecies still remain enshrined in the ancient star names that have come down to us.

A prophecy was handed down in the East that in the constellation of *Coma* (the desired one), a new star would appear at the birth of Him whom it foretold. Balaam prophesied concerning the appearance of a star in connection with a Sceptre.

“There shall come forth a star at (or over) the inheritance of Jacob. And a sceptre shall rise out of Israel.”

The wise men from the East were led by a star, the meaning of which they were perfectly certain.

The heavenly bodies are God’s great pledge and timepiece. For signs of the One to come, and the things to come; for seasons or cycles of time, as indicated and measured by the movements of the heavenly bodies. To attempt to go further into this complex subject would carry this paper far beyond its intended limits. To those who feel desirous of investigating the subject more fully, we heartily recommend *The Witness of the Stars* by Dr. Bullinger.

The sign of the Lord’s coming, referred to in Matthew xxiv., together with the darkening of the sun and moon, will doubtless come to mind. Also the quotation from Joel in Acts ii. 19, 20, together with parallels in the book of the Revelation will suggest further lines of study. For our immediate purpose it is sufficient that we have shown that the firmament, with its sun, moon and stars, are all a part of a great design not created for their own sakes, not created merely for their physical effects, but created and arranged in view of their testimony to the faithfulness of the great Purposer, and the fixedness of His great Purpose.

#10. The Creation. -- Man. (Gen. i. 26-31 & ii. 7).

The work of the sixth day of creation commences in much the same way as do the other days, "Let the earth bring forth", but the record suddenly takes an individual and more personal character when the creation of man is described. For the first time a conference is indicated in the counsels of the Most High. "And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness." The *Companion Bible* refers this statement to the figure of *Hendiadys*, and suggests the reading, "In the likeness of Our image." Ten times in this chapter do we read of various parts of creation being made "after his kind", and now we have the marvellous statement quoted above. To the simple mind, this early introduction of plurality in the reference to the Persons of the Godhead is self-explanatory, and we do not feel that we are justified in embarking upon a series of controversial articles on this subject. The dispensational place of the creation of man is our more immediate concern. If we accept the rendering, "In the likeness of Our image", the first question that seems to demand an answer is, To what does this image refer? If we take the expression to have reference to the attributes of God, it hardly seems possible to draw a line and say, "From this point the likeness ceases". Man as created was neither Omnipotent, Omniscient, nor holy. The fact that man after the fall is spoken of as being the image and likeness of God (Gen. ix. 6; I Cor. xi. 7; James iii. 9), shows that we are not to look for the likeness on the moral plane. Yet it does appear a difficulty to think that man, physically, is the image of God, Who is Spirit. We must give heed for a while to the teaching of Scripture regarding Christ, and this will enable us to understand, at least in some degree of clearness, the meaning of Gen. i. 26.

Colossians i. 15, 16 ascribes the creation of all things visible and invisible to "the Son of His (the Father's) love". It is written, "God is Spirit", "God, Whom no man hath seen, nor can see", and therefore from the first moment of creation the creature has needed a mediator. The supplemental title therefore, if we may use the expression, that follows in Col. i. 15, is that He Who is the image of the invisible God, is the firstborn of all creation. II Corinthians iv. 4, in a different context, speaks of "the gospel of the glory of Christ Who is the image of God". If man therefore was made in the likeness of the image of God, he was made in the likeness of Christ, for He is the image of God. This places man upon the earth in a typical capacity. That the first man was a type of Christ is readily seen from Scripture. Take for example I Cor. xv. 45-47, "The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam a life-giving spirit". "The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven." The passage immediately goes on to speak of the image of the earthy, and the image of the heavenly. There are some honoured teachers who believe that the creation of man in Gen. i. 26 refers to a totally different person from the man who was made out of the dust of the earth as recorded in Genesis ii. It is beyond question that the first man Adam is the one whose creation is recorded in i. 26, where the word "man" is in the Hebrew *Adam*. He is the first Adam. I Corinthians xv. 45 says that it is written, "the first man Adam was made a living soul", but this is not written in Genesis i., but in Genesis ii., which links the two passages together. Romans v. 14, under another aspect, tells us that Adam was a figure, or type, of Him that was to come. In both cases the type is eclipsed by the antitype. The true and last Adam is a bearer of glory and blessing that the first knew not of.

Something of the typical position of man is indicated in Gen. i. 26 by the words, "let them have dominion". Notice that the pronoun "them" is used four times. We are by no means limited to one man and one woman in this passage, although actually only one man and one woman were created. Mankind is viewed in this work of the sixth day, and not the individual of the species. We are told that man, unlike the other orders of creation, was created in the likeness of the image of God, that he was given dominion over the fish, the fowl, the cattle, all the earth, and every creeping thing. In chapter ii. we are told how God made man of the dust of the earth, and not only so, but *when this took place*, "in the day, etc.", verse 4. Verse 4 commences the first of the eleven generations that sub-divide the book of Genesis. "The generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created." When we read in

Gen. v. 1, "This is the book of the generations of Adam", we are likewise given a definite time from which to start:--

"In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made He him; male and female created He them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created."

This man Adam, whose creation is recorded in Gen. i. 26, lived 130 years and had a son whose name is Seth. The Adam of Genesis i. and the Adam of Genesis ii. are therefore identical. The generations of Adam, of Noah, and of others, are their immediate descendants. This must be the meaning, however figuratively interpreted of the first reference, the generations of the heavens and of the earth.

Special attention is drawn in Gen. ii. 4, 5 to the fact that the creation of "every plant of the field" must be believed to have taken place "before it was in the earth", and "every herb of the field before it grew". This indicates that a great amount of detail is withheld from us in Genesis i. When we read, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed", we are to remember that Gen. ii. 4, 5 tells us that a creative work had already been done. So when we read, "Let us make man", we are prepared to find that further details will be given of that which so vitally concerns ourselves. These details are given in Genesis ii. under the generations that there commence. Man was *created* in the image of God (i.27), he was *formed* of the dust of the ground. The elements that enter into the composition of the herb, the tree, and the cattle, enter into the composition of man. The generic name for man, as well as the name of the first man, is *Adam*, for he was formed of the dust of the *ground* (*adamah*). Man is of the earth, earthy. But, one may interpose, "You forget that of Adam it is written, 'and man became a living SOUL', a statement that is not said of the lower creatures in Genesis i.". It is true that the word *soul* does not occur in the A.V. until the record concerning man is reached, but this is by reason of the power of tradition. The translators of our wonderful authorised version apparently believed that man was possessed of an immortal soul, and consequently, when they met the Hebrew words translated "living soul" in the passages that speak of animals and creeping things, they assigned to them a lower meaning; the ordinary reader is consequently at a serious disadvantage. A ray of light is shed from the margin of Gen. i. 30, where the reader will discover that the word "life" in the sentence, "everything that creepeth upon the earth, wherein is life", has the marginal note, "*Hebrew, a living soul*". This fact shatters the conception that man alone is a living soul, and with it goes the fabric of error that has grown up upon that fundamental falsehood.

In Gen. i. 20, 21, 24 & 30, the Hebrew word *nephesh* ("soul") is used of the lower orders of creation. In chapter ii. two words occur twice. When they have reference to man they are translated "a living soul", but when they have reference to animals they are translated "living creature". Out of the first thirteen times that *nephesh* occurs in Genesis, ten of these occurrences refer to animals. It is evident that the Apostle Paul, when writing to the Corinthians, had no idea that Gen. ii. 7 taught the immortality of man, for he uses this very passage to prove the reverse. In I Cor. xv. 44 he says, "It is sown a *natural* body, it is raised a *spiritual* body". We must bear in mind that the word "natural" is literally "soul-ical", if such a word is allowable (*psuchikos*). In this state it is "sown". The reader will observe that the "soul-ical" condition is also linked with corruption (42), "dishonour" and "weakness" (43). It is not a necessary, nor an illuminating interpretation that makes the "sowing" to mean the burial of the dead. Dead seed is not sown. The entry of man into this world is his "sowing". Since Adam's fall that sowing has introduced his children into corruption, dishonour, and weakness. The Apostle clinches his argument concerning the low estate of man by nature by referring to Adam himself, and not to Adam *fallen*, but Adam as he left the hands of his Maker, "and so it is written, the first man Adam was made a *living soul*, the last Adam a *life-giving spirit*". The first man is also "earth" in contrast to the second man who is "heavenly". After emphasizing the contrast between the "earthly" and the "heavenly", the Apostle concludes:--

“And I say this, brethren, because *flesh and blood* cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth *corruption inherit incorruption*.”

It will be observed that Adam, *as created* and unfallen, is unfit for the kingdom of God. Man by nature is of the earth, independently of sin.

“The *soul* of the flesh is in the blood ... an atonement for your *souls*; for it is the blood that maketh an atonement *by reason of the soul*” (Lev. xvii. 11, R.V.).

It is clear from this inspired reasoning that the “soul” is linked to “flesh and blood”, and is in no sense “spiritual” in its nature. Indeed, “soul” is contrasted with “spirit”. Hebrews iv. 12 distinguishes between the two, as does I Cor. xv. 44. The “natural” man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God (I Cor. ii. 14).

In James iii. 15 we have the word *psuchikos* translated “sensual”. “This wisdom descendeth *not* from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonical.” The whole of the teaching of Scripture regarding the soul points to it as the sum of natural life. All that goes to make up the individual feelings, desires, and experiences of each living being is expressed under the Bible word “soul”. Just as man became “a living soul”, so he becomes at death “a dead soul” (Num. xix. 11, margin). Hunger, and the pleasures and functions of eating (Prov. vi. 30, xiii. 25, xix. 15, xxvii. 7), and all the natural enjoyments of this life (Eccles. ii. 24, margin, “delight his *senses*”, Luke xii. 19) are attributes of the soul. One of the strangest series of passages, and a series whose testimony is as opposite to the ordinary conception of the soul as can be imagined, is that in which the O.T. associates it with the various organs of the body, these organs as it were in their functions making up the living soul. We will give a few examples:--

Gen. xlix. 6. “O my soul ... Mine liver” (A.V. “honour”).

Psa. xvi. 9. “My heart is glad, my liver (A.V. ‘glory’) rejoiceth.”

Psa. xxxi. 9. “Mine eye ... yea, my soul and my belly.”

Prov. xiii. 25. “Satisfying of his soul; but the belly of the wicked shall want.”

Psa. xvi. 7. “My kidneys” (A.V. “reins”, Jer. xvii. 10).

The figurative use of the organs of the body are based upon a fact, namely, that *the combined organism* is the soul.

It is common mistake to speak of the soul of man as something separate from himself; Gen. ii. 7 does not say man became the possessor for the time of a living soul, but that man *himself* became a living soul. A living man is a living soul, a dead man is a dead soul, an immaterial independent “spiritual” something is not the “soul” of the Bible. The Hebrew word “soul” (*nephesh*) is closely related to the word “to breathe”, which is *naphach*. Exodus xxiii. 12, “be refreshed”, *naphash*, have time to breathe. The Hebrew word “nostril” is also similarly connected, *aph* meaning a breathing organ. Seeing the close connection that the inspired language makes between “soul”, “breath”, and “nostril”, and having seen sufficient to dispose of the general teaching that the soul is synonymous with the spirit, we may be able to learn the lesson of man’s lowly place from Genesis ii. 7, instead of finding there a God-breathed immortality. We have often heard the idea urged that the fact that *God* breathed into Adam must of necessity convey to Adam something of the Divine nature. “The breath” of life of Genesis ii. 7 is used in Josh. x. 40 (“utterly destroyed all that *breathed*”) as an equivalent for “soul” in verse 37 (“utterly destroyed all the *souls*”). So also Josh. xi. 11, 14. Has it ever struck the reader that the “nostrils” are a strange entrance for immortality to enter into man? The fact that man is one whose “breath is in his nostrils” is used in the Scriptures to indicate his helplessness; if tradition were truth it would lend encouragement to the doctrine that man by nature is allied with the Godhead. Genesis ii. 7 gives no warrant for teaching that there was anything spiritual about Adam at all. As every other “soul” that was to become a “living soul”, he breathed *with* (not “into”, see usage of Hebrew preposition *beth*) his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul (a “breather”, *nephesh*). The passage *does*

not say, “God breathed”; it says “he breathed”, and the context alone can decide to whom the “he” refers.

We feel that it is essential, if we would not make a most fundamental error, to see the true nature of man at his creation. As a perfect man he was placed upon the earth, but the perfect man was “natural”, not super-natural. He was “flesh and blood”. He was innocent, nevertheless he was not righteous. His communion with God was that of an unfallen creature. All that is said of his surroundings were of a nature to attract “a living soul”, the fruit trees good for food, the garden, etc., but nothing for the spirit. I Corinthian xv. tells us that the spiritual was *not first*, that man as a living soul was not spiritual, he was earthy, and flesh and blood. A being that is not spiritual cannot have a *spiritual fall*. If he transgresses, his sin and his punishment must be within his own sphere. The death penalty threatened to Adam could not have been “spiritual death” unless Adam had a “spiritual” nature. The “spiritual” nature of man came after the fall, where faith and hope were called into exercise, where sacrifice and worship and longing for the new life began to take hold upon those who believed. Adam as created was placed at the head of physical creation. From this position he fell, and that position will be taken up with added glory by the Son of man when He comes again.

#11. The Creation. -- The Fall of Adam (Genesis iii.).

The first dispensation (see volume VI., p.136) ends with the fall of Adam. There seems no reason to doubt but that this first dispensation was the briefest of all. A Rabbinical interpretation of Psal. xlix. 12 refers it to Adam, who “abode not a night”, but who, on the tenth day from the commencement of the creation week, fell, thereby necessitating the day of atonement to be observed on the tenth day of the month. To read Gen. ii. 8-25 one is not impressed with a sense of a long period. The description given of the garden planted in Eden is limited to the trees, and the river that watered the garden. Of the many trees wherewith that garden was planted two only are given names. One is the tree of life, the other is the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, to eat of which meant death. Much has been written concerning this tree of knowledge of good and evil, and the penalty that followed transgression, yet much seems to be but the guesswork and imaginings of men, who have introduced into the subject themes that belong to another sphere. Adam was told not to eat of this tree, for in the day that he ate he should surely die. The words are simple, and were easy of comprehension. Something connected with the knowledge of good and evil involved death, just as the eating of some poisonous berry might have been prohibited for similar reasons. That God should plant a tree bearing such fruits is only explainable by the fact that He had a great purpose. We may safely assume that up to the time of eating of this tree neither Adam nor his wife had a knowledge of good and evil. Spiritual enjoyments and aspirations are never mentioned in relation to Adam before the fall. Adam, so far, lived in a realm of types and symbols. The true paradise of God with its river of life and tree of life was unrevealed, yet how many have spoken of Adam’s shadow as though it were the true substance!

In considering the teaching of Scripture as to the purpose that God had in view, we must remember that there were already, unseen and probably unknown by man, fallen spirits. Genesis iii. 1 is proof enough of this. Scripture does not speak of the purpose of redemption as something which God had to bring in to remedy the evil introduced by Adam’s disobedience. Redemption was planned before man was created, for Christ was foreordained as the Lamb before the foundation of the world. The great outstanding feature of the command to Adam is its simplicity. All that Adam has to do is to *abstain*. He is not under a law of positive precepts, the keeping of which involved a great care, labour, and watchfulness. He was under the easiest of conditions. Surrounded by everything that was good and pleasant, he simply had *not* to take of the forbidden tree. It was a passive obedience. Human nature was put upon the simplest of trials. Another feature of the trial it is important to remember is that no promise was attached to obedience. There is no alternative made to Adam. Some teach that had he continued obedient to the divine prohibition he would have been transferred to heaven and have received eternal

life, but that is pure speculation. What was this knowledge the attaining of which was fraught with such consequences? The references to “good and evil” in this passage are four. Genesis ii. 9 & 17 speak of the tree itself, its position in the garden, and the prohibition regarding its fruit, Gen. iii. 5 & 22 speak of the consequences of eating of it: “Ye shall be as gods” (or God), and “Behold, the man is become as one of Us, to know good and evil”. The tempter mingled truth with his lies at the beginning as he has done ever since. His lie was, “Ye shall not surely die”. There was no lie in the words, “Ye shall be as gods (or God), knowing good and evil”. That which was forbidden to Adam under pain of death is held out as a mark of spiritual growth in Heb. v. 14. The full-grown ones, the perfect, have their senses exercised to discriminate between good and evil. Whatever Adam may have done had no outside influence been brought to bear upon him is not a matter for us to speculate upon. Scripture records the introduction of an item that completely altered the whole aspect of the trial and its consequences. That item was the temptation by a wise and superior being, enforced by deception and guile. If we cannot recognize any alteration of the test by the introduction of this outside temptation we may also refuse to recognize any modification of the penalty, but we believe a little consideration will show that the introduction of an outside temptation made a very great difference. Think for a moment of the book of Job; Satan is allowed to test Job to the extreme, yet Job in the end receives double for his loss, and Satan has the mortification of knowing that by the record of the book of Job, there is on permanent record a classic example of how he overreached himself, and that out of intended evil God brought ultimate good. Such we believe is the case in connection with the fall of Adam. In the case of Job we are allowed a glimpse of the heavenly and invisible side of the history, a glimpse denied to Job himself. We are, however, allowed no such insight in the case of the temptation of Eve. With suddenness the tempter is introduced into the narrative of Scripture. “Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made.” He raises questionings regarding the will and word of God. He holds out the bait, “Ye shall be as gods” (or God); he lies by saying, “Ye shall not surely die”. The woman was deceived, “the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty” (II Cor. xi. 3), “Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression”. When Adam was asked by the Lord, “Hast thou eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?”. Adam replied, “The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and i did eat”. We cannot believe that Adam was trifling. He stood in his shame before his God. We believe he truthfully stated his case. He was not deceived like his wife was, but went into sin out of attachment to the woman who had been given him. The Lord apparently accepted his reply, for He addressed the woman, “What is this that thou hast done?”. The woman’s reply also stated truthfully the case, “The serpent beguiled me and i did eat”. No word of censure, no word of judgment is addressed to the guilty pair, but the curse is pronounced upon the serpent. Enmity also is pronounced as between the woman and the serpent, between her seed and his, and in the pronouncing of the serpent’s sentence comes the first great Messianic promise, “It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel”. Adam and Eve must have wondered at this first great exhibition of grace. The evil one had overreached himself. Intent upon accomplishing the downfall of man, his very temptation provided an opportunity for the exercise of mercy. To the woman who had sinned under the influence of deception, and whose action and invitation had involved Adam, the Lord says:--

“I will greatly multiply thy *sorrow* and thy conception; in *sorrow* shalt thou bring forth children; and thy desire shall be unto thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.”

Sorrow is the word that is most emphasized. It occurs again in the words spoken to Adam:--

“Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in *sorrow* shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life, thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust thou return.”

Sorrow enters into creation together with sin and death. Yet the words which tell them of their sorrow, tell them that where sin abounded grace was to superabound. If Adam was to eat *in sorrow*, he was nevertheless to be spared to *eat* “all the days of his life”. The death sentence is held back. As an outside spiritual force had entered into the case on the one side, an outside spiritual force shall enter into the other. If the serpent could not restrain himself, but must attempt to hasten man’s ruin, the Lamb of God can step in and bring about His redemption. Already the great conflict that runs throughout the Scriptures has become apparent. Man, though responsible for his disobedience, was not entirely alone in the deed. He must suffer the wages of sin, but he shall learn before he returns to the dust “good and evil”. As a living soul he had no exercise of faith, no patience of hope. As a fallen sinner, seeing on the one hand the “evil” of the serpent’s motives, and the “good” of the Lord’s provision, he might learn for his eternal welfare lessons which in his original state he was not capable of learning. The ways of God are wonderful, and altogether beyond us. Sin and sorrow and death are nevertheless beneath His sway. Adam commences a new experience. The creation around him becomes no more a delight. A curse rests upon it, never to be lifted until the last Adam comes as the life-giving spirit to deliver the groaning creation from its bondage of corruption. Adam’s experiences become one long lesson of good and evil. A spiritual conception is now a possibility. In a new life beyond the grave lies all the hope of man. Adam is prevented from further access to the tree of life. Life unto the ages can only be his now by virtue of the promised Seed, and the pledge of the redemption of creation and of man is found in the cherubim tabernacled at the east of the garden. So ends the first dispensation, the first step so far as the human race is concerned of the purpose of the ages.

It shows us man standing between the wiles of the serpent and the wisdom of God. The cherubim that are referred to constitute a great pledge of redemption, and were understood so to mean by those who first peopled the earth. We must consider something of their message in our next article before we go on to the section which covers the period from the fall to the flood.

#12. The Cherubim (Gen. iii. 24). The hope of Creation.

Genesis iii. is a complete section of Scripture, as its wonderfully complete structure shows. We do no more here, however, than call attention to the opening and closing members. The chapter opens with the “serpent” and closes with the “cherubim”. The serpent is connected with the tree of knowledge of good and evil, the cherubim with the tree of life. The serpent is the medium of a supernatural tempter, the cherubim, afterward described as comprised of animal and human forms, are always associated with the Divine presence and purpose. The fact that the structure of Genesis iii. puts the serpent and the cherubim in correspondence should make us consider what the parallelism teaches. There is a passage in Ezekiel xxviii. that will throw light upon the subject. Ezekiel’s prophetic lamentation upon the king of Tyrus uses language that goes beyond the possibilities of any human king.

“Thus saith the Lord God; Thou sealest up the sum (thou art the finished pattern), full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God ... thou art (wast) the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee” (verses 12-19).

We believe that this passage can find its fulfilment in but one person – Satan. As a fallen being he is introduced into the narrative of Genesis iii. He had, by then, been deprived of his character of the covering cherub, and after the fall of Adam the cherubim appear — this time a combination of symbols taken from the six days’ creation. “By pride fell the angels”. Lucifer, son of the morning, said,

“I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God ... I will be like the Most High” (Isa. xiv. 12-14).

Here, the king of Babylon is linked with this supernatural being, like the king of Tyrus was in Ezekiel xxviii., his temptation to man was along similar lines, “ye shall be as God”.

It would seem from a due consideration of these things that into the place forfeited by Satan, the cherubim of Genesis iii. were placed. It appears from Ezekiel that one of the functions of the cherubim was to “cover”. Hebrews ix. 5 speaks of “the cherubim of glory shadowing the mercy seat”, and I.Kings.viii.7 tells “the cherubim covered the ark”, showing that this was in some measure continued. The cherubim occur in the symbolism of the Tabernacle and of the Temple (Exod.xxv.18-22; xxxvi.35; I Kings vi. 23-29). They are specially connected with God’s dwelling place (I Sam. iv. 4; II.Kings.xix.15; I Chron. xiii. 6; Psa. lxxx. 1; xcix. 1; Isa. xxxvii. 16), and throne (Ezekiel i. & x.).

The description given of the living creatures in Ezekiel i. is the description of the cherubim (see x.20). Ezekiel tells us that they had “the likeness of a man” (i. 5). They had four faces, and one was the face of a man, one of a lion, one of an ox, and one of an eagle (i. 10). These cherubim are seen under the throne, which had the appearance of a sapphire stone, and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it. The cherubim are particularly connected in Ezekiel with the purposes of God pertaining to Israel. The departing, and the returning glory (iii. 23 & xliii. 2) is associated with them. The living creatures of the book of the Revelation (wrongly called “beasts”) are likewise associated with the throne, the glory and with Israel, and also, forming a link with Genesis, the living creatures are closely associated with creation. The serpent is judged and set aside, while the cherubim are placed to preserve the way of the tree of life. The long line of redemptive purposes, passing from Eden to the Tabernacle, from the Tabernacle to the Temple of Solomon, from the desecrated Temple of the Captivity to the Temple yet to be, is definitely linked with the cherubim. Man had dominion over the cattle, the beast of the field, and the fowl of the air. These are all represented in the cherubim. The sea and its inhabitants do not figure in these symbols, and stand rather as types of evil. The pledge that God’s purpose in creation should stand was given at the east of the garden of Eden.

In Gen. iii. 24 the word translated “placed” is literally, “to dwell as in a tabernacle”. The fire that turned every way, represents the same word as used in Ezek. i. 4, “infolding itself”; the word “keep” means to preserve. Genesis iii. 24 therefore may read:--

“And He tabernacled (between) the cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a fierce fire infolding itself to preserve the way of the tree of life.”

The cherubim foreshadow the great work of Christ in its redemptive aspect. The way of the tree of life has been preserved. Man fallen and undone as he is need not be hopeless, for even Adam and Eve had this blessed symbol and tabernacle of hope before them, telling of a day when this groaning creation shall enter into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. The dark ending of the first dispensation is illuminated by promise and hope. Every succeeding dispensation partakes of this character. This earth, cursed for Adam’s sake, ceases to be his rest or his hope. Over the darkness and death of creature failure grace has triumphed. No longer surrounded by everything that was good for food and pleasant to the eyes (which require no spirituality to appreciate), Adam and Eve are turned into the world outside of the garden, to walk by faith, to worship by faith, to live by faith (in short, a spiritual experience had become a possibility), and are pointed to the only escape from the effects of disobedience.

Truly, the Lord overruled the tempter’s designs for good, and while by no means condoning sin, did of His own rich grace provide a Saviour. As in our case:--

“He commanded light to shine out of darkness.”

#13. Cain and Abel.—The two Seeds.

The names given by Eve to the two sons whose birth is recorded in the opening of Genesis iv. provide a fair insight into the frame of mind, and the modifications wrought by experience, of the first man and woman.

They had been expelled from the garden planted by God; the ground upon which they stood, and from which they wrung a living by the sweat of the face, spoke to them continually of the curse which had settled upon it. The sorrows of their new experiences, however, were lusted by hope. Had not God said that the woman's seed should bruise the serpent's head? Did He not set before them the wonderful symbol of a restored and redeemed creation when He caused the cherubim to tabernacle at the east of the garden? In view of this we can understand in measure the fulness of hope and desire that possessed the breast of those first parents, and the reason why they named their infant son *Cain*. Cain in the Hebrew language means "acquisition", the verbal form occurs in Gen. xxv. 10 and Exod. xv. 16 as "purchase"; in Gen. xxxiii. 19, xxxix. 1 as "buy"; in Neh. v. 8 it is "redeem", in Isa. xi. 11 it is "recover", and in Gen. iv. 1 and Prov. iv. 5 it is "get". It will be seen that the word, while indicating acquisition, does not convey any idea as to how the acquisition is made; it may be as a gift, or as a purchase, it may be by power or by redemption. Cain was looked upon by his parents as an acquisition; the A.V. reads, "I have gotten a man from the Lord", the Hebrew *'ish 'eth Jehovah*, is literally, "a man, even Jehovah". This rendering suggests the reason why the name Cain was given. Adam and Eve felt sure that this man-child born to them was none other than the "seed of the woman" promised in the earlier chapter; how mistaken they were events were to prove. Scripture indeed tells us that instead of being the promised seed of the woman, Cain "was of that wicked one", in other words, he was rather "the seed of the serpent". It is important to notice that the good, or the types of good, do not come first. Cain comes before Abel, Ishmael before Isaac, Esau before Jacob, Reuben and the others before Joseph, "that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural, and afterwards that which is spiritual". Cain is one of the great foreshadowings in this book of beginnings. Jude, writing of the last days, says, "Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain". John in his first epistle likens Cain to the world, "we should love one another, not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother ... marvel not, my brethren if the world hate you". Not only so, a strong division is made between the two seeds, Cain was "of that wicked one", "he that committeth sin is of the devil", "in this are the children of God manifest, and the children of the devil". In our Lord's day there were those who were "the offspring of vipers", and all down the age, from Cain onwards, the two seeds have run their course together. Satan, as the god of this *age*, and the prince of this *world*, by those who are his children, persecutes and seeks to destroy those who are God's children. The Lord Himself has ordained the "enmity" (Gen. iii. 15), therefore whosoever is a friend of the world constitutes himself an enemy of God. The presence and purpose of Cain is repeated in parable form by the Lord in the parable of the *Tares*, "the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one".

We cannot help feeling that a due recognition of those scriptures which speak of one section of the human race as "children of the wicked one" (Matt. xiii. 38), "children of the devil" (I John iii. 10; cf. Acts xiii. 10; John viii. 44), a "generation of vipers", and of The man of sin as the "son of perdition", etc., is necessary to arriving at a true understanding of the scope and results of redemption. When the Lord asked the question, "Ye serpents, ye brood of vipers, how can ye escape the judgment of Gehenna?". He gave expression to a query that runs through the whole Bible. As a "fundamental of dispensational truth" the recognition of the two seeds and their destinies is all-important.

The high hopes that burned in the heart of our first parents were doomed to disappointment, Cain was not the promised deliverer. By the time Abel was born experience had taught *the lesson* of the age, at least in its elements, that the creature had been made subject to vanity. "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity", was the summing up of the wisest man that lived, and we venture to say that no more important

portion of Scripture from the dispensational point of view can be found than that of Ecclesiastes. Abel was so named because Abel means vanity. Cain is referred to in the N.T. three times, viz., Heb. xi. 4, "Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain"; I John iii. 12, "Not as Cain who slew his brother"; Jude 11, "They have gone in the way of Cain". Abel is mentioned four times in the N.T., viz., Matthew xxiii. 35, "From the blood of *righteous* Abel"; Luke xi. 51, "From the blood of Abel"; Hebrews xi. 4, "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was *righteous*"; Heb. xii. 24, "The blood of sprinkling which speaks something better than Abel".

The first thing we learn is that Abel was **RIGHTEOUS**, and that Cain was "of that wicked one". There is no question of salvation in the case of Cain and Abel, but rather of righteousness and unrighteousness. Abel was evidently a prophet (Matt. xxiii. 34), and when Cain shed his brother's blood, he shed "righteous blood" (Matt. xxiii. 35). The two offerings that figure in Genesis iv. were not offerings for sin, but for worship, the word *minchah* is that rendered meat offering, an offering that is in the nature of a gift, not an expiation (see Gen. xxxii. 13-21, "gift"). Abel's offering is given in Genesis iv. as, "the firstlings of his flock and the fat thereof". Cain's as "the fruit of the ground". Hebrews xi. gives no such details, but says instead that Abel "offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain". The testimony that God bore to Abel was, "that he was righteous".

To introduce the future into the past or present is to fail in interpretation; to introduce into Genesis.iv. the question of justification by faith is to teach a truth that does not find a place therein. Genesis iv. does not raise the question as to *how* righteousness was obtained, but whether it existed, the purely elementary fact that is taught by Genesis iv. in the light of Hebrews xi. and Matthew xxiii. is that Abel *was righteous*. We might, in the light of subsequent revelation, be led to suppose that because Abel's offering was that of an animal, and involved the shedding of blood, that this constituted the great difference. It must be remembered that when God Himself gave the law of the *minchah*, the offering of Genesis iv., He says nothing about the slaying of an animal, or the shedding of blood. Leviticus ii. gives the specification, and it will be seen that Cain's offering of the fruit of the ground is nearer to the bloodless *minchah* than was Abel's. The excellency of Abel's offering therefore seems to arise from another origin. The cause of the acceptance of Abel's offering and the rejection of Cain's is found in the character of the *offerers* rather than their offering. Abel's gift was accepted because he was "righteous"; Cain's was rejected because he was wicked. The same principle is found in the words of the Lord in Matt. v. 23, 24:--

"If therefore thou bring *thy gift* to the altar, and there rememberest that the brother hath ought against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way, first reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."

Here is the case of Cain and Abel, Cain's offering was rejected because God could not bear witness that the offerer was righteous.

Let us look at the reference to Cain and Abel in I John iii. What is the theme of this chapter? The structure makes it very clear that John is urging a practical manifestation of righteousness and love upon those who have believed.

I John iii. 1-18.

- A | 1, 2. The Father's love to us.
- B | 3-9. Distinguishing mark between God's children and the devil's.--Righteousness.
- B | 10-17. Distinguishing mark between God's children and the wicked one's.--Love.
- A | 18. Our love to brethren.

The member *B* is the one that contains the reference to Cain, and we will give that in detail.

I John iii. 10-17.

- B* | *e* | 10, 11. "In this" are manifested the children of God and of the devil.
- f* | 12. Cain slew his brother.
- g* | 13. The world's hate.
- h* | 14, 15. No murderer has eternal life abiding in him.
- e* | 16-. "In this" we perceive the love of God.
- f* | -16. Lay down lives for brethren.
- g* | 17-. The world's good.
- h* | -17. No compassion. How abideth the love of God in him?

The two seeds are characterized by their deeds; the emphasis is not put upon the righteousness which is upon faith without works, but the righteousness which is "done" and manifested. The apostle says:--

"Little children, let no man deceive you, the one who *does* righteousness *is* righteous, the one who *does* sin *is* of the devil; no one not *doing* righteousness is of God, and no one who loves not his brother."

Then follows the example of Cain who manifested that he was "of the devil", and was not righteous, by his hatred of his brother. "And wherefore slew he him? Because his works were wicked and his brother's righteous". Cain's works were *poneros* (wicked), because he was of the *poneros* (the wicked one). We do not understand the mystery of the divine begetting, we know it to be a reality, and we see its manifestation. We do not understand the mystery of satanic begetting, but Scripture emphasizes the "sonship" of the devil's children as clearly and in the same terms as it does those of God, and we see their manifestation. Cain slays his brother, children of God lay down their lives for their brethren.

We must not attempt to pursue this theme further, for the whole epistle is an exposition of this manifestation (see i. 6-10; ii. 4-6, 29; iii. 3, 7, etc.). Genesis iv. 7 places emphasis upon "doing well", and by so doing Cain would have been accepted. If he did not well "a sin offering was lying at the entrance (of the garden of Eden, where the Presence of the Lord tabernacled between the cherubim)". Cain repudiated the word of God, he would not go the way of true acceptance, and instead of slaying the sacrifice, he slew his brother. Cain's punishment was:--

"Now thou art cursed more than the ground ... a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth."

Cain realized that the greatness of his punishment consisted more in the being driven out from God's presence than from the extra curse upon the ground. In answer to his fear that he would be slain, the Lord set a sign or token for Cain, and protected him (O! wondrous mercy) by a threat of sevenfold vengeance. The vagabond takes his name with him, for the land he travelled to is named *Nod* (wandering or vagabond); it does *not* say "*and he took unto himself a wife*" in the land of Nod, as so many misquote.

Cain was the first one that Scripture says built a city, the second recorded builder was Nimrod. The Israelites were compelled to build cities for Pharaoh, but the only building that is recorded of God's children in the first two books of the Bible is that of *altars*. The rebels in the land of Shinar said, "Go to, let us build us a city". Lot, not Abraham, was attracted by "the cities of the plain", and when Sodom was about to be destroyed Lot pleaded that he might be allowed to go to another city, Zoar. Abraham, on the other hand, built no city, for he looked for a city that had foundations, whose Maker and builder is God. Cities are symbols of civilization, the arts and crafts and music were all introduced by the descendants of Cain. The "world" with all its attractiveness is of Cain, who was of that wicked one, and

the true child of God is found outside with Abel, with Enoch, with Noah, with Abraham, and with Christ.

We must not go further, much more should have been considered, but space is limited. May the practical lessons not be lost upon us, and may we grasp this great fundamental of dispensational truth – the two seeds.

#14. Seth (Gen. iv. 25). The Principle of Substitution.

We have learned from the record of Cain and Abel of the presence of two seeds upon the earth.

The enmity which exists between these two seeds is irreconcilable. It is a fundamental of dispensational truth to recognize the presence and the utter contrast of the principles for which Cain and Abel stand.

The name “acquisition” is affixed to that which is evil, the name “vanity” to that which is good, for another fundamental of dispensational truth is that the present life is comparable to a wilderness journey, and that the believer’s hope lies beyond it. We now turn to the consideration of what the Scriptures teach about Seth, the son of Adam.

At the birth of this son we read that his mother “called his name Seth, for God, said she, hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew” (Gen. iv. 25). The word “appointed” and the name “Seth”, are alike in the original. There is an important difference between the record of Cain and Abel, and that of “Seth”; in the former case we have a record of deeds, we are told the daily occupation of the two seeds, we are told of the acts of worship also, we are told of the sin of Cain and of his punishment: this is in contrast with the record of Seth. Of Seth’s actions we know nothing. He had a son whom he called Enos, meaning “frail” or “incurable”, he had other sons and daughters unnamed, and died at the age of 912 years. The man’s individual actions therefore do not constitute the special lesson for us, it is *his position in the line of purpose* that does. A similar observation may be passed upon the life of Isaac. Of the three “fathers” of **nation of Israel**, Isaac’s life is the most passive and quiet as the type of the promised Seed, his birth, and his offering on the mount are of more importance than his subsequent manner of life, and from another standpoint Isaac, like Seth, speaks of substitution, for Isaac (and in Isaac, all Israel) lived because of a ram that was offered “instead”.

The words of Gen. iv. 25 indicate that Abel was, humanly speaking, the chosen vessel through whom the deliverer should come, for Eve tells us that Seth was appointed as “another seed instead of Abel”. It is beyond the limits of Scripture, and therefore beyond the bounds of our investigation or speculation, to fathom the mystery that lies beyond these simple words. On the surface it appears that Cain spoiled the purpose of the Lord, and that He was compelled to appoint another to take Abel’s destined place. Appearances however are deceptive. We believe the fact of Scripture that the Lord will accomplish all His pleasure, and leave the demonstration of this truth to the Lord Himself in His own good time. For us, the more important truth is that God definitely accepts and adopts the principal of substitution in the accomplishing of His purpose.

Adam himself was dealt with not merely as a private individual, but as head and representative of unborn millions who had no voluntary association with his deeds (e.g., Rom. v. 14-21); the penalty threatened in the garden of Eden was suspended and endured by Christ instead. This substitution was typified to Adam and Eve in the provision of the “coats of skin” (Gen. iii. 21). By reason of death provision is made in the law for “that son that is priest in his stead” (Exod. xxix. 30).

The principle of substitution is seen in the choice of Levites, “all the firstborn are mine”, said the Lord, “for on the day that I smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, I hallowed unto Me all the

firstborn in Israel, both man and beast: mine shall they be” (Numb. iii. 13). Although such was the case, yet the Lord immediately before had introduced the principle of substitution, saying, “And I, behold, I have taken the Levites from among the children of Israel instead of all the firstborn” (iii. 12). The firstborn of animals also were the Lord’s, yet provision is made in Exod. xiii. 13 that “every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb”. The reader will call to mind the many passages in the New Testament where the Lord Jesus is said to suffer or die *for* us, and we would commend to the earnest student a thorough examination of this wondrous theme. We must turn back for a moment to Genesis v. to make one other observation concerning Seth. Genesis v. commences the book of the generations of Adam; there, Cain and Abel are not mentioned. After the statement of the creation of Adam in verse 2, the book of the generations of Adam goes straight on to the birth of Seth, and he it is who heads the list. The substitute is here seen in an undisputed position, Cain and Abel are never again mentioned in the Old Testament.

In the genealogy given in I Chronicles i. 1, the order of Genesis v. is retained, viz., “Adam, Seth, Enosh”. In the genealogy of the Saviour by Luke the same is true (Luke iii. 38). Now just as Cain and Abel never come into the book of the generations of Adam, but that honour is unreservedly given to Seth, the substitute, so in the Person of Christ, the last Adam, the second man, the whole creation will recognize in Him, and not in Adam, the One to whom dominion belongs, the glorious head of a new creation, the “former things”, like Cain and Abel, having passed away.

#15. Enoch, the seventh from Adam. His threefold Witness.

In the book of the generations of Adam are two significant entries. **The first** is that of Gen. v. 5:--

“And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty five years,
AND HE DIED”.

The second is that of verses 23, 24:--

“And all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty five years, and Enoch walked with God: AND HE WAS NOT, FOR GOD TOOK HIM.”

The entry of death, first made against the name of Adam, is repeated with constant succession throughout this book of the generations of Adam, with the one exception of Enoch. That Enoch did not die Heb. xi. 5 affirms:--

“By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God”.

The words of the sub-title, *Enoch, the seventh from Adam*, are supplied by the Epistle of Jude, from which we may gather the corrupting ungodliness of the days of Enoch, and learn that just as the “last days” shall be “as it was in the days of Noah”, so also shall they be as the days of Enoch. The seventh from Adam is not allowed to see death. Here we may observe a prophetic foreshadowing of the end. Just as the seventh day of Genesis ii. foreshadows “the rest that remaineth to the people of God”, so the seventh from Adam foreshadows the triumph over the death of those who shall not sleep, but be changed at the last trump; this last trump appears to be the sounding of the seventh trumpet of the book of the Revelation.

In a world of ungodliness, fifty-seven years after the death of Adam, Enoch was translated. The name Enoch means “teaching” or “initiation”, and Enoch’s two prophecies show that he had an inner knowledge that guided him in the world of wickedness in which he was placed.

His first prophecy is the naming of his son. When Enoch was sixty and five years old a son was born, and he named him *Methuselah*, which by interpretation is, "At his death it shall be". Of what does Enoch speak? He speaks of coming wrath, he warned of the flood that was to destroy all flesh. See how exact is his prophecy; Noah was 600 years old when the flood came (Gen. vii. 6). Lamech his father was 182 years old when Noah was born, and Methuselah was 187 years old when Lamech was born. What is the total number of years then from the birth of Methuselah to the flood:--

187	Age of Methuselah at birth of Lamech.
182	Age of Lamech at birth of Noah.
600	Age of Noah at time of the flood.
<hr/>	
969	
<hr/>	

Genesis v. 27 tells us that "all the days of Methuselah were 969 years, and he died". *At his death it shall be*, prophesied Enoch, and at his death, to the exact year, the awful deluge came, so faithful is the word of God. Yet note, and note well, the age of Methuselah is proverbial, even among unbelievers; yet how few recognize in this a glorious exhibition of longsuffering; the man whose death was to be the signal for judgment *lived longer than any man before or since*, it was as though God waited until He could wait no longer. How strange a work is judgment, how the Lord delights in mercy.

Enoch's second prophesy is recorded in Jude:--

"Behold the Lord cometh with His holy myriads, to execute judgment against all, and to convict all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and concerning all the hard things that ungodly sinners spoke against Him" (verses 14, 15).

Enoch's twofold prophecy resolves itself into type and antitype. The flood, a real and dreadful judgment, was itself a type of a future day of wrath. The ungodliness of the days of Noah which brought down the floods of wrath was in turn typical of the character of the time of the end. "The coming of the Lord" therefore is no new doctrine, *it is as old as Adam*, for Enoch lived together with Adam for the last 308 years of Adam's life; Adam must therefore have understood the significance of Methuselah's name, and must have heard Enoch's prophecy of the Lord's coming.

"And God took him". In the days which are drawing nearer it will again be true that "one shall be taken, and the other left". Enoch was taken in blessing, and did not see death (type of those who "are alive and remain at the coming of the Lord"). Enoch's twofold prophecy is confirmed by his consistent walk with God, and thus together sets forth a threefold witness that cannot be gainsaid. Let us believe the literal accuracy of His Word, the graciousness of His purposes, the certainty of His judgments, and the blessed assurances of one day being *with the Lord*.

#16. Lamech: the Curse and the Comfort.

The person who before the flood stands out more prominently than any other descendant of Adam, is Noah. Enoch's twofold prophecy, considered in previous series, pointed to the flood, and to that of which the flood was a type, the coming of the Lord in judgment.

Enoch could not have avoided explaining to Methuselah the prophetic import of his name, and this would doubtless have been the topic of many an earnest conversation both between them, and with Lamech, Enoch's grandson. Lamech was sufficiently well instructed to know that he was not the one who should survive the coming judgment, and is divinely guided in the naming of his firstborn son.

Before we pass on to consider the Scriptures that deal with Noah and the flood, it will be to our profit to pause awhile and learn what we can from his less prominent yet none the less godly parent. From

what the Scriptures say concerning the “days of Noah”, we may picture to ourselves the environment of the days of Lamech; he lived to within five years of the flood, and, further, in his grandfather Enoch’s days ungodliness marked the generation (Jude 15), which evidently grew worse as the days drew on. Lamech was 182 years of age when Noah was born. Sufficient time had passed for him to arrive at the conclusion that has been discovered by others since, viz., that “vanity of vanities all is vanity.”

In naming his son Noah, Lamech emphasized his felt need of rest. Noah is derived from *nuach* which means “to be at rest”, and occurs in Gen. viii. 4, “and the ark *rested* in the seventh month”. Again in Exod. xx. 11, “for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and *rested* the seventh day”. When we read in Gen. viii. 9, “the dove found no *rest*”, the word is *manoach*, or in viii. 21, “the Lord smelled a *sweet* savour”, the word “sweet” is *nichoach*, and literally the passage reads, “a savour of rest”. Thus it will be seen that for God as well as man there is a place of rest, and that rest is Christ, of whom Noah and the ark are prophetic.

Lamech in naming his son said, “this same shall comfort us (*nacham*, or give us rest) concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed”. The word rendered “toil” is twice rendered “sorrow” in Genesis iii. where the curse is first pronounced, “I will greatly multiply thy sorrow”, and “in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life” (verses 16, 17). The words “work and toil” may be a figure, meaning very grievous work; the work and the toil are clearly specified as being the work and toil of the *hands*, and in connection with the *ground*, that under the curse yielded but thorns and thistles of itself, and bread only by sweat of face. We read that Cain experienced a special pronouncement of this curse (Gen. iv. 12), and he is the first builder of a City that is named in Scripture.

We cannot help noticing the similarity of names that occur in the two lines of Adam’s descendants. If there is an Enoch who walked with God, there is an Enoch born to Cain in the land of banishment. If there is a Jared in the line of Seth, there is an Ired in the line of Cain, which differs only in one letter. Methuselah has a son named Lamech in the line of Seth, so Methusael had a son of the same name in the line of Cain. Both Lamechs have seven, and seventy and seven written of them. If these things were not recorded in Scripture we might dismiss them as fanciful, but they are written for our learning. Do they not speak to us of the beginning of that parody of truth which Satan has so skillfully established and maintained by taking advantage of similar sounding names, and of the confusion of tongues which we associate with Babylon and Babylonianism? (See *The Two Babylons*, by Hislop).

Lamech, the seventh from Adam, in the line of Cain, has three sons, one (Jabal) kept cattle, and so continued in the work of the ground, but Jubal was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ, and Tubal-cain an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron. It would appear that the veneer which has spread over the curse, and which is variously named culture, civilization, etc., to-day, was originated by the sons of Lamech in Cain’s line; the Lamech who begat Noah, however, is in direct contrast, he does not appear to have attempted to evade the weary toil that must be experienced by those who, by sweat of face, eat the bread that is produced by the ground that is cursed. Lamech longed for rest, but he did not accept the vain travesties of Cain’s descendants. There are many to-day who, surrounded by the comforts and inventions of man could scarcely believe that there is truth in the record of the curse on the ground. The products of the earth and sea are brought to their door, no thought passes through their mind as to the sorrow and the toil that someone, somewhere, must endure to provide them with the necessities of life. Lamech knew no such deadening influence; the toil of his hands was hard and wearying because of the ground that the Lord had cursed. A friend writing recently gave an unconscious echo of Lamech’s words, saying, “When one, from the back of the land, sees the toil of man and beast, there come to the lips no more fitting words than, ‘Even so, Come, Lord Jesus’.”

Harps and organs, however, melodious and charming, brass and iron, modelled and designed into the most wonderful of machines and inventions, though they may “prove” to the natural man the upward development of man’s attainments, afford no rest for those in whose hearts the truth of God abides.

Rest for them is found in the true Noah, whose witness and whose experiences testify of the resurrection, and a new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

#17. The Nephilim (Gen. vi. 1-7).

Our last paper led on to the days of Noah by way of the line of promise and blessing, namely, through Seth. Where details of any of these sons of Adam are given, they are seen to be men of God; Enoch walks with God, Lamech looks for comfort, not from the civilization spread by the sons of Cain, but from the type of Christ, Noah. The last verse of chapter v. gives the names of the three sons of Noah, but the generations of Noah and the building of the ark do not commence with the opening verses of chapter vi. The first eight verses are a continuance of the book of the generations of Adam, and takes us back to the period indicated in Gen. v. 4, “and the days of Adam after he had begotten Seth were eight hundred years; and he begat sons and daughters”. Genesis vi. differs from chapter v. in one or two important respects. Genesis v. tells us of Adam “in the day that God created man ... and blessed them”. Genesis vi. 1-8 does not speak of the line of blessing – it tells of the curse.

It is necessary to point out that the word “men” in vi. 1, 2 is in the singular, carrying the article, and indicates, not men, but *the man Adam*. We must be on our guard, however, of hurriedly forming a hasty conclusion from the presence or absence of the article; there is no article in v. 1 before the word Adam, yet inasmuch as this is the first of a series of ten generations of individuals, it must mean the man Adam; the same is true of the opening of verse of I Chronicles i. It is the individual man Adam that is meant in v. 3, for he alone could be the father of Seth, so also verses 4, 5; thus it will be seen that while the presence of the article would generally indicate the man Adam, the absence of it does not necessarily refer to mankind in general. Just as in these verses Adam without the article can mean none other than the first man Adam himself, so in vi. 3, “My spirit shall not always remain in Adam, for that he also is flesh”, simply tells us that the man Adam would die, for that he also is flesh, like the others; then the length of Adam’s days is given as 120 years.

One other reference to this question of the article must be given. In verses 7, 8 the Lord said:--

“I will destroy (wipe off or blot out) man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man and beast and creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth Me that I have made them. But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord” (Gen. vi. 7, 8).

The Lord did not “destroy” Adam. Chapter v. 5 records his death in exactly the same terms as it does that of Seth. God did destroy man and beast with the flood, and these were “made” by Him, which is parallel to the word “create”. The statement also is definitely contrasted with the case of Noah, and it must be remembered that Adam had been dead over 120 years before Noah was born, or over 720 years before the flood came. Again, in viii. 21 “man” in both cases is “*Ha-Adam*” — yet, though the article is there, this cannot mean Adam himself. We can now come back to the opening verses of chapter vi. and render it as follows:--

“And it came to pass, when Adam began to multiply on the face of the ground, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of Adam, that they were fair: and they took them wives of all which they chose. And the Lord said, My spirit shall not always remain in Adam (the article is not used here, even as it is omitted in the words ‘in *the* earth’ in verse 4) for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years” (Gen. vi. 1-3).

Who are the sons of God? Adam himself is so called in Luke iii. 38, but none of his descendants *as such* are afterwards so called. “The sons of God” are in exact contrast with “the daughters of Adam”.

Adam here is literal, it carries no moral meaning, “the sons” are in contrast with “the daughters”, and the words “of God” are in contrast with “of Adam”. If the sons of God were men, they were sons of Adam, and to contrast the sons of Adam with the daughters of Adam by calling them sons of God must lead to error. Scripture does not mislead.

Job i. 6; ii. 1; xxxviii. 7 speak of the sons of God, and in these passages whatever else the “sons of God” may mean, certainly they do not mean any of the sons of Adam. In Psa. xxix. 1 and lxxxix. 6 reference is made to the sons of the mighty, the changed word being *Elim* instead of *Elohim*; the second reference places these sons “in heaven”. Another legitimate parallel is that of Dan. iii. 25. As the language of Daniel iii. is *Syriac* and not Hebrew, we have the word *bar* instead of *ben* for “son”, but the meaning is the same. Nebuchadnezzar’s words recorded in Daniel iii. were not inspired, nevertheless, seeing that he explains what he meant when he used the expression, “son of God”, his explanation must carry more weight than that of those who live in the present time. In verse 28 Nebuchadnezzar explains his meaning of a son of God by saying that God had sent “His *angel*”.

We know that angels fell, for Jude 6 speaks of the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation. The word for habitation is *oiketerion* and occurs nowhere else except in II. Cor. v. 2. Their sin is likened to that of Sodom and Gomorrah in its *essential* feature, viz., “going after strange (*heteros*) flesh”. The time of their fall is not given in Jude, but Peter links the “angels that sinned” with the time of Noah (II Pet. ii. 4, 5), and refers to the spirits in prison, which were disobedient during the time that the ark was preparing.

When we remember that angels are always spoken of as men, and indeed were entertained as such for some hours by Abraham, the difficulty which we may have in connection with this subject may not appear so great. It may seem strange at first that Gen. vi. 3 should come in between the two statements concerning the sons of God, but we are sure that it is there with a definite object. Of Adam the Lord said, “My spirit shall not always remain in Adam, for that he also is flesh”. The spirit remaining in man keeps him alive; when that spirit is withdrawn man dies, he is but flesh. Adam differed nothing in this respect from his children, his days were numbered, and it is revealed to us that from this point “his days” were to be “an hundred and twenty years”. “There were giants in the earth IN THOSE DAYS”, so continues verse 4, and the only days that can be meant are those which refer to the last 120 years of Adam’s life. Not only were they in the earth then, but “after that”, after Adam had died, and after the flood had destroyed the giants that were in the earth during Adam’s closing years. The word “giants” comes from the Greek *gigantes*, which did not originally mean only greatness of size, but is derived for *gegenes*, “earth born”. The Hebrew word is *Nephilim*, or “the fallen ones”; these were the *Gibbor*, the “mighty”, for so it is translated 139 times out of 159 occurrences. Nimrod was “a mighty one in the earth”, and “the beginning of his kingdom was Babel”. These mighty ones are also called “men of renown”, or literally, “men of name”; this again is a prominent feature in the rebellion that originated Babel, for the builders said, “let us make us a name”.

That the Nephilim numbered among them literal giants, the Scriptures clearly testify. The spies sent by Moses into the land of promise spoke of the “men of great stature” that they saw, saying, “and there we saw the giants (*Nephilim*) the sons of Anak which come of the giants”. All however were not of necessity gigantic in size, although they seem to have left that impression upon the mind of man: their unnatural origin, their superhuman prowess supplied the basis for the “heroes” of Greek legend, and the “giants” of most folk tales; the giant cities of Bashan still bear testimony to the existence of a race of literal giants, the iron bedstead of Og, king of Bashan (over 15 feet long) bears its witness also; hence although the A.V. gives “giants” as a translation of *Nephilim*, and is therefore open to the charge of giving a private interpretation rather than a translation, let us not hastily come to the conclusion that these *Nephilim* were not, nevertheless, literal giants, for Scripture most definitely tells us that many of them were. The intermarrying of one section of Adam’s children with another does not supply a reasonable argument for “giants” as a result. If the sons of God were fallen angels, the abnormal

consequences are what may be expected, and such a drastic and universal destruction as the flood becomes a necessity. Amid the awful corruption of the flesh on every hand Noah stand uncontaminated. “Noah was a just man and perfect (without blemish) in his generations (his contemporaries)”; through him only could the line of promise run. Satan had tried to prevent the coming of the Seed of the woman, but had again failed; he tried at the birth of Cain, for Cain “was of that wicked one”. Finding that Seth was given in place of Abel, he corrupted the stream of life while Adam still lived by the irruption of the angels that fell. Again his attempt failed, and the purpose of God held steadily on its way. Satan himself in the form of a serpent sought by the temptation in the garden to thwart the Most High. Satan by his angels again attempted by most diabolical means to render the purpose impossible of attainment, but he failed.

So has it always been, and so must it be till the end, for concerning His purpose it is written, “As I have purposed, so shall it stand”.

#18. The Flood and the Renewed Earth (Gen. vi. 9 - ix. 29).

We must keep before us the main line of purpose that runs through Scripture, and not lose the conception of the whole in the consideration of the incidents.

The temptation and fall of man must be viewed as part of a plan, and the words of Christ in the parable of the tares explain much that occurs in Scripture history, *an enemy hath done this*. Sin opened the door for death, and death reigned from Adam. God, however, is not thwarted either by sin or by death. For the complete emancipation from their dual authority, and for the crushing of the serpent’s head, He promises the “seed of the woman”. From Genesis iii. onwards we are reading chapters in the conflict between the Seed and the serpent, and their respective “seeds”; hence the sad history of Cain and Abel — hence, too, the awful corruption that necessitated the flood. The purpose of God has sometimes hung upon a slender thread, and in the well-nigh universal corruption one man is sustained by grace to keep the Messianic channel pure. “Noah was a just man, and perfect in his generations”. Noah is called in II.Pet.ii.5, “the eighth”, and it is a point that is noted in I Pet. iii. 20 that “eight souls” were saved in the Ark. Enoch we have already seen was “the seventh from Adam”, and although Methuselah and Lamech were born before Noah, yet Noah is marked as the “eighth” by reason of the significance of the number; the eighth or octave is a new beginning, the first day of the week also an eighth day, resurrection and regeneration are thereby symbolized. The very names of Noah and his sons have a numerical value, which connects them with this number.

The gematria of the names is as follows:-

Noah	=	58
Shem	=	340
Ham	=	48
Japheth	=	490

	936	= 8 * 117.
=====		

Ham comes under his father’s curse, and becomes the father of Canaan; removing his name from the list, the total is 888. The witness of numbers is not, however, exhausted by this. Genesis vii. 6 tells us that “Noah was 600 years old when the flood of water was upon the earth”. Six is the number of man. Six days complete the week of work and lead to the Sabbath. Noah enters the Ark in his 600th year and thereby signified that the end of flesh had come. When were the waters dried up from the earth? “In the 601st year, in the 1st month, the 1st day of the month” (viii. 13), this is the beginning of the seventh hundred, the Sabbath rest of which Noah himself and his experiences were prophetic.

By the symbolism of the first seven days we are led to expect that the ages will lead on to a Sabbath; we do know that the millennial kingdom will be for a thousand years, and if we look upon the thousand years as being represented by a day, the six days of earth's toil and man's sin will cover a period of six thousand years. The re-entry of Noah into the world after the flood in the very dawn of the seventh century suggests the same line of thought. The millennial kingdom is also called, "the Regeneration" (Matt. xix. 28), and of this the flood and the renewed earth are a type. The days of Noah were also prophetic of the coming of the Son of man (Matt. xxiv. 37). Everything points to the flood as an epoch, and a type of the day of the Lord. Let us therefore, as we look at a few of the details of this momentous judgment, continually look away from the type to the great reality that is surely coming upon the world, plunged in darkness, heading for perdition, yet deluded by the fallacy of "peace and safety".

We noticed in our last paper that although the corruption began in the days of Adam, yet the height of iniquity was not reached until the days of Noah. After giving the names of Noah's three sons, the record continues, "The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence". "The end of all flesh had come". Like Ezekiel's reiterated "end" (Ezek. vii. 2, 3, 6) there was no more remedy, and no further extension. For the preservation of Noah and his family (also of bird and beast) the building of the Ark was commanded; an act of faith that must have drawn down ridicule and scoffing upon the patriarch's head. There are suggestive parallels between this first structure here commanded, and the tabernacle and temples of Solomon and Ezekiel that may be worth the while of some of our readers to carefully work out. In the Ark, actual men, animals and birds were preserved; in the Tabernacle and Temple, the cherubim shadowed forth the same hope.

The destruction by the flood was utter and complete, the high hills "under the whole heaven" were covered (vii. 19), "the mountains were covered" (20).

"and all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man ... and every living substance ... and Noah alone remained alive, and they that were with him IN THE ARK" (21-23).

The first act of Noah upon leaving the ark was to build an altar and offer unto the Lord burnt offerings, "and the Lord smelled a savour of *rest*". Noah the man of *rest*, in his sabbath century, with death and judgment passed away, looks out again upon the earth. "I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake". Why? Because Noah and his family were now sinless? No,

"Although the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every living thing, as I have done; while the earth remaineth, seed time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease" (viii. 21, 22).

With Noah, "the eighth person", God makes a covenant, and his covenant is referred to eight times, once before the flood came (vi. 18), and seven times afterwards (ix. 9, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17). This covenant, said God, is "between Me and you and every living soul of all flesh"; it was for "perpetual generations (generations of the *Olam* or age; and so was called an everlasting covenant, or, a covenant for the *Olam* or age). This age lasts as long as the earth remaineth, and under the terms of this primitive covenant mankind as a whole still receives the providential mercies of God, and is under the assurance that no more will He bring a flood of waters to destroy the earth. God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth"; this places Noah in the position of Adam, for at Adam's creation the self-same words were uttered. In Gen. i. 28 it is recorded that God said to Adam:--

“Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.”

This is parallel with the words of Gen. ix. 2:--

“And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, and upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea, into your hand are they delivered.”

Following the blessing upon Adam comes the provision of his food:--

“Behold I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat” (Gen. i. 29).

In the same way similar words follow the blessing upon Noah:--

“Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things” (Gen. ix. 3).

Here we observe a most important change, for the first time in Scripture do we read of flesh being given as a part of man’s dietary. To those who have any knowledge of the ways and means of spiritism, the change will be most suggestive, for anyone to attain to a high position in spiritism vegetarian diet is essential, as also is abstinence from marriage. To preserve the race from the universal effects of another irruption of spirit beings this change is made; here there is a further foreshadowing of the end:--

“Now the spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall apostatize from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons ... forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats” (I Tim. iv. 1-3).

Again, as in Genesis i., reference is made to the fact that man was created in the image of God, and upon this fact is based the law of capital punishment (Gen. ix. 6).

These parallels with Adam’s original blessing and position indicate that Noah was in type a second Adam, and foreshadowed the Lord Himself. The bow in the cloud, given as the token of the covenant made between God and all flesh, is seen together with the Cherubim in Ezek. i. 28, and in Rev. iv. 3, and it shines around the head of the mighty angel who swore by Him that liveth for ever and ever, Who created heaven and the things that therein are, and the earth and the things that therein are, and the sea and the things which are therein, that there should be a time no longer, but that the mystery of God should be finished (Rev. x. 1-7).

There are mysteries deep and wide that surround the record of the flood and the Ark; into these we cannot here attempt to penetrate; we rejoice, however, to trace the rainbow of God’s covenant through to the day when the mystery of God shall be finished, and a *real* renewed earth shall be placed under the righteous way of a greater than Adam, and a greater than Noah.

#19. The Basis of the New Order (Gen. viii. 21 - ix. 17).

(see The Fifteen Dispensations, Volume VI, page 136).

There are many of the Lord’s gifts to us as His creatures that we accept as a matter of course, yet without which life would be impossible. Nothing is so free as air and sunlight, yet nothing so vital. The regular sequence of day and night, the recurrence of seed-time and harvest, the continued rotation of summer and winter we think of as though no interference with their regularity and order could be possible. The flood, which we were considering in our last paper, was the most violent interference with “nature” that had occurred since the fall of man, and it was after the waters of the flood had dried up, and Noah had offered his burnt offerings, that we read:--

“The Lord said in His heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man’s sake; for the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth, neither will I again smite any more every living thing, as I have done” (Gen. viii. 21).

There is a parallel with this in ix. 8-17 where God establishes His covenant with Noah and his seed and with every living creature that there should never be sent a flood again to destroy all flesh.

Although we often speak of *Jehovah* as God in covenant with His people, and *God* as Creator, we observe that while JEHOVAH said in His heart that He would not smite any more as He had done, it is GOD who makes the covenant to that effect. For the dispensational meaning of Jehovah the reader is referred to the article on pp.40-44 of volume VIII.

Jehovah being the God of the age, His covenant is called the age covenant (A.V. everlasting covenant, ix. 16):--

“While the earth remaineth (or while all the days of the earth [continue]), seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease.”

Day after day since this promise was made the Lord has looked down upon man whose heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, and has never again interfered with the universal ordinances here specified. Famine and other judgments there may have been in places, but never universally, like the flood. The Lord while on earth drew attention to the fact that the Father “maketh His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust”. The apostle Paul declared that God, while suffering all nations in time past to walk in their own ways, yet “left not Himself without witness, doing good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness” (Acts xiv. 15-17).

The Lord appeals to the unchanging continuance of the ordinance of day and night to indicate the like character of His covenant with Israel:--

“Thus saith the Lord which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinance of the moon and of the stars for a light by night ... If those ordinances depart from before Me ... then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before Me all the days” (Jer. xxxi. 35, 36).

The A.V. and the R.V. by using here the words, “for ever”, instead of “all the days”, commit the Lord to perpetuate Israel *as a nation* throughout eternity, and also the ordinances of the sun and moon. Neither of these propositions can be established by Scripture, and there are some passages which speak of the cessation of the ordinances of the sun, moon and stars, therefore the earnest student will be careful not to go beyond what is written. The apostle, as we have seen (Acts xiv. 15-17), speaks of these things as “a witness”. Romans i. 19, 20 teaches us that the Gentiles by the “things that are made” might have known the “eternal power and deity of God”, and thereby have been deterred from idolatry. In the same manner these covenanted ordinances are God’s witnesses. The recurring seed-time and harvest are a standing warning to the whole race, apart from the written revelation. How often the present life with its opportunities is likened to a seed time, and how many are the warnings and the encouragements in view of the harvest at the end of the age! The day, too, when man may work, the night that cometh when man’s work is done; the daily miracle of sleeping and awaking is a foreshadowing of that sleep of death and that morning of resurrection which is so prominent in the N.T. Scriptures. All these themes the reader can pursue with profit; we can but draw attention to the great age-time covenant, that throughout all dispensations has continued in unaltered order.

The first great dispensational fact that is made known in the new world that opened out to Noah and his descendants was that judgment is deferred. God will not again visit in the same way the sins of man as He did at the flood; the wicked *now* may prosper as a green bay tree, the righteous *now* may be plagued all the day long, “the end”, as seen in “the sanctuary of God”, reveals the fact of a future day of individual judgment. So it is that even though man continues in his sin, seed time and harvest, and day and night, do not cease.

In the next chapter (ix.) the Lord lays the foundation of human government. We must go back further into history than the days of Nebuchadnezzar for the divine institution of “the powers that be”. “Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed, for in the image of God made He man” (Gen. ix. 6). When Cain shed his brother’s blood God made a special protection for him against the hand of his fellow-man. Here, however, man is appointed judge and executioner. A change also in the food of man is made. To Adam God gave every herb bearing seed, and every tree in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; now, “every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you, even as the green herb have I given you every thing”. To this divine change in human diet the apostle Paul alludes in I Tim. iv. 4, 5, “For every creature of God is good and nothing to be refused, being received with thanksgiving, for it is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer”. The false teaching of the apostasy, the doctrines of demons, included the forbidding of marriage, and the abstinence from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.

To progress in what is called Spiritism, abstinence from flesh foods and from marriage is essential; the seducing spirits with their doctrines of demons seem to be characteristic of the “latter times”. The days of Noah are to be repeated, and the spirit activities that brought about the corruption of the earth that ended in the flood are to be expected again. If the abstinence from flesh food and from marriage makes intercourse with the spirit world easier, we can perceive the wise provision in the change of human food as given to Noah, and the reason why such an institution should be discontinued as a prelude to demon activities in the latter times.

After blessing Noah, and saying, “Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth”, God speaks of man’s new relationship to the animal world; this is exactly in the same order in Gen. i. 28. There are one or two modifications, however, that indicate a change from Gen. i. 28; man is told not only to replenish the earth, but to subdue it, a type of Him who will yet subdue all things beneath His feet; further, he was to “have dominion”, another type of the Lord from heaven. This appears to be directly connected with the fact that man was created in the image of God. That the image remained after the fall and after the flood is abundantly testified by Gen. ix. 6, and James iii. 9. Instead of the word “dominion”, we have in the re-institutions of Noah, “the fear of you and the dread of you” shall be upon every beast, fowl and fish. This is something lower than dominion, and harmonizes with the general character of the age.

When Nebuchadnezzar was made “the head of gold”, he became more than king of Babylonian Empire, or the first of a new dynasty, a dispensational change took place, almost as great as is indicated in Genesis ix. When Daniel interpreted to Nebuchadnezzar the meaning of the great image he said:--

“Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory, and wheresoever the children of MEN dwell, the BEASTS of the field and the FOWLS of the heaven hath He given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all” (Dan. ii. 37, 38).

The words, “hath He given into thine hand”, are an echo of the words of Gen. ix. 2, “into your hand are they delivered”; there is also more than a coincidence in the fact that in Gen. i., ix., & Daniel ii. these things are associated with an image, in the one case “the image of God”, in the other a “great image whose brightness was excellent, and its form terrible” (Dan. ii. 31). One other consideration and we must close.

The question as to the extent of the flood is perennial, and we just briefly deal with it here. First of all, the extent of the flood must be considered not from a geographical point of view, but from the standpoint of its purpose. Genesis vi. 17 declares that the flood was intended to destroy all flesh, and that everything in the earth should die. This is again stated in Gen. vii. 4, “every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth” [*adamah*, ground]. This is recorded as an accomplished fact in vii. 21-23:--

“All flesh died ... and every man, all in whose nostrils was the breath of life, and all that was in the dry land died, and every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground ... they were destroyed from the earth, Noah only remained, and they that were with him in the ark.”

These statements are sufficient proof that the flood was universal in extent *so far as life was concerned*, and we might waive the question of its geographical extent did not the Scripture (Gen.vii.19) use such an expression as

“ALL the high hills, that were under the WHOLE heaven were covered.”

Had the passage read, All the high hills that were on the earth or the ground, there may have been room for an argument as to the meaning of these terms, but surely no such limitation can be set to the whole heavens!

Dr. Kitto points out another witness:--

"If the deluge were local, what was the need of taking *birds* into the ark, and among them birds so widely diffused as the raven and the dove? A deluge which could overspread the region which *these* birds inhabit could hardly have been less than universal ... if the waters of the deluge rose fifteen cubits above all the mountains of the countries which the raven and the dove inhabit, the level must have been enough to give universality to the flood."

We believe that the human race began anew in Noah and his sons, and with them commenced the order of things that was at the base of the national life, soon to be instituted; the beginning of the nations and their place in the divine economy we must consider in our next paper.

Space will not permit a lengthy examination of all the varying features of the new dispensation which commenced with Noah and his saved family and the lower animals. We feel that the evident relation between the dispensations connected with Adam, and that connected with Noah is important enough to receive the following tabulated list of parallels and contrasts, and we trust the interested reader will pursue the theme more fully than we are able to do in these pages; we write always for BEREANS:--

List of parallels and contrasts between the dispensations headed by:

A D A M	N O A H
A judgment in the background which left the earth without form and void (Genesis i. 2; Isa. xlv. 18).	A flood in the background that left the earth a ruin (Gen. vii. 17-24).
(The parallel between these two passages is so close that commentators are divided as to which of them II Pet. iii. 5, 6 refers).	
The dry land appears on the third day, grass and trees grow (Gen. i. 9-13).	The dry land appears in Noah's 601 st year, and the pluckt olive leaf indicated to Noah that this was so (Gen. viii. 11-13).
Living creatures are “brought forth” from the water and from the earth, and God blessed them saying, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth” (Gen. i. 20-25).	Living creatures are “brought forth” with Noah out of the ark that they may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply in the earth” (Gen. viii. 15-19).

A D A M	N O A H
Man made in the image of God to have “dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth ... and God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth, and subdue it” (Gen. i. 26-28).	“And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea, into your hand are they delivered.” “In the image of God made He man” (Gen. ix. 1, 2, 6).
Food. — “Every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed, to you it shall be for meat” (Gen. i. 29).	Food. — “Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things”, but not blood (Gen. ix. 3, 4).
The seventh day rest (Gen. ii. 1-3).	Every flood date (except Gen. viii. 5) is a Sabbath. (<i>Companion Bible</i> note) the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month which was a Sabbath (Gen. viii. 4).
Adam has three sons, Cain, Abel and Seth (Gen. iv. 1, 2, 25).	Noah has three sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth (Gen. v. 32).
One son, Cain, is cursed more than the earth, and becomes a fugitive and a vagabond (Gen. iv. 12).	One son, Ham, the father of Canaan, is cursed, even though God had promised not to curse the ground any more, and Canaan becomes a servant of servants (Gen. ix. 25; viii. 21).
God curses Cain for shedding his brother’s blood, but does not sanction vengeance by human hands (Gen. iv. 10-15).	God will require the life blood from every beast and man, but now delegates the execution of judgment to man himself. “Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed” (Gen. ix. 5, 6).
The Lord sets a “mark” (<i>oth</i>) to protect Cain (Gen. iv. 15).	The Lord sets a bow in the cloud for a “token” (<i>oth</i>) to ensure all flesh (Gen. ix. 13).
God planted a garden.	Noah planted a vineyard.
Nakedness and shame are linked together in connection with Adam.	Nakedness and shame are linked together in connection with Noah.
The fruit of the tree, and the fig (Gen. ii. 8; iii. 6, 7, 10).	The wine of the vineyard (Gen. ix. 20-23).
The redemption of both man and his lost dominion is symbolized by the Cherubim (Gen. iii. 24).	The redemption of both man and his lost dominion is symbolized by the animals preserved alive in the ark (Gen. vii. 13-16; viii. 1, 17-19).
The serpent beguiled the woman and brought about the curse (Genesis iii. 1-24; II.Cor.xi.3).	The sons of God by their actions towards the daughters of men bring about the flood (Gen. vi. 1-4).
All the days of Adam were 930 years (v. 5).	All the days of Noah were 950 years (ix. 29).

Many other details could doubtless be collected, and many instructive lessons be learned from the changes introduced into the new dispensation. We trust that sufficient has been given above to stimulate the reader to individual effort.

#20. The Purpose of God (Genesis i. - ix.).

Our studies together of these early chapters of Genesis have led us up to the point when in the new world nations are to make their first appearance, and a new development is about to take place in the purpose of the ages. We write these pages for those who desire help in understanding the *fundamentals* of Dispensational Truth, and therefore propose to pause at this juncture to consider what light these early chapters throw upon the purpose of God.

There is need here for the utmost care, lest by confusing things that differ we are found saying things about the Lord that shall be to our shame.

First there is the purpose of God according to election. This purpose is illustrated for us in the ninth chapter of Romans; the apostle had expressed his sorrow for his kinsmen according to the flesh, but corrects any idea that there had been any miscarriage of the purpose of God by saying:--

“Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect, for they are not all Israel which are of Israel, neither, because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called ... the children of the promise are counted for the seed.”

The Scripture passes from the promise concerning Isaac to that concerning Jacob, saying:--

“For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of Him that calleth, it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger.”

It is evident that this is “election” pure and simple; it was planned before the children were born, and took no account of their works, either good or evil. In the operation of this purpose the Lord shows mercy or hardness entirely irrespective of the individual. Pharaoh, and the hardening of his heart, is instanced as a further illustration, and the figure of the potter and the clay makes the meaning of the apostle clear. References to a similar purpose are to be found in Eph. i. 1-14, where the election is said to have been made in Christ before the overthrow of the world, and the sonship and the inheritance are spoken of as being according to predestination, which predestination is in harmony with the purpose of Him who is energizing all things according to the counsel of His own will. Parallel with this is the reference in II Tim. i. 9:--

“Who saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before *aionian* times.”

This purpose and promise, related to that period spoken of as before *aionian* times, is, like the purpose which is related to the period before the overthrow of the world, connected with election, for Titus i. 1, 2 links the faith of God’s elect with the promise that was made before *aionian* times. Now, here comes the danger of a false comparison of things that differ. If we transfer the terms of this pre-*aionian* purpose to the purpose of the ages, or to the purpose of God in general, we shall be found teaching that which if taught wittingly would be quite erroneous.

Let us see what happens if we take the absolute principles of the purpose of election, and teach that such is the character of God in the widest application. If this be true then there is no such thing as sin, or human guilt; God is openly and unblushingly made responsible for sin, and sin is robbed of its ugliness

and criminal character, and becomes but the handmaid of God. Satan is not really an enemy or an adversary, he is but one of the many strange tools that God is employing under this purpose. It is idle to speak of responsibility, of obedience or disobedience, of punishment and repentance; as well punish a stone, because left unsupported it falls to the ground, as punish a man for sinning. If God has willed and decreed from first to last the whole course of the ages with all that ever will be done therein, He has of necessity made a machine, the wheels and cogs of which move by *mechanical* power and not by *moral* forces. If any fault is to be found it must be found in the Maker, for He willed all that has been and shall be down to the last detail.

Possibly the reader will interpose with one of the many passages of Scripture where man is addressed as a moral agent, urged to obey, believe, love, etc., threatened with punishment or encouraged by reward. Deuteronomy xxviii., e.g., is so much mockery in the ears of those whose every deed is fixed by predestination or electing purpose. It will be sufficient for our purpose to consider the following passages in the nine chapters of Genesis which we have now passed under review.

- (1). Gen. i. 1, 2. Creation and Chaos.
- (2). Gen. ii. 17. Prohibition and Penalty.
- (3). Gen. iv. 25. Seth and Substitution.
- (4). Gen. vi. 5-7. The repentance of God.

(1). GEN. i. 1, 2. — We noticed, when dealing with this passage in volume VI, pp.169-173, that the condition of chaos and darkness there indicated was not the condition of creation “in the beginning”; it *became* so. The passage we referred to (Isa. xlv. 18), not only discloses that the earth was not created *tohu* (without form), but that “He formed it to be inhabited”. Here, therefore, at the threshold of our enquiry we have words that indicate that the purpose of the creation of Gen. i. 1 received a check; something had for the time being entered and spoiled the fair work of God. This passage, taken by itself, does not settle the question we are considering; we must wait until we have collected further evidence. We may remark here, however, that the “purpose of the ages” (Eph. iii. 11) occupies the whole period of this present time, the creation of the six days being the platform upon which the great drama of good and evil is enacted, the consummation being the restoration of the alienated creation back to God. When this takes place the present heaven and earth pass away, and a new heaven and a new earth appear. It seems that we must choose the view that either the purpose of God is of such a character as to roll on its way utterly unaltered by any action of any of His creatures, or we must believe that something did enter into His creation which temporarily turned that purpose aside, and that the conflict of the ages is no piece of theatricals, but a desperate battle, that sin is an ugly and awful thing, and no creature of God, that the coming of the Son of God was a necessity, that His agony, suffering, and death were real, that the triumph and victory was not the conquest of a make-believe enemy, and that the infinite power and wisdom of God are fully able to deal with all opposition, and to accomplish the fulfilment of all His purposes. The One who sees the very “weakness” of God as being stronger than man, and the “foolishness” of God as wiser than man, needs no inflexible mechanical purpose to necessitate certainty. We watch a game of chess, and after a while the certainty comes to us that one player is already beaten, and the other the victor, although each are bound by laws, and neither can predestinate the others movements, and the wisdom and the skill of the victor is enhanced as we realize the high qualities of his opponent. Sin, Satan, and death are real enemies; they are included in the things that offend, and are to be finally banished from the kingdom of God. True, He makes the wrath of man to praise Him, and restrains the rest (Psa. lxxvi. 10), true, He overrules sin, and takes the wise in their own craftiness. To accomplish His purposes of grace He spared not His own Son, and working by law and by faith, by conscience, and by revelation, by grace, by love, by warning, and by beseeching, with infinite variety and in manifold wisdom He deals with the ever varying moral agents that comprise the fabric of His purpose.

(2). GEN. ii. 17. — Coming to Adam, his temptation and fall, Scripture definitely declares, “This only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions:” (Eccles. vii. 29). When God said to Adam concerning the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, “Thou shalt not eat of it”, *He meant it*, as the “God of truth and without iniquity”. He could not have meant, “Thou shalt not eat of it — but my purpose is that you shall, that your seeming responsibility and choice is only superficial and not real”. The penalty attached to the disobedience is only moral if Adam had free action in the matter; if we grant this, then it at once becomes evident that the purpose of God cannot be of the mechanical unaccommodating character that some would have us believe. An illustration of what we mean by accommodation is found in the birth of Seth.

(3). GEN. iv. 25. — Seth was so called, because “God hath appointed me”, said Eve, “another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew”. Cain was “of that wicked one”, and if the unalterable and inflexible purpose of God was that Seth should be the seed through whom the line of promise should run, then Cain had obeyed the will of God in thus murdering his brother, but if God met the attack of “the wicked one” by appointing “another seed instead of Abel”, His purpose would still go on, and the enemy’s attack fail. Besides, that view makes the whole transaction real, the other makes it an awful fiction.

(4). GEN. vi. 5-7. — Come again to another scene, the flood. If the deluge was a predestined part of the unalterable, inflexible purpose of God, so must have been the wickedness that necessitated it, and God, looking down upon the increasing violence, must have rejoiced to see how well His purpose was developing; but what saith the Holy Word?

“And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually, and it REPENTED THE LORD that He had made man on the earth, and it GRIEVED HIM AT HIS HEART, and the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man and beast, and creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it REPENTETH ME THAT I HAVE MADE THEM” (Gen. iv. 5-7).

Here is solid, sober Scripture, call it by what name in the range of figurative language that you will, when all is said and done, stand once again and behold this record of Divine grief over the apostacy of His creatures, and the resolution to blot them out that followed. We need no greater proof than this, that the responsibility for human guilt rests upon man, and that he was under no necessity by reason of an iron purpose to do so wickedly. Noah himself, as we sought to show in the last two papers, is a kind of second Adam with whom a new start is made. We will not pursue this subject further, being content to have seen that there is a vast difference between that electing purpose that was made in Christ before sin entered, and that purpose and plan which spans the ages and ends in the defeat of the adversary, the destruction of the last enemy, and the homage of heaven and earth and underworld in the name of Jesus. We cannot quote a more apt passage in conclusion than that of Rom. iii. 5-8:--

“But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (i speak as a man), God forbid; for then how shall God judge the world? For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto His glory; why yet am i also judged as a sinner, and not rather (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say), LET US DO EVIL, THAT GOOD MAY COME? WHOSE DAMNATION IS JUST.

#21. The Birthright of the Nations (Genesis x.).

The Third Dispensation (see volume VI, p.136).

It is evident from the many parallels exhibited between the period immediately following the flood and the period of the creation of Adam, that a new dispensation commenced with Noah and his saved family. If we believe the teaching of Scripture (Genesis x.) we can have no alternative but to believe that all mankind is descended from Noah, through his three sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth:--

“These are the sons of Noah: and of them was the whole earth overspread”
(Gen. ix. 19).

The apostle Paul, speaking to the Athenians said:--

“God ... hath made of one *every* nation of men to dwell on the *whole* face of the earth” (Acts xvii. 26).

These words of Paul are either Scripture truth and therefore final, or private opinion and therefore fallible. Speaking as an apostle (*ex cathedra*, as it were) Paul was inspired and infallible, and the testimony given here on Mar's Hill was a public witness of a duly accredited ambassador of Christ. He spoke truth, and his word here is but an echo of the statement of Genesis x.

The Athenians applied the term of *autochthones* to other peoples, believing that other peoples had sprung as a separate creation from the soil, as they believed they had. One can feel the point of the apostle's words to these very Athenians, knowing the belief they entertained. The testimony to the unity of the human race seems to be the exclusive witness of the Scriptures, **and what science is reluctantly but nevertheless definitely approaching, the humblest believer in the Word has known all along.** As far back as 1655 *La Peyrère* published his theory of pre-adamite races, and at intervals since then there have been various suggestions put forward regarding the different origins of existing nations.

Voltaire said that no one who was not blind could doubt "that the Whites, the Negroes, the Albinos, the Hottentots, the Chinese, and the Americans belong to entirely different races".

One philosopher maintained that there were eleven different species of mankind, while another went so far as to say there could be no less than fifteen.

Let us look at some of the most striking differences exhibited by the various nations. Among them we might mention *colour*. *Quatrefages*, in his book, "the Human Species", says:--

"The difference in colouring is easily explained. We now know beyond a doubt that the skin of the Negro is exactly the same in composition as that of the White ... the mucous layer ... is the seat of the colour ... External influences have, moreover, an influence on the organ, and modify the colour secretion. Simon has shown that freckles are nothing more than spots upon the skin of the White, presenting the characteristics of the skin of Negro. He also says that even the attempt to divide the races of mankind along the line of colour is founded upon *entirely erroneous ideas*. Among the 'Whites' there are entire populations whose skin is as black as that of the darkest of Negro."

"There are Arab and Jewish families of ancient settlement in Northern Africa, who have become as black as the other inhabitants" (*The Vestiges of Creation*).

Another insecure test is that of the *hair*. All Negroes have not the proverbial wool. Every possible gradation from crisp curly woolly hair to flowing hair is found among them.

Difference in *height* is sometimes taken as an argument. The Patagonian of 6ft.3.75in. is in great contrast with the Esquimaux of 3ft.3.37in., yet the links that bind these extremes are of such gentle gradation that it is impossible to draw the line and say, Here one race begins and another ends. It has

been ascertained that the French have decreased in height in the islands of Mexico, whilst the British have increased in height in Kentucky.

The *brain capacity* was once thought to be a criterion, but even *Haeckel*, the evolutionist, and no friend of the Bible, says:--

"Within the limits of a single race, for example, among the peoples on the Mediterranean, the shape of the cranium can vary even to the most extreme forms."

The writer of *The Vestiges of Creation* quoted above says:--

"About 200 years ago, a number of people were driven by a barbarous policy from the counties of Antrim and Down in Ireland towards the sea-coast, where they have ever since been settled, but in unusually miserable circumstances even for Ireland; and the consequences is, that they exhibit peculiar features of the most repulsive kind, projecting jaws with large open mouths, depressed noses, high cheek bones, and bow legs, together with extremely diminutive stature."

We could multiply quotations (we are indebted to the writings of *Rev. John Urquhart* for those cited), but we refrain. Scripture simply and unreservedly states as a fact of inspired truth that all the nations of the earth sprang from "one". Moreover, it does not make the mistake of judging by outward appearance, but divides the whole of mankind into three families, declaring that this division is the result of the families originating from Noah's three sons. The study of language has led men to divide the human race into *three*, called the Aryan (which corresponds with the Japhethic), the Semitic, and the Turanian (which answers to the Hamitic). The Aryan family stretches from India to England, and includes such a variety of languages as Sanscrit, Persian, Celtic, Greek, Latin, Italian, Russian, Danish, German, English, etc. *Colonel Vans Kennedy* shows a list of 900 words common to the Sanscrit and other languages of the same family. In the Sanscrit and Persian we find such words as pader, mader, sunn, dokhter, brader, deuta, eyeumen, nasa, none of which need translation for the English reader.

The Semitic family includes Hebrew, Assyrio-Babylonian, Arabic, Syriac, and Ethiopian. The third, the Turanian, or Hamitic group, comprises all the languages of Asia and Europe not included in the Aryan or Semitic groups. In the *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology, 1889 and 1890*, is shown the close connection between the Accadian, an undoubted Hamitic tongue, the most ancient language of Babylonia, and the Chinese, which Mr. J. C. Ball calls "the new Accadian".

The science of philology has led to the conclusion that there is a threefold division of the human race corresponding with the threefold division of Genesis x.

One more testimony from archæology and we pass to other things. Genesis x. places the new beginning of the race in Western Asia. Is there any evidence that these three families have left their mark here? *Professor Rawlinson* says:--

"In Western Asia the several ethnic branches of the human family were more closely intermingled, and more evenly balanced than in any other portion of the ancient world. Semitic, Indo-European, and Tartar or Turanian races, not only divided among them this portion of the earth's surface, but lay confused and interspersed upon it in a most remarkable entanglement. It is symptomatic of this curious inter-mixture, that the Persian monarchs, when they wished to publish a communication to their Asiatic subjects in such a way that it should be generally intelligible, had to put it out not only in *three* different languages, but in three languages belonging to the *three principal divisions* of human speech.

The region retains the same peculiarity to the present day. It is still inhabited by representatives of the *three* great divisions of the human race, and when the Government publishes its edicts, it has still to employ Indo-European (Persian), Semitic (Arabic), and Turanian (Turkish) speech."

We must now leave this testimony to the truth of the Scriptures to consider in brief “the generations of the sons of Noah”. Shem is named first because of the fact that he was the father of the line of promise, although Japheth was the first-born (I Chron. i. 5).

THE SONS OF JAPHETH. — The name of Japheth means “enlargement”, and the fulfilment of the promise, “God shall enlarge Japheth” is seen to this day in the fact that the “white man” is still the colonizer and pioneer. The sons of Japheth are seven in number, who have seven sons, and “by these were the coast-lands of the Gentiles divided in their lands; every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations”. Brief notes are all that can be given upon these sons and their descendants.

GOMER. -- Ezekiel xxxviii. 6 places Gomer in “the north quarter”. In the Assyrian inscriptions Gomer is called Gimirra, and by the Greek writers Kimmerii. The name is preserved in the word “Crimea”. By the Romans Gomer was called Cimbri. This in turn is the name Cymry, the name of the Welsh or the Celtic race. They have left traces of their journey across Europe from the Crimea to Cumberland.

MAGOG. -- Ezekiel xxxviii. 2-6 associates Gomer with Magog, and nothing very definite can be said of this man’s descendants.

MADAI. -- The title of the multifarious tribes to the east of Kurdistan; the Medes.

JAVAN. -- Both Sargon (the father of Sennacherib) and Darius use this name for Ionia and Greece.

TUBAL spread over the south-eastern portion of Cappadocia.

MESHECH, Muski, Muska and Moschaios of the Assyrian tablets were known to be in the eastern part of the Asia Minor. An opinion, not yet confirmed, is that Meshech is the ancestor of the Muscovites.

TIRAS. -- *The Companion Bible* gives this man as the ancestor of the Thracians.

Of the sons of Gomer and Javan little can be said.

Professor Sayce sees in Ashkenaz, the Assyrian Asguza, a district which lay between the kingdom of Ekbatana and the Minni. The Jews, however, have always applied the name to Germany.

Max Muller says:--

"There was a time when the ancestors of the Celts, the Germans, the Slavs, the Greeks, the Italians, the Persians and the Hindoos were living together beneath the same roof, and separate from the Semitic and Turanian races."

The philologist of the 20th century but repeats the witness of Genesis x.

THE SONS OF HAM are four in number.

CUSH. — The Cushites first lived in South Mesopotamia, and afterwards in Africa; the Ethiopians. *Bunsen* once wrote, “An Asiatic Cushite exists only in the imagination of interpreters, and is the child of their despair”. *Strabo*, the ancient Greek geographer, describes the Ethiopians as “a two-fold people, lying extended in a long tract from the rising to the setting sun”. Herodotus speaks of “Oriental Ethiopians”. The Egyptian Monuments, “From the time of the twelfth dynasty onwards, a new race makes its appearance on the Egyptian horizon, viz., the Kashi in Nubia” (see also Jer. xlv. 9, A.V. margin).

MIZRAIM. — The Egyptians. Isaiah xxxvii. 25 records Sennacherib’s boast that he had, “dried up all the rivers of Matsor”, that is, the mouths of the Nile. Again, in Isa. xix. 6, the “brooks of defence” should read, “The Nile-arms of Matsor”. While Matsor was the name of lower Egypt, upper Egypt was called, Pathros (see Isa. xi. 11), the Egyptian Peto-res or “southern land”. A son of Mizraim is Pathrusim (Gen. x. 14).

PHUT. — Probably Somali-land, the Punt or Put of the Egyptian Monuments.

CANAAN. — The Tel-el-Amarna tablets show that the land of promise was known by the name of Canaan in the time of Moses. The Hittites were descended from Canaan (Gen. x. 15, "Heth"), their language, as yet undeciphered, shows now affinity to the Semitic or the Aryan, and has been adjudged as Turanian or Hamitic. The Philistines were descended from Casluhim, while the Phœnicians were called Kept by the Egyptians, and the part of Egypt in which they lived was called Kept-ur (see Caphtorim, Gen. x. 14). Amos ix. 7 presents a problem as compared with Gen. x. 14 which we are unable to solve. There are thirty-one names given in the line of Ham.

THE SONS OF SHEM. — Shem is called the father of "all the children of Eber", for Peleg's descendants, who carry us down to Abraham, are not named in this chapter, but are reserved until the special section which gives the generations of Shem (Gen. xi. 10).

ELAM. — Josephus thought Elamites were Persians, but the Assyrian inscriptions identify the Elam with Susiana, the ancient inhabitants of which were Semites.

ASSHUR. — The Assyrians, whose language is closer to Hebrew than French or Italian is to Latin.

ARPHAXAD. — *Professor Sayce* concludes that this refers to Chaldæa, as the word may be pronounced Arpa-Chesed, or "border of Chaldæa".

ARAM. — Mesopotamia and Syria. The language of this people, called Aramaic, was the language of Dan. ii. 4-7, the language of the common people of Palestine in the time of Christ. Mark v. 41 is an example. Very little is known of the other names figuring in this list.

Uz was the name of the country of the Sabeans and Chaldeans (Job i. 15, 17).

EBER. — The word indicates "one who passed over" (see Joshua xxiv. 2, 3, 14, 15), and from this word we get the name *Hebrew*. Eber has two sons, Peleg and Joktan. Attention is drawn to the fact that in Peleg's days the earth was divided, but nothing more is said of him until chapter xi., where he is seen in the direct line from Shem to Abraham.

Joktan is considered to be the father of the Saracens. He was the 13th from Shem, the numerics of his name being 13*13, and he had 13 sons.

"These are the families of the sons of Noah, after their generations, in their nations: and by these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood."

These nations, seventy in all, were divided by God into the various parts of the earth. He set the bounds of their habitation (Acts xvii. 26), and divided the earth and its peoples, and separated the sons of Adam, "according to the number of the children of Israel" (Deut. xxxii. 8). So the great purpose of the Bible is steadily pursued, the list of Noah's descendants being as vital to the theme as is the genealogy of Matthew i.

None of these nations is "lost". They may be untraceable to man, but God knows where they are, and what they are now called. Their names recur in the prophecies that refer to the future day of the Lord, and when the Lord deals both in judgment and in blessing with the nations of the earth, these seventy nations we believe will be found to encompass them all.

#22. Babel (Gen. x. 8-12, xi. 1-9).

In the midst of the list of names given in Genesis x. we are arrested by one or two digressions. One son of Cush became so great that his name and prowess became a proverb, "Wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord". The other digressions in this chapter are the references to the Canaanites (18, 19); the statement that Shem was the father of all the children of Eber (21); the division of the earth in the days of Peleg (25); and the dwelling of the sons of Joktan (29, 30). We propose to consider the place that Nimrod occupies in the outworking of the purpose of God.

The name Nimrod is from the Hebrew *marad*, to rebel. The Merodach of the Bible (Jeremiah l. 2) is the name Nimrod. The Accadian Merodach was called Amaruduk or Amarudu, and became in Assyrian-Babylonian, Marduk. The suffix *uk* is dropped in the Hebrew, and the prefix *ni*, assimilating the name "to a certain extent to the initial forms of the Hebrew verbs", was added giving us the Hebrew name Ni-marad or Nimrod. We would not say that *all* error is counterfeit truth, simply because our limited knowledge would not justify the assertion, but we do say that much error, much *vital* error, is counterfeit truth, this is seen in the lies of Satan spoken in Eden and incarnate in Nimrod.

Merodach (i.e. Nimrod deified) is creator and saviour in the whole unholy parody. He it is who undertakes to do battle with Tiamat, and to him it was spoken, "Fear not, and make merry, *for thou shalt bruise the head of Tiamat*". Here is one of the primal declarations concerning the Seed diverted from its true object. Merodach, as a result of his decision to become the avenger and the redeemer, is exalted above all gods. "Among the high gods *thou art highest*; thy command is the command of Anu, O Merodach, our avenger, we give thee sovereignty over the entire universe. Thy weapon will ever be irresistible". "May Merodach, the mighty overseer of the heavenly spirits, exalt thy head."

What is true concerning the usurpation of the glory and offices of Christ in this satanic scheme, is true also of all that is associated with His gospel. A complete *religion* dealing with life, death, and judgment, salvation by works, penances and rites, a Christless creed, and the very mystery of iniquity. With Nimrod, Babylon and all that Babylon stands for are associated together. "Babylon is taken: Bel is confounded: Merodach is broken in pieces" (Jer. l. 2).

Nimrod, the rebel, is the first one that Scripture records as founding a kingdom. "The beginning of his kingdom was Babel". Up to this time an earthly king was unknown; how suggestive of the character and purpose of human kingdoms it is, that the first king was a rebel and the first kingdom began at Babylon! The line of Divine purpose was to flow and develop through Shem, that is evident by a comparison of the generations given in Genesis x. & xi. Nimrod was therefore the next great satanic attack upon that purpose, and from its first mention in Genesis until its final mention in Revelation Babel or Babylon has been the seat of all the rebellion and opposition to the Divine purpose.

Before we proceed to the more detailed account of the origin of the name Babel, as given in Genesis.xi., we will endeavour to show how the great rebel has been foisted upon mankind in the endeavour of Satan to usurp the glory and the kingdom of the Son of God. Bunsen states that the religious system of Egypt was derived from "the primitive empire of Babel". Birch, dealing with the Babylonian cylinders, is quoted by Layard as saying, "The zodiacal signs ... show unequivocally that the Greeks derived their notions and arrangements of the zodiac (and consequently their mythology, that was intertwined with it), from the Chaldees". Ouvaroff in his work on the Eleusinian mysteries states that these mysteries were transplanted from Egypt, which in turn received them from the East, "the centre of science and civilization". Not only did Egypt and Greece derive their religion from Babylon, but so also did the Phœnicians, so Macrobius says in his Saturnalia; and wherever man is found and religion is professed, beneath the superficial differences of names and ritual lies the one great primitive lie originated at Babylon and linked with Nimrod.

Egypt, under the titles Isis and Osiris; India under the titles Isi and Iswara; Asia as Cybele and Deoious; Pagan Rome as Fortuna and Jupiter-puer (the boy Jupiter); Greece as Ceres, the great Mother with the babe at her breast; China as Shing Moo with her child in her arms; and Papal Rome as the Madonna and child, all these and many more are the result of the original idolatry set up at Babylon to turn the minds of men away from the first promise of the true Seed of the woman to Satan's counterfeit. The Babylonians worshipped Semiramis under the name of the great *Goddess Mother*, and it was from her son that she derived all the glory and claim to deity. By a strange process the husband of Semiramis came to be worshipped as the seed (her son), and that son and husband was NIMROD himself. Babylon, both in Old and New Testaments, stands forward as the great symbol of Anti-God, even as Nimrod usurps all the titles and prerogatives of Christ. (For fuller details as to these titles, the reader is referred to that master-work, *The Two Babylons* by Hislop).

Let us now trace the story of Babylon, to see its place in the order of things. Babylon does not come into the page of Scripture (after the two references of Genesis x. & xi.) until the time of Israel's deposition draws near. God's king, David, and God's city, Jerusalem, had been chosen, but until David's greater Son should reign the purpose of God must flow in other channels. Universal sovereignty goes back by Divine appointment to Babylon, to be retained in Gentile succession until Babylon and Babylonianism should be destroyed. Read Daniel for this. Isaiah xiii. contains "the burden of Babylon", "and Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah". In chapter xiv. 4, the king of Babylon is addressed, and what is said is prophetic of the future antichrist who said, "I will be like the Most High". Again, in "the burden of the desert of the sea", come the words, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen" (xxi. 9). In Isa. xlvii. 1-15 we have another prophecy of Babylon's doom. Babylon is addressed as a woman that had been called, "the lady of kingdoms", and which had usurped the Divine prerogative of saying, "I AM, and none else beside Me".

Jeremiah speaks the word of the Lord against Babylon, and occupies chapters i. & li. with threatenings of wrath to come. The vengeance that falls upon Babylon is "the vengeance of His temple". "Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord's hand that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunk her wine; therefore the nations are mad". Babylon is addressed as a "destroying mountain" in li. 25, and is threatened with judgment. "I will make thee a burnt mountain". "As Babylon hath caused the slain of Israel to fall, so also at Babylon shall fall the slain of all the earth". Many similar passages of great importance come in these two chapters of Jeremiah which we cannot stay to quote. Jeremiah concludes with a solemn charge to Seraiah, who was going to Babylon to take the book wherein all these judgments were written, to read them there, to bind a stone to it, and to cast it into the Euphrates, and say, "Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her: and they shall be weary".

Just as in Isaiah we have history intertwined with prophecy, a literal Sennacherib foreshadowing the future Antichrist in his blasphemy and his doom, so Jeremiah's prophecy concerning Babylon had reference partly to the overthrow of Babylon of the Medes (Jer. li. 11), and partly to the future overthrow of the Babylon yet to be revived again in these last days. The book of the Revelation devotes considerable space to the fall of Babylon. Six times Babylon is mentioned, and five times out of the six she is spoken of as being "great". Let us notice what is said in this last prophecy of the Word. "And there followed another angel saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all *nations* drunk with the wine of her fornication" (Rev. xiv. 8). This utterance has on the one side the *aionian* gospel, with its call to "*worship* Him that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters". On the other there is the threat of awful judgment upon any one who *worships* the beast and his image, and who receives his mark in his forehead, or in his hand.

The next reference is in Rev. xvi. 19, "... and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath". A most mighty earthquakes shakes the

earth at the pouring out of the seventh vial, the great city is divided into three parts, the cities of the nations fall, every island flees away, and mountains are not found. The judgment of Babylon is in a setting of world-wide judgment. Then follows in Revelation xvii. a description of this great city, and its judgment. It is likened to a woman sitting upon a scarlet coloured beast having seven heads and full of the names of blasphemy. The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold, precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: and upon her forehead was a name written, "Mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth". The woman was drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. Her destruction is brought about by the ten horns which the beast carried, who are ten kings who reign for the brief hour of the Beast's dominion.

Revelation xviii. follows with a further description of the character and fall of Babylon. Again an angel cries, "Babylon the great is fallen, and is become the habitation of demons, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every hateful and unclean bird". As chapter xvii. tells of the kings of the earth, so chapter xviii. links all nations and kings in the participation in Babylon's impure vintage. Jeremiah's command to Seraiah is taken up and amplified:--

"A mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and cast it into the sea saying, Thus with violence shall the great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all. And the voice of harpers and musicians, and of pipers and trumpeters shall be heard no more at all in thee, and no craftsman of whatever craft he be shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee; and the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee; for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived. And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth."

Let us note these closing words; they may be a figure of speech, they may, however, be very awfully true. All the blood! not only of prophets, saints and martyrs, but every murder and every execution, every war and every assassination, all traceable back to the system of iniquity and the father of lies, who, to thwart the purpose of the Most High, made his seat at Babylon. Not only is the influence and the judgment of Babylon world-wide in its effect (the very heavens resound with Hallelujahs at her downfall), heaven itself can hold the glorious Son of God no longer. He rides forth to conquer and to rule, and the reign of peace and righteousness follows swiftly on the destruction of that city which symbolized the dread authority of the prince of darkness.

We must now return to the book of Genesis, to learn somewhat more of the beginnings of Babel. Although the division of the earth among the sons of Noah comes before the record of the building of the tower of Babel, the scattering that took place at the confusion of tongues was the cause of the division recorded in Genesis x. There in Gen. x. 5, 20 & 31, the descendants of Japheth, Ham, and Shem are divided according to their *tongues*. This therefore must have come after the record of Genesis.xi., for there we read, "The whole earth was of one language and one speech" ("one lip, and one in words"). The idea that the tower of Babel was built "to reach unto heaven" is not scriptural. The words are more correctly rendered, "whose top with the heavens", and far more likely denote a tower like the ancient temples of Denderah and Esneh which have the signs of the zodiac represented on them. What possible object there could have been to build such a tower with the Zodiac thereon we must reserve for the series entitles, *Sidelights on the Scriptures*, as the subject is too vast altogether for this article. Suffice it to say that it meditated a direct attack upon the primeval witness given by God to man, and pictured for his memory in the heavens. The builders also desired to make a name. This too was an intrusion into the purpose of God. That which could not be obtained by such means was promised by

God to Abraham, "I will make of thee a great nation, and make thy name great". Seeing that the imagination of man's heart is evil, the greater the number, and the easier the means of communication, the greater the possibilities of evil. The Lord does not destroy these men; no judgments fall. He simply confounds their language. They were scattered abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. Nimrod did not build Babel (the beginning of his kingdom was Babel), he went back it would appear to that deserted city, finished it, and sought to overthrow the purpose of God by becoming the first earthly king. From this, apparently, small beginning has spread all the harlot abominations of the earth, and as we saw by reading the Revelation, no millennium is possible until that city and its system is judged before heaven and earth. Babylon is Satan's metropolis, even as Jerusalem is God's. Babylon and Shinar are about to revive before our very eyes.

As we see these things, we know the hour of our glory and hope is near. Readers, lift up your heads.

#23. The Generations of Shem and Terah (Gen. xi. 10-32).

The generations of Shem lead us on to another phase in the unfolding of the Divine plan. The way in which this new section is placed in juxtaposition with man's attempt at Babylon is suggestive. In the order of occurrence Genesis x. follows Gen. xi. 1-9. This is easily seen when we note that in the period covered by Genesis xi. 1-9, "The whole earth was of *one* lip and one in words", whereas in Gen. x. 5, 20, & 31 the division of the earth among the sons of Japheth, Ham, and Shem is among other classifications, "after their tongues". We are not told when the tower of Babel was built, but we do know that it was immediately after its erection that "the Lord scattered the builders abroad upon the face of the whole earth". In Gen. x. 25 a statement is made that in the days of Peleg "the earth was *divided*". This word "divided" is not the same as that used in Gen. x. 5 & 32, but it is nevertheless used with the same meaning. The Hebrew word is *palag*, which comes in such passages as II.Chron.xxxv.5, "the *division* of the families of the Levites"; Ezra vi. 18, "they set the priests in their *divisions*"; Daniel ii. 41, "the kingdom shall be *divided*". We may take it that in the days of Peleg this great division took place, and he was so named in relation to the event. In Deut. xxxii. 8 there appears another reference, as it seems, to this time:--

"When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the peoples according to the number of the children of Israel."

Here the word "divided" is *nahal*, and directs attention more to the "inheritance" than to the manner of its division. Peleg's generation is not given in Genesis x., while that of Joktan his brother is set out fully; the reason is clear. Joktan is numbered among the nations, Peleg comes in the line of promise which involves the calling of the one nation out of which was to come the Messiah. Peleg was born, according to the genealogy of Genesis xi., 101 years after the flood, and 121 years after Peleg, was born Terah the father of Abraham.

Terah's generation comes central in the book of Genesis. On the one side we have the generations of the heavens and earth, Adam, Noah, the sons of Noah, and Shem. On the other side we have the generations of Ishmael, Isaac, Esau, the sons of Esau, and Jacob. Terah is the link between the "nations" and the "nation". Strangely, Abram has no separate generation, but has his line traced under the generations of Terah. While the genealogy from Terah to Abram is exceedingly brief, the section covered by these generations is very full, extending to Gen. xxv. 11. Terah has three sons, Abram, Nahor, and Haran. Abram marries his half sister Sarai; Nahor marries his niece Milcah, the daughter of his brother Haran, and becomes the grandfather of Rebekah. Lot was brother to Milcah.

Genesis xi. 28 tells us that Ur of the Chaldees was the land of Haran's nativity, while verse 31 shows that Abram dwelt there also. The Hebrew name of this city is *Ur-Kasdim*. Hommel has shown that the

name, like many others, has changed with time. From the 9th century onwards *Kasdim* was *Kaldu*, which gives the Greek word *Chaldaioi*, Chaldeans, before that, as early as the second millennium B.C., the name had been *Kardu*, from which comes the dynasty, *Karduniash*. The Hebrew name takes us back 2,000 years B.C., in fact to the very time of Abraham, and the dynasty of Khammurabi. This city, Ur of the Chaldees, was at the time of Abraham a centre of learning, science, art, and wealth, even to the point of luxury. All this has been discovered from the monuments and remains of the great city.

It is of great importance that we remember that it was *not* Abram's ordinary mode of life to dwell in a tent. He was *not* by upbringing and choice a nomad; he was a citizen of no mean city. The fact therefore that Abram chose to leave this city behind, and become a stranger and a pilgrim, is an evidence of faith, and becomes an example of enduring hardships for Christ's sake. With all the light and learning of Ur of the Chaldees there was darkness and ignorance of the true God.

“Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor; *and they served other gods*” (Joshua xxiv. 2).

So again when Laban and Jacob made their covenant, Laban swore by

“the God of Abraham, and the god of Nahor, the god of their fathers. And Jacob swore by the fear of his father Isaac” (Gen. xxxi. 53).

Idolatry had reached a high pitch by the time Abram was born. An elaborate ritual and priesthood, with altar, sacrifice, and temple. With gods many and lords many, with awful magical rites and powers, and a definite league with evil spirits had enveloped the earth as with a pall. Into this mire and corruption descended the God of grace, and led Abram forth to make of him the father of the faithful and the friend of God. Abram therefore stands out in the page of history as a kind of firstfruits, a pledge of the blessing yet to be realized.

The nations of the earth had been given up by God as a retribution for turning away from Himself, and for instituting idolatry. He might have left them to perish with their own devices. That He did not, but called out Abram to walk with Himself, and become the father of a great and privileged nation, is an eloquent testimony to the great purpose of love that shines out with ever increasing splendour as the Scripture story develops. Let the reader remember as he finishes the eleventh chapter of Genesis, that so far as the periods covered are concerned, he is *half way through the O.T.* It is an illuminating fact which shows how truly the Bible is the record not merely of human history, but of Divine purpose.

#24. The Foundation Covenant (Gen. xii. 1-4).

TERAH is the watershed of the Old Testament, even as his generation is the central one of the eleven in Genesis. His most famous son, Abraham, not only left his city and his home, but we nowhere read, “these are the generations of Abraham”, the whole of his wonderful life being ranged under the “generations of Terah”. Abraham beyond all things else sets forth the principle of faith. He is the first one of whom the Old Testament records that he *believed in the Lord*. The twelfth chapter of Genesis opens with the words:--

“Now the Lord *had said* unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and *from thy kindred*, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee.”

Stephen in his speech before the Council said:--

“The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was yet in Mesopotamia, *before he dwelt in Haran*, and said unto him, Get thee out of thy country” (Acts vii. 2, 3).

The Lord not only called Abraham out from Ur of the Chaldees, but from his kindred, yet the first movement after the word were spoken to Abraham is that of Terah.

“And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son’s son, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram’s wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, *to go into the land of Canaan*; and they came unto Haran, *and dwelt there* ... and Terah died in Haran” (Gen. xi. 31, 32).

The call of God to Abraham involved separation of a very drastic character, and we shall see that the Lord did not lay upon him the whole burden at once; he was to leave country and kindred, but not at first his father’s house; he obeyed the call so far as leaving his country was concerned, and Hebrews xi. records the step of faith with divine approval. Scripture does not say, “and Abraham took Terah”; it is put the other way, “and Terah took Abram his son”. Terah’s name means a “traveller”, or a “wanderer”, and as a type he may well represent that class who “go out”, not by faith, but by reason of temperament; the call that quickened Abram with a living faith acted upon the fleshly mind of Terah, and he too felt attracted by the journey.

A glance at the map shows that Terah and his family journeyed about 600 miles with Abram to get to Haran, but the map also reveals another thing, the route never took them across the river Euphrates. Even though 600 miles separated them from Ur of the Chaldees they were not separated from all that Chaldea meant to God. Haran was famous not only as a frontier town of the Babylonian Empire, but for the worship of the self-same god that made Ur of the Chaldees famous too. Terah was not a Hebrew, he never passed over. It will be remembered that Pharaoh was willing to let Israel go and worship the Lord “*in the land*”, but neither Terah nor Pharaoh had the “Hebrew” spirit. Before the record is given of Abram’s departure from Haran, there is recorded the great promise made by the God of glory, introducing into the page of Scripture the purpose of election, so far as nations are concerned. The Scripture are very exact, and we are never likely to believe them too implicitly; if we compare Gen.xii.1 with Acts vii. 2-4, we shall find that Stephen makes an omission of one term. He tells us that the God of glory called Abraham from his country and kindred, but he does not say, “and from thy father’s house”. Abraham’s action, therefore, in allowing his father and relatives to accompany him as far as Haran was quite within the command he had received. Upon the death of his father the added words, “and from thy father’s house”, make up the full statement, and “so Abram departed, AS the Lord had spoken unto him”. Nature’s ties were no longer to hold him, a second separation must now be made. How kindly the Lord leads on! Still further and deeper trials of faith await Abram, but he is not tried above that which he is able.

The Lord in Gen. xii. 1-3 makes the first of a series of eight covenants with Abraham. In this first covenant we have a promise, every item of it, as we shall see, being personal to Abraham.

“Get *thee* out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will shew *thee*.

And I will make of *thee* a great nation,

And I will bless *thee*,

And make *thy* name great,

And *thou* shalt be a blessing,

And I will bless them that bless *thee*,

And curse him that curseth *thee*,

And in *thee* shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.”

This great covenant is divided into related groups of promise, as follows:--

- A | Get thee OUT, the Lord had said.
- B | Country, KINDRED, and HOUSE. A *land* shown to Abraham.
- C | a | The promise of the GREAT nation.
 - b | The promise to BLESS Abraham.
 - a | The promise of the GREAT name.
 - b | The promise that Abraham shall be a BLESSING.
(Conditional clause added).
- B | All FAMILIES of the *earth* blessed in Abraham.
- A | So Abram DEPARTED, as the Lord had spoken.

Here we have the germ of the whole of God's covenants with Abraham, viz., Israel and the Nations. Like Nebuchadnezzar's dream, which stands on the threshold of the times of the Gentiles, this covenant spans and embraces the whole period and scope of the Abrahamic covenant, all other covenants and promises, including even Paul's witness to justification by faith in *Romans* and *Galatians*, being but expansions and details of this one grand covenant. It behoves us therefore to give careful attention to this marvellous record; it is bounded on either side (members A A) by command and obedience, "Get thee out", "So Abram departed". Obedience to the word of God, "the Lord had said", "as the Lord had spoken". Hebrews xi. 8 links Abraham's obedience with faith, "By FAITH Abraham, when he was called to go out unto a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, OBEYED"; this supplies the scriptural interpretation to the words of Paul in Romans, "By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for *obedience of faith* among all nations" (i. 5), "... made known to all nations for *obedience of faith*" (xvi. 26). To this the apostle refers in xv. 18, "for the obedience of the nations". Acts vi. 7 shows that those of Israel who believed were "obedient to the faith". (We shall have to consider the relation of faith with Abraham and his covenants when we read Genesis xv.).

We pass on to notice members B B. Abraham's obedience meant loss, yet Abraham's obedience meant gain on exactly the same lines. He was called to leave kith and kin, yet his obedience made him the father of many nations, and all families in the earth were to be blessed in him. How can we speak of losing when we have such a God! We lose trifles, bubbles, we gain realities for ever. The land promised to Abram was not to be a portion of earth cut off from all else, for though sacred and called by preeminence, *The Holy Land*, it was chosen, and the people and events that fill out its history have as their designed end the blessing of the nations, "all families of the earth". So in Gal. iii. 13, 14, "Christ hath redeemed us (Israel, verse 10) from the *curse* of the Law, ... that the *blessing* of Abraham might come on the Gentiles".

The central member C is taken up with the links that were designed to bring about this desired end, first, the formation of a great nation. A question that is of importance here is that which touches the greatness of this elect nation, viz., wherein was their greatness? In several places the greatness of this nation is mentioned:--

"Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation"
(Gen. xviii. 18).

"I am the God, the God of thy father; fear not to go down into Egypt, for I will there make of thee a great nation" (Gen. xli. 3).

"A Syrian ready to perish was my father, and he went down into Egypt and sojourned there with a few, and became there a nation, great, mighty and prosperous" (Deut. xxvi. 5).

The inhabitants of Canaan, however, are said to be *great*, "for the Lord hath driven out from before you great nations and strong" (Josh. xxiii. 9). Seven nations are enumerated in Deut. vii. 1 that were

cast out of the land, “greater and mightier” than Israel. The question of Israel’s greatness therefore does not consist of mere numerical greatness, indeed the same passage continues, “the Lord did not set His love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were *more in number* than any people; for ye were *the fewest* of all people” (verse 7). Israel’s greatness as a nation consisted in the unique position which they occupied as an instrument of blessing in the hand of the Lord:--

“For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon Him for; and what nation is there so great that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day” (Deut. iv. 7, 8).

Israel’s greatness is here shewn to be the nearness of the Lord, and gift of His revealed will in the law. To be entrusted with the oracles of God was the chief of their claims to pre-eminence (Rom. iii. 1, 2). Not only was Abraham to be the father of a great nation, but he himself receives the promise, “I will make thy name great”. The greatness of the “name” is connected with the greatness of “inheritance” as Heb. i. 4, 5 shows. Abraham became “heir of the world”, father of the great nation and of many nations; Abraham was called “the friend of God”. The record of Genesis xii. seems to have been purposely placed in contrast with Genesis xi. There we have the whole earth of one speech, and inhabited by one family, they dwelt in the plain of Shinar or Mesopotamia; Abraham is called to leave that very land, and to separate himself from home and kindred. “Let us make a name”, said the builders of the tower of Babel; “I will make thy name great”, said God to Abraham. Judgment falls upon the people in Genesis xi., and they are scattered abroad to form “the families of the earth” who are to be blessed in Abraham, God, while leaving the nations to walk in their own ways, had not forgotten them or given them up for ever. His concentration upon Israel was for the Gentiles ultimate blessing.

No promise in this wonderful covenant is conditional to Abraham. Israel must be a great nation, Abraham must be a blessing, all the families of the earth must be blessed in him. God has said so, the only conditional element in the whole passage is that of verse 3:--

“I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that maketh light of thee.”

They that pray for the peace of Jerusalem shall prosper. National histories bear record to the truth of these words.

Where is Babylon? where is Assyria? gone, yet Persia that helped Israel in the rebuilding of the temple remains to this day. It may be that the national prosperity of Britain is related to its attitude toward the people of Israel. The Jew, outcast and despised as he is, is a sacred object by reason of the covenant with the fathers:--

“As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the father’s sakes, for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance ... for God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all” (Rom. xi. 28-32).

These opening verses in Genesis xii. are of prime importance, for they are the foundation of the gospel of the apostle Paul, the teaching of such epistles as Romans and Galatians, and the ministry of the reconciliation.

#25. The Principle of Separation (Genesis xii.).

Abraham must ever stand out in the Scriptures as a giant of faith, and it behoves such pigmies as ourselves to be careful of our criticism, yet we realize that the faithful Word presents to us in Abraham a man of like infirmities with ourselves, and if we learn from the recorded failures of this man of faith, it need not minister to our pride, nor lessen the testimony of faith which Abraham gave:--

“By faith Abraham, when he was called ... obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.”

“So Abraham departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him.”

The question that is in our mind concerns Lot. The Lord had called Abram and he obeyed. He had told him to leave country, kindred, and father's house. Did Abram fully obey this part of the command? The verse in Genesis xii. says, “So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him, *and Lot went with him*”. Lot was the son of Haran, therefore Abram's nephew (Gen. xi. 27, 31; xii. 5; xiv. 12), therefore he was Abram's *kindred*, and Abram had been commanded to get out from his kindred. Lot seems to be mentioned several times in a somewhat detached way, “and Lot with him” (xiii. 1). “And Lot also, which went with Abram” (xiii. 5). A relieved feeling seems to come when we read, “and the Lord said unto Abram, *after that Lot was separated from him*, Lift up now thine eyes”. The ties of the flesh are strong. When Abram was first called out by God we read, “and Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran, his son's son”. Now this tie, first introduced by Terah, is again found to be strong, “and Lot went with him”. Whether we are right in this, we cannot say, true it is that Lot's presence brought neither peace nor blessing to Abram, and his entry into the land of Canaan ultimately lost him his wife, his home, and finally his character. If we will but examine ourselves we shall find that most of our fullest acts of obedience, and sincerest endeavours to walk a separate path, have been somewhat spoiled by the *Terahs* and the *Lots* who will not leave us to wholly follow the Lord. The silence of Scripture as to this in the record of faith in Hebrews xi. is a consolation; the Lord is not swift to mark iniquity, if He were, who should stand?

When Abram reached Sichem and the plain of Moreh, the Lord appeared unto him. Abram had crossed the Jordan, and penetrated nearly half way through the country known as Samaria; Gilgal, where the reproach of Israel was rolled away some years afterward, is near this place. It looks as though Abram had to venture upon the word of the Lord, walking by faith. Without further vision or revelation, surrounded by the **Canaanites (ever the foes of faith)**, he was put to a severe test. The silence is at length broken by the appearance of the Lord, and by the utterance of a single promise, “unto thy seed will I give this land”. Following this promise comes Abram's response, “and there builded he ...”. What did he build? Surely, if the land was his freehold, and his seed's for ever, he will at once begin to build a nice comfortable house, he will be justified in adding all the latest improvements that the Canaanites may have invented, and so show that his faith was real and matter of fact, that he really believed that the land belonged to him. So reasons the flesh. Abram never built anything other than altars throughout his pilgrimage. Cain and Nimrod built cities, the whole family of mankind attempt to build a city and a tower, and make a great name; Noah and Abram built altars. There is in this a principle, true now as then, and expressed for all time in the words of Him Who spake with authority and not as the Scribes:--

“Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.”

The fitting accompaniment to the altar is the tent. Genesis xii. 8 tells us that Abram pitched his tent, having Bethel on the west, and Hai on the east, and there he builded an altar unto the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord. Verse 9 says, “and Abram journeyed”; the word indicates the pulling up of tent pegs. There was a definite purpose and choice in all this:--

“By faith he sojourned *in the land of promise*, as in a strange country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise” (Why?). “For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God” (Heb. xi. 9, 10).

The spiritual pilgrim in effect judges that no city of man’s building has *foundations*. In spite of the testimony of our senses, faith knows that “that which is seen is temporal, but that which is not seen is eternal”.

“These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.”

Do we “declare plainly” that such is our faith and hope? Our life and hope and inheritance are found at the right hand of God. Do we, by setting our mind on things above, and by exhibiting small concern for the fashion of this world that passeth away, do we “declare plainly” that here we have no continuing city? Our citizenship is in heaven, and as such we cannot but be strangers and pilgrims on the earth; the altar and the tent are the two great characteristics of the pilgrim walk. The *altar* recognizes the claims of a holy God, the *tent* the necessity of separation for a holy and pilgrim people.

Hebrews xi. tells us that the fact that Abraham was willing to dwell in a tent in the land of promise, was due to the vision of faith — “he looked for a city that had foundations”. Abraham was not a nomad by temperament, he did not choose the tent out of preference, he longed for city life, he looked for a city. Like others, who found here no continuing city, he sought one to come. Abraham, however, realized that to have fellowship with God meant that he must share the rejection of the Lord. The altar and the city come together in Heb. xiii. 10-14, “We have an altar ... here we have no continuing city”. That means practically for us, “the tent”. In other words, like Abraham, we must “go forth unto Him *without the camp*, bearing His reproach”.

It will come to the mind that no altar was raised to God in Egypt. Moses had to decide between the dignity and glory of being called “son of Pharaoh’s daughter”, and “the reproach of Christ”. He exchanged, as a matter of choice and estimation, the palace for the shepherd’s tent, the crown for the crook, the greatness of Egypt for the backside of the desert. Abraham was called “the friend of God”, and Moses was never so great as when he renounced the treasures of Egypt. May the true spirit of altar and tent, of pilgrimage and strangership be more fully entered into by us all, that the name of the Lord may be magnified.

#26. Gaps in the Calendar of Faith (Gen. xii. 10-20).

We noticed in our last article the fundamental lesson of separation as it is exhibited in the case of Lot and Abram; we are now to see Abram in yet another light, and most heart-searching lesson awaits us.

“And there was a famine in the land: and Abram went down to Egypt to sojourn there, for the famine was grievous in the land.”

One of the lessons that we all have to learn is expressed in the words of Deuteronomy viii.:--

“Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep His commandments or no, and He humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know, that He might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of

the Lord doth man live. Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell, these forty years; thou shalt also consider in thine heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord chasteneth thee.”

Perhaps the strongest test of the faith indicated in these occurrences is the character of the manna, “which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know”; faith trusts apart from sight or knowledge, but sense yearns for something *substantial*, not realizing that “faith is the substance of things hoped for”. We must not judge by some rule of thumb, for each case has its own peculiar position in the purpose of God. When on another occasion a famine swept over Canaan, and the sons of Jacob went down to Egypt, we can see that it was part of a Divine plan to bring about God’s own purpose; and again, when Herod sought to kill the infant Christ, Joseph and Mary found refuge in Egypt at the command of an angel of God. Whether, therefore, Abram should have remained in Canaan in spite of the famine, or whether he was right to go to Egypt, it is not for us to say, one thing comes prominently out of the story, and that is the terrible effect upon the pilgrim of faith a close proximity to the world can have.

“And it came to pass when he was come near to enter Egypt, that he said unto Sarai his wife, Behold now, I know that thou art a fair woman to look upon; therefore it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see thee, that they shall say, This is his wife and they will kill me, but they will save thee alive. Say, I pray thee, thou art my sister; that it may be well with me for thy sake, and my soul shall live because of thee.”

Bishop Hall’s pithy comment is worth repeating:--

“God hath said, I will make thee a great nation: Abram saith, the Egyptians will kill me ... he through inconsiderateness doubted twice of his life doubted not the life of his seed ... yet it was more difficult that his posterity should live in Sarah, than that Sarah’s husband should live in Egypt.”

When we analyze unbelief, it is of all things most unreasonable. Abram would doubtless have defended his attitude by saying that after all Sarai *was* his sister. **The poet has it that the lie which is half the truth is ever the blackest of lies,** and it is more abominable in Abram to make the semblance of truth his refuge, than for the wicked to lie outright. The world, the Pharaohs of this spiritual Egypt, they will even reprove the man of faith for his inconsistency. The famine in Canaan was a trial certainly, but all trials that come upon the child of God are intended to lead him more continually to Christ. If Abram had only thought what he was doing, as he drew near to Egypt, he would have realized that to take refuge in a lie was to depart from God. True, Abram exchanged Canaan’s famine for plenty — “he had sheep, and oxen, and he asses, and menservants, and maidservants, and she asses, and camels” — *but he had no fellowship with God*. This we shall see in the sequel.

The plagues sent by the Lord because of Abram’s wife are sent to unmask Abram’s deceit. An unbeliever (or at least a type of this world), rebukes the man of God:--

“And Pharaoh called Abram, and said, What is this that thou hast done unto me? Why didst thou not tell me that she was thy wife? Why saidst thou, she is my sister? So I might have taken her to me to wife; now therefore, behold thy wife, take her and go thy way.”

Let us notice how Abram’s sin involved others. “What is this that thou hast *done unto me*?” The pilgrim cannot step aside from the path of faith without evil resulting to himself and others. How sad to think that he who had been specially called out to be a blessing to all nations, should by his first individual act involve (but for the mercy of God) a nation in sin!

Chapter xiii. sees Abram leaving Egypt rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold, yet poor as yet in the treasures of faith:--

“And he went on his journey from the south, even to Bethel, unto the place where his tent had been *at the beginning*, between Bethel and Hai, unto the place of the altar which he had made there *at the first*, and *there* Abram called on the name of the Lord” (Gen. xiii. 3, 4).

This is a picture of restoration, “He restoreth my soul, He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake”. The time which Abram spent in Egypt was so much waste, so far as God was concerned; he had to retrace his steps to the starting point. Similarly, Jonah ran away from the Lord, and entered a ship bound for Tarshish, yet when the great fish vomited up Jonah, he was upon the coast of the country he had been told to visit (Jonah iii. 1):--

“And the word of the Lord came unto Jonah *the second time*, saying, Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee.”

Not only is it true that these lapses in the path of faith are so much lost time to the individual believer, but it enters also into the great prophetic reckonings of God with His people. We doubtless are aware that there are what are called *lo-ammi* periods in biblical chronology; *lo-ammi* being the Hebrew for, “not my people”. According to I Kings vi. 1 the temple was commenced in the 480th year after the children of Israel had departed from Egypt, whereas according to Acts xiii. 17-22 the period is given as 573 years (this includes 3 years of Solomon’s reign), a difference of 93 years. Abram’s loss of communion, and the re-commencement with God from where he was *at the beginning*, is but a small example of the principle that solves this apparent riddle.

During the time of the Judges Israel were taken away captive 5 times, and if we note the duration of these captivities, we find they total exactly 93 years! In case some readers are acquainted with this fact, we give the references hereunder:--

Chusan-rishathaim.	Judges iii. 8.	8 years.
Eglon	iii. 14.	18
Jabin	iv. 2.	20
Midian	vi. 1.	7
Philistines	xiii. 1.	40

		Total 93 years.
		=====

The years of the Acts reckoning are *Anno Mundi* (in the year of the world), whereas the 480th year of I Kings is *Anno Dei* (in God’s year), showing that no record is made of the years of captivity. What a short term of Christian service some of us really serve when we come to consider the many lapses, and the many fresh beginnings that we can remember. **What a mercy that the Lord does restore us, yet should we remember His words, “Go, and sin no more”.** The reader who is interested in the prophetic times of Daniel ix. will find a further application of this principle in volume VI *The Berean Expositor* (page 165).

We are sure that when Abram reached the place of tent and altar, and there called upon the name of the Lord, he realized that nothing Egypt could offer was so precious as these two accompaniments of his pilgrimage. The world throughout all dispensations has been an unqualified snare: the wise will profit by these scriptural examples, while the foolish will think that where Abram failed, they will succeed. Doubtless Lot thought he would overcome the evil of Sodom, but we know that he did not.

We cannot close without at least a remembrance of that One who though the Son of God (and who could, had He wished, have turned the stones of the wilderness into bread), nevertheless waited upon God, repelling the suggestion of dependence upon any arm save that of His Father. Abram will find his

place in the list of those who lived by faith, but the One who eclipses the whole cloud of witnesses is that One who is the author and perfecter of faith.

“Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.”

#27. “Saved; yet so as by fire” (Gen. xiii. 5-18).

“And the land was not able to bear them, that they might *dwell together*: for their substance was great, so that they could not *dwell together*. And there was *strife* ...”.

The “substance”, literally “that which is gathered together”, was partly accumulated during the sojourn in Egypt and partly during the halt at Haran (Gen. xii. 5 & 16). The LXX translates the word by *ta huparchonta*, and a very apposite occurrence will be that of Heb x. 34, “ye ... took joyfully the spoiling of your goods (*ta huparchonta*), knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance (*huparxis*)”. “Goods” cling to Lot in this history. They originate the cleavage, and they are mentioned pointedly in Genesis xiv.:--

“And they took all the *goods* of Sodom ... And they took Lot, Abram’s brother’s son, who dwelt in Sodom, and his *goods* ... and he brought back all the *goods* ... his brother Lot, and his *goods* ... and the king of Sodom said unto Abram, ‘Give me the persons and take the *goods* to thyself’.”

These goods, or this substance, seem to have no spiritual character or tendency.

Immediately following the record of strife are the words, “And the Canaanite and Perizzite dwelled in the land”. Abram’s conscience was still tender. The rebuke given him by the heathen king was yet vivid in his memory. And the strife between himself and Lot would be no good testimony to the Lord their God. He was beginning to desire to “adorn” the doctrine. Therefore it was that Abram, to whom the land had been given by God, stand aside and exhibits that meekness of spirit which should ever accompany the possession of the heavenly gift. To Lot Abram gives the right of choice. When all things are ours in God, we can well be generous with those of small faith.

Lot was not rebuked apparently by Abram’s forbearance, or, if he was, the well-watered plains of Sodom proved too strong a temptation for him. It is a curiously mixed description that Scripture gives. It was well-watered everywhere, yet the words, “before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah”, are inserted between the beginning and the end of the description, “even as the garden of the Lord”. Its Eden-like appearance was superficial, for the Lord never walked there in the cool of the day. It was furthermore “like to the land of Egypt as thou comest to Zoar”. *It was a reminder to Lot of that which Abram would fain forget*. So it came about that the choice was made, the two separated. “Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain (or among the cities of the plain) and pitched his tent toward Sodom”. “Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

The Companion Bible draws attention to the six downward steps of Lot’s course. (a) “Strife” (xiii.7), (b) “beheld” (xiii.10), (c) “chose” (11), (d) “pitched toward” (12), (e) “dwelt in” (xiv. 12), (f) “sat in its gate” (xix. 1).

Sodom is proverbial in Scripture for wickedness, yet Sodom did not repel Lot. The N.T. throws a light upon one side of Lot’s action and attitude:--

“And delivered righteous Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: (for that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds). The Lord knoweth how

to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished” (II Pet. ii. 7-9).

Lot was righteous; Lot vexed his righteous soul; Lot was delivered as the godly — all this is comforting. Lot’s witness, however, was marred. His fellowship with the Lord was hindered, and he is an example of those who though saved are saved “so as by fire”. Even in the parable of the Sower, the seed that was choked by the thorns is not to be taken altogether as of the unsaved, for Luke viii. 14 reads:--

“And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with CARES and RICHES and PLEASURES of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection.”

Lot had certainly “gone forth”, but he did not “go on unto perfection”. Rather did he come nigh unto cursing and being burned (Heb. vi. 8). He himself was righteous, but he did not bring forth the fruit of righteousness.

The two angels, who together with the Lord had been entertained by Abraham unawares, entered Sodom, but the Lord Himself Who had graced the hospitality of Abraham’s tent would not enter the portals of Lot’s city. Even the two angels were with difficulty persuaded to enter Lot’s house.

Now as to the effect of Lot’s choice upon his testimony. When the angels revealed to Lot the destruction of the city, he went and spoke to his sons-in-law, which had married his daughters, and said, “Up, get you out of this place: for the Lord will destroy this city”. What was the effect of this righteous man’s earnest warning? He seemed as one that MOCKED — or talked nonsense. Lot had chosen, dwelt in, and established family ties with Sodom. His actions were reasonable and intelligible; his words were those of a mocker, or as “one that played with them”. Lot himself had to be hastened by the angels lest he should be consumed with the city. Even Lot “lingered”, and had to be laid hold of, “the Lord being merciful”, and set “without the city”. While Abram’s faith gives him “the land of Canaan” to dwell in (Gen. xiii. 12), such spaciousness was too overpowering for Lot. He pleads against the command, “neither stay thou in all plain”,

“Oh, not so, my Lord: Behold now, thy servant hath found grace in thy sight, and thou hast magnified thy mercy, which thou hast shewed unto me in saving my life; and I cannot escape to the mountain, lest some evil take me, and I die; Behold now, this city is near to flee unto, and it is a little one: Oh, let me escape thither (is it not a little one?) and my soul shall live” (xix. 19, 20).

Zoar, the city of his choice, did not long prove a refuge for Lot, “for he feared to dwell in Zoar”. The last end of Lot is pitiable in the extreme. Finding a refuge for himself and his daughters in a cave, he who had chosen the well-watered plains and pitched his tent toward Sodom left as his legacy two nations whose history is that of shame and wickedness, Moab and Ammon. It is surely something more than coincidence that the final prophetic utterance concerning Moab and Ammon takes us back to the destruction of Sodom. “Surely Moab shall be as Sodom, and Ammon as Gomorrah” (Zeph. ii. 9). An Ammonite or a Moabite were not allowed to enter into the congregation of the Lord even to their tenth generation (Deut. xxiii. 3).

Lot’s deliverance from Chedorlaomer was entirely the result of Abraham’s activity, and Lot’s deliverance from Sodom was for Abraham’s sake. The Scripture does not say, “And God remembered Lot”, but “God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow”. All the vexing of Lot’s righteous soul did not avail to save one Sodomite. Abraham who never entered its gates prayed that even if only ten righteous persons were to be found in Sodom it might be spared. We do not know just the reason why Abraham stayed at “ten”, some think he felt certain that Lot, his wife, his daughters

and their husbands, together with their servants, would account for that number. It was not so however, Lot's only recorded attempt at preaching sounded as so much mockery — his practice was far too eloquent.

Sodom occurs 39 times in the O.T. (13*3), and 9 times in the N.T. Both numbers are indicative of rebellion and judgment. The references to Sodom in II Pet. ii. 6, 7 and Jude 7 show us the character of the last days fast approaching. In this light the connections between Sodom and Babylon are suggestive (Isa. xiii. 19; Jer. l. 40).

The attempt once again to intercept the purpose concerning the promised seed, and defile the Messianic stream, seems manifest. Sodom stand for all that is anti-Christian. The dead bodies of the two witnesses shall be in the streets of that great city, "which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, *where also our Lord was crucified*" (Rev. xi. 8). This world with its possessions, even though they may appear as attractive as the garden of the Lord, is on the verge of judgment. The lesson of Lot seems to be echoed in I John ii.:-

"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. For all that is in the world ... is not out of the Father."

Whatever our interpretation of such a passage as, "All things are of God", certain it is that the Father repudiates the world and its ways as being of Him. Throughout the dispensations, different as they are in many particulars, there has always been the call of God on the one hand, and the attraction of the world on the other. Shall it be with us, "a tent in the land of promise as in a strange country", or shall it be the city with its plenty, its protection, its advantages — and its loss? The true *Hebrew* still says, "*here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come*".

Christ is still "without the camp". Let us therefore go out unto HIM. The fundamental truth, true for all dispensations, which is brought forward prominently by a comparison of the O.T. and the N.T. story of Lot, is the distinction which must ever be drawn between salvation and service, between the One foundation and the building erected thereon, between the hope and the prize.

#28. Faith's Heritage and Repudiation (Gen. xiii. 14 - xv. 1).

Lot gives the picture of the failure of a believer's testimony; the utter lack of fruit; the barest minimum of faith.

We turn to the other picture of growing and increasing faith, and find it closely linked with a growing and increasing separation. There seems a clearing of the atmosphere when Lot is at last gone. Abram is now left alone. He had left his choice with the Lord. In the eyes of the world doubtless he would be pronounced a fool — but he was God's fool.

"And the Lord said unto Abram, AFTER THAT LOT WAS SEPARATED from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever (*olam*, for the age of undefiled limits). And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and the breadth of it: for I will give it unto thee" (Gen. xiii. 14-17).

Lot chose for himself and lost. Abram hears God's choice and obtained. Surely to each one of us the contrast is pointed enough to make us desire to emulate the one and shun the other. Leaving the

well-watered plains of this world, let us stand alone in fellowship with the Lord and hear Him say, “Arise, walk through the land, in the length of it and the breadth of it”. There are blessings which are ours in Christ, which we have never yet experienced. Let us present that “other-worldly” spirit in contrast with the Lots of our time and explore and appropriate the fulness of blessing that is ours already in Christ.

It is doctrinal verity, as much as a record of historical sequence, that Abram did not hear these words until separation was complete. Separation however must never be considered merely from one side. Abram was not simply separated *from* Lot, but separated *to* the Lord. This is indicated in his next movement:--

“Then Abram removed his tent, and came and dwelt among the oaks belonging to Mamre (brother of Eschol and Aner, xiv. 13) which is in Hebron, and built there an altar unto the Lord.”

It appears from Gen. xxiii. 2 that the name of this city was originally Kirjath-arba, the two names occurring together in the record of Sarah’s death. Its first name means Strong-hold of Arba, being built by Anak and the sons of Arba (Josh. xiv. 15; xv. 13). It fell to Caleb, the type of the overcomer, where its second name again appears as Hebron. Hebron means “fellowship” or “confederacy”, and was the name given to the rebuilt city of Kirjath-arba by the Kharibi or allies. The introduction of the name in the case of Abram emphasizes the typical meaning. **Separation from worldliness meant fellowship, covenant fellowship with the Lord.** David was king in Hebron before he was king over all Israel (II.Sam.ii.11). He also knew the blessing of fellowship even though not at the time recognized by all his people.

This twofold character of separation is found in many scriptures, e.g.:--

“Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I WILL RECEIVE YOU” (II Cor. vi. 17).

“Let us go forth therefore UNTO HIM without the camp, bearing His reproach, for here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come” (Heb. xiii. 13, 14).

Not, let us go forth without the camp for temperament’s sake, or for misanthropic reasons, but because He is there. “Unto Him” comes before “without the camp”.

There is a great deal of archaeological interest in the chapter that follows this separation and fellowship of Abraham. We will not deal with it here, however, but go to the end of the chapter to see how Abram has progressed along the line of faith. After Abram had delivered Lot and all the people and goods of Sodom we read:--

“And the king of Sodom went out to meet him after his return from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer, and the kings that were with him, at the valley of Shareh, which is the king’s dale; and the king of Sodom said unto Abram, give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself.”

Now, viewed from the standpoint of the world, Abram would have been perfectly justified to have taken his reward. Will he do so? Does he walk according to the elements of the world, or does he now walk according to the unseen things of faith? Before we allow Scripture to answer, we must go back and insert the parenthesis which we have omitted.

Most abruptly and strangely the episode of the meeting of Abram and the king of Sodom is interrupted by the episode of the meeting of Abram and the king of Righteousness and Peace:--

“And Melchisedec, king of Salem, brought forth bread and wine, and he was priest of the Most High God. And he blessed him and said, blessed be Abram of

the Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth: and blessed be the Most High God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he (Abram) gave him (Melchisedec) tithes of all” (Gen. xiv. 18-20).

Before Abram is tempted to sully the separate character of his walk with the goods of Sodom, he meets with him who was the type of Christ, the High Priest, specially mentioned in that epistle of perfection and overcoming — Hebrews. Abram’s attitude in chapter xiii. led him on to victory and greater blessing. Did Lot have such a privilege in his “garden of the Lord”? Could he have repudiated the offer of Sodom’s king?

There are times when the believer learns rapidly and accurately. Such was the condition of Abram. Melchisedec had ministered to Abram the symbols of covenant-keeping. Melchisedec had twice spoken of The Most High God, and further, that He was the possessor of heaven and earth. Melchisedec had blessed Abram in the name of this Most High God, taught Abram that the great deliverance that had been accomplished was entirely the work of this Mighty One, and Abram had recognized the truth and blessedness of all this by giving tithes of all the booty before ever he returned to Sodom. He was thus equipped to meet the offer of Sodom’s king:--

“And Abram said to the king of Sodom, i have lift up mine hand unto the Lord, the Most High God, the possessor of heaven and earth (oh, how small the goods of Sodom become by comparison! How small Lot’s choice, with the northward, southward, eastward and westward of a separate blessing!) that i will not take from a thread even to a shoe-latchet, and that i will not take anything that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, i have made Abram rich: save only that which the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men which went with me, Aner, Eschol, and Mamre; let them take their portion.”

Abram is jealous of the glory of God. How marked a contrast with the sad lapse before Pharaoh. Abram’s attitude must have been wholly unintelligible to the king of Sodom, especially as one professing like faith had acted so differently. “The far more exceeding, age abiding, weight of glory” is in view “while we look not at the things which are seen”. An eye on the well-watered plains or the goods of Sodom would soon lead to the reasoning that these things were Abram’s possessions — for had not God Himself given them to him? But no, away with the thought — the blessing is vitally connected with righteousness and holiness, and to be a pilgrim in the midst of the earth is our only capacity “till He come”. Greater riches than the treasures of Sodom are in store for Abram:--

“After these things the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not Abram, I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward.”

Great faith leads us face to face with great reactions. Abram had exposed himself and made possible enemies by his victory. He had further repudiated legitimate reward, and to confirm his faith and still his fears, the Lord reveals Himself in the twofold capacity of shield from enemies, and reward in the place of Sodom’s repudiated gifts. As the man of faith goes on in the pilgrim pathway, he learns by blessed experience that his all is in God. Presently (chapter xvii.) God will reveal Himself in a yet fuller light as El-Shaddai, God all-sufficient; but for the time being Abram’s faith can rest satisfied in God His shield and exceeding great reward.

There is no surer shield and reward for either the writer or the reader, than the same Most High God, made known to us by Him Who ever liveth at the right hand of the majesty on high. Oh that we all carried the name of the Lord so high and so clear that we could always repudiate the temptations of the world “lest it should say, i have made Abram rich!”. None shall enrich the child of faith but God alone. The wilderness journey is designed to teach that man does not live by bread alone.

It is noticeable, that Abram had his faith “to himself alone”. He did not impose it upon Lot who owed his life and liberty to his intervention, neither did he allow his own scruples to rule the attitude of Aner, Eschol and Mamre. The cause of truth is often hindered by zeal unaccompanied by knowledge. Think of the offence often caused by one believer telling another believer that he ought not to take the Lord’s supper, for instance. In the first place the probability is that the said believer is blessed under the terms of the new covenant, and so would be wrong with his present light to forego the observance.

Then secondly, the only right that we have to use the word “ought” is with regard to ourselves. I can say, “I ought not to observe the ordinances of baptism and the Lord’s supper” with clear conscience and scriptural reasons, but this must not be imposed upon any who do not take the same stand.

Lot, Aner, Eschol and Mamre were representative of a different class. Abram it was that met Melchisedec, and was blessed by him. Abram it was who lifted up his hand to heaven. The others were ruled by lower laws, that could not be imposed upon the man of faith, and conversely could not be displaced except by like precious faith. What Israel did by faith, the Egyptians ‘assaying to do’ were destroyed.

May we all learn increasingly the blessing of a closer walk with God our shield and exceeding great reward.

#29. Faith and the Flesh (Gen. xv. 1 - xvi. 16).

In the two chapters now before us we shall again be brought face to face with the conflict of spirit and flesh, of faith and works, of liberty and bondage, in short with the key words of the epistle to the Galatians, and the very allegory which the apostle uses in that epistle.

In response to the words which were given to Abram in the vision, “Fear not, Abram, I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward”, Abram said:--

“Lord God, what will Thou give me, seeing i go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus? And Abram said, Behold, to me Thou hast given no seed; and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir.”

This must not be interpreted to mean that upon the mention of the word “reward” Abram evidenced a grasping spirit — rather the contrary is the true meaning. Here he was a stranger among strangers. His nearer relative had parted from him for the greater attraction of Sodom. He was getting well on in years and still childless. Hence he says, “What wilt Thou give me?”; as much as to say, Thou hast already loaded me with blessings, what can more of the same avail, seeing that in the ordinary course (and according to the law of the land at the time) it must all go to Eliezer my steward? (For the code of Khammurabi, to which Abram refers here, *see* volume VI, p.104).

God had promised Abram a seed, and Abram began to think that the intention of the Lord was to run along the lines of human codes. In this he was mistaken:--

“And behold the word of the Lord came unto him saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir.”

This definite statement removed Eliezer from the field conferred upon Abram in his old age the assured hope of literal parenthood.

Not yet did Abram’s faith firmly grasp the fact that this promise encircled Sarah also; this is evident by the sequel, yet he believed the literal statement of the Lord and for the time that was all the Lord intended. When Abram stood alone, rid of the society of Lot, the Lord used the simile of the dust of the earth to indicate the number of his seed. Now Abram’s eyes are directed heavenward:--

“And He brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and He said unto him, so shall thy seed be.”

Abram stood before that heavenly host, a childless old man, yet the simple statement is made — grand in its simplicity — “And he believed in the Lord; and He counted it to him for righteousness”. This sentence brings us to one of the most important utterances of Scripture. Upon the truth contained therein the apostle Paul founded his gospel. The epistles to the Romans and the Galatians are impossible apart from it: It will therefore warrant a pause and a prayerful consideration.

“*He believed in the Lord.*” -- Romans iv. 3 says, “Abraham believed God”. Had not Abraham believed in the Lord, or believed God when he obeyed the command to leave Ur of the Chaldees? He certainly did, for Hebrews xi. definitely says that he acted “by faith”. Was not the response recorded in Gen. xii. 7 the act of a worshipper who believed? Did not Abraham believe the Most High God when he preferred His blessing to Sodom’s gifts? Surely he did. Then what is the reason for this statement here? We believe the whole secret is wrapped up in the fact that Abraham’s belief in the Lord on this particular occasion embraced the idea of *resurrection*. This is elaborated in Romans iv. in connection with the fuller statement concerning Abraham’s seed given in Genesis xvii. That is the character of the faith which justifies.

The purpose of justification goes back as far as Genesis xii., for Gal. iii. 8 says:--

“The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.”

Justification by faith was incipient in the covenant of Genesis xii., it arrives at full consciousness, so to speak, in Genesis xv. Take the words “counted for”. If we turn to Rom. iv. 1-8, we find the expression “counted for”, and also “reckoned” and “imputed”, the same word being translated by these various terms. The important thing to notice is that faith is “counted FOR”, whereas righteousness, sin and reward are “counted”. The difference is this, righteousness, sin and reward are real value in themselves, whereas faith is only of value by virtue of the work of another and the ordinance of God.

A treasury note is worth £1, yet its intrinsic value is practically nil. Drop a treasury note in the fire and its value ceases. Drop a sovereign in the fire and its value remains the same. Faith is the treasury note. It is *counted for*, but it is not of itself *counted as*, righteousness. The moment we look on faith in itself as a meritorious cause of justification, that moment we make it a work which is excluded.

Abraham’s faith, as exhibited in Genesis xv., confessed the utter inability of the flesh to accomplish anything for God. His faith said practically, “unless God is the One who quickeneth the dead, i have no ground of hope”.

Following upon this justifying faith comes the confirmatory covenant concerning the inheritance. “Whom He justified, them He also glorified”; that is the sequence expressed doctrinally. “Joint heirs with Christ, if so be we suffer with Him”; that is the reason for the affliction of Abraham’s seed. “God works all things together for good to them that love God, to those who are called according to a purpose”; this expresses the superintending hand of God in all the strange pathways of His covenant people. Thus the history of Genesis xv. and the doctrine of Romans viii., bear united testimony. Even though justification leads on to glory, it does not exempt from intermediate suffering, but rather supports the teaching that it must come.

The Lord said to Abram, “I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it”. And he said, “Lord God, whereby shall i know that i shall inherit it?” There are two questions in this chapter, and there are two answers. Indeed the answers precede the questions:--

“I AM THY SHIELD.” — This was the pledge of Abraham’s justification.

“I AM THY EXCEEDING GREAT REWARD.” — This was the pledge of Abraham’s inheritance.

“WHAT WILT THOU GIVE ME?” — External confirmation. — The stars.

“WHEREBY SHALL I KNOW?” — External confirmation. — The smoking furnace and the burning lamp.

Space prevents us from quoting the verses of Genesis xv., the reader is expected to “search and see” with regard to all the articles of this magazine.

Offerings are arranged for the purpose of making a covenant, but Abram falls into a deep sleep that the covenant may be manifestly unconditional.

The question must arise, Why was it necessary for Israel to go down into Egypt, to be oppressed there, to be delivered out of it, and to be brought back to the same land wherein Abraham already was? Why should not Abraham’s descendants just continue without a break in the land of their inheritance? This question expressed in different terms is asked all down the age regarding the strange providence of suffering. The answer is a revelation of God’s character and purpose:--

“But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again, FOR THE INIQUITY OF THE AMORITES IS NOT YET FULL.”

The bondage in Egypt was not only for the discipline of Israel and the manifestation of redemption, it was because the longsuffering of God waits until the workers of iniquity have proved themselves incorrigible. That this is a *Fundamental of Dispensational Truth* we shall find by other scriptures:--

“And in the latter time of their kingdom, *when the transgressors are come to the full*, a king of fierce countenance ... shall stand up ... but he shall be broken without hand” (Dan. viii. 23-25).

In Matt. xxiii. 32-36; I Thess. ii. 16 we find the words:--

“*Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers ... that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth ... All these things shall come upon this generation*”.

“Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved, *to fill up their sins always*: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.”

“Filled up” sins are met with “filled up” wrath. John saw “seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is *filled up the wrath of God*” (Rev. xv. 1).

There are spiritual and human workers of iniquity for whose fulness the inheritance waits. The book of the Revelation shows human and Satanic iniquity fully ripe. The bondage of the redeemed will then come to an end. Those that afflict them will be judged, and afterward the redeemed shall “come out with great substance”.

Another covenant is made by God, which defined the geographical boundaries of the land of promise. This land has never yet been possessed by Israel. It is the “good land and large” that awaits them. When they enter it they will dispossess 10 nations, “the Kenites ... the Jebusites”, which is typical of the overthrowing of the 10 antichristian kings at the time of the end. An episode follows this chapter of faith which again shows the failure of the flesh.

Abraham believed that the son and heir promised to him should be his own flesh and blood, but both Abraham and Sarah seemed to have concluded that Sarah was not to be the mother of the child. Indeed Sarah says that the Lord had restrained her, when He had done nothing of the kind. One of the hardest

things for the believer to do is to WAIT. The promise seems to tarry, and the flesh counts the long suffering of God "slackness". The flesh also seeks to help God to fulfil His own unconditional covenant, and the end is always disaster.

Ten years had passed, and the trial of faith proved too much. "Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai", sad repetition of Gen. iii. 17. The transactions of this sixteenth chapter of Genesis seem strange to our ideas, but it was strictly in accord with the law of the land at the time. This is specially to be remembered when considering verses 3 & 6.

The result of the intrusion of the FLESH into the realm of FAITH was the birth of Ishmael. The epistle to the Galatians has much to say concerning the flesh and the spirit and the enmity between the son of the bondmaid and the son of the freewoman. The one indicates law which can only touch the flesh. The other indicates faith which can only apply to the spirit. The reader is referred to the whole epistle as an inspired comment upon these chapters. The individual working out of the comparisons and allusions will be a helpful study. We have the beginner in mind in this series, and nothing is worse than never to allow the beginner the opportunity of searching the Scriptures and receiving the training which results from exercise.

Hagar had a wonderful experience. If Hagar was to wander later in the wilderness of Beer-sheba (*the well of the oath*) she is first of all to know Beer-lahai-roi (*the well of living after seeing*). Another interpretation of this name is *The well of the living and the visible One*, and when we remember the revelation of Christ to a fallen woman of Samaria (John iv.), the possibility of this equally wonderful revelation being made to the outcast Hagar is not to be dismissed.

When Ishmael was born Abram was eighty-six years old. Faith had yet to be strengthened by longer waiting, for chapter xvii. opens with a childless Sarai, when Abram had reached ninety and nine years of age.

We shall continually meet with these examples of failure because of not waiting. May the lesson be not wasted upon ourselves. "Wait, I say, on the Lord". "Which worketh for him that waiteth for Him" (Isa. lxiv. 4, R.V.).

#30. Circumcision and its relation to being "perfect" (Genesis xvii.).

Abram has had several trials of faith. We see his progress much like the climbing record on the meteorological chart. Not one straight undeviating line does Abram's record leave. He falls a few degrees, and advances a few more, but it is to be thankfully noted that he does advance. One, and One only, ever walked the straight path of perfect faith, and while Abraham may twice figure in the list of those who received a good report through faith, Christ Himself alone is the Author and Perfecter of faith (Hebrews xi., xii.). Nevertheless, Abram is a follower of the Lord, and to him as to all believers comes the call to go on unto perfection:--

"And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram and said unto him. I am El Shaddai; walk before Me and be thou perfect."

When He was revealed as Abram's shield and reward, Abram believed Him unto justification and inheritance. Something fuller and deeper lies before Abram now. Up to this point Abram is the father of all that believe. Every believing child of God is justified and will receive a share of His inheritance. Not all believers, however, "go on unto perfection". Even Paul, sure as he was of his justification and of his fitness for the inheritance in the light, yet says, "Not as though I were already perfect". When Abram is called upon to "be perfect", a fuller revelation of God is made to him. It will be helpful to observe the different titles of God that appear in the various phases of Abram's walk of faith.

Stephen tells us that “The God of glory” appeared to Abram and bade him leave Ur of the Chaldees for the land of promise. This title of the Lord is in vivid contrast to the idolatrous and passing world of Abram’s nativity. As “The Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth”, the Lord was revealed to Abram before he met the temptation of the king of Sodom. As Abram’s shield and exceeding great reward the Lord is revealed Who was to justify him and pledge his inheritance through all the trials that awaited him and his seed.

His title, when He lets Abram know that his inheritance is sure, is “The Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees” — implying the truth otherwise expressed “that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ”. This characterized Abram’s faith (*see* Rom. iv. 21). As “The Almighty God”, or *El Shaddai*, the Lord appeared to Abram when He would urge him on to perfection. If justification by faith supposes the deadness of nature and the resurrection power of the Lord, subsequent perfection will necessitate that God Himself shall be all in all. *El Shaddai* has been curiously rendered, “The enough God”; the idea is expressed by the apostle when he said, “Our sufficiency is of God”.

Abram’s name is here changed to Abraham, “The father of many nations”, and this is spoken of at some length by the apostle in Rom. iv. 16-25. The land of Canaan is given here to Abraham and his seed for “an everlasting” possession, by an “everlasting” covenant, or a possession for the age of undefined limits. Thus Israel is called the ancient people, or the everlasting people, the people for the age (Isa. xlv. 7). The connection of this “everlasting” character of the blessing with “perfecting” will be more fully dealt with in the articles on *The Epistle to the Hebrews*.

The first occurrence in the New Testament of the title “Almighty” is II Cor. vi. 18 where it is preceded by separation, as in Abram’s case, and followed by cleansing from the filthiness of flesh and spirit, “perfecting holiness in the fear of God”. Seeing that the word “perfect” in Genesis xvii. is the word used of Noah in Gen. vi. 9, who “was uncontaminated in his pedigree”, and considering the insistent attempts of Satan to corrupt the line of the promised Seed, as in the case of Pharaoh and Sodom already noticed, there may be an allusion here to the intrusion of the flesh resulting in the birth of Ishmael.

Three important aspects of truth are indicated in Genesis xvii.:--

1. The Lord reveals Himself. — “I AM” (1).
2. The Lord reveals His intention. — “I WILL” (seven times, 2-8).
3. The Lord reveals something for Abraham to do. — “Thou shalt keep” (9-14).

The Lord is Alpha (*I am*), and Omega (*I will*) before Abraham is called upon to do anything. The seventh “I will” pledges the fulness of *El Shaddai* in that day to Abraham’s seed, “I will be their God”. Further, Abram’s name is changed to Abraham before a conditional covenant is made with him.

Abraham can be *justified* without circumcision, but not *perfected*. This is vividly brought out by the apostle in Philippians iii. where before speaking of the perfection to which he pressed, he spoke of those who were likeminded believers as “the circumcision who had no confidence in the flesh”. That is the true significance of the rite. The flesh is repudiated. After having begun in the spirit, asked Paul of the Galatians, are you now made perfect by the flesh? To the Colossians the apostle expressed his earnest desire that he might present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. This statement *follows* the record of their perfect acceptance in Christ, and is *followed by* the reference to their circumcision in Christ.

1. “In the body of His flesh to present you holy and unblameable” (i. 22).
2. “That we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus” (i. 28).
3. “In Whom ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in the *putting off the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ*” (ii. 11).

So it is that the changed name follows the command to be perfect, and is in turn followed by “My covenant which ye shall keep”. This was to be the token of the “everlasting covenant” already mentioned.

Sarai’s name is now changed to Sarah. The meaning of the two names does not differ much. Sarai means “princely” and Sarah “princess”. The same letter “H” which was added to Abram’s is added to Sarai’s.

There are eight covenants that are made with Abraham, and each is suggestive when we observe its numerical order:--

1. The great nation. “Thee” (personal) seven times (Gen. xii. 1-3).
2. The Seed. Redemption. Altar (Gen. xii. 7).
3. The land. Only Abraham’s in resurrection (Gen. xiii. 14-17).
4. Boundaries. 400 years. 4th generation (Gen. xv. 13-21).
5. Grace, the changed name. “H” = 5 in Hebrew. Circumcision and perfection. “Abraham laughed” (Gen. xvii. 1-22).
6. The flesh a failure. “Sarah laughed” (Gen. xviii. 9-15).
7. Isaac, not Ishmael. “Let him laugh” (Gen. xxi. 12).

AFTER THE OFFERING OF ISAAC.

8. Blessing in resurrection. The oath (Gen. xxii. 15-18).

It may also have been remarked that in chapter xvii. we have a fuller statement of the sevenfold covenant of Genesis xii. This covenant has seven “I wills”, but the promises are fuller. It commences the second set of four covenants. The first four are concerning the great nation, the promised seed, the promised land, and its geographical boundaries. These are covenants made with *Abram*. The second four are covenants made with *Abraham*. They include circumcision as the token, the promise concerning Sarah, the exclusion of Ishmael, and the “better promises” obtained by Abraham, revealed for the first time centuries after in the epistle to the Hebrews. The earthly inheritance is given in Genesis xv. 13-21, the heavenly is contained in xxii. 16-18.

Doctrinally we must repudiate the Ishmaels of our failures, but practically we may have to shoulder our burdens and responsibilities to them. Thus the apostle did not instruct a believing husband to put away his wife who may have still remained a pagan. This would have brought the name of the Lord into disgrace. Abraham remembers his responsibility regarding Ishmael. Rightly or wrongly, Abraham was his father, and he pleads for Ishmael before the Lord. The Lord replied:--

“Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him. And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation. *But my covenant will I establish with Isaac*, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year. And He left off talking with him, and God went up from Abraham” (Gen. xvii. 19-22).

Ishmael should be blessed, but the covenant was in Isaac. Both Ishmael and Isaac were circumcised, yet one was of the flesh, while the other was of promise. **Isaac was circumcised on the eighth day — the day of resurrection, whereas Ishmael was circumcised in his thirteenth year, the number of rebellion.**

Thus Abraham was instructed, when he set out upon his walk before God, that to be perfect involved the putting off of the body of the flesh. Ishmael cannot inherit the promises of the covenant. All must be of God and not of the flesh. Thus did Abraham learn his first lesson when he was ninety years old

and nine. Thus did he laugh the laugh of faith when he believed that a child should be born to one a hundred years old.

The Scriptures in setting forth the truth of *perfection* allow no room in connection with it *the flesh*.

#31. The Child of Promise.

As early as the time recorded in Genesis xv. Abraham learned that God would give him a son, and that his heir should not be “this Eliezer of Damascus”. When the Lord bade him look toward heaven and consider the multitude of the stars, saying “so shall thy seed be”, Abraham believed. Chapter xvi. however opens with the words:--

“Now Sarai, Abram’s wife, bare him no children; and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar.”

This maid was given to Abram by his wife in accordance with the law of the time (recorded in Code of Khammurabi), and the birth of Ishmael was the result. Abram was eighty-six years of age when Ishmael was born. Thirteen more years passed and then came the word, “I am the Almighty God, walk before Me, and be thou perfect”. God then renews the covenant with Abram, “thou shalt be a father of many nations”, and changes his name from Abram to Abraham, “father of a great multitude”. Then comes circumcision, the sign and the seal of the righteousness of faith (Romans iv.). God can now reveal the next step to Abraham:--

“As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah (Princess) shall her name be, and I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: Yea, I will bless her, and she shall become nations; kings of people shall be of her. Then Abraham fell upon his face and LAUGHED.”

When Sarai overheard the words of the angel,

“I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life and lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son” (xviii. 10),

we read, “therefore Sarah LAUGHED”. Both Abraham and Sarah laughed — the one in the joy of faith, the other in the derision of unbelief. Responding to the laugh of faith, the Lord continued to Abraham,

“Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed, and thou shalt call his name LAUGHTER (Isaac).”

In reply to the laugh of unbelief come the words:--

“Is anything too hard for the Lord? At the appointed time I will return unto thee according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.”

Three important dispensational principles are disclosed to us by this passage:--

The nature of PROMISE.

The factor of TIME.

The fact of RESURRECTION.

The nature of Promise.

One of Abraham’s titles is, “he that had the promises” (Heb. vii. 6, xi. 17). The land of Canaan in which Abraham sojourned is also called “the land of promise” (Heb. xi. 9). Isaac and Jacob who dwelt with him there are said to be “heirs with him of the same promise”. Both the epistle to the Galatians and that to the Romans lay great emphasis upon the nature of God’s promise. Let us notice what is attached to the promise:--

“That we might receive the promise through ... FAITH” (Gal. iii. 14).

“The covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the LAW, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect, for if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise” (Gal. iii. 17, 18).

Here the nature of the promise is shewn by its relation to law and faith. Turning to Romans iv. we shall increase our understanding of the nature of the promise, and also learn more fully the strength of Abraham’s faith. The first reference echoes Galatians iii.:--

“For the promise, that he should be heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the LAW, but through the righteousness of FAITH, for if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect ... therefore it is of FAITH that it might be by GRACE, to the end the promise might be SURE to all the seed” (Rom. iv. 13, 14).

Notice the teaching; it is by faith, by grace, that it might be SURE. Abraham and Sarah believed the promise (faith), but they endeavoured to help God (flesh), and the birth of Ishmael was the result. God will make the promise sure without the intrusion of the flesh, for the very intrusion of the flesh robs the word promise of its meaning.

The factor of Time.

Attached to every promise of God is an appointed time either stated or implied. Not only is this necessitated by the outworking of a plan, but it also is used to exercise and encourage simple faith. Ecclesiastes has noted, “There is a time to every purpose under heaven”. The answer to the tried faith of Habakkuk was, “the vision is yet for an appointed time ... though it tarry, wait for it”. So the promise to Abraham was timed. To the flesh the long years that passed after the normal age of parenthood had been reached were a hard trial of faith. It was not until Abraham was “about an hundred years old” that the promise was fulfilled; yet there was no tarrying on the part of God. “At the time of life”, “at the set time”, “at the time appointed”, Isaac is born, and Ishmael is seen to be the symbol of law, bondage, and unbelief.

“It is written that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free woman, but he that was born of the bondwoman was born after the *flesh*, but he of the freewoman was by *promise*” (Gal. iv. 22-31).

“They are not all Israel, which are of Israel; neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children, but IN ISAAC shall thy seed be called, that is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted for the seed” (Rom. ix. 6-8).

In Genesis xxi. we read the simple yet sublime account of the fulfillment of God’s promise:--

“And the Lord visited Sarah *as He had said*, and the Lord did unto Sarah *as He had spoken*. For Sarah conceived and bare Abraham a son in his old age, *at the set time* of which God had spoken to him ... and Sarah said, God hath made me to *laugh*, so that all that hear will *laugh* with me.”

Here Sarah’s laugh is the laugh of faith. She is however forcibly reminded of her laugh of unbelief, for the context once more uses the word (this time translated “mock”), “and Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had borne unto Abraham, *laughing* (mocking).”

Not only is the promise of God entirely removed from the sphere of law and flesh, the accident of time and the impatience of unbelief, but its essential characteristic and crown is that it triumphs over DEATH.

The fact of Resurrection.

Romans iv. displays the essential facts of resurrection both as regards Abraham's personal faith, the title of God, and *the* essential element in justifying faith. Abraham's personal faith. Which was easier to believe, that God in some far-off day would raise His own Son from the dead, or to believe that there and then, Abraham and Sarah "as good as dead" should be quickened into life? Abraham's faith is thus described:--

"Who against hope (humanly speaking), in hope believed, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, so shall thy seed be, and without growing weak in faith, he considered his own body now *dead*, when he was about an hundred years old, and the *deadness* of Sarah's womb, he did not use doubtful disputation in unbelief (*cf.* Rom. xiv. 1) against the promise of God, but was strong in the faith, giving glory to God, and being fully persuaded that what He had promised, He was able also to perform, and therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness" (Rom. iv. 18-22).

This factor of resurrection re-appears in connection with Abraham's faith in Heb. xi. 17-19:--

"By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac, and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, that in Isaac shall thy seed be called, accounting that God was able to raise him up even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure."

The one title of God that is given in this passage (Romans iv.) is "God Who quickeneth the *dead*, and calleth those things which *be not* as though they were". Abraham's trust was not in a blind impersonal Providence, not in the *Almighty* whose name is uttered by the despairing, and forgotten when the storm is passed, but the God of resurrection. This title of God before all others is the one which all believers to-day must recognize. Only *as such* can He be our Father; only as such can He be the God of hope, of peace, of all comfort, of patience, of glory. None of the glorious promises enshrined in the Divine titles can ever be realized or enjoyed apart from the resurrection. The Old Testament saints were taught this; the land of promise was theirs in resurrection: "they all died in faith not having received the promise". The throne of David cannot be occupied apart from resurrection: "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee" are the words of the decree (*see* Psalm ii.).

The Church has no status or blessing apart from resurrection; chapter and verse can hardly be given, as this thought underlies the whole of the apostle Paul's ministry, both before and after Acts xxviii.

The Essential Element in Justifying Faith.

"Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him: but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again because of our justification" (Rom. iv. 23-25).

"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Rom. x. 9).

Let us learn this important teaching concerning the promises of God, for it underlies all His purposes of grace and glory. The close association between Isaac and Christ (Gal. iii. 16; Rom. ix. 7), the references to the offering of the only begotten Son (Heb. xi. 17; John iii. 16) reveal that in some

mystical way God Himself moves along these lines as well as His people. He also awaits the hour appointed. He must eliminate all human merit. He too works only in the sphere of resurrection life.

“For how many soever the promises of God, in Him is the yea; wherefore also through Him is the Amen to the glory of God through us” (II Cor. i. 20).

#32. The Perfecting of Faith (Genesis xxii.).

We now approach the supreme trial of Abraham’s life. *Laughter* in the shape of Isaac had entered into his home and heart, and the promises were all centred in that little life now growing up. Abraham’s old age had been illuminated by the gift of God. Then came the test and the triumph. “Walk before Me and be thou perfect”, God had said some twenty-five years previously. The first act which followed that command was the rite of circumcision.

The act which we now contemplate is not the *rite* of circumcision, but the *reality*. Philippians iii. defines true circumcision. It is threefold:--

- (1). Worship God in Spirit.
- (2). Rejoice in Christ Jesus.
- (3). Have no confidence in the flesh.

Surely if the flesh ever made an appeal it did in Genesis xxii. God said to Abraham:--

“Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains that I will tell thee of.”

There is much meaning in the response of Abraham:--

“And Abraham arose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up and went unto the place of which God had told him.”

Here was no conference with flesh and blood. Had Abraham consulted Sarah surely she would have anticipated Zipporah’s reproach, telling Abraham that he was a bloody husband, and have withstood his purpose, and probably have prevailed. Had Eliezer been consulted, he too might have urged such strong reasons against the deed, that Abraham would have compromised. There were times in Abraham’s life when he stooped to lies and to the appeal of the flesh, but it was not so now. He had reached the *end* of his calling and his faith, and so can tell no one, ask no one, but just obey his God.

When God first appeared unto Abraham in Ur of the Chaldees, there was the element of uncertainty in regard to his destination, “he went out not knowing whither he went”. This is repeated in Genesis.xxii. Abraham did not know the exact place of the mighty transaction, but went out awaiting direction as the time arrived. This is always the character of faith, it is the opposite to sight. The simple words of Abraham to his young men, when read in the light of Hebrews xi., reveal a triumphant faith:--

“I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and WE WILL COME AGAIN to you.”

“By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac, and he that had received the promise offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, that in Isaac shall thy seed be called, accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from whence also he received him in a figure” (Heb. xi. 17-19).

A most important lesson, perhaps we should say *the* most important lesson for us here, lies in the word “account”. It occurs once in Hebrews, but eleven times in Romans iv. In Romans iv. Abraham

believes the God of resurrection, and his faith is imputed, accounted for righteousness. The important thing to observe is that Abraham is passive as far as the imputing is concerned. Abraham believes, "is persuaded", "staggers not", "gives glory to God", but he imputes nothing. "Abraham believed God and *it was counted* unto him for righteousness": "his faith is *counted* for righteousness"; cf. "the man unto whom *God imputeth* righteousness without works". This is the way in which the word is continually used. At the beginning Abraham, as we said, imputes nothing, but when faith is perfected his passive attitude is replaced by activity. What God can do in view of the resurrection of Christ, Abraham can in his measure do. So it is that the father can contemplate the slaying of his beloved son, "accounting that God was able to raise him up". Romans vi. is a step forward from Romans iv., and there the active side is presented:--

"For in that He died, He died unto sin once, but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God; likewise *reckon* (account) *ye also yourselves* to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. vi. 10, 11).

We find the active again in Rom. viii. 18, "for i reckon", where resurrection glory is in view. We find the explanation of this advance in the epistle of James. He too speaks of the great trial of Abraham's faith, and, as in Hebrews, it is connected with the idea of "going on unto perfection". In this connection temptation is prominent:--

"My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations, knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience, but let patience have her *perfect* work, that ye may be perfect and entire, lacking nothing." "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life" (James i. 2-4, 12).

In chapter ii. 14, 21 James asks a straight question:--

"What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can *that* faith save him? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?"

There is no confusion or contradiction of Romans iv. Here, Abraham was justified by FAITH in Genesis xv. when he believed God's promise regarding the seed. Abraham was justified by WORKS in Genesis xxii. when, still believing God's promise, he offered up Isaac, accounting that the God who gave him in figure from death ("one as good as dead"), could raise him again from the dead. It all resolves itself into a matter of personal, experimental, individual, faith. It was comparatively easy for Abraham to believe in the impersonal doctrine, the *idea* of resurrection. It was also comparatively simple to believe that God some thousand or so years hence would raise His own Son from the dead. It was quite another matter to build the altar, take the knife and prepare to slay his own flesh and blood, and believe that *there and then* (not some thousand years or so hence) God would raise his (Abraham's) son from the dead. This is where faith is perfected.

"Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith *made perfect*? and the Scripture was FULFILLED, which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness and he was called the Friend of God" (James ii. 22, 23).

This chapter (Genesis xxii.) is quoted in another context in Hebrews, to which we must turn:--

"And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope to the end; that ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through *faith and patience* inherit the promises, for when God made promise to

Abraham, because He could swear by no greater, He swore by Himself, saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee, and so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise” (Heb. vi. 11-15).

The chapter opens with the words, “Therefore ... let us go on unto perfection”, and Abraham is cited as an example. Notice too this fact. James says that Genesis xv. was *fulfilled* in Genesis xxii. Hebrews vi. says that the promise, made and believed earlier, was *obtained* in Genesis xxii. In Heb.xi.33 we meet the expression again, “who through faith subdued kingdoms, *wrought* righteousness, *obtained* promises”.

There are some who look upon this subject with suspicion, or at any rate treat it as something like a pet theme of the editor. We would ask such to consider our claim that this doctrine is a “Fundamental”, in view of the words of James ii., “Faith without works is DEAD”. While Genesis xv. reveals the justification of Abraham, Genesis xxii. shows its fulfillment. While Genesis xii.-xvii. contains the promises, in Genesis xxii. Abraham obtains them. We misunderstand the gift of life if we assume that because it is a gift, and a gift of grace and not of works, no activity on our part is called for. Scripture speaks otherwise, “Arise, shine; for thy light is come”, “Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead”. We have been redeemed from all iniquity, “that we might be a peculiar people, zealous of GOOD WORKS”. Let no creed, or remnant of a creed, cramp our minds and hearts. The teaching of Scripture is our creed, formulated or otherwise, for we all tend to turn the liquid metal into moulds of our own fashioning.

We have not dwelt in this article upon the wondrous theme of the great Sacrifice on Calvary, so vividly presented in this remarkable chapter. This is not because such has no place in our heart or teaching, but because that aspect is so evident to all, and so widely recognized. We would nevertheless not let the opportunity pass without using it, if only briefly.

Redemption by the blood of Christ, true atonement by His death, and full acceptance in His merits, are the first words of gospel preaching, and the first note of apocalyptic song. The religion of the age repudiates the necessity for the blood of Christ. Jude’s picture of the closing days is of men “denying the Lord that bought them”. We cannot read seven verses into the epistles of the Mystery without hearing that we are redeemed by the blood of Christ (Eph. i. 7). God has offered His only Son whom He loved, He spared *not* His only begotten Son. That Son of God loved me and gave Himself for me. Let us listen afresh to the word:--

“Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price,
therefore glorify God in your body” (I Cor. vi. 19, 20).

#33. Jacob. — The Flesh and the Promise (Genesis xxv. - xxviii.).

We have seen Abraham’s initial response to the call of God in his going out “not knowing whither he went”, and we have seen his last trial of faith in his journeying to one of the mountains of which God would tell him. While there is much of interest and instruction in the closing days of this man of faith, we feel it time to pass on to another figure who plays a part in the development of the purpose of the ages.

The marriage of Isaac with Rebecca (xxiv.) kept the seed of promise within prescribed limits, also affording in the case of the eldest servant (who *may* have been Eliezer of Damascus) an example of faithful service and Divine leading, “I being in the way, the Lord led me”. The words of xxv. 5 (“and Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac”) suggest as the heir of all things — Christ. Jacob the son of Isaac holds a place more prominent than his father in the typical outworking of the purpose, partly by reason of the intensely human side of his career. Jacob’s history begins before his birth. The N.T. commentary upon Gen. xxv. 22-26 is found in Rom. ix. 10-13:--

“When Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; for the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of Him that calleth; it was said unto her, the elder shall serve the younger, as it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.”

The purpose according to election is a key to Israel’s position and privilege. The purpose ensured a remnant in the days of deepest apostasy. When Elijah felt he alone was left, the answer of God to him was, “I have reserved unto myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed his knee to the image of Baal.”; so verse 5 continues, “at the present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace”. Thus we have Israel blinded with the exception of a remnant.

Let not a cold Calvinism, however, intrude its rough-shod logic here. It is a simple thing to divided the world into two classes, the elect who are saved, and the reprobate who are as most certainly damned. The teaching of Scripture, however, is not so. Romans xi. continues, and looking onward into the days to come speaks of a time of Israel’s fullness, and of receiving them back again; of regrafting the broken branches in. The remnant according to an ELECTION OF GRACE far from *excluding* the rest pledges their restoration, for the figure used by the apostle in this connection is “the firstfruits” (verse 16). The firstfruit presupposes a harvest to come, and the election of grace presupposes the words of 26-29, “and so ALL Israel shall be saved ... for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance”.

The opening words of chapter ix. balance the closing verse of chapter xi. In both sections come the words, “all Israel”; in chapter ix. we read:--

“They are NOT ALL ISRAEL that are of Israel, neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children, but in Isaac shall thy seed be called ... the children of the promise are counted for the seed.”

Some who were the children of Abraham by physical descent were nevertheless children of the devil according to the Lord’s own testimony (John viii. 33-44). The nation of Israel, as a nation, was so according to election. Whether that *national* election is co-extensive with the salvation of Rom. xi. 26 is a point which we are not called upon to settle.

In Genesis xxv. we have the election of the nation, “two nations are in thy womb”, “the one *people* shall be stronger than the other *people*”. When God made the promise of a seed to Abraham, the flesh spoilt the answer of faith by introducing Hagar, in a weak attempt to help God fulfil His word. When God so definitely said, “the elder SHALL serve the younger”, it should have been sufficient. The firstborn according to election must stand. Yet what do we find? The flesh practicing deception upon Isaac in the matter of the blessing of the firstborn.

In connection with Jacob’s birth is recorded the incident that gave him his name—“the heel-catcher” or “circumventor”. This strange incident must have some meaning, for not only is it recorded in Genesis xxv., but it appears in the prophecy of Hosea in rather a strange manner (which receives consideration in another article). The incident which follows the record of their birth is evidently in continuation of this theme. Here we find Esau and Jacob as grown men. Esau is spoken of in Hebrews.xii. as “a profane person who sold his birthright”, so we need waste no unspiritual sentiment upon one whose true character is revealed by that Word of God which discerns between soul and spirit. Neither can we commend Jacob’s action. It was, to say the least, unbrotherly. Yet, if we look below the surface, we shall at least find this, that however wrong he may have been in *method*, he certainly did not despise the promise of God, but stooped to a mean level to endeavour to bring about its fulfillment.

An opportunity occasioned by his brother’s extreme need presents itself, and Jacob seizes it — “Sell me this day thy birthright”. The next step in this despicable attempt of the flesh to help God to fulfil His promise is recorded in Genesis xxvii. There, acting under the direction of his mother, Jacob disguises

himself as Esau, and filches the blessing of Esau. Even Jacob finds his conscience too difficult to ignore when Isaac said, “how is it thou hast found it (the venison) so quickly my son?” for he replies, “Because the Lord THY God (not MY God) brought it to me”. The blessing which Jacob lied and deceived to obtain, however, was not to be received by him in that manner. Even though Isaac does bless him with “dew of heaven and fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine”, that blessing can hardly be said to epitomize the life history of Jacob, even upon his own testimony (xlvii. 9). Isaac certainly said of Jacob, even after he realized the deceit which had been practiced upon him, “yea, and he shall be blessed”; but it does not follow that by some decree of fate God was at all bound to fulfil any such thing, otherwise there would be a premium on the methods of Jacob.

We will here pursue the story of Jacob, and return to that of Esau later. Rebecca’s scheme for her favourite son now begins to bear fruit. She who stooped to deceive is now to be the one who of her own accord advises the departure of Jacob on that journey from which she would not live to welcome him back. Esau’s vow of vengeance was known to her, so she planned to deliver Jacob for a time, and send him far off to her brother Laban. What must the feelings of this frail fleshly pair have been, when Isaac, unconstrained, freely, and “by faith” (Heb. xi. 24) gave Jacob the coveted blessing, viz.:-

“And EL SHADDAI bless thee and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a called-out assembly (Hebrew equivalent for *ekklesia* or church) of peoples: and gave THE BLESSING OF ABRAHAM to thee, and to thy seed with thee, that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave to Abraham” (Gen. xxviii. 3, 4).

Here we do not read of corn and wine, but of that which Rebecca and Jacob had schemed and lied for in vain. The blessing of Abraham did not of necessity belong to the firstborn by nature, nor could it be attained by the sharp practice with which the birthright was secured, or the low deception which filched the blessing. The promise of God which runs along the line of an election of grace takes no notice of either good or evil. God’s government however does, and though Jacob cannot but receive the blessing of Abraham, as the elect link in the chain of purpose, Jacob must nevertheless suffer the consequences of his deception, and the devoted mother must part from her son upon the morrow of his triumph. David experienced this same dual treatment too; the covenant remained unaltered, but war never left his house after his great sin. This is the first great crisis in Jacob’s history. Here starts the long discipline which culminates in the change of his name.

We pause here to consider the folly of all, whoever they may be, who dare attempt by any means of the flesh even co-operation with the God of electing grace. Such attempt carries with it nothing but defeat and sorrow. Abraham never forfeited his place in the purpose of God, yet what a deed was that that gave him Ishmael for a son! Jacob never forfeited his elect position, yet his deceptions led him straight away to banishment, servitude, and to be deceived in his turn, first by Laban, Rebecca’s brother, and then by his own sons, in the matter of Joseph.

Whatever our calling may be, and whatever the peculiarities of the dispensation under which we walk, God’s attitude both to His gifts and callings, and also to truth and righteousness, remain the same. It is not written in Genesis alone, or even in Galatians with its “justified by faith without law”, but throughout Scripture that “*whatsoever* a man soweth, *that* shall he also reap”.

#34. Jacob and the God of Bethel (Genesis xxviii. - xxxi.).

There is a statement, several times repeated, that Laban was “Rebekah’s brother”. If Rebekah can deceive for her son’s gain, possibly her brother can deceive for his own, and such at any rate is the fact.

“And Jacob went out from Beer-sheba (the well of the oath) and went toward Haran (the frontier town of the Babylonian Empire)” (Gen. xxviii. 10).

Somewhere between these two suggestive places Jacob is overtaken by the night. A stone formed his pillow and in that place Jacob met with God. There God speaks with him. No word of censure for his sins, no word of bitter disillusion, indicating that the blessing of Abraham could never be for such as he, but a blessed confirmation of the purpose according to election, which we learn from Romans is an election of GRACE. Above the ladder which Jacob saw, the top of which reached heaven (or as some read “beside him”), stood the Lord, who said:--

“I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed. And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south, and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed, and behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land: for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of” (Gen. xxviii. 13-15).

When Jacob awoke, he said, “surely the Lord is in this place, and i knew it not”, and he was afraid and said, “how dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven”. These words sound sincere; were they? Some commentators reckon that the bargaining cheating spirit of Jacob is manifest in the vow that follows; we however believe that here we have, in the opening chapter of this pilgrimage, the dawn of a new life, not by any means perfected, for he has much to learn of the weakness and failure of the flesh, before he shall halt upon his thigh, a cripple of grace. Some say, hark at his bargainings, with his *ifs*. “If God will be with me ... then shall the Lord be my God”. In the first place a true translation transposes the “then” of verse 21, and the “and” of verse.22, making the verses read thus:--

“If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that i go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that i come again to my father’s home in peace, and the Lord be my God, THEN, this stone, which i have set up for a pillar, shall be God’s house: and of all that Thou shalt give me i will surely give the tenth unto Thee.”

Here is no bargaining spirit. Jacob, overwhelmed with grace, can only say, if this be so it demands of me nothing less than the devotion I now offer. The tenth or the tithe became a Divine institution, and appears to have been accepted of Jacob. The one whose stolen blessing included PLENTY of corn and wine is grateful to acknowledge “bread to eat”. Here is Jacob’s first meeting with God, and here is seen the effect of grace. Any one less than God would have felt it becoming and right, nay *righteous*, yea a moral necessity, to have prefaced the blessing with reminders, with censure, with warning, with upbraiding. Blessed be God! He knows best. Here, Jacob is more deeply moved by unsullied grace than ever he would have been by perfect law. Censure, rebuke, warning, would have called forth the depths of Jacob’s duplicity; unmitigated grace finds its echo in unsophisticated gratitude. Surely a fundamental here, not only of dispensational truth, but of private conduct too, especially in the dispensation of the grace of God.

The first act of Jacob was symbolical of supplanting and gave him his name Jacob (Gen. xxv. 26). His next recorded act shows him cheating his brother of his birthright and blessing, then comes the crime and the commencement of his pilgrimage. Here, possibly for the first time, Jacob comes into personal touch with God, and that God of his father becomes his God. His next recorded act is not one of selfishness, but of chivalry:--

“And it came to pass that when Jacob saw Rachel, the daughter of Laban, *his mother’s brother*, and the sheep of Laban, *his mother’s brother*, that Jacob went near and rolled the stone from the well’s mouth, and watered the flock of Laban *his mother’s brother*, and Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice and wept” (Gen. xxix. 10, 11).

The repeated reference to his mother’s brother seems to indicate Jacob’s affection for his mother, and also carries an intimation that possibly Laban will have some of the cunning of his sister in his character, which forebodes trouble for Jacob. However, at the beginning Jacob is received with warm welcome, and with a kinsman’s affection. The last sentence of verse 13 suggests much, “and he told Laban *all these things*”. How much did Jacob tell his “mother’s brother”? Whatever it was, Laban said to him, “surely thou art my bone and my flesh, and he abode with him the space of a month”. At the end of this time Laban suggests that Jacob should be paid for his services, and asks Jacob to name his wage:--

“And Jacob loved Rachel, and said, I will serve thee seven years for Rachel thy younger daughter” (Gen. xxix. 18).

Now commences the operation of that even-handed justice which commends the ingredients of our poisoned chalice to our own lips. Jacob of all men has to say to his uncle:--

“What is this that thou done unto me? Did not I serve thee for Rachel? Wherefore then hast thou BEGUILED me?” (verse 25).

Laban realized that in Jacob he had too valuable a servant to lose, and possibly noting the rare love which Jacob had (verse 20) for Rachel acted accordingly. Another seven years unpaid service must Jacob give for the wife of his choice. Leah was hated (possibly “not loved so much”, *see* verse 30), and the Lord gave Leah children, but withheld children from Rachel. Rachel may have been more beautiful and loved more ardently, yet there is manifested in Leah’s attitude a loving patient trust in God, which is not so marked in Rachel. This comes out in the naming of her children. The first is called Reuben, “for she said, surely the Lord hath looked upon (*raha*) my affliction; now therefore my husband will love me”. Her second son she called *Simeon* (*shimeon*, hearing), “because the Lord hath heard (*shama*) that I was hated”. Again a son is born, and again her sorely tried faith revives, “now this time will my husband be joined unto me, because I have borne him three sons; therefore was his name called *Levi*” (joined). Her fourth son is called Judah, for his mother said, “let me praise the Lord”. Man had failed, her husband still loved Rachel more than herself, and she turns to the God of all comfort, voicing no more her heart’s burden, but saying in true resignation, “let me praise the Lord”.

Leah’s fruitfulness, if it failed to arouse her husband’s love, moved Rachel’s envy. Even Jacob’s anger is kindled against Rachel by her importunity. Rachel then in agreement with the code of Khammurabi and the example of Sarah gives her handmaid Bilhah to Jacob. A son is born, and Rachel calls his name *Dan*, for said she, “God hath judged me”. This child is not born into so kindly an atmosphere as the sons of Leah. The second one too, called *Nephtali*, was so called because Rachel said, “with great wrestlings have I wrestled with my sister, and I have prevailed”. Leah is now stirred and presents Jacob with her maid Zilpah; another son is born, and in happy exuberance Leah cries, “a troop cometh”, and calls his name *Gad*. Again another son, and he is called *Asher*, for said Leah, “happy am I, for the daughters will call me blessed”, and so through the whole story. *Isaachar* means “hired”, *Zebulun*, “endued with a dowry”, *Dinah* the daughter is so named, but no reason is given. At

last Rachel herself is remembered of God, and gives birth to a son whom she named *Joseph*, for she said, “the Lord shall add to me another son”. Here we reach another turning point in Jacob’s eventful career. Immediately the chosen wife of Jacob bears a son, Jacob thinks of home:--

“And it came to pass, when Rachel had borne Joseph, that Jacob said unto Laban, Send me away that I may go unto mine own place, and to my country”
(Gen. xxx. 25).

What follows to the end of the chapter appears at first to be an evident piece of Jacob’s typical cunning. Laban agreed that Jacob’s hire shall be the speckled and spotted cattle, and removed all such from the herd and set a three days’ journey between them and the rest of the flock under Jacob’s hand. The question arises once more, was the action of Jacob, detailed in verses 37-42, the ingenuity of the man Jacob, or was it of God? Our first thoughts condemn Jacob we do not shrink from exploiting his cunning — yet, as at Bethel we may find sufficient evidence to alter our verdict. Read on into chapter xxxi. The Lord said unto Jacob, “Return unto the land of your fathers, and to thy kindred, and I will be with thee”. He reminds his wives that with all his power he had served their father, who had nevertheless deceived him and changed his wages ten times. Then he introduces the part that God took in this state of affairs. At the time covered by Gen. xxx. 37-42 Jacob had a dream, and the angel of the Lord showed him practically what he then put into operation, and declared Himself to be “the God of Bethel, where thou anointedst the pillar, and where thou vowedst a vow unto Me”. Laban’s cupidity had alienated his daughters from him; “he hath sold us”, could both Leah and Rachel say with truth, “and hath quite devoured also our money”. Thus Laban prepared his daughters to be willing to leave their home and journey back with Jacob to the land of his fathers.

Truly, whether the central figure be a placid Isaac, a scheming Rebekah, a deceitful Jacob, or a greedy Laban, all are in the hands of One Who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will. Bethel was the turning-point in Jacob’s life. As the God of Bethel God appears unto Jacob in his exile, so at Bethel once again with changed name shall Jacob once more meet with God.

#35. Israel — Prince of God (Genesis xxxii.).

Jacob’s first meeting with the God of his fathers at Bethel and the impress of grace he there received is to have yet more and abiding fruit. In a night vision some twenty years afterwards the Lord again speaks to him saying:--

“I am the God of Bethel ... now arise, get thee out of this land and return unto the land of thy kindred” (Gen. xxxi. 13).

We have no means of determining whether Jacob’s silent flight was dictated by natural cunning or by Divine instruction, nor are we called upon to pass judgment. The action itself could be right or wrong, according to the will of the Lord at the time. Laban however gives chase, but before he can come up with the fugitives God came to Laban the Syrian in a dream by night saying, “Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad”. Laban’s search for his stolen gods proves fruitless, and Jacob, knowing nothing of Rachel’s action, takes the opportunity of forcing upon the conscience of Laban his own dishonest dealings during the time when Jacob served him faithfully and well (xxxi. 37-42). Laban and Jacob build a “witness heap” and a “watch tower”, for Laban said, “the Lord watch between me and thee when we are absent one from another”.

At the close of the solemn covenanting Laban departed and “Jacob went on his way, and the angel of God met him”. Upon hearing of the approach of Esau with a company of four hundred men Jacob does two things: he first disposed of his forces, with foresight and wisdom taking the “two bands” of angels as his guide, and secondly he prayed. Here is the first real prayer recorded in the Bible. Abraham’s intercession for Sodom is more like an argument. Abraham’s servant’s words in Genesis xxiv. are the

expression of a desire for a sign. Here is a real prayer. It commences and ends with a reference to the covenant. Jacob's conception of his claim on God is not based upon his worthiness or his need, but upon the covenant made with his fathers. The reference to the covenant made unto the fathers is followed by a remembrance of a personal promise, which in its turn is echoed by a confessed fear and felt need; in the center comes the repudiation of all worthiness echoed by an acknowledgment of God's faithfulness:--

- A | xxxii. 9-. The God of the covenant with Abraham and Isaac.
- B | -9. Reminder of promise.
- C | 10-. Confession of utter unworthiness.
- C | -10. Acknowledgment of overflowing blessing.
- B | 11-. Prayer for deliverance.
- A | -11. Reference to covenant blessing.

Jacob after this prayer arranges a present to pass over the ford that Esau may be appeased and accept his returning brother in peace. His two wives and his two women servants together with his eleven sons pass over the ford, "and Jacob was left alone". If Jacob could say of Bethel "how dreadful is this place", what shall he say of this all-night wrestling with the angel of God? "And there wrestled a Man with him." This wrestler is called *God* in verse 30.

There is a division of opinion regarding the meaning of this midnight wrestling. Some see in it a picture of overcoming prayer — but it does not say Jacob wrestled, but the *Man* wrestled — Jacob's attitude was one of resistance. This passage, coupled with the strange supplanting act at his birth, is referred to in Hosea xii., and possibly the reference there will aid us in understanding the purport of Genesis xxxii. The passage in the A.V. reads as follows:--

"He took his brother by the heel in the womb, and by strength he had power with God (margin '*was a prince, or behaved himself princely*'), yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed, he wept and made supplication unto him, he found him in Bethel, and there he spake with us, even the Lord God of hosts; the Lord is his memorial."

The Companion Bible differs from the majority of commentators, both in the passage in Genesis xxxii. and in Hosea xii. In Genesis xxxii. the changed name *Israel* is interpreted, "God commands, orders or rules", and the additional remark is made that "out of some forty Hebrew names compounded with *El* or *Jah* God is always the doer of what the verb means (cf. *Dan-el*, God judges). "The name" (continues the note) "is used here not to dignify but to reproach", and the references are given. The words "hast thou power with God and with men and hast prevailed" are explained to mean that Jacob had contended with Esau at birth, for the birthright, for the blessing, and with Laban. In contending with men he had succeeded, but now contending with God he fails, and receives the name *Isra-el*, (*God commands*) to teach him the greatly needed lesson of dependence upon God.

The notes of the *Companion Bible* to Hosea xii. 4, 5 are even more complicated. The words "by his strength" (in his manhood) referring to another occasion of strife; "had power with" (contended with), Heb. *Sarah* (hence his name Israel). The word "prevailed" is not to be referred to the result of Jacob's contending, but means that He (the angel) prevailed. "He found him in Bethel", *i.e.*, God found Jacob. If Jacob's new name Israel indicates "God commands" it cannot at the same time have any connection with Jacob's own "contending" — see note above — it must be one or the other, yet the *Companion Bible* emphasizes both.

We cannot say that the note on Genesis xxxii. appeals to us as being the true meaning, and therefore we have no help for it but an independent search into what is confessedly a difficult passage. One interpretation makes Israel a Prince with God, because he had power with God and prevailed, the other

makes the name Israel mean God commands, and supposes it used as a reproach not a dignity. Let us turn again to Gen. xxxii. 24, 25. "WRESTLED." — This word occurs nowhere else in the O.T. A substantive derived from this word is translated five times "dust" and twice "powder". This would show the idea to be more "pounding", "crushing", or "pulverizing" than "wrestling". It does not seem possible that an ordinary man could in his own strength "wrestle" with the Angel of God for hours, but from what we have gathered of Jacob's character we can understand that it was not a trifling thing to reduce his old nature to powder.

"PREVAIL." — This word suits well the idea of wrestling, but when connected with reducing anything to powder it is not so fitting; it is translated "could" in Genesis xiii. 6, xxxvi. 7, xxxvii. 4, xlv. 1, 3; "can" in Gen. xiii. 16, xix. 19, 22, xxiv. 50, xxix. 8, xxxi. 35, and as this is the usual rendering we are under no necessity to translate the passage other than "was not able", or "could not". One suggestive use of the word is found in II Sam. xvii. 20, "they be gone over the brook of water". In II Sam. xvii. 20 we have *mee-chal*, when joined with the word for water it means, "manageable water", "fordable water", "water that can be overcome". Jacob, by the ford Jabbok, was not so manageable. As the dawn of day approached it became imperative that the reduction of Jacob should be accomplished, and the angel touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh, and he limped the remainder of his pilgrimage. Jacob now clings tight to the angel and says, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me".

Now, do the words that follow indicate a blessing for Jacob, or otherwise? First of all his name is *changed*, "Thy name shall be called no more Jacob but Israel". Now if Israel be a term of reproach, we are faced with a problem indeed; we are further told that Jacob had succeeded in his contending with men, but had failed with God. Neither statement is true, Jacob miserably failed in the scheme to get the blessing and Scripture settles the other statement by saying of Jacob, "as a prince hast thou power with GOD and with men, and hast prevailed".

We have other evidences of the purport of a change of name in Genesis, *e.g.*, Abraham instead of Abram, Sarah instead of Sarai. In both cases the change is to a higher plane and the result of a blessing. The name Sarah means Princess and contains the word which gives us I-sra-el. SAR. — *Sar* is rendered "prince" 208 times, and "captain" 125 times, hence chief, ruler, governor, etc., and seen in connection with Sarah Jacob's new name seems to echo its meaning, she the Princess, he the Prince. One feature of great importance must now be noted which links together the *changed* names of Abraham, Sarah, and Israel, and also substantiates the meaning of Prince in the name Israel.

"As for Sarai thy wife, thou shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name ... **KINGS** of people shall be of her" (Gen. xvii. 15, 16).

"Thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel ... **KINGS** shall come out of thy loins" (Gen. xxxv. 10).

We must by this evidence retain the kingly thought in the word Israel. Here, in each instance, the change of name is associated with blessing, and a promise of a royal seed. Newburry interprets *Isra-El* by a prince of God, just as we translate *Peni-El*, face of God, or *Beth-El*, house of God. The change of name was given for a revealed reason, "FOR thou wast as a prince", *saritha*, "as a prince hast thou power", being but one word.

This word occurs nowhere else, but in Hosea x. 11. Bethel in the days of Hosea had become notorious for its idolatry. Israel is exhorted to consider the typical history of their father Israel, how from being a supplanter he was changed to a Prince of God, and how from being a keeper of sheep (xii.12) he became a Prince of God, or, as the parallel is written turning from the type to the antitype, the captive bondman Israel in Egypt brought out of Egypt by a prophet (xii. 13) to become when at last they see God face to face "kings and priests unto God". Ephraim or Israel had become idolators, they had fallen by their iniquity, yet, saith the Lord, "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely". Jacob's experience at Jabbok is an O.T. parallel to Paul's experience spoken of in II Cor. xii. 9, 10:--

“And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmity that the power of Christ may rest upon me ... for when I am weak, then am I strong.”

Jacob's human frame ever afterwards showed evidence of his weakness and the need to distrust the flesh, but it would ever be associated with a gracious blessing, a princely name and a consciousness that henceforth his strength was to be found in God. Jacob's experience anticipates that day soon to dawn, when the night shall have passed away for ever, when his descendants shall look upon Him whom they pierced (*Peniel*) and shall say:--

“Unto Him that loved us and loosed us from our sins by His own blood, and hath made us **KINGS** and priests unto God” (Rev. i. 5, 6).

Who is this One upon whom they look? “**PRINCE** of the **KINGS** of the earth.” *Sar* of *Sars*, the true and antitypical Israel, Prince of God. Saviour and saved are both foreshadowed. He the great King-Priest after the Order of Melchisedek, they the kingdom of priests, a royal priesthood. Israel like Jacob could not attain this by creature strength, it was when the hollow of his thigh was touched that he asked a blessing and received his princely name.

#36. Esau, the Profane. Jacob, the Perfect (Genesis xxv. - xxxv.).

We have passed Jacob's history in review up to the moment when he “saw God face to face, and his life was preserved”, and he was changed from supplanter to prince. Such is his transit, from catching his brother's heel in creature strength to losing the power of the flesh for spiritual force, from scheming, bartering, and lying to obtain the blessings that vanished into thin air to vowing with awe-struck heart, and praying with earnest self-abnegation to the God of Bethel, the God of all grace.

Jacob well set forth in type Israel's history. First the reliance upon self, then the exile, the servitude, the return and the new name — a Prince with God: and over all, from before birth and throughout that eventful pilgrimage, the God of Abraham and of Isaac, in very truth the God of Jacob. We now retrace our steps to the time of Jacob's birth to note what is said concerning Esau, for he too is typical.

The epistle to the Galatians uses the two sons of Abraham as a figure, Ishmael representing those in bondage, Isaac those who are free. Romans draws attention to Esau and Jacob, teaching that they are not all Israel that are of Israel, and that the true Israel is the child of promise. Not only did Abraham have two sons, the one a type of the flesh and the law, the other a type of promise and covenant mercy, but Isaac also had two sons, Esau and Jacob, who in their turn reflect in type the seed of truth and of evil.

Esau when he had grown is described as “a cunning hunter”. The word for “hunter” occurs 12 times in Genesis and is used of two persons only, Nimrod the mighty hunter and Esau the cunning hunter. Esau is further described as “a man of the field”. Jacob in the same verse is called “a plain man”. Why this rendering should have been chosen we do not quite see. The very next occurrence of the adjective is found in Job i. 1, “this man was **PERFECT** and upright”. In Song of Solomon v. 2 and vi. 9 it is rendered “undefiled”. The substantive is rendered in Gen. xx. 5 “integrity” (margin, “simplicity”, “sincerity”), and these three words together with uprightness are the words that are used to translate it throughout some twenty occurrences.

In the emphatic form *tahmeem* we find the word used of Noah, “Noah was a just man and *perfect*” (Gen. vi. 9). It is used of Abraham in the words, “Walk before me and be thou *perfect*” (Gen. xvii. 1). It is used of the Passover lamb, “your lamb shall be *without blemish*” (Exod. xii. 5). Every occurrence of the feminine form is translated “integrity”. The last thing we should say of Jacob (as taught by our traditions) is that he was sincere, upright, simple or perfect. Who would think of Jacob and Job

together? Nevertheless God who trieth the heart and knows what is in man definitely describes Jacob as a perfect or sincere man, whilst generous-hearted, easily-appeased, hale-fellow-well-met Esau is termed a profane person. God seeth not as man seeth, man looketh upon the outward appearance, but God looketh upon the heart.

The second description of Jacob is “dwelling in tents”. This fact is referred to in Heb. xi. 8, and is there used as a sign of faithful patience in view of the promise:--

“By faith he (Abraham) sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, *dwelling in tents* with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise.”

The epistle to the Hebrews uses both the words which describe Jacob with special purpose, *perfect* and *dwelling in tents*. The same epistle describes Esau as a *profane* person who sold his birthright. Esau thus becomes the exact opposite of Jacob. Esau is held up as a warning to these Hebrews who were beginning to draw back, whose endurance was waning. Such could not be renewed *again* unto repentance, and are pointed to Esau:--

“Who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright, for ye know how that afterwards, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected; for he found *no place of repentance*, though he sought it carefully with tears” (xii. 16, 17).

The chapter goes on to speak of those who were the church of the firstborn ones, who are here warned against selling their birthright for a little respite.

Esau’s second name (*Edom*) is taken from this selling of his birthright for a mess of pottage, “that red” as he called it. Esau’s second name links him with his profanity, and Jacob’s second name with his loss of self and his royalty, Esau is named after a mess of lentils, Jacob is named Prince of God. Esau comes in from the field saying, “i am faint ... i am at the point of death; and what profit shall this birthright do to me?”. Jacob after an all-night wrestle with the angel, touched at the breaking of the day upon his thigh so that the sinew withered, still clings tight saying, “i will not let thee go except thou bless me”. Esau after selling his birthright “did eat and drink and rose up and went his way; thus Esau despised his birthright”. How many more have done the same! Jacob on the other hand, though he works with base tools and crooked means, pursues his end — THE blessing. We make no excuse for the method nor the means, but we do ask the reader, whether God Who judges the motive may not after all amid all that is false and fleshly see earnest desire, not for ease, comfort, or worldly greatness, but the heart’s cry, “Oh that I may receive the blessing of Abraham, and take my place in the line of God’s purpose”. For this frail flesh will lie and deceive, for this suffer exile and the heat by day and the frost by night, but nevertheless Jacob the perfect man shall by one path or another come at last to see the face of God, repent, believe, and inherit the blessing.

Esau’s next evidence of his nature is given by his choice of wives. Jacob had two wives — but not of choice, yet Jacob’s wives were of his kindred, he allowed not his “generation” to be contaminated, being like Noah “perfect as to his pedigree”, for the Abrahamic blessing involved a “seed”. Abraham’s care for Isaac’s wife will here come to mind. When Esau was forty years old he married two Hittites! These were “a bitterness of spirit to Isaac and Rebecca”. It is in keeping with Esau’s typical character that his Hittite wife should bear a Hebrew name, “Judith”, but her name alone was Hebrew. Esau, finding that Isaac straitly charge Jacob not to marry one of the daughters of Canaan and that his own Canaanitish wives were not pleasing to his parents, manifests the utter incapability of the flesh of doing a spiritual act by taking a wife this time of the line of ISHMAEL! Oh unhappy man! Judith, Hebrew in name, but not in heart: Ishmael, son of Abraham truly, but of bondage, not of promise. Esau has many followers in the religious world to-day, who vainly seek to copy the outward things of faith but manifest their profanity and their folly thereby. It is but the “form of godliness”.

Jacob's words when he meets Esau after their long separation are repeatedly of *grace*. When Esau said, "Who are these with thee?" Jacob replied, "The children which God hath *graciously* given thy servant". When Esau asks the meaning of the droves he met, Jacob replies, "These are to find *grace* in the sight of my lord". Esau magnanimously tells Jacob to keep what he has for himself: "I have enough my brother", but Jacob urges, "If I have found *grace* in thy sight that the present be received ... because God hath dealt *graciously* with me". His parting words with Esau are, "Let me find *grace* in the sight of my lord". After this Jacob erected an altar and called it *El-eloe-Israel*, God, the God of Israel. We must remember as we read this that Israel at that moment was the one individual — Jacob. It was Jacob's personal testimony to God Who had so wondrously kept His word.

The generations of Esau are given, and kings and dukes are in his line. Edom looms large in the day of judgment, the prophets speak much of its sin and its punishment. Isaiah lxiii. gives a tragic figure of wrath, but the subject is too great to be dealt with here.

Jacob with his many failings finds many a parallel in the believer to-day. The very possession of "two natures" in the child of God will manifest itself in an erratic walk while the flesh is not reckoned dead, while the thigh bone is not out of joint. **It is easy to be worldly-minded in the world, or heavenly-minded in heaven, but to be always heavenly-minded in the world needs great grace.** May we who do not spare our censures on Jacob's meanness and cunning emulate his desire for the thing that matters most; and while we sound out the praise of noble generous Esau, take heed that we do not for a mess of this world's pottage sell *our* birthright.

#37. Joseph — The Dominion Promised and Postponed.

Passing over the chapter that is devoted to the generations of Esau we open at Genesis xxxvii. and read:--

"And Jacob dwelt in the land wherein his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan. These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph".

Jacob's generations are not written as from Padan-aram and the house of Laban, but from Canaan, the land of pilgrimage. Jacob uses this word "stranger" in xlvii. 9, when he speaks of the years of his "pilgrimage". The pilgrim character of the family of faith is a very "fundamental of dispensational truth". All the exhortations to leave the world and its ways, which so characterize the writings of the New Testament, emphasize this truth.

The second item of importance in this statement of the generations of Jacob is the fact that it is practically the life story of Joseph. We do *not* read, "These are the generations of Jacob. Reuben ...", but "Joseph". The other sons are referred to as "his brethren". Joseph is pre-eminently the great type of Christ in Genesis, and this again leads us to another great fundamental of all truth; whether doctrinal or dispensational Christ is all. The first great type of Christ in Genesis is Adam, "who was a figure of Him that was to come". The last is Joseph, equally a figure of the same blessed one. Adam's story is one of awful failure involving all his seed in ruin. Joseph's story is one of suffering as a path to glory with the object that he may "preserve life".

It may be interesting to note the complete little picture that Genesis presents in the seven great types of Christ that it contains:--

- A | ADAM.—Sin forfeits life.
- B | ABEL.—The accepted offering.
- C | SETH.—Substitution.
- D | NOAH.—Atonement ("pitch").
- C | ISAAC.—Substitution.
- B | JUDAH.—Suretyship.
- A | JOSEPH.—Sufferings lead to preservation of life.

The record on Genesis xxxvii. does not say, “Now Jacob loved Joseph”, but “*Israel* loved Joseph”. Israel, the prince with God, loved Joseph more than all his children. Joseph’s position in the family is indicated by the “coat of many colours”, which his father made for him. The marginal alternative of the A.V., “pieces”, is to be rejected. The same word is used in Judges v. 30 where it refers to “divers colours of needlework”. The embroidered garments of Aaron—the blue, the purple and the scarlet, were symbols of the priestly office. Joseph was the heir and the priest of the family. When Rebekah prepared Jacob to deceive Isaac and to seek the birthright, she took “raiment of desires”. Throughout Scripture clothing has a symbolic value. The result of Joseph’s pre-eminence is prophetic of Christ. “His brethren ... hated him.”

Joseph’s career cannot be dissociated from dreams, and they run in pairs:--

1 st pair.		Joseph’s dreams of pre-eminence.
		Lead to prison and suffering.
2 nd pair.		The prisoners’ dreams being interpreted.
		Lead to deliverance from prison.
3 rd pair.		Pharaoh’s dreams being interpreted.
		Lead to glory and honour.

The words of his brethren at the recital of his first dream anticipate the words of the enemies of Christ:--

“Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us?
And they hated him yet the more for his dreams and for his words” (Gen.xxxvii.8).

The statement made concerning Jacob — “his father observed the saying” (Gen. xxxvii. 11) — upon the narration of the second dream remind one of the words concerning Mary that she “kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart” (Luke ii. 19).

It is very strongly emphasized in the sequel that the envy and hatred that sought to prevent Joseph’s dreams from becoming accomplished facts were over-ruled by God to bring about their fulfillment:--

“So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and He hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and a lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt” (Gen. xlv. 8).

So Peter could say:--

“Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain” (Acts ii. 23).

Joseph’s dreams spoke of rulership over his brethren. The rejection of Joseph by his brethren temporarily suspended this prophecy from fulfilment, and during the interval he became ruler and saviour among the Gentiles, reaching the destined rulership at a subsequent period. The “postponement theory” cannot be proved from a type, but the fitness is nevertheless confirmatory. Christ was heralded as a King. His rejection as such was foreknown; and when at length He is acknowledged King, it will be found that He is Saviour as well.

It is also surely not an accident that it is one named Judah (Judas in Greek) who suggested selling Joseph for twenty pieces of silver, while Judas sold Christ for thirty pieces of silver. It was the father who sent his beloved son Joseph to his brethren, the latter saying, “Come now, therefore, and let us slay him”. It was the Father Who sent His well beloved Son to His brethren in the flesh: these received Him not, but rather said, “This is the heir; come, let us kill Him”.

We learn from the last verse of Genesis xxxvii. that Joseph was sold to Potiphar; and then, before we are told anything further, a part of the life of Judah is interjected, the theme of Joseph at Potiphar’s

house being resumed in Genesis xxxix. Judah falls into temptation, and the signet, bracelets and staff which he left behind are a witness against him. Joseph stands firm under a similar temptation; and the garment which he left behind, though used against him falsely, was a witness really of his integrity. Joseph stands where Judah falls: how this is repeated in the temptation of Christ is recorded in Matthew iv. Those three temptations in the wilderness have their parallels in the wilderness wandering of Israel, the three quotations used by Christ being from the book of Deuteronomy.

The pathway to glory for Joseph was *via* prison and shame. It was so with his blessed Antitype too, Who declared that He must needs have suffered these things and to have entered into His glory. When Joseph was in the house of Potiphar, we read, "The Lord was with Joseph" (Gen. xxxix. 2). This is repeated when Joseph was cast into prison (verse 21). This must have been the great sustaining fact upon which Joseph leaned during his severe trial. It was the consciousness, too, of the Father's nearness that was the great joy of Christ during His earthly ministry. We have reached the lowest depth of Joseph's trials. The rejection and the loss are to be followed by acclamation and honour. This we must leave until we can devote more space to it.

We conclude this section with the quaint rendering of an early English version:--

"The Lord was with Joseph, and he was a luckie fellow" (Gen. xxxix. 2).

#38. Joseph — The Dominion Realized (Genesis xl. - l.).

Joseph sets before us in his remarkable career a clear type of that feature which is so prophetic of Christ — "the sufferings and the glory that should follow".

We left Joseph in our last study together in the lowest depths; we shall not leave him in this paper until we see him seated at the right hand of Majesty. The dreams of Joseph led to his exile; the dreams of Pharaoh led to his exaltation.

"And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art. Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled; only in the throne will i be greater than thou" (Gen. xli. 39, 40).

Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnath-paaneah. The A.V. gives a possible meaning in the margin by considering it a Coptic word, but more recent discovery in Ancient Egyptian brings to light the true meaning of the name and its prophetic import. *Zaph-en-to* was a title of the last of the Shepherd Kings of Egypt and means "The nourisher of the world". *Zap* means "abundance".

"Its well ascertained meaning is 'food', especially 'corn' or 'grain' in general" (Canon COOK).

Nt (*nath*) is the preposition "of", common on the early monuments. *Pa* is the definite article "the". *Anch* signifies "life". Thus one name of Memphis is *ta-anch*, the land of life, or, the land of the living. The name therefore means "Food of the life", and is a far-off echo of that wondrous claim which the Greater than Joseph was to make when He said "*I am the Bread of Life*".

Is there not also an echo of Pharaoh's words in the lips of Mary? Pharaoh said, when the people had no bread, "Go unto Joseph; what he saith to you, do" (Gen. xli. 55). Mary said to the servants, when they had no wine, "Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it" (John ii. 5).

Genesis xlii. resumes the broken thread of the story of Jacob and his sons. One event however has happened that it is important to remember. Joseph blesses the Gentiles during his rejection by his brethren. Joseph is united to a Gentile by marriage while exiled from his father's house. The names of his two children speak of forgetting his toil and his father's house, and of being fruitful in the land of his affliction. The famine at length appears and among those who are forced to sue at Joseph's feet are his

ten brethren. The story is a long one and we will not spoil it by attempting to summarize, we know how it all ends. The outstanding typical features number among them the following:--

1. THE REPENTANCE OF ISRAEL. — When Joseph's brethren came before him and are charged with being spies, they aver that they are twelve brethren, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and behold say they:--

“The youngest is this day with our father, and one is not” (Gen. xlii. 13).

The mention of the fate of Joseph and the harshness of their treatment at the hands of the ruler of Egypt causes their conscience to awaken and they said:--

“We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us” (Gen. xlii. 21).

Reuben uses even more forceful words: “Behold, also his blood is required” (Gen. xlii. 22). The type is clear. Israel must repent before they can be blessed.

2. THE REVELATION TO ISRAEL. — “Then Joseph could not refrain himself ... I am Joseph” (Gen. xlv. 1-4). When Israel's blindness is removed and for the first time they recognize the Lord Jesus as their Messiah, “They shall look upon Me whom they have pierced, and shall mourn for Him” (Zech.xii.10) is the word of prophecy.

First there is the revelation of the *Person*, “I am Joseph”. Then follows the revelation of the *Purpose*, “God did send me before you to preserve life to save your lives by a great deliverance” (Gen.xlv.4-7).

3. THE RESTORATION OF ISRAEL. — Joseph could not be content until “all Israel” were safely beneath his care. Benjamin had been brought before him by the strategy of love, and now nothing must hinder the journey of his father Jacob.

One more feature of fundamental importance is marked for us in Hebrews xi. If we were to select the one act in Joseph's life which should eclipse all others as an act of faith, we hardly feel that the one selected by the inspired writer of Hebrews xi. would be our choice. There in Heb. xi. 22 we read:--

“By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; *and gave commandment concerning his bones.*”

“Concerning his bones”! What is there in these words to deserve such prominence? Joseph linked the deliverance of Israel with *resurrection*.

4. THE RESURRECTION OF ISRAEL. — Joseph stresses the fact that the land of promise was that which God swore to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob (Gen. i. 24), and Christ shows that the title “The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob” proves the doctrine of Resurrection (Matt. xxii. 23-33). Ezekiel.xxxvii. connects resurrection with restoration.

We are conscious that much more precious truth lies near the surface of this remarkable history. We have indicated a few fundamentals of dispensational importance. One more feature must bring this paper to a close. The dreams of Joseph, though their realization was postponed, were eventually realized, but the postponement shut the door upon Israel for a time and opened it to the Gentiles. So the rejection of Christ by His brethren, their refusal to “have this man reign over them”, deferred the time of their restoration. When Israel is at length restored the Gentiles will have been blessed for a period of two thousand years, or as the type has it, “For these TWO years hath the famine been in the land” (Genesis xlv. 6).

The Lord who was despised and rejected shall yet be honoured and exalted, and in this glorious fact is all our hope and desire.

#39. Final Notes on Genesis.

While the story of Joseph carries us through to the close of the book of Genesis, there are one or two items of dispensational importance that may be profitably gathered together before leaving this book of the beginning.

Judah, who made such a sorry figure in the parenthesis of chapter xxxviii., becomes a noble type of Israel's Redeemer in chapters xliii. & xliv. There the great feature is Suretyship:--

"I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him: if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame for ever" (xliii. 9).

"Now therefore, I pray thee, let thy servant abide instead of the lad a bondman to my lord; and let the lad go up with his brethren. For how shall I go up to my father and the lad be not with me?" (xliv. 33, 34).

The language of these verses is so clear, so beautiful that any words of ours would seem to spoil their teaching. All that we will do will be to indicate the usage and meaning of the word translated Surety.

SURETY (Hebrew *Arab*). — The root idea of the word appears to be "To mix", as in Psa. cvi. 35, "mingle"; Prov. xiv. 10, "intermeddle". In the Chaldee section of Daniel the equivalent occurs in Dan. ii. 41, "Iron *mixed* with miry clay".

In weaving, the *ereb* is the "woof", that which is woven into or mixed in the texture (Lev. xiii. 48). The word is translated many times "evening", the time when darkness begins to "mix" with the light. Now all this bears upon the truth of Surety-ship. The Surety so "mixes" with the one for whom he acts as to take his place and be treated in his stead. Judah clearly perceived this when he said:--

"Let thy servant abide **INSTEAD** of the lad **A BONDMAN**, and let the lad **GO UP** with his brethren" (Gen. xliv. 33).

Benjamin was the one who really should have been bound and Judah the one who should have gone up to his father, but Judah as the Surety was so intermingled with the case of his brother that he could be treated "instead of" Benjamin with perfect justice.

The attitude of Reuben with regard to Joseph must not be passed over without a word. Reuben, being the first-born, might well have been jealous of Joseph but we find him doing his best to save Joseph from the hands of his brethren. It was during Reuben's absence that Joseph was sold, and his grief is expressed upon his return in the words:--

"The child is not, and I, whither shall I go?" (xxxvii. 30).

The student of the Scripture must have noticed the important place given to the firstborn. Christ Himself bears the title, and so do the elect. A careful weighing of the statements of Scripture would make one feel that believers to-day constitute a kind of firstborn, saved early and during this present time that they in their turn may deliver those who have not been so favoured, when the time comes for the knowledge of the Lord to cover the earth as the waters cover the seas.

Before Jacob died he gathered his sons together, to tell them what should befall them "in the last days" (xlix.). The prophecy, though it finds partial fulfillment in Israel's past, looks to the period of the second coming of the Lord and the time of Jacob's trouble and restoration. By far the largest space is devoted to the future of Judah and Joseph. In both come prophecies of Christ. Verse 10 speaks of

“Shiloh” and the “Sceptre” in connection with the royal tribe of Judah, and in Joseph’s line Christ again figures as the “Shepherd” and “Stone” of Israel of whom Joseph was such a type.

A brief outline may help to set out the chief points.

<i>Reuben</i> (Firstborn).	Not excel. Birthright forfeited (I Chron. v. 1).
<i>Simeon and Levi</i> .	Divide; Scatter. (Josh. xix. 1; Lev. xxv. 32-34; Exod. xxxii. 26; Deut. x. 8, 9).
JUDAH.	The Lion.
<i>The Sceptre</i> .	
<i>Shiloh</i> (Christ).	
<i>Zebulun</i> .	Haven of Ships.
<i>Isaachar</i> .	Strong Ass.
DAN.	Judge.
<i>The Serpent</i> (Antichrist).	
<i>The Salvation</i> (Christ) awaited.	
<i>Gad</i> .	Overcome.
<i>Asher</i> .	Bread.
<i>Naphtali</i> .	Let loose.
JOSEPH.	The Fruitful Bough.
<i>The Shepherd</i> .	
<i>The Stone</i> (Christ).	
<i>Benjamin</i> .	Wolf.

When Jacob had finished this prophecy, he spoke of his approaching death and commanded that he should be buried together with Abraham and Isaac. Joseph lived to nourish and care for his brethren, and when he was about to die, he too gave command that his bones be carried up to the land of promise, saying “God will surely visit you”. The book, which commences with the creation of heaven and earth, concludes with the history of one obscure man and his twelve sons, and stresses the fulfillment of God’s promise concerning the “land” and the close connection that resurrection would hold to that fulfillment. The Scriptures focus upon a small space and a limited number, not because the wider circle is forgotten, but because in the smaller sphere we may the better see the purpose of the ages which indeed transcends the promised land and embraces the heavens and the earth, and goes beyond the pale of the chosen people to embrace every nation, tongue, people and language, and behind the promises made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to that promise made before the age times.

#40. Israel’s Bondage and its Bearing upon Dispensational Truth (Exodus i.)

The Hebrew title for Genesis is *B’reshith*, “In (the) beginning”. It speaks of Creation. The Hebrew title of Exodus is *Ve alleh Shemoth*, “Now these are the names”. It speaks of Redemption. Genesis speaks of the Nations, Exodus of the Nation. The theme of Genesis is traced through Adam and the fall of Joseph and the restoration. Joseph’s last words were that God would surely visit Israel and lead them back to their own land. That visitation is chronicled in the book of Exodus.

The book is divided into two sections by the giving of the law at Mount Sinai, and may be visualized thus:--

Exodus.	
Bondage.	\ Passover.
Redemption.	/
<i>The Giving of the Law.</i>	
Freedom.	\ Tabernacle.
Worship.	/

Worship can only be offered by a free people, yet let us note well a free people received the law! The apostle Paul who fought so for freedom in the epistle to the Galatians gladly commences Romans by calling himself the “bond slave” of Christ. The one great purpose of God is displayed under varying forms again and again:--

First we have a perfect creation (Gen. i. 1).	\	
Then a fall, darkness and chaos (Gen. i. 2).	}	Cosmic.
Then a renewal (Genesis i., ii.).	/	

If we leave the cosmic platform and limit ourselves to the human plane, the purpose is again displayed in Genesis iii.:--

First a perfect creation. Man.	\	
Then a fall, death and expulsion.	}	Racial.
But a restoration promised and typified.	/	

Leaving the wider circle of the human race we notice the story of the nations:--

First the nations divided by God (Genesis x.).	\	
Then their rebellions (Genesis xi.).	}	National.
Then their only hope of restoration (Genesis xii.).	/	

This is as far as Genesis takes us. Exodus now expands the theme, but confines itself to the fortunes of the one nation Israel. The same order is observed.

First the fruitful and mighty people (Exod. i. 1-7).
 Then the bondage.
 Followed by the deliverance and exodus.

How did it come about that Israel became such abject slaves? There is a threefold answer to the question, viz., (1) The Purpose of God:--

“Thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them: and they shall afflict them” (Gen. xv. 13).

(2) The Fulness of Iniquity. Their entrance into the land of Canaan was delayed in mercy to the wicked inhabitants:--

“In the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full” (Gen. xv. 16), and

(3) The Punishment of Sin. The bondage of Israel was connected with their own failure. They became idolatrous and like the Egyptians themselves (Lev. xvii. 7; Josh. xxiv. 14; Ezek. xx. 5-9).

Possibly some readers will not be fully alive to the fact that God visited Israel with judgment in Egypt before He delivered them, and therefore we will quote the passage from Ezekiel xx. referred to above:--

“In the day that I lifted up Mine hand unto them, to bring them forth of the land of Egypt Then said I unto them, Cast ye away every man the abominations of his eyes, and defile not yourselves with the idols of Egypt. I am the Lord your God. But they rebelled against Me in the midst of the land of Egypt.”

Israel sets forth in miniature the dealings of God with mankind. First there is the great purpose of the ages, that necessarily accounts for much that is mysterious and strange in God’s providential dealings. It would have seemed more reasonable, seeing that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were already settled in the land of promise, that the promises upon which their faith rested should be put into immediate operation.

As it was, these men were pilgrims and strangers in the very land of promise, and the only portion that actually belonged to Abraham was a piece he *paid for* in which to bury Sarah.

Secondly, the relation which Scripture shows existed between the exile of Israel and the iniquity of the Amorites reveals another phase of God's dispensational dealings. The same truth is uttered in the epistle to the Romans:--

“Blindness in part is happened to Israel, *until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in*, and so all Israel shall be saved” (Rom. xi. 25, 26).

Adam's fall, Job's sufferings, the Church's period of suffering and persecution, all speak of the same long waiting for the heading up of Sin, as set forth finally at Babylon (Revelation xiii., xvii., xviii., etc.).

Thirdly, Israel became idolators in Egypt. Their bondage followed upon their departure from God. So with the larger issue. Man's present condition of bondage is a part of the Divine Plan. It must continue his condition until iniquity has filled its measure. It continues also because man is personally sinful and amenable to wrath. The heirs of promise therefore possessed no merit whereby they could lay claim to the land. The movement which ended in their deliverance was entirely the work of God:--

“Speak not thou in thy heart saying, For my righteousness the Lord hath brought me in to possess this land Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine heart dost thou go to possess their land but that He may perform the Word which the Lord sware unto thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob” (Deut. ix. 4-6).

There is yet one further reason for the long sojourn in Egypt before the occupation of the land, which bears upon the purpose of every individual life, and that is *experience*. They were destined to be a Kingdom. The law was to come forth from their holy city unto all the earth. They were to be the custodians of the written revelation of God, and the guardians of His holy Law. Moses himself was most thoroughly trained under Pharaoh for his future great work, being learned in all the arts of the Egyptians. Israel, too, during their stay would become possessed of a wide knowledge and ability, which, humanly speaking, could never have come to them had they remained in Canaan in the same station and manner of life as that of the twelve sons of Jacob.

Every child of God is gathering experience. He may never perform in the life to come the occupation wherewith he earns his bread in this life, but he that is faithful in that which is least is faithful in that which is much. A faithful and honest fulfillment of life's little duties here may be fitting one for higher service there. In Building there are the great fundamental principles of righteousness expressed in the line and the plummet, the square and the foundation. In Agriculture there is the ploughing and the sowing before the reaping. All spheres of life contribute their quota, and like Israel in Egypt we are being prepared for higher things.

The Author of the *Natural History of Enthusiasm* may be quoted here with advantage. After having spoken of the misconception of heaven as a place of inertness and quiescent bliss, he says:--

"But if there be a real and necessary, not merely a shadowy, agency in heaven as well as on earth; and if human nature is destined to act its part in such an economy, then its constitution, and the severe training it undergoes, are at once explained; and then also the removal of individuals in the very prime of their fitness for useful labour ceases to be impenetrably mysterious. This excellent mechanism of matter and mind, which, beyond any other of His works, declares the wisdom of the Creator, and which under His guidance is now passing the season of its first preparation, shall stand up anew from the dust of dissolution, and then, with freshened powers, and with a store of hard-earned and practical wisdom for its guidance, shall essay new labours in the service of God, Who by such instruments chooses to accomplish His designs of beneficence. That so prodigious a waste of the highest qualities should take place, as

is implied in the notions which many Christians entertain of the future state, is indeed hard to imagine. The mind of man, formed as it is to be more tenacious of its active habits than even of its moral dispositions, is, in the present state, trained, often at an immense cost of suffering, to the exercise of skill, of fore-thought, of courage, of patience; and ought it not to be inferred, unless positive evidence contradicts the supposition, that this system of education bears some relation of fitness to the state for which it is an initiation? Shall not the very same qualities which here are so sedulously fashioned and finished, be actually needed and used in that future world of perfection? Surely the idea is inadmissible, that an instrument wrought up at so much expense to a polished fitness for service, is destined to be suspended for ever on the palace-walls of heaven, as a glittering bauble, no more to make proof of its temper?" (Quoted by Fairbairn on *Typology*).

Let us not repine therefore at the trials of the way, but believe that when the harvest comes we shall reap in this connection, exactly as we have sown.

#41. Moses and Christ; rejected at first, but afterwards received (Exodus ii. - iv.).

We saw, in our last paper, the great dispensational fact that Israel's bondage was a necessary part of the Divine purpose, both with regard to themselves and with regard to the nations.

"Man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upwards: YET affliction cometh not forth of the dust, NEITHER doth trouble spring out of the ground" (Job v. 6, 7).

Affliction and trouble are within the providence of God; they come from above. Egypt was no fit abiding-place for the chosen people; affliction and distress came upon them, to make them the more ready to respond to the command to leave the house of bondage and go forth to the land of promise.

"Arise and depart hence, for this is not your rest, *because it is polluted*" (Micah ii. 10).

Before the cry of oppressed Israel ascended up to heaven, the deliverer was prepared who should be the manifest answer to their prayer. The seventh from Adam was Enoch (Jude 14). He walked with God, and he was not, for God took him. Scripture draws attention to the fact that Enoch was the seventh from Adam, and it is evident that we are to consider this as of typical importance. Moses was the seventh from Abraham. (1) Abraham, (2) Isaac, (3) Jacob, (4) Levi, (5) Kohath, (6) Amram, (7) Moses. This fact seems to indicate that Moses also will be an outstanding figure in the development of the purpose of God. The same numerical character may be seen in the case of Abraham. Abraham was the seventh from Eber, who gave his name to the Hebrews — "Abram the Hebrew" (Gen. xiv. 13).

The faith of the parents of Moses finds a place in the list of overcomers in Hebrews xi. This led to the adoption of Moses by Pharaoh's daughter, and is a remarkable example of the marvellous way in which the Lord makes "the wrath of man to praise Him". "When Moses was grown" (Exod. ii. 11), or, as Acts vii. 23, 24 tells us:--

"When he was full forty years old, *it came into his heart* to visit his brethren the children of Israel. And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended him, and avenged him that was oppressed, and smote the Egyptian."

Stephen, when he uttered these words, was "full of the Holy Ghost", and his face as it had been "the face of an angel". This must guide us when we read in Exod. ii. 12:--

"And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that there was no man, he slew the Egyptian and hid him in the sand."

Exodus gives us the outward appearance, Acts vii. looks upon the heart, and moreover reveals the dispensational teaching as we shall see. Instead of thinking that Moses cast furtive glances “this way and that way” before dealing a treacherous blow, we must see it in the light of Isa. lix. 16:--

“And He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore His arm brought salvation”.

So also Isa. lxiii. 5. Stephen reveals the purpose that prompted Moses to take vengeance upon the oppressor:--

“He supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them: but they understood not” (Acts vii. 25).

Vengeance as well as redemption belong to the Kinsman-Redeemer of Whom Moses was a conspicuous type.

These words prevent us from agreeing with the words of Dr. Fairbairn concerning this act of Moses when he says:--

“It was the hasty and irregular impulse of the flesh, not the enlightened and heavenly guidance of the Spirit, which prompted him to take the course he did.”

Upon interposing between two of his brethren who were striving together next day, he was rebuffed by their jealous words, “who made thee a ruler and a judge over us?”. This is typical of the rejection of Christ upon His first advent. It is not the failure of Moses, but that of his people, that we are to see here. His sojourn in the land of Midian and his marriage there must be viewed in the same light as Joseph’s sojourn in Egypt and his marriage there, the outcome of both being the deliverance and blessing of his brethren who had hated and rejected him. That this is so we may learn from Acts vii. Joseph and Moses are brought together by Stephen to enforce this great lesson upon the leaders of Israel:--

“And at THE SECOND TIME Joseph was made known unto his brethren” (Acts vii. 13).

“This Moses whom they refused, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge? THE SAME did God send to be a ruler and a deliverer by the hand of the angel which appeared to him in the bush” (35).

It is clear that we have here in Exodus a foreshadowing of Israel’s great rejection. The Lord Jesus came, the time was fulfilled, but His people refused Him saying, “we will not have this Man to reign over us”.

During their rejection by their brethren both Moses and Joseph marry Gentile brides. This looks to the dispensation of the Acts during which the Church is spoken of as being prepared as a bride, and on to the period of the second coming as given in Revelation xix. The *second time* is the key thought. The reason why Israel failed to respond to Moses and to Christ is the same, “They understood not”. Their eyes were blinded, their ears were stopped, their hearts were hardened. At length however Israel cry unto the Lord, “and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage” (Exod. ii. 23). Their cry brings back the deliverer they refused. The Lord spake to Moses out of the burning bush and said:--

“I have surely seen the affliction of My people I will send thee unto Pharaoh” (Exod. iii. 7-10).

Moses was sent in the name of Him Who was the great I AM, and was assured of his success by the twofold sign of the serpent and leprosy. He Who came to be the Saviour must have power over Satan (the serpent) and over Sin (leprosy), so Matthew iv. records the temptation, and Matthew viii. the first defined miracle. It was Moses’ high destiny to have foreshadowed Christ in more ways than one. He

was to have been both “Apostle and High-Priest”, but by reason of human infirmity this honour was shared with his brother Aaron.

A greater than Pharaoh is soon to mount the throne, and a greater tribulation than that of Israel in Egypt will follow. The apocalyptic judgments will be appallingly greater than the plagues of Egypt. Men will once more harden their hearts instead of repenting. Israel will cry again to the Lord, and “the day of vengeance” will be in His heart. He Whom they rejected shall come back to them and “so all Israel shall be saved”. They shall look upon Me Whom they have pierced”, saith the Lord. And when Israel do at length see Who it is that is their deliverer they will say, as we can never so fully say:--

“Surely He hath borne OUR griefs, and carried OUR sorrows, YET we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted!” (Isa. liii. 4).

Moses was inspired to speak of his own typical character:--

“A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; Him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever He shall say unto you” (Acts iii. 19-26).

The truth of the postponement of the purpose of God relative to Israel is much more than a theory. Israel through all these centuries have experienced the terrible reality of its effect upon them. The hour of their deliverance draws near, “the second time”.

#42. “Let My people go” (Exod. v. 1). The Principle of Separation.

The demand that Moses made when he entered into the presence of Pharaoh, and Pharaoh’s refusal and attempts at compromise, form a type of the age-lasting feud between the “Church and the World”:

“Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto Me in the wilderness” (Exod. v. 1).

No feast to the Lord could be held in Egypt, the type of the world. The wilderness was the place chosen by the Lord for worship. Pilgrims and strangers may worship acceptably; slaves to the world and the flesh cannot worship in spirit. In Exod. v. 3 two terms are added that are typically suggestive. God is called “The God of the Hebrews”, suggesting the separate character of His people. The journey that the Israelites must take in order to worship God was to be a “three days’ journey”. From the Creation week onwards the third day sets forth resurrection. True worship is not of the world (*Egypt*), it is offered by a free people (*Let My people go*), and a separate people (*Hebrews*), and is upon resurrection ground (*three days*). One sacrifice only was offered in Egypt, the Passover; all else was reserved for the Tabernacle in the wilderness.

Pharaoh’s answers, “Who is the Lord?”; “i know not the Lord, neither will i let Israel go”; “get you to your burdens”, are, in their turn, typical of the world’s attitude towards spiritual service. The “burdens of Egypt” are far more important than the service of the Lord, and even among the Lord’s people Martha finds more imitators than Mary, so much of Egypt do we all carry with us.

The Judgments of God begin after Pharaoh’s refusal, and in chapter viii. Pharaoh calls for Moses and Aaron and suggests the first compromise, “Go ye, sacrifice to your God IN THE LAND” (25). God had said “in the wilderness” and a “three days’ journey”. Pharaoh’s says, in effect, “You can worship *your* God, i do not ask you to bow down to any of mine, you can offer your sacrifice, but there is no necessity for making yourselves so peculiar, sacrifice to your God *in the land*.”

The first great snare set by the god of this age is that of mixing the world with the church. Moses repudiated the compromise, the first reason being that the very center and basis of their worship was an *abomination* to the Egyptians.

The world is quite willing to speak of “Jesus”, and especially so if they can refer to him as the “Galilean” or the “Carpenter”, but the center of the faith, the cross, “Christ crucified”, is an “offence”. The cross reveals the hopeless and helpless condition of the flesh, and this is an “abomination to the Egyptians”.

The second reason for repudiating the suggestion is just as strong as the first, but one that we are apt to forget. The suggestion ran counter to God’s express statement, and that is enough to condemn it. When He says “wilderness” and “three days’ journey”, to *debate* the question of “in the land” is sin. Upon this resolute stand being taken by Moses Pharaoh appears willing to lengthen the chain, but it is still *a chain*:--

“I will let you go, that ye may sacrifice to the Lord your God in the wilderness”
(Exod. viii. 28).

So far, that is good. Pharaoh, moreover, does not speak irreverently of God; he uses the full title of the Lord. The snare, however, is still set. “Only” — Ah yes! the world will give a good length of chain. “Only ye shall not go VERY FAR AWAY”. The contested point is the clear-cut division between the Church and the World. While many would hesitate to offer the abomination of the Egyptians IN THE LAND, they are ensnared at the HALF-WAY HOUSE. Let the Church have its separate gatherings, its ecclesiastical laws, its ordained priests, its ritual, its “form of godliness”, but let it deny “the power thereof” by leaving out the “three days’ journey”. Once more the demand is made, and once again the chain is lengthened:--

“Go, serve the Lord your God: but who are they that shall go? And Moses said, We will go with our young and with our old, with our sons and with our daughters, with our flocks and with our herds; for we must hold a feast unto the Lord” (Exod. x. 8, 9).

True Scriptural unity has ever been the target of Satan. If the attractions of the world from without do not avail, distractions from within may prove more effectual.

“And he said unto them, Let the Lord be so with you, as i will let you go, AND YOUR LITTLE ONES: look to it; for evil is before you. Not so, go now YE THAT ARE MEN, and serve the Lord” (Exod. x. 10, 11).

The distraction of divided heart, the serving of two masters, the miserable failure of the attempt to make the best of both worlds, are suggested here. After further judgments, a yet further concession is made:--

“Go ye, serve the Lord: only” (Exod. x. 34).

The presence of that “only” is deadly. Shakespeare puts it — “but me no but’s”, and it were well that we met all attempts to evade the full truth as peremptorily.

“Only *let your flocks and herds be stayed*, let your little ones go with you”
(Exod. x. 34).

That is, bind the saint of God down to earth by the shackles of worldly possessions. The love of riches, the cares and riches of this age, the things that so easily entangle us. Moses replied:--

“Thou must give us also sacrifices and burnt offerings that we may sacrifice unto the Lord our God, our cattle also shall go with us; there shall not an hoof be left behind; for thereof must we take to serve the Lord our God; and we know not with what we must serve the Lord, until we come thither” (Exod. x. 25, 26).

Demas was caught in this snare, so also were Ananias and Sapphira. The parable of the Sower speaks of the thorns as representing the cares, riches and pleasures of this life. The evil is two-fold. While our possessions remain in Egypt, our hearts are likely to turn back there too. On the other hand we must be prepared to offer whatever the Lord shall demand. We may be prepared to offer money, but hold back time. We may be pleased to pray, but not to labour. That is a spirited expression that it would do us good to repeat occasionally — *not an hoof*. Separateness must ever be offensive to the world, and will never be understood or tolerated.

Moses demanded that Israel should serve God:--

In the wilderness.
A three days' journey.
All should go.
Not an hoof left behind.

Pharaoh suggested that they could serve their God just as well and with far less inconvenience if they either remained:--

In the land.
Not very far off.
Only men went.
Flocks and herds left behind.

These four items teach us that true worship is connected with a pilgrim walk, is on resurrection ground, that it comprehends all saints, and embraces all we have and are. These four items fill out the word “Saint”; anything less “comes short of the glory of God”.

#43. The Beginning of Months (Exodus xii.).

Nine plagues had descended upon Egypt afflicting man and beast and exposing the grossness of Egypt's idolatry and the utter failure of their gods. At the end of the ninth plague Pharaoh had brazenly told Moses that if he saw His face again he should die. Moses went out from the royal presence saying, “thou hast spoken well, i will see thy face again no more” (x. 29). Nine separate solemn warnings had fallen upon deaf ears and a hard heart. Before Moses entered into the presence of Pharaoh, the Lord had said:--

“I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand”
(iii. 19).

When Moses was ready to leave Midian and return to Egypt, the Lord said:--

“See that thou do all those wonders before Pharaoh, which I have put in thine hands: but I will harden his heart, that he shall not let the people go” (iv. 21).

One verse throws a strong light upon the vexed question of the hardening of Pharaoh's heart:--

“But when Pharaoh saw that there was *respite*, he hardened his heart” (viii. 15).

Again in ix. 34:--

“When Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunders were ceased, *he sinned yet more*, and hardened his heart” (Exod. ix. 34).

It is not our intention to presume to defend the righteousness of God; Romans ix. silences all replies against God. Some can only accept the teaching of Romans ix. concerning Pharaoh if it be allowed that God foresaw the salvation of Pharaoh at or before the reconciliation of all things. Romans ix. however cuts all argument short, and leaves us and all men as clay in the hands of the Potter. Nevertheless be it noted that Pharaoh *sinned* when he hardened his heart, “as the Lord had said”. To return however to Exod. iv. 21-23. Moses was commanded to say to Pharaoh:--

“Thus saith the Lord, Israel is My Son, even *My firstborn*: and I say unto thee, let My Son go that he may serve Me! and if thou refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, even *thy firstborn*.”

And so, as we have seen, plague after plague fell, revealing the long-suffering and the goodness of God which should have led to repentance. The destruction of the firstborn, though threatened first, falls only after nine plagues had revealed the obdurate character of Pharaoh’s heart:--

“Thus saith the Lord, About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt, and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die” (xi. 4, 5).

Before the stroke falls Israel is instructed concerning the Passover, the first great typical ordinance of redemption given to this people. It is a matter of great importance to realize that indissolubly connected with the Passover is the unleavened bread. The connection is maintained in the reference by Paul to this great chapter of Israel’s history in the epistle to the Corinthians. How does he introduce this glorious type of redemption? Does he speak of it in chapter i., where he speaks of the gospel as the preaching of Christ crucified? No, neither does he refer to it in chapter ii. It is in chapter v., where he is dealing with moral evil in the assembly, that the Passover is brought to bear, and it is introduced by a reference to the unleavened bread:--

“Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. FOR even Christ our Passover hath been sacrificed for us, THEREFORE let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth” (I Cor. v. 7, 8).

Possibly, in our view, the Passover appears so great, so essential, that it overshadows the associated feast, but not so in the eyes of God. The sprinkled blood *outside*, and the unleavened bread *inside*, present a complete picture. This relation between the Passover and the unleavened bread is shewn by the structure.

Exod. xii. 1-20.

- A | 1, 2. The beginning of months.
- B | 3-11. The Passover.
- C | 12, 13. For I will pass through ... I will pass over.
- B | 14-17-. The Unleavened Bread.
- C | -17. For this day I brought you out.
- A | 18-20. The first month.

It will be noticed that the section is bounded by the reference to the month:--

“This month shall be *unto you* the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year *to you*” (xii. 2).

It was not the first month naturally, the first month of the year was originally *Tisri*, corresponding to our October. The Jews still keep their New Year at this date, in spite of the definite change instituted at the time of their redemption, sad evidence of their unregenerate condition. From the Autumn of falling leaf and fading flower we are called to Springtime with its parable of resurrection. Notice the words “to you”, indicating that the change was not intended to interfere with unredeemed Egypt. In this change of time, made when the nation of Israel was born and redeemed, we have the great truth of regeneration. The two “musts” of John iii. come to mind here:--

“Ye **must** be born again” (7).

“Even so **must** the Son of Man be lifted up” (14).

Newness of life is the blessed fruit of redemption by blood. We must pause here, and more carefully consider the further teaching of Exodus xii. in another paper; but may the truth of the “beginning of months *to you*” be no strange doctrine to any of our readers.

#44. The Lamb without Blemish (Exodus xii.).

“A lamb”, “The lamb”, “Your lamb”, such is the suggestive progression in verses 3, 4 & 5, as they speak of the shadow and type of the Lamb of God. Surely in every heart there is the prayer that Christ shall become increasingly the great central and personal factor. That from A Saviour, we may have passed to *The Saviour*, and not have rested until we can also say *My Saviour*.

“The whole congregation of Israel shall kill IT” (Exod. xii. 6).

So merges the type, the many lambs, into one “it”, the one great Passover of God.

“Your lamb shall be without blemish” (Exod. xii. 5).

The law in Leviticus is most particular, descending to minute details, that the holiness and perfection of the great Antitype should ever be before the mind of the faithful:--

“Blind, or broken, or maimed, or having a wen, or scurvy, or scabbed,
that which is bruised, or crushed, or broken, or cut” (Lev. xxii. 22-24),

all such are set aside.

“Whatsoever hath a blemish, that shall ye not offer: for it shall not be acceptable for you IT SHALL BE PERFECT TO BE ACCEPTED”
(Leviticus xxii. 19-21).

The lamb was to be taken on the tenth day of the month, and sacrificed on the fourteenth. This would give time and opportunity for careful inspection. Luke xxiii. contains the finding of those who examined the true Lamb of God.

PILATE. “I find *no fault* in this man.”

“I have found *no fault* in this man.”

HEROD. “No, nor yet Herod: for I send you to him, and lo,
nothing worthy of death is done unto Him.”

PILATE. “What evil hath He done? I have found *no cause of death* in Him.”

The
MALEFACTOR. “We receive the due reward of our deeds,
but this man *hath done nothing amiss*.”

The CENTURION. “Glorified God saying, Certainly this was a *righteous* man.”

Matthew xxvii. adds further evidence.

JUDAS. "I have betrayed *innocent* blood."

PILATE'S WIFE. "Have thou nothing to do with that *just* man."

Scripture everywhere teaches and assumes the holiness and spotless sinlessness of Christ the Lamb of God. If doctrine necessitates the tremendous statement that Christ was "made sin for us", it immediately adds "Who knew no sin" (II Cor. v. 21). If it is emphasized that Christ as Kinsman-Redeemer actually took our human nature, it is careful to say that while He *actually* was made flesh, it was in the *likeness* of sinful flesh that He came (Rom. viii. 3). Before Peter says, "Who His Own self *bare* our sins", he writes of Him, "Who *did* no sin" (I Pet. ii. 22-24), and in the same epistle Peter speaks of redemption as being by "the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (i. 18, 19).

If Hebrews iv. declares that Christ was touched with the feeling of our infirmities and in all points had been tempted like as we are, it does not omit to add "*sin excepted*". There is need that every believer should hold with no shadow of uncertainty that Christ was "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners". "It shall be PERFECT to be accepted." Such is the Lamb of God, such is our Saviour.

"And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are:
and when I see the blood, I will pass over you" (Exod. xii. 13).

The word "token" will repay a little study. It first occurs in Gen. i. 14 "Let them be for *signs*". Genesis iv. 15 A.V. reads "The Lord set a mark upon Cain"; it should read "The Lord set a token for Cain, lest any finding him should kill him". It was a token for Cain's safety. The bow in the cloud is called "the token of the covenant" (Gen. ix. 12) as also is circumcision (Gen. xvii. 11).

Many times the word translated "sign" in Exodus is this word, and indeed this is its most frequent translation. "The blood shall be to you for a sign." The blood signified something. It signified life laid down:--

"The soul of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar
to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement
by reason of the soul" (Lev. xvii. 11).

The blood atoned for "YOUR SOUL" "BY REASON OF THE SOUL" in it. The blood sprinkled upon the doorpost was a "sign" that redemption had been made. Nothing else was a "sign", nothing else did the Lord "see". No genealogy showing direct descent from Abraham could be a "sign", no promises, vows, prayers, nothing but the sprinkled blood.

The words "I will pass over you" must also be considered. As they stand, they give the mind the impression that the Lord "passed over" the houses of Israel without smiting them, and went on to the houses of the Egyptians. In verse 23 however this idea does not seem fully to fit the statement there made:--

"The Lord will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in
unto your houses to smite you."

The "passing over" here is synonymous with protecting. In I Kings xviii. 21 we meet the word in the question of the prophet "How long *halt ye* between two opinions". The idea of "hovering" or "suspense" suits the thought better than "passing over" and leaving. Isaiah xxxi. 5 says:--

"As birds flying, so will the Lord of Hosts defend Jerusalem; defending also
He will deliver it; and *passing over* He will preserve it."

The allusion to Deut. xxxii. 11 here seems clear.

“As an eagle stirreth up her nest, *fluttereth over* her young, *spreadeth* abroad her wings.”

Instead of repeating the words “fluttereth over”, Isaiah goes to Exodus xii. for a synonym, and says “passing over”. This gives us the blessed meaning of “Passover”. The Lord, like the eagle, spread abroad His wings, hovered over the house, and protected it from the destroyer that went through the land. Psalm xci. 4 expresses the feeling of *pasach* “To pass over” without using the word.

“He shall *cover* thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust.”

We would not suggest any alteration in the A.V.; the words are too precious and have too sacred associations, but we can keep in mind the meaning as we read as being “When I see the blood I will PAUSE over you, (not PASS over you)”. “The two *side* posts and the *upper* door post” were sprinkled with the blood, but not the threshold, not the floor. The apostacy is characterized by “Trampling under foot the Son of God, and counting the blood common” (Heb. x. 29).

The Jews reckoned a double evening, the first from noon to three, the second from three until sunset. In Exod. xii. 6 the margin shews that the Passover Lamb was killed “between the two evening”, which would be at three o’clock. Matthew xxvii. 46 shews that the Lord Jesus died at the ninth hour, and after that “when even was come” Joseph of Arimathea begged of Pilate the body. The sixth hour was noon, the ninth hour was 3.0p.m. Even such a detail as the exact time was fulfilled. John xix. 36 draws attention to yet another feature which links type and Antitype together.

“These things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of Him shall not be broken.”

Roman practice must give place to the sure word of prophecy. The Roman soldiers must bear their testimony together with the Centurion that “this was a righteous man”, for Psa. xxxiv. 20 speaking of the righteous says:--

“He keepeth all his bones; not one of them is broken.”

When David was led to see his sinfulness before God, instead of saying, “i am unrighteous”, he said:-

“Make me to hear joy and gladness, that the *bones* which thou hast *broken* may rejoice.”

Unblemished in life, unbroken in death, God’s true Passover Lamb was *perfect*, and in Him alone can we find redemption and acceptance.

#45. Feast of Unleavened Bread (Exodus xii.).

We imagine that some readers may say occasionally, “We do not come across the word dispensational, or rightly divide, very much in this series; why then does it use the title, “Fundamentals of *Dispensational* Truth”? We desire to correct a wrong impression. All truth is dispensational. The whole circle of God’s *aionian* purpose is subdivided into a series of dispensations. The preaching of the gospel cannot be accomplished with clearness apart from dispensational truth.

It was suggested to the Editor by those responsible for another magazine, that they would accept a series of articles on Romans *if the dispensational side were kept out*! How could one ignore the dispensational bearing of such passages as “To the Jew first”, and “My Gospel”? How could one deal with Romans v., ix.-xi., or xv. without reference to dispensations?

The Scripture record of Adam or Abraham, of Israel or the Church, is so written because God’s dealings with these men, nations, or assemblies show the varying dispensations in which the purpose of

the ages is unfolded and accomplished. The Passover is a part of dispensational truth, and to see where and how it applies is to grasp the very fundamentals.

We must now give attention to the associated feast of unleavened bread. Throughout Scripture the truth set forth by the Passover and the unleavened bread is constantly associated. Take for instance Eph. ii. 8-10, “for by grace are ye saved through faith not *out of* works”, this is the N.T. doctrinal presentation of the truth set forth in the sign of the sprinkled blood. “Created in Christ Jesus *unto good works*”: this is the equivalent to the unleavened bread. The blood, outside, of the unblemished lamb calls for the unleavened bread within.

“And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it” (Exod. xii. 8).

In the law given subsequently in Exodus occurs this command:--

“Thou shalt not offer the blood of My sacrifice with leavened bread” (Exodus.xxiii.18).

In Lev. ii. 11 we read:--

“No meal offering shall be made with leaven.”

In the N.T. leaven consistently typifies evil. Matthew xvi. 6-12:--

“Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees Then understood they how that He bade them beware of *the doctrine* of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.”

Luke xii. 1 adds the words:--

“Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is *hypocrisy*.”

I Corinthian v. 8 speaks of “the leaven of *malice* and *wickedness*”, contrasting it with the “unleavened bread of *sincerity* and *truth*”. Summing up the evil that had corrupted the simple faith of the Galatians, the apostle says, “A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump” (verse 6). Leaven therefore represents evil in doctrine and practice. It is the purpose of God that His children should be “without blemish”. As a result of the great offering of Christ they shall one day be presented “holy and unblameable and unproveable in His sight” (Col. i. 22).

Notice the basis of the exhortation of I Cor. v. 7:--

“Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, *as ye are unleavened*.”

In Christ the Corinthians were “unleavened”. They are addressed as “saints”, but their walk was far from being “as becometh saints”. They could not make themselves holy, but being sanctified in Christ they can be urged to walk worthy.

Another associated meaning which Scripture attaches to the feast of unleavened bread is connected with the pilgrim character of those who first partook of it:--

“Thus shall ye eat it (the lamb, the bread and the herbs), with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste” (Exod. xii. 11).

“And the people took their dough before it was leavened, their kneading troughs being bound up in their clothes upon their shoulders” (xii. 34).

“And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they brought forth out of Egypt, for it was not leavened; because they were thrust out of Egypt and could not tarry” (Exod. xii. 39).

The feast of unleavened bread speaks of separation from Egypt, of a people who are not at home, whose hopes are beyond and above.

It is evident that the observance of the feast of the Passover lamb alone was not a sufficient memorial:--

“Ye shall observe the feast of unleavened bread; FOR in this selfsame day have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt: THEREFORE shall ye observe this day in your generations for an ordinance for ever” (xii. 17).

Redemptions saves *from* and saves *to*. The Passover not only saved Israel from the destroyer, but from further contamination with or service to Egypt. The Passover naturally led to the Red Sea and the wilderness. The lives of the people had been made “bitter with hard bondage”. This is easily forgotten, as can be seen in the case of Israel in the wilderness. There, when the dreadful experiences of the Passover and the Red Sea were things of the past, they remembered “the flesh pots” and “bread to the full” (xvi. 3).

“We remember (said they) the fish which we did eat in Egypt gratuitously; the cucumbers, *and* the melons, *and* the leeks, *and* the onions, *and* garlick” (Numbers.xi.5).

That is what they “remembered”, six items! They soon forgot the wonders of their deliverance and the bitterness of their bondage. Therefore added to the unleavened bread was “bitter herbs”, “bitterness” as the Hebrew really is. God it is that appoints the bitterness of the pilgrim’s path. Israel met it at the beginning of their wilderness experience, and the first stage of their journey is named Marah, or Bitter.

Let us accept these indications without murmuring, for they are sent in love to wean us from the flesh pots of Egypt, and to remind us of the bitterness of our former bondage. May we all rejoice in the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, and experimentally realize the place and importance of the feast of the unleavened bread.

#46. The Great Mixture (Exod. xii. 37, 38).

We have seen the emphasis which the close association of the unleavened bread with the Passover lamb gives to the fact that redemption must always be manifested by separation from evil: that those who are “called saints” should act as “becometh saints”; that those who are “unleavened” should put away the “leaven of malice and wickedness”. This is the ideal, and nothing lower than this can have the sanction of the Word. The Scripture, however, reveals the fact which everywhere presses upon us today, that the meaning and truth of the unleavened bread is not practically realized.

“And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot that were men, beside children. *And a mixed multitude* went up also with them; and flocks, and herds, even very much cattle” (xii. 37, 38).

When Moses stood before Pharaoh he demanded that not only should the men go, but said he:--

“We will go with our young and with our old, with our sons and with our daughters, with our flocks and with our herds we will go” (x. 9).

When the exodus actually took place it is found that in between the “men and the children” and their “flocks and herds”, is “a mixed multitude also”, or as the margin reads “a great mixture”. The effect of this mixture is seen in Numb. xi. 4: “And the mixt multitude that was among them fell a-lusting”: that is what we might expect. There is however a sad echo of the “also” of Exod. xii. 38, for Numb. xi. 4 continues:--

“And the children of Israel also wept again, and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat? there is nothing at all, beside this manna before our eyes.”

“This manna” is elsewhere called “angel’s food”, “bread from heaven”, and is type of Him Who is the bread of life that came down from heaven. The influence of the mixed multitude is clearly seen. The heart is turned back to Egypt, and the things of God are lightly esteemed.

Some of this mixed multitude were allied to Israel by marriage. This is no fancy, for we have at least one such alliance and its disastrous effect recorded in Lev. xxiv. 10:--

“And the son of an Israelitish woman, *whose father was an Egyptian*, went out among the children of Israel.”

The words “went out among” seem to imply some definite purpose. We are told in Exod. ii. 11 that when Moses was grown:--

“*He went out* unto his brethren . . . and he spied an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew.”

Here, however, we find, “The son of the Israelitish woman and a man of Israel strove together in the camp”. To the fleshly lusts of Numbers xi. therefore must be added the “strife” of Leviticus xxiv. Not only so, but the dreadful sin of blasphemy must be included:--

“And the Israelitish woman’s son blasphemed the name of the Lord, and cursed.”

Instead of loving that name, and revering it, this son of an Israelitish woman blasphemed, and blasphemy is the germ of Antichrist.

Nehemiah xiii. 1-3 shows how Israel, when returned from the captivity, mingled with the Ammonite and the Moabite, and these are called “the mixed multitude”. In Neh. xiii. 23, 24 Ashdod, Moab and Ammon are cited as nations which had intermarried with Israel, and Nehemiah draws a sad lesson from Solomon:--

“Did not Solomon king of Israel sin by these things? Yet among many nations was there no king like him, who was beloved of his God, and God made him king over all Israel, nevertheless even him did outlandish women cause to sin” (Nehemiah xiii. 26).

Ezra ix. 1, 2 likewise mourns over the fact that Israel had not:--

“separated themselves from the people of the lands the holy seed have mingled themselves with the people of those lands.”

Jehoshaphat was another king who had a good record, for he “walked in the first ways of his father David, and sought not unto Baalim, but sought the Lord God of his father”. In the third year of his reign he sent Princes and Levites with the book of the law of the Lord to teach in Judah. Yet like Solomon and like Israel of the exodus he failed, for II Chron. xviii. 1 says:--

“Now Jehoshaphat had riches and honour in abundance, and joined affinity with Ahab”,

and that “affinity” was his ruin. It is interesting to note that *chatan*, “to join in affinity”, is translated “to be a son-in-law”, “to make marriages”, “father-in-law”, and “mother-in-law”, showing the closeness of the union between Jehoshaphat and Ahab.

Returning to Israel and the mixed multitude we see the failure to put into *practice* the truth contained in the type of the unleavened bread.

The Corinthians, we have seen, were “called saints”, and Christ had been made to them “sanctification” as well as “redemption”. They were “unleavened” in Christ, but they had failed to realize their position.

II Corinthian vii. 1, summing up the argument of II Cor. vi. 14-18 where the unequal yoke and unholy fellowship is seen in all its ugliness, says:--

“Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit,
PERFECTING holiness in the fear of God.”

Holiness we can neither make nor merit, but when the grace of God separates us, by the blood of Christ (as of a lamb without blemish and without spot) from sin and death with its bondage and its bitterness that are worse than those of Egypt, then “our reasonable service” must include this heart and life separation, the absence of which worked such disaster in the spiritual experience of Israel, of Solomon, of Jehoshaphat and of the Corinthians. This is “perfecting holiness”.

“Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty” (II Cor. vi. 17).

#47. The Self-same Day (Exodus xii.).

As one reads the book of Exodus, especially that part which deals with Pharaoh’s opposition, the interplay of human fear and cupidity, of Divine forbearance and judgment, the long period of Israel’s bondage, or the policy of the new king that knew not Joseph, all seem to move so naturally, cause and effect is so obvious, that the sovereign will and purpose of God is not apparent on the surface. Yet through all the years of Israel’s changing fortunes, whether the inhuman hatred of Joseph’s brethren, the famine that forced Jacob into Egypt, the dreams of Pharaoh, or the change of dynasty, God’s great purpose was unfolding, and neither the premature advent of Moses, nor the obstinacy of Pharaoh altered the prearranged plan by so much as one day:--

“Now the sojourning of the children of Israel (who dwelt in Egypt) was four hundred and thirty years. And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, EVEN THE SELFSAME DAY it came to pass, that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt. It is a night to be much observed unto the Lord” (Exod. xii. 40-42).

The “sojourning” of the children of Israel dates back beyond the birth of Jacob’s twelve sons, and includes the pilgrimage of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. From the call of Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldees he became a “sojourner”, and all his children were sojourners too. Incidentally Exodus xii. says that they “dwelt in Egypt”, but this did not alter the fact that they were sojourners and away from the land of promise. Galatian iii. 17 gives the same period of time, namely 430 years, as covering the time that elapsed from the promise given to Abraham in Genesis xv. until the giving of the law from Mount Sinai, which took place soon after the exodus from Egypt.

There is another period connected with the same event (the exodus) that starts from another point, and covers a period of 400 years. This prophetic utterance is given in Gen. xv. 13-16, and it will be seen that not only did God speak of a definite period of time, but of the chief features that led up to the exodus. Let us enumerate them:--

“Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs
(and shall serve them and they shall afflict them) 400 years.
And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge:
And afterward shall they come out with great substance.
In the fourth generation they shall come hither again,
For the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.”

How are we to account for the fact that Genesis xv. speak of a period of 400 years, whereas Gal.iii.17 speaks of the same events as occupying 430 years? At the time of writing this article, the writer endorsed the explanation of *The Companion Bible* which makes the 400 years commence with the recognition of Isaac as the seed when Isaac was 5 years old. Since writing, however, a beloved fellow-helper has suggested a much simpler explanation which we gladly give in his own words.

"This explanation (referring to that of *The Companion Bible* and also our own), i have always personally regarded as unsatisfactory. Surely Isaac was ‘recognized as the Seed’ before his birth — ‘In Isaac shall thy seed be called’. Surely the point is that Gen. xii. 4 tells us that Abraham was seventy-five when he left *Haran* (*not Ur*), where he had remained till the death of Terah. But Stephen (Acts vii. 1) says that the glorious God appeared to Abraham while he was still in Ur, before he went to live in Haran. If we reckon that the sojourning began (as Stephen implies) when Abraham left *Ur*, the five years are accounted for by the sojourn in Haran. Thus:--

Departure from Ur	Abram	70	0
Death of Terah and departure from Haran	Abram	75	5
Birth of Isaac	Abraham	100	25

			30
Sojourning of Seed			400

Total: Sojourning until Exodus . . .			430
			=====

We are grateful for this explanation and commend it to our readers.

The Scripture tells us that at the end of the 430 years, even *the selfsame* day, the children of Israel went out of Egypt. Such is the way that God keeps His word, and carries out His purpose.

We believe it to be a fundamental of dispensational truth that prophecy shall be fulfilled *literally*. The prophetic statements of Scripture concerning the Messiah which have found their fulfillment in the Lord Jesus Christ at His first coming have been fulfilled literally. His place of birth, His manner of life, His ministry, His death, burial and resurrection, have all been literal fulfillments of prophecy. These Scriptures which concern Him that await their fulfillment at His second coming, these too, we most surely believe shall be likewise fulfilled to the very letter. How comforting it is to realize that “all are in the hand of God”! Habakkuk (ii. 2) was assured that in spite of apparent delay:--

“The vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, *wait for it*; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.”

Job seemed to perceive this grand fundamental, when he said:--

“If a man die, shall he live again? All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. Thou shalt call, and I will answer Thee; Thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands” (Job xiv. 14, 15).

To the one who looks upon the Bible as a collection of "texts", this article may not mean much, but to everyone who has learned to look upon the Word as the unfolding of the purpose of the ages, every confirmation of the faithfulness of God in the fulfillment of His word is a source of joy and peace:--

“Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read: no one of these shall fail, none shall want here mate” (Isa. xxxiv. 16).

#48. The Lord’s Leading (Exod. xiii. 21, 22).

How many readers could say, without referring to the chapter, with what subject the book of Exodus closes? Some may say the tabernacle, and be partly right, but the actual closing reference is to the pillar of cloud and fire “throughout all their journeys”.

In the book of the Psalms the exodus of Israel is several times epitomized, and among the features of that memorable time that are remembered is the fact that He who redeemed the people, led them out and on through sea and wilderness until they reached the land of promise. Notice the following:--

“In the daytime also He led them with a cloud and all night with a light of fire” (Psa. lxxviii. 14),

“And He led them on safety, so that they feared not; but the sea overwhelmed their enemies” (Psa. lxxviii. 53).

He “guided (same word as *led*) them by skillfulness of His hands” (lxxviii. 72).

“He spread a cloud for a covering; and a fire to give light in the night” (Psalm.cv.39).

So in Exod. xiii. 21, 22 we read:--

“And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them in the way: and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light: to go by day and night: He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night from before the people.”

Let us notice the following features:--

1. The leading was Personal.

“*The Lord* went before them.” When Moses rehearsed, before his death, the ways of the Lord with Israel, speaking of His leading he said, “So the Lord *alone* did lead him” (Deut. xxxii. 12). It is the Lord’s prerogative to lead His people, and the solemn statement of Moses here seems to suggest that all other “leading” is nothing less than idolatry. This should give pause to any who rather freely use the expression “I felt led”. This personal Presence of the Lord was clearly realized by Moses as being essential to the accomplishment of the Lord’s purpose:--

“My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest. And he said unto Him, If Thy presence go not with men, carry us not up hence” (Exod. xxxiii. 14, 15).

This presence of the Lord was manifested by an angel. “Behold Mine angel shall go before thee” (Exod. xxxii. 34). So in Exod. xiv. 19, 20 we find:--

“The angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them; and it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these.”

The presence of the Lord, the leading of the Lord, is a great dividing line between the saint and the world. “As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God” (Rom. viii. 14). The leading may be by lowlier means than that of an angel. Psalm lxxvii. 20 says, “Thou leddest Thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron”, yet though the means be more fallible, the Lord alone is the leader, whatever medium He may choose from time to time. The children of God today may not see visible signs of the Lord’s presence, nevertheless the Lord still leads His people, and largely uses the inspired Word. “Send out Thy light and Thy truth, *let them lead me*” (Psa. xliii. 3). We may be more certain that we “feel led” when we are led by God’s own Word.

2. The leading was adapted to the need.

By day a pillar of cloud, but this would not have been visible by night, and so the Lord manifested His presence at night by means of a pillar of fire. The experience of one time is not necessarily the experience of another. In the daytime and sunshine of life the Lord’s presence will be manifest in one way. In the dark night of life’s experiences His presence, just as real, will be manifest in another way. Whatever the mode of manifestation, the Lord’s personal presence is the blessed fact.

3. Leading is a part of redemption.

“HE TOOK NOT AWAY the pillar of cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people” (Exod. xiii. 22).

Israel many, many times failed, so grievously indeed that many forfeited the land of promise and perished in the wilderness; nevertheless, the pillar of cloud went before them. This is the closing testimony of the book of Exodus. Coming where it does in the book (Exod. xl. 34-38) it reveals the reason why the presence of the Lord manifested in the pillar of cloud could remain. Exodus xl. speaks of the setting up of the tabernacle, and Lev. xvi. 2 says:--

“I will appear (or, I am wont to appear) in the cloud upon the mercy seat.”

Numbers ix. 15-23 speaking of the same event says:--

“And on the day that the tabernacle was reared up the cloud covered the tabernacle, namely, the tent of testimony; and at even there was upon the tabernacle as it were the appearance of fire until the morning, SO IT WAS ALWAYS.”

Notice the way in which this closing statement of Exodus is introduced:--

“So Moses FINISHED the work. THEN a cloud covered the tent” (Exod. xl. 33, 34).

The Lord’s leading is one of the results of the Lord’s redemption, one of the fruits of a finished work. The Good Shepherd who gave His life for the sheep, as the risen One leads them in green pastures for His name’s sake.

4. The pillar of cloud regulated all Israel’s journeyings.

“When the cloud was taken up from the tabernacle, THEN AFTER THAT the children of Israel journeyed: and IN THE PLACE where the cloud abode, THERE the children of Israel pitched their tents” (Numb. ix. 17).

The time *when* and the place *where* is decided alone by the Lord. Further, we read, “whether it was *by day* or *by night* that the cloud was taken up, they journeyed”. The Lord’s leading did not always conform to custom, nor to convenience, but day or night Israel had to be prepared to follow. “Or whether it were two days, or a month, or a year” that the cloud tarried, there in unquestioning obedience Israel had to remain (Numb. ix. 15-23). What a blessed condition to be in, led by the Lord! By day or by night, to Elim with its palm trees and wells, or on into the desert, all is well if we are led by the Lord.

“And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart” (Deut. viii. 2).

“Lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies” (Psa. xxvii. 11).

#49. Israel’s Passage through the Red Sea (Exodus xiv.).

“Sing ye to the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea” (Exod. xv. 1).

The various references to Israel’s passage through the Red Sea show that it is an experience which was necessary for Israel, as a parallel may be found in the experience of the believer, and in the future restoration of Israel. An appreciation of its place and meaning will give encouragement to the downcast, stimulus to the one who is seeking the crown or the prize, and an explanation of some of the baffling providences which make up the purpose of the ages.

As we shall see in our next paper on the Revelation, the Beast, the False Prophet, and Satan must be removed before the millennial kingdom can be set up: so Israel must see Pharaoh and his host dead on the sea shore before the kingdom can be inherited. This is emphasized in the prophecy of Israel’s restoration recorded in Isa. li. 9, 10:--

“Awake, awake, put on Thy strength, O arm of the Lord, awake as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art Thou not it that hath cut Rahab and wounded the dragon? Art Thou not it which hath dried up the sea, the waters of the great deep; that hath made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over?”

There is another interesting reference in Isaiah xi. Here again the theme is that of Israel’s restoration.

“And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set His hand a second time to recover the remnant of His people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt and the Lord shall utterly destroy the gulf of Egyptian sea: and shall shake His hand against the river (Euphrates) in the full force of His spirit, and shall smite it in the seven streams thereof, and make men go over dryshod. So shall there be an highway for a remnant of His people, who shall be left, out of Assyria: LIKE AS IT WAS TO ISRAEL IN THE DAY THAT HE CAME OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT” (Isa. xi. 11-16).

When the ransomed Israelites stood upon the sea shore and realized the deliverance that had been accomplished, together with the tragic overthrow of their enemies, they took up a song of triumphant thanksgiving. After speaking of the way the Lord had “triumphed gloriously” they continued:--

“The Lord is my strength and song, and He is become my salvation” (Exod. xv. 2).

This is exactly what follows the parallel of Exodus xiv. already quoted above. After speaking of the turning away of the Lord's anger, Israel will continue:--

“The Lord Jehovah is my strength and song: He also is become my salvation”
(Isa. xii. 2).

The parallels are very plain and need no comment. There shall not only be a new covenant made with Israel which shall be infinitely greater than the covenant which the Lord made with them in the day that He:--

“took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt” (Jer. xxxi. 32),
but there shall be a repetition of the Red Sea experience also. In the book of the Revelation, Pharaoh is set aside and his place is taken by the Beast. The magicians that withstood Moses find their antitype in the False Prophet. The plagues are repeated on a grander scale in the vials of wrath, and the song of Moses blends with the song of the Lamb.

“I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire; and them that had gotten the victory over the Beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing THE SONG OF MOSES AND THE LAMB” (Rev. xv. 2, 3).

These extracts will show the place that the crossing of the Red Sea holds in prophecy.

When reading Psalm lxxvii. we find that the psalmist, being cast down and troubled, found strength and comfort in remembering that even such an obstacle as the Red Sea must give place before the word of God:--

“I have considered the days of old, the years of ancient times Will the Lord cast off for ever? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Then i said, this is my infirmity, but i will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High” (Psalm lxxvii. 5-10).

What is it that the psalmist recalls for his encouragement? He remembers that moment when Israel, hemmed in by the wilderness and threatened by the pursuing Egyptians, saw the Red Sea open before them:--

“The waters saw Thee, O God, the waters saw Thee: they were afraid ... Thy way is in the sea ... Thou leadest Thy people like a flock ...” (Psa. lxxvii. 16-20).

We understand from Heb. xi. 29 that not only did the Lord open the Red Sea, but that Israel passed through “by faith”. The two phases of the one act are expressed in the words of Exod. xiv. 13, 15:--

“Fear ye not, STAND STILL, and see the salvation of the Lord.”

This is the Godward aspect.

“Wherefore criest thou unto me? speak unto the children of Israel, that they GO FORWARD.”

This is the other side of the truth. We find many parallels to this. Ephesians ii. 9 declares that we are not saved “out of works”, and Eph. ii. 10 as strongly declares that we have been saved “unto good works”, Phil. ii. 12 says, “work out your own salvation”, while Phil. ii. 13 follows by saying, “it is God that worketh in you”.

The reference already made to Revelation xv. will confirm the thought that the passage of the Red Sea was the first great act of overcoming faith on the part of Israel. Hebrews xi. says, “By faith he

(Moses) kept the Passover” (Heb. xi. 28). “By faith they (Israel) passed through the Red Sea as by dry land” (Heb. xi. 29).

There is a significant addition in the verse concerning the Egyptians. Israel did not merely venture to cross the bed of the sea. The Egyptians did so also. The outward act was the same, but there the semblance ceased, for Israel’s act was *by faith*, the record of Heb. xi. 29 being:--

“Which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned.”

In some way, not fully understood by us, this passage through the Red Sea united the people together with Moses as one:--

“All our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea” (I Cor. x. 1, 2).

Coming back to Exodus xiv. we observe that the salvation of the Lord, which Israel were to see that day, included not only their own deliverance, but the destruction of their enemy. Salvation in one sense is an accomplished fact; we are redeemed by the blood of Christ. Salvation in another sense is future; we are sealed unto the day of redemption. This future aspect of salvation involves the destruction of the power of death, and him who held the power, i.e., the devil. The Beast, the False Prophet, and the Dragon must be overcome before the saved possess the kingdom.

The Red Sea experience lies ahead of every dispensational division of God’s purpose, whether of church or kingdom.

“Thanks be to God, that giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (I Cor. xv. 57).

#50. Marah before Elim (Exod. xv. 23-27).

Stamped upon the whole course of the purpose of the ages is the lesson taught in our title, *Marah before Elim*. It is found in the expressions “No cross, no crown”, and “Suffering before glory”. Man was created a living soul, and was of the earth earthy. In the resurrection man shall possess a spiritual body, and bear the image of the heavenly. The earthly period of man’s life is set in the school of experience and of the knowledge of good and evil. Israel, as we have seen, went down into the bondage of Egypt before they entered into possession of the promised land. In all cases, whether of creation, Israel, church or individual, the remedy for all the ill is found in Christ.

As we read the song of Moses and the response of Miriam in Exodus xv., we feel the glow of triumph and the sense of victory. It is something in the nature of an anti-climax that meets us in:

“And Miriam answered them, Sing ye to the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea and they went three days into the wilderness, and found no water” (xv. 22).

We are conscious that such would be a severe test. Three days’ journey in the vicinity of the Red Sea without water would be well-nigh intolerable, and by the end of the third day the sense of triumph that had burst forth into song became dimmed with the feelings of mistrust:--

“And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter: therefore the name of it was called Marah. And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink?” (verses 23 and 24).

Here is the first murmuring of the people after leaving Egypt, a murmuring that was to grow and produce the fearful fruits of unbelief:--

“The waters covered their enemies: there was not one of them left. Then believed they His words: they sang His praise. They soon forgot His works: they waited not for His counsel” (Psa. cvi. 11-13).

Here in this Psalm the transition is as sudden as it is in Exodus xv. The scene of Israel’s failure at Marah is said to be the result of forgetfulness. As remembrance of the bondage of Egypt and their deliverance from their enemies receded, so the sensual remembrance of the land of bondage revived. This people, who so quickly “forgot” the Lord, could say:--

“We *remember* the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick” (Numb. xi. 5).

This “remembrance” is fatal to the overcomer. Those whose remembrance is thus expressed perished in the wilderness. Lot’s wife could not leave the doomed city without “looking back”. Her treasures were there. Paul, when pressing on with the prize in view, said:--

“Forgetting the things which are behind I pursue” (Phil. iii. 13, 14).

Egypt with its fish and its onions and its garlick stands for the world and its seductions. Let us, who have been redeemed from the present evil age, seek to cultivate a sanctified forgetfulness, lest the things that have been left behind become a snare.

Forgetfulness led to impatience:--

“They waited not for His counsel” (Psa. cvi. 13).

Surely if we keep in mind the way in which the Lord has saved us, doubt cannot arise. Unbelief grows only when we forget God. Remembering the Passover, the Red Sea, and the destruction of the enemy Israel would have “waited” instead of “murmured”. The argument is expressed for us in the words of Rom. viii. 32:--

“He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?”

We shall most assuredly come to the waters of Marah before we cross the waters of Jordan and stand triumphant in the land of promise, and when we do, what shall we say? shall we murmur? Yes, we shall if we forget the works of the Lord. If, however, we remember His mercy, we shall, in the midst of the sore trial (for bitter water at the end of a three days’ wilderness journey *is* a sore trial) realized that He is still faithful, and that a lesson for our higher good is to be learned. The Lord would have His children to understand that there is but one sweetener for the bitterness of the wilderness journey, and that is the cross of Christ:--

“And the Lord shewed Him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet: Then He made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there He proved them” (Exod. xv. 25).

“*There He proved them.*” — Deuteronomy viii. 2, 3 reveals the fact that the whole of the forty years in the wilderness with its many trials and calls for patience and trust, its privations and its sufferings, were all a part of the Lord’s leading (“Thy God led thee”), and were “to prove” the people in order to make them know that man does not live by bread alone. The lesson is the same for all who tread the pilgrim way. It is there in Hebrews for every partaker of the heavenly calling. It is there in Philippians for all who would, with the apostle, count all things loss, and press on for the prize. Before Abraham received the promise with an oath he was “proved”, as we see in Genesis xxii. and Hebrews vi.

The sweetening of the bitter waters by the tree is found to be a symbol of the healing of the nation.

“If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in His sight, and wilt give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee which I have brought upon the Egyptians; for I am the Lord that healeth thee” (Exod. xv. 26).

Here is revealed the second of the Jehovah titles:--

The first is JEHOVAH-JIREH (Gen. xxii. 14).

The second is JEHOVAH-ROPHEKA (Exod. xv. 26).

The great dispensational miracle of Acts iii. looks to the same end.

“Neither is there *the healing* (salvation) in any other” (Acts iv. 12).

None of the Lord’s dealings are arbitrary, all is for His glorious purpose. As soon as the lesson of Marah had been given, and the people “proved” as soon as they realized that the waters of the wilderness must be ever bitter apart from the Lord their Healer, then the burning sand is exchanged for the delightful shade of Elim’s palm trees and the wells of Elim take the place of the bitterness of Marah. Here is completeness. Twelve wells, one for each tribe. Here they can anticipate the day when they shall

“draw water out of the wells of salvation” (Isa. xii. 3).

So then, fellow-pilgrims, remember that He who leads to Marah can also lead to Elim, and if it be that Marah shall be our experience, its bitterness shall become sweet if it but reveal, in Christ, the “Lord that healeth”. The Lord who knows the bitterness of Marah knows that

“no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but rather grievous, NEVERTHELESS AFTERWARD” (Heb. xii. 11).

If we could but remember those words “nevertheless afterward”, our Marahs would speedily give place to Elims, and the initial lesson of the wilderness would be ours. May we have grace at every Marah to look for the tree, which when cast into the waters *makes them sweet*.

#51. Manna. The Gift of God (Exodus xvi.).

The necessities of this life are frequently summed up under the phrase “bread and water”, to which we must add “raiment” (I Tim. vi. 8). It will be found that in the pilgrimage of Israel, type of the earthly walk of all the Lord’s redeemed people, these three items come before us with some degree of prominence.

“Water” figures at Marah in Exodus xv., and again at Rephidim in chapter xvii. The question of the provision of “bread” for the pilgrimage occupies the whole of the intervening chapter xvi. The murmurers remember the flesh pots of Egypt and that they then did eat “bread to the full” (xvi. 3), but the bread of Egypt must give place to the “bread of heaven” for all those who walk the pilgrim’s way. It will be remembered that the hasty departure of Israel out of Egypt led to the institution of a new kind of bread:--

“And the people took their dough before it was leavened” (Exod. xii. 34),

and this apparent accident was overruled to emphasize the lesson that the heavenly pilgrimage cannot be sustained with the bread of Egypt, and so the new food provided by God is called “bread from heaven” (Exod. xvi. 4). Psalm lxxviii. 25 calls this bread “angel’s food”. Manna, the name given to this bread from heaven, first meets us in Exod. xvi. 15:--

“And when the children of Israel first saw it, they said one to another, ‘It is manna’, for they wist not what it was.”

It is usual to explain the meaning of the word “manna” by saying that it is the Hebrew word uttered by Israel as a question, “What is this?”. The Hebrew reads:--

“When the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another *man-hu* for they did not know *mah-hu*.”

The A.V. gives an alternative meaning in the margin, reading:--

“Or what is this? or it is a portion.”

The Hebrew word *man* signifies a portion or a gift. Helen Spurrell’s translation reads, “It is the gift, for they knew not its name”. Aaron Pick in his *Bible Students’ Concordance* reads MANNA MON, a gift. The marginal note in Newberry’s Bible is *man-hu*, i.e., *in Chaldee* what is it? *In Hebrew* it is an appointed portion. Parkhurst quotes from Bates in *Grit. Heb.* to the effect that:--

“The children of Israel said *man-hu* this (is) a particular species, a peculiar thing, for they knew not what it was.”

This comes under *manah*, “to distribute”, and so includes the word “kind” of Gen. i. 11, 12, etc., the idea referred to above of “species” and also a distributed portion or gift. Urquhart’s comment is:

“It is the name which has enshrined the surprise and joy of deliverance from death ... when it was picked up and tasted, the words of Moses flashed upon them and the heart of Israel was swayed as the heart of one man ... ‘It is a gift’. It was a happy title, and the Scripture thankfully records it.”

We believe the meaning of the word manna in Exodus xvi. is “It is a gift”, but seeing that the commonly accepted rendering is fairly strongly held, we felt it necessary to show the authority we have for departing from the traditional meaning. We notice that this bread from heaven was a special provision for the wilderness:--

“Until they came unto the borders of the land of Canaan” (Exod. xvi. 35).

“And the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten the old corn of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more” (Josh. v. 12).

During the days of our pilgrimage here the Lord provides for our spiritual needs to suit the circumstances, but we are ever to remember that when this life ceases, and we enter into the life to come, the blessings and mercies of the days of our pilgrimage will appear small when compared with the exceeding riches of grace and glory that shall then be enjoyed. There is a sad addition to the story of Exodus xvi. in Numb. xi. 6:--

“But now our soul is dried away; there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes.”

“This manna!” the gift of God, the bread from heaven, angel’s food! To complete the sad evidence against these people we read in Numb. xxi. 5:--

“Our soul loatheth this light bread.”

The word “light” means “exceedingly light”, and the word “loathe” means “to be weary”, as Rebekah said:--

“I am weary of my life because of the children of Heth” (Gen. xxvii. 46).

It is a sad thing when the heart grows weary of the Lord’s heavenly provision for His people, yet the same liability to turn in heart away from Christ to the things that have been left behind is not the malady

merely of a past generation. It is with us still. The man who could say he counted all things loss did so because of “the excellency of the knowledge of Christ”, and he could add:--

“This one thing i do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto the things which are before, i press” (Phil. iii. 8-14).

Those, on the contrary, who said “there is nothing at all besides this manna” and who eventually sank so low as to “loathe” and call “contemptible” the bread from heaven, had prepared the way for this rebellious spirit by an unholy remembrance. Unlike Paul, who forgot those things that were behind, these said:--

“We remember the fish the cucumbers, and the melons and the leeks and the onions and the garlick” (Numb. xi. 5).

They remembered the savouries, the tasty morsels, and were not satisfied with the simple fare for the heavenly pilgrimage: Is there no lesson here for ourselves? They forgot the bitterness of hard bondage which had caused the cry to reach heaven (Exod. ii. 23). This people said on another occasion:--

“Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt” (Numb. xiv. 4),
but the inspired comment, given by Nehemiah, is:--

“In their rebellion they appointed them a captain to return to THEIR BONDAGE” (Neh. ix. 17).

If at any time the old nature seeks to turn the face of the pilgrim back to the world he has left behind, it will call to remembrance the pleasures (the leek, the onion, the garlick), but will not remind of the awful bondage and bitterness. We are not left to the evident analogy of the type to show that the manna set forth the Lord Jesus, for with unmistakable directness He Himself has taught the lesson:--

“Our fathers did eat manna in the desert, as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.” “Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness *and are dead*. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die.” “I am the bread of life.” “This is that bread which came down from heaven; not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead; he that eateth of this bread shall live for the age” (John vi. 31, 48-50, 58).

Step by step we shall find Israel’s history unfolding the all-sufficiency of the Son of God for all things. His one sacrifice as the great Passover was all sufficient for our deliverance. Identification with Him breaks the threefold dominion of sin, death and law. His cross makes every Marah sweet, and He, the great gift of God, supplies all our needs unto the very border of the promised land. The experiences of the Exodus are to be repeated in the near future. The sore judgments of the Revelation echo the plagues of Egypt. In an earlier article we saw that the crossing of the Red Sea was in its turn a type of the future, and now we shall find that the miraculous supply of bread from heaven will be repeated:--

“And to the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished” (Rev. xii. 14).

In our articles on *The Sermon on the Mount* we drew attention to a clause in the prayer taught therein, viz., “Give us this day our daily bread”. “Daily” in Greek is *epiousios*, from *epi* = upon, and *ousios* = coming. The true rendering of the prayer therefore is, “Give us this day the bread which cometh down upon us”, i.e., the manna. We read of “the hidden manna” in Rev. ii. 17. Some of the manna which fell in the wilderness was placed in the ark.

“That they may see the bread wherewith I have fed you in the wilderness, when I brought you forth from the land of Egypt” (Exod. xvi. 32).

The overcomer in Pergamos was strengthened by the fact that the God Who could sustain His children for forty years in the wilderness could once again give all needed supplies both spiritual and physical, and even though the edict should go forth that none should be allowed to buy or sell who had not the mark of the beast, even then the Lord would provide while witness was necessary.

Stored up in the Ark of the Covenant were three precious witnesses of the fulness of Christ; (1) the unbroken tables of the law, speaking of His perfect obedience, (2) the rod that budded, speaking of His undying priesthood, and (3) the golden pot that had the manna, speaking of His faithful provision throughout the whole of life's pilgrimage:--

“Jesus said, ‘I am the bread of life: he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst’.”

“Lord, evermore give us this bread” (John vi. 34, 35).

#52. That Rock was Christ (Exod. xvii. 1-7).

Leaving the Wilderness of Sin, and passing Dophkah, and Alush (Numb. xxxiii. 12-14), the people, now miraculously fed by manna, come to Rephidim.

“And there was no water for the people to drink” (Exod. xvii. 1).

Surely we shall here find a story of faith and patience, of lessons learned, of experience that led to hope, and hope that made not ashamed! Alas, no! Israel who had seen the waters of the Red Sea form a wall on either side of them at the command of God, who had experienced the sweetening of the waters of Marah, who had been led to the twelve wells at Elim, who had received a daily promise of manna, failed at the first test.

Have not we also failed in similar circumstances? Have there not been occasions in the past when we have passed through some trial in which after serious misgivings and unbelief the hand of the Lord has been revealed, and have we not at some later period been brought face to face with a situation almost identical, and have we not as surely failed to rise to the test of faith as did Israel of old? The repeated trials of our pilgrimage are so many indications of failure. Abraham was never tested twice in the matter of the offering of Isaac, for he responded to the test, but after his sojourn in Egypt we find him returning to the spot between Bethel and Hai:--

“Unto the place of the altar which he had made there at the first” (Gen. xii. 8 & xiii. 4).

Under the pressure of famine he had failed. The second time however he overcame, for immediately after his return to Bethel and Hai the conflict arose which resulted in Lot choosing Sodom, and Abraham receiving confirmation of the promise of the land and the seed (Gen. xiii. 5-18).

At Rephidim Israel failed to remember the wondrous works of God:--

“Wherefore the people did chide with Moses, and said, Give us water that we may drink” (Exod. xvii. 2).

So great was their murmuring and so threatening their attitude that they not only tempted God, but were at the point of stoning their leader. The Lord commanded Moses to:--

“Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and the rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thy hand and go. Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock of Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel” (Exod. xvii. 5, 6).

The word “smite” occurs in Exod. iii. 20 of the smiting of Egypt, and in xii. 12 of the smiting of the firstborn. In Zech. xiii. 7 it is used prophetically of the offering of Christ, “smite the shepherd”; and again in Isa. liii. 4, “smitten of God”. We learn from I Cor. x. 3, 4 that the smitten rock was typical of the Lord:--

“And did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink, for they drank of that spiritual rock that followed, and THAT ROCK WAS CHRIST.”

Some interpret this passage to mean that the water which flowed that day from the smitten rock actually followed the wanderings of the Israelites from that day onward. Deuteronomy ix. 21 speaks of a brook that descended out of the mount, while Psa. lxxviii. 15, 16 says:--

“He clave the rocks in the wilderness, and gave them drink as out of great depths. He brought streams also out of the rock, and caused waters to run down like rivers.”

Wall in his Critical Notes suggests that this river thus formed descended from Horeb to the sea, and that for the remaining 39 years of Israel’s wanderings they kept near to its channel until in the last year of their pilgrimage they came to Ezion-gaber (Numb. xxxiii. 36), a part of the Red Sea on the Arabian side. It was not until after this that we once more read of Israel’s need of water. Others, seeing that there is no word for “them” in the original of I Cor. x. 4, read the passage as though it means:--

“They drank of the spiritual rock which followed the sending of the spiritual bread from heaven.”

Yet others, seeing the word “spiritual” before the word “rock”, teach that we are not to understand this statement of the literal water, but of Christ, Who accompanied the children of Israel on all the journeyings, providing for all their needs all the time. Our own belief embraces the first and the third interpretation.

There was literally a river formed by the cleaving of the rocks, which made a provision for the whole period of Israel’s pilgrimage.

This literal provision in turn is typical of that spiritual rock, Christ, Who has promised never to leave nor forsake His people.

The names given to this place, Massah and Meribah, perpetuate Israel’s *tempting* of God and their *striving* with Moses. The “tempting” of the Lord is contained in the challenge:

“Is the Lord among us or not?” (Exod. xvii. 7).

Do we not trace the same spirit at work as led the Lord Jesus to say:--

“Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe?” (John iv. 48).

In the case in point (John iv. 48) the nobleman did believe the bare word of the Lord, without signs and wonders, but with the generality it was not so. The fame of the Lord had gone throughout the length and breadth of the land; the leper had been cleansed, the demon-possessed had been delivered, the dead had been raised (Matthew iv.-xi.). Yet after all these evidences the Scribes and Pharisees said:--

“Master, we would SEE A SIGN from Thee!” (Matt. xii. 38).

Israel too in the wilderness had signs in abundance, yet with the pillar of cloud before their eyes, and the table spread in the wilderness, they rose up and said.

“Is the Lord among us or not?” (Exod. xvii. 7).

What a blessed contrast is seen in the case of the prophet Habakkuk. To him the word had come:--

“The vision is yet for an appointed time wait for it the just shall live by his faith” (Hab. ii. 3, 4).

We see how this man “lived by his faith” by the closing verses of chapter iii.:--

“Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail; and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation” (Hab. iii. 17, 18).

Here is a contrast with Israel in the wilderness. The one tempted the Lord in the presence of want, the other trusted Him. For ourselves we would seek the higher lesson. Not merely to trust the Lord because we know that in spite of appearances He will supply, but to trust Him, as Job did, saying “though He slay me, yet will I trust Him”. To trust Him as the three Hebrew youths did when they told Nebuchadnezzar that even if the Lord did not deliver them from the burning fiery furnace, yet would they trust and obey. To accustom oneself to look for signs *may be* an evidence of unbelief. To the church the word comes:--

“We walk by faith, not by sight” (II Cor. v. 7).

#53. Amalek, type of the flesh. Aaron and Hur, types of fellowship (Exodus xvii. & xviii.).

“THEN CAME AMALEK.” — In the generations of Esau (Genesis xxxvi.) we find that Esau and his descendants are the Edomites; “Esau is Edom” (verses 1 & 8). In verse 12 we learn that Amalek was the grandson of Esau. Both Israel and Amalek therefore could trace their descent from Abraham, and herein lies the significance of the type. Amalek stand for the flesh. This typical feature is repeated. Going back no further than Abraham we find two sons — Ishmael who stands for the flesh, and Isaac for the spirit. The church of the Galatians provides a commentary upon the typical character of these two sons and their relation to the flesh and spirit.

Coming to Isaac we find that he also had two sons — Esau and Jacob, and once again the type is clear. The epistle to the Hebrews provides explanations of the meaning of the typical character of these two sons.

Two others must be included, viz., Moab and Ammon, both the children of Lot, and preeminently the children of shame. When we speak of Ishmael, Edom, Moab, Ammon and Amalek, we enumerate those foes of Israel who sought to bar the way and prevent their entry into the land of promise.

This is exactly what “the flesh” in a believer endeavours to do, Israel, when bondmen in Egypt, when confronted by the Red Sea, when in need of bread and water, were called upon neither to fight nor to fend for themselves. In all these experiences they typified the passive position of the believer under grace. The believer, however, has a warfare before him, a conflict that lasts until this life finishes, the conflict between flesh and spirit.

The word “fight”, apart from the instance in Exod. i. 10 which voiced the fears of Pharaoh, is used in two settings only:--

- (1). OF THE LORD. — “The Lord shall fight for you” (Exod. xiv. 14).
“The Lord fighteth for them” (Exod. xiv. 25).
- (2). OF ISRAEL. — “Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel” (Exod. xvii. 8).
“Go out, and fight with Amalek” (Exod. xvii. 9).
“So Joshua fought with Amalek” (Exod. xvii. 10).

The one conflict of the believer after redemption is with the flesh. What was the occasion of the fight? We believe it was twofold. The word “then” in the sentence, “then came Amalek”, appears to be connected with:--

(1). The provision of water.

In a country like Arabia water is precious, and its possession eagerly sought. Parallel cases may be found in Gen. xxi. 25, where we find Abimelech’s servants violently taking away the wells of water from Abraham. Deborah’s song includes a reference to this perennial cause of conflict:--

“Instead of the shouting of the archers among the wells, There they laud the righteous acts of Jehovah” (Judges v. 11, Companion Bible).

(2). The tempting of the Lord.

“Then” reads immediately after the question, “Is the Lord among us or not?”. The flesh takes immediate advantage of the beginnings of unbelief, of murmuring and complaining.

Amalek was overcome by two means:--

The intercession of Moses.

The warfare under Joshua.

Bishop Hall’s comment here is:--

"I do not hear Moses say to this Joshua, Amalek is come up against us, it matters not whether thou go up against him or not; or if thou go, whether alone or with company, or if accompanied, whether with many or few, strong or weak; or if strong, whether they fight or no: *I will pray* on the hill; but choose us out men, and *go fight*."

In the conflict with the flesh the weapons must be those of God’s appointment, and neither prayer alone, nor conflict alone can prevail. As Moses’ hands were raised, so Israel’s fight succeeded. As Moses’ hands sank, so Israel’s fight failed.

Three noteworthy features close the narrative:--

The command to write the record in a book.

The revelation of the name *Jehovah-nissi*.

The reason given for Amalek’s extermination.

“And the Lord said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua, for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven” (Exod. xvii. 14).

Joshua was the instrument in the hand of the Lord to divide the land of promise for an inheritance to Israel. His greatest activities were spent in the subjugation of the Canaanites, and all those who opposed the possession of the land. This possession was not to be considered complete until Amalek had been destroyed, Moses reminds Israel:--

“Remember what Amalek did unto thee by the way, when ye were come forth out of the Land of Egypt: How he met thee by the way, and smote the hindmost of thee, when thou wast faint and weary, and he feared not God. Therefore it shall be, when the Lord thy God hath given thee rest from all thine enemies round about, in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance to possess it, that thou shalt blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven; thou shalt not forget it” (Deut. xxv. 17-19).

The name *Jehovah-nissi* is the third Jehovah title revealed in Scripture. The first is concerned with the offering of Isaac, the great type of Christ and His redemption, *Jehovah-jireh*, “the Lord will provide”. A friend, whose judgment we hold in high esteem, says that *Jehovah-jireh* means “Jehovah appeared” (Gen. xxii. 14). The second is connected with the overthrow of the Egyptians (type of the world), *Jehovah-ropheka*, “the Lord that healeth thee” (Exod. xv. 26). The third title is connected with the destruction of Amalek (type of the flesh), *Jehovah-nissi*, “the Lord my banner” (Exod. xvii. 15). The third title is the first of three that suggests the believer’s active appropriation:--

“The Lord my banner” (Exod. xvii. 15).

“The Lord my shepherd” (Psa. xxiii. 1).

“The Lord our righteousness” (Jer. xxiii. 6).

The word “banner” (Hebrew *nes*) is the word used for the “pole” upon which the brazen serpent was lifted (Numb. xxi. 8, 9). If we turn to the occasion we shall find that it is a repetition of Rephidim. The people speak against God and against Moses because of the lack of water. *Jehovah-nissi* is this time set forth in symbol, and this symbol Christ takes to Himself in John iii. 14:--

“As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up.”

The “banner” under which we must fight our “Amalek” is the cross of Christ, the serpent on the pole, suggesting in type the deep doctrine of Rom. vi. 6 and Gal. v. 24. It is the cross of Christ, seen not as the means of our redemption, but of our victory over the flesh. This is the burden of Romans vi., vii., viii. and Galatians v. In the margin of the A.V. of Exod. xvii. 16 we read:--

"Heb. *the hand upon the throne of the Lord.*"

The translation both of the A.V. and the R.V. shows that those responsible believed “the hand” to be the Lord’s hand, and therefore translated the passage “the Lord hath sworn”.

The Companion Bible note reads:--

"Surely the hand (lifted up) upon the banner of *Jah* (is to swear):" &c.

The substitution of “banner” for “throne” is explained by Rotherham in his *Emphasized Version* as:--

"Ginsburg *thinks* it should be as follows: These are readings suggested by context and verse, but not supported by the Ancient Versions" (G. Intro. pp. 162, 170).

Rotherham does not endorse this “suggestion”, but translates:--

"Because of a hand against the throne of *Yah*."

The hand that was laid upon the throne of the Lord was the hand of Amalek. With all their failures Israel were the Lord’s anointed. When Balaam was brought to curse Israel, he had to say:--

“He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob the shout of a king is among them.”

“His king shall be higher than Agag, and his kingdom shall be exalted.”

“Edom shall be a possession.”

“And when he looked upon Amalek, he took up his parable and said, Amalek was the first of the nations, but his latter end is even to perish” (Numbers xxiii. & xxiv.).

Here Agag is mentioned in connection with Israel’s king and kingdom. This was a title similar to that of Pharaoh or Abimelech, and used by all the kings of Amalek.

(To be concluded)

#53a. Saul and Agag. Mordecai and Haman.
(I Samuel xiv. & Esther).
(Conclusion)

We have seen that because Amalek's hand was laid upon the throne of the Lord war was declared from generation to generation. Let us pursue this vital subject further. It will be remembered that after Saul had been king for some time, we read:--

“So Saul took possession of the kingdom over Israel, and made war round about against all his enemies, against Moab, and against the sons of Ammon, and against Edom and smote the Amalekites” (I Sam. xiv. 47, 48).

Following this general deliverance of Israel from their hereditary foes comes the more explicit command to:--

“Smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not”
(I Samuel xv. 3).

The story is well-known to us. Saul smote the Amalekites, but he took Agag the king of the Amalekites alive. Saul and the people also refused to destroy the best of the sheep and the oxen, and “all that was good”.

The flesh, the old man, typified by Amalek, is too often spared to-day. In the sight of God there is “no good thing” in the flesh, but it is rare to find that believer who is so taught of God that he has reached the height of Philippians iii. and, making no comparison between the flesh cultured and the flesh manifestly depraved, repudiates it entirely and rejoices to stand beneath the Banner of the cross. Many who condemn Saul would be found sharing this “good” thing of the flesh. Too often we add to our sin by hypocrisy. Saul said:--

“The people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, TO SACRIFICE UNTO THE LORD thy God in Gilgal” (I Sam. xv. 21).

“In Gilgal”! The place where the reproach of Egypt was rolled away (Josh. v. 9), where the rite of circumcision which sets forth the repudiation of the flesh (Col. ii. 11) was solemnly carried out by all Israel before they set foot in the land of promise, there above all places would Saul offer the sacrifice of the flesh and dishonour the Lord. This was to go in the way of Cain. The very next thing that Samuel is instructed to do after this is to anoint David king (I Samuel xvi.). That the throne of the kings of Israel could be spoken of as “the throne of the Lord” I Chron. xxix. 23 makes clear:--

“Then Solomon sat on the throne of the Lord as king instead of David his father.”

The purpose of God foreshadowed in the earthly kingdom of Israel will be brought to a glorious conclusion by the Lord Jesus Christ. When He takes to Himself His great power and reigns, He will not rest until all enemies are abolished. There will be no sparing of Amalek then. Those readers who have grasped the significance of the two seeds (see volume XIII, page 52 and the pamphlet “The Reconciliation of All Things”) will perceive it in operation here, for Amalek though descended from Abraham was not counted as the seed, for that line came through Isaac and Jacob, whereas Amalek descended from Esau.

Mordecai and Haman.

One other occasion is given in Scripture to show the character of Amalek and to foreshadow the end. The book of Esther records that Haman was advanced by the king above all the princes that were with him, and that all the king's servants bowed down before him. It further says that "Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence" (Esther iii. 2). Why was this?

"Haman was the son of Hammedatha the AGAGITE" (Esther iii. 1).

Haman was the descendant of one of the Amalekite kings, and Josephus (ant. xi. 6, 5) calls him an Amalekite. What was this man's attitude towards Israel?

"Haman sought to destroy all the Jews that were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus" (Esther iii. 6).

As a result of Esther's noble intervention, Haman the Agagite is first compelled to do honour to Mordecai, and then to suffer the fate upon his own gallows that he had planned for the Jew. We cannot say that Haman was a descendant of that Agag who was spared by Saul, but typically we can see that in the sparing of one Amalekite in the early days of Israel's kingdom, Saul jeopardized the whole nation under the reign of Ahasuerus. So must it be with the flesh.

"He that soweth to his flesh shall of his flesh reap corruption" (Gal. vi. 8).

"Because the minding of the flesh is enmity against God" (Rom. viii. 7).

It certainly is extremely suggestive to read the genealogy of Mordecai in Esther ii. 5:--

"Now in Shushan the palace there was a certain Jew, whose name was Mordecai, the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a Benjaminite."

Saul, who so signally failed concerning Agag, is of the same line as Mordecai who so signally succeeded. Both were of the line of Kish, a Benjaminite. Saul loses his kingdom, and David is sought out and anointed immediately after the failure of Saul concerning Agag. Mordecai, however, dispossess the Amalekite, and succeeds to his office:--

"For Mordecai the Jew was next unto king Ahasuerus, and great among the Jews, and accepted of the multitude of his brethren, seeking the wealth of his people, and speaking peace to all his seed" (Esther x. 3).

This foreshadows the purpose of the Lord and the happy results that will follow the casting down of all opposition and the introduction of that perfect day when God will be all in all. The throne of God and the purposes connected therewith have been assailed. Satan is the arch rebel, and the principalities and powers directly under him are the Amalekites of the church of the one body. Just as Amalek barred the way towards the land of promise, so in the heavenly places are the opposing principalities and powers. There our conflict lies.

This conflict of the age is figured throughout Scripture under various titles. The Canaanites were to be utterly destroyed by the conquering Israelites. Each one may see in these ancient foes the sketch of his own. Each dispensation, too, has somewhat parallel marks. Blessed be God, Satan is to be overcome, and the words of Zech. xiv. 21 are to be understood in their fullest and highest sense:--

"In that day there shall be no more Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts."

#54. A parenthesis and its lesson (Exodus xviii.).

The Companion Bible puts chapter xviii. into a parenthesis saying that the actual event occurred later, and quoting Deut. i. 7-14 says that Jethro's counsel was given and taken when Israel was ready to depart from Sinai. If this be true, then we must seek the lesson intended by the introduction of Jethro's coming and advice immediately following the conflict with Amalek. By nature we are apt to be extremists. Written in the fly-leaf of our Bible we have the following extract from the writings of Adolph Saphir:--

"Men undertake to be spiritual, and they become ascetic; or endeavouring to hold a liberal view of the comforts and pleasures of society, they are soon buried in the world, and slaves to its fashions: or holding a scrupulous watch to keep out every particular sin, they become legal and fall out of liberty; or charmed with the noble and heavenly liberty, they run to negligible and irresponsible living; so the earnest become violent, the fervent fanatical and censorious, the gentle waver, the firm turn bigots, the liberal grow lax, the benevolent ostentatious."

The flesh profiteth nothing. It can find no place in the service of God. We should repudiate it and all its works. Let us, however, not fall into the error of confounding the flesh with the physical, or of believing that God's service entirely suspends all creature co-operation. We find in Exodus xvii., xviii., much as they differ, that they have one item in common, viz., the overtaxed servant Moses, and the provision for his support and relief.

A seat and a stay.

Israel's victory hinged upon the uplifted hands of Moses:--

"And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed" (Exod. xvii. 11).

We read, however, that "Moses' hands were heavy". The hands of Moses, under God, were hands of power. The rod he held aloft commanded the very forces of nature, yet what miracle was wrought to sustain the weary servant of God upon whose continued intercession so much depended? *Some one gave him a seat!:*--

"And they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon" (xvii. -12-).

What Divine provision was there made to keep Moses' hands upheld?:--

"And Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun" (Exod. xvii. -12).

While these three together may represent the perfect intercession of *prophet* (Moses), *priest* (Aaron), and *king* (Hur), for Hur was of Judah (I Chronicle ii.), the lesson for us is rather the humbler one of the place of fellowship in the service of God. It is this truth that reappears in chapter xviii.:--

"And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses sat to judge the people: and the people stood by Moses from morning until evening" ("even until evening" some MSS read) (verse 13).

It was bad for both Moses and the people; it was bad for the ministry of the truth, and it was an unnecessary martyrdom. Jethro saw this, and said:--

"Why sittest thou thyself alone thou wilt surely *wear away*, both thou, and this people that is with thee; for this thing is too heavy for thee; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone" (verses 14 and 18). (The LXX reads, "thou wilt wear away with intolerable weariness").

Now it may be that the time will come when we shall have to face the same conditions as closed round the last years of Paul, and if so, grace will be given to yield, no, not for an hour, that strength will be given to finish the course and fight the good fight. We are not, however, called upon to invite persecution or to invent a martyr's conditions, otherwise the service we have in heart and hand will suffer, for "thou art not able to perform it", and those to whom we minister will suffer too, "both thou and this people with thee". Moses, great leader as he was, was a meek man: the counsel of Jethro commended itself to him:--

"Be thou for the people to Godward teach them shew them the way and the work" (Exod. xviii. 19, 20).

The lesser duties that could be undertaken by other men should be undertaken, or the work would otherwise suffer, and so Jethro counselled that Moses should provide able men who feared God, men of truth, hating covetousness, and that these should be placed over thousands, fifties and tens, thus simplifying the labour and preventing trifles from interfering with the main work.

The warfare and the warfare of God's people necessitates fellowship. It would have been a display of the flesh had Moses refused the stone as a seat or the loving support of Aaron and Hur. It would have been the work of the flesh had Moses chosen rather to wreck the ministry he had received for the apparently high quality of independence. There were circumstances wherein Paul was justified in saying, "it were better for me to die" than to receive fellowship (I Cor. ix. 15), but to take this as a general rule would be harmful and foolish. The church at Philippi were ever in close touch with the apostle and his needs:--

"In as much as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace" (Phil. i. 7).

This he called their "fellowship in the gospel from the first day" (i. 5). We see how practical this fellowship was by turning to Phil. iv. 15:--

"Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel (as i. 5) . . . no church communicated *koinoo* (in i. 5 it is *koinonia*) with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only."

The burden and the blessing.

We are joyfully to expect our duties to increase, and be ready to respond to the growing need. Moses did not for one moment regret the multiplying of Israel which added to his burden; he rejoiced in it, but he accepted Jethro's counsel to meet the situation:--

"And I spake unto you at that time, saying, I am not able to bear you myself alone. The Lord your God hath multiplied you, and, behold, ye are this day as the stars of heaven for multitude (The Lord God of your fathers make you a thousand times so many more as ye are, and bless you, as He hath promised you!) How can I myself alone bear your cumbrance, and your burden, and your strife?" (Deuteronomy i. 9-12).

There came a moment in the early church when the apostles had to decide whether they were justified in leaving the ministry of the word of God and prayer, or whether, following the lines of Exodus xviii., the time had not come to look out men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom they could appoint over the business that was intruding into the time and strength of the apostles (Acts vi. 1-4).

It is not the will of God that either His servants or their ministry should suffer through false sense of independence, neither is it His will that there should be any leaning upon the arm of the flesh or warring

with its weapons. It is most certainly for our guidance and warning that the lesson of Exodus xvii. should be restated in Exodus xviii.

It may be that some will be called upon to spend and be spent in the service of the truth, but there is no merit in “wearing out with intolerable weariness” through missing the wise counsel of Jethro, or the simple sense of that unnamed child of Israel who provided a seat for the great mediator — Moses.

#55. The Covenant of Sinai (Exodus xx. - xxiv.)

We have traced the Lord’s dealings with Israel from their call in Abraham, and their deliverance from Egypt, to their arrival at the wilderness of Sinai (Exod. xix. 1). Sinai marks a crisis in the history of this people, and is of fundamental importance in their typical story. Israel are to show once and for all the utter inability of the flesh to enter into blessing by a covenant of works. This necessitates the new covenant with its better promises and its better sacrifices, which is the theme of the epistle to the Hebrews. “The law made nothing perfect.”

In Exod. xix. 3, 8, & 20 we have three ascents of Sinai by Moses, culminating in the giving of the law. Three more ascents are recorded in Exod. xxiv. 9 - xxxii. 14, xxxii. 31-33 and xxxiv. 4-28, culminating in the building of the tabernacle, the ark receiving the tables of stone written the second time, and so bearing witness to Israel’s failure and their need of Christ. There is therefore a distinct connection between the old and the new covenants as Jer. xxxi. 31-34 reveals.

The Old and the New Covenants.

“Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah” (Jer. xxxi. 31).

Let us observe how definite the Scripture is with regard to the covenanting parties. “The Lord” on the one hand, and “The house of Israel and the house of Judah” on the other. It is a covenant properly drawn up, and no one who is not of the house of Israel or Judah, or who cannot show full Scriptural warrant for being reckoned with such, can have part or lot in it. Romans xi. reveals the method whereby some believing Gentiles came within the bounds of the new covenant. They are spoken of as wild olive branches grafted into the true olive, and, with the branches that remained unbroken, “partaking of the root and fatness of the olive tree” (Rom. xi. 17). Such is the widest extension of the bounds of this covenant. The moment Israel as a nation passed off the scene, that moment the new covenant and all pertaining to it was withdrawn, to be reserved until the day when:--

“All Israel shall be saved For this is MY COVENANT UNTO THEM” (Rom. xi. 26, 27).

We now proceed with the statement of Jeremiah xxxi.:--

“Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt” (verse 32).

Here we see the close connection between the old covenant made at Sinai, and the new covenant to be made in the future. The reference to the Exodus from Egypt is important. Every year this deliverance was remembered by the observance of the feast of the passover. Israel remembered that old covenant in the very year that our Lord was crucified. It was at the passover that Christ instituted the memorial of another and greater exodus, by another and greater passover lamb, and established another and better covenant:--

“They made ready the Passover . . . and He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, DRINK YE ALL of it; for this is My blood of the NEW COVENANT, which is shed for many for the remission of sins” (Matt. xxvi. 19-30).

The Lord's supper is a memorial feast exactly similar to the passover, but differing in this, that the Passover was a typical memorial connected with the old covenant, whereas the Lord's supper is connected with the new covenant. For Gentile believers to partake of this new covenant memorial while *unassociated with Israel* appears to us to be an unwarranted intrusion. Jeremiah xxxi. continues regarding the first covenant:--

“Which My covenant they break, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord” (verse 32).

The LXX reads “I regarded them not” instead of “I was an husband unto them”. This reading is followed by the N.T. quotation in Heb. viii. 9, which proves that this is the true interpretation. The Hebrew *ba'al* has two meanings (1) to be lord, master, or husband; (2) to disdain, reject, or disregard. The A.V. of Jeremiah xxxi. chose the wrong meaning. The inspired writer of “Hebrews” gives the true meaning. Israel broke the old covenant, and they were disdained, disregarded, all hope being henceforth centred in the Messiah:--

“But this shall be the covenant that I shall make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts: and will be their God, and they shall be My people” (Jer. xxxi. 33)

It is impossible to read these words without remembering Paul's argument in II Cor. iii. & iv.:--

“Written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stones, but in the fleshly tables of the *heart* God has made us able ministers of the NEW COVENANT” (II Cor. iii. 3-6).

The Corinthians were already instructed regarding their connection with the new covenant, as I.Cor.xi.25 will show. Here in the second epistle the apostle feels under the necessity to warn his children concerning Judaism that would lead them back to bondage. Therefore he institutes a comparison which it will be helpful to observe.

II Corinthians iii. & iv.	
<i>The old covenant.</i>	<i>The new covenant.</i>
The letter that killeth (iii. 6).	The spirit that quickeneth (iii. 6).
The ministration of death (iii. 7, 8).	The ministration of the spirit (iii. 7, 8).
The ministration of condemnation (iii. 9).	The ministration of righteousness (iii. 9).
That which is done away (iii. 11).	That which remianeth (iii. 11).
Moses and Israel veiled (iii. 13-15).	The vail done away in Christ (iii. 13-15).
When Israel turn vail removed (iii. 16-18).	We all with unveiled face (iii. 16-18).
The glory of God in the face of Moses “done away” (iii. 7).	The light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (iv. 6).

II Corinthian iv. 3 needs a fuller explanation than we can give in this tabular form:--

“But if indeed our gospel be veiled, by those things which are perishing they have been veiled.”

The “perishing” things are the things of the old covenant which are said to be “done away” and “abolished”. The god of this age uses the old covenant and ministration of death to veil the light of the glory of the gospel that shone in the face of Christ. One further word from Jeremiah xxxi. and then we must return to Exodus xix.:--

“If these ordinances (see verse 35) depart from before Me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a NATION before Me all the days” (Jer. xxxi. 36).

It is not possible to hold to the inspiration of Scripture and deny the *national* character of the new covenant. We do not wish to be aggressive or controversial, but in an article purporting to deal with fundamentals of dispensational truth we must perforce “use great plainness of speech”, and we must state that we have no hesitation or diffidence with regard to our attitude concerning the observance of the Lord’s supper as a member of that elect company called into favour during the time of Israel’s rejection. Let us now turn to Exodus xix. and read the terms of the first covenant.

The terms of the First Covenant.

“Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel; Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles’ wings, and brought you unto Myself. Now therefore IF ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, THEN ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine: And ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words that thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel” (Exod. xix. 3-6).

Moses descended from the mount, called for the elders of the people, and laid before them the words commanded him. There was an unanimous acceptance of the conditions. “And all the people answered together, All that the Lord hath spoken will we do” (Exod. xix. 8). From this point on to xxiii. 33 we have the preparation of the people, the descent of the Lord to Sinai, the giving of the 10 commandments, and the judgments. Then Moses came once more to the people and told them all the words of the Lord and all the judgments, and once more all the people answered with one voice, “All the words which the Lord hath said will we do” (Exod. xxiv. 3).

The people having re-asserted their agreement, Moses next put the words of the Lord unto writing (Exod. xxiv. 4). He then built an altar on twelve pillars, one for each tribe, and caused sacrifices to be made. Half of the blood shed Moses reserved in basons. He then took the book of the covenant, and read it over in the audience of the people: and they again replied, “All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient” (Exod. xxiv. 7). Moses then took the blood and sprinkled it on the people, saying:

“Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words” (Exod. xxiv. 8).

A covenant instituted with such solemnity, framed with words of such weight and far reaching effect, demands a respectful study. We cannot hope to do more than point the way in articles such as these, but we earnestly trust that the reader will be stirred up to see something of the heights and depths of this revelation of the righteousness of God.

The Ten Words (Exod. xxxiv. 28 margin).

The ten commandments are pre-eminently the basis of the covenant:--

“And the Lord said unto Moses, Write thou these words; for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel ... And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments” (Exod. xxxiv. 27, 28).

“He declared unto you His covenant, which He commanded you to perform, even ten commandments, and He wrote them upon two tables of stone” (Deut. iv. 13).

Let us summarize these ten commandments. There are quite a variety of ways in which the commandments have been divided and numbered, for it must be remembered that there is no numeration in the original. Some think that numbers.I.-IV. belong to the first table and relate to God, and numbers.V.-X. belong to the second table and relate to man. This would place number V. as “the first commandment with promise” at the head of the list, and remove the difficulty created by the apparent

promise found in Exod. xx. 6. On the other hand “that thy days may be long upon the land” (verse 12) is the first definite promise in the covenant.

The Companion Bible draws attention to the fact that the first five commandments contain the title “The Lord thy God”, but that no title or name of God appears in the second set. This seems to fall under the natural division of two sets of five, the one dealing with love to God, the other with love to neighbour. If this be accepted, the honouring of parents is placed upon the table devoted to the honouring of God, and demands serious thought.

The Covenant and the Commandments.

Each of the commandments are vital parts of the covenant, and in many cases passages may be found where this connection is definitely stated. On others it is clearly implied. We will not occupy space in printing the commandments, but the reader with Exodus xx. open before him may find some help by noting the following facts and particulars.

I. “*No other God.*” — It is implied in the expressions, “Thy God”, “I will be their God”, “The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob”, that there is a covenant relationship between the two parties named. This is established by such a passage as:--

“Behold, I make *a covenant* thou shalt worship no other god lest thou make *a covenant* with the inhabitants of the land” (Exod. xxxiv. 10, 14, 15).

II. “*No graven image.*” — Had this command been observed by Israel, it alone would have made them a separate people on the earth, for idolatry and image worship was practically universal:--

“Take heed unto yourselves, lest ye forget *the covenant* of the Lord your God, which He made with you, and make a graven image, or the likeness of anything . . .” (Deut. iv. 23, 24).

“Wherefore hath the Lord done this unto the land? because they have forsaken *the covenant* of the Lord God of their fathers FOR THEY WENT and served OTHER GODS” (Deut. xxix. 9-28).

III. *The covenant Name.* — When the Lord bade Moses hew two tables of stone in order that the words of the covenant might be written thereon, we read:--

“And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the NAME of the Lord and He said, Behold, I make *a covenant*” (Exod. xxxiv. 1-10).

The name here proclaimed is “The Lord God”, and the title “The Lord thy God” occurs in each of the commandments on the first table. It is the covenant name, and therefore sacred and central.

IV. *The sabbath.* — The sabbath was a sign of the covenant:--

“Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath for a perpetual *covenant*. It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel” (Exod. xxxi. 16, 17).

V. *The honouring of parents.* — The honour due to father and mother is a marked feature of the Old Testament, and it gains in importance when we see that this command finished the first table that deals with Israel’s relation to God. We may the better understand the Lord’s words in Matt. xv. 4-6 when we see the place of this fifth commandment. The Pharisees transgressed this commandment by their tradition. They taught that if a man declared that all his possessions were given to God, saying, “It is *Corban*, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me, he shall be free” (Mark.vii.11).

This the Lord condemned as transgressing the commandment of God. It is not possible to honour God by the dishonour of parents. Let us now notice the relation of the commandments the one to the other:--

- A | I. No other gods before Me. "The land of Egypt."
- B | II. No image or likeness. "Heaven", "earth", "water".
- C | III. The Name.
- B | IV. The Sabbath. "Heaven", "earth", "sea".
- A | V. Father and mother. "The land the Lord giveth."

This arrangement not only shows the relation of the first and the fifth, but also shows how an intelligent observance of the sabbath was a preservative from idolatry. It would not be possible to bow down to images of things in heaven or earth if one remembered that in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is.

The Second Table.

VI. *Thou shalt not kill.* — Although the name of God is not mentioned in the second table, it becomes abundantly clear upon examination that a right conduct towards our neighbour is governed by, and is a reflection of, our conduct toward the Lord. "Thou shalt not kill" takes our mind back to Gen.ix.6, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed, for in the *image of God* made He man". Murder aims at the heart of the purpose of creation, the destruction of the image of God on earth. Murder links man with Satan, who was a murderer from the beginning (John viii. 44), and with Cain, who was of that wicked one (I John iii. 12).

VII. *Thou shalt not commit adultery.* — If murder aims at destroying the image of God, adultery is calculated to corrupt the seed:--

"Judah hath profaned the holiness of the Lord which He loved, and hath married the daughter of a strange god. The Lord will cut off the man that doeth this the Lord hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously, yet she is thy consort, and the wife of thy *covenant*. Truly did He not make (the twain) one (flesh)? Yet had He the residue of the Spirit (and so could have made more than one wife for Adam). And wherefore one (emphatic)? Because He desired a SEED OF GOD" (Mal. ii. 11-15).

The discerning reader will perceive Genesis iii. & iv. in a clearer light by remembering the comment of Malachi. The universal association between immorality and idolatry throughout the Scriptures from Genesis to Revelation, the story of Genesis vi., the two attacks upon Sarah before Isaac's birth, the downfall of Solomon, the vehement protest of Nehemiah, these and similar examples reveal the place that adultery takes in the attack upon the purpose of the ages.

So vital is this relationship, that the Lord uses it as the most fitting figure of His covenant relationship with Israel. Their very land is to be called Beulah or "married", and the climax of revelation, apart from the mystery, is "the marriage of the Lamb", with its Satanic counterpart, "the whore" of Revelation xvii. & xviii. Even the members of the church of the one body may manifest the love of Christ and the church in their own married relationship (Ephesians v.). Idolatry and adultery are convertible terms in the Scriptures.

If holiness is involved in the sin of adultery, righteousness is involved in the sin of stealing.

VIII. *Thou shalt not steal.* — Satan was a murderer from the beginning. Satan has sought down the ages to corrupt the true seed. Satan entered into Judas, who betrayed his Lord, and Scripture says Judas "was a thief" (John xii. 6). Malachi whose words we have quoted above says, "Will a man rob God?" (Mal. iii. 8).

The weights and measures of Israel were not beneath Divine legislation, for in them were set forth the equity and righteousness of the Lord. "Just balances, just weights, a just ephah and a just hin, shall ye have" (Lev. xix. 36), and this command is immediately followed by a reference to the Lord Who brought them "out of the land of Egypt". Deuteronomy xxv. 15 puts the same truth in connection with the land of promise:--

"Thou shalt have a perfect and just weight, a perfect and just measure shalt thou have, *that thy days may be lengthened* in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

Righteousness is the foundation of the throne of God, the basis of the covenant with Israel, the bed rock of the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, the lasting character of the new heavens and earth, "wherein *dwelleth* righteousness", when "the tabernacle of God will be with men and He will *dwell* with them". Any system of interpretation that juggles with good and evil, until at last their distinct difference is bedimmed, must stand condemned before the simple example of "the just weight and balance".

IX. *Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.* — Satan, the breaker of the commandments already cited, is also the arch-false witness. "He is a liar, and abode not in the truth." Ephesians iv. 25 & 28 bring together two of the commands of this table:--

"Wherefore putting away the lie, speak every man truth with his neighbour ...
Let him that stole steal no more."

Stealing transgresses righteousness, false witness transgresses truth. The new man of Ephesians iv. created in righteousness and holiness of truth. If Satan entered into Judas the thief, he inspired Ananias; "Why hath Satan filled thy heart to lie?" (Acts v. 3). It appears from Zech. v. 3 that among the last phases of the curse of Babylon to the earth is the condoning of stealing and false swearing. The Hebrew word *nakad* should be translated declare innocent or let off:--

"For every one that stealeth hath been let off (is written) on the one side according to it (the curse or the scroll), and everyone that sweareth (falsely) hath been let off (is written) on the other side according to it."

X. *Thou shalt not covet.* — It has been said that covetousness breaks all the commandments. It certainly breaks the first, for Mammon is its god. It breaks the second, for Col. iii. 5 calls a covetous man an idolator. We can well see how many if not all of the others can be sacrificed upon the altar of this idol. "The love of money is a root of all evil" (I Tim. vi. 10).

This brief survey enables us to perceive something of the depth of the terms of the covenant made by God, and entered into by Israel. Israel broke that covenant even before Moses could reach them with the two tables of stone. It is a feature of the utmost importance to remember that those broken tables of stone were *re-written*, and placed in the ark. This ark is called the ark of the covenant (Deut. x. 8), and the ark of the testimony (Exod. xxx. 6). Exodus xxxi. 18 tells us that the two tables of stone were the tables of testimony. Exodus xxxiv. 28 & 29 calls them both the "tables of the covenant", the "two tables of the testimony" and the "ten words".

The ark and the mercy seat together represent the perfect redemption of Christ. The new covenant does not set aside the ten commandments, but fulfils them. As we look through the epistles we find practically every one of the commandments re-stated with one exception, namely, the sabbath.

I.	No other God.	"To us there is but one God" (I Cor. viii. 6).
II.	Idolatry.	"Ye turned to God from idols" (I Thess. i. 9).
III.	The Name.	"That the name of the Lord be not blasphemed" (I Tim. vi. 1).
V.	Honour parents.	"The first commandment with promise" (Eph. vi. 2).
VI.	Not kill.	"Love . . . not as Cain who . . . slew his brother" (I John iii. 11, 12).

VII.	No adultery.	“Adulterers God will judge” (Heb. xiii. 4).
VIII.	Not steal.	“Let him that stole steal no more” (Eph. iv. 28).
IX.	Not false witness.	“Speak every man truth” (Eph. iv. 25).
X.	Not covet.	“No covetous man hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God” (Eph. v. 5).

The IVth commandment is the exception. During the Acts period Paul wrote to the Galatians, “Ye observe days I am afraid of you” (Gal. iv. 10, 11). To the Romans he wrote, “One man esteemeth one day above another; another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind” (Rom. xiv. 5). After the Acts period Paul wrote to the Colossians, “Let no man judge you in respect of the sabbath days, which are a shadow” (Col. ii. 16, 17). These words could not have been written had the sabbath observance continued.

Exodus xxxi. 13 tells us that the sabbath is a sign between Israel and the Lord. Like the other sign, namely, circumcision (Rom. iv. 11), and the signs, namely, the miracles wrought during the earthly life of the Lord, and the Acts of the Apostles (I Cor. i. 22; xiv. 22), these together with the sabbath belonged to Israel, and cease with the setting aside of that nation. Let us conclude this survey of the ten commandments with the apostle’s comment in Romans xiii.:--

“Owe no man anything, but to love one another; for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet, and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, viz., Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself” (Rom. xiii. 8, 9),

and with the Lord’s words in Matthew xxii.:--

“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets” (Matt. xxii. 37, 40).

#56. The application of the Ten Commandments as shown in the judgments of Exodus xxi. - xxiii.

We have seen in the “ten words” the great basis of the covenant made with Israel, and we are yet to see how the whole tabernacle and its services revolve around the ark, in which rested the tables of testimony, and the mercy seat which covered it. Before we turn our attention to the tabernacle it seems fitting that we should acquaint ourselves with the judgments that were added to the “ten words”. It will be found upon examination that they unfold and apply the law given in the tables of stone. It will be remembered that the ten commandments divide the duties of Israel into two sets, five dealing with God and five dealing with man. The N.T. sums up the law and the prophets as love to God and love to neighbour.

The ten-fold exposition.

In Exodus xx. the covenant is given, and in Exodus xxiv. the covenant is ratified, and it will be seen that this covenant is concerned with:--

1. All the words of the Lord, i.e., the “ten words” of xx. 1-17.
2. All the judgments, i.e., those of xxi.-xxiii.

“And Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the Lord hath said will we do” (Exod. xxiv. 3).

These “judgments” follow the arrangement of the ten commandments, namely, five sections are devoted to Israel’s attitude to God, and five sections deal with Israel, or the Lord’s attitude to man, one to another or to strangers.

Let us take a broad view of the whole section Exodus xx. 21 - xxiii. 33.

The ten-fold judgments.

- A1 | xx. 21-26. GOD. His worship and idolatry.
- B1 | xxi.-xxii. 17. MAN. Servitude, murder, stealing, negligence.
- A2 | xxii. 18-20. GOD. Witchcraft, confusion and sacrifice.
- B2 | xxii. 21-28. MAN. Vexing, afflicting, strangers, widows, etc.
- A3 | xxii. 29-31. GOD. Offerings, fruits and firstborn.
- B3 | xxiii. 1-9. MAN. False witness, bribery, oppression.
- A4 | xxiii. 10-19-. GOD. Sabbaths and Feasts.
- B4 | xxiii. -19. MAN. Humane treatment of animals.
- A5 | xxiii. 20-25-. GOD. The angel, My name, gods.
- B5 | xxiii. -25-33. MAN. Food, land, health, length of days.

Here we have a five-fold alternation, corresponding to the two tables of stone. This amplification is not confined to Exodus. Psalm cxix. 122 reads, “Be surety for Thy servant for good, let not the proud oppress me”. This verse is the subject of a Massoretic note* which draws attention to the fact that every verse in Psalm cxix. with the exception of verse 122 contains one of *ten words*, all of which refer to the commandments of God. These ten words are way, testimonies, precepts, commandment, word (‘*imrah*), law, judgment, righteousness, statute, word (*dabar*). The one exception uses the word “surety” instead and points to the fact that the tabernacle with its offerings was appointed when Israel failed, and looks forward to the new covenant of which Christ Himself is “the surety for good”.

[NOTE: * - These notes occur in the margin of the Hebrew Bible and have reference to the sacred text, with the intention that such information shall guard against any alteration or corruption of the original. For illustration see page 82 of Appendix to *The Companion Bible*.]

The Judgments.

The word judgment (*mishpat*) is often translated “the manner of” as in Exod. xxi. 9, “He shall deal with her after *the manner of daughters*”. The relation of the word to the service of God may be gathered from II Kings xvii. 26, “The nations which Thou hast removed, and placed in the cities of Samaria, know not *the manner of* the God of the land”. The king of Assyria commands that one of the captive priests shall be sent to teach the new arrivals, and we read that he taught them “how they should fear the Lord” (verse 28). It was a sorry business however, for in verse 33 we read that “they feared the Lord, and served their own gods”, which broke the very first words of the covenant (verses 34-41). These judgments therefore, given to supplement and expand the “ten words”, show “the manner of the Lord”, and His manner is “right”:

“Shall not the Judge (*Shaphat*) of all the earth do right?” (*mishpat*, Gen. xviii. 25).

Let us now see a little more in detail this righteous dealing between God and man.

I. Servitude and freedom (Exod. xxi. 1-11).

In the case of the Hebrew male servant six years was the limit of his servitude, “in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing”, the only exception being that in the event of the servant marrying a wife given by his master, and having children and not wishing to leave them, then he could voluntarily devote

himself “for ever” to that master’s service. That such servitude was not “slavery” can be gathered from the words, “If the servant shall plainly say, i love my master, my wife, and my children; i will not go out free”. The question of the connection between the boring of the ear with the readings of Psalm xl. 6 and Heb. x. 5 has been dealt with at some length on pp.59-61 of this volume (see *Hebrews16*, #43).

In the case of the Hebrew maid servant particular regard is paid to the liability of abuse that awaits a lonely woman, and it is clearly stated that “she shall not go out as the menservants do”. This kindly fatherly element in God’s judgment, given in a day when woman were reckoned as cattle or household chattels, gives the lie to those who would bring down the law of Sinai to an imitation of that of Khammurabi or Babylon: “To sell her unto a strange master he shall have no power”. This has reference to a betrothal made, but rejected. In the case of adding another wife, the feelings and status of the first wife are preserved:--

"Her food, her raiment, and her duty of marriage, shall he not diminish If he do not these three unto her, then shall she go out free without money."

II. Death penalty and refuge (Exod. xxi. 12-17).

Murder, the cursing of parents, and man-stealing were to be punished with death, without the option of sacrifice or fine. Manslaughter was provided with “a place to flee”.

III. Recompense (Exod. xxi. 18-36).

In cases of striving, smiting and negligence a variety of instances of sinful acts done to another that could be put right by a payment for the loss of time, money, limb, etc., are given. For hurting an equal: “He shall pay for the loss of his time, and shall cause him to be thoroughly healed.” For hurting a servant: “He is his money.” Causing an abortion, without mischief following, must be paid for as the judges determine and the husband lays upon him. If mischief follow, then there must be “eye for eye, tooth for tooth”, etc. This is further enforced in the setting free of a servant as a recompense for the loss of eye, or tooth.

Negligence to keep under control an ox that gores a person to death is compensated by the loss of the ox. If, however, the negligence be culpable, both ox and owner must be put to death. This also applies with modification to negligence that causes the death of ox or ass.

IV. Full restoration and a fine in addition (Exod. xxii. 1-17).

For stealing one ox he shall restore five. If a thief be smitten to death when caught in the act, it is quits. If he survives and have nothing, he shall be sold. If the theft be found, he shall restore double. Feeding cattle in another man’s field and destroying crops through careless fire-lighting demands restitution. Those entrusted with goods must be responsible unto double the value. To entice a maid that is not betrothed must be recompensed either by marriage or dowry.

Such is a very imperfect summary of the first section xxi. 1 - xxii. 17. This is followed by a brief section (Exodus xxii. 18-20) dealing with the Godward side. (1) The witch. (2) The confusion of seed. (3) The sacrifice to any other god save the Lord. In each case the penalty is death. The section following (xxii. 21-28) is devoted to the question of vexing and afflicting strangers, widows, fatherless, and borrowers. Exodus xxii. 29-31 emphasize the claims of God upon the first-fruits, first-born sons, and first-born of cattle; also that in the question of their food Israel were to be “holy men unto Me”.

Exodus xxiii. 1-9 deals with false witness, unkindness, bribery, and oppression, Exod. xxiii. 10-19 with God’s command concerning the sabbatic year, the sabbath day, and the three feasts in the year, namely, the feast of unleavened bread, the feast of harvest, and the feast of ingathering. Also that no leaven must be offered with the blood of sacrifice, neither must the fat remain till the morning. The following one little clause stands out alone:--

“Thou shalt not seethe a kid in its mother’s milk” (Exod. xxiii. 19).

This humane stipulation was intended to restrain the more brutal instincts of man, much in the same way that the command concerning the bird and its young in Deut. xxii. 6, and the cow and its calf in Lev. xxii. 28.

Exodus xxiii. 20-25- promises the leadership and protection of the angel in whom is the name of the Lord upon the condition of obedience, and the angel is said to go before them and to bring them into the land of the Canaanites. A final warning is given concerning idolatry and an exhortation to serve the Lord. Then comes the last man-ward section, viz., Exod. xxiii. -25-33. This contains promises concerning bread and water, sickness, fruitfulness, and length of days. The clearing of the land of promise of the Canaanites, and of the beasts of the field, the boundaries of the land of promise, and the man-ward effect of any covenant made with either the Canaanites or their gods, such was the tenor of the covenant made with Israel. This is by no means all, for in subsequent books Moses reveals further expansions of the principles here set forth.

Judgment and mercy.

A superficial view of these laws has led to a great deal of misrepresentation. The God Who could think of the little kid, Who legislated for slaves, for fatherless, for strangers, cannot be either harsh or merciless. Many have objected to the severity of the law, "eye for eye, tooth for tooth", when a closer acquaintance would lead them to magnify God for His mercy. The laws that were in force at the time when God gave the law to Moses reveal what a merciful advance is here made. Instead of an eye for an eye it would be a vendetta and perhaps many lives. This can be tested by reading what is called the Code of Khammurabi (the Amraphel of Gen. xiv. 1), and comparing the offences and penalties under the two legislations.

In the Sermon on the Mount the Lord reveals the deeper spirituality of the law. Moses does not only teach an eye for an eye, but he teaches (by implication and comparison with other laws) not *many* eyes for *one*, that is, Moses taught that justice should be tempered with mercy. The Lord Jesus does not contradict the law of Moses, but shows its legitimate "fulfillment". The same is true regarding the murder that is incipient in heart hatred. We can well believe that had Israel been able to fulfil their promise to obey all the commandments of the Lord, they would have fulfilled their calling, and have been a great outstanding witness for truth in the earth.

Deuteronomy.

The title of the fifth book of Moses in the LXX is Deuteronomy, meaning "Second Law", being taken from the LXX version of Deut. xvii. 18 where we read, "Then shall he write for himself this repetition of the law" (*kai grapsee hautō deuterōnion touto*). This book of thirty-three chapters cannot be a mere repetition of the law given in Exodus, unless we mean "vain repetition", for in very bulk it is eight times as large. It means therefore that just as the ten commandments were expanded in Exodus xxi.-xxiii., so they are more completely expanded as the times arrives for Israel to enter into the land. This is more easily seen when we realize that the whole book of Deuteronomy is occupied with a ten-fold address given by Moses, giving expansions, expositions, blessings and cursings of the Ten Words of Exodus.xx.--

"And it came to pass in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first day of the month, that Moses spake unto the children of Israel, according unto all that the Lord had given him in commandment unto them" (Deut. i. 3).

The Ten Addresses in Deuteronomy.

Introduction. — A resume of Israel's history from the time they commenced their journeyings unto the eve of the entry into Canaan (Deuteronomy i.-iii.).

- (I.) Deut. iv.—Baal Peor. No similitude or graven image.
Reference to *the land* in last verse.
- (II.) Deut. v.—The Ten Words of the Covenant. Reference to *the land* in last verse.
- (III.) Deut. vi. 1 - x. 11.—One God (vi. 4). No other gods (vi. 14).
The table of stone (x. 1-5). Reference to *the land* in last verse.
- (IV.) Deut. x. 12 - xxvi. 19.—Blessing and cursing (xi. 26).
Laws governing all classes.
Reference in last verses to *the land* (15), and "*holy people*" (19).
- (V.) Deut. xxvii., xxviii.—Cursing and blessing.
- (VI.) Deut. xxix., xxx.—The covenant beside that of Horeb.
- (VII.) Deut. xxxi. 2-6.—Joshua the leader. The Lord goes before and with them.
- (VIII.) Deut. xxxii. 1-43.—The song, a witness against Israel if they break the covenant
(xxxii. 19-21).
- (IX.) Deut. xxxii. 46, 47.—"It is your life." Reference to *the land* in last verse.
- (X.) Deut. xxxiii. 2-29.—Sinai, the law, the blessing of the twelve tribes.
Reference to *the land* in verse 28.

Throughout this repetition the terms of the original covenant are continually in mind, together with the effect upon Israel consequent upon obedience. A peculiar treasure, above all people, a kingdom of priests, a holy nation, the possession and enjoyment of the land.

The book of Revelation, to say nothing of the testimony of the Prophets, testifies to the fact that although Israel can never enter into their peculiar blessings upon the basis of the old covenant, by virtue of the new covenant all these blessings shall be theirs. This fact raises the question as to what is the position of the law. Is it set aside? Is it fulfilled vicariously? Will it be fulfilled? The true answer to the question, if it is to be established from Scripture, must of necessity take more space than a closing paragraph, and we therefore leave it until time and space afford the necessary opportunity. Meanwhile we trust that the fulness of those ten words which form the basis of the covenant with Israel have been the better appreciated by our study together, and the inability of man to keep them will but magnify that great justification which has been made ours freely by the grace of God through the redemption and propitiation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

#57. The Tabernacle. A general survey (Exod. xxv. 1-9).

In tracing the history of Israel as a nation we start with redemption, the Passover deliverance from Egypt, where a fresh start was made. The Passover month became "a beginning of months" unto them. We have followed them through the waters of the Red Sea, which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned. None but the redeemed of the Lord can reach the other side alive. We have seen their trials and temptations, their first great battle with Amalek, and its spiritual teaching. We have seen them enter into covenant relationship with God, both book and people being sprinkled with blood; we have heard the words of the covenant given in solemn grandeur from Sinai, and we have reached that point in the development of their typical history that demands the tabernacle and its ritual.

In the articles under the heading of *Redemption* we have discussed the difference between redemption as the *exodus*, and the atonement as the *eisodus*, the one leading out and giving deliverance, the other leading in and giving acceptance and access. Therefore we will not stay over that phase now.

The present creation is described in Genesis i. & ii., and the record of that mighty work comprises 34 verses. The tabernacle is described in Exodus xxv.-xxxi. & xxxv.-xl., and the record comprises 457 verses. This disproportion can be explained only in the light of their relative importance, the understanding of the way into the presence of God being far more important than the understanding of the way in which He created heaven and earth. The new creation is so much greater than the present, as the finished temple the scaffolding erected for its building.

The shadow of heavenly things.

In Exod. xxv. 9, 10, xxvi. 30, xxvii. 8, and Numb. viii. 4 Moses is commanded to see that all things in the tabernacle are made after the pattern that was shown him in the mount, and this is repeated in Heb. viii. 5. In the latter passage the reason for this exactness is given:--

“The example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle, for, See, saith He, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.”

Again, in Heb. ix. 23 the tabernacle is spoken of as “The pattern of things in the heavens”. The holiest of all in the tabernacle was evidently a symbol of heaven, for we read:--

“We have an high priest in the heavens, a minister of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man” (Heb. viii. 1, 2).

It is called “a greater and more perfect tabernacle” in Heb. ix. 11, and the holy places made with hands are called “figures of the true”, and the true is further defined as “heaven itself” in ix. 24. It is therefore a matter beyond controversy that the tabernacle and its offerings, its priests and its furniture, are intensely typical, and speak of heaven itself where Christ as the great high priest has for us entered.

“Of Thine own have we given Thee.”

The whole of the material necessary for the construction of the tabernacle and its furniture was given willingly by the people of Israel:--

“Every man that giveth it willingly with his heart” (Exod. xxv. 2).

“And they came, every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whose spirit made him willing” (Exod. xxxv. 21, 29)

The same element of wholehearted willingness entered into the preparation for the temple in David’s day:--

“Who then is willing to consecrate his service?”

“Then the people rejoiced, for that they offered willingly, because with perfect heart they offered willingly to the Lord” (I Chron. xxix. 5, 9).

The chapter also reveals the secret of this willing offering:--

“All things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee.”

“All this store that we have prepared to build Thee an house for Thine holy name cometh of Thine hand, and is all Thine own” (I Chron. xxix. 14, 16).

These material things, such as silver and gold, were but the evident types of unseen realities that pertain to God. David’s ascription of praise (I Chron. xxix. 11-13), punctuated by 14 “ands” (including “now” of verse 13, and so making 15 items), may be compared with the “pattern of things in the heavens” given in Exod. xxv. 3-7:--

The fifteen patterns. (Exod. xxv. 3-7).	The things themselves. (I Chron. xxix. 11-13).
1. Gold.	1. Greatness.
2. Silver.	2. Power.
3. Brass.	3. Glory.
4. Blue.	4. Victory.
5. Purple.	5. Majesty.
6. Scarlet.	6. All in Heaven and Earth is Thine.
7. Linen.	7. Kingdom and headship.
8. Goats' hair.	8. Riches and honour.
9. Rams' skins.	9. Reign over all.
10. Badgers' skins.	10. Power.
11. Shittim wood.	11. Might.
12. Oil.	12. To make great.
13. Spices.	13. To give strength.
14. Onyx stones.	14. Thanks.
15. Stones (various).	15. Praise.

We do not intend to teach by these parallels that (1) gold represents greatness, or (8) goats' hair represents riches and honour. All we intend is to emphasize the spiritual value of these typical materials, and to take advantage of that characteristic of inspiration where even words are weighed and numbered. The same element of symbolism is discernible in the gifts brought by the wise men to the infant Christ "born King of the Jews", viz., "gold and frankincense and myrrh" (Matt. ii. 11).

The fifteen items enumerated in Exod. xxv. 3-7 retain the special number (5) that pervades the tabernacle. The outer court was 100 cubits long and 50 cubits wide, covering an area of 5,000 square cubits. The 60 pillars of this court multiply the tabernacle number (5) by the number of tribes (12). The pillars that held the curtains were 5 cubits apart and 5 cubits high; the whole of the outer curtain was divided into squares of 25 cubits. We will not pursue this further, but as we come to individual details we shall find five (5) dominating the whole structure. We are distinctly told in Psalm cv. that the offerings made by Israel for the tabernacle were brought from Egypt at the Exodus:--

"He brought them forth also with silver and gold" (Psa. cv. 37).

"They asked of the Egyptians jewels of silver and jewels of gold, and raiment"
(Exod. xii. 35).

This was provided for in the covenant made with Abraham:--

"And also that nation, whom they serve, will I judge, and afterward they shall come out with great substance" (Gen. xv. 14).

It practically amounted to deferred pay, the taskmaster being compelled at the end to disgorge the wage withheld. The same principle is seen in Isa. lx. 5, 11, 16, lxi. 6. That service and honour due to God, and which sin has diverted to itself, shall by virtue of redemption be taken from the usurper and willingly offered to the rightful Lord. The same may be said of the various ascriptions of praise found in the book of the Revelation, they are all so much of the Lord's due held back for a time by sin. When the day of glory arrives:--

"The kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it" (Rev. xxi. 24).

"Thy people shall offer themselves willingly in the day of Thy power" (Psa. cx. 3).

The first article of the tabernacle to be specified is the ark. This we will examine later, but first we had better obtain a general survey. The tabernacle itself was an oblong, 30 cubits in length, & 10 cubits

in the height and breadth. This was divided by a veil into two parts; the holy place being 20 cubits long, and the most holy, the holy of holies, being a perfect cube of 10 cubits length, breadth and depth. These are referred to in Heb. ix. 2, 6, 7 as the first and second tabernacle, respectively. In the first tabernacle stood the lampstand, the table of shewbread, and the altar of incense. In the holiest of all stood the ark and the mercy seat. None but the high priest was allowed to enter into the holiest of all.

The tabernacle itself was constructed of planks of shittim wood overlaid with gold, which planks were placed upon silver sockets and fastened together by long rods. Inside the tabernacle were woven tapestries containing embroidered cherubim, and outside the tabernacle were successive layers of curtains of goats' hair, rams' skins dyed red, and badgers' skins. Before the door of the tabernacle stood the brazen altar and the laver, and the whole was surrounded by the white curtained court. Disposed around this tabernacle were the priests, the tents, and the tribes. Rabbinical tradition has it that each tribe carried as a sign one of the twelve constellations of the Zodiac. These twelve signs, beginning with the sign of the virgin (Genesis), and ending with the sign of the lion (Revelation), depict the whole story of redemption.

The twelve tribes were distributed according to the four points of the compass, the whole forming a wondrous picture — all Israel grouped around the ark, the mercy seat, and the pillar of cloud or fire, setting forth the day when God shall be all in all. The order here referred to is given in full detail in Numbers ii. and *The Companion Bible, Dispensational Truth* (page 106), and Newberry's Supplement to *The Englishman's Bible* set the whole before the eye in a diagram. It is of interest to note that the tribes that occupied east, west, south, and north had as their signs the lion, ox, man, and eagle (*scorpio*), so that both at the centre (the mercy seat) and at the circumference (the standards) the cherubic pledge of restoration was remembered.

The primary purpose of the tabernacle.

In Exod. xxv. 8, immediately following the enumeration of the materials necessary for the building of the tabernacle, God gives the primary purpose of its construction, "Let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them". "The tents of Shem" were from the days of Noah destined to be the dwelling place of God (Gen. ix. 27), and it is the purpose of redemption and atonement to make the sons of men fit for God to dwell among them. The climax of the book of Revelation is expressed in the words:--

"Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God"
(Rev. xxi. 3),

and when this takes place tears, death, sorrow, crying, and pain, the close attendants upon sin ever since paradise was lost, shall for ever pass away. This blessed time of restoration is expressed in the typical tabernacle of Israel.

Why a tabernacle?

A tabernacle is a tent, a dwelling place that belongs to pilgrims. It speaks of the wilderness and its wanderings rather than the kingdom and its peace. Consequently it has an application all down the age to all companies of the redeemed who are pressing on to the hope laid up for them:--

"By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac, and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise"
(Heb. xi. 9).

Not only so, it represents the willingness of God in His grace to have no settled place upon this earth until sin is removed, and His pilgrim people are at home in peace. Since Genesis iii. the sabbath rest of creation has been broken by the activities of redemption. The date upon which the tabernacle was set

up is also of a typical nature, “on the first day of the month”. Moses records one other important typical event that took place upon this same date, namely, the day when the waters were dried up from off the earth at the time of the flood, and when Noah removed the covering of the ark (Gen. viii. 13). Both events have restoration in view, both have an ark as the central feature (two words in the Hebrew O.T., but one in the Greek N.T.).

Noah’s ark had no cherubim, for man, lion, ox, and eagle were there in reality; the ark of the covenant had golden cherubim. Noah’s ark was covered with *pitch*, the first occurrence of the Hebrew word atonement in the O.T. The mercy seat is in Hebrew *kapporeth*, *pitch* being *kopher*, and to pitch, *kaphar*.

We are now ready to give closer attention to the detailed description given in Exodus of the various parts of the tabernacle, and we pray that the exhibition of these rich types may be a means of blessing not only to the young believers among our readers for whom they are primarily intended, but to the most advanced also.

#58. The Tabernacle.

The ark and the mercy seat (Exod. xxv. 10-22).

The first item of the tabernacle that is specified is the ark. This is severally called:--

- “The ark of the testimony” (Exod. xxv. 16);
- “The ark of the covenant” (Numb. x. 33);
- “The ark of the Lord” (Josh. iii. 13);
- “The ark of God” (I Sam. iii. 3);
- “The ark of the Lord God” (I Kings ii. 26);
- “The ark of Thy strength” (II Chron. vi. 41);
- “The holy ark” (II Chron. xxxv. 3).

These seven titles are doubtless distributed throughout the Scriptures with that discrimination which we always find whenever we subject the Word to a careful examination. For example, the title “The ark of the testimony” is reserved for the period covered by Moses and Joshua, whereas the title “The ark of the covenant” extends from Moses’ tabernacle to Solomon’s temple, from wilderness to kingdom. We must leave the tabulation of these titles, with the added one “The ark of the God of Israel” (I Sam. vi. 3) and others, to those who may be able to spare the hours that verification and accuracy demand.

The ark and its contents.

The ark was an oblong wooden chest 2-1/2 cubits long, 1-1/2 cubits wide, and 1-1/2 cubits high, covered within and without with gold, and having upon it round about a crown of gold. For the purpose of transport four rings of gold were fixed to the four corners, and two staves of shittim wood overlaid with gold were placed in the rings, and left there in constant readiness for the removal of the ark. The [shittim wood](#) of which the ark was made is most probably that of the [acacia tree](#). It is mentioned, together with the cedar, the myrtle and the oil tree, fir tree, pine, and box, in Isa. xli. 19, and appears to be one of seven trees that indicate blessing:--

“The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of My sanctuary” (Isa. lx. 13).

Jerome says that the wood of the shittim tree affords long planks smooth and free from knots, and that it does not grow in cultivated places, or in any other place of the Roman Empire, except in the desert of Arabia. It is intensely interesting to note that the LXX renders the word shittim wood *xulon asepton* = “incorruptible wood”. The woodwork of the tabernacle was covered; it was designed for

constructional purposes, and not for beauty, and the humbler office was fulfilled throughout by the shittim or acacia tree. Where every detail is so specifically shown, and where the typical character of every item seems so apparent, we can hardly dismiss as fanciful that suggestion that the two natures “flesh” and “spirit” (Rom. i. 3, 4) are set forth by the wood and gold used in the construction of the ark. Within the ark was placed, at different intervals of time:--

1. The tables of the covenant.
2. Aarons’ rod that budded.
3. The golden pot of manna.

The tables of stone are called “the testimony” and “the covenant”, and give their names to the ark. These were the only articles placed in the ark when it was first made (Exod. xxv. 16). The tables of stone originally given to Moses were broken by the angry law-giver at the sight of the people and the golden calf, and after having demonstrated that they had so soon broken the covenant into which they had entered, Moses prayed for the people:--

“Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if Thou wilt forgive their sin---; and if not, blot me, i pray Thee, out of Thy book which Thou hast written” (Exod. xxxii. 31, 32).

Passing over much that we shall have to consider later, we find the Lord restated the covenant, after bidding Moses to hew two tables of stone like unto the first. After the proclamation of His mercy and graciousness, the Lord in restating the covenant lays particular stress upon idolatry (Exod. xxxiv. 10-28). Moses returned to Israel with the new tables of stone, and Exod. xxxv. 4 re-introduces the question of the tabernacle. What we have to learn from this rather complicated parenthesis is the old lesson of the ages. Before Israel actually received the tables of stone, they had broken them, and when Moses once more returned with the fresh tables of stone, he said in effect: “Make an ark. This covenant cannot be kept by you. All that you can hope for is to have a system of types and shadows, and await the advent of Him Who alone can magnify the law and make it honourable.”

The same story is found in Genesis iii. Man failed, and is shut up to the promised Seed. Israel failed, and is shut up unto the faith that should afterward be revealed. The important fact for us at the moment is that the *ark contains the unbroken law*. It is fundamental to both doctrinal and dispensational truth that it should be so. One cannot imagine, after a knowledge of the truth, the *broken* tables of stone being placed in the ark. The ark speaks of a law and a covenant fulfilled. Now the tabernacle and its furniture were shadows of the true or heavenly reality. Two references from the *Apocalypse* will be sufficient to prove that the ark was a pattern of a heavenly reality:--

“And the temple of God was opened *in heaven*, and there was seen in His temple the ark of His covenant” (Rev. xi. 19).

“Behold, the inner shrine of the tabernacle of the testimony *in heaven* was opened” (Rev. xv. 5).

Following the former quotation came lightnings, voices, thunderings, earthquakes, and great hail, which in turn is followed by the sign of Israel and the dragon (Revelation xii.). Following the latter quotation we find the seven angels with the vials of wrath spoken of as a sign “great and marvellous” (Rev. xv. 1).

This is the covenant of marvels, which God made upon the restatement of the covenant with Israel:--

“Behold, I make a covenant: before all thy people I will do marvels, such as have not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation” (Exod. xxxiv. 10).

Thus it is that the plagues which fell upon Egypt are repeated in the Revelation upon a grander scale. They are aimed at the same idolatry and blasphemy, and are marked by the same hardening effect. Little

as we may be sensible of the fact, the whole controversy of righteousness and lawlessness, of Christ and Satan, is summed up in the first and second commandments. The destruction of the Canaanites by Israel, their altars, images, and groves, was the only preservative against being enticed into making a contrary covenant with them. The terrible judgments of the Revelation fall upon those who “had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image” (Rev. xvi. 2). Idolatry was the outward visible sign of an inward and invisible apostasy.

The sin of Israel, whereby they broke the covenant of Sinai, was exactly the same, *idolatry* (the golden calf), and their chequered history from the time of the Judges until the captivity in Babylon was one series of lapses into idolatry. Man can have but one of two masters: Elijah may call them *Jehovah* and *Baal*, and Christ may call them *God* and *Mammon*, while Paul may call them *righteousness* and *sin*, or *God* and *Satan*. It is all the same, and whosoever serves not the one serves the other. The ark with its unbroken law enthroned the Lord; an ark with a broken law enthrones Satan. The prophet Zechariah had a vision of this very travesty:

“... i see a flying roll; the length thereof is twenty cubits, and the breadth thereof ten cubits ... everyone that stealeth is declared innocent according to it on this side, and every one that sweareth is declared innocent on the other side to it ... Lift up now thine eyes, and see what goeth forth ... This is an ephah ... and, behold, there was lifted up a talent of lead ... This is wickedness ... Then two women with the wind in their wings, for they had wings like a stork, and they lifted up the ephah To build it an house in the land of Shinar”
(Zechariah v. 1-11, **?version?**)

Here we have the law definitely broken; an ephah (a measure equalling about three pecks) instead of the ark; a lid made of lead, instead of the mercy seat made of gold. Wickedness within instead of righteousness, and two women with wings like those of an unclean bird to serve as cherubim, finally taking it back to its own resting place, Babylon. A remarkable statement in Jeremiah leads us to understand still further the typical character of the ark:--

“In those days (of Israel’s restoration) saith the Lord, they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of the Lord; neither shall it come to mind; neither shall they remember it; neither shall they visit it; neither shall it be made again” (Jer. iii. 16),

the reason being, according to verse 17, that the throne of the Lord will then be at Jerusalem, and therefore the type will no longer be necessary.

Priesthood and provision.

Beside the two tables of the covenant, there were placed in the ark Aaron’s rod that budded, and the golden pot of manna. The rebellion of Korah and Dathan, that foreshadows the great revolt against the Lord Himself, was followed by the command to lay up in the tabernacle, before the testimony, the rods of the leaders of Israel, among them Aaron’s. On the morrow it was discovered that Aaron’s rod had budded, bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds. This symbol of life, while it confirmed Aaron in his office, pointed on to Him Who by means of resurrection hath an unchangeable priesthood. The golden pot of manna was a constant memorial of the faithfulness of God in supplying all pilgrim needs until the land of promise was reached, and is a very real type of Christ. Is it no comfort to us in our wilderness journey to know that beside the unbroken law, there is the reminder of that Priest Who ever liveth to make intercession for us, and of that faithfulness that has said no good thing will He withhold while we walk the pilgrim pathway?

The golden ark with its crown, its unbroken covenant, its pledge of the ever living Priest, and its memorial of ever faithful care, was incomplete without the mercy seat that rested upon it. Righteousness without mercy would not bring salvation to sinners:--

“Though justice be thy plea, consider this, that in the course of justice, none of us should see salvation.”

In the ark and the mercy seat, “righteousness and peace have kissed each other”.

The mercy seat.

The mercy seat was made of pure gold, unlike the ark which was made of wood overlaid with gold. Made of one piece with it were the cherubim with their wings stretched forth on high, and with their faces toward the mercy seat:--

“And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I will give thee. And THERE I WILL MEET WITH THEE, and I will commune with thee” (Exod. xxv. 17-22).

The N.T. word mercy seat in Heb. ix. 5 is translated in Rom. iii. 25, “propitiation”, and is the word used by the LXX to translate the Hebrew word mercy seat. The word mercy seat (*kapporeth*) is from the word *kaphar*, to make atonement. Now whatever our conclusions may be as to the exact meaning of the word translated “atonement”, one thing is established, and that is that it is an essential part of the great sacrificial work of Christ.

We endeavour in this series to avoid arguments that are complicated, or that necessitate too close an investigation into the originals, and as we hope to give the doctrine of the *atonement* a careful study in the series headed “Redemption”, we leave the controversial side alone in this article. If we were asked what ideas came to the mind at the mention of the mercy seat, we should probably say, something to do with atonement, acceptance, or forgiveness. All these are true, but they are not the primary truth. This atonement is necessitated by our sins, but what is the object before us which necessitates the removal of the barrier, sin? We may receive a precious lesson from the very first statement made concerning the use of the mercy seat. To Moses the Lord said, “There I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee”. Fellowship and communion, these are the real objects; all else but makes a way.

I will meet. — The words *to meet* mean “to meet by appointment”, and the Hebrew word enters into one of the names of the tabernacle, viz., “the tabernacle of the *congregation*” (Exod. xxvii. 21). It is translated “to betrothe” in Exod. xxi. 8, 9, and “agreed” in Amos iii. 3. It will be remembered that the tabernacle number was given as number 5, and 5 times in the book of Exodus does the Lord speak of the mercy seat, or the altar, where the blood was shed that sprinkled the mercy seat, as the place where He would meet Moses, and the children of Israel (Exod. xxv. 22; xxix. 42, 43; xxx. 6, 36).

The meeting place, a beautiful symbol of the result of the atonement, contains within itself the ideas of entrance, access and acceptance. A most interesting and helpful suggestion of the fulness of this meeting with God is contained in the LXX rendering of the word “meet” in these passages, where the translation reads, “And I will *make Myself known* to thee from thence”. The knowledge of God begins at the mercy seat, and all subsequent knowledge of Himself and His ways are made known *there*. **Knowledge in the Scriptural sense is far removed from mere scholarship**, valuable asset though that is. Asaph learned this lesson, and recorded it in Psalm lxxiii., for when he went into the sanctuary of God he understood that which before he could not discover.

I will commune. — The Hebrew word *dabar*, which is translated “commune” 20 times, is translated “speak” 814 times, so that while we lose an apparently spiritual idea by giving up the deeper word “commune”, we in reality gain by using the commoner word “speak”, for instead of thinking of set occasions, and for specially holy purposes Moses heard the voice of the Lord, it was here at the mercy seat that *every* word was heard, every instruction given, every problem settled. Here it was that the Lord

“spake (*dabar*) with Moses face to face, as a man speaketh (*dabar*) unto his friend” (Exod. xxxiii. 11). Here it was that the Lord “talked” with Moses (Exod. xxxiii. 9):--

“When Moses was gone into the tabernacle of *meeting* to *speak* with Him, then he heard the voice of One *speaking* unto him from off the mercy seat that was upon the ark of the testimony, from between the two cherubim, and he *spake* unto him” (Numb. vii. 89).

Who will have the temerity to decide that the meaning of the last clause should be written, “and *He* spake unto him”, or “and he spake unto *Him*”? Is it not the very essence of this meeting place that both should speak; Moses speaking with God, and God speaking with Moses? Is not this “communion”? To speak with God, and to hear His word, before the blood sprinkled mercy seat? Truly we have yet to learn of burnt offerings and sin offerings, offerings to make atonement and peace, yet are they not all with the very object to remove all barriers and unfitness so that, unhindered, we may enter into the presence of God, to “meet” with Him and to have this “communion”?

So important is this somewhat forgotten aspect of the result of atonement, that the word *dabar* was used as a name for the holiest of all, and appears in the word “oracle” (II Sam. xvi. 23), and in the slightly modified form (*debir*) in sixteen other passages in the O.T. The mercy seat, though associated with the work of atonement, is essentially a place of fellowship, and the hearing of the word of God.

The references to the mercy seat (*kapporeth*) in the tabernacle are 26 in number, and those who have Dr. E. W. Bullinger’s *Number in Scripture* will find examples tending to show the connection of the number 13 and its multiples with the subject of atonement. These 26 references to the mercy seat are divided into three groups:--

1. Those in Exodus which speak of the actual making and placing of the mercy seat.
2. Those in Exodus and Numbers that refers to it as a place of meeting and communion.
3. Those in Leviticus xvi. which deal with the great day of atonement.

The references in Leviticus xvi. are seven in number. What was the actual origin of the day of atonement? The sin and death of Aaron’s two sons Nadab and Abihu. These men offered strange fire before the Lord, and were destroyed:--

“Then Moses said unto Aaron, This is that the Lord spake, saying, I WILL BE SANCTIFIED in them that come nigh Me, and before all the people I will be glorified” (Lev. x. 1-3).

Leviticus xvi. begins with the words:--

“And the Lord spake unto Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they offered before the Lord, and died Speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times within the vail before the mercy seat, which is upon the ark; that he die not.”

The words “at all times” mean “just at any time”. Aaron and his sons were becoming too familiar, and made certain religious conventions necessary. It is the habit of the superior person to sneer at conventions, but with some natures they have their place, and while set forms, solemn ritual, and ceremonial may degenerate into superstition and empty formalism, they have their place. The solemn ritual of the day of atonement, and the restriction of access to the high priest once every year, would have the tendency to hallow the name of God and prevent that unholy familiarity that was evidently developing. And so there is the washing of the flesh, the linen clothes, the sin offering and the atonement, the incense and the seven times sprinkled blood. The words of the wise man are very appropriate here:--

“Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools; for they consider not that they do evil. Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be hasty to utter anything before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few” (Eccles. v. 1, 2).

The cherubim [which are so closely associated with the mercy seat as to be made “of the matter of the mercy seat” (Exod. xxv. 19 margin)], have been dealt with in the series *Redemption*, both in connection with the cherubim themselves, and in connection with the original office of Satan, and though we do not pretend to have exhausted the teaching of Scripture, we can say nothing more to profit at the end of an article. May the four simple features brought before us in connection with the ark and mercy seat be a blessing to us:--

1. An unbroken covenant.
2. An undying Priest.
3. An unfailing supply.
4. A place of fellowship and communion.

“And truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ ... If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin” (I John i. 3-7).

#59. The table of shewbread (Exod. xxv. 23-30). “All one in Christ.”

Having considered something of the rich teaching set forth by the ark of the covenant, and the mercy seat within the second veil, we now, following the order of the narrative before us, pass into the holy place and turn our attention to the furniture there.

Divine service.

Before passing on to detailed descriptions, however, we must have some idea of the typical meaning of the “holy place” in which this furniture stood:--

“There was a tabernacle made; the *first*, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shewbread; which is called the sanctuary (margin, the holy, Gr. *hagia*). And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all (Gr. *hagia hagion*)” (Heb. ix. 2, 3).

Here we have very clearly the subdivision set forth with the distinctive names of the two parts, the division being made by the second veil:--

“Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. But into the second went *the high priest alone once* every year, not without blood” (Heb. ix. 6, 7).

Without seeking to force a distinction beyond its limits, it appears from the usage of the words “service” and “serve” that these do not so much describe the great atoning work of Christ, as that they refer to the worship and service of the redeemed. Both the Saviour and the saved were set forth in type in the tabernacle. The Saviour being typified by the solitary act of the high priest “alone once”, the saved being typified by the priests who went “always” accomplishing the “service”. *Latreia* (service) occurs in Heb. ix. 1 & 6, *latreuo* (to serve or worship), in Heb. viii. 5; ix. 9, 14; x. 2; xii. 28; xiii. 10. It will be seen that the “service” is entirely connected with the Levitical priesthood, or its N.T.

counterpart. They that did the service were not perfected as pertaining to the conscience by the daily ritual then imposed (Heb. ix. 9). It necessitated a greater high priest than Aaron, and a better sacrifice than was offered on the day of atonement to purge the conscience from dead works to serve the living God (Heb. ix. 14). The shadows of the law with its typical sacrifices could not make the comers thereunto perfect, for their consciences were not really purged from sin (Heb. x. 1, 2). The gifts and sacrifices that constituted the service of the typical tabernacle “stood only in meats and drinks, and divers baptisms, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation” (Heb. ix. 10).

Latreuo and *latreia*, are not found in the Septuagint of Genesis, they appear for the first time in Exodus. The Passover feast is called “this service” (Exod. xii. 25, 26). Pharaoh understood “service” to involve the offering of sacrifice, for in Exod. iii. 12; iv. 23; vii. 16; viii. 1 & 20 the demand had been made that Israel should be liberated to “serve” God, Pharaoh’s words are, “go ye, sacrifice to your God in the land” (Exod. viii. 25). Moses, moreover, when speaking once again to Pharaoh, uses another expression of similar import. To Pharaoh’s “go, serve the Lord”, Moses replies, “We must hold a feast unto the Lord” (Exod. x. 8, 9).

While *latreuo* seems to have special reference to “the service of a worshipper”, and is omitted from Genesis, *douleuo* is of frequent occurrence in that book. It is used of the service rendered to kings (Gen. xiv. 4); of Israel’s bondage (xv. 14); of the elder serving the younger (xxv. 23); of men serving man (xxvii.29,40); and of Jacob’s service to Laban (xxix. 15, 18, 20, 25, 30; xxx. 26, 29; xxxi. 6, 41). The apostle uses the two words in Romans i.:-

“Paul, a bond slave (*doulos*) of Jesus Christ” (Rom. i. 1).

“Whom I serve (*latreuo*) with my spirit in the gospel” (Rom. i. 9).

“Who worshipped and served (*latreuo*) the creature” (Rom. i. 25).

If the distinct aspects of service that these two words indicate are kept in mind, the meaning of the apostle will become more clear. Coming now to Exodus xxv. we bring with us the thought that here in the first tabernacle, where priests ministered daily, we are dealing with *service*, and it is in connection with service that we must view the table of shewbread.

Divine sustenance.

The table not only held the twelve loaves of shewbread, but also was laid with “dishes, spoons, covers, and bowls of pure gold”. It was a table, not an altar, a table spread in the presence of the Lord with food wherewith those who rendered service might be fed. The margin of Exod. xxv. 29 renders “to cover withal” by “to pour out withal”, and the LXX reads:-

“And thou shalt make its dishes and its censers, and its bowls and its cups, *with which thou shalt offer drink offerings*; of pure gold shalt thou make them” (Exodus xxv. 29).

This makes us think of the supreme act of service contemplated by the apostle Paul in Phil. ii. 17, and carried through in II Tim. iv. 6, where we have the only occurrence of *spendomai* in the N.T. He was willing to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice and service of faith. While therefore the bread is the important item on the table, the drink offering must be remembered. The ingredients and the quantity for the making of the twelve loaves were not left to human judgment, they are given in Lev. xxiv. 5-9:

“And thou shalt take fine flour, and bake twelve cakes thereof: two tenth deals shall be in one cake. And thou shalt set them in two rows, six on a row, upon the pure table before the LORD. And thou shalt put **pure** frankincense upon *each* row, that it may be on the bread for a memorial, *even* an offering made by fire unto the LORD. Every sabbath he shall set it in order before the LORD continually, *being*

taken from the children of Israel by an everlasting covenant. And it shall be Aaron's and his sons'; and they shall eat it in the holy place ..." (Lev. xxiv. 5-9).

It will be noticed that no leaven enters into the composition of these twelve loaves; leaven being a type of evil, therefore whatever or whoever is represented by these loaves is viewed as perfect. Moreover, upon each row is placed frankincense, which would impart a sweet smelling savour.

The words "taken from the children of Israel" have been variously interpreted. Spurrell suggests "a presentation from". The R.V. reads "on the behalf of", which is quite an opposite idea. The Hebrew "M" which is frequently translated "from" does sometimes carry the thought suggested by the R.V. For example, Gen. v. 29, "because of"; Exod. ii. 23, "by reason of"; Isa. xxviii. 7, "through". Though taken from the children of Israel, it was also a memorial before the Lord on the behalf of the children of Israel.

These loaves were eaten by the priests in the holy place. There are several things specified as eaten by the priests in the holy place, among which we find the flesh of the sin offering (Lev. vi. 26); the flesh of the trespass offering (vii. 6); the peace offering (vii. 14); and the shewbread (xxiv. 9).

The memorial.

The twelve loaves of shewbread are not said to be a memorial, much as we may have expected it; the pure frankincense upon each row constitutes the memorial. It will be helpful if we seek a clearer understanding of this term, *Azkarah*. This feminine form of the word occurs seven times in Scripture. The passages are Lev. ii. 2, 9, 16; v. 12; vi. 15; xxiv. 7 and Numb. v. 26. *Zikkaron*, the masculine form, occurs twenty-four times. We give a selection only. We use the word "reminder" as variant, as familiarity with the A.V. sometimes blunts our senses: "This day shall be unto you for a *reminder*" (Exod. xii. 14). "It shall be for a sign ... and a *reminder*" (Exod. xiii. 9). These two passages refer to the feast of the Passover and the unleavened bread: "Stones for a reminder unto the children of Israel ... their names before the Lord ... as a *reminder*" (Exod. xxviii. 12, 29). Here the names of Israel engraven upon the stones of the ephod and breastplate are a reminder both to Israel and to the Lord. We cannot give all occurrences, they can easily be found. *Zikkaron* is used seven times in blessing, and once in judgment against Amalek in Exodus. *Zeker*, another masculine form, occurs several times. The first occurrence is Exod. iii. 15, "This is My name for the age, and this is My *reminder* unto all generations".

The Passover was a reminder of redemption, the unleavened bread of the bondage endured and the exodus effected, together with the need to "purge out the old leaven of wickedness". The name "Jehovah Elohim of your fathers" was a sufficient reminder for God to "remember His covenant" (Leviticus xxvi. 42, 45). The frankincense upon the twelve loaves was a *reminder*. A reminder of what? Before we can answer that question we must answer another: "What did the twelve loaves typify?"

The bread of the presence.

It is good to see in books dealing with the tabernacle and its typical teaching that every opportunity is seized to bring forward the fulness of Christ, but there may be even in this, zeal without knowledge. We refer to the interpretation that speaks of the twelve loaves as typical of Christ as "the bread of life". In John vi. the Lord says, "Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness and are dead I am the living bread" (John vi. 49, 51). It will be seen that lying upon the ground outside the tabernacle morning by morning was to be found the type of Christ as the bread of life. That therefore can scarcely be the meaning of these twelve loaves also. This "bread of presence" before the Lord "always" (Exod. xxv. 30), the "continual bread" (Numb. iv. 7), like the names engraven upon the stones of the ephod and the stones of the breastplate, represented the twelve tribes of Israel.

The table of shewbread is mentioned in II Chron. iv. 19 under Solomon, and again in xiii. 11 it is mentioned in king Abijah's appeal to the ten tribes when he pleaded for the true unity of Israel, also in

Hezekiah's reign (II Chron. xxix. 18). When the captivity returned under Nehemiah, even though called by their enemies "these feeble Jews" (Neh. iv. 2), and even though the restored temple was in the eyes of those who knew the Lord's house in its first glory "as nothing" (Hag. ii. 3), there is not the remotest suggestion either by Abijah, Hezekiah, or Nehemiah that any number of loaves than twelve should be used, or that the frankincense should be omitted. The twelve loaves set forth Israel as viewed in Christ, not as viewed in themselves. "He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath He seen perverseness in Israel" (Numb. xxiii. 21). This was no "legal fiction", but based upon the offering of their Messiah:--

"Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God" (Rom. iii. 25).

Whatever the personal state of Israel may have been whether united as one nation or divided into two, whether humbly seeking God or wickedly departing from His commandment, one thing remained "always" and "continual". That was the "everlasting covenant" or the "covenant of the ages". This it will be remembered is connected with the command concerning the shewbread in Lev. xxiv. 5-9. Just as the memorial in the offering for jealousy was to bring "iniquity to remembrance" (Numb. v. 15), so the memorial upon the shewbread was to bring the sweet savour of Christ to remembrance.

The age-abiding covenant.

The first mention of *berith olam*, "an age-abiding covenant", is in Gen. ix. 16, where God sets His bow in the cloud as a "reminder" ("that I may remember") of His covenant with all flesh. Now this covenant was made *notwithstanding* the fact that "the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth" (Gen. viii. 21), and in *close association* with the "sweet savour of rest" that spoke of the offering of Christ. So with Israel. Abram's name was changed to Abraham, and the Lord said:--

"I will establish My covenant between Me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for *an age-abiding covenant*, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land of thy sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for *an age-abiding possession*; and I will be their God" (Gen. xvii. 7, 8).

Though Israel broke this age-abiding covenant (Isa. xxiv. 5), yet in the person of their Messiah that covenant is established (Isa. lv. 3 & lxi. 8). This age-abiding covenant lies behind the new covenant which was sealed by the blood of Christ (Jer. xxxii. 40 & xxxi. 31-37). Perhaps there is no more marvellous setting for this covenant, nor a passage that emphasizes its utter independence of human merit than Ezek. xvi. 60. Charges are made against Israel in Ezekiel xvi. that reveal a condition that dwarfs the sin of Sodom "as a very little thing" (xvi. 47), and by comparison can justify the words "they (Sodom and Samaria) are more righteous than thou" (xvi. 52). Then come the words of verse 60:--

"Nevertheless I will remember My covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will establish with thee an age-abiding covenant."

All this is set forth in the table of shewbread. Twelve loaves show Israel complete and undivided before the Lord. These twelve loaves are all unleavened, Israel's righteousness is fully provided for in *Jehovah Tsidkenu*. "Pure" frankincense above, and a "pure" table beneath, indicate their perfect acceptance in the Beloved. Here is a "reminder" of that "age-abiding covenant" that glorifies the end of Ezekiel xvi., and will glorify the end of this stiff-necked and gain-saying people.

The shewbread and service.

Returning to our opening thoughts we can see the relation between this tremendous fact of Israel's position before the Lord, and the strength such a recognition would afford to all who truly appreciated it, who in type eat that bread in the holy place. Is there no word for the members of the one body? The

dispensation of the mystery may not appear in type or symbol in the O.T., yet parallel principles are everywhere discoverable. May we not substitute “chosen in Him before the overthrow of the world” for Israel’s “age-abiding covenant”? May we not see the frankincense in the purpose “holy and without blemish”? May we not see in the risen and ascended Christ “far above all” the pledge that we too are “blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ”? However broken and divided the church may appear to the human eye, we too may contemplate by the eye of faith, as in the presence of God, the “one body” (Eph. iv. 4), and comprehend with “all saints” the love of Christ. Our inheritance is as inviolable as that of Israel, and we too have as the ground and base of this perfect presentation (Eph. v. 27) the “offering and sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour” (Eph. v. 2). For us no type or symbol is necessary. “The bread of presence” is expressed for the church once and for ever in the blessed words, “Accepted in the Beloved” (Eph. i. 6), and “Made meet” (Col. i. 12).

#60. The golden lampstand (Exod. xxv. 31-40). Unity in witness.

If it be true, as we sought to show in our last article, that the holy place is connected with worship and service, that will be true not only as it relates to the table of shewbread, but as it relates to the golden lampstand. The word candlestick is misleading. No candles were used, but oil for the lamps is specifically mentioned:--

“And thou shalt make the seven lamps thereof” (Exod. xxv. 37).

“Oil for the light” (Exod. xxv. 6).

“Pure olive oil beaten for the light” (Exod. xxvii. 20).

“Not by might, nor by power.”

There is a chapter in Zechariah that deals so pointedly with the symbolism of this golden lampstand, that to attempt an interpretation of Exodus xxv. before first considering this passage would be to insult the Author of Scripture, therefore, let us turn to Zechariah iv. Here we have one of a series of visions, all concerned with one object, the fulfilling of the *age-abiding covenant*, whose memorial or reminder we have seen was found in the twelve loaves of presence, the shewbread. These visions are eight in number, and occupy chapters i.-vi., a new section of the prophecy commencing with chapter vii. Readers of *The Companion Bible* will notice a light change in the structure of these visions, as we feel that there is no warrant for uniting the sixth and seventh as one member.

The eight visions of Zechariah i. - vi.

A | i. 7-17. The horses. “My house shall be built.” “The Lord shall yet choose Jerusalem.”

B | i. 18-21. The horns and the smiths. Gentile oppressors and deliverers.

C | ii. 1-13. Measure Jerusalem; breadth and length.

“Jerusalem shall be inhabited.” His eye.

D | iii. 1-7. The high priest. “The Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem.”

E | iii. 8-10. My servant the Branch. “Every man under his vine and fig.”
Seven eyes.

D | iv. 1-14. The lampstand. The laying of the foundation of the house. Eyes.

C | v. 1-4. The flying roll; length and breadth.

“Zion that dwelleth with Babylon.”

B | v. 5-11. The ephah. Gentile dominion. “Build it an house.”

A | vi. 1-8. The chariots. The four spirits of the heavens. Judgment.

E | vi. 9-15. The man whose name is the Branch. Temple and throne.

It will be seen that the common theme of these visions is the restoration of Israel, showing the satanic opposition (manifested through Gentile powers and finally at Babylon), and the triumph of the Lord (manifested through Joshua and Zerubbabel, and finally through Christ, the Branch). We are not, however, dealing with Zechariah, but seek light from Zech. iv. upon the symbolism of the candlestick.

The Branch.

In Exod. xxv. 31-36 when reading the description of the lampstand we come upon the word “branches” repeatedly, in fact twelve times. The word branch here is *qaneh*. In Zech. iv. 12, where we read of “the two olive branches”, the word is *shibboleth*. In Zech. iii. 8 & vi. 12 the Branch is *Tsemach*. Now although these seem so diverse at first, they are nevertheless intimately related.

In Gen. xli. 5 we have the first occurrence of *shibboleth*, where it is translated “ears of corn”. In Gen. xli. 5 also we have the first occurrence of *qaneh*, where it is translated “stalk”. This establishes a connection between the “branches” of the golden candlestick of Exodus xxv. and the “two olive branches” of Zechariah iv. In Psa. lxxv. 9, 10 *tsemach* is used of corn, “the springing”. So also in Hos. viii. 7 where it is translated as the “bud” that yields no meal, and is connected with sowing, reaping and standing corn (*see* margin). It is demonstrated, therefore, that the three words translated branch are all used of corn, and therefore cannot be widely dissimilar, but, to adopt the words of Scripture, may be as closely allied as “the blade, the ear, and the full corn in the ear”. We have here a sequence. First the type of the lampstand in the tabernacle, next the vision of the lampstand in Zechariah iv., and finally the prophetic fulfillment of both type and vision in “The Man Whose name is the BRANCH”.

It is readily granted that we should naturally have considered the lampstand in the tabernacle as a type of Christ, the light of the world, but we should have made the same mistake that we observed is made by making the shewbread a type of Christ as the bread of life. As the light of the *world* Christ is set forth by other figures, but as the light in the *holy place* another office is implied. Prophecy is said to be a “light that shineth in a dark place” (II Pet. i. 19), until the day dawn, and the Lord comes. Zechariah iv. is most certainly prophetic of the day of Israel’s restoration and the coming of the Lord. The explanation of the vision of the lamp fed from the two olive trees is given by the angel:--

“This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by My spirit, saith the Lord of hosts” (Zech. iv. 6).

There can therefore be no two thoughts as to the symbolism of the olives. They speak of the witness and the work of the spirit in contrast with the arm of the flesh. The seven lamps are evidently “those seven” of verse 10, which are explained to be “the eyes of the Lord” that watch over His purpose. The last word of explanation in Zech. iv. 14 forces us to turn to the book of the Revelation.

“These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth.”

The two witnesses.

The state of things under Joshua and Zerubbabel at the return from the captivity is to be repeated on a vaster scale in the time of the end. In Revelation xi. we have the measuring of the temple by an angel (xi. 1), parallel to the measuring of Jerusalem by an angel in Zechariah ii. The two witnesses withstand the beast until their testimony is finished. This testimony lasts for 42 months. Upon their martyrdom resurrection and ascension follows the sounding of the seventh angel:--

“The kingdom of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ” (Rev. xi. 15).

To this the two witnesses, the vision of Zechariah iv., and the golden lampstand of the tabernacle bore their testimony. “The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy” (Rev. xix. 10). It will be seen that “oil for the light” and for the “anointing” (Exod. xxxv. 28) come to much the same thing. Every

anointed priest and every anointed king bore testimony to the day when Zech. vi. 12, 13 should be fulfilled:--

“Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH and He shall be a *priest* upon His *throne*.”

All point forward to the King-Priest, after the order of Melchisedec. They too are to combine kingship with priesthood. They are to be “a kingdom of priests” (Exod. xix. 6), “a royal priesthood” (*see* Rev. i. 6; I Pet. ii. 5, 9).

The seven lampstands.

While the unity of Israel, so far as God’s view-point is concerned, remains unchanged throughout their whole chequered history, their manifest witness as set forth by the seven-branched lampstand did not remain intact. When we come to the book of the Revelation, we have seen separate lampstands, each standing for a church in Asia that was bearing a testimony of some kind. Christ is seen in their midst as the great King-Priest, upholding the seven angels who are responsible for the testimony of these seven churches. Failure could involve the removal of a lampstand out of its place (Revelation ii. 5). Israel were the Lord’s witnesses (Isa. xliii. 10), the tabernacle was called “the tabernacle of witness” (Numb. xvii. 7), they who reign for the thousand years include those who were beheaded “for the witness of Jesus” (Rev. xx. 4). The ark is called both the ark of the covenant, and the ark of testimony or witness* (Exod. xl. 3), and when the seven angels appeared, then John said, “Behold the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony (or witness) in heaven was opened”.

[* - Both in the Hebrews and the Greek, *witness* and *testimony* are the same.]

The great thought of the lighted lampstand in the holy place is that of witness bearing. Genesis i. 3 differentiates “light” itself from a “light bearer” (Gen. i. 14, 15), light being *or* in i. 3 and *maor* in Gen. i. 14, 15. This distinction is carried over into the LXX. Exodus xxv. 6 “oil for the light” uses *maor*, the light bearer. “Light” (*or*) occurs but once in Exod. x. 23, whereas “light bearer” (*maor*) occurs seven times, and each time is used of the lampstand.

In Isa. xi. 2 we have the sevenfold anointing of Christ:--

“And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.”

He is pre-eminently “the faithful witness”, and all other witness must draw its inspiration from Him, the great Anointed, and receive its light from Him, the true light.

In the description of the lampstand we sometimes use the expression, “The seven-branched candlestick”. This is incorrect.

“Six (not seven) branches shall come out of the sides of it; three branches . . . out of the one side, and three out of the other side” (Exod. xxv. 32).

Though there were seven lamps, there were but six branches, the central stem supporting both its own lamp and the remaining branches. It is a fit symbol of the essentials for witness, whether in Israel or the church. **The central supporting and uniting shaft is the Lord Himself; the oil for the light, the Holy Spirit; and apart from union with the Lord, and the Spirit of God, we shall have neither light nor testimony. This sevenfold arrangement is well seen in the special testimony for the church of the mystery as given in Eph. iv. 4-6, where the one Lord is in the midst with the two sets of three on either side.** “Oil for the light” is a word that should make us examine our own testimony to see that the source of our illumination is that of which God can approve.

The two features of the holy place specified by Exodus xxv. are the table of shewbread and the golden lampstand. They stood over against each other. The light from the lamps would shine upon the pure gold of the table, the twelve unleavened loaves and the pure frankincense. Testimony in the holy place is not taken up with flesh and failure, but with the purpose of grace as seen in Christ.

One more article of furniture that was found in the holy place, viz., the altar of incense, is not mentioned here, but its description is deferred until after chapters xxviii. & xxix. These chapters are devoted to the consecration of the priests, and then, with the opening verse of chapter xxx., comes the first reference to the altar of incense. The reader will realize the necessity to abide by this divine order, and we therefore follow the leading of the Lord and likewise refrain from comment upon this third item until the proper time, which will be after chapters xxvi.-xxix. have been considered. This in itself, small detail as it may appear, is a practical outworking of what we realize underlies the words “oil for the light”, for true witness must always flow from faithful adherence to God’s Word given by inspiration.

May our witness ever conform to the essentials set forth in the beautiful symbol of the golden, oil fed lampstand in the holy place.

#61. The Tabernacle, its fabric and foundations (Exodus xxvi.).

While the typical teaching of the ark and the mercy-seat are at the very foundation of access to God, and while the table of shewbread and the lampstand speak so much of service, these are really subsidiary to the purpose expressed in Exod. xxv. 8: “Let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them”. The actual tabernacle is described in Exodus xxvi., and while the whole structure with its boards and coverings may be spoken of as the tabernacle, this title is used in a more limited sense of the innermost set of beautiful curtains described in Exod. xxvi. 1-6:

“Moreover thou shalt make the tabernacle with ten curtains of fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet; with cherubim of cunning work shalt thou make them ... it shall be one tabernacle.”

Tabernacle, tent, covering.

While it is not easy to distinguish between tabernacle and tent in the A.V., there is no confusion in the original. We find upon examining the Scripture that over the “tabernacle” was spread a “tent”, and that over this tent was placed a two-fold covering. The tent was made of goats’ hair, and is described in verses 7-14 (once called “covering”), the twofold covering of the tent being made of rams’ skins dyed red, and of badgers’ skins. We must therefore distinguish between the tabernacle proper, made of the glorious linen curtains, and the goats’ hair tent and covering of skins, as we find them distinguished for instance in Exod. xxxv. 11: “the tabernacle, his tent, and his covering”; also by comparing the record of Exod. xxvi. 6 & 11 together.

“And thou shalt make fifty taches of gold, and couple the curtains together with the taches: and it shall be *one tabernacle*.”

“And thou shalt make fifty taches of brass, and put the taches into the loops, and couple *the tent* together, that it may be one.”

In order that we may appreciate these three features we will set out the meaning of each word.

TABERNACLE. — *Mishkan*, from *shakan* = to dwell. Exodus xxv. 8; Gen. ix. 27 and Genesis iii. 24, “placed”.

TENT. — *Ohel* occurs frequently. Genesis iv. 20; Exod. xxxiii. 10.

COVERING. — *Miskseh*, from *kasah* = to cover, as in Exod. xl. 34; Isa. xi. 9.

We have here three features that must be taken into account in any attempt to discover the typical teaching of the tabernacle.

- (1) The tabernacle was essentially a dwelling place for God.
- (2) The pilgrim character of the children of God necessitated a tent and not a temple.
- (3) The beauty of this dwelling was not seen from the outside, but was veiled or covered. This covering was also a protection, for the word is first used in Gen. viii. 13, where we read that "Noah removed the *covering* of the ark".

The pilgrim nature of the tabernacle is witnessed by II Sam. vii. 2 & 6:

"See now, I dwell in an house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains."

"I have not dwelt in any house since the time I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt even to this day, but have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle."

Seeing that every detail of the tabernacle was made according to the pattern of heavenly things, we must not consider it too fanciful to see significance in the colours and materials that are so carefully specified.

Fine linen. — Of this material was made not only the tabernacle itself, but the hangings for the court, the ephod of the high priest, the girdle, the breastplate, the coat and the mitre. "The fine linen is the righteousness of saints", or as *ton hagian* might mean, "the righteousness of the holiest of all". It can truly be said that righteousness was the warp and woof of the dwelling place of God. It is a lesson that bears repetition, lest at any time we should be inclined to entertain doctrines that necessitate the lowering of this high standard.

Blue is intimately connected with the high priest by the "ephod all of blue" (Exod. xxviii. 31), and with the separation of Israel unto God (Numb. xv. 38). *Purple* is the colour of kings (Judges viii. 26 & Esther viii. 15). *Scarlet* speaks of redemption (Josh. ii. 18). The great Babylonian travesty seizes upon these symbols for its own ends.

"The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour" (Rev. xvii. 4).

"Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet" (Rev. xviii. 16).

The cherubim speak of the great goal of the ages, the restoration of man, and his dominion in and through Christ. This subject is too vast for a note of this character: the interested reader is referred to a fuller exposition of the matter in volume XV, page 181.

The tabernacle and its symbolism sets forth the only possible way whereby the lost paradise of Genesis iii. with its cherubim and flaming sword, its curse and its death, can ever be exchanged for the paradise of God with its river of life, where there shall be no more curse or death. That way was shown to our first parents before they left the garden, their covering of skin being perpetuated in the covering of rams' skins dyed red, a symbol too patent to need much proof. The fabric of the tabernacle therefore speaks of redemption and restoration, a king and a priest, and we have not found any N.T. passage that would lead us to alter that testimony.

The tent of goats' hair could never be, in the mind of an Israelite, dissociated from the great offerings that occupied so large a place in the daily life of the people. Goats were used as well as lambs for the passover (Exod. xii. 5); they were also used for the burnt offering, the peace offering, the sin offering, and for the great day of atonement, Lev. i. 10, iii. 12, iv. 23, and xvi. 5, &c. It was the purpose of God that the glorious prophecy of the tabernacle should ever be seen beneath the shadow of atonement, the tent of goats' hair.

Protecting this tent was a two-fold covering, one of rams' skins dyed red, the other of badgers' skins. *Rams' skins* alone would have spoken plainly of sacrifice and consecration (Exod. xxix. 27; Lev. v. 15; & xix. 21), but the red dye would emphasize sin and its cleansing (Isa. i. 18).

Badgers' skins are not so easy to interpret. The usual suggestion is that the beauty of the tabernacle was hidden from view, and only rough badgers' skins were seen, just as it is written that Israel saw no beauty in the Lord when He walked the earth in the days of His flesh. Apart from the tabernacle, badgers' skins are only mentioned once in the Scriptures, viz., Ezek. xvi. 10, where the other references to silver, linen, and embroidered work are considered by many to be an allusion to the tabernacle itself.

While modern translators consider the Hebrew word *tachash* to mean a badger or some such animal, this has not been always the case, for the voice of the ancient versions is practically unanimous in stating that the word stands for a colour. Josephus has the following remark in his *Antiquities*:

"There were also curtains made of skins above these which afforded covering or protection ... and great was the surprise of those who viewed these curtains at a distance, for they seemed not at all to differ from *the colour of the sky*" (book iii., chapter vi.).

The LXX and Jerome translate the word by *hyacinthus*, the "jacinth" of Rev. xxi. 20, which is azure or sky-blue. Other ancient versions, together with the Vulgate, translate the word by *ianthinus*, violet coloured. That hyacinth was an article of commerce, and used in the dyeing of dress material, can be seen by consulting the LXX of Ezek. xxvii. 24 & Isa. iii. 23. It will be remembered that Moses was instructed to make the tabernacle according to the pattern shown him in the mount (Exod. xxv. 9, 40; xxvi. 30; xxvii. 8; Acts vii. 44; & Heb. viii. 5). It is also very plain that the tabernacle in the wilderness was an example and shadow of "the heavenly things themselves", that "true tabernacle", which the Lord pitched, and not man (Heb. viii. 2, 5; ix. 23, 24). May we not have in this fact an explanation of the added covering, and the reason of its azure colour? The true external cover of the tabernacle was the one of rams' skins dyed red, the superimposed covering of blue representing heaven itself in which the true tabernacle really existed. This was but an anticipation in type of Solomon's prayer: "Hear Thou in heaven Thy dwelling place". There are many other features of interest in the details revealed in this wonderful structure that we must leave to the reader to investigate, while we notice briefly the framework, foundations, and the vail, before concluding this survey.

Golden boards and silver sockets.

The walls and framework of the tabernacle were made of *shittim* wood (or as the LXX renders it "incorruptible wood"), overlaid with gold. Forty-eight boards were used altogether, twenty on either side, six across the back, and two to form the corners in some way not revealed. These boards were held in place by a series of bars and rings, and the boards terminated at the bases in two tenons or "hands" that fitted into silver sockets placed in the earth to receive them. When we read in John i. 14, "The Word was made flesh, and tabernacled among us", we can readily see in the gold and the wood a type of the true deity and the sinless humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ, while the sockets of silver are explained in the book of Exodus himself. In chapter xxx. 11-16 we find that every man of Israel gave for the ransom of his soul a half shekel of silver. This atonement money was appointed for the service of the tabernacle. Exodus xxxviii. 25-28 tells us how this silver was used. One hundred sockets of silver weighing one talent each were made of this atonement money, and constituted the great foundation upon which the whole typical fabric rested. No words of ours are necessary to illuminate the lesson here. Fine linen and silver, righteousness and atonement, the warp, woof and foundation of the great plan of the ages!

The new and living way.

The record of Exodus xxvi. is not completed until a description is given of the vail and the door hanging. Both vail and hanging are made of the same material, the vail alone having the cherubim. Beautiful as this vail must have been, its presence spoke of man's failure. Before the typical prophecy

of the tabernacle could be fulfilled, that vail must be rent, that golden mercy-seat spattered with blood, such is the nature of sin and of holiness:--

“Having, therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us THROUGH THE VAIL, that is to say, His flesh” (Heb. x. 19, 20).

“And behold, the vail of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom” (Matt. xxvii. 51).

In the writings of the apostle Paul there is scarcely a reference to the earthly life of the Lord, but we find constant reference to His death:--

“In the body of His flesh through death” (Col. i. 22).

“The children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy ... and deliver” (Hebrews.ii.14,15).

Such is the continual testimony of Scripture. There is no gospel in the spotless life of the Son of God taken by itself, that only aggravates our sinfulness the more, and, like the vail, bars our access to God.

Through the *rent* vail, through that spotless life *laid down* in death is found a way into the holiest. Just as the tabernacle rested upon the silver sockets of atonement, and was covered by the rams' skins dyed red, so no part of the mighty purpose of the ages shall be accomplished apart from the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is a fundamental of all truth, yea a very chief corner stone.

We earnestly ask our younger readers, for whom this series is particularly written, to test all the modern “gospels” and schemes by this great exhibition of the mind and will of God. No one can believe its message and trifle with the vitals of the faith, which are everywhere proclaimed through type and symbol, by fabric, colour and position, to be the sacrificial death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

“Without shedding of blood is no remission For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true: but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us” (Heb. ix. 1-28).

#62. The altar and the gate (Exod. xxvii. 1-19).

We now leave the tabernacle with its glorious colouring, and its more glorious teaching, and step out into the court, to learn something more of the will and purpose of God. The whole of the chapter, with the exception of the last two verses, is occupied with a description of the outer court of the tabernacle, and one solitary object within it, namely, the brazen altar. In the chapters of Exodus that record the actual making of the tabernacle, we find one or two additions, as, for example, the altar of incense, which is described for the first time in xxx. 1, and in verse 18 of the same chapter we read for the first time of the laver of brass that also stood together with the brazen altar, between the door of the court and the door of the tabernacle. It has pleased God, however, to leave in all its grandeur the brazen altar as the one great essential feature, reserving for a later period the additional laver.

The brazen altar

Brass is an alloy of copper and zinc. Job speaks of the vein for the silver and of the iron that is taken out of the earth, and brass that is molten out of the stone. Dr. Bullinger's metrical version reads, “And copper may be smelted out of the ore” (Job. xxviii. 2). Again, in describing the land of Palestine, Moses says, “And from whose hills thou mayest dig brass” (Deut. viii. 9), which also refers to copper. It is

fairly certain that the “brass” of Scripture is the metal we know as copper. Just as the silver sockets of the tabernacle itself spoke of atonement, so the brazen sockets of the court would associate that place with the great altar of sacrifice. On the altar was offered the whole burnt offering, and it was called “an altar most holy” (Exod. xl 10). This altar was four-square, and had four horns, one on each corner. These horns served several related purposes:

- (1) The blood of the sacrifice was placed upon the horns of the altar with the finger of the priest.
- (2) Sacrificial animals were bound with cords to the horns of the altar.
- (3) The horns of the altar appear to have been considered a place of sanctuary. There is no definite statement to this effect in Scripture, but it seems from three passages that this was a custom from earliest times.

The latter appears from the case of the murderer, “Thou shalt take him from Mine altar, that he may die” (Exod. xxi. 14). Adonijah and Joab fled to the tabernacle, “and caught hold on the horns of the altar” (I Kings i. 50; ii. 28), although it availed them not, for no sacrifice was known under the law for the sin of murder. Jeremiah uses the horns of the altar in a tragic setting:

“The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond: it is graven upon the table of their heart, and upon the horns of your altars” (Jer. xvii. 1).

Sin took the place both of the law of God, “the tables of the heart”, and of His offerings, “the horns of the altar”. Punishment for sin is symbolized by the falling of the horns of the altar to the ground (Amos iii. 14). The ark and mercy seat within the holiest of all, and the brazen altar before the door of tabernacle, are perhaps the two most vital symbols in the whole structure.

The new and living way

Just as we have quoted the words “a new and living way” with reference to the veil, so we must quote them again with reference to the altar. The court of the tabernacle, which is described in the same xxviiith chapter of Exodus, surrounded the tabernacle itself on its four sides, and had one gate hung upon four pillars. It was impossible to enter into the tabernacle itself without passing the great brazen altar standing some nine feet in breadth and length and some five feet high. Surely one might say that over the tabernacle could have been written the mistaken quotation of Heb. ix. 22 once made in our hearing by a nervous Jewish boy, “Without shedding of blood *no admission*”. As a text it is garbled, but it nevertheless expresses a most important truth.

Further, there could exist no two thoughts in the mind of any child of Israel as to the purpose of the altar. The Hebrew word *mizbeach* means “a place of slaughter”, and the construction of the altar, and the articles that went with it, left no doubt as to its purpose. “Pans to receive ashes”; they speak of fire. “Basons and flesh hooks”; they speak of sacrifice. The five great offerings detailed in Leviticus.i.-vii., the offering on the day of atonement, the various offerings that formed part of the consecration of the priests, etc., etc., all were offered here. The great altar standing alone in the court of the tabernacle was a type of the cross of Christ. All the precious teaching concerning the sacrifice of Christ, the offering of Christ, without spot, to God, His being made sin for us, Who knew no sin, the shedding of His blood, and its connection with forgiveness and peace, the bearing of the cross upon the flesh and the world; all these blessed features were concentrated in this great altar that stood midway between the gate of the court and the door of the tabernacle. Its teaching lies at the dawn of human experience. The provision of the coats of skin for our first parents pointed to the same truth. A sacrifice that involved the shedding of life’s blood was constantly before the eye and the mind of every Israelite. This is a fundamental not of dispensational truth merely, but of all truth.

If we would reject those books of the N.T. that are committed to the necessity of a sacrifice by the shedding of blood, we should have to set aside the four Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, Paul's epistles to the Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, and Hebrews, the first epistle of Peter, and the first epistle of John, as well as the book of the Revelation. We should have, as a matter of fact, a record with neither beginning (Gospels), nor end (Revelation), foundation (Romans), nor top-stone (Ephesians). The Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms speak with one voice, that the way of the cross of Christ is the *one* way back to God. The blood of Christ is the pledge of the new covenant (Matt. xxvi. 28), and also the purchase price of the church of God (Acts xx. 28). It is the basis of propitiation (Rom. iii. 25), justification (v. 9), and communion (I Cor. x. 16). Redemption and forgiveness, access and peace are ours through the same shed blood (Eph. i. 7; ii. 13; Col. i. 20), and by that precious blood the overcomers at the end shall prevail (Rev. xii. 11). Christ's one sacrifice for sins, for ever, has been offered (Heb.x.12). Christ our passover has been sacrificed for us (I Cor. v. 7). He has given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour (Eph. v. 2). Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many (Heb. ix. 28).

The various offerings that were offered upon this brazen altar cannot be dealt with here. A fairly comprehensive study of them will be found in the series entitled "Redemption" now appearing in our pages. It may be a point worth noting that we have three spheres suggested in this tabernacle and its court:

- (1) The innermost, the holiest of all, entered by the high priest alone once every year.
- (2) The holy place, where the priests ministered daily.
- (3) The outer court.

The fine twined linen of the outer court speaks as loudly of righteousness as did the fabric of the tabernacle itself. The silver hooks and brazen sockets are both connected with atonement and sacrifice, and just as the veil spoke of Christ, so too He can be heard saying, "I am the door". From the innermost shrine of the tabernacle to the outermost gate post of the court, it can truly be said, "Christ is all", and anything that enforces that lesson of the ages is fundamental in the last degree. Without the altar and its offerings that tabernacle would have stood unserved, unentered, empty. There would have been no ministering priests, no sweet-smelling incense, no table of remembrance, no reconciliation, no propitiation. Without the cross of Christ and His great sacrifice "heaven itself" would never be entered by any child of Adam. No single soul would ever perform one act of service to the Lord, there would be no acceptance and no fellowship, no forgiveness and no peace.

As we ponder these things and learn these lessons from the brazen altar in Israel's court, may we be able to say with deeper reality than ever before:

"When I survey the wondrous cross,
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride."

#63. "Crowned with glory and honour" (Exodus xxviii.).

After the tabernacle has been described, and the chief articles of furniture specified, we are permitted to learn something concerning the high priest's ministry by a lengthy description of his garments.

Called of God, as was Aaron.

No child of God to-day is a priest, neither is his ministry priestly, nevertheless it is well to remember that God reserves the right to call and to choose as well as to fit those who are to be His ministers. While this may not be so obvious to-day, it is not the less real, and if we could see as God sees, there may still be much strange fire offered in His service. Have we not met a brother obviously unfitted for

speaking in public, but eminently fitted for some other sphere of God's service, spoiling both his own witness and hindering that of others by failure to keep in mind the Scriptures: "To every man his work", and "Every man according to his several ability"? This feature is stressed in connection with the appointment of the priesthood of Israel:

"And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron" (Heb. v. 4).

"Take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto Me in the priest's office, even Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's sons" (Exod. xxviii. 1).

Two aspects of the high priest's work are discovered by comparing:

- (1) "That he may minister UNTO ME" (Exod. xxviii. 1).
- (2) "For every high priest taken from among men, is ordained FOR MEN in things pertaining TO GOD" (Heb. v. 1).

The claims of both God and man were met in the ministry of the high priest. Hence in Hebrews we have Christ presented not only as high priest, but also as mediator: not only meeting all the claims of God, but ever living to make intercession for His people.

As we read the names Nadab and Abihu, we call to mind their transgression and their solemn end. From one point of view their action was but the repetition of the high priest's ministry, but from another point of view it was a willful intrusion and disobedience. In Exodus xxiv. these two sons of Aaron had been initiated into something of the awfulness of "worship", and had seen the glory of the Lord as a "devouring fire" (xxiv. 17). In Lev. ix. 24 we read: "And there came fire out from before the Lord, and consumed (devoured, same word) upon the altar the burnt offering". Yet in spite of this reminder of the "devouring fire" (of Exodus xxiv.), Lev. x. 1, 2 opens with the account of the offering of Nadab and Abihu of strange fire, "which the Lord commanded them not", with the awful result: "And there went out fire from the Lord and *devoured them*, and they died before the Lord".

The strangeness of the fire consisted simply in the fact that Nadab and Abihu had never been called of God nor commanded of God to this service. Is there not a need for every one of us to put up the apostle's prayer: "Lord, what wilt Thou have *me* do?".

Holiness, glory and beauty.

The garments that are described in Exodus xxviii. are called "holy garments", and were "for glory and beauty". Holiness opens and closes this description, for the gold plate on the mitre described in xxviii. 36 bore the legend "Holiness to the Lord". Holiness, sanctification and cognate words enter largely into N.T. doctrine, so that it will be for our edification to obtain some idea of the basic meaning of this word. The root idea of *kodesh* ("holy") is "separated or set apart", and while holiness cannot be thought of apart from the highest moral and spiritual qualities, it is nevertheless a fact that such qualities are not inherent in the original conception. Leviticus xx. 24-26 will bring out this basic idea of separation fairly clearly:

"I am the LORD your God, which *have separated* you from other people ... ye shall *put a difference* between clean beasts and unclean ... ye shall be *holy* unto Me, for I the LORD am holy, and *have severed* you from other people, that ye should be Mine."

Again in Deut. xix. 2 & 7 we read: "Thou shalt *separate* three cities"; and in Joshua xx. 7 this command is obeyed: "and they *sanctified* (margin) these cities". Jeremiah xvii. 22 speaks of "hallowing" the Sabbath day, that is separating it from the rest of the week, setting it apart for God's

service. The same word is used in Jer. xxii. 7 for “preparing” destroyers, the idea of separation being constant, but the N.T. conception of sanctification is entirely absent from the passage. Yet once more. When Paul said in Gal. i. 15 that he had been “separated” from his mother’s womb, he was making an evident allusion to that other prophet of the nations, Jeremiah, who had been “sanctified” from the womb (Jer. i. 5). To make the matter certain we must record the awful fact that such unholy creatures as Sodomites are nevertheless called *qadesh*, simply because they were “set apart”, but surely not “sanctified”, to the abominable service of Canaanitish gods (I Kings xiv. 24; II Kings xxiii. 7; Hos. iv. 14, “separate”; Job xxxvi. 14, “unclean”). We must therefore always allow in our interpretations of saintship and sanctification this element of separation unto God. With this in mind II Cor. vi. 14-17 (with its insistence upon “being separate” as well as not touching the unclean thing) may be remembered as “*perfecting* holiness in the fear of God” (II Cor. vii. 1).

The holy garments were “for glory and beauty”. We call to mind such passages as “the beauty of holiness” and the like, but the connection with the N.T. is of greater importance just now. The LXX translates this phrase by *timē kai doxa*, “honour and glory”, and Heb. ii. 9 & II Pet. i. 17 are seen to be antitypical. Peter’s reference is to the mount of transfiguration, where Christ the King is seen as Christ the High Priest. This is important. We hear much of the fact that Matthew is the Gospel of the Kingdom, but we do well to remember that it will be a kingdom of priests (Rev. i. 6) when it is established, and that Christ is the Priest-King. We have given elsewhere the structure of Matthew’s Gospel, and have shown the twofold character of its teaching — we will just revive the memory so far as to draw attention to the two time divisions, viz., Matt. iv. 17 & xvi. 21, and the two occasions when the voice from heaven testified: “This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased” (Matt. iii. 17; xvii. 5). It is in the second, the priestly section, that the Lord first speaks of His suffering and death. Uzziah was stricken with leprosy for daring to unite the office of king and priest, there being but one Priest after the order of Melchisedec, even the Lord Jesus Christ.

There are six items of clothing specified in Exod. xxviii. 4, to which may be added the “bonnets” and “breeches” of verses 40 & 42, making eight items in all. Some of these garments need no special comment: those that seem to call for exposition are the *ephod*, with its shoulder stones and breastplate, and the *robe* with its bells and pomegranates.

THE EPHOD. — The word is taken unaltered from the Hebrew, and comes from *aphad*, “to bind”, being found in Exod. xxix. 5 where “gird” is *aphad*. The ephod seems to have been made of two pieces, back and front, and its chief use was to provide a beautiful and efficient holder for the breastplate. Scripture records that Aaron the *high priest*, Samuel the *prophet* (I Sam. ii. 18), and David the *king* (II Sam. vi. 14) wore the ephod, prophetically setting forth the fulness of Christ as Prophet, Priest and King, Who shall rule and reign in the coming kingdom. The wearing of the ephod, one of the garments of “glory and beauty” or “honour and glory”, gives point to the words of I Sam. ii. 28-30:

“Did I choose him out of all the tribes of Israel to be My priest ... to wear an ephod before Me ... Be it far from Me, for them that honour Me I will honour, and they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed.”

Two ounces of gold, each set with an onyx stone, and engraved with the names of the children of Israel according to their birth, were placed upon the shoulders of the ephod, that Aaron should bear their names before the Lord upon his two shoulders for a memorial. This was one memorial ever associated with the ephod. The other was connected with the breastplate. This set apart a special stone for each tribe, and Aaron bore them upon his heart for a memorial before the Lord continually when he went in unto the holy place. Upon his shoulders, upon his heart: surely no words of ours are needed in explanation of this beautiful symbol of an equally blessed fact.

URIM AND THUMMIM. — A marvellous amount of ingenuity has been expended in an attempt to explain how the Urim and Thummim gave the Lord's answer, or "judgment". Perhaps the one most satisfactory is that given in *The Companion Bible* margin. The note, however, is too long to transcribe here. It suggests that the breastplate being "doubled" (Exod. xxviii. 16), was a bag in which the Urim and Thummim were placed, and that Prov. xvi. 33 makes reference to it, the "lap" being the "bosom" and referring to the breastplate. The two Hebrew words Urim and Thummim mean Lights and Perfections, and while we may not know exactly how the answers were given or how these titles are appropriate, it suffices that it was efficient, while the LXX translation "Manifestation and Truth" points us on to the Holy Scriptures, the Divine Oracles, where we too may obtain infallible guidance. **If we could only and ever keep in mind the close association that this makes between the High Priest and the Scriptures, every study would become a sanctuary, the spirit would rejoice as the understanding was illuminated, worship and work, grammar and grace, glossaries and glory would be blessedly intermingled, and the lexicon and concordance would be but rungs in the ladder that lead from earth to heaven, to the right hand of the Majesty on high.**

THE ROBE OF THE EPHOD. — The robe of the ephod was "all of blue", the colour of heaven, and the sign of separation and holiness (Numb. xv. 38). This robe was made of one piece, and the hole through which the head came, presumably, was bound with woven work "that it be not rent" (Exod. xxviii. 32). Psalm xxii. says: "They cast lots upon My vesture" (18). This was fulfilled at the foot of the cross. The coat that belonged to the Saviour was without a seam, woven from the top throughout; they said therefore, "Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it" (John xix. 23, 24), and there can be little doubt that here was an indication of the High Priest, Prophet, and King Who was at that moment offering the one great sacrifice for sin.

Beneath the hem or skirt of the blue robe was arranged a decoration consisting of pomegranates in blue, purple and scarlet, and golden bells. These were to be worn by Aaron when he went into the holy place and when he came out: "His sound shall be heard ... that he die not". This is the first of a series of most solemn injunctions connected with priestly service. We read that the priestly garments must be worn by Aaron and his sons, "that they bear not iniquity and die" (Exod. xxviii. 43); that hands and feet must be washed; that wine must be avoided; that Aaron was not to come within the veil at all times, and that when he did come he must carry incense with him; that the priest must be kept scrupulously free from uncleanness, and that the Kohathites must not see the holy thing when they are covered, all these injunctions being followed by the word, "that he die not" or "lest he die". **It is sometimes said that these golden bells were a means of assuring Israel of the active ministry of the high priest when he went within the veil once a year on the day of atonement. This cannot be, for the simple reason that a different set of linen clothes was worn on that occasion.** No, the bells and pomegranates were not "lest they fear", but "lest he die"; such is the absolute need of all the acceptableness set forth by the symbols of fruitfulness and pleasant sound.

Golden bells and pomegranates, lest he die! As we weigh over these things, may we realize more fully than ever the awfulness of approach unto the living God, and while rejoicing in an access that is with "boldness and confidence", let us never forget that we have this boldness and access with confidence "*by the faith of Him*". The fulness of our acceptance, the freeness of grace, and the glorious liberty of our calling should never, surely, be abused or minimize the infinite preciousness of the blood that has been shed, and the tremendous responsibility shouldered on our behalf by our glorious Head, the Lord Jesus Christ.

#64. Consecration (Exod. xxviii. 40 - xxix. 46).
“Put all in their hands ... receive them of their hands.”

The garments of “glory and beauty”, outward symbols of spiritual realities, have been described in the earlier part of Exodus xxviii. The priests were not to treat these symbolic garments without due regard, for upon the wearing of them in the course of their ministry depended the life of the ministers.

“And they shall be upon Aaron, and upon his sons, when they come in unto the tabernacle of the congregation, or when they come near unto the altar to minister in the holy place; that they bear not iniquity, and die” (Exod. xxviii. 43).

Such, however, is the holiness of God, and such the ministry of the true High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ, that the earthly types were caused to pass through a further series of ceremonials of consecration and cleansing, that internal as well as external fitness might be stressed.

The whole story of this consecration is punctuated with sacrifice. There is so much detail in this ceremonial consecration that it will be of service to set out the passage in structure form, so that the essential features may be made more evident. It will be seen that the passage actually commences at xxviii. 40, where the “consecration and sanctification” of Aaron and his sons are first introduced.

Exodus xxviii. 40 - xxix. 46.

- A | xxviii. 40 - xxix. 1. Aaron and his sons.
Consecration and sanctification commanded.
- B | xxix. 1-3. Materials for ceremony. Bullock, rams, bread and oil.
- C | xxix. 4-30. The act of consecrating and sanctifying.
 - a1 | 4-9. Consecration. Wash, clothe, crown, and anoint.
An age-abiding statute.
 - b1 | 10-21. Means. - Bullock . . . Sin offering.
Ram Burnt offering.
Ram Blood and oil.
 - a2 | 21. Sanctification. Blood and oil.
 - b2 | 22-27. Means. - Ram Wave offering.
Ram Heave offering.
 - a3 | 28-30. Consecration. Garments for succession.
An age-abiding statute.
- B | xxix. 31-41. The ram and bread eaten.
The bullock and lamb, with oil, flour and wine offered.
- A | xxix. 42-46. Aaron and his sons.
Consecration and sanctification achieved.
I will meet. I will sanctify. I will dwell.
I will be their God. They shall know.

We are too conscious of our limitations to pretend to any degree of exactness in such a complicated passage, but we trust the earnest reader will be helped in the study of this important theme by the analysis of the chapter here presented. By comparing the opening and closing members A, we realize the goal and object of this consecration and sanctification — “I will meet”; “I will dwell”; “They shall know”. Members marked B show the symbolic materials used, while under C the actual ceremonial is enacted. It will be observed that consecration and sanctification are kept distinct. Before proceeding we must understand the word translated “consecration”. “Sanctify” we already know to have as its basis the idea of “separation” or “setting apart”.

Filled to the full in Him.

Male yad (consecrate) means literally, “to fill the hand”, and is taken from this ceremony:

“And thou shalt take of the ram ... and *put all* in the hands of Aaron ... and thou shalt *receive them* of their hands, and burn them upon the altar for a burnt offering, for a sweet savour before the LORD” (Exod. xxix. 22-25).

Put all in their hands ... receive them of their hands. What room for self does such “consecration” leave? As surely as the ram, and the unleavened bread speak of the offering of Christ in all His spotless acceptableness, so surely this teaches that consecration is not the development of the flesh or even the growth of the spirit, but it is the taking of the fulness of Christ, “filling the hand”, and then bringing all that fulness back in loving service to the Lord.

The Philippians’ ministry to Paul is spoken of as an “an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God”. This is the “receiving of their hands”. But this passage from Philippians iv. is immediately followed by the words: “But my God shall supply all your need, according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus” (Phil. iv. 19). This is the fulness first of all placed in their hands. Consecration, like service, is in line with the words of the O.T.: “of Thine own have we given Thee”. Here is true consecration:

“Of His fulness have all we received” (John i. 16).

“Ye are filled to the full in Him” (Col. ii. 10).

When we ponder that which actually filled Aaron’s hands we may see all the more clearly what true consecration means.

“Thou shalt take of the ram the fat and the rump, and the fat that covereth the inwards, and the caul above the liver, and the two kidneys, and the fat that is upon them, and the right shoulder; for it is a ram of consecration: and one loaf of bread, and one cake of oiled bread, and one wafer out of the basket of the unleavened bread that is before the LORD” (Exod. xxix. 22, 23).

The blood of the ram was taken and put upon the tip of Aaron’s right ear, upon the right hand thumb, and upon the great toe of the right foot. Oil and blood were also sprinkled upon Aaron’s garments; all this was to SANCTIFY. Then, *when sanctified*, Aaron’s hands are filled that he may be *consecrated*. This is important. Only sanctified hands can be filled with all the fulness of Christ in consecrated service. Sanctification is here seen to be twofold. First, by the blood on the ear, hand and foot. Then by oil in a general sprinkling. Sanctification by the Spirit follows sanctification by the atonement. To reverse this order is to court disaster. The undue emphasis upon the work of the *Spirit* apart from the sanctification once for all by the blood of Christ is not of God.

The wave and the heave offerings.

“Thou shalt sanctify the breast of the wave offering, and the shoulder of the heave offering, which is waved, and which is heaved up” (Exod. xxix. 27).

Terumah, the heave offering, is essentially something lifted up, for *rum* means to lift up, to exalt:

“Let us *exalt* His Name together” (Psa. xxxiv. 3).

“Be thou *exalted*, O Lord, above the heavens” (Psa. lvii. 5).

Tenuphah, the wave offering, is derived from the word *nuph*, which means to move in a horizontal rather than in a vertical direction. It is the movement of a sickle (Deut.xxiii.25) and a sieve (Isa.xxx.28). The “sending” of rain (Psa. lxviii. 9: margin, “shake out”) suggests the sieve also. The idea of the wave offering seems, like the four horns of the altar, to include the four corners of the earth, whereas the

heave offering is directed upwards to God. The high priest bore the names of Israel “on his two shoulders” and “on his heart”; these two offerings, the one “the breast”, the wave offering, the other “the shoulder”, the heave offering, appear to have the same lesson to teach. True consecration will alone enable any of us to “bear one another’s burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ”. It is here in this ceremony of consecration that we read of the “drink offering” (Exod. xxix. 40), and to this the apostle alludes when he says,

“Yea, and if I be offered (*poured out* as a drink offering) upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all” (Phil. ii. 17).

Consecration, then, in the Lord’s service, has at least two aspects. There is (1) the complete appropriation of the fulness of Christ, and (2) its rendering back in acceptable service. The O.T. ceremonial says, “Fill the hand ... put all in the hands ... receive them of their hands”. The N.T. realization says: “It is God Which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure” (Phil.ii.13).

Our walk may be a remembrance of the offering of Christ (Eph. v. 2). Our life in the flesh may be His life lived in us (Gal. ii. 20). Our whole ministry may be a savour of Christ (II Cor. ii. 15).

True consecration and true equipment is a hand, a heart, and a life filled with Christ. All other so called "consecrations" have about them some element of “strange fire”.

If our service were ever and only the rendering back to God of the fulness of Christ, originally and graciously given, what service it would be! May the contemplation of this chapter be owned and used to that end for writer and reader.

#65. “Ye shall know that I am the Lord” (Exodus)

Before we leave Exodus xxix. one phrase occurring in verse 46 demands our attention:

“And they shall know that I am the LORD their God, that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them: I am the LORD their God.”

The expression: “they shall know that I am the Lord” is one that comes over and over again in different settings, and it seems a fitting opportunity to pause here and give it consideration. It occurs first in Exodus in connection with the promise of redemption, it runs through Exodus, both in connection with Israel and the Egyptians, and the closing references are connected with sanctification (xxix. 46 & xxxi. 13). Seven references deal with Israel, seven with the plagues of Egypt, and two have to do with individuals — Jethro and Moses.

The seven passages that are concerned with Israel are as follows:

A1		vi. 6, 7.	I will redeem ... ye shall know.	
A2		viii. 22.	I will sever the land of Goshen.	\
		xi. 7.	The Lord put a difference between Egyptians and Israel	/
		xvi. 6.	Provision of Quails	\
		xvi. 12.	Provision of Quails and Manna	/
		xxix. 4.	Sanctification. Dwell among Israel	\
		xxx. 13.	Sanctification. Sign of the Sabbath	/

The seven passages that are concerned with Egyptians are similar in arrangement:

A1		vii. 5.	Egyptians shall know.	
A2		vii. 17.	Plague connected with river	\
		viii. 10.	Plague lifted from waters	/
		ix. 14.	Plagues sent upon heart	\
		x. 2.	Signs wrought among them	/
		xiv. 4.	God obtains honour upon Pharaoh at Red Sea	\
		xiv. 8.	God obtains honour upon Pharaoh at Red Sea	/

Thus there is a twofold way in which this mighty lesson of the ages is impressed. The Lord's people learn by the judgments that fall upon the ungodly, and by the Lord's own dealing with themselves. The ungodly, too, are to learn this lesson, even though in their case it will not bring similar blessings. We are more concerned just now, however, with the Lord's people, and the way in which they are led along this pathway of knowledge. The first step must, in the nature of things, be redemption.

“By My name Jehovah was I not KNOWN to them ... I will REDEEM you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments ... and ye shall KNOW that I am the Lord your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians” (Exod. vi. 3-7).

The patriarchs certainly heard and used the name Jehovah. Abram “called on the name of Jehovah” (Gen. xiii. 4). Abram said, “I have lifted up mine hand unto Jehovah” (xiv. 2), and named the mountain of his great trial of faith, “Jehovah-Jireh” (xxii. 14). Isaac “intreated Jehovah for his wife” (xxv. 21), and to Jacob the revelation was made at Bethel: “I am Jehovah, God of Abraham thy father” (xxviii.13). Yet it could be said that the name Jehovah was not *known* unto them.

This immediately revolutionizes our idea of what knowledge is. How did Israel *know* that name in a way that was radically different from any experience of man hitherto? The answer must be found in their actual deliverance from Egypt, and the manifestation of the power of the Lord in that deliverance. His judgment upon the gods of Egypt, and their oppressors, His remembrance of His covenant, and, moreover, the fact that the redemption from Egypt was not only by power, but through the shedding of blood — all this, and more, led to the point wherein it could be said that Israel *knew* the Lord. This is a foundation truth still. Men may be *acquainted* with the “God of Creation” and “Providence”, but to *know* Him necessitates an experience of redeeming grace.

The next step that Israel had to take in this deepening knowledge was the lesson of separation, viz., “I will sever” (Exod. viii. 22), “the Lord put a difference” (xi. 7). This distinction is twofold: (1) In connection with divine judgment. (2) In connection with human judgment. This “severing” of the land of Goshen from the rest of Egypt, and so separating it from the sphere of judgment, is called a “sign”, and the words “I will put a division” read, as the margin shows, “I will put a redemption”. One of the first great results of redemption is this complete separation from judgment. “There is therefore now *no condemnation*.” Even though the child of God be chastened by the Lord, he cannot be condemned with the world (I Cor. xi. 32).

The Lord, Who “severed” Israel from the divine judgments, “put a difference” between the Egyptians and the Israelites, in that He would not allow even a dog to move his tongue against them. In later prophecies this blessing is expanded.

“No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of Me, saith the LORD” (Isaiah.liv.17).

This twofold difference was made with the object that,

- (1) “Thou (Pharaoh) mayest know that I am the Lord in the midst of the earth” (Exod.viii.22).
- (2) “Ye (Israel) may know how that the Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel (Exod. xi. 7).

Israel had still more to learn of the Lord before their lesson was complete, and the next step in it was reserved for the wilderness. The Lord Who delivers from the bondage of sin has pledged Himself to lead us every step of the way to glory. This is all involved in the work of redemption. If we look back once more to Exodus vi., we shall find that the Lord’s activities do not finish with the deliverance from Egypt, but He goes on to say: “And I will bring you into the land, concerning the which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob” (Exod. vi. 8). Here Israel failed. They said: “Ye have brought us forth unto this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger” (xvi. 3). Now, ordinary common sense should have prevented such foolish reasoning, but unbelief is ever illogical. If God had indeed delivered Israel by such a series of marvels, even to the crossing of the Red Sea dry shod, surely He could provide for the pilgrim journey; so Moses said:

“At even, then ye shall know that the LORD hath brought you out from the land of Egypt” (Exod. xvi. 6). “Ye shall know that I am the LORD” (xvi. 12).

This lesson is expressed in more doctrinal language in such passages as the following:

“He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?” (Rom. viii. 32).

“For all things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's” (I Cor. iii. 21-23).

The last step of the lesson is connected with sanctification:

“I will sanctify the tabernacle ... and the altar, I will sanctify also both Aaron and his sons ... I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God. And they shall know that I am the LORD their God, that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them: I am the LORD their God” (Exod. xxix. 44-46).

“Verily My Sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the LORD that doth sanctify you” (Exod. xxxi. 13).

The knowledge of the Lord, though it commences with redemption, is not complete until the object of redemption is attained, viz., the sanctification of the people, and the dwelling of the Lord with them. We shall never have an adequate knowledge of the Lord unless His intense desire for the full heart-confidence of His people is appreciated. In the full sense, Israel have yet this final phase to learn. When the “tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them” (Rev. xxi. 3), when the earth is “filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord” (Hab. ii. 14), when the life of the ages is really entered, then the knowledge of the Lord will at length be attained.

“And this is life eternal (*aionion*), with the object that (*hina*) they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom Thou hast sent” (John xvii. 3).

Without going into the references to “knowing” in John xvii., we suggest the following supplement to the seven passages in Exodus to all readers who desire to pursue these studies:

To know (John xvii.)

A1		xvii. 3. "Life <i>aionion</i> , that they might know Thee."	
A2		7. "They have known ... all things of Thee."	\
		8. "They have known surely that I came out from Thee."	/
		23. "That the world may know that Thou hast sent Me."	\
		25. "The world hath not known Thee."	/
		25. "I have known Thee."	\
		25. "These have known that Thou hast sent Me."	/

In addition to the sevenfold testimony in Exodus, both to Israel and the Egyptians, there is a twofold personal testimony (Jethro and Moses) that rounds off the record.

"Blessed be the LORD, Who hath delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of Pharaoh, Who hath delivered the people from under the hand of the Egyptians. Now i know that the LORD is greater than all gods: for in the thing wherein they dealt proudly He was above them" (Exodus.xviii.10,11).

"Now therefore, i pray Thee, if i have found grace in Thy sight, shew me now Thy way, that i may KNOW Thee, that i may find grace in Thy sight: and consider that this nation is Thy people. And He said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest ... so shall we be separated, i and Thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth" (Exod. xxxiii. 13-16).

Here are two points of view. Jethro learns the infinite greatness of the Lord as related to the gods of Egypt. Moses even though he had learned this, presses on to better knowledge. "Shew me Thy way, that i may know Thee", and that ultimate way is a way of fellowship, "My presence", and that fellowship is a way of peace, "I will give you rest". This fellowship, in its turn, manifested Israel's sanctification, "Thou goest with us, so shall we be separated".

Though we may have touched upon the references in Exodus, a great field yet lies before us. The prophecy of Ezekiel, for example, contains at least 70 references to different experiences of judgment and grace, "that they may know that I am the Lord". We must leave untouched the blessed results that follow from a knowledge of the Lord; this must form the theme of another paper. We can, however, at all times take the attitude of the apostle when he said, "That i may know Him".

#66. The knowledge of the Lord.

Before we continue our studies in the closing chapters of Exodus, it seems necessary that the subject opened in the previous paper should not be left without the sequel supplied by the N.T.

In Exodus we have seen the knowledge of the Lord, commencing in redemption, progressing through separation and pilgrim supply, and culminating in sanctification. If we gather up some of the teaching of the N.T. upon the subject of knowledge, we shall have before us the same truth in terms applicable to ourselves. No one who realizes the truth of Eph. iv. 18 can ever speak slightly either of ignorance or knowledge:--

"Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the IGNORANCE that is in them."

This ignorance alienates from the very life of God! It does not mean merely a little less culture. The passage speaks of the Gentiles, and Romans i. contains the genesis of their defection:--

“Even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them up to a reprobate mind” (Rom. i. 28).

Israel likewise failed in connection with knowledge:--

“They have a zeal of God, but not according to *knowledge*, for they being *ignorant* of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God” (Rom. x. 2, 3).

The great prayers of the prison epistles give a high place to knowledge:--

“The spirit of wisdom and revelation in the *knowledge* of Him that ye may *know*” (Eph. i. 17, 18).

“And to *know* the love of Christ, which passeth *knowledge*” (Eph. iii. 19).

“And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in *knowledge* and in all judgment” (Phil. i. 9).

“That I may *know* Him, and the power of His resurrection” (Phil. iii. 10).

“That ye might be filled with the *knowledge* of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding” (Col. i. 9).

The results of the true application of this knowledge must be considered also. Looking again at these great prayers, we find that this knowledge is for a very high and holy purpose. The Ephesian prayers lead on to “fulness”:--

“The fulness of Him that filleth all in all” (Eph. i. 23).

“That ye may be filled unto all the fulness of God” (Eph. iii. 19),

and the path to this goal is pointed out as a result of knowing the exceeding greatness of resurrection power to us-ward who believe, and of the comprehension with all saints of that which really passes all knowledge — the love of Christ. This same knowledge is to enable us to

“approve things that are excellent (try the things that differ), so that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ” (Phil. i. 10).

This is a goal that must commend itself to every renewed mind, and if “knowledge” can help towards it, it is indeed of supreme value. The acquisition of knowledge for its own sake is nowhere taught in Scripture. The Colossian prayer seeks knowledge: “That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing” (Col. i. 10). What Paul thought of this glorious knowledge is seen in Phil. iii. 8: “Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the *knowledge* of Christ Jesus my Lord”, and the prayer of the Colossian epistle leads on to “increasing in the knowledge of God”.

Sin entered into the world in connection with the tree of knowledge, and the new man “is renewed in *knowledge* after the image of Him that created him” (Col. iii. 10). The light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ is the very “gospel of the glory of Christ” that the god of this age seeks to veil.

The climax and crown of the perfect man is expressed in the words: “Then shall I *know* even as also I am known” (I Cor. xiii. 12). The sophistry and the intolerance of the Pharisees could not stand before the simple testimony of the man born blind: “One thing I *know*, that, whereas I was blind, now I see” (John ix. 25). How much service will fail to stand the test of that day, because the deep lesson learned by Paul and expressed in the words of Rom. vii. 18 has never been learned: “For *I know* that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing.”

What a comfort resides in the blessed words: “*We know* that all things work together for good to them that love God” (Rom. viii. 28). Think of the repeated phrase — “we know” — in John’s epistle with its blessed assurance:--

“*We know* that when He shall appear we shall be like Him.”

“*We know* that He was manifested to take away our sins.”

“*We know* that we have passed from death unto life.”

“*We know* that the Son of God is come”,

think, too, upon the wealth of doctrine, practice and consolation that is hung upon the one word “knowing”: “*knowing* that tribulation worketh patience” (Rom. v. 3). Without this knowledge glorying in tribulations would be impossible.

“*Knowing* this, that our old man is crucified with Christ” (Rom. vi. 6).

“*Knowing* that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more” (Rom. vi. 9).

Without this knowledge who would contemplate the reckoning of self as dead without shrinking back with dread? So Rom. xiii. 11; II Cor. iv. 14; Gal. ii. 16; Eph. vi. 8, 9; I Thess. i. 4; II Pet. i. 20, iii. 3, and other places. What was Paul’s great stay when all Asia left him? when no man stood by him? when the truth for which he had lived, suffered and was about to die was forsaken and betrayed?

“Nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I KNOW Whom I have believed” (II Tim. i. 12).

While it is perfectly true that there is a knowledge that puffeth up, a knowledge that is nothing worth, a knowledge that is proud, selfish and false, is this any reason why we should renounce the true because of the counterfeit? “I would not have you ignorant” is still written. “Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ” is still true. “Add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge” is still a divine command. As with Israel of old so now. Redemption, separation, pilgrimage, sanctification are all stages in the knowledge of the Lord, and the glorious goal is foreshadowed in Israel’s prophetic history:--

“After those days, saith the Lord, I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people, and they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; *for they shall all know Me*, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord; *for I will forgive* their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more” (Jer. xxxi. 33, 34).

#67. The altar of incense, or acceptance through Christ.

The first article of furniture for the tabernacle that is specified is the ark of the testimony; the last is the golden altar of incense. The ark, together with the mercy-seat, speak of righteousness and atonement; the altar of incense speaks of intercession and acceptance.

Prayer is likened to incense in Psa. cxli. 2: “Let my prayer be set forth as incense, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice”. In Psa. lxvi. 15 the word “incense” is used in a way that at first appears somewhat strange: “I will offer unto Thee burnt sacrifices of fatlings with the incense of rams”. We find, however, that this word is translated “perfume” in Exod. xxx. 35, and in its verbal form (*qatar*) not only means “to burn incense” (as in Exod. xxx. 7), but to burn “fat” (Exod. xxix. 13), and “the bullock” of the burnt offering (Lev. i. 9).

The N.T. references to incense associate it with prayer:--

“The people were praying without at the time of incense” (Luke i. 10).

“And another angel came and stood by the altar, having a golden censer; and to him much incense was given, that he should give it to the prayers of all the saints on that golden altar which is before the throne. And the smoke of the incense went up with the prayers of the saints out of the hand of the angel before God” (Rev. viii. 3, 4).

The expression, “give it to the prayers” — a somewhat clumsy rendering of the dative case — is perhaps best explained, with *Vitringa* and others, as: “that he might give the effect of incense to the prayers of the saints”. *His* intercession makes *our* prayers possible.

This incense is variously described in Scripture. It is called “*perpetual* incense before the Lord” (Exod. xxx. 8). Like the shewbread that was to be before the Lord “alway” (Exod. xxv. 30), or the breastplate upon the High Priest’s breast “continually” (Exod. xxviii. 30), or the cloud by day and fire by night that guaranteed the presence of the Lord with Israel “alway” (Numb. ix. 16), the symbol of Christ’s intercession and perfect acceptance was to be “alway” before the Lord. “He *ever* liveth to make intercession for us.”

Many times it is called “sweet incense”. The margin of Exod. xxx. 7 gives it as “incense of *spices*”. This is the correct rendering, and refers to the special composition of the incense given by the Lord, as we read in Exod. xxxvii. 29: “And he made the holy anointing oil, and the pure incense of sweet spices, according to the work of the apothecary”. The ingredients of this incense are given in Exod. xxx. 34, 35:

“Take unto thee sweet spices, stacte (*netaph*, a drop, a gum), and onycha (*shecheleph*, shell of the perfume crab), and galbanum (*chelbenah*, an aromatic gum); these sweet spices with pure frankincense; of each shall there be a like weight. And thou shalt make it a perfume (incense), a confection after the art of the apothecary, tempered (Heb. salted) together, pure and holy.”

The Companion Bible states that there are five ingredients in the incense, evidently counting “sweet spices” as one. Its repetition after the three cited by name, however, would lead one to read: “Take unto thee sweet spices, namely, stacte”, etc. The word “tempered” (*malach*) literally means “salted”, and some, including *Maimonides*, maintain that salt was actually an ingredient. This, however, does not seem to be the truth. Both the Chaldee and Greek versions render the word “mix” or “temper”, as though the various spices were mixed together, as salt is mixed with the food over which it is sprinkled. Salt was, of course, offered with every offering on the altar.

The figurative meaning of the word “salt” may be gathered from other usages. Salt was valuable, and stood for the whole of one’s keep. We still use the phrase, “He is not worth his salt”. So, when we read in Ezra iv. 14: “We have maintenance from the king’s palace”, the margin tells us that the Chaldee reads: “We are seated with the salt of the palace”. There is a suggestion that these men were in a covenant with the kings of Persia, as we read in Numb. xviii. 19 of a “covenant of salt”. Be this as it may, the one thing we do not understand when reading Ezra iv. 14 is that these men were actually “salted”. Let us, however, not miss the truth because of inability to decide the literal meaning of the language that describes the type. *Ainsworth* says:--

"If our speech is to be always with grace, seasoned with salt, as the apostle teaches (Col. iv. 6), how much more should our incense, our prayers unto God, be therewith seasoned?"

The lessons of the incense.

The first feature that strikes one when reading Exod. xxx. 1-10 is the intimate association between the position of the altar of incense and the purpose of the mercy-seat:--

“And thou shalt put it before the vail that is by the ark of the testimony, before the mercy seat that is over the testimony, *where I will meet with thee*” (Exod. xxx. 6).

Fellowship with God commences with the death of Christ, but continues through His ever-present intercession at the right hand of God. He has entered with His own blood, and that offering is ever remembered.

The second feature is found in verses 7 & 8:--

“And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning, *when* he dresseth the lamps and when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the Lord throughout your generations.”

The lamps stand for testimony. Among the duties of the priest was the “dressing” of the lamps. This would include “snuffing”, for “snuffers” are mentioned in Exod. xxxvii. 23. Is it not a cause for real gratitude to remember that, whenever the Lord is obliged to “snuff” our lamps of testimony, He not only does it with “snuffers of gold”, but the sweet savour of His own acceptableness ascends before the Father, canceling and covering the offensiveness of our failure, even as the sweet-smelling incense overcame the smell of the badly burning lamp?

The third feature is found in verse 9:--

“Ye shall offer no strange incense thereon.”

We read elsewhere of “strange fire” (Lev. x. 1), and of a “strange god” (Psa. lxxxi. 9). The holy oil was never to be put upon a “stranger” (Exod. xxx. 33). All this testifies to the preciousness of that sweet-smelling savour that ascends on our behalf through the work of Christ *alone*.

When we really weigh over the two expressions, “strange incense” and “strange fire”, we begin to realize something of the abomination that Christendom must be with its religious flesh, its empty ritual and its parade of human wisdom and merit. To the professing church, even as to Israel, the Lord could truly say:--

“Bring Me no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto Me when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear” (Isa. i. 10-15).

Unless Christ be “all” in our worship, God cannot be well pleased.

Perhaps the most solemn references to the symbolism of the incense are the following:--

“And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the Lord, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the vail; And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is upon the testimony, THAT HE DIE NOT” (Lev. xvi. 12, 13).

“Take a censer, and put fire therein from off the altar, and put on incense, and go quickly unto the congregation, and make an atonement for them . . . And he stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was stayed” (Numb. xvi. 46-48).

At first it may seem a strange thing that incense should be used “lest he die” and “to make an atonement”, but it will be observed in both cases that the fire is specified as “from off the altar”. Sacrifice has been made, blood has been shed, and even the horns of the golden altar of incense have been touched with atoning blood (Exod. xxx. 10). Translated into the truth of the person and work of Christ, if we have been reconciled by His death, we shall be saved by His life. If our initial salvation is found in His blood, we remember with joy that “He is able to save them to the full end that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth *to make intercession* for them now to appear in the presence of God for us” (Heb. vii. 25; ix. 24). The blood of Christ is not only effectual for our initial

justification — it is remembered by God in every act of daily cleansing (I John i. 7). He Who gave Himself for His church, will cleanse it and present it blameless before the Lord.

There is no more sacrifice for sin. The Christ Who died, dieth no more, but the fragrance of that offering and its sweet savour ascend as incense before the throne. There, like Aaron, under the cloud of that fragrance, we draw near and meet with God. There our prayers find “the effect of incense” given to them. No prayer should be offered to God that is not presented “for Christ’s sake”. It is the incense of His blessed Name that accompanies our prayers and makes them acceptable. We often have felt, even when “grace” has been said before a meal, that the omission of the words “for the sake of Christ” has robbed it of its sweet-smelling savour. At our altar of incense our lamps may be trimmed and lighted with acceptableness, for our service is rendered “for the sake of His name”.

We saw in a previous study that the true meaning of consecration was to come before the Lord with hands filled with the fulness of Christ; so we see here, that all our acceptableness in prayer and worship is because of that blessed One at the right hand of God, far above all.

“Accepted in the Beloved” (Eph. i. 6).

“Unto you therefore which believe IS THE PRECIOUSNESS” (I Pet. ii. 7).

#68. The atonement money (Exod. xxx. 11-16).

The institution of the half shekel of silver as atonement money in this passage is associated with numbering the children of Israel and with the possibility of plague. [At first sight there is no apparent connection between these items, but a consciousness that all Scripture is inspired and profitable is a great help forward in its understanding.](#) The association of these features evidently meant something to Moses and Israel, and it will to us as we allow the Word to enter and give us light.

“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. This shall they give, every one that passeth among them that are numbered, half a shekel, after the shekel of the sanctuary (a shekel is twenty gerahs): an half shekel shall be the offering of the Lord” (Exod. xxx. 12, 13).

What is the association between numbering, plague and the ransom of half a shekel? And why are we told just here that the shekel is equal to twenty gerahs? It is evident that each person paid ten gerahs, and if we took our stand with this people we should not be long before we saw some association between the ten gerahs and the ten plagues that fell upon Egypt, from which Israel were spared and delivered by redeeming blood. This is no play of imagination, as a reference to Exodus xiii. will show. There we find that by reason of the fact that Israel were spared, while the tenth plague were enjoined to wear the phylacteries as “a sign and a memorial”, and to sanctify every firstborn, whether of man or beast, unto the Lord.

“The males shall be the Lord’s. And every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb and all the firstborn of man among thy children shalt thou redeem when Pharaoh would not let us go, the Lord slew all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man, and the firstborn of beast: therefore I sacrifice to the Lord all that openeth the matrix, being males; but all the firstborn of my sons I redeem” (Exod. xiii. 12-15).

Later on another phase of substitution was introduced whereby the whole tribe of Levi was set apart instead of every firstborn of the whole nation.

“And I, behold, I have taken the Levites from among the sons of Israel instead of all the firstborn ... because all the firstborn are Mine: for on the day that I smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt I hallowed unto Me all the firstborn of Israel, both man and beast: Mine shall they be: I am the Lord” (Numb.iii.12,13).

Then comes the numbering of the Levites in verses 14-39, and the numbering of the firstborn of Israel in verses 40-43. It so transpired that there were 22,273 firstborn males of Israel and 22,000 Levites of one month old and upward, leaving 273 to be specially redeemed by the payment of five shekels apiece. This sum of 1,365 shekels was given to Aaron and his sons (Numb. iii. 45-51).

There is evidently some similar principle at work in Exodus xxx. In this case the numbering is of all who are twenty years old and upward, and the ransom money is appointed for the service of the tabernacle as a memorial (xxx. 16). The number of those who thus paid their half shekel was 603,550 men, and of the total sum 100 talents were used to make the sockets of silver on which the tabernacle rested, while some, at least, of the remainder were used in the making of the silver hooks, chapiters and fillets that were specified.

No distinction was made between rich and poor in the matter of this atonement money: “The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less” (Exod. xxx. 15). Whilst we have a recognition of “each one’s several ability” in the distribution of the talents, one receiving five, another two, and another only one, whilst reward for service will be in some measure proportionate to faithfulness, yet, *when we deal with such matters as redemption and atonement, “there is no difference”*, all alike are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, all alike pay their half shekel, neither more nor less.

It is a blessed thought, that every time an Israelite looked at his own firstborn son, he had a “memorial” of substitution before him. Every time he looked at a Levite accomplishing the service of God, every firstborn male could say: There is one who hath taken my place. Every time he considered the foundations upon which the tabernacle rested, they spoke of his atonement.

What of the spiritual realities of which these are but shadows? Does our conception of service, worship and the present position of Christ at the right hand of God bring vividly to our mind and heart the consciousness that we are not our own; that we are bought with a price?

There is one occasion in the history of David, in which “numbering”, “plague” and “ransom” figure, that should be considered as a contrast to this ordinance. David was moved to number Israel and Judah. Even Joab realized that the spirit that prompted this numbering was not good (II Sam. xxiv. 3), and David subsequently confessed that he had sinned greatly (verse 10). The result was judgment, in the form either of famine, defeat, or pestilence, and the sequel was the erection of an altar and the offering of sacrifice. The words of Exod. xxx. 12 come to mind as one reads this tragic chapter:--

“Then shall he 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 numbering of Israel by David was evidently done either in pride, or in unbelief of the power of God. The grace of God that chose Israel for His own ignored their numerical inferiority as compared with other nations (Deut. vii. 7, 8). While Israel remained true, “one should chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight” (Deut. xxxii. 30), but when they were unfaithful “a small company of men” was sufficient to conquer “a very great host”, for the Lord would not be with them.

The solemn numbering of Israel with the accompanying emphasis upon atonement would impress upon them the truth concerning both their own shortcomings and the Lord’s grace.

The depths of love were sounded when the spotless Son of God was “*numbered* with the transgressors”. Whenever we think of that, the only numbering that matters to us is that we have been numbered with His saints, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.

#69. The brazen laver (Exod. xxx. 17-21).

Immediately following the record of the atonement money, we have the command to make “a laver of brass to wash withal”, and upon examination we discover that there is a closer connection between the two statements than appears on the surface.

Before proceeding to this closer study we would allude to yet a third item, which will be found to add one more example of a similar nature: we refer to the brazen altar. When Korah, Dathan and Abiram died for their sin, we learn that:--

“Eleazar the priest took the brazen censers, wherewith they that were burnt had offered; and they were made plates for a covering of the altar; to be a memorial unto the children of Israel, that no stranger, which is not of the seed of Aaron, come near to offer incense before the Lord” (Numb. xvi. 39, 40).

This was done at the commandment of the Lord, Who also said: “They shall be a sign unto the children of Israel” (verse 38).

We have, therefore, the brazen altar, closely associated with the sign and memorial of Korah’s sin; we have the two silver sockets of the tabernacle made of the atonement money paid by every Israelite over twenty years of age for the ransom of his soul, and now we are to find that the brazen laver is connected with another sinful association with the true worship of God.

Immediately following the record of the making of the altar of brass in Exodus xxxviii., we read:--

“And he made the laver of brass, and the foot of it of brass, of the looking glasses of the women assembling, which assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation” (Exod. xxxviii. 8).

At first sight we are inclined to look upon this as a free-will offering to the Lord given by a company of godly women, but the note in the margin, “Heb. assembling by troops, as I Sam. ii. 22”, sets one thinking. To speak of women “assembling by troops” at the door of the tabernacle has an unpleasant sound, and the dreadful purpose of their assembling is revealed in all its hideousness by a reference to I.Sam.ii.22. The margin of *The Companion Bible* very gently comments on the word “assembling” in Exod. xxxviii. 8: “doing service, or worshipping according to Egyptian practice”. By using the mirrors, therefore, for the construction of the laver, this practice was abolished.

It is not for us to enlarge upon immorality. The teaching of “that woman Jezebel” is associated with what is false worship right down the ages, and Babylon is well called, “the Mother of Harlots”. It is common knowledge that many of the temples of Astarte or Venus were famous (or rather infamous) for the practice of the same uncleanness. The brazen mirrors of these women, which possibly symbolized their sensual vanity, were confiscated, and from the metal thus acquired the laver “to worship withal” was made.

Three witnesses, therefore, to human failure, in close association with divine worship, were ever before the eyes of Israel:--

- (1) The silver sockets made of their ransom money, telling of their need of atonement.
- (2) The brass covering of the altar, as “a sign” and “a memorial” to all that they stood in need of a true Priest whose offering should be acceptable before the Lord.
- (3) The brazen laver, a standing witness against all uncleanness, and to the utmost need for care lest the flesh, or earthly beauty, should intrude into that which after all is alone spiritual.

It comes as a shock to the lover of Art, to learn that, lovely as old stained glass may be, ravishing as some Gothic Cathedrals truly are, yet that all this beauty is merely upon the natural or soul-plane, and cannot enter into the worship of God Who is Spirit. Lovers of music also need to remember that the delights of harmony and the soul-exalting strains of beautiful music rise no higher than this self-same plane. God looks for the “ornament” of a meek and quiet spirit, and the “adorning” of the doctrine of God our Saviour. He listens for the “melody” of hearts, and the “songs” of thanksgiving that may at times escape even from the “inmost prison”.

The emphasis upon cleansing.

In an Eastern land, where the temperature is high, where sandals are worn, and where food is eaten with the fingers, constant washing would be necessary for cleanliness and health alone, but in addition to this we find (in the commandments of the law) washings of persons, sacrifices, articles, and buildings at every turn. Before Aaron and his sons were invested with the priestly robes, they were washed with water (Lev. viii. 6). Before Israel received the law from Mount Sinai, both their persons and their clothing were washed (Exod. xix. 10-15). No priest was suffered to approach the altar of God, on pain of death, without washing both hands and feet (Exod. xxx. 19, 20), and to this the Psalmist refers when he says: “i will wash my hands in innocency; so will i compass Thine altar” (Psa. xxvi. 6).

Uncleanness could be contracted not only in the ordinary course of life and nature, but in several ways that had something of a ceremonial and typical character. Leviticus xii.-xv. details a series.

After childbirth: for a man child 7 days; for a maid child 14 days, and a further period of either 33 or 66 days until the days of purifying be fulfilled. At the end of this time a sin offering was made and atonement accomplished — “and she shall be clean” (Lev. xii. 1-8).

Uncleanness arising from leprosy might be in a man, in his garment, or in a house, and cleansing was effected after the leprosy had departed, or, in the case of a person, if it had covered the whole skin and turned white. Garments were burned or washed in water, houses were demolished, or scraped, and a very elaborate ceremonial cleansing (to which a special paper must be devoted) is described in Leviticus xiv.: “The law of the leper in the day of his cleansing”.

Other cases of uncleanness are specified in Leviticus xv., and the chapter concludes:--

“Thus shall ye separate the children of Israel from their uncleanness; that they die not in their uncleanness, when they defile My tabernacle that is among them”
(Lev. xv. 31).

Certain animals were set aside as unclean, and defilement was contracted even by touching them, to say nothing of eating them. To touch a grave rendered a person unclean; hence arose the custom of *whitening sepulchres* to make them easily visible. To touch a dead body, or to enter a tent where the dead lay, rendered a person unclean. The scrupulous sanitation of the law of Moses must be studied to be appreciated. For example, the destruction of vessels upon which the carcase of a mouse had fallen was commanded without a reason being given. Modern sanitation warns against mice and rats as carriers of plague, and endorses the teaching of the law. Some commands concerning personal cleanliness are too intimate for our pages, but we believe every one would be at least physically the better for a little more of this “law” in their daily routine.

Spiritual application of this truth.

Taking the great mass of detail concerning uncleanness as read, we must consider the spiritual application which Scripture makes of this matter.

“Wash thine heart from wickedness”, says Jer. iv. 14; nevertheless, though nitre and much soap be used, Israel’s iniquity would still be marked before the Lord (*An opportunity here for a lesson to children, with a handkerchief, marking ink, soap, soda and water*).

“Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings”, says Isa. i. 16, yet in i. 18 it is added: “Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow”. This will be accomplished by the Lord Himself, for “in that day there shall be a fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness.” (Zechariah xiii. 1), of which Psalm li. supplies a prophetic anticipation: “Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin wash me and I shall be whiter than snow”.

The N.T. is replete with references to the necessity for cleansing, and for the perfect provision that has been made. We read of the cleansing power of the Word in Eph. v. 26, when the church is presented in glory, having neither spot, nor wrinkle, nor any such thing, but being holy and without blemish. And again:--

“Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoke unto you” (John xv. 3).

“Sanctify them through Thy truth, Thy Word is truth” (John xvii. 17).

“Ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth” (I Pet. i. 22).

In II Cor. vi. 14-16 we have a series of circumstances that bring about spiritual defilement: being yoked with unbelievers, having fellowship with unrighteousness or with darkness, mixing up Christ and Belial, faith and infidelity, the temple of God and idols.

Cleansing is expressed in such terms as, “Come out from among them ...”, “Be ye separate ...”, “Touch not the unclean thing”, and is fully explained in plain language to the church in II Cor. vii. 1: “Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God”.

Writing to the Hebrews, who knew full well the “diverse washings” which they were called upon to make, the apostle says:--

“For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: 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.13,14).

The graves, the bones, the dead that defiled Israel are here seen as types of the dead works that defile the conscience.

“Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water” (Hebrews x. 22).

Cleansing has much to do with service, as is illustrated by the following passages:--

“Purge your conscience to serve the living God” (Heb. ix. 14).

“As ye have yielded your membership servants to uncleanness even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness” (Rom. vi. 19).

“A vessels unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master’s use” (II.Tim.ii.21).

Redemption is for sinners, and releases from their bondage. Atonement is for saints, and makes them nigh. Cleansing is for service, and keeps the vessel meet.

We have seen that cleansing is through the blood of Christ, and by the Word of God. Hearts are purified by faith (Acts xv. 9), and souls are purified by obedience (I Pet. i. 22). Purging is necessary for fruitbearing (John xv. 2), and for service (II Tim. ii. 21). We have not been called unto uncleanness, but unto holiness (I Thess. iv. 7). All the injunctions written in the law concerning the priests are focused upon the believer's walk of the present day in Titus ii. 3: "In behaviour as becometh holiness", which word "holiness" is *hieroprepes*, "proper to priests".

Such is part of the teaching of the law connected with the brazen altar, "to wash withal". May we hear the voice of the Son of God: "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me" (John xiii. 8).

#70. The holy anointing oil (Exod. xxx. 22-28).

The last item to be considered in this long and important section has to do with the composition of the holy anointing oil or ointment, and of the incense to which allusion has already been made in the description of the altar of incense.

The holy anointing oil was composed of specified quantities of myrrh, cinnamon, calamus and cassis, compounded together with sufficient olive oil to give it proper consistency. The incense, as we have already seen, is also specified. A prohibition attaches to both of these — the holy anointing oil and the incense:--

"This shall be an holy anointing oil unto Me throughout your generations. Upon man's flesh shall it not be poured, neither shall ye make any other like it, after the composition of it: it is holy, and it shall be holy unto you. Whosoever compoundeth any like it, or whosoever putteth any of it upon a stranger, shall even be cut off from his people" (Exod. xxx. 31-33).

Light on sanctification.

The prohibitions concerning this anointing oil will throw some light upon the scriptural conception of holiness. It is "holy"; therefore the first prohibition is:--

"*Upon man's flesh shall it not be poured.*" — We read that the holy anointing oil was poured upon the head. The Psalmist said, "It ran down the beard, even Aaron's beard", and even to the skirts of his garment; but it was not to be poured upon man's "flesh". There was an anointing which was a part of the everyday toilet, and an anointing that was used as a mark of respect and favour to a guest. This was not limited to the head and beard, but extended to the "face" (Psa. civ. 15), "feet" (John xii. 3), and "body" (Mark xiv. 8), and was used at "birth" (Ezek. xvi. 9), and "death" (Mark xvi. 1).

We have here a very necessary distinction which we do well to ponder. There is an anointing that belongs to man as such. Sweetness of temper, a kindness of manner, a natural gentleness of disposition may be very fine; they have a fragrance and a smoothness that is all to the good. But we must never make natural qualities in any measure parallel with spiritual graces. The Holy Spirit does not anoint man's "flesh":--

"That which *hath been* born of the flesh *is* flesh" (John iii. 6).

"The flesh profiteth *nothing*" (John vi. 63).

"The mind of the flesh is enmity against God" (Rom. viii. 7).

"*Eye* hath not seen, nor *ear* heard, neither have entered the *heart* of man
but God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit" (I Cor. ii. 9, 10).

“The natural (soul-ical) man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God”
(I. Corinthian. ii. 14).

“The works of the flesh” are sharply distinguished from “the fruits of the Spirit”, and never, until grapes grow on thorns or figs on thistles will the flesh produce anything other than its own works. Consequently we must remember that none can be holy or sanctified outside of Christ, and it is the new man and not the old upon whom the grace of the Spirit descends.

“Neither shall ye make any other like it, after the composition of it. It is holy, and it shall be holy unto you.” — This emphasizes from another point of view the necessity to distinguish between the flesh and the Spirit, bringing into prominence this time the danger of counterfeit. If the anointing be not of the Lord, if it be not the fragrance of Christ, if it be not the work of the Spirit, then however near to the true counterpart it may appear, it must be repudiated. It is a holy thing, and it must be kept so. The thought of holiness here, as in all the teaching on the subject in both Old and New Testaments, is very largely that of something specially set apart for God.

Whosoever putteth any of it upon a stranger, shall be cut off. — Some things belong to the Lord’s people alone. No stranger could partake of the Passover (Exod. xii. 43). It was a memorial of redemption and national birth. No stranger was allowed to contribute anything towards the offerings of the Lord. This prohibition still holds good regarding Christian service, and condemns all such means of making money as dances, whist drives, and the like, that are everywhere spreading their “corruption” and making all such service “unacceptable” by reason of the “blemishes” (Lev. xii. 25).

No stranger, not of the seed of Aaron, was allowed to draw near to God to offer incense (Numb. xvi. 40). No stranger could be king of Israel (Deut. xvii. 15). No stranger upon pain of death was allowed near the tabernacle when it was taken down (Numb. i. 51), and no stranger could ever be appointed to the priest’s office (Numb. iii. 10). Strange fire, strange incense, strange wives, strange gods, a strange vine, strange apparel; these things help us to realize something of the limits set by God regarding that which belongs to His holiness, and speaks of Christ.

The Lord’s Anointed.

There are three outstanding offices that are associated with anointing in the Scriptures — those of Priest (Exod. xxviii. 41), King (Psa. xviii. 50) and Prophet (I Kings xix. 16) — and these three offices are filled, and in their fullest measure, by Christ.

His title, “The Christ”, is but the Greek form of the Hebrew “Messiah”, “the Anointed One”.

“God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost, and with power”
(Acts. x. 38).

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel” (Luke iv. 18).

“For God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him” (John iii. 34).

“Thy Throne Thy Sceptre Thy God hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows” (Heb. i. 8, 9).

He is God’s Anointed, His Prophet, Priest, and King. We confess that He is *the Christ*, and we acknowledge this threefold fulness. All true sanctification flows from Him.

There is a phase of the anointing that belongs to the period of miraculous gifts (II Cor. i. 21, 22) which is omitted in the dispensation of the mystery (Eph. i. 13), but the true anointing remains. It is seen in “the unity of the Spirit”, which brings us into such vital union with Christ that His anointing becomes ours. We are partakers of His holiness. He is made unto us sanctification as well as redemption (I Cor. i. 30).

While the mystery was never a subject of Old Testament revelation, a very beautiful figure of sanctified unity is given in Psalm cxxxiii. that it would benefit us to ponder:--

“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron’s beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments: As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountain of Zion.”

Here we have a double figure of unity. The ointment that was poured upon the head of Aaron extended to the very skirts of his garments. The A.V. of the second figure needs a correction. There is no real “dew” in Palestine, but a “summer sea night mist” rolls in and drenches the parched earth. The mist makes no distinctions. It unites in one Mt. Hermon away in the North and Mt. Zion in the South. So are all in Christ.

The apostle says, “We are unto God a sweet savour of Christ” (II Cor. ii. 16). Just as we found that “consecration” was “filling the hand” with Christ in service and offering, so true sanctification, true unction, true anointing is a life that is so much of Christ, that every act, every word, every thought is just the manifestation of the Anointed One. Words easy to write, words that condemn us as we think of ourselves, words that compel us to flee to Him, to be buried in His death that we may rise to walk in newness of life and serve in newness of spirit.

This holy anointing of ours in Christ comes not “on the flesh”; it resolutely sets aside all counterfeit; it is found where “Christ is all” or not at all, and it is not enjoyed by the alien, the stranger, the foreigner from grace. As we can more fully say, “For me to live is Christ”, as we more fully “preach Christ”, as the life of Christ is more really the life we now live in the flesh, as the fruit of the Spirit is more evidently manifest, so shall we approximate more to the fulfillment of this sacred type of the holy anointing oil.

John, writing to believers of another calling, expressed the same truth, saying:--

“The anointing which ye received of Him abideth in you it hath taught you, ye *shall abide in Him*” (I John ii. 27).

So we come to the conclusion of this type of Christ and His work as set forth in the tabernacle. At every step it has spoken of the Son of God. Starting with the ark and mercy seat, pausing at the altar of brass, and finishing with the holy anointing oil and sweet incense, we can truly say that “*Christ is all, and in all*”.

#71. The sabbath. A sign and a covenant (Exodus xxxi.).

With the reference in Exod. xxxi. 1-6 to the two men who were specially endowed with wisdom for the making of the tabernacle, and the enumeration of its furniture in Exod. xxxi. 7-11, the description of the tabernacle and its parts comes to an end. Upon the close of the description of the place of worship follows the sign and covenant of the sabbath, the giving of the law on the two tables of stone, and the lapse into idolatry during the absence of Moses.

The Companion Bible shows the inter-relation of these parts very clearly; we give a somewhat condensed copy of the structure here:--

Exodus xxiv. 9 - xxxii. 14.

- A | xxiv. 9-11. The worship of the seventy elders.
- B | xxiv. 12-14. The tables of stone promised.
- C | xxiv. 15-18. The six days and the seventh.
- D | xxv. 1 - xxxi. 11. The tabernacle and its furniture.
- C | xxxi. 12-17. The six days and the seventh.
- B | xxxi. 18. The tables of stone given.
- A | xxxii. 1-14. The idolatry of the people.

It has sometimes been felt that the making of such a structure as the tabernacle demanded greater skill than it can be supposed a nation of slaves, whose labour was in the brick fields, could possess, but we must leave God out of our reckoning. He not only gave Moses detailed instructions and a perfect pattern, but fitted specially appointed workers for their task:--

“I have called by name Bezaleel I have filled 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 unto him Aholiab and in their hearts I have put wisdom, that they may make all that I have commanded thee” (Exod. xxxi. 1-6).

This covers the whole question: the God who gave the command provides the wisdom and skill necessary for its accomplishment. Bezaleel means, “In the shadow of God”; Aholiab means, “The tent of my Father” — two precious and fitting names for men who were to be used of God in the construction of the tabernacle.

While we would make no pretensions to supernatural endowment to-day, we do most certainly believe that when God calls a man to a service He equips him for the work. He may be but a fisherman or a gatherer of sycamore fruit. He may be the wisest of kings or the most learned of pharisees, but, be he whom he may, his fitness for service will be given by the One Who called him to the work.

What a blessed thought, too, is conveyed to the heart of the worker by the name Bezaleel, “In the shadow of God”. There is the place where wisdom, knowledge and understanding are first received, and ever after maintained — “Not by might, nor by power, but My Spirit, saith the Lord”. There is also a note of instruction in the name Aholiab, “The tent of my Father”. Paul stresses the necessity to be occupied with “God’s building” when building upon the one foundation: all else passes away in smoke and fire (I Corinthians iii.). Just as the tabernacle imaged the person of the Lord when He was made flesh and “tabernacled” among men (John i. 14), so we find the “shadowing” suggested in Luke i. 35: “The power of the Highest shall overshadow thee”.

The second half of Exodus xxxi. is devoted to the question of the sabbath, so that, in some sense, we have in this chapter the six days’ work (1-11), and the one day sabbath (12-18). This, as the structure shows, falls exactly into correspondence with one special week recorded in Exod. xxiv. 15-18:--

“And the glory of the Lord abode upon Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days; and the seventh day He called unto Moses out of the midst of the cloud.”

The placing of the covenant of the sabbath immediately after the appointment of the workers of the tabernacle would be a reminder that even work for God must be allowed to crowd out worship. We may all profit by this lesson.

The sabbath.

We will now look into the teaching of Scripture regarding the sabbath.

In the first place it is important to remember that not only is there the weekly sabbath day enjoined upon Israel, but that a system of sevens, from days to years, is found in Scripture. Creation is stamped with the number seven. In the Hebrew of Gen. i. 1 we find seven words, *Bereshith bara elohim eth hashshamayin beth haerets* — and twenty-eight letters, 7*4. This cannot be shown in English because in that language separate letters for the sounds “th”, “sh”, &c., must be used.

The present creation is introduced by the word of God: “And God said”. In this phrase there are ten Hebrew letters having the following numerical equivalents: *Vav 6, Yod 10, Aleph 1, Mem 40, Rosh 200, Aleph 1, Lamed 30, He 5, Yod 10, Mem 40*. These figures total 343, which is 7*7*7, or raised to the superlative. If, moreover, the reader will look at this series he will see that exactly seven different letters are used.

The present creation occupies a double set of three days followed by a seventh rest. These sets of three perfectly correspond with each other:--

1 st Day	Light.
2 nd Day	Firmament and waters.
3 rd Day	Dry land. PLANT LIFE.
4 th Day	Light bearers.
5 th Day	Fowls in the firmament. Fish in the waters.
6 th Day	Beasts of field. HUMAN LIFE.

Then the 7th day rest.

This sevenfold character lies behind the whole purpose of the ages, and Peter’s comment: “One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day” (II Pet. iii. 8) suggests that the whole range of time, from the Adamic creation until and including Millennium, will be a series of seven days, each measuring one thousand years. The feasts of Israel, specified in Leviticus xxiii., fill up the interval between Creation and Millennium, and foreshadow the purpose of the ages.

We find the following use of “seven” in the Scriptures that deal with Israel:--

Seven DAYS.—“The seventh day is a sabbath of rest” (Lev. xxiii. 3).

Seven WEEKS.—“Seven sabbaths shall be complete” (Lev. xxiii. 15).

Seven MONTHS.—“In the seventh month” (Lev. xxiii. 24).

So far as feasts are concerned the year ends here.

Seven YEARS.—“The seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest” (Lev. xxv. 4).

Seven times seven YEARS.—“It shall be a Jubile unto you” (Lev. xxv. 8-13).

Seventy times seven YEARS.—“Seventy weeks are determined” (Dan. ix. 24).

Seven TIMES.—“I will chasten you seven times” (Dan. iv. 16).

Israel’s chastisement the same length of time as Gentile madness.

Here we have a progressive series of seven features, showing that the weekly sabbath was one of a series of ordinances enjoined upon this people.

The sign and the covenant.

Just as blood of the passover lamb (Exod. xii. 13), the unleavened bread (xiii. 9), and the redemption of the firstborn (xiii. 13) were “signs” or “tokens”, so the sabbath was a special “sign” to Israel of their separation unto the Lord from all other nations. This sanctification is expressed in Lev. xx. 24-26:--

“I am the Lord your God, which have separated you from other people. Ye shall therefore put a difference between clean beasts and unclean ye shall be holy unto Me, for I the Lord am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine” (Lev. xx. 24-26).

The scruples discussed in Romans xiv. as to “days” and “meats” arose out of the relationship of such things to Israel’s exclusive position.

The observation of the sabbath was given for an “age-abiding covenant”, but it is well to notice that in Exodus xxxi. both the “sign” and the “covenant” are restricted to Israel (xxxi. 16, 17):--

“Wherefore *the children of Israel* shall keep the sabbath an age-abiding covenant. It is a sign between Me and *the children of Israel* for the age.”

There can be no intrusion of others into this covenant. It belongs to Israel, and to those who, by becoming proselytes, are reckoned with Israel. The breaking of the sabbath by the performance of work was punishable by death, and anyone who thus transgressed the commandment was cut off from the people of God; he had broken the covenant. The sabbath, moreover, was to be observed and kept as an age-abiding covenant.

There are reasons for observing the sabbath attached to the various commands that we should notice. The first passage is that which occurs in the ten commandments. The reason given there for sabbath observance is that the Lord, after the six days’ creation, “rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it”. So long as Israel observed the sabbath day, they were a witness to the God of creation, and the creation narrative of Genesis i. & ii.

In Exod. xxiii. 12 the sabbath is enjoined so that ox, ass and servant may be refreshed. The words are echoed in Exod. xxxi. 17:--

“For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed.”

The word “refreshed” is *naphas*, and could almost be translated “had time to breathe”. We do not entertain the thought that the mighty Creator becomes weary with work, but it is helpful to see how He stoops to the needs of the creatures made in His image.

Attached to the command to keep the sabbath is a reminder that Israel was once a servant in the land of bondage, so that the institution of the day showed God’s mercy to Israel and His concern for others (Deuteronomy v. 12-15). Reverence for the sanctuary of God, also, was associated with the sabbath (Lev. xxiii. 32). Though shrouded in type and symbol, the sabbath, nevertheless, was an opportunity of experiencing and expressing something of the grace of God:--

“If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord; and shalt honour Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words” (Isa. lviii. 13)

Both the true spirit of the sabbath, and the false representation of it, as it had become by the tradition of the elders, are very vividly brought to view in the Gospels. When the disciples plucked a few ears of corn, and rubbed them in their hands, they broke the sabbath according to the tradition of the Pharisees. Of course reaping and threshing on the sabbath were forbidden by the law, but these formalists taught that to pluck an ear of corn was “reaping”, and to rub it in the hand was “threshing”, even as walking on grass was a species of threshing!

The persecution of the Lord, and the crucifixion itself, may be traced to His attitude toward the sabbath day:--

“Therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay Him because He had done these things on the sabbath day” (John v. 16).

In spite of the fact that the Lord kept every jot and tittle of the law, the Pharisees refused to recognize in His actions any observance of the sabbath. They said: “This man is not of God, because He keepeth not the sabbath day” (John ix. 16). While these things are important, and have in view the great sabbath rest that awaits the children of God (Heb. iv. 9-11), we must not omit the statements concerning the sabbath and other holy days and feasts that are found in Paul’s epistles.

The Sabbath, Sunday and the Church.

It is evident that Paul could not have written Romans xiv. had the sabbath day been binding upon the church. The law of the sabbath does not leave room for “esteeming every day alike” (Rom. xiv. 5), and if this be true regarding such an established institution as the sabbath, it is also most true regarding the first day of the week. When Paul said to the Galatians:--

“Ye observe days, and months, and times and years, I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain” (Gal. iv. 10, 11),

he made no exception of the sabbath day. His words in Colossians ii., however, leave one without a doubt as to the purport of his teaching:--

“Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbaths, which are a shadow of good things to come: but the body is of Christ” (Col. ii. 16, 17).

With the coming of the full truth of the mystery, there passed off the scene all types and shadows. The inclusion of the “sabbaths” in such a context as Colossians ii. should make us doubly on our guard against any specious arguments that “have a show of wisdom”, but which lead away from our full and complete position in Christ.

We respect the conscience of the weaker brother regarding the observance of days, the abstaining from meats, and other items that have no longer any value for us. Sunday is not the sabbath, and no manipulation of the references to the first day of the week can make it so. Moreover, we do not seek to impose Sunday observance upon the world of the ungodly, for we realize that no such claim belongs to our calling, or to them. We thankfully accept Sunday as an opportunity for obtaining that necessary one day’s rest in seven which our physical nature demands. We, moreover, welcome the opportunity it provides for more completely turning aside from the things of everyday life to the worship of God, and the ministry of His Word, but *we see no special sanctity* in a meeting held on Sunday, neither would we allow any thought of the “day” to influence our attitude or witness. Concern for the conscience of others is the only bondage to which we are willing to submit in this matter. The bondage of “holy days” is “not after Christ” and is to be rejected.

Whatever the sabbath meant to Israel a rest, a delight, a prophecy of the rest that remaineth, a sign, a covenant, a mark of the high calling of God, this, like circumcision and other rites, we find in full measure in Christ. *He is our Sabbath*, and we need no shadows of good things to come. We have the blessed substance. While we walk in Him, we need no holy days.

#72. The golden calf (Exod. xxxi. 18 - xxxii. 14).

The worship of the golden calf and the breaking of the two tables of stone are the closing incidents of this great section of the book of Exodus.

The worship of the calf is in exact correspondence with the worship of the God of Israel by the seventy (Exod. xxiv. 9-11), and the promise of the two tables of stone with their reception by Moses (Exod. xxiv. 12-14 & xxxi. 18):--

A		xxiv. 9-11.	Worship of God of Israel.
B		xxiv. 12-14.	Tables of stone promised.
)	-	-	-
B		xxx. 18.	Tables of stone given.
A		xxxii. 1-14.	Worship of golden calf.

When Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel ascended the mountain, we are told that “they saw the God of Israel and they did eat and drink”. Then it was that the Lord spoke of the tables of stone:--

“Come up to Me into the mount, and be there: and I will give thee tables of stone, and the law, and the commandment WHICH I HAVE WRITTEN, that thou mayest teach them” (Exod. xxiv. 12). (The R.V. corrects the A.V. here, for the Lord spoke of *the* law, not “a” law and *the* commandment, not “commandments”).

If this passage stood alone it would be sufficient for all who bow before the authority of the Scriptures. The verse distinctly affirms that, before Moses ascended into the Mount, the Lord had already written the tables of stone. It is of course possible to explain the passage as being merely a figure of speech, but the number of times the fact is mentioned leaves no room for doubt. The subject is important enough to warrant a careful tabulation of all the references, which will now be given.

Did God actually write the Law?

Let us read further evidence on this vital question:--

1. Exod. xxiv. 12.—Already quoted above.
2. Exod. xxxi. 18.—“And He gave unto Moses, when He had made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, WRITTEN WITH THE FINGER OF GOD.”
3. Exod. xxxii. 15, 16.—“And Moses turned, and went down from the mount, and the two tables of the testimony were in his hand: the tables were written on both sides; on the one side and the other were they written. And the tables were THE WORK OF GOD, and the writing was THE WRITING OF GOD, graven upon the tables.”
4. Exod. xxxiv. 1, 28 (also Deut. x. 1-14).—“And the Lord said unto Moses, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first; and I WILL WRITE upon these tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou breakest And he was there with the Lord forty days and nights: he did neither eat bread nor drink water. And HE WROTE upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments.”
5. Deut. iv. 13.—“And He declared unto you His covenant, which He commanded you to perform, even ten commandments: and HE WROTE them upon two tables of stone.”
6. Deut. v. 22.—“These words (i.e. the ten commandments quoted in verses 6-21) the Lord spake unto all your assembly in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice; and He added no more. And HE WROTE them in two tables of stone, and delivered them unto me.”
7. Deut. ix. 9, 10.—“When I was gone up into the Mount to RECEIVE the tables of stone, even the tables of the covenant which the Lord made with you the Lord DELIVERED unto me two tables of stone WRITTEN WITH THE FINGER OF GOD.”

Here are seven separate passages of Scripture. One makes promise of the bestowal of the tables, three record the receiving of them, and three more rehearse the fact years after the event.

The testimony is clear and complete.

The ten commandments which formed the “covenant” between Israel and the Lord were written by none other than God Himself. The remaining commandments, statutes and judgments, all spring from these basic commandments and were given to Moses during the forty days, commencing with the law given in the Mount. We may therefore declare that God has not only *spoken*, but He has written, and thereby made it plain to all His people that He will communicate in written word His will for them. In the language of Paul in I Cor. xv. 3 the reader will doubtless perceive a reflection of Deut. ix. 9, 10: “For i *delivered* unto you first of all that which i also *received*”.

Worship.

This section, as we have seen, begins and ends in worship, and what is true of this small section is true of the whole age-purpose. The somewhat veiled story of Ezekiel xxviii. revolves around the thought of worship. The temptation of the Lord in Matthew iv. reaches its climax in worship. The Beast, at the last, enables Satan to attain his end — worship (Revelation xiii). The times of the Gentiles begin and end with false worship (Daniel iii., Revelation xiii.). Worship is the goal of the mystery of iniquity (II.Thess.ii.4), and the word “godliness” in the phrase “the mystery of godliness” (I.Tim.iii.16) is “good or accepted worship” (*eusebeia*). The Gentile apostacy was connected with worship (Romans.i.21-23) at the beginning, and will be so at the end — “a form of worship” (II Tim. iii. 5). The last of all gospels stresses worship (Rev. xiv. 7).

The first and all-embracing term of the covenant of Sinai was: “Thou shalt have no other gods before Me” (Exod. xx. 3), and the first step in transgression is the making of “any graven image, or any likeness of anything thou shalt not bow down to them, nor serve them” (Exod. xx. 4, 5). Idol worship is demon worship:--

“What say I then? that the idol is anything, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is anything? But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons, and not to God” (I Cor. x. 19, 20).

The gods of Egypt, as well as the Egyptians themselves, were the objects of God’s wrath in the plagues (Exod. xii. 12).

The worship of the golden calf.

“And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we know not what has become of him” (Exod. xxxii. 1).

There are two points of great importance in this verse. The first has reference to the word “delayed”. The word is the *piel* form of the verb, which generally indicates intensity. The verb itself is *bosh*, meaning “to be, or to feel, shame”, and at first sight the translation “delayed” seems to have no connection. That *bosh* does mean “to be ashamed” the following passages will show: Gen. ii. 25; Psalm vi. 10; Isa. i. 39, and the A.V. so translates it seventy-one times. Once, the verb is translated “become dry” (Hos. xiii. 15), and *yabesh* is used in Gen. i. 9 and Exod. xiv. 16 of the “dry land”. This, rather than “ashamed”, is at the root of the word, and the transition of the meaning is as follows: “To flag, fail, grow flaccid, limp, spiritless”, then “to languish at long delay, to feel ashamed, confounded.” There is one other reference in the A.V. where the *piel preterite* is found, viz.,

Judges.v.28: “Why *is* the chariot so *long* in coming?”. Here the mother of Sisera betrays her uneasiness and confusion at the delay of her son.

Exodus xxxii. 1 therefore tells us that Israel began to flag, to dry up, to feel somewhat ashamed at the long delay — they felt that something ought to have been done by then, much as we may feel at being kept waiting for an interview beyond what we may think a reasonable time. Israel did not realize that one of the first phases of worship is expressed in the word “wait”:

“Let not them that wait on Thee, O Lord God of hosts, be ashamed for my sake” (Psa. lxi. 6).

“Yea, let none that wait on Thee be ashamed” (Psa. xxv. 3).

“Let me not be ashamed of my hope” (Psa. cxix. 116).

“Hope maketh not ashamed” (Rom. v. 5).

“According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed” (Phil. i. 20).

Habakkuk had to learn the importance of waiting God’s time (Hab. ii. 1-4), and the same lesson is rehearsed in Hebrews x. 37-39. It was the evil servant who said, “MY Lord delayeth His coming” (Matt. xxiv. 48).

Romans i. reveals an affinity between idolatry and ingratitude:

“They glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image” (Rom. i. 21-23).

Exodus xxxii. 1 shews the same connection:

“Up, make us gods, which shall go before us, for as this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we know not what has become of him.”

“As for this Moses” — It does not sound very respectful; the people fail in their attitude both to God and man.

The idol that was made by Aaron from the golden earrings of the women was in the form of a calf. Memphis, which was near to Goshen, and On, which was in the midst of Goshen, were both famous for the worship of the Sacred Bull. At the death of the Bull, whose name was *Apis*, it was called *Osiris*, *Apis* or *Serapis*, and a new calf, born of a cow that could have no more young, became the new god. There is a mixture here of the false and the true:

“These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt. And when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, To-morrow is a feast to the Lord” (Exod. xxxii. 4, 5).

Here is confusion — “gods” and “the Lord”, and Aaron in his answer to Moses manifests that he is a temporizer:

“And Moses said unto Aaron, What did this people unto thee, that thou hast brought so great a sin upon them? And Aaron said, Let not the anger of my lord wax hot; thou knowest the people, that they are set on mischief. For they said unto me, Make us gods and there came out this calf” (Exod. xxxii. 21-24).

We are warned in Scripture to judge not lest we be judged. With all humility and full consciousness of our own weakness and liability to err, we feel that nothing can be put forward to justify Aarons’ action. Three thousand men lost their lives, the whole of the people were shamed, the precious tables of stone written by the finger of God shattered, and the initial term of the covenant broken, all largely because one man did not stand firm for God and His revealed will. What a blessed contrast it is to turn

to Galatians ii. and see there the magnificent stand of the apostle for the truth of the gospel, and his subjection to the popular voice “no, not for an hour”.

The statement that the people “rose up to play”, that they were “dancing” round the golden calf, and that Aaron had made them “naked unto their shame among their enemies”, reveals the lascivious character of their worship. Many have found a difficulty in understanding verse 20: “And he took the calf which they had made, and burnt it in the fire, and ground it to powder, and strawed it upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink of it”. The modern chemist would probably use tartaric acid in accomplishing this, but the ancient Egyptians used *natron*. The resulting powder has a nauseous taste, and the action would be symbolical of the bitter result of their folly. Should any, moreover, feel any difficulty about the amount of gold indicated, he should acquaint himself with the statements of archaeologist and historian. “The rich frequently had ornamental works, statues, and furniture of solid gold. *Diodoros* mentions a golden statue at Babylon, forty feet high, weighing one thousand Babylonian talents”, and a list is given of other similar effigies “making a total of at least 690 talents, reckoned equal to L11,000,000 sterling”. Thus *Wilkinson* in *Ancient Egyptians*.

Not only did Israel turn back in heart to the leeks and the fish which they did eat in Egypt, they also turned to their gods — yes, even after the majesty of Sinai and the meditation of Moses. The lapse of forty days was a test, and under that test Israel failed. The number forty is often associated with a test. How wonderfully the Lord Jesus entered into Israel’s position, triumphing where they failed. He, too, waited for forty days; He, too, was tempted to worship Satan, but He gloriously triumphed, giving glory to God and honouring His Word. The spies searched the land of Canaan forty days, and again Israel failed, and for forty years wandered in the wilderness.

There is a sad parallel with Exodus xxxii. even to-day. The great Mediator has ascended, the time seems long; ministers appointed by God yield to the pressure of the people; they effect a compromise: “gods” and “the Lord” are brought together, and the One Who accomplished their redemption is slighted.

The outcome of this awful departure from the covenant of God we must consider in our next paper. Meanwhile, let us not miss the solemn lessons that everywhere are apparent in this chapter, for in the scriptures written to us and about us is the warning concerning “heaping to themselves teachers”, and “a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof”. The added word, “From such turn away”, is, in measure, an echo of Exod. xxxii. 26, where Moses stood in the gate of the camp and cried: “Who is on the Lord’s side? Let him come unto me”.

#73. The mediation of Moses (Exod. xxxii. 1 - xxxiii. 3).

In connection with the worship of the golden calf, there are some solemn features that could not be dealt with in the previous article. The language used by the Lord concerning Israel indicates a change in their relationship: “Go, get thee down, for *thy* people, which *thou* broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves” (Exod. xxxii. 7). The Lord does not speak of “My” people, but “thy” people. He does not say that He, the Lord, brought Israel from Egypt, but speaks of Moses as their leader. Israel had, for the time, fallen out of covenant with God and had become *lo ammi*, “not My people”. There is much the same intention in these words as in those of the Lord Jesus concerning Jerusalem: “*Your* house is left unto you desolate.”

Israel had corrupted themselves. The word used here occurs also in Hosea xiii. 9 where we read: “O Israel, thou hast *destroyed* thyself”. We first meet the word in Genesis vi. — an ominous context: “The earth also was corrupt before God And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth” (Gen. vi. 11, 12). We have some small conception of the depth of corruption that filled the earth at the time of the flood — the same word is

used of Israel in Exodus xxxii. It is also rendered “destroy” in Genesis: “I will *destroy* them with the earth”; “I will *destroy* all flesh” (Gen. vi. 13-17).

The relation between “corruption”, “destruction”, “idolatry” and the “covenant” is seen in Deuteronomy iv.:--

“Lest ye *corrupt* yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female.”

“Take heed unto yourselves, lest ye forget the covenant of the Lord your God, which He made with you, and make you a graven image or likeness of any thing, which the Lord Thy God hath forbidden thee and shall *corrupt* yourselves, and make a graven image if thou shalt seek Him He will not forsake thee, neither *destroy* thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which He swore unto them” (Deut. iv. 16, 23, 25, 29, 31).

Here we have the same word, *shachath*, translated both “corrupt” and “destroy”. We expect our readers to prove all statements made in these pages, and therefore anticipate the findings of some who may consult *The Companion Bible* on verse 31. The word there is marked with the reference figure to verse 26, as though *shamad* is used in verse 31. This is not correct, however, and users of the *T.C.B.* would be well advised to cross out the reference to 26 in verse 31. [This comment is in the cause of truth, and entirely after the heart of the editor of the *T.C.B.*; it is made by a sincere admirer of this valuable work. We say this lest any should think that we have anything but admiration for the witness of the late Dr. Bullinger].

As we read Deuteronomy iv., we see how Israel’s corruption of true worship reverted in its corrupting and destroying effect upon themselves. The inspiration that governs all Scripture led Paul, in Romans i., to speak of “the incorruptible God” in a context of idolatry and personal degradation (Romans i. 23-25).

When dealing with Romans i. we drew attention to the close parallel that exists between the histories of the Gentile and of Israel. It is so important to realize this that we repeat the following quotations:--

Gentile (Romans i.).	Israel (Psalm cvi.).
“They changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image ... man birds, beasts and creeping things” (23).	“They made a calf in Horeb, and worshipped the molten image. Thus they changed their glory into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass” (19, 20).
“They did not like to retain God in their knowledge” (28).	“They forget God their Saviour” (21).
“Wherefore God also gave them up” (24).	“Therefore He said that He would destroy them” (23).
“Uncleanness ... vile affections” (24-27).	“They joined themselves also unto Baal-peor, and ate the sacrifices of the dead” (28).
“Inventors of evil things” (30).	“They provoked Him to anger with their inventions” (29).

Romans i. 18-32 has much in common with II Thess. ii. 1-12 & II Tim. iii. 1-8, and the link with Genesis vi. shows that we have the same evil at work in the patriarchal age with Israel as at the end of this dispensation. In like manner we have in II Peter ii. “destructive heresies, even denying the Lord that brought them”, and soon “lascivious ways”. Then follows the sin of the angels, and of Sodom and Gomorrah, a reference to the brute beasts that perish in their own corruption, eyes full of adultery, the

way of Balaam, and finally servants of corruption, likened to dogs and sows. Here we have the degeneration that sets in upon departure from the truth.

It is because of the close affinity between the glory of the incorruptible God, and the blessing of man, that we find in the covenant of the ten commandments, written by the finger of God, that which preserves not only pure worship, but pure family life. As surely as man corrupts the worship of God, so surely will he corrupt himself, **and in seeking to “worship God in spirit and truth” he is at the same time pursuing his own truest interests.** The Millennium itself is characterized by the “knowledge of the Lord”.

In the tenth verse of our chapter we have the repudiation of Israel: “Now therefore let Me alone, that My wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them; *and I will make of thee a great nation*” (Exod. xxxii. 10). This leads us back to Genesis xii. where the Lord made the promise to Abraham.

Promise versus Law.

Moses makes no reference to this suggestion, but throws himself and his people upon the grace of God. He will not even repeat the Lord’s word with reference to himself, “thy people, which thou broughtest out”, but boldly says: “Lord, why doth Thy wrath wax hot against *Thy* people, which *Thou* has brought forth out of the land of Egypt?” (verse 11). Moses reminds the Lord that He is Israel’s Redeemer. This sinful, stiff-necked people are the Lord’s redeemed, typically, by the blood of the Lamb, “with great power and a mighty hand”. Moses further pleads for the name of God among the enemy: “Wherefore should the Egyptians speak and say, For mischief did He bring them out, to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth?” (verse 12). Finally he reminds the Lord of the covenant established before the law of Sinai. He anticipates the argument of the apostle in Galatians:--

“And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise. Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made” (Gal. iii. 17-19).

Moses, the man of law, and Paul, the man of grace, speak alike. Moses does not plead the covenant of Sinai — he goes back “four hundred and thirty years” earlier to the covenant with Abraham: “Remember Abraham, Isaac and Israel, Thy servants, to whom Thou swearest by Thine Own Self, and saidst unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it for ever” (verse 13).

In response to this prayer, the Lord repented of the evil He had purposed against Israel. Over against the Lord’s repudiation, Moses had placed the Lord’s redemption; against their own corruption, the degrading of the Lord’s name among the heathen; against making of Moses himself a great nation, the unconditional covenant made with Abraham, Isaac and Israel.

Levi and Phinehas.

Moses’ intercession with God did not by any means indicate a hiding or minimizing of Israel’s sin. We read that “Moses’ anger waxed hot”, and that, seeing that the covenant was already broken, he cast the tables of stone to the ground, breaking them on the mount. He cause Israel to realize their sin by compelling them to drink the bitter fluid compounded of the calcined image, and made Aaron to understand that he had brought a great sin upon Israel.

When Moses saw the extent of their corruption — “they were naked” — he, who had interceded for them with God, now reveals that covenant promises do not mean indulgence for sin, and three thousand men were slain by the sword of Levi, who were spared the wrath of God.

Psalms cvi. brings together the worship of the golden calf, and the sin of Baal-peor, recorded in Numbers xxv. There are several features that are common to the two records. The hint of uncleanness in Exodus xxxii. becomes an obvious fact in Numb. xxv. 1-3, 6-8. The execution by the sons of Levi in Exodus xxxii. corresponds to the command of Numb. xxv. 5: “Slay ye every one his men that were joined unto Baal-peor”. The added zeal of Phinehas in some measure counterbalances the sin and fall of Aaron, for the Lord says:--

“Behold, I give unto him My covenant of peace: And he shall have it, and his seed after him for an everlasting priesthood; because he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement for the children of Israel” (Numb. xxv. 12, 13).

This passage illuminates the true meaning of atonement; it is no “covering up” of sin: “Phinehas . . . hath turned My wrath away and made an atonement for the children of Israel”. *In this case* the atonement did not save; *in our case* wrath is turned away, but the atonement is made by death other than our own. In both cases plague follows the idolatry and uncleanness, and with the solemn words of Rom. i. 27 in mind, some medical men believe this is to be the origin of one disease that is spreading among mankind to-day. The sons of Levi had an awful consecration that day (Exod. xxxii. 29). Moses had called: “Who is on the Lord’s side? Let him come unto me”, and there followed the slaughter of the three thousand men by the sword of Levi.

Once more Moses is the intercessor, this time going so far as to say: “And if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of the book which Thou hast written”. But, just as he himself had pleaded the grace of God to save Israel from being blotted out, so the Lord in His turn rejects Moses’ suggestion, saying: “Whosoever hath sinned against Me, him will I blot out of My book”. Whether Moses had the thought in mind that he could thereby make an atonement, we do not know — he had said to the people: “Peradventure, I shall make an atonement for your sin” — but the passage foreshadows the greater Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, Who gave Himself a ransom for all.

Israel’s sin, while it did not bring about their extinction, yet put them at a greater distance from the Lord: “Therefore now go, lead the people unto the place of which I have spoken unto thee: behold, My angel shall go before thee *I will send* an angel before thee *I will not go* up in the midst of thee” (xxxii. 34 - xxxiii. 3). While angelic leading may be blessed, it was by comparison a severe loss to Israel, for they had forfeited the **Lord’s presence in their midst**. We shall see more of this as we consider chapter xxxiii. The lessons are so many and so solemn that reiteration and application seem out of place. Exodus xxxii. is a chapter to read before the Lord, praying that there may be no present-day parallel with the position of Aaron and the people in our own walk.

Let us not say that the Lord delayeth; let us watch and pray; let us worship God in spirit, boasting in Christ Jesus, and having no confidence in the flesh.

#74. The presence and the glory (Exodus xxxiii.).

We take up the narrative at the point where the Lord promised to send His angel to go before Israel, but said that He Himself would not go up in the midst of them, lest He consumed them in the way. These were “evil tidings”, which brought about a general mourning. No man put on his ornaments, for the wearing of these was a sign of rejoicing, as abstention therefrom was of mourning. The Lord said to Moses: “Say unto the children of Israel, Ye are a stiff-necked people; if I had come one instant among you, I had destroyed you (*Horsley* and *De Wett*): therefore now put off thy ornaments from thee, that I may know what to do with thee” (Exod. xxxiii. 5). Here we have, set forth in symbol, the necessity for *repentance*.

Following this manifestation of repentance came the removal of the “tent” without the camp, indicating the necessity for separation from the prevailing ungodliness, a witness-bearing by active association. This “tabernacle” must not be confounded with the tabernacle already so fully described, for that was not then made. This one is called “The tabernacle of the congregation” (or “assembly”). The LXX translates this, “The tabernacle of witness”, and although there is no apparent connection between “congregation” and “witness”, we do not get the full intention of the Hebrew word *moed* unless we include the idea of testimony. *Ed* is the Hebrew word translated “witness” in Exod. xx. 16; *eduth* is the word translated, “the tabernacle of witness” in Numb. xvii. 7. *Moed*, translated “congregation” in Exod. xxxiii. 7, is rendered in Gen. i. 14 “for seasons”, and in Gen. xvii. 21 “at this set time”; also “feasts”, “set feasts”, “solemnly”, etc.

This removal of the tabernacle “without the camp” was itself a witness, and the congregation that worshipped there was no longer “all Israel”, but “every one that sought the Lord went out unto the tabernacle of the congregation which was without the camp”. It is plainly around this feature that Heb. xiii. 13 is written, and about this self-same separation that the great cloud of “witnesses” are arrayed in Hebrews xi. In this separated congregation we have in germ the idea of a church, “a called-out company” as *ekklesia* means. Exodus xxxiii. 8-11 must be read as a description of what happened subsequently, that is, when the true seeker after God had given his testimony by going without the camp. Then, each time after that, when Moses entered the tabernacle to commune with the Lord, these same men (and possibly others following their example) rose and worshipped, every man in his tent door. There is a precious lesson here. By his act of separation and devotion, each man turned his own dwelling-place into a sanctuary, much as the early church worshipped in houses, remembering all the time that their great Mediator was in the presence of God, and outside the camp.

There is strong emphasis here upon communion with God: “And the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend” (Exod. xxxiii. 11). What a glorious contrast to the obscene worship of the golden calf! Here is no visible image, just a small tent, and the cloudy pillar to indicate the presence of the Lord.

This peculiar prerogative of Moses is mentioned more than once, to show how specially favoured and honoured he was:--

“If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make Myself known unto him in a vision, and I will speak unto him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all Mine house. With him I will speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold” (Numb. xii. 6-8).

It is among the last things said of Moses, at his death, that “there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face” (Deut. xxxiv. 10).

Moses now faces the altered conditions, and seeks of the Lord guidance and renewed assurance: "See Thou sayest unto me, Bring up this people, and Thou hast not let me know whom Thou wilt send with me. Yet Thou hast said, I know thee by name, and thou hast also found grace in My sight" (Exod.xxxiii.12). Here we are permitted to hear the communion of Moses with his God. How blessedly simple, intimate and direct it is! Moses neither overrated his own abilities, nor under-estimated the task before him. How was it possible, he argued, to reconcile such a task with the favour in which he stood with the Lord? So he continues: "Now, therefore, i pray Thee, if i have found grace in Thy sight, show me now Thy way, that i may know Thee, that i may find grace in Thy sight: and consider that this nation is Thy people" (verse 13).

Let us observe that Moses does not tell the Lord what to do, nor does he even voice his own conscious need of the Lord's presence, but just asks, "Show me now Thy way", adding, as an additional plea, "Consider that this nation is Thy people".

There is no reference in the Lord's first answer to the "way" or the "people", but He met Moses' initial fear and need by saying: "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest" (verse 14). Moses had before him, perhaps a task more gigantic than has ever since fallen to man to perform, but here, at the outset, he is assured of rest. From now onward he may enjoy a continual sabbath, for the word for rest here is used by the Lord in Exod. xx. 11. So, when Moses responded to this gracious word of God, he did not speak of "bringing" up the people of Israel himself, but of the Lord "carrying" them: "If Thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence" (verse 15).

"I will give you rest."

Here service takes on a new form — a more blessed form — it becomes fellowship. We cannot do better than turn to Matthew xi. to obtain an illustration of the principle set forth here. The whole setting of this chapter is one of doubt, disappointment and triumphant trust, John the Baptist had sent from prison saying: "Art thou He that should come, or do we look for another?". The generation that had seen the Lord's miracles and heard His words is next compared to fractious children who will neither mourn at funerals nor rejoice at weddings. The cities of Chorazin and Bethsaida are rebuked for their unbelief, and it is then, at that time, and in these circumstances, that we read: "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in Thy sight" (verses 25, 26). It is in this setting and context that the words of comfort follow: "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light" (verses 28-30).

The following sentences taken from *With Christ in Palestine*, by A. T. Schofield, M.D., are suggestive:--

"I was looking at a very good commentary as to what 'yoke' is supposed to mean here, and I found it means 'fellowship, restraint, and subjection'. No doubt these are three minor uses of a yoke but the chief great primary use of a 'yoke' is seldom grasped by Christian people; most are so occupied with the secondary uses I have named that its great purpose is entirely missed. A yoke first of all is a contrivance to enable oxen to pull a load along the road or across the field; 'yoke' is simply another word for 'harness'. Harness is not put upon an animal primarily for subjection or restraint or fellowship; it is put on to enable it to draw a load.

Speaking now for a moment as a physician, who sees a great many nervous and broken-down people of all sorts, I find that the greater number are not only sick in their bodies, but also sick in their minds, and what they mostly suffer from is a complaint which I call 'sore neck'.

What, then, had made the neck sore? It is that the collar either does not fit, or it has not been properly padded Christ has come to us and says, It is not enough for you to come to Me as weary and heavy laden and find rest for your conscience in Myself: you want some means of

shielding your heart from all the petty worries and troubles and all the contrariety and meaningless vexations of this world of sorrow When the *yoke* is easy then the burden is light.

What, then, is this yoke padded with? The two materials mentioned are meekness and lowliness of heart I take it, meekness is our attitude towards man, and lowliness is the attitude towards God."

It is something of this that we find in Exod. xxxiii. 15: "And he said unto Him, If Thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence". Now it is in connection with the very fact that the Lord had spoken to Moses face to face, that we meet the statement: "Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth" (Numb. xii. 3). It is evident that this meekness is displayed on many occasions when lesser souls would have given way to impatience. But alas for human nature! the meekest man on earth spoke unadvisedly with his lips and failed; *One* only could ever be the "perfecter of faith". Moses reasoned that the presence of the Lord was the great evidence of His favour:--

"For wherein shall it be known here that I and Thy people have found grace in Thy sight? Is it not in that Thou goest with us? *So* shall we be separated, I and Thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth" (Exod. xxxiii. 16).

The positive side of sanctification.

"*So shall we be separated.*" — Here is a word in season for us all. Separation is, too often, a matter of "separation *from*", a negative thing, whereas it should be "separation *to*", the positive truth. **Fellowship with the Lord is the great antidote to worldliness**, but separation from worldliness alone has produced Pharisees and founded monasteries. Hebrews xiii. 13, the oft-quoted passage, does *not* merely say: "Let us go forth therefore without the camp". What it does say is: "Let us go forth therefore *unto Him* without the camp."

Israel's separation from the nations was evidence by their observance of clean and unclean meats: "I am the Lord your God, which have separated you from other people. Ye shall therefore put a difference between clean and unclean" (Lev. xx. 24, 25). Israel's separation brought about this observance. It was because the Lord *had separated* them, that "therefore" they made the difference. Israel were not permitted to intermarry with the Canaanite, but this abstention did not make them separate. They abstained because they had been separated: "Neither shalt thou make marriages with them for the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto Himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth" (Deut. vii. 1-6).

The sanctification which is summed up in a series of negatives is not the real thing. That is not scriptural sanctification which merely does *not* do this, does *not* go there, does *not* drink this, for we are solemnly warned against the false system which says: "Touch not, taste not, handle not." Our positive sanctification is found in Him, and proceeds from this alone.

The Lord's answer to Moses reveals the value, in His sight, of true intercession: "I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken: for thou hast found grace in My sight, and I know thee by name" (Exodus.xxxiii.17).

Show me Thyself!

Answered prayer beget prayer. The Lord's promise of His presence stimulates Moses to a further request: "And he said, i beseech Thee, show me Thy glory". What is the true burden of Moses' request? Together with Israel, he had seen the glory of the Lord manifest upon Sinai, and in the cloud. Moreover, he had entered into the presence of the Lord, and the Lord had talked with him face to face, and the similitude of the Lord he had seen. Yet, upon the gracious promise of the Lord's presence with him, he is emboldened to press further and say: "Show me Thy glory."

The word “show” involves seeing. A similar request is found in Song of Sol. ii. 14, “*Let me see Thy countenance*”. Moses said, “*Let me see Thy glory*”. He evidently sought something fuller than he had experienced hitherto. He had been “shewed” the pattern of the tabernacle; this was something he had “seen”, and in the Lord’s answer to this request he uses the same word, saying, “My face *shall not be seen*” (Exod. xxxiii. 23). Earlier in Exodus we have means adopted “lest the people break through ... to gaze”. When Moses, Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and the seventy elders ascended the Mount, we read that “they *saw* the God of Israel”. In the passage we are considering Moses must have desired something more than had been vouchsafed on the earlier occasion. Moses said, “Let me see *Thy glory*”. The Lord answered:--

“Thou canst not see *My face*” (Exod. xxxiii. 20).

“While My glory passeth by, I will put thee in a clift in the rock, and will cover thee with My hand, while I pass by: And I will take away Mine hand, and thou shalt see My back parts: but My face shall not be seen” (Exod. xxxiii. 22, 23).

Does it seem evident that in this passage “glory” and “face” are interchangeable in some way? *Spurrell* translates Exod. xxxiii. 18-23 as follows:--

“Furthermore he said: O show me, I pray Thee, THINE OWN SELF! then will I turn aside this the hollow of My hand, and thou shalt behold Me retiring, but My face shall not be seen.”

This was the fullest revelation that could then be given to any mortal man.

The prayer of Moses is answered for us all in II Cor. iv. 4 & 6:--

“The light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, Who is the image of God the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the FACE OF JESUS CHRIST.”

That this is connected with Exodus xxxiii. & xxxiv. is seen by a reference to II Corinthian iii. There we read of the passing glory of the old covenant, and the failing glory of the *face of Moses* (II Cor. iii. 7). All that the Lord could do for Moses was to let His goodness pass before him and proclaim the Name of the Lord before him. Moses needed protection from the fuller personal revelation of the Lord, and the clift in the rock and covering hand might well speak to Moses of his need of Christ. The glory of the law fades in the presence of “the glory that excelleth” (II Cor. iii. 10, 11). It was nevertheless a gracious revelation to Moses. The proclamation of the Name, its effect upon Moses, the altered covenant, and the summary of its terms given in Exodus xxxiv., must be reserved for our next paper.

#75. The new covenant anticipated (Exodus xxxiv. & xxxv.).

In preparation for the proclamation of the Name of the Lord, and the partial revelation of His glory to Moses, the Lord instructs Moses to hew two tables of stone like to the two that had been broken, and to be ready in the morning to ascend the mount. Precautions were to be taken that neither man nor beast should be near. This being accomplished, we read: “And Moses rose up early in the morning, and went up unto mount Sinai, as the Lord commanded him, and took in his hand the two tables of stone” (Exod. xxxiv. 4). The proclaiming of the name of the Lord immediately followed:--

“Then the Lord passed before him, and proclaimed, Jehovah, Jehovah God, tenderly compassionate and gracious, long-suffering and abounding in mercy and truth, reserving mercy for thousands, bearing away iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children’s children, unto the third and fourth generation” (Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7).

There is by no means unanimity among Hebrew scholars as to the correct reading of the phrase: “And that will by no means clear *the guilty*”. We may see by the italic type that “the guilty” are words added to complete the sense. The words “by no means” are the rendering of an idiomatic use of the verb with which most students are familiar. For example, “Thou shalt surely die” is a good English translation, yet literally the words are, “Dying, thou shalt die”. Here in Exod. xxxiv. 7, “Clearing, He will not clear” represents the order of the words. Spurrell translates the passage: “And justifying the unjustified; *yet* visiting the iniquity of the father”, etc. Dathe and Boothroyd, after *De Dieu*, render the passage: “And do not altogether destroy the impious.” Boothroyd, moreover, in his “Bible” translates it: “Clearing him that is not clear.”

There is no essential difference between “clearing the guilty” and “justifying the ungodly”. The introduction of the words, “That will by no means clear the guilty”, in some measure nullifies the gracious words that precede. There we read that the Lord forgives or “bears away” the iniquity, transgression and sin which constitute a person guilty. Surely, it is the blessed truth taught alike to Abraham, Moses and David, and made abundantly plain by Paul in Romans iii. & iv., that He Who bears away our sin *does* “clear him who is not clear”.

The proclamation of the name Jehovah involves a two-fold attitude to sin: an attitude of graciousness, mercy, long-suffering and faithfulness in bearing away sin, yet, by no means condoning sin or compromising God’s own Holiness. This shows that sin, though it be forgiven, often leaves behind a crop of trouble that must be reaped. For example, David was forgiven, yet as a result of his sin, even though forgiven, war never departed from his house. Moses was forgiven, but he nevertheless never entered the promised land. So here, sin will be forgiven, yet the iniquity of the fathers is visited upon the children. The sins of a believer to-day are forgiven, but the effects of his sin go on.

Once more we see Moses grasping the intention of the Lord by faith, and daring to urge yet more grace:--

“And Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped. And he said, If now I have found grace in Thy sight, O Lord, let my Lord, I pray thee, go among us: FOR IT IS A STIFF-NECKED PEOPLE; and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for Thine inheritance” (Exodus xxxiv. 8, 9).

Surely Moses knew that God did “clear him who is not clear”. Look at the holy boldness that faith possesses when standing on the ground of grace. The Lord had said that the reason why He would not remain with Israel was that they were “a stiff-necked people” (Exod. xxxii. 9, xxxiii. 3 & 5), yet Moses, with the vision of the glory still fresh and the proclamation of the name of the Lord still present to his memory, urges this as a reason for the Lord to alter His threat, to turn away His wrath and to go among them once more. Truly, the principles of grace and merit are at the two extremes.

The re-stated covenant.

Following this manifestation of grace the Lord re-states covenant conditions in verses 10-17, following it up in verses 18-26 with a selection of the commandments which are the working out of the terms of the covenant. It will be observed that, in this new statement, practically one item only is stressed, the matter of idolatry and the making of a covenant with idolaters. Every covenant must have at least two parties, with mutual obligations. Consequently verses 10-17 are distributed under the pronouns “I” and “Thou”.

“I.”

- A | Behold, *I* will make a covenant.
- B | Before all thy people *I* will do marvels.
- B | It is a terrible thing that *I* will do with thee.
- A | Behold *I* drive out before thee the Amorite.

“thou.”

- A | Take heed lest *thou* make a covenant with inhabitants.
- B | *ye* shall destroy their altars.
- C | *thou* shalt worship no other God.
- A | Lest *thou* make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land.
- B | Lest *thou* take of their daughters unto thy sons.
- C | *thou* shalt make thee no molten gods.

The omission of the remaining nine commandments from these words of the covenant does not imply that they were not repeated (*see* verse 28), but the insistence upon the first commandment would cause Israel to realize that the worship of God alone was the first essential. No amount of obedience to any other command would compensate for the breaking of this, the essential clause.

When Israel came out of Egypt many marvelous plagues attended their deliverance; but the Lord says here that He will, in the working out of this covenant, “do marvels”, and that it will be a “terrible thing” that He will do with Israel. Moreover these marvels will be such as have not been seen in all the earth, nor in any nation. There are hints of this scattered throughout the history of Israel. A very definite statement is found in Micah vii. 15-17:--

“According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt will I show unto him *marvelous* things. The nations shall see and be confounded at all their might: they shall lay their hand upon their mouth, their ears shall be deaf. They shall lick the dust like a serpent, they shall move out of their holes like worms of the earth: they shall be afraid of the Lord our God, and shall fear because of thee.”

It is evident, when we survey the teaching of Scripture, that these unprecedented marvels are not described in their full import until we reach the book of the Revelation. When we compare the opening of the Revelation with the original covenant of Sinai, we perceive the change that is brought about by the changed covenant:--

“Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles wings, and brought you unto Myself. Now, therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people: for all the earth is mine; and ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation” (Exod. xix. 4-6).

This is the original covenant, and upon hearing its term Israel said, “All that the Lord hath spoken we will do” (Exod. xix. 8). Alas, the flesh cannot fulfil such promises. But a few weeks pass and Israel break the covenant and are threatened with extinction. Though the people will never become a kingdom of priests on the terms of their own law-keeping, the words of Revelation i. indicate that by the grace of God, and through the redemption of Christ, they will ultimately attain to this glorious position:

“Unto Him that loveth us and loosed us from our sins by 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, 6).

The covenant of marvels is fulfilled by the Lord in this book of the Revelation. The vials of His wrath are poured out upon the earth and, sun, moon and stars share in the judgment. Micah vii. tells us that the nations shall come out of their holes like worms. Revelation tells us that they shall hide themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains (Rev. vi. 15).

What Israel failed to attain by law, they shall reach through redeeming love: and this re-stated covenant of Exodus xxxiv. follows the wonderful exhibition of divine forbearance and forgiving grace revealed at the intercession of Moses.

Following the new terms of the covenant of marvels is a repetition of one or two commandments that arise out of it.

The commandments (Exodus xxxiv. 18-26).

- A | 18. | a | Thou shalt keep. The feast of unleavened bread.
 - b | Seven days shalt thou eat it.
 - c | Thou camest out of Egypt.
- B | 19, 20. Firstborn of cattle—redeemed.
 - Firstborn of ass—break his neck.
 - Firstborn of sons—redeemed.
- C | 21. Six days work. Seventh day rest.
- A | 22-24. | a | Thou shalt observe. Feast of Weeks, Firstfruits, Ingathering.
 - b | Thrice in the year—No leaven.
 - c | I will cast out the nation—No leaven.
- B | 26. Firstborn of land—bring.
 - No seethe kid in mother's milk.

The commandments so put forward, and thereby emphasized and enjoined upon this people, are as follows:--

1. *The four feasts that mark out their ecclesiastical year.*—Unleavened bread is a reminder of their separation from evil unto the Lord, but the statement in verse 25 concerning the unleavened sacrifices would remind Israel that it is by the blood of atonement, and not by the works of the law, that they can ever hope to find acceptance. The last feast, the ingathering, symbolizes all Israel's hope, and keeps it before them.

2. *Redemption.*—This is selected for repetition. The firstborn of man and beast belong to the Lord. This, as we find by referring back to Exod. xiii. 12-15, was ordained to keep perpetually in mind the deliverance of Israel and the slaying of the firstborn in Egypt. The firstling of an ass did not come into the same class as the firstling of an ox or sheep, for the ass was not an animal fit for sacrifice. It must either be redeemed by the sacrifice of a lamb, or its neck must be broken. All firstborn sons, too, like the ass must be redeemed.

The injunction at the close against seething a kid in its mother's milk, guards the mind against what might appear indifference to animal suffering or cruelty. God's commands concerning animal sacrifices were necessitated because of sin, but He would have His people follow the paths of love and kindness.

3. *The observance of the sabbath knew no exceptions.*—Ploughing and harvesting are exacting periods in the life of an agricultural people, nevertheless, however pressing the apparent need, the seventh day sabbath must be preserved. It was, as we have seen, a sign between Israel and the Lord.

4. *The first of the firstfruits were to be given to the Lord.*—This is much in line with the many customs still existing in virtue of which some tangible tribute is paid annually to an overlord in recognition of his dues and demands upon the fealty of the one in covenant. As we shall see later, these firstfruits were a foreshadowing of resurrection.

What was the effect upon Moses of this new covenant of graciousness? The skin of his face shone. He could not but catch something of the glory. True, both the record here and the inspired comment in II Corinthian iii. show that the glory was transient, yet it foreshadowed the fuller blessings of the new covenant where they who behold the glory of the Lord with unveiled face are transfigured. Moses, we are told, "wist not that the skin of his face shone". To boast of modesty is to be immodest. To parade humility is to be proud. True sanctity walks hand in hand with conscious unworthiness. Boldness of access by reason of the faith of Him, and fear and trembling when working out that salvation, go together. Paul did not know his own greatness. He rather marveled at the grace given to the least of all saints. David was a man after God's own heart, but he knew what it was to pray for forgiveness of deep and awful sin.

Others will take knowledge of us when we have been in the presence of the Lord, just as the priest who had been offering incense would carry some of the fragrance with him on returning from the sanctuary.

The section concludes with one more reference to the sabbath, this time particularizing its effect in the household:--

"Ye shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations upon the sabbath day"
(Exod. xxxv. 3).

The law of the sabbath suited Israel's land. Even the law concerning fires on the sabbath would mean sickness and death if applied to a northerly country such as England. The climate of this country would not allow the sabbatic year to be kept, unless the Lord accompanied the command with perpetual miracles. But these are particular features of the covenant made between the Lord and Israel.

After this last reference to sabbath rest, the remainder of Exodus is occupied with the description and making of the tabernacle under the guidance of Bezaleel and Aholiab. When the work was finished, the gracious promise of the Lord's presence was kept:--

"Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle" (Exod. xl. 34).

The closing words of Exodus tell us that the token of the Lord's presence never again left the people. He Who led them out, led them in. The redeemed of the Lord have no need to plead for His leading, for it is theirs as part of His one great act of love. What they need is eyes to see the cloud and the fire, and hearts responsive to the indications of His will.

Thus all things are now ready for the great covenant worship with which the ten commandments open. The book of worship, so far as details are concerned, is the book of Leviticus, and this must be our next study.

#76. Leviticus. The book as a whole.

In the series entitled "Redemption" in volumes XVII & XVIII we have given the five great offerings with which Leviticus opens a fairly close study. We now pass on to a wider consideration of the book, asking all our readers to refer to the articles dealing with Leviticus i.-vii. in the volumes referred to above, so that their study may be as complete as possible.

Before attempting a detailed exposition, it is incumbent upon us to seek the general disposition of subject matter, and at the outset we must confess that the task appears formidable. However, believing Leviticus to be a part of inspired Scripture, we approach it with the same confidence that we should an epistle of Paul, expecting to find beneath the surface those evidences of its divine composition which we have observed so frequently in other parts of the Word.

The complicated character of the book and the mass of intricate detail preclude all idea of an exhaustive analysis, but the following presents a survey of the teaching of the book without the omission or suppression of any section.

Leviticus as a whole.

- A | i.-vii. Five offerings. Worship.
 - a | i. Whole Burnt Offering.
 - b | ii. Meal Offering.
 - c | iii. Peace Offering.
 - a | iv., v.-. Sin Offering.
 - b | -v.-vii. Trespass Offering.
- B | viii.-xv. | d | viii., ix. Priests' service.
 - e | x. Warning to priests. Nadab destroyed.
 - f | xi.-xv. A clean people. "Make a difference."
- C | xvi., xvii. Atonement for sins. Blood sprinkled seven times.
- B | xviii.-xxv. | f | xviii.-xxii. A clean people. "Put a difference."
 - d | xxiii.-xxv. People's service.
 - e | xxiv. 10-16. Warning to people. Blasphemer stoned.
- C | xxvi. Punishment for sins. Seven times.
- A | xxvii. Five vows and the redemption.
 - a | 1-13. Devoted persons or beasts.
 - b | 14, 15. Devoted houses.
 - c | 16-24. Devoted fields.
 - a | 26-29. Devoted man or beast.
 - b | 30-34. Devoted tithes.

All that is necessary at the moment is to indicate in a few words the obvious relationship of the various parts. Leviticus opens and closes with freewill offerings. Five great basic sacrifices occupy the opening chapters, and five separate sets of vows, and their redemption, occupy the closing chapter. While there is not an exact parallel between these two sets of five, it is noticeable that in both cases the opening offering is the highest in character. In Leviticus i. it is the whole burnt offering, entirely devoted to God. In Leviticus xxvii. it is the devotion of persons, men, women or children, to the Lord. The second offering is the meat (or meal) offering, while the second vow is the sanctification of a house. The third offering is the peace offering and the third vow the sanctification of a field and its produce. The sin offering and the firstling of beasts come fourth, and include one kind that can never be redeemed (xxvii. 28). Lastly we have the trespass offering and the redemption of tithes. The fuller exposition of Leviticus xxvii. must await its place in the series.

The two sections under the letters B and B should be read and compared together. The first is occupied with the sanctifying and the service of the priests. The second with the feasts and service that were incumbent upon all Israel. In both there is a most impressive warning. The sacred nature of the priest's office is most tragically enforced by the destruction of Nadab and Abihu, when they offered strange fire before the Lord. The equally sacred responsibility of the people is enforced by the tragic end of "the son of an Israelitish woman, whose father was an Egyptian", who for cursing the name of the Lord was stoned to death.

Associated with both of these groups is the law concerning clean and unclean things. Chapter xi. gives a long list of clean and unclean animals, and its true object is revealed in the words: "Ye shall sanctify yourselves make a difference" (Lev. xi. 44-47). Chapter xii. is occupied with the purification of women after child-birth; xiii. & xiv. deal with the plague of leprosy and the law of its cleansing, and xv. with various physical causes of uncleanness. Chapters xviii.-xxii., which supplement xi.-xv., take up the question of defilement and uncleanness once more, dealing with

unlawful marriage relationships and unchaste acts. Leviticuss xvii. & xix. are concerned with the abominable rites of Molech and further unchastity, xx. with defilement by death and physical blemishes, and xxi. with the peculiar separateness of Aaron and his seed. Once again the teaching of these chapters focuses upon the separateness of Israel: "Ye shall therefore put a difference ... I have severed you from other people" (Lev. xx. 24-26). The two outstanding features that remain are the atonement and the punishment for sins in chapters xvi., xvii. & xxvi.

It would serve no useful purpose to attempt the exposition of any one feature at this stage; we leave the outline with the prayerful student, trusting that he will not only compare it with the various outlines put forward at different times by other servants of God, but above all test it by close reference to the Book itself. In subsequent studies we hope to deal with a series of salient features that are of importance in the school of faith.

#77. Leviticus. Some phases of holiness.

The laws enumerated in Leviticus were all given by the Lord from Mount Sinai. This is plainly stated four times. At the end of chapter vii., where the five great offerings are detailed, we read:--

"This is the law of the burnt offering, of the meat offering, of the sin offering, and of the trespass offering, and of the consecrations, and of the sacrifice of the peace offering; which the Lord commanded Moses in Mount Sinai, in the day that He commanded the children of Israel to offer their oblations unto the Lord, in the wilderness of Sinai" (Lev. vii. 37, 38).

Again at the beginning of chapters xxv. and end of xxvii. we read:--

"And the Lord spake unto Moses in Mount Sinai."

"These are the commandments, which the Lord commanded Moses for the children of Israel in Mount Sinai."

Throughout the book there are indications that Israel are living in camp. Both the incidents that break into the narrative, namely, that of Nadab, and that of the blasphemer (chapters x. & xxiv.), speak of the camp, and their very introduction indicates that the actual giving of the law was in progress.

The time occupied in the giving of the law in Leviticus is just one month. This is discovered by referring to the following:--

"And it came to pass in the first month in the second year, on the first day of the month, that the tabernacle was reared up" (Exod. xi. 17).

"And the Lord spake unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the tabernacle of the congregation, on the first day of the second month, in the second year after they were come out of the land of Egypt" (Numb. i. 1).

Under the shadow of the law and its threatenings, therefore, was given this gracious typical provision for sin. The laws of Leviticus come with the same divine authority as the ten commandments of Exodus xx. The book of Leviticus contains more of the spoken words of God than any other, and while we do not intend by this statement to imply that it is more inspired than the rest of Scripture, nevertheless, the fact should give pause to any waverer who listens to the critic who relegates the whole to later times, and speaks of it as a pious forgery. Leviticus, moreover, is quoted in forty places in the N.T. and these quotations are not confined to one section, but are found in the four Gospels, the Acts, Hebrews, Peter, James, Jude, Revelation, I & II Corinthians, Galatians, Romans, Ephesians and Colossians.

The fundamental basis of the book is holiness, and it is no exaggeration to say that holiness is implied in every law, every ordinance and every offering. *Qadosh*, “holy”, and its variants occur over one hundred times, variously translated, “holy”, “hallow”, “sanctify”, and “sanctuary”. Closely allied with this holiness are the various laws and ceremonies that deal with uncleanness and purification. Redemption from sin is not in view in these. The great central offering for sin is seen in the institution of the day of atonement.

Uncleanness.

As one patiently seeks out the varied laws that deal with uncleanness in Leviticus, and as the scriptural emphasis upon the many and varied causes of contamination begin to be translated by the Spirit into their spiritual equivalents, one feels like Isaiah who, in the presence of the Lord, cried, “Woe is me, for i am undone, because i am a man of unclean lips”, and more than ever are we thankful for that precious blood “that cleanseth us from all sin”. In this book we discover that even the natural workings of the body may nevertheless be unclean, and we learn that, irrespective of any fault of our own, there are many outside sources of defilement that may render us unclean. There is one case, where the near relation of the dead is definitely permitted to make himself unclean out of love and devotion, but, though permitted, this uncleanness is nevertheless not allowed to pass; it must be removed, as must all other (See Lev. xxi. 1-4).

In Leviticus, cleanness is used as a synonym for holiness, and to know this is a valuable help in the understanding of the will of God concerning our sanctification:--

“Put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean”
(Lev. x. 10).

In Leviticus xi. we have the law regulating the matter of clean and unclean beasts that might or might not be eaten by an Israelite:--

“These are the beasts which ye shall eat among all the beasts that are on the earth and in the waters.”

A long list is given of prohibited beast, fish, fowl and creeping thing, and then come the concluding words:--

“Ye shall not make yourselves abominable with any creeping thing that creepeth, neither shall ye make yourselves unclean with them, that ye should be defiled thereby. For I am the Lord your God; ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy: neither shall ye defile yourselves with any manner of creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. For I am the Lord that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy” (Lev. xi. 43-45).

Profaneness.

Another opposite to holiness, in Leviticus, is profanity.

“They shall be holy unto their God, and not profane the name of their God”
(Lev. xxi. 6, 7).

“He shall not go in unto the vail, nor come nigh unto the altar, because he hath a blemish; that he profane not My sanctuaries: for I the Lord do sanctify them” (Lev. xxi. 23).

“If a man eat of the holy thing unwittingly, then he shall put the fifth part thereto they shall not profane the holy thing” (Lev. xxii. 14, 15).

“Neither shall ye profane My holy name; but I will be hallowed among the children of Israel; I am the Lord which allow you” (Lev. xxii. 32).

The word translated “profane” is *chahal*, and means “to penetrate”, and so, in its more intensive forms, it means ruthlessly to violate all sacred bounds, brazenly to enter holy ground. The adjective *chol* is rendered “unholy” in Lev. x. 10, where it is placed in contrast with “holy” and “clean”:

“That ye may put a difference between holy and unholy: and between unclean and clean.”

The idea of being “common” in opposition to “sacred” can be seen in Ezek. xlvi. 12-15, where *chol* is translated “profane”:

“This oblation of the land a thing most holy and the five thousand that are left in the breadth shall be a profane place for the city.”

That this “profane” place simply means, the place for the common people is seen by the concluding words of the verse, “for dwelling, and for suburbs”.

Blemish.

Not only are uncleanness and profaneness placed in contrast with holiness, but, in the setting aside from holy service all that are physically blemished, another aspect is typified.

“Speak unto Aaron, saying, whoever he be of thy seed in their generation that hath any blemish, let him not approach to offer the bread of his God he hath a blemish; that he profane not My sanctuaries” (Lev. xxi. 17-23).

What is true of the priest is also true of the offering:

“Whatsoever hath a blemish, that shall ye not offer; for it shall not be acceptable for you it shall be perfect to be accepted: there shall be no blemish therein” (Lev. xxii. 18-25).

How these types force us to the blessed realization of the fulness of the Lord Jesus Christ! Both as Offering and High Priest He was “without blemish and without spot”, “holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners”, and can we not see in Eph. i. 4-6 the close connection between holiness, and acceptance in the Perfect One?

“That we should be holy and without blame accepted in the Beloved.”

Holiness and sin.

The removal of defilement in order to attain to holiness is set forth in a great variety of ways in Leviticus. We have rinsing in water, washing in water, sprinkling with blood, anointing with oil, and the making of atonement, in order to cleanse. Some of these different processes we must consider, but the only aspect we propose to notice before closing this article is a special word translated “cleanse” which shows the intimate connection between unholiness and sin:

“And he shall take *to cleanse* the house” (Lev. xiv. 49).

“And he *shall cleanse* the house with the blood of the bird” (Lev. xiv. 52).

“And Moses took the blood and *purified* the altar” (Lev. viii. 15).

These words “cleanse” and “purify” are the *piel* form of the verb *chata*, “to sin”, and there can be no true holiness that is not intimately connected with the sacrifice of Christ. True, we read of the sanctification of the *Spirit*, and the sanctifying by the *Word*, but this is subsequent to, and based upon, the sanctification which is by His *blood*. This we shall see more clearly in the passage we hope to consider in our next article.

Thou shalt put a difference.

When Israel were redeemed out of Egypt, we read that the Lord “put a difference” between Israel and the Egyptians (Exod. xi. 7), and where, in Exod. viii. 23, we read, “I will put a division between My people and thy people”, the margin reads, “(*Heb.*) a redemption”, for “a division”. What, therefore, is holiness or sanctification but redemption carried to its logical conclusion? The teaching of Leviticus is expressed in the words of Lev. x. 10:--

“And that ye may put a difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean.”

This putting a difference between righteousness and unrighteousness, between light and darkness, Christ and Belial, believer and infidel, is summed up in II Cor. vii. 1, as “perfecting holiness in the fear of God”, and separation from evil unto God, perceiving, and acting out the difference that grace has made, is the essence of true sanctification. While the law made nothing perfect, and Levitical cleansings and offerings failed to touch the conscience, they foreshadowed the great work of Christ, “the very image”, and are a preservative against that emotional and fleshly “holiness” that passes, with some, for the real thing. “True holiness” is ours in Christ (Eph. iv. 24).

#78. “The law of the leper in the day of his cleansing.” (Leviticus xiii. & xiv.).

The great outstanding type of cleansing in Leviticus is that of the leper, given in chapter xiv. — “The law of the leper in the day of his cleansing”. Before we can hope to appreciate the blessing of this typical cleansing we must have some understanding of the nature of the defilement, and this necessitates a consideration of chapter xiii. also. In chapter xiii. the priest pronounces the leper unclean, while in chapter xiv. he pronounces him clean.

Alongside the main subject of the leper and his cleansing are the related subjects of leprosy in a garment or in a house. Leprosy in the person is typical of sin within, it is indeed “deeper than the skin” (Lev. xiii. 2). Leprosy in the garments is typical of our “habits” — the English idiom retains the figure, for we still speak of some clothing as a “habit”, e.g., “a riding *habit*”. Scripture uses the figure continually. “Be clothed with humility.” “The robe of righteousness.” “Put on (as clothing) the new man.” The house speaks of relationships — home, witness, service, etc., “The house of God”, “The household of God”, “The household of faith”. The subject matter of Leviticus xiii. & xiv. is disposed as follows:--

The law of leprosy (Leviticus xiii. & xiv.).

- A | xiii. 1-46. The leper. Pronounced unclean.
- B | xiii. 47-57. Leprosy in a garment.
- C | xiii. 58. Cleansing of garment.
- D | xiii. 59. “The law.”
- A | xiv. 1-32. The leper. Pronounced clean.
- B | xiv. 33-47. Leprosy in a house.
- C | xiv. 48-53. Cleansing of house.
- D | xiv. 54-57. “The law.”

Upon reading Leviticus xiii. one of the first impressions received is the extraordinary care that the priest must exercise in judging as to whether the person before him is, or is not, suffering from leprosy. No hasty judgment is allowed. No indiscriminate generalizings, for leprosy cuts a man off from fellowship with God and his neighbours, deprives him of all visible means of grace, all domestic and social privileges, and consequently it must be dealt with most carefully. The priest is given the most

detailed account of the symptoms, and his diagnosis does not depend upon his feelings or his reasoning, but upon the Word of God. Then, observe the care that must be exercised whenever there is a doubt in the mind of the priest.

“Then the priest shall shut up him that hath the plague seven days” (Lev. xiii. 4).

If at the end of that time there is still uncertainty, the suspected person must be shut up for yet a further seven days (xiii. 5). How this should warn us against hasty judgments, uncharitable interpretations, or biased opinions of the actions of others.

“It is but a scab” (xiii. 6). The whole subject is loathsome, but also is sin, and we are but looking into the mirror of the Word. A scab may, or may not, be a cause for putting away. The one great point that the priest was to observe was that “it spread not”. If, however, spreading be evident, “he shall be seen of the priest again”, then, if the spreading continues, the dread sentence goes forth, “it is leprosy”. Here is a lesson that should give us pause. The person is pronounced leprous and unclean when the plague with which he is afflicted *spreads*! If we would have this interpreted for us in spiritual language, we may heed the apostle’s statement:--

“I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean (or common) of itself: but to him that esteemeth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean” (Rom. xiv. 14).

“All things indeed are pure, but it is evil for that man that eateth with offence” (Rom. xiv. 20).

“Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth” (Rom. xiv. 22).

“We know that an idol is nothing in the world howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge: for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat it as a thing offered unto an idol and through thy knowledge the weak brother is perishing, for whom Christ died” (I Cor. viii. 4-11).

While we live and walk in this world it is impossible to avoid contact with evil somewhere, and while this is to be deplored, it is but an indication of the present state of things, and the effect upon us is described in the language of the type as, it is but a “scab”. Though by no means spiritual or right, such things are not a sufficient ground for the breaking off of fellowship, for “then must ye needs go out of the world”. But where anything tends to “spread”, and weaker brethren are stumbled, then it is time to judge the thing and pronounce it unclean.

The law of cleansing.

While we should not too quickly turn away from the awful picture of sin given in chapter xiii., our immediate object is rather the *cleansing* of the leper, which is given in chapter xiv. Referring to the structure on [p.141](#) (see above “A”), we see that the section dealing with the cleansing of the leper occupies verses 1-32. This, we shall discover upon reading, is further divided into two sections. First the full ceremonial (1-20), then the provision for one who might be too poor and unable to afford so much. This, therefore, reduces our field of investigation to the first twenty verses. The intricate detail of this passage is apt to overwhelm the reader, and he may thus miss one or two most essential distinctions. To enable all to see these features we set out verses 2-20 as follows:--

- A1 | xiv. 2-7. Out of the camp.
- A2 | xiv. 8, 9. Into the camp.
- A3 | xiv. 10-20. At the door of the tabernacle.

It is vital to the understanding of this lesson that these three divisions shall be kept distinct. Each has its own ceremonial, and what is done at the door of the tabernacle would be impossible either outside the camp, or during the seven days tarrying abroad in the camp. We can now fill in the detail of each section:--

- A1 | xiv. 2-7. Out of the camp.
 - a | The two birds.
 - b | Cedar, scarlet, hyssop.
 - a | The two birds.
- B1 | xiv. 7. "HE SHALL PRONOUNCE HIM CLEAN."
- A2 | xiv. 8, 9. Into the camp.
 - c | Wash clothes, shave and wash flesh.
 - d | Seven days tarrying.
 - d | Seventh day.
 - c | Shave, wash clothes and wash flesh.
- B2 | xiv. 9. "AND HE SHALL BE CLEAN."
- A3 | xiv. 10-20. At the door.
 - e | Trespass offering.
 - f | Wave offering.
 - g | The blood applied.
 - g | The oil applied.
 - e | Sin offering.
 - f | Burnt offering and meat offering.
- B3 | xiv. 20. "AND HE SHALL BE CLEAN."

As we observe what is said regarding the cleansing of the leper, we shall find food for thought. In the first section he is "pronounced clean". In the second, he begins to take active part "that he may be clean" (verse 8). "And he shall be clean." In the third, there seems at first to be a set-back. He is spoken of as "the man that is to be made clean" (verses 11, 18 & 19), and not until atonement has been made do we read, "and he shall be clean" (verse 20). It is evident that deep teaching is here. May we look ever to the Lord that we may be guided into the truth.

The two birds.

First let us consider the initial act of cleansing. The margin tells us that the birds may be sparrows, and there is a possibility that the English word is derived from the Hebrew, which is *tsippor*. With these two birds are taken cedar wood, scarlet and hyssop. Perhaps we may never penetrate the typical intention, yet these things are written for our learning. A variety of suggestions have been made from time to time, which it would serve no useful purpose to repeat here. But two N.T. passages come before the mind that seem to point the way to the truth intended. The spiritual equivalent of leprosy is found in the words:--

"Hating even the garment spotted by the *flesh*" (Jude 23).

"Keep himself unspotted from the *world*" (James i. 27).

The flesh and the world are the two great sources of spiritual defilement, and nothing but the cross of Christ can deliver the believer from their contamination:--

"They that are Christ's have crucified the *flesh*" (Gal. v. 24).

"The *world* is crucified unto me" (Gal. vi. 14).

By nature we are all defiled and unclean. "In the flesh and in the world" is the centre and circumference of the natural man (Eph. ii. 11, 12). The combination of cedar and hyssop makes one think of I Kings iv. 33, where the whole range of the vegetable kingdom seems comprehended in the

words: “He spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall”. Scarlet is what we know as cochineal, and the combination may indicate the world and the flesh, the contaminating agents, being placed under the power of the death and resurrection of Christ. However this may be, the great feature of this offering is found in the two birds.

It is not often that we have, in one offering, so vivid a picture of both the death and resurrection of Christ as we have here. One of the birds was taken and killed in an earthen vessel over running water (the same word as “living” in verse 6), and then the living bird, together with the cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop, were dipped into the blood of the bird that was killed: the leper was then sprinkled seven times, and the living bird let loose into the open field.

The two aspects of cleansing.

As a result of this, the man is “pronounced clean”. Here is the initial cleansing. All this while the leper has done nothing. He is brought to the priest. The priest goes out of the camp to inspect him. The priest commands to take for the leper the two birds. The priest kills the one bird, the priest dips the bird, the priest sprinkles the leper, the priest pronounces him clean. But immediately following this extremely passive attitude comes one of personal activity:--

“He shall wash his clothes, and shave off all his hair, and wash himself in water, that he may be clean” (Lev. xiv. 8).

“That he may be clean.” What does that mean? He had been pronounced clean already, yet upon his own washing and shaving the words are added, “that he may be clean”. The same idiom and the same explanation are found elsewhere:--

“Love your enemies ... that ye may be the children of your Father” (Matt. v. 45).

Does any one understand this to mean, that a man may bring about his own regeneration by loving his enemies? No, it is understood to mean “that ye may be *manifestly* the children of your Father”. The lesson is this. First our cleansing is entirely the work of God in applying to our need the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Then when this is done, and we are “pronounced” clean, the newly awakened soul begins to stir itself, that it may be in act, what it is in fact. This is set forth by the washing of the clothing — the habits, and the flesh — by our own act, and the shaving off of all the hair which has been associated with the disease (*see* Leviticus xiii.), and II Cor. vii. 1 is a commentary upon the type:--

“Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”

To this same Corinthian church the apostle had already written:--

“But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God” (I Cor. vi. 11).

The same sequence is the same as in Leviticus xiv.:--

I & II Corinthians	Leviticus xiv.
“Ye are washed.”	“Pronounced clean.”
“Let us cleanse ourselves.”	“He shall wash himself.”

Another precious parallel is found in John xiii. 10 where a due consideration of the two words translated “wash” is most helpful:--

“He that *hath been bathed* needeth not save *to wash* his feet,
but is clean every whit.”

The eighth day.

The washing and shaving is repeated on the seventh day after the admission back into camp, and the word then goes forth, *and he shall be clean*. With the eighth day, however, we seem to start all over again. We read now of “the priest that maketh him clean”, and “the man that is to be cleansed”. The man is now “presented” at the door of the tabernacle, and full acceptance, conscious access, real service is in view, and for that a further preparation is necessary. In other articles we have shown that redemption (*exodus*) and atonement (*eisodus*) are complementary. The former is set forth by the two birds, with never a word about trespass, sin or acceptance, and the latter is set forth by the full fourfold offering — trespass, sin, meal and burnt offering — fully set out in Leviticus i.-vii., and analysed with some care in other articles of this magazine. In this cleansing, the whole man is not sprinkled, but three representative members are touched, first with the blood and then with the oil. The right ear, the thumb of the right hand, and the great toe of the right foot. This is a symbol full of service. The servant must hearken in order to obey, and then hand and foot are engaged in loving obedience. All this takes place on “the eighth day”, the day of circumcision, which finds its exposition in Philippians iii. and Colossians ii.:-

“We are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh” (Phil. iii. 3).

“In Whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off *the body of the flesh* (R.V.) by the circumcision of Christ” (Colossians ii. 11).

Here is the resurrection stand. Here is where and when the four great offerings of Leviticus i.-vii. have their place. Redemption is for the sinner, atonement for the saint. First deliverance *from*, and then access *to*.

The oil on the blood.

Here is a most important order, a corrective to much mischievous teaching that is abroad to-day. Sanctification of the Spirit is taught in the Word. Cleansing by the Word is scriptural. But the Spirit is powerless, and the Word unavailing, *unless behind and beneath all is the precious blood of Christ*. An *undue* emphasis upon the Holy Spirit may not be from God. It is the Spirit’s office to glorify the Son of God. The true order in sanctification is that of Leviticus xiv. First the application of the blood, then the application of the oil “upon the place of the blood” (xiv. 28). Just as the initial cleansing of Leviticus xiv. 2-7 underlies all that follows, so the initial sanctification by the blood of Christ underlies all progressive appreciation on our part. The trespass offering speaks of personal acts of sin, the sin offering speaks of inherent, radical sinfulness, the burnt offering is the recognition of the satisfaction which the Father found in His beloved Son, and the bloodless meat offering, the gift of thankfulness for mercy received.

The Lord, Who cleansed the leper, and whose once-offered sacrifice did away, for ever, with all the offerings of the law, endorsed the whole typical teaching of Leviticus xiv., and bade the cleansed leper “offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them” (Matt. viii. 4).

We do most earnestly pray that every reader, after pondering the teaching of Leviticus xiv. together, will appreciate perhaps more than ever the blessed meaning of the words, “*The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin*”.

#79. Azazel. The Scapegoat (Leviticus xvi.).

The day of Atonement has always been held to be a very solemn and searching type of that One Sacrifice, once offered, for sin, by the Lord Jesus Christ. Like all types of divine things, we shall find that it utterly breaks down in some features. Yet even these are not to be regarded as faults, but inherent in the very nature of the case. For example, observe how, in Hebrews ix., the Holy Spirit lays hold upon several such inadequacies in type:--

“Into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the errors of the people” (Heb. ix. 7).

“But Christ by a greater and more perfect tabernacle neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place” (Heb. ix. 11, 12).

Here we have heaven itself instead of the tabernacle made with hands; here we have “His own blood” instead of the blood of bulls and goats; and here we have no need for an offering for His own sins, for this High Priest was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.

The immediate cause for the great symbolic rite of the Day of Atonement was the action of Nadab and Abihu in offering strange fire unto the Lord. While access to the presence of the Lord is a most blessed privilege of the redeemed, unholy familiarity must not be allowed, lest it breed contempt, and consequently

“The Lord spake unto Moses, after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they offered before the Lord, and died: and the Lord said unto Moses, speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times into the holy place within the vail before the mercy seat, which is upon the ark; that he die not” (Lev. xvi. 1, 2).

“That he die not” has allusion to the fate of the two sons, Nadab and Abihu. It is repeated in xvi. 13, where, in contrast with the strange fire that called down judgment, Aaron was to take

“A censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the Lord, and his hands full of sweet incense, beaten small, . . . that he die not” (Lev. xvi. 12, 13).

Our earlier studies of the offerings will have prepared us to appreciate more readily a good deal that is written in Leviticus xvi., and as the scapegoat has become the most controversial subject in the passage, we shall at once devote ourselves to its consideration.

The goat for Azazel.

The peculiar feature of this atonement is that, not one, but two, goats are presented before the Lord, one being subsequently slain and the other, the living goat sent away and let go in a land not inhabited. The margin of the A.V. draws attention to the fact that the word rendered “scapegoat” is the Hebrew word *Azazel*, and further investigation shows that, placed in juxtaposition, are the expressions “one lot for the Lord” and “the other lot for Azazel”, which has lent colour to the suggestion that Azazel must be a person. We do not think that it would be edifying to indicate the many different explanations of the allocations of these lots that have, from time to time, been put forward, but we give a few in order that the reader may be able to judge of the matter for himself:--

NEWBERRY gives a note explanatory of Azazel, “Heb. *Hazah-zeel*, from *hez* a goat, and *ahzal* to depart”.

ROTHERHAM says: “Azazel is a title of an evil being, opposed to Jehovah, to whom, on the great day of propitiation, the live goat was sent, not as a sacrifice to Satan, but rather because of the death of the other goat, in virtue of which he cries aloud to Satan, ‘Slay me if thou durst, I claim to live! I have already died in my companion whose death is accounted mine’.”

THE OXFORD GESENIUS translates Azazel, “entire removal”, which is very similar to the view of Tholuck and Bahr, who take the word as a form of *azal*, to remove.

Another view is that the goat of Azazel is not a type of Christ at all. This interpretation holds that it symbolizes the unbeliever, who is sent away from the presence of the Lord bearing his sin, and Barabbas is mentioned as the antitype of the goat whose life was spared. Taking this last view first, we cannot accept it because of the simple statement in Lev. xvi. 5: “Take two kids of the goats *for a sin offering*”. Surely, if the Lord intended us to understand that only one of the goats was a type of the Lord’s offering, this statement would have been qualified. The fact that no one knew which goat would be for the Lord and which for Azazel necessitated that they should both be without blemish, and therefore types of Christ.

The scapegoat.

Let us now examine the Scripture afresh, and go back, beyond modern speculation, to the interpretations of earlier times. The Latin Vulgate renders *Azazel* by *Hircus emmisarius*, which means “a goat for sending away”. The LXX translates *Azazel* by *apompaios*, which is a word made up of *apo*, “away” and *pempo*, “to send”. In non-biblical usage this word meant “the turner away”, “the averter”, and carried with it a good deal of superstition, but there is no reason for rejecting the simple meaning of the LXX, “the sent away”. Now “the goat for sending away” is the literal meaning of the Hebrew words *Az Azel*. *Az* is a Hebrew word for “goat” and is so translated in the A.V. fifty-five times. In five other places it is translated “she goat” and once “kid”. Some find difficulty here, as the “kids” taken in Lev. xvi. 5 are not “she goats”. On the other hand there are two words available when “he goats” are to be specified, *attud* (Numb. vii. 17 & in sixteen other places), & *tsaphir* (II Chron. xxix. 21 and in four other places).

The words used in Leviticus xvi. are more general, and do not constitute a legitimate objection. *Azel* is the verb, “to send away”. With the simple etymology of the word before us, coupled with the ancient testimony of the Septuagint, of Symmachus, of Aquila and of the Latin Vulgate, we believe the A.V. is correct and that the goat for Azazel is the goat for sending away, the “escape” goat, the one set free.

This live goat is atoned for. Verse 10 reads, “to make an atonement *with* him”. There are some who uphold this rendering, but as the same preposition is used in verses 6, 16 & 18 it must be rendered similarly, “to make an atonement *for* him”. The note in *The Companion Bible* on Lev. xvi. 10 is as follows:--

“ ‘With him’, Heb. ‘for him’. See verses 16, 18. The scapegoat was not used to make atonement, but atonement was made *for* it. Hence he was to be ‘let go’ free. See verse 22.”

The two goats are therefore to be considered together as exhibiting God’s method of dealing with His people’s sin. The idea expressed by some, that the live goat symbolizes those whose sins are unforgiven is disposed of by the following facts:--

First, the goat on whom the Lord’s lot fell is killed; its blood makes atonement.

“Because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins” (Lev. xvi. 16).

“*In all their sins.*” This must not be minimized. Atonement has been made concerning all the sins of the people.

Secondly we read:--

“And when he hath made an end of reconciling the holy place” (Lev. xvi. 20).

This is a reference to verse 16, and assures us that the work of atonement was “finished”, “ended”, “accomplished”, as the word *kalah* is translated. Even in dealing with types of the offering of Christ, it is a serious thing to introduce any measure of uncertainty.

Thirdly:--

“When he hath made an end of reconciling the holy place he shall bring the live goat and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat” (Lev. xvi. 20, 21).

By comparing verse 16 with verse 21 we find that atonement was made for Israel’s transgressions in all their sins, and confession was made of all these transgressions in all their sins. These confessed sins were forgiven sins, and the whole point of the passage turns upon confession. Psalm xxxii. & Psalm li. bear eloquent and moving testimony to the need for the *confession* of sins, even though they be atoned for.

“When I kept silence my bones waxed old I acknowledged my sins I said I will confess my transgressions” (Psa. xxxii. 1-5).

“Wash me . . . cleanse me . . . for I acknowledge my transgressions” (Psa.li.2,3).

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (I John i. 9).

Some have asked whether, if the epistles assure us that God has forgiven us all trespasses, it is of faith that we ask to be forgiven. The Scriptures written for our learning do not teach us to ask for forgiveness, but it is for our moral good that, while rejoicing in the freedom of His grace, we nevertheless confess our sinnership. It is just as true for us as for Israel that we should both confess and forsake all known evil (Psa. xxviii. 13), otherwise we may come under the judgment of Romans vi., and be found teaching that, because we are under grace, we may continue in sin.

Fourthly, these atoned-for and confessed sins are now sent away:--

“Confess over him and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness” (Lev. xvi. 21).

Jewish tradition has unwarrantably mutilated this part of the inspired law. We read in their account that the live goat was taken to some precipitous place and there dashed to pieces down the rocky slope. Sadly enough, some Christian expositors have enlarged upon this imagination as though it were resident in the type. The truth is all the other way. There can be no second sacrifice for the same sins in a type like this. The live goat carries away confessed sins, atoned sins, into a land of “separation”. The live goat is “let go”.

In Leviticus xiv. we have the same words used in connection with another double symbol. There, two birds, one dead and one living, instead of two goats, one dead and one living, the words “let loose” and “let go” in Lev. xiv. 7 & 53 being the same as are used of the live goat. The living bird is dipped in the blood of the bird that was slain, and then “let loose”. In the case of the live goat, sins that have been atoned for are confessed over it instead, and it, too, is then “let go”.

The word “forgiveness” in Eph. i. 7 is *aphesis*, which, in works outside the Scriptures, is variously translated “let go”, “to set free”, “quittance”, “discharge”, “divorce”. Luke iv. 18 this word “forgiveness” occurs twice in the phrases “*deliverance* to the captive”, “*to set at liberty* them that are bruised”.

The scapegoat seems to be in the mind's eye of the prophets when they wrote:--

"I will forgive their iniquity (the goat slain) and I will remember their sins no more" (the goat set free) (Jer. xxxi. 34).

"Who is a God like unto Thee, that pardoneth iniquity? (the goat slain) ... Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea" (the goat set free) (Micah vii. 18, 19).

"Thou hast, in love to my soul, delivered it from the pit of corruption (the goat slain), for Thou hast cast all my sins behind Thy back" (the goat set free) (Isa. xxxviii. 17).

We have touched upon the symbol and pledge of resurrection, in the live goat, for though it may be deduced, it is not prominent, the complete removal of sin being the immediate purpose of this glorious type. Let us all thank God for the sacrifice slain — let us not omit praise for Azazel, "the goat that was sent away".

#80. A dispensational forecast (Leviticus xxiii.).

This chapter of Leviticus is distinguished from the rest of the book, by the fact that it surveys the typical year of Israel's fasts and feasts, and sets forth, so far as the people of Israel and those associated with them are concerned, the purpose of the ages. A reading of the chapter impresses one with the important sabbatic principle that underlies the whole purpose. The chapter opens with a reference to the weekly Sabbath (verses 1-3), and then proceeds to outline the feasts and fasts that occupy the first seven months of the year.

It will be remembered that at the Passover, first instituted in Exodus xii., a change was made in the calendar, and Abib became "the beginning of months". The seventh month, therefore, and the twelfth month of the respective reckonings would overlap, and so, for the purposes of typical teaching, Israel's year is limited to the first seven months, the remaining months being allowed to run their course unnoticed.

The sabbatic principle.

The sabbatic principle is not confined to the written revelation of God. It is found throughout the works of His hand. All are familiar with the seven-hued rainbow, and most know that in the diatonic musical scale there are seven notes, the sequence being repeated at the eighth or octave. Turning to the observations of men of science we may mention the periodic law of the elements. Sir William Crookes said of this law:--

"I am convinced that whoever grasps the key to the periodic law will be permitted to unlock some of the deepest mysteries of creation."

Dr. E. J. Pace, in his book *The Law of the Octave*, shows by a series of diagrams, too complicated to describe and perhaps unnecessary so far as we are concerned, that the elements composing the universe all obey this law of the seven sequence. Dr. Ethelbert W. Bullinger's *Numbers in Scripture* will supply further information of interest. We are, however, more concerned with the presence of the number seven in the typical and dispensational foreshadowings of Scripture. We find that there are seven features, developed in an orderly sequence — a seven of days, a seven of weeks, a seven of months, a seven of years, a seven times seven of years, a seven times seventy of years, and a period of seven times.

I.	7 days.	“Remember the Sabbath day” (Exod. xx. 8-11).
II.	7 weeks.	“Seven Sabbaths shall be completed” (Lev. xxiii. 15).
III.	7 months.	“In the seventh month – a Sabbath” (Lev. xxiii. 24).
IV.	7 years.	“In the seventh year – a Sabbath” (Lev. xxv. 2-5).
V.	7 * 7 years.	“Seven times seven years – Jubile” (Lev. xxv. 8-10).
VI.	7 * 70 years.	“Seventy weeks are determined” (Dan. ix. 24-27).
VII.	7 times.	“Punish seven times for sins” (Lev. xxvi. 24; Dan. iv. 16).

Here we have orderly and regular progression.

The only passages that may be questioned in this series are Daniel ix. and Leviticus xxvi. That Daniel ix. implies a period of years we show in the series dealing with Daniel’s prophecy. That the term “times” is prophetic of a period we discover by studying its usage in Daniel. Leviticus.xxvi.33,34 suggests that the “seven times” of Israel’s punishment is co-extensive with the period of Gentile dominion (the seven times of Nebuchadnezzar’s madness). These questions are dealt with more extensively in the series on Daniel. It is sufficient for our present purpose that we recognize this sabbatic principle at work.

This series of sevens leads up to the octave, the new beginning, the new heaven and earth “wherein dwelleth righteousness”. So that we find the seventh feast of the year expanded, and prominence given to one part of it — “the eighth day” (Lev. xxiii. 39). In this last phase we see, in type, Israel’s wonderful restoration — the steps leading up to it being set out, as we shall see, in strictly historical order.

The feasts mentioned in Leviticus xxiii. are the following: The weekly Sabbath, Passover, Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, Trumpets, Day of Atonement, Tabernacles, and the Eighth Day of the Feast. Their interrelation may be demonstrated as follows:--

The feasts of the Lord (xxiii.).

- A | THE WEEKLY SABBATH (1-3)
- B | PASSOVER. Redemption by the blood of Lamb (5-8).
THE FIRST-FRUIT.
- C | UNLEAVENED BREAD. The present attitude (9-14).
- D | PENTECOST. The end of the first harvest (15-21).
The uniting of the nation.
The Jubilee anticipated.
References to Holy Spirit.
Provision for the stranger (22, 23).
Interval of Israel’s blindness.
Israel’s regathering inaugurated by
- A | THE BLOWING OF TRUMPETS (24, 25).
- B | THE DAY OF ATONEMENT. Atonement by blood (27-32).
Israel “the second time”.
- C | TABERNACLES. (34-38).
- D | THE INGATHERING (The *sunteleia*) (39-44).
THE EIGHTH DAY OF THE AGE.
References to Holy Spirit.

In the series dealing with the Second Coming of Christ, the expression, “The *sunteleia* of the age”, used by the disciples in Matt. xxiv. 3, is shown to correspond to the feast of ingathering. Three of these feasts have been fulfilled; four await fulfillment. And just as those that have been fulfilled have been fulfilled literally and in historic sequence, so we may confidently expect the remainder to be fulfilled in the same way when the appointed time comes.

The Passover.

No reader of the four Gospels, who is taught of God, can fail to see that Christ Himself was the true Passover Lamb. He was the Lamb of God (John i. 29; Exod. xii. 3-5). He was without spot or blemish (Heb. ix. 14; I Pet. i. 19; Exod. xxii. 5). And He was most severely scrutinized as was the passover lamb from the 10th to the 14th day of the month (Luke xxiii. 4, 15, 22, 41, 47).

The passover was slain “between the two evenings”, and Lev. xxiii. 32 makes it clear that a day began and ended with an evening — “from even unto even”. It was therefore possible for the Lord to partake of the passover lamb and Himself be offered upon the 14th Nisan — an impossibility had the Jewish day begun at midnight.

I Corinthians v. 7 makes it perfectly clear that Christ fulfilled the great type of the passover: “For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us”. And the typical meaning of the feast of unleavened bread was entered into by the believer: “Therefore let us keep the feast with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth” (I Cor. v. 8). Pentecost, too, was fulfilled to the exact day, as Acts ii. demonstrates.

It is interesting to see that the feasts of Israel are all recognized in the epistle to the Corinthians:--

PASSOVER.—“Christ our Passover” (I Cor. v. 7).

FEAST OF WEEKS.—“Let us keep the feast” (I Cor. v. 8).

“On the first of the Sabbaths” (I Cor. xvi. 2).

THE FIRST-FRUITS.—“Christ the First fruits” (I Cor. xv. 23).

PENTECOST.—“I will tarry unto Pentecost” (I Cor. xvi. 8).

After Pentecost comes the long interval which spans the whole of the period from Israel’s rejection to the sounding of the trumpet that ushers in the day of their ingathering. One critic has objected to the statement made by the writer that the parable of the sower covers the whole time period from the day of the Lord’s earthly ministry to the future day of the Lord, on the ground that this would include the dispensation of the mystery. But we must realize that if Matthew xiii. or Daniel ix. or any other prophecies leap over the present interval, they must necessarily include the actual period now occupied by the manifestation of the mystery. These prophecies, however, contain no indication of the revelation to be made known during this uncharted period. So, while it is true that the dispensation of the mystery was never a subject of O.T. prophecy, we can nevertheless see, now that the revelation has been made, that the gap between Pentecost and the seventh month leaves provision for the present dispensation. The rest of the dispensational purpose as foreshadowed in Israel’s ceremonial year will be fulfilled as surely as were the four feasts from Passover to Pentecost.

Trumpets.

“He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other” (Matt. xxiv. 31).

“We shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump” (I Cor. xv. 51, 52).

“For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God” (I Thess. iv. 16).

“In the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as He hath declared to His servants the prophets” (Rev. x. 7).

Day of atonement.

“Ye shall afflict your souls” (Lev. xxiii. 27).

“I will pour upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon Me Whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourneth for his only son the land shall mourn, every family apart” (Zech. xii. 10-12).

“Behold He cometh with the clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him, and all the tribes of the land shall wail because of Him” (Rev. i. 7).

“Christ has entered into heaven itself and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation” (Heb. ix. 24-28).

Tabernacles.

“I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day. In that day, saith the Lord of Hosts, shall ye call every man his neighbour under the vine and under the fig tree” (Zech. iii. 9, 10).

“They shall beat their swords into ploughshares they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid” (Micah. iv. 3, 4).

“I will go up to the land of unwalled villages, I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates” (Ezekiel xxxviii., xxxix.).

The Ingathering.

“The feast of the ingathering, which is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field” (Exod. xxiii. 16).

The LXX here reads: “the *sunteleia*” where the A.V. reads: “the feast of the ingathering”. This is referred to by the disciples in Matthew xxiv.: “Tell us when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the *sunteleia* of the age?”.

The Eighth Day of the Feast.

“In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living waters. But this He spake of the Spirit” (John vii. 37-39).

There is a reference here to several prophecies, such as Ezekiel xlvii. The last feast is therefore parallel with Pentecost and an expansion of it. What Pentecost foreshadowed was not the church of the mystery, but the ingathering of Israel and the pouring out upon them of the Spirit as a life-giving stream. Here, therefore, given to the people of type and shadow, was a sacred calendar, a period of seven months in which was foreshadowed, so far as the earthly side was concerned, the unfolding purpose of the age.

The creation week, with its six days of work and one of rest, the fact that Heb. iv. 9 speaks of a rest or Sabbath keeping for the people of God, the fact that the sabbatic principle underlies the whole scheme, lends colour to the Rabbinical view that the ages will conform to the same principles. The Rabbis taught that the world was two thousand years without the law, two thousand years under the law, and two thousand years under the Messiah. The Revelation tells us of the thousand years of glory at the close. The world draws near to the end of its sixth day.

It is folly to attempt the computation of the time of the end, for at least two reasons. It transgresses the evident prohibition of Acts i. 7 & Matt. xxiv. 36, 44; and it assumes that chronology since Christ is trustworthy. At the best we can only say that this present year of grace is approximately A.D.1932. There is no proof — and we believe the uncertainty to be of God.

The church of the mystery finds no exposition in Leviticus; its hope is entirely separated from the hope of Israel. This does not, however, clash with the obvious deduction, that if the hope of Israel draws near to its realization, how much nearer must our hope be? Grace now; and glory soon. What manner of persons ought we to be?

#81. The Book of Numbers. My breach of promise (Numb. xiv. 34).

The English title of this fourth book of Moses is taken from the one given it by the LXX. *Arithmoi*, which has its origin in the fact that the opening chapter deals with the numbering of the tribes of Israel. The title of the book in the Hebrew Bible, however, is *B'midbar*, "In the wilderness", which indicates the true setting of its tragic story. Perhaps the verse that best epitomizes the book is Numb. xiv. 34:--

"After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise."

"My breach of promise"! What an expression to come from the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob! What a revelation of the complete apostacy of His people! It was for the guidance and comfort of this people that Moses wrote Psalm xc. and also, as we believe, Psalm xci. Most readers know that the Psalms are divided into five books, each of which corresponds with one of the books of Moses. The fourth of these comprises Psalms xc.-cvi., and is the Numbers section, which is appropriately opened by the Psalm of Moses. This Psalm has a direct bearing upon the condition of those men who, being twenty years old and upwards, were condemned to die in the wilderness, while Psalm xci. speaks to those, their children, who were to be spared and carried triumphantly through the wilderness and into the promised land.

The references in Psalm xc. to the 40 years' wandering in the wilderness are:--

"Thou turnest man to destruction, and sayest, return ye children of men" (xc.3).

"All our days are passed away in Thy wrath, we spend our years as a tale that is told" (9).

"The days of our years are threescore years and ten" (10).

"So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts to wisdom" (12).

The statement concerning the threescore years and ten refers primarily to the children of Israel. Any man who was twenty years of age when Israel were turned back into the wilderness could "number his days"—he would die at, or before, attaining 60 years—so with all the rest, 70 years being a fair average.

In this plight Israel's hope is in the Lord and His "return", which will be the better realized when we consider the general structure of the Psalm. But before this is set out, we must consider the relationship of the two Psalms together. *The Companion Bible* says that "Psalms xc. and xci. are evidently one Psalm in two parts", and the reader of the Hebrew Bible will find nothing to suggest the end of one Psalm and the beginning of another. In the absence of any division it is more easily seen that the opening verse of Psalm xc. corresponds with the opening verse of Psalm xci.:--

"Lord Thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations" (Psa. xc. 1).

"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty" (Psa. xci. 1).

The two Psalms, taken together, exhibit the following theme:--

Psalms xc. & xci.

- A | xc. 1, 2. The Lord. The dwelling place of His people.
- B | xc. 3-17. Result of being expelled from this security.
- A | xci. 1. The Lord. The dwelling place of His people.
- B | xci. 2-15. Result of abiding under His shadow.

While Psalm xc. speaks to Israel as condemned to die in the wilderness, Psalm xci. assures their children that none of the instruments of destruction — the snare of the fowler, the noisome pestilence, the terror by night, the arrow by day, the lion and the adder — shall come nigh or hurt them.

The expansion of that part of Psalm xc. which shows Israel's condemnation and hope is as follows:

Psalm xc. 3-15.

- A | 3. Return. Spoken in wrath.
- B | 4. 1,000 years are but as yesterday and as a watch in the night.
- C | 5. Carried away as with a flood.
- D | a | 6. In morning flourish. In evening cut down.
- b | 7, 8. Consumed by Thine anger wrath.
- C | 9, 10. Passed away as a tale told.
- D | b | 11. Power of Thine anger wrath.
- a | 12. Teach us to number our days.
- A | 13. Return repent.
- B | 14, 15. According to the days of affliction. Satisfy us in the morning.

It is not our present purpose to give an exposition of these Psalms, but they have been quoted here because of the light they throw upon the lessons of the Book of Numbers. Psalm xcv. also makes pointed reference to the Book of Numbers and is, in turn, quoted at length in the Epistle to the Hebrews. Chapters ii. & iv. of the epistle to the Hebrews particularly allude to Israel's failure in the wilderness. In them Joshua's leadership is used as a type of the great Captain Who shall yet lead many sons to glory, "Jesus" in Heb. iv. 8 being not the Lord, but Joshua.

Closely associated with the numbering of Israel and their failure in the wilderness is the appointment of the Levites, the rebellion of Korah, and the inability of the priesthood to lead the people. All this, as Hebrews teaches, reveals the need of Christ, the one true, perfect High Priest.

What we must keep in mind as we seek the typical lesson of the Book of Numbers, is that this people, rebellious though they were, suffering loss as they did, were nevertheless a redeemed people. The truth is summed up in the words of I Cor. iii. 15: "If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."

The wilderness journeyings of Israel fall into two parts. The first of these was according to divine purpose. It commenced at the shores of the Red Sea, led through Marah and Elim to Sinai, and thence to Kadesh Barnea. From the 1st of Abib, in which the Exodus commenced, to the time of the arrival at Kadesh Barnea was sixteen months. As we have said, this period of Israel's wilderness experiences was of divine purpose, and in it were taught them many precious lessons, as at Marah, Elim, and again in connection with Amalek. During that period the law was given from Sinai and the tabernacle built. The forty years' wandering, however, was a result of unbelief and we must be careful to keep these two periods distinct. Some having seen the forty years of unbelief have said, "There is no wilderness experience for the believer to-day", and so become an easy prey to those who would urge them to act as though heavenly places were already attained, and reigning a present reality. We would urge any such to consider the fact that the earlier part of Israel's wilderness experiences was by God's ordering for

their teaching and profit; like Abraham, their father, they did not enter immediately into possession of the land, but became strangers and pilgrims, tent-dwellers, ever moving on. The sixteen months' wilderness experience of Israel and the life-long pilgrimage of Abraham (Hebrews xi.) are examples of how we may enjoy the blessings that are ours in Christ, by faith. The actual entry into the land, and the fall of Jericho under Joshua, anticipate the day of redemption and the redemption of the purchased possession.

The book of Exodus, and Numbers i.-xii. record the first wilderness experience, and contain much that illuminates the believer in his experience to-day. The remainder of the Book of Numbers deals with the period of unbelief and resumption of the journey. Deuteronomy concludes the story, and Joshua, a type of the risen Christ ("Moses My servant is dead: now therefore arise", Josh. i. 2), leads Israel into the land of promise.

The truth of the mystery is of course entirely dissociated from what we have been considering. So far as the dispensational teaching of the epistle to the Ephesians is concerned, it is an act of unbelief to attempt to discover in the O.T. that which God never revealed there. Its distinctive doctrine, too, transcends anything that is set forth in type in the law, yet we may learn from these O.T. types the broad principles that underlie the distinction between the truths of Hope and Prize, between Ephesians and Philippians, between Living and Reigning, between the Overcomers, like Caleb, and Overcome, like those who perished in the wilderness. It is naturally outside the scope of these articles to attempt a detailed exposition of these books — all that we can hope to do is to point out those more obvious passages that illuminate the ways of God and His people, suggest lines of practical teaching, and generally set forth those underlying fundamentals of dispensational truth which it is the prime object of *The Berean Expositor* to make plain.

#82. The numbering, every one according to his service (Numbers i. - iv.).

Two numberings of Israel are recorded in the book of Numbers. They are recorded in chapters i.-iv. and xxvi.-xxvii. Two distinct objects are in view. In the first numbering, service is before us; in the second, inheritance. In both, ability to go forth to war is specified.

In the numberings of the tribes of Israel, Levi is omitted, and Joseph is represented by both Ephraim and Manasseh, thus retaining the number twelve. The numbering of the tribe of Levi was done separately, and is recorded in Numb. iii. 14-29, where a special reason for this distinction is given.

"And I, behold, I have taken the Levites from among the children of Israel instead of all the first-born that openeth the matrix among the children of Israel, therefore the Levites shall be Mine; because all the firstborn are Mine: for on the day that I smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt I hallowed unto Me all the firstborn of Israel, both man and beast: Mine they shall be; I am the Lord" (Numb. iii. 12, 13).

The total number of the firstborn males of all Israel amounted to 22,273 (Numb. iii. 43), whereas the total number of the Levites, who were the substitutes for these firstborn, only amounted to 22,000. This left 273 unaccounted for, and these had to be redeemed at the price of five shekels a head. The numbering of Israel had the following objects in view:--

- (1) To discover how many of an age of twenty years and upward were able to go forth to war (Numb. i. 45).
- (2) To set apart the tribe of Levi for the service of the tabernacle (Numb. i. 50).
- (3) To ensure order when Israel encamped or marched (Numb. ii. 1-34).
- (4) To settle the particular service of the three sections of the Levites (Numb. iii. 21-37).

The tribe of Levi was sub-divided according to the sons of Levi — Gershon, Kohath and Merari. These had their allotted places: the Gershonites west of the tabernacle (Numb. iii. 23), the Kohathites south of the tabernacle (Numb. iii. 29), the Merarites north of the tabernacle (Numb. iii. 35), leaving Moses and Aaron and his sons the east side of the tabernacle. Each section of Levites, moreover, had its special charge. The Gershonites had the care of the tabernacle, the hangings, the door, the court and the cords of the tabernacle. The Kohathites had charge of the ark and all the furniture and vessels of the tabernacle. The Merarites took charge of the boards, bars, pillars and sockets, and pins and cords of the court (Numb. iii. 21-37).

The Lord not only regulated the position and service of each son of Levi, but every tribe had its allotted place for encampment:--

“Every man of the children of Israel shall pitch by his own standard, with the ensign of their father’s house; over against about the tabernacle of the congregation shall they pitch” (Numb. ii. 2).

The ensigns of the twelve tribes are not described in the Scriptures. Judah’s ensign, the lion, is fairly familiar to all Scripture students, but for the rest we must accept the voice of tradition for what it may be worth. The targum of Jonathan, a paraphrase in Chaldee, gives to each tribes one of the signs of the Zodiac:--

Tribe.	Sign.	Constellation.
JUDAH.— <i>East.</i>	The Lion	Leo.
ISSACHAR.	The Crab.	Cancer.
ZABULUN.	The Virgin.	Virgo.
REUBEN.— <i>South.</i>	A Man.	Aquarius.
SIMEON.	Fishes.	Pisces.
GAD.	The Ram.	Aries.
EPHRAIM.— <i>West.</i> \	The Ox.	The two horns of the bull
MANASSEH. /		Taurus.
BENJAMIN.	The Twins.	Gemini.
DAN.— <i>North.</i>	The Eagle.	Scorpio.
ASHER.	The Archer.	Sagittarius.
NAPHTALI.	The Goat.	Capricornus.
LEVI.— <i>In the midst.</i>	/ The Scales.	Libra. Ancient name <i>Tulka</i> ,
	\ Earlier, possibly the Altar.	the Sacred Mound.

The witness of the stars (Gen. i. 14-19; Psalm xix.) was, from Adam to Moses, the ancient testimony to the purpose of the ages. When Israel, the people of type, sign and symbol, were formed, the significance of the twelve “signs” in the heavens was perpetuated by the tribal “ensigns”. This important testimony is carefully explained and illustrated in Dr. Bullinger’s *Witness of the Stars*, and a most helpful synopsis is given in Appendix 12 of *The Companion Bible*.

It will be observed that, at the four cardinal points, East, South, West and North, are symbols that also appear with the Cherubim:--

“They four had the face of a *man*, and the face of a *lion* on the right side; and they four had the face of an *ox* on the left side: and they four also had the face of an *eagle*” (Ezek. i. 10).

“The first living creature was like a *lion*, and the second living creature like a *calf*, and the third living creature had a face as a *man*, and the fourth living creature was like a *flying eagle*” (Rev. iv. 7).

The fourfold picture of the Lord Jesus, as set forth in the four Gospels, focuses the witness of the heavens, the testimony of the ensigns of Israel, and the pledge of the cherubim upon the Person and work of the Saviour:--

MATTHEW.	The lion.	Behold your KING.
MARK.	The Ox.	Behold my SERVANT.
LUKE.	The Man.	Behold the MAN.
JOHN.	The Eagle.	Behold your GOD.

Returning to the tribe of Levi and their particular service, we find careful details set out in Numbers.iv. It was not left to chance to decide the order in which these Levites approached their respective tasks. Aaron and his sons come first. These take down the vail and cover the ark with it. Full instructions are given in Numb. iv. 1-4 as to the covering of the various articles of tabernacle furniture:--

“And when Aaron and his sons have made an end of covering the sanctuary, and all the vessels of the sanctuary, as the camp is to set forward: after that, the sons of Kohath shall come to bear it: but they shall not touch any holy thing, lest they die. These things are the burden of the sons of Kohath in the tabernacle of the congregation” (Numb. iv. 15).

The Gershonites come next, bearing the curtains, hangings, etc., as already mentioned (Numbers.iv.24-28), and last of all the Merarites:--

“According to the commandment of the Lord, they were numbered by the hand of Moses, every one according to his service, and according to his burden” (iv.49).

In this concluding verse we have the three underlying principles that relate to all scriptural service, viz.:--

According to THE COMMANDMENT of the Lord.
According to HIS SERVICE.
According to HIS BURDEN.

What is the supreme and only authority for service? Surely that it be “according to the commandment of the Lord”.

The commandment.

“He called He gave them power” (Matt. x. 1).

“Have not I chosen you twelve?” (John vi. 70).

“Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you and ordained you” (John xv. 16).

What is true of the ministry of the twelve apostles is true of all subsequent ministry; it must be according to the Lord’s command. In the days of the Law, death followed transgression in service (*see* Numb. iv. 15, 19). While physical death does not follow transgression in service now, who can say how much *spiritual* deadness results from it here, and how much loss will result there when the service is tried by fire? If the Lord called some to be evangelists, and some to be teachers, it is surely evident that He needs both. The criticism of friends counts for nothing in these matters. Some have “problems” respecting the ministry of women, but the “commandments of the Lord” are plain, *vide* I Cor. xiv. 34, Titus ii. 3-5 & I Tim. ii. 12-15. There is an order in later ministry that is as definite as any given in Numbers i.-iv.:--

“God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers” (I Cor. xii. 28).

“He gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers” (Eph. iv. 11).

Whatever dispensation is in view, order is to be observed. Apostles and prophets came first. They were the foundation ministry of the church of the mystery (Eph. ii. 20). Evangelists (II Tim. iv. 5) came next; then teachers (II Tim. ii. 2).

His service.

“Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation; he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness” (Rom. xii. 6-8).

“If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body, is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? The eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee. God hath set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased Him” (I. Corinthian. xii. 15-21).

And yet, for example, we meet with some, eminently fitted to be the *hosts* of the church, who spoil a good witness by persistently trying to *teach* or *preach*. Others, whose business abilities are demanded by the Lord, leave the church the poorer while they indulge some foolish whim of their own.

His burden.

“And unto one He gave five talents, to another two, and to another one: to every man according to his several ability” (Matt. xxv. 15).

“All these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will” (I Cor. xii. 11).

“But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another, for every man shall bear his own burden” (Galatian vi. 4, 5).

We have not been careful to draw attention to the different dispensations that the above scriptures represent, our idea being merely to show that, in all dispensations, true service must be accepted and regulated according to the threefold principle of Numb. iv. 49. Service that is not according to plan is disobedience, a waste of time and opportunity, robbing someone else of service that might have been rendered, eliminating any possibility of reward, and resulting in failure to glorify the Lord. The appeal to apparent success, or expediency, and all the shifts of human reasoning leave us unmoved. The word of God, unaltered, is our basis of salvation, and nothing lower or less can be the basis of our service.

To every reader of this magazine we make a personal appeal. See that you have your “marching orders” direct from the Word of God. If you have, happy are you. But if there is the slightest tampering with “His commandment”, the slightest departure from “his service”, the smallest attempt to avoid “his burden” — what kind of servants are you?

As we have already seen, the people of Israel carried the ensigns of the cherubim, God’s great pledge that He will surely accomplish His purposes of man’s redemption and restoration. An obedient Israel will have the inestimable blessedness of being fellow-workers together with God. In like manner obedient servants of God to-day may enjoy this privilege; but what a world of tragedy is found in the closing words of the second numbering recorded in Numbers xxvi.:--

“These are they that were numbered by Moses and Eleazar the priest, who numbered the children of Israel in the plain of Moab by Jordan near Jericho. But among these there was not a man of them whom Moses and Aaron the priest numbered, when they numbered the children of Israel in the wilderness of Sinai. For the Lord had said of them, They shall surely die in the wilderness. And there was not left a man of them, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun” (Numb. xxvi. 63-65).

I Corinthian ix. 24 - x. 13 and I Cor. iii. 11-15 show us that Israel in the wilderness and Belshazzar in Babylon are not the only ones of whom it shall be said: ‘Numbered weighed and found wanting.’”

May we truly pray the apostle’s first prayer, “Lord, what wilt *Thou* have *me* to do?” (Acts ix. 6).

#83. Separation and blessing precede service (Numbers v. & vi.).

At the dedication of the altar described in Numbers vii., twelve princes of the tribes of Israel bring their offerings consisting of twelve chargers, twelve silver bowls, and twelve spoons of gold, besides meal, oil, incense, bullocks, rams and lambs. Between the numbering of Israel and the apportioning of the service of the Levites, and this offering of the princes comes a somewhat strange section dealing with leprosy, trespass, jealousy and the Nazarite vow. There must be some lesson for us here, and to its discovery and understanding we now apply ourselves. First of all let us see what connection these separate items have, for we do not endorse the critical view that we have, in this fourth book of the law, merely a miscellaneous collection of laws and incidents strung together without method or purpose:--

Numbers v. & vi.

- A1 | Among whom I dwell.
 - A | v. 1-4. Threefold separation *from* the Lord:
LEPER; ISSUE; DEAD.
 - B | v. 5-10. Trespass. In general: against the Lord.
 - B | v. 11-31. Trespass. In particular: against husband.
 - A | vi. 1-21. Threefold separation *to* the Lord:
WINE; RAZOR; DEAD.
- A2 | My Name upon Israel.
 - A | vi. 22-27. Threefold blessing:
BLESS KEEP;
FACE SHINE BE GRACIOUS;
LIFT UP FACE GIVE PEACE.

Not till all this is traversed do we hear any more of tabernacle service. Here is a solemn word concerning ministry and service unto the Lord, which is true in principle for all time.

Just as the blessing is threefold, so the cause of separation (uncleanness) is threefold. The trespass offering is twofold. First, trespass in general, with its added fifth; then the particular trial of jealousy. The Nazarite section is twofold. First the loss and defilement of the days of separation by unavoidable contact with sudden death; then the true consecration of the days of separation, with its special offering of the Nazarite’s hair. Let us now pass these sections in review that the lessons they teach may not be lost upon us:--

“Command the children of Israel that they put out of the camp every leper, and everyone that hath an issue, and whosoever is defiled by the dead. Both male and

female shall ye put out, without the camp shall ye put them; that they defile not their camps, in the midst whereof I dwell” (Numb. v. 2, 3).

These three causes of defilement seem to be chosen to enforce the fact “that in my flesh dwelleth no good thing”. Leprosy is contagious; it is a defilement contracted through the everyday intercourse of man with man. It teaches us that, however innocent we may be, or however legitimate our callings and dealings, the very fact that we are “in the world” calls for the cleansing which the precious blood of Christ alone can give. The defilement by the various issues that are specified in the law occur in the ordinary course of nature, revealing to us that there is a deeper need of cleansing than that of our personal and voluntary transgressions. That, since the sin of Adam, we are indeed rendered unfit by the very depravity of our natures. Here we have “the flesh”, as such, and its natural uncleanness. The defilement by the dead was not contracted involuntarily, but in the very exercise of humane and kindly ministry. Here we have service in a world of death, and the Christian worker would do well to remember that while His Lord could be a friend of publicans and sinners, yet remain holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, it is not at all easy for the best of us to follow in His steps uncontaminated. Here, therefore, are three causes of defilement, three occasions that brought about separation from the conscious enjoyment of the presence of God:--

LEPROSY.—Contagion in a world of sin, in the daily round of business and life.

ISSUES.—Natural weakness. The flesh. This body of death.

DEFILEMENT BY THE DEAD.—Ministry itself exposes us all to defilement.

“Speak unto the children of Israel, when a man or woman shall commit any sin that men commit, to do a trespass against the Lord, and that person be guilty; then they shall confess their sin which they have done: and he shall recompense his trespass with the principal thereof, and add unto it the fifth part thereof, and give it unto him against whom he hath trespassed. But if the man have no kinsman to recompense the trespass unto, let the trespass be recompensed unto the Lord, even to the priest; beside the ram of the atonement, whereby an atonement shall be made for him” (Numb. v. 6-8).

Prominence is given in this case to the individual recognition of personal responsibility, notwithstanding the fact that the ram for atonement is there in the background. Let us note the following features:--

- (1) The trespass is against the Lord.
- (2) Yet the principal, and added fifth, is to be rendered unto a fellow-creature. (Verse 8 does not conflict with this as it makes provision for one who had no kinsman).

It is essential that true views of sin and trespass shall be entertained by all the people of God. Sin against my brother is really sin against God. David sinned grievously against Uriah the Hittite, but it was perfectly true in his confession to say that he had sinned against God (Psa. li. 4). The prodigal son sinned against the father, and outraged common decency, yet he confessed that he had sinned against heaven. Two things are necessary if we are to preserve a clear conscience at all times: confession and reparation:--

They shall CONFESS their sin.

He shall RECOMPENCE the principal and add a fifth part.

The fifth part is a double tithe, two tenths. Thus there is a double recognition of sin against God and against man, even as the whole law is summed up as love to God and neighbour.

A very special form of trespass follows: “If any man’s wife go aside, and commit a trespass against him” (Numb. v. 12). The reason why adultery was so severely dealt with in Israel includes the following:--

- (1) It typified the apostacy of the nation from the covenant made with the Lord, the figure of marriage and its terms being used throughout their history to set forth their close attachment to the Lord.
- (2) In a nation whose laws of inheritance were of so exacting a nature, adultery and illegitimacy introduce vexing and disturbing elements.
- (3) True marriage had in view “a seed of God” (Mal. ii. 15); adultery gave place to the devil.

Spiritual adultery makes blessing and service hopelessly impossible: “The woman shall be a curse among her people” (Numb. v. 27). Defilement and trespass, treated separately in verses 2-8, are seen to be but two parts of one whole, for in verse 12 the defilement of the woman is said to be a trespass against her husband.

There now follows the positive side of the lesson: the real, personal, voluntary separation from all defilement, both natural and moral, unto the Lord, the separation of the Nazarite. The word *Nazarite* is simply the Hebrew word *nazir*, which is translated: “him that was separated from” in Gen. xlix. 26, and Deut. xxxiii. 16. In Numbers vi. *nezer* is translated “separation” eleven times, and “consecration” twice. A most important secondary meaning of *nezer* is “crown”. It is so translated eleven times in the A.V. We give hereunder those found in the law. When we read these passages it is quite easy to see how the same word that is translated “separated” and “consecrated”, and which gives us the word “Nazarite”, can also mean a “crown”:--

“Thou shalt put the mitre upon his head, and put the holy crown upon the mitre” (Exod. xxix. 6).

“And they made the plate of the holy crown of pure gold, and wrote upon it a writing, like to the engraving of a signet, HOLINESS TO THE LORD” (Exodus.xxix.30).

“Upon the mitre, even upon his forefront, did he put the golden plate, the holy crown” (Lev. viii. 9).

“He that is high priest among his brethren, upon whose head the anointing oil was poured shall not go in to any dead body, nor defile himself for his father, or his mother: neither shall he go out of the sanctuary, nor profane the sanctuary of his God; for the crown of the anointing oil of his God is upon him” (Lev. xxi. 10-12).

In some measure the Nazarite was separated to God even as was the high priest himself. The *nezer* (crown) was not limited to the high priest; it was also used of kings, *e.g.*, II Sam. i. 10; II Kings xi. 12, for they also were the Lord’s anointed. Samson, too, the judge and deliverer of Israel, was a Nazarite (Judges xiii. 5), and all point forward to the true Nazarite of God, the Lord Jesus, Who was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners (Heb. vii. 26), and Who for our sakes sanctified Himself (John xvii. 19).

Considerable difference of opinion exists among lexicographers as to the connection between Nazareth and the word Nazarite. Although etymologically the likeness is accidental and not real, who can avoid comparison of the two estimates — man’s and God’s — expressed in the two following inscriptions?

“And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews” (John xix. 19).

“And they made the plate of the holy crown (*nezer*) of pure gold, and wrote upon it a writing Holiness to the Lord” (Exod. xxxix. 30).

Man called Him the Nazarene: God saw in Him the true, anointed, separated, and devoted Nazarite.

Just as anyone, a man or a woman, could take the Nazarite vow without usurping the priesthood, so to-day sanctification and Christ-likeness are open to all without in any sense encroaching upon the exclusive glory of the risen Lord.

The Nazarite’s separation to the Lord was to be manifested in three connections (Numb. vi. 3-6):--

- (1) ABSTINENCE FROM THE PRODUCT OF THE VINE.—“Wine, strong drink, vinegar of wine, vinegar of strong drink, liquor of grapes, dried grapes. Anything made from the vine, from the kernels even to the husk.”
- (2) ABSTINENCE FROM CUTTING THE HAIR.—“All the days of the vow of his separation there shall no razor come upon his head: until the days be fulfilled, in the which he separateth himself unto the Lord, he shall be holy, and shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow.”
- (3) ABSTINENCE FROM CONTACT WITH THE DEAD.—“All the days that he separateth himself unto the Lord, he shall come at no dead body.”

In no circumstances was the Nazarite allowed to break the last rule. It could not be relaxed even for father, mother, brother or sister, when they died, and if it should happen that someone suddenly died at their side, the number of days already passed were considered lost, the head of his consecration was defiled, he had to shave his head, offer sin offering, burnt offering and trespass offering, and begin again.

While Scripture warns against some kinds of wine, it commends others, and, apart from wine altogether, grapes are most wholesome and good for food. Here then is the principle of voluntary abstinence from things innocent in themselves, which finds its parallel in the pilgrim path of the believer to-day:--

“And they that use this world, as not using it to the full” (I Cor. vii. 31).

“Let your moderation be known to all men” (Phil. iv. 5).

Jeremiah, lamenting the downfall of Israel, says: “Her Nazarites were purer than snow, they were whiter than milk” (Lam. iv. 7), and calls upon Jerusalem to act like the Nazarite who had become defiled, whose days of separation were lost. “Cut off thine hair (*nezer*), O Jerusalem, and cast it away” (Jer. vii. 29). The Nazarite who had fulfilled his vows offered his hair to the Lord, and it was put into the fire under the peace offerings. Space will not permit a fuller study of the Nazarite here, but it will come before us when dealing with Samson.

We have seen sufficient to realize the importance of the command:--

“Be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord” (Isa. lii. 11).

“If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified and meet for the Master’s use, and prepared unto every good work” (II Timothy ii. 21).

Such exhortations as “shun”, “flee”, “turn away” in II Timothy ii. 16, 22 and iii. 5 are equivalent to-day to the abstinence enjoined upon the Nazarite of old.

#84. Numbers xi.

“Mark them whose god is their belly.”

Following the law dealing with the Nazarite are a series of chapters that deal with the dedication of the tabernacle and its service (chapters vii.-x.). As we considered the tabernacle in the articles which dealt with the book of Exodus, we will pass on to other features, taking up our study in chapter xi. which begins to deal with the chief feature of the book, and the one of most important in its lessons for ourselves.

Chapter xi. commences a series of events, accompanied by significant movements and journeyings of Israel, that have been incorporated into the practical parts of some of the epistles, and demand a prayerful as well as a careful study. We have already had before us the provoking of the Lord by Israel at the Red Sea, at Marah, in the wilderness of Sin, at Rephidim and at Horeb. The book of Numbers records three more provocations, viz., at Taberah (Numb. xi. 1), at Kibroth Hattaavah (Numb. xi. 4), and at Kadesh Barnea (Numb. xiv. 2) where they filled up their measure and lost the promised land. Of the first of the three acts of provocation recorded in Numbers no specific details are given, but the simple statement:--

“And when the people complained, it displeased the Lord: and the Lord heard it; and His anger was kindled, and the fire of the Lord burnt among them” (xi. 1).

Murmuring or complaining is not treated with the seriousness that it merits, and there will doubtless be many sad cases where believers will suffer loss as a result of failure to mark and forsake the sin of unbelief and ingratitude. **If we really believed that God was leading us, we could not complain: it is only when we commence to doubt His care that complaining can possibly begin.** It is not without true reason therefore the chapter x. ends with the reference to the ark and cloud, symbols of God's presence and leading. To murmur in the very presence of God, and in sight of that pillar of cloud was unbelief, and the fire of the Lord consumed to the uttermost parts of the camp.

I Corinthians x. 6-10 uses this wilderness experience to enforce a lesson, saying:--

“Neither murmur ye, as some of them murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.”

Philippians, while it does not actually refer to this period, treats of the same aspect of truth — the going on like Caleb and Joshua — and in that epistle comes the exhortation:--

“Do all things without murmurings and disputings” (Phil. ii. 14).

A murmuring or complaining member of Christ is giving the lie to his calling. It is the first step to a wasted life, the “perdition” of Heb. x. 39, the “destruction” of Phil. iii. 19. Philippians counters this spirit by implicating joy. A rejoicing believer is proof against the temptations of the wilderness.

Following this general reference comes one that is specific:--

“And the mixed multitude that was among them fell a lusting: and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat?” (Numb. xi. 4).

This mixed multitude has appeared before, viz., in Exod. xii. 37, 38. They had evidently come out under the shelter of the passover, and they had come through the Red Sea, as we find them here in Numbers xi. This mixed multitude were the result of mixed marriages contracted while in Egypt. Leviticus xxiv. 10 speaks of the son of an Israelitish woman whose father was an Egyptian. When Israel returned to Jerusalem under Nehemiah, mixed marriages again were a source of trouble (*see* Nehemiah xiii. 23 & Ezra ix. 1, 2). Jehoshaphat's ruin is traceable to his “affinity” with Ahab. This

mixed multitude, when expressed in spiritual equivalents, appears in II Cor. vi. 14-18, and hinders that “perfecting” of holiness which is the goal before us (II Cor. vii. 1).

Israel, when they wept, said:--

“Who will give us flesh to eat? We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick. But now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes” (Numb. xi. 4-6).

It is not without significance that Egypt’s food is given as six items. Before the Israelites lay the land of promise, and the food items mentioned in Deut. viii. 8 are seven in number. *Behind* them lay the viands of Egypt, *ahead* the fruits of the land of promise, and *around* them, before their very eyes and fresh every morning, was the manna, with its taste like fresh oil. One of the seven items of Canaan’s food was olive oil, and the manna seems to have been a foretaste, a sort of “earnest of the inheritance”.

That it was to be accepted gratefully and highly prized, the references in Scripture testify. A golden pot of manna was among the few items that were laid up in the holiest of all (Heb. ix. 4), and the Psalmist speaks of it as “The corn of heaven” and “angel’s food” (Psa. lxxviii. 24, 25). Yet, did we not know, alas too well, our own hearts, we should hardly believe that a redeemed people, so recently sighing under the bitter bondage of Egypt, should so soon forget the bitterness and remember the tasty morsels like leeks, onions and garlick. They said “we remember”, and the apostle in Phil. iii. 13 says, “forgetting those things which are behind”, and Heb. xi. 15 says: “Truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned”. Stephen, in Acts vii. 39, tells us that Israel turned back again in their hearts unto Egypt, while in Numb. xiv. 4 we read that they actually said: “Let us make a captain, and let us return unto Egypt”.

No one with a knowledge of Hebrews, with its double reference to “The Captain of our salvation” (Heb. ii. 10), and “The Captain and Perfecter of faith” (Heb. xii. 2), will fail to see the solemn bearing of this spirit upon the alternatives of Hebrews, viz., “On to perfection” or “Back to perdition”. The poet has said: “Distance lends enchantment to the view”, and Israel’s memory was biased; they forgot the bondage while they remembered the fish, etc., and we do well to profit by this lesson.

How awful the words sound when we think of their setting:--

“There is nothing at all, beside this *manna*, before our eyes” (Numb. ix. 6).

It is almost like crucifying to themselves the Son of God afresh, and putting Him to open shame. It is comparable with Esau who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. It is parallel with those who were failing of the prize as these Israelites were, whose “god was their belly”. [It is not without deep reason that the first temptation of Adam, and of Christ, revolved around something to eat. This is the first avenue of temptation, and sometimes it is enough.](#)

There is something infectious about evil. The mixed multitude start lusting, the children of Israel begin to weep and complain, and now Moses under the heavy strain begins to speak:--

“Wherefore hast Thou afflicted Thy servant? Have i conceived all this people? Have i begotten them, that Thou shouldest say unto me, Carry them in thy bosom, as a nursing father beareth the sucking child, unto the land which Thou swearest unto their fathers?” (Numb. xi. 11, 12).

Poor Moses — mighty leader as he was, man of faith that so wondrously overcame — he was nevertheless a shadow only of Him Who was to come:--

“For it became Him in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings” (Heb. ii. 10).

There came a day when the patience of Moses snapped, he spoke unadvisedly with his lips and lost entry into the land of promise. He was a saved man, he appeared upon the Mount of Transfiguration, he was faithful, as a servant, in all his house — few, if any, have even walked so closely with the Lord or been so highly honoured — yet the greatest and the best are unworthy to loose the latchet of the Saviour's shoes. Every crown must be placed at the feet of the Redeemer, He alone is worthy: no flesh shall glory in His presence.

The Lord meets Moses' difficulty by appointing seventy men of the elders of Israel to share his burden, even as He had deputed Aaron to share the work at the first.

Then the Lord takes up the complaint of Israel and their desire for flesh:--

“Ye shall not eat one day, nor two days, nor five days, neither ten days, nor twenty days, but even a whole month, until it come out at your nostrils, and it be loathsome unto you: because that ye have despised the Lord which is among you, and have wept before Him, saying, Why came we forth out of Egypt?” (Numbers.xi.19,20).

We know how the Lord fulfilled this dreadful pronouncement. A wind brought quails from the sea, which flew so low that they were easily caught. All that day and all that night and all the next day the people gathered quails:--

“And while the flesh was yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed, the wrath of the Lord was kindled against the people” (Numb. xi. 33).

The following passages of Scripture seem to be a fitting comment and conclusion to this solemn passage:--

“We remember” (Numb. xi. 5).

“They soon forgot His works; they waited not for His counsel, but lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert. And He gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul” (Psa. cvi. 13-15).

“I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, to be content I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me” (Phil. iv. 11-13).

“Be content with such things as ye have: for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee” (Heb. xiii. 5).

#85. Numbers xi. - xiv.

*“These things are examples, to the intent
we should not lust after evil things” (I Cor. x. 6).*

It is one thing to perceive glimpses of truth — and for the smallest ray of light how can we be too thankful — it is quite another matter to so perceive the trend of a passage as to receive illumination, both upon detail and upon the general scope. While we most gratefully seize upon the veriest crumbs of doctrine or practical teaching which we may receive from such a book as the book of Numbers, readers of *The Berean Expositor* will feel, somehow, that unless we can get larger views than just a survey of a few verses, we shall probably miss many essential points.

As we turn the pages of Numbers xi., xii. & xiii. onward, the task seems too great to be able to discern order and design in such a wealth of detail and such a mass of description. Yet the words of Numb. xi. 23: “Is the Lord's hand waxed short?” is a challenge to faith, and consequently, before we proceed with our study of Numbers xii. we seek for light upon the scope of this section. And first where does the section that commences at chapter xi. end? We read on until we arrive at the close of

Numbers xiv. to find that chapter xv. opens with laws that were to be enforced when the people entered the land. This evidently marks a dividing line for us. It would be good discipline for us all if we had time and space to take the reader step by step through the intervening chapters so that the discovery of the underlying unity should be received as a gift from the Lord, and not, as we fear it will appear, as a matter of course. The structure or the scope of a passage is of the first importance.

Quoting from the opening chapter of the book: "The Foundations of Dispensational Truth" by the late *E. W. Bullinger, D.D.*, we read:--

"There is one great foundation principle in the science of LOGIC which will meet all the difficulties, if we are careful to observe it. It is this: *We cannot reason from the particular to the general.* The difficulties experienced by some of our readers are due to the fact that they arise from a consideration of only *parts* of the truth. To find the answer to them, it is vain to continue the discussion of them as separate difficult points: we mean difficulties connected with the earlier Pauline Epistles written before Acts xxviii., such as ordinances, the one body of I. Corinthian. xii. or the spiritual gifts of I. Corinthian xiii., xiv., etc."

These words may help our readers to appreciate any light that can be cast upon the scope of a passage, so that we may reason from the general to the particular, which is of course the only true way.

A strictly literary structure is too vast an undertaking, but the following synopsis will make it clear that a purpose runs through the record of Israel's murmurings, and to see that will suffice:--

**Numbers x. 33 - xiv. 45.
God's breach of promise.**

A		x. 33 - xi. 3.		The ark goes before to search out a place of rest.
		TABERAH.		The people complain. Fire consumes them.
B		xi. 4-35.		The mixed multitude. The people wept (xi. 4).
		KIBROTH-		Exaggerated remembrance of Egypt (xi. 5).
		HATTA AVAH.		Its food: fish, cucumbers, melons, leeks,
				onions, garlick (xi. 5).
				A month of days for eating flesh (xi. 20).
				"Why came we out of Egypt?" (xi. 20).
				Seventy elders appointed (xi. 24).
				Moses resists temptation to be jealous (xi. 29).
		C xii.		Miriam and Aaron speak against Moses.
		HAZEROTH.		Moses' meekness emphasized.
				They object to Cushite (while hankering after Egypt).
				Miriam a leper for seven days.
B		xiii. 1 -		The ten rulers report. People wept (xiii. 31; xiv. 1).
		xiv. 38.		Exaggerated remembrance of Canaan (xiii. 32, 33).
		PARAN.		Its food: grapes, pomegranates, figs,
				milk and honey (xiii. 23-27).
				Forty days' search ends in disaster (xiii. 25; xiv. 34).
				"Would God we had died in Egypt!" (xiv. 2).
				Twelve rulers appointed (xiii. 4-16).
				Moses resists offer to become head of great nation (xiv. 12).
A		xiv. 39-45.		The ark departed not out of the camp.
		KADESH.		The people presume. The Amalekites discomfit them.

Quite a number of items that bear upon the teaching associated with Philippians and our own calling call for attention. Let us briefly pass them in review.

The ark goes before to search out a place of rest. Can we not find help here? Speaking to those who were His disciples, the Lord said: "I go to prepare a place for you" (John xiv. 2), and this blessed promise is preceded by a statement of principle: "If it were *not so* I would have told you". This is still true for the Church of the One Body. To learn of the hope, we need to know where Christ is now, and if details and explanations are not always given, surely the promise still holds good: "I would have told you". We shall see presently that the sending of the spies was a contradiction of trust in this fact.

The mixed multitude, and the ten spies, are a type of the effect upon the believer of failure to abide by such scriptures as:--

"Why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances" (Col. ii. 20).

"No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of his livelihood"
(II. Timothy. ii. 4).

Ephesians says to us "Remember"; Philippians says to us "Forget". We are to *remember* that we were hopeless aliens, but Israel remembered the onions and garlick instead. We are to *forget* the things that are behind, and to set our mind on things above.

Even the two passages that speak of the resistance of Moses are important to us. Moses was not moved by jealousy when he heard that Eldad and Medad, who had remained in the camp, had prophesied. And when God said in His wrath: "I will smite them with pestilence, and disinherit them, and will make of thee a greater nation and mightier than they" (Numb. xiv. 12), Moses did not entertain the thought for a moment, but pleaded with the Lord to pardon the people and remember His Own glorious Name. Here is a concrete example of the spirit inculcated in Phil. ii. 3, 4:--

"Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others."

Miriam's leprosy and her being shut out of the camp for seven days, and the jealous spirit manifested, typify Israel in her *lo-ammi* (not my people) condition between the first coming of Christ when the kingdom was preached, and the second coming of Christ when it shall be established. The meekness of Moses is here mentioned, anticipating that other period of rejection, when the Lord should say: "I am meek and lowly in heart" (Matt. xi. 29).

Let us now concentrate our attention on those sections that are most prominent. It will be seen that the two features of greater importance are members B and B. The first looks back with longing eyes to Egypt and its flesh-pots; the second looks with bias upon the land of promise and exaggerates its difficulties. The ten spies are said to have brought up a "slander upon the land" (Numb. xiv. 36), and above all comes the revelation of God's breach of promise.

How often has the sad history of chapters xi. & xii. been repeated after Egypt, and turn against a true man of God among them, putting up some trumped-up charge against him, largely to cover their own baseness, as was the objection against the Ethiopian wife of Moses. Whenever we have to meet the parallel of Numbers xii., let us immediately look for the parallel of Numbers xi., and see it manifested by the failure of Numbers xiv.

Our study for this paper must now concentrate upon the story of the spies and the result of their report:--

"And the Lord speak unto Moses, saying, Send thou men that they may search the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel" (Numb. xiii. 1, 2).

Has it ever struck the reader that there is a note of pain, a sense of distrust in the words: "that they may search the land of Canaan, which I give"? Why search? Why send men to see "what the land is,

whether it be fat or lean” (Numb. xiii. 20), if God had described it and given it Himself? Does it not sound like unbelief? It not only sounds like distrust, but it was. The command to take the twelve men and send them as spies did not originate with God: it was an answer to their own request, and once again, it brought leanness into their soul. When Moses rehearsed the affair in the ears of Israel he reminded them of their unbelief:--

“Behold, the Lord thy God hath set the land before thee: go up and possess it, as the Lord God of thy fathers hath said unto thee; fear not, neither be discouraged. And ye came near unto Me every one of you and said: We will send men before us, and they shall search out the land, and bring us word again by what way we must go up, and into what cities we shall come Yet in this thing ye did not believe the Lord your God, Who went in the way before you, to search you out a place to pitch your tents in; in fire by night, to shew you by what way ye should go, and in a cloud by day” (Deut. i. 21-23).

A reference to Ezek. xx. 5, 6 shows that at the time when the Lord delivered Israel out of the land of Egypt, He had already “espied for them” a glorious land. Israel’s request for the spies therefore was sheer unbelief, it was a despising of the Lord, a slighting of His loving care and provision. It has its analogy to-day.

Quite a number of those who believe the teaching of the epistles of the mystery have expressed themselves as unsatisfied by the scantiness of the revelation there contained as to (1) just what constitutes the glory of our inheritance, and (2) just exactly by what way the Church shall enter into its hope. There is a looking back to the hope of an earlier dispensation, a sort of envy at the lavish description of the millennial kingdom, or the wonders of the heavenly city, and one senses something petulant in the request, “Where is our hope described in the epistles of the Mystery? Why are there no details given to us as to others?” There is also a querulous complain that whereas I Thessalonian iv. or I Corinthian xv. are most explicit, one cannot be sure from the prison epistles whether the Church of the One Body will be caught up by rapture, will die off and pass through death and resurrection, whether all will go together, whether there will be angelic accompaniments, etc., etc. All this, which superficially sounds like earnest enquiry, is but the old unbelief of Israel re-expressed. They wanted to know more than God had revealed about “the land” which was their inheritance, and they wanted to know more than God had revealed as to “what way we must go up”. Both these questions were already answered by faith. God had espied the land and had called it good. God went before them with fire and with cloud “to shew them by what way they should go”. Faith needs nothing more.

If our inheritance at the right hand of God, “far above all”, is so transcendently above all human thought and experience, what words of human language could describe the riches of the glory of that inheritance of the saints? If in the resurrection and translation we need such adjusting to the new sphere of blessing “in the heavenly places”, how should we be the better if God described the process. It is enough for us that as we receive a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of “Him”, the ascended Lord, and of “it”, the mystery, **we shall receive as full an answer to our quest for knowledge as God sees fit to give.** If we are assured that: “when Christ Who is our life shall be manifested, we also shall be manifested with Him in glory”, what does it matter that “the way we must go up” is left unexplained? We shall arrive — praise God. We do not know how — well, that is His responsibility, not ours.

Our refusal to be turned back to I Thessalonian iv. as the hope of the Church is to be understood in the light of Numbers xiii. & xiv. We seek the spirit that enabled Caleb and Joshua to believe God, and leave the consequences. As we pointed out when dealing with Col. i. 23 (*see* volume XXI), the great evidence of progress in the truth, or of the beginning of decline, are closely associated with holding steadfast to “the hope”. Caleb and Joshua were threatened with stoning for the stand they took. We

shall probably get its equivalent again and again; but as in their case, so in ours, His truth shall be our shield and buckler.

One of the reasons why the Lord was not too explicit about the land of Canaan, and the way up, was because it was inhabited by a monstrous seed of the wicked one, the giants, the sons of Anak, and viewing such antagonists with the eyes of the flesh, the spies said: “We were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight”. The cities were walled and very great — and grace was not given in the wilderness to deal with these remote difficulties. When at last Israel did stand before the walls of Jericho, they fell down flat at the shout of faith.

The pathway to our inheritance is blocked by principalities and powers, spiritual wickedness and world holders of darkness. If we should see them with the eyes of the flesh, we should crumple up as did Daniel. God mercifully spares us this vision. We believe His Word; that is enough. If we knew the formidable strongholds of Satan that must be overcome in “the evil day”, we should recoil in fear and unbelief. We shall not face them until we are all assembled beneath the banner of our true Captain, the greater Joshua, with Jordan behind us, and the land of promise immediately before us. Why not take a leaf out of this book of experience; why not believe what God has revealed, and lovingly accept as best what He withholds?

Two Psalms should be read in connection with this passage of Israel’s history. Psalm xc. speaks of those who, being over twenty years of age, died in the wilderness: they were taught to number their days. Psalm xci. speaks of their children, who grew up at their sides, and who saw the pestilence and the arrow doing their work, yet knew that they should not come nigh them.

While a sinner may be saved at the eleventh hour, it would appear from many passages of Scripture that a believer who is saved, and who puts his hand to the plough, who looks back like Lot’s wife, who does not press toward the mark, who like Demas loves this present evil age, or like the Hebrews of Hebrews vi. or Esau of Hebrews xii. exchange their birthright for a little ease here, are running a serious risk of suffering loss in that day, of losing their crown or their reward. Caleb and Joshua, on the other hand, are examples of those who press on unto perfection, who attain “the better resurrection” of Hebrews xi., or the “out-resurrection” and “prize” of Philippians iii.

May we draw attention to one more feature. “The better resurrection” of Hebrews xi. is a close parallel with the “out-resurrection” of Philippians iii. Now we are not left to surmise as to when the better resurrection was entered, for Hebrews xi. declares that those who looked for the better country all died in faith, not having received the promise, “God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect” (Heb. xi. 40).

Caleb and Joshua were not permitted by the Lord to go on to the inheritance at once. No, they had to wait the forty years just like the rest. The overcomers of Hebrews xi. did not enter the heavenly city immediately after death, no, they had to wait until the whole of their company were raised together, the “better resurrection” referring not to the time when it is entered, but to the prize appertaining thereto which would be presented when the time had come.

So with Philippians iii. The out-resurrection need not take place before the resurrection and translation of the whole Church, but it will qualify for “the prize of the high calling”, which is parallel with Caleb’s additional inheritance when God’s time comes.

It is not without significance that Paul’s other reference to a “prize” should be most intimately associated with Israel’s failure in the wilderness (I Cor. ix. 24, x. 13), nor should we slight the precious lesson of the closing sentence: “But will with the temptation make the end (or goal), so that ye may be able to bear it.”

The trials of the pilgrim path are for our future glory. He knows; therefore, follow on.

#86. Numbers xvi. & xvii.

The Lord knowethdepart from iniquity (II Tim. ii. 19).

It will be remembered that the section of Numbers that has just been before us, viz., xi.-xiv., revealed many points of analogy both with Philippians and Hebrews. There is one other epistle that comes into line with Philippians, namely, II Timothy, and we shall find that the next section of Numbers which we are to study (xvi. and xvii.) is used in II Timothy in a significant context.

Numbers xvi. & xvii. is in the first place an attack upon the distinctive office of the priest, in the second place it provides a corrective against an argument often used in opposing the distinctive character of the church, the body, and of the distinctive company in that church who shall attain unto the prize of the high calling. This is anticipating somewhat, so we will deal with the actual passage.

Numbers xvi. & xvii. must be looked upon as a whole. There are two rebellions, one by the princes led by Korah, and the other by the people, both having reference to the distinctive calling of the priest. The two chapters may be visualized as follows:--

Numbers xvi. & xvii.

"The Lord will show who are His."

- A | xvi. 1-3. | a | Rebellion of Korah.
 - b | Gathered together against Moses and Aaron.
 - c | Wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord.
- B | xvi. 4. Moses fell on his face.
- C | xvi. 5-9. *To Korah.*—Take you censers—ends in death.
 - D | xvi. 10-18. | d | Seek ye the priesthood also?
 - e | Take every man his censer the tabernacle.
 - E | xvi. 19-40. | f | Death and consuming for rebellion.
 - g | Censers a memorial "against own souls".
- A | xvi. 41-44. | a | Rebellion of all the congregation.
 - b | Gathered against Moses and Aaron.
 - c | Ye have killed the people of the Lord.
- B | xvi. 45. Moses and Aaron fell upon their faces.
- C | xvi. 46. *To Aaron.*—Take a censer—make atonement.
 - D | xvii. 1-9. | e | Take every one a rod the tabernacle.
 - d | "I will choose" (the priesthood).
 - E | xvii. 10-13. | g | Aaron's rod a token "against the rebels".
 - f | Death and consuming feared.

What was the basis of Korah's rebellion? Let him speak for himself:--

"Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord?" (Numb. xvi. 3).

At the close of chapter xv. is the command of the Lord that all the children of Israel should wear a fringe and a riband of blue, a reminder to them to keep all the commandments of the Lord, to seek not the desires of their own hearts, and to be holy unto the Lord.

Korah's argument was that, seeing that *all the congregation* was holy, there should be no such distinctions among them as was evident in the high positions held by Moses and Aaron; that Moses and Aaron had lifted themselves up above their fellows — all of whom were part of the same congregation of the Lord.

Moses' first response is to prostrate himself before the Lord. He saw the seriousness of this rebellion, and wisely sought the face of God before attempting to justify himself before man. His opening words dispose of the insinuation of Korah, that Moses and Aaron had lifted *themselves* up above the congregation. If there had been any "lifting up" it was by the sovereign disposal of the Lord Himself:--

"Even to-morrow the Lord will shew who are His, and who is holy (set apart): and will cause him to come near unto Him: even him whom He hath chosen will he cause to come near unto Him. This do: Take your censers, Korah, and all his company; and put fire therein; and put incense in them before the Lord tomorrow: and it shall be that the man whom the Lord doth choose, he shall be holy; ye take too much upon you, ye sons of Levi" (Numb. xvi. 5-7).

Moses now draws the attention of Korah to the illogical nature of his objection. Korah himself was a Levite, and God had separated the Levites from the congregation of Israel. They had been brought near to do the service of the tabernacle of the Lord:--

"He hath brought thee (Korah) near to Him; and all thy brethren, the sons of Levi, with thee: and seek ye the priesthood also?" (Numb. xvi. 10).

All Israel might have justly murmured against Korah, as Korah murmured against Aaron.

Moses sought to remonstrate with the sons of Reuben, but they would not hear, but cast the aspersion upon Moses, that he wished to make himself altogether a prince over them. Then comes the dreadful ordeal. "Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men" (Numb. xvi. 26). We know the tragic end. Korah and his men went down alive into the opened earth and were swallowed up, and the 250 men who had offered incense were consumed with fire.

Here is a "new thing" or as the Hebrew reads: "but if the Lord create a creation". The first earthquake is associated with usurpation of the priest's office. Uzziah also is connected both with an earthquake and with usurpation of the priest's office, and Antichrist will be likewise associated with both.

While we may be keenly interested in the typical teaching of this passage as it illuminates the days of antichristian rebellion that are still future, it will be more profitable to observe the bearing of this tragic end upon ourselves. One might object, and say that such things can have no possible bearing upon the church. Let us see. Two utterances of Moses stand out prominently in chapter xvi.:--

"The Lord will show who are His" (verse 5).

"Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men" (verse 26).

These words re-appear in II Timothy ii.:--

"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His, and, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity" (II Tim. ii. 19).

In what way does II Timothy ii. resembles Numbers xvi.? Let us remember Korah's objection to the possibility of some being called to glory higher than others, though all members of the same congregation, and then let us see the way in which the apostle deals with that same spirit:--

"But in a great house (*parallel with the whole congregation*) there are not only vessels of gold and of silver (*like the offices of Moses, Aaron, and the Levites*), but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to no honour. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work" (II Tim. ii. 20, 21).

Some object to the distinctive glory of the church of the mystery by appealing to the fact that all the Lord's people, of whatever calling and company, are redeemed by the same precious blood, and belong to the same Christ. This is no valid objection. The Lord could choose and has chosen some of the redeemed to "inherit the earth", some to walk the streets of the New Jerusalem, and some to enter their inheritance in the heavenly holiest of all. The same answer that Moses gave to Korah must be given here. It is a matter of the Lord's sovereign choice. Limiting ourselves to the one company, the church which is His body, some express themselves in almost angry terms when any suggestion is made to the teaching of Philippians, with its out-resurrection and prize, or to II Timothy with its contest and crown, endurance and reign. These possible distinctions in the one church in the heavenlies are no more objectionable than the evident distinction between the comely and uncomely members of the one human body, or the distinctions that obtained in Israel. To any who would seek further argument, we would commend the chapter in *Dispensational Truth* entitled: "An election within an election".

Returning to Numbers xvi. & xvii. we observe that the censers of the men who rebelled were beaten out into sheets for a covering of the altar, and to act as a memorial of their rebellion, while the rod that budded was placed in the holiest of all before the testimony, as a token against the rebels:--

"And thou shalt quite take away their murmurings from Me, that they die not"
(Numb. xvii. 10).

We are brought back therefore to the initial seed of this awful crop of death — murmuring. Murmuring about God's sovereign disposal of glory, dignity or honour reveals a failure to appreciate that the smallest and lowliest blessing we receive is all of grace. Korah should have remembered the signal mercy that had led him out of Egypt, and have been thankful that his bones were not bleaching with those of the Egyptians on the shore of the Red Sea. No wonder Philippians, the epistle of the prize winner, is the epistle of rejoicing, the epistle of contentment, the epistle that warns against murmuring. Some, we fear, may resent this message: may it be a means of help to those who having heard the higher call are seeking grace to run with patience.

#87. The start from Kadesh (Numbers xx. - xxv.).

Once again we have, interposed between chapters of history, further laws pertaining to the priests and the people, full of matter and abundantly repaying careful study. It is not our purpose, however, to investigate every detail of these books, time alone being against us, so we pass over chapters xviii. & xix. and take up the theme again in chapter xx., where another series of incidents is recorded, some of which are used in the N.T. and all of which are full of needed lessons for those who, having been redeemed by the precious blood, are pressing on like Caleb and Joshua to the inheritance ahead. It is not of our choosing that these historic incidents should necessitate so much insistence upon the Philippians aspect of truth, and we shall not shirk it because some may not readily appreciate the lessons taught. We need all the counsel of God, and a faithful ministry does not keep back anything that is profitable.

The section before us occupies six chapters, and for the first approach, the structure found in *The Companion Bible* is of service in placing the distinct grouping of events before the eye. The following analysis brings into prominence the features that represents the lesson element, the features therefore that we mostly desire:--

Numbers xx. - xxv.

- A | xx. 1. Miriam dies.
B | xx. 2 - xxi. 3. |
 a | NO WATER.
 b | "Would God we have died with our brethren."
 The Rock and the water.
 Moses forfeits entry into land.
 c | Water of Meribah.
 Water refused by Edom twice.
 Aaron forfeits entry into land.
 d | Arad the Canaanite—Open fighting.
B | xxi. 4 - xxv. 13. |
 a | NO BREAD.
 b | "Wherefore have ye brought us to die in the wilderness."
 The Serpent and life.
 Israel set forward.
 c | Brooks of Arnon.
 Way refused twice by Sihon and Og,
 Israel set forward.
 d | Balak and Balaam—Betrayal.
A | xxv. 14-18. Midianitish woman slain.

Here is the old trouble, viz., no water and no bread. While both Moses and Aaron forfeit entry into the land, the structure balances this with the two passages which say (even after failure in one instance) that "the children of Israel set forward" (*see* xx.12,13,24 for Moses and Aaron; and xxi. 10 & xxii. 1 for Israel). Earlier we see how the Lord defended the high honour of Moses against the murmurs of Aaron and Miriam, and how he defended Aaron against the gainsaying of Korah. Nevertheless high honour brings high responsibility. To him that has had much given, of him will more be required. The five talent man must produce five more talents to be level with the two talent man who produced two. We are therefore still in an atmosphere of service, contest, endurance, pressing on, reward or loss.

Wasted years.

Chapter xx. opens with the words: "Then came the children of Israel, even the whole congregation, into the desert of Zin in the first month", and unless we are already prepared, we should naturally assume this to be within a brief interval of the last recorded movement. As a matter of fact an interval of some 37½ years must be recognized as intervening between Numbers xiv. and Numbers xx.:--

"Your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years and ye shall know My breach of promise" (Numb. xiv. 33, 34).

This should warn us to be prepared to find the interval, but the definite date of Aaron's death leaves no doubt. Chapter xxxiii. enumerates the itinerary of Israel from the time they went forth out of Egypt until they pitched by Jordan in the plains of Moab, and it is there we read:--

"And Aaron the priest went up into the Mount Hor at the commandment of the Lord, and died there, in the fortieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the first day of the fifth month" (Numb. xxxiii. 38).

Miriam dies without entering the promised land; Aaron dies without entering; and so does Moses, although the death of Moses is deferred until later. The men that were twenty years old and upward who had seen the mighty work of the Lord, and who had nevertheless refused to go up at the leading of the Lord, were now all dead.

The children that they had said were to be a prey in the wilderness had been miraculously preserved, and were now about to go into the land. The fact that these repeat the sin of their fathers removes all idea that they were essentially different from their parents; their entry is still of the grace of God. Moses called them rebels, and so they were; nevertheless, in that, and in his angry striking of the rock, Moses failed. The comment of Psa. cvi. 32, 33 should be remembered:--

“They angered him also at the waters of strife, so that it went ill with Moses for their sakes: because they provoked his spirit, so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips.”

Let none think that we comment on Moses’ lapse in any self-righteous spirit. Who amongst us would have endured one year, let alone forty years, of this people’s manners and ways?

There is perhaps a closer link between minister and people than at first appears. Paul said to the Thessalonians:--

“For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? For ye are our glory and joy ... when Timothy ... brought us good tidings of your faith we were comforted ... for now *we* live if *ye* stand fast in the Lord” (I Thess. ii. 19 - iii. 8).

To the like intent we read I John ii. 28 and II John 8:--

“And now, little children, abide in Him; that, when He shall appear, *we* may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.”

“Look to yourselves, that *we* lose not those things which we have wrought, but that *we* receive a full reward.”*

[NOTE * - Some texts read “ye”, but we do not feel that there is sufficient evidence to warrant the alteration. If “ye” had been originally written, who would want to alter it to the more difficult “we”?]

There is, moreover, another reason for the death of Moses and Aaron before entry into the land of promise. Both stood for a failing law and failing priesthood. Law was to be dead and buried before Joshua (whose name is the same as Jesus) should rise and lead the people over Jordan. God had forgiven many sins of Moses and Aaron, and could have forgiven many more. It pleased Him, however, to prevent the representative of the law from crossing the Jordan, and we do well to learn both the personal lesson for ourselves, and the doctrinal lesson for the church.

Types of Christ.

The rock and the brazen serpent are evident types of Christ. In the earliest history of Israel, the smiting of the rock had been by divine command:--

“Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock of Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink” (Exod. xvii. 6).

When once more water was to be brought out of the rock at the end of the forty years’ pilgrimage, no command was given to strike it again. The sacrifice of Christ is never to be repeated. There shall be in the day of Israel’s return a fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, and they shall look upon Him Whom they pierced, but they shall never pierce Him again. The striking of the rock in the second place is an O.T. parallel of the awful words of Heb. vi. 6: “They crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh”.

The second great type of this section is the brazen serpent. Again the people murmur (Numb. xxi. 5), and use very similar expressions to those recorded in xx. 3-5, yet in chapter xx. no punishment

follows, while in Numbers xxi. the murmuring is immediately followed by the judgment of the fiery serpents. It will be remembered that earlier still the people had murmured, and had been visited with dire judgment. Is there anything in the passage to account for this? There is one thing common to the two passages recording that punishment is absent, and that is a slighting reference to the manna:--

“But now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes” (Numb. xi. 6).

“Our soul loatheth this light bread” (Numb. xxi. 5).

What expressions are here, when speaking of the gift of God — the corn of heaven, angels’ food.

The chapter in John which speaks so much of the manna, and of Christ as the true bread that came down from heaven, shows the spiritual equivalent of this loathing of the manna, and the “dried up” soul:--

“This is a hard (dried up) saying” (said many of His disciples), “who can hear it the words I speak unto you they are spirit and they are life” (John vi. 60-63).

Murmuring is evil enough, but when it takes the form of loathing the gift of God and the type of Christ, judgment falls.

When Israel sinned and broke the law at the foot of Sinai the Lord’s reply was, in effect, “Make an ark”. Here, the only remedy is: “Make a fiery serpent and set it upon a pole.” Here is a most precious anticipation of those statements in the epistles that reveal that the curse of the law can only be removed by one dying under a curse (Gal. iii. 13), or that reconciliation can only be accomplished by imputing sin to the One Who knew no sin:--

“For He hath made Him to be sin for us, Who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him” (II Cor. v. 19-21).

Numbers xxi. 8 is the O.T. equivalent of John iii. 16:--

“And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life” (John iii. 14, 15).

By the time Hezekiah came to the throne, the brazen serpent, preserved by Israel and carried by them into the land, had become an idolatrous image:--

“He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it; and he called it Nehushtan — a brass thing” (II Kings xviii. 4).

The symbol of Israel’s redemption had degenerated to the level of the obscene *Asherah*, and idolatrous images. If Satan cannot blot out a truth by denial, he will ruin it by fleshly prominence. Where the symbol of the cross is most prominent to-day, the reality of its teaching is lost. The apostate church abounds in crucifixes, images and incense, but where is the glorious doctrine of the cross of Christ? How can we tolerate the wearing of crosses as ornaments, when we remember of the dreadful truth for which it stands? What a sad thing for people of any time, when the grandest symbol of their faith has to be destroyed as “a thing of brass” in order to save them from idolatry.

The apostles, writing to different companies of the church, warn of idolatry, and we are not so removed from all spheres of temptation but that the warning should be remembered by ourselves also.

We will next consider the remaining items indicated in the structure which deal with the opposition of Edom, Arad, Sihon, Og and Moab.

#88. Numbers xx. - xxv.
The twofold opposition encountered by Israel
and its relation to Eph. vi. 12.

Israel, as they press on from Kadesh, meet with opposition in various forms. The Edomites, who were related by blood, refuse passage through their territory and even the purchase of drinking water. The Moabites, who were also related to Israel through Lot their father, sought to curse Israel, and succeeded in entrapping them in evil practices. Arad the Canaanite, Sihon King of Heshbon and Og King of Bashan, in no way related to Israel but rather the seed of the Serpent, oppose, too, in different ways. A careful consideration of these contests will throw light upon the conflict of the Church to-day, and especially upon the meaning of the apostle in Eph. vi. where the armour of God is specified and the contestants indicated. "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers" (Eph. vi. 12). Edom and Moab represent "flesh and blood"; Arad, Sihon and Og the "principalities and powers". Two distinct lines of action are indicated to deal with these two types of opposition.

Edom, of course, is Esau the brother of Jacob, and so the message sent to the King of Edom opens with the words: "Thus saith thy brother Israel" (Numb. xx. 14). The request was for permission to pass through the country, and the request was accompanied by a promise that neither fields, nor vineyards, nor wells of water should be touched, but that the King's highway should be kept "until we have passed thy borders". This modest request was refused. The children of Israel sent again saying:--

"We will go by the high way: and if I and my cattle drink of thy water, then will I pay for it: I will only, without doing anything else, go through on my feet" (Numb. xx. 19).

Edom again replied, "Thou shalt not go through", but Deut. ii. 28, 29 suggests that the request to purchase food and drink was granted. Neither Edom nor Moab, however, would allow Israel to pass through their territory. Jephtha's summary of the time shews this clearly:--

"Then Israel sent messengers unto the King of Edom, saying, Let me, I pray thee, pass through thy land, but the King of Edom would not hearken thereto. And in like manner they sent unto the King of Moab: but he would not consent; and Israel abode in Kadesh" (Judges xi. 17).

Deuteronomy xxiii. 3, 4 shows that Moab refused what Edom granted:--

"They met you not with bread and with water in the way, when ye came forth out of Egypt: and because they hired against thee Balaam the Son of Beor of Pethor of Mesopotamia, to curse thee."

The Companion Bible note to Deut. ii. 28 suggests that Moab sold too, but the very clear-cut distinction made between Moab and Edom in Deut. xxiii. 3, 4 & 7 is rather opposed to this suggestion. However, be that as it may, Edom and Moab both refused permission for Israel to pass through their territory.

What did the Lord say? Did He command, "Arise, O Israel, manifest by conquest that you are the redeemed of the Lord"? No; Israel's attitude was to be the reverse of this. All that is written in Numbers xx. 21 is: "Wherefore Israel turned away from him". Deuteronomy ii., however, makes very clear what Israel's attitude was to be:--

"Ye are to pass through the coast of your brethren, the children of Esau, which dwell in Seir; and they shall be afraid of you: take ye good heed unto yourselves

therefore. Meddle not with them; for I will not give you of their land, no, not so much as a foot breadth” (Deut. ii. 4, 5).

Much the same is said of the Moabites: “Distress not the Moabites neither contend with them in battle” (ii. 9). Here is no uncertain sound, and the spiritual analogy is not difficult to perceive:--

“We wrestle not with flesh and blood” (Eph. vi. 12).

“Ye took joyfully the spoiling of your goods” (Heb. x. 34).

“They confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth” (Hebrews.xi.13).

“No man that warreth entangleth himself in the affairs of his livelihood” (II.Timothy.ii.4).

“Let your moderation be known to all men” (Phil. iv. 5).

“I have learned in whatsoever state I am, to be content (or independent)” (Philippians iv. 11).

Passages like these bear out the analogy. We are not citizens here. This world is partitioned out to others; brothers indeed in the flesh but, alas, not in the line of promise. We leave them their inheritance, we do not meddle with them, we shall not possess one foot of their territory, and we are forbidden to enter into conflict. “From such turn away” is the apostle’s echo of the words, “Israel turned away from him”. If the rebuff of the world hurts our pride, we must remember that we should have no pride left to be hurt. The redeemed of the Lord should have no “rights” in the world. Their citizenship is not here; they are at best pilgrims seeking a pathway home.

When we come to the consideration of the Canaanite opponents, we are on entirely different ground. The first is King Arad the Canaanite. We read:--

“And when King Arad the Canaanite, which dwelt in the south, heard tell that Israel came by way of the spies; then he fought against Israel, and took some of them prisoners” (Numb. xxi. 1).

The spies had originally entered the land by this route (*see* Numb. xiii. 17), and this early act of unbelief (as we have seen the sending of the spies to be) not only brought disaster upon those who lived at the time, but upon their children forty years afterwards.

The Canaanites are delivered into the hand of Israel and are utterly destroyed.

A request is next sent to Sihon, King of the Amorites, couched in terms almost identical with those used for Edom. The request is refused, Sihon comes out and fights against Israel; and Israel smites him with the edge of the sword, and takes possession of his territory. What Israel took from Sihon had originally belonged to Moab (Numb. xxi. 26), who had become idolatrous, as we see from xxi. 28, 29: “The lords (baalim) of the high places of Arnon O people of Chemosh” (Chemosh being an idol, II Kings xxiii. 13).

This was a legitimate conquest on this side of Jordan before the land of promise was reached; and the Church to-day, while not forgetting the restrictions associated with Moab and Edom, can win back territory which was lost to Satan and his hosts, which once belonged to the outer circle of God’s people.

Og, King of Bashan, also went out against Israel, and he, too, was overcome and destroyed. This king was the last of the Rephaim; his bedstead (or tomb) was nine cubits long, “after the cubit of a man”.

The destruction of Sihon and Og is commemorated in a psalm of praise, which specially emphasizes the mercy of God.

“To Him which smote great kings:
For His mercy endureth for ever:
And slew famous kings:
For His mercy endureth for ever:
Sihon, King of the Amorites:
For His mercy endureth for ever:
And Og, King of Bashan:
For His mercy endureth for ever” (Psa. cxxxvi. 17-20).

This seed of the giants, the Rephaim, were the tares sown by the Wicked One; it was mercy utterly to destroy them. And so, when the day arrives for the Church to ascend into the heavenly inheritance, the principalities and powers, the world holders of this darkness and the “spiritual wickednesses” that have, under the authority of Satan, for so long barred the way, shall in like manner be destroyed. Already by the cross they have been “spoiled” and “triumphed over” (Col. ii. 15). For the present time our orders are to “stand”, to “stand against” and to “withstand”.

If it was vital that Israel should follow out implicitly the instructions given them in their passage from the wilderness to the promised land, it is surely equally important that we also should neither exceed nor fall short of the instructions given for our own guidance. The teaching that some hold regarding “warfare” to-day, is as though Israel, long before the arrival at Kadesh, marched forward indiscriminately with sword in hand, simply because they knew that over the Jordan lay their inheritance and that even then they were really “more than conquerors”.

We have touched, in passing, upon each of the opposing forces met by Israel, but so much is involved in the action of Balak and Balaam that this must be reserved for separate study in a subsequent paper.

#89. Numbers xxii. - xxv. Balaam and Baal-Peor.

Throughout the unfolding of the purpose of the ages — whether the whole sweep of that purpose, as visualized from Genesis i. to Revelation xxii., whether man himself, from Paradise lost to Paradise regained, whether Israel, or the Church, or even the individual life of the believer throughout all times and under all dispensations — Scripture apprizes us of a series of Satanic attacks, carried out along lines parallel with that purpose, including, prominently, an attack upon the exclusive worship of God, and a seduction from the path of moral purity. These attacks are not confined to the beginning of any new dispensation, but are repeated, with undiminished force, at their close. Rebellion began in heaven and war will again take place in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the Dragon and his angels. That old Serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, who deceived our first parents when placed in the garden of Eden, will deceive the nations once again, just before the garden is restored at the last.

Coming closer to our subject, Israel had been delivered out of Egypt but five months when we find them ensnared in the matter of the golden calf and its immoral “play”, for they made themselves naked (Exod. xxxii. 1-6, 25). This terrible breaking of the covenant of Sinai was visited by a judgment executed by the sons of Levi. And now, as we are about to read the account of the closing attack upon Israel, just as they are to cross the Jordan, we find again, in the matter of Baal-Peor, the same idolatry and immorality, followed by vengeance executed by the javelin of Phinehas.

The book of the Revelation reveals a similar attack at the time of the end, “that woman Jezebel” teaching the same double evil in the church in Thyatira (Rev. ii. 20). Before the dreadful fall of Israel in the matter of Baal-Peor, much is recorded concerning Balaam himself, and considerable space is devoted to his unwilling inspiration and utterance of the prophetic parables.

Three battles are recorded: against Irad the Canaanite, Sihon, king of the Amorites, and Og, king of Bashan, but these sanguinary fights are disposed of in a few verses. The record of the final attack under Balaam, however, occupies more than one hundred verses. Moreover, the N.T. refers to Balaam three times, and makes allusion to two points in the story recorded in Numbers:--

“Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam, the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness, but was rebuked for his iniquity; the dumb ass speaking with man’s voice forbad the madness of the prophet” (II Pet. ii. 15, 16).

“Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Korah” (Jude 11).

“But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit fornication. So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate” (Rev. ii. 14, 15).

A reference is made to this period in I Cor. x. 8:--

“Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand.”

Two references are made to Baal-Peor outside the books of Moses:--

“They joined themselves also unto Baal-Peor, and ate the sacrifices of the dead” (Psa. cvi. 28).

“They went to Baal-Peor and separated (*nazar*, as Numb. vi. 7) themselves unto that shame; and their abominations were according as they loved” (Hos. ix. 10).

As a detailed examination of the whole of the narrative is beyond our limits, these references will enable us to appreciate the features that require consideration.

Just as Balaam comes upon the scene at the very end of Israel’s period of wandering, and just before they cross over into the promised land, so these N.T. Scriptures which refer to Balaam, are Scriptures that deal with the last days, viz., II Peter, Jude and Revelation.

II Peter is occupied with prophecy, both false and true, revolving around the second coming of the Lord. Chapter ii. is taken up with the question of false prophets, and the ungodly of ancient times. The angels that sinned, the old world in the days of Noah, and the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, are examples cited of the ungodliness yet to come. Even a passing acquaintance with the Scriptures that deal with these three subjects will indicate the awful uncleanness associated with them, and this is immediately taken up by the apostle (ii. 10-14), and is followed by the reference to Balaam.

Jude follows very closely the same lines as II Peter ii. He, too, introduces three ancient examples of ungodliness: Israel, the angels, and Sodom & Gomorrah, and, again, terrible uncleanness is indicated (Jude 7, 8). These three classes are balanced in the epistle by three evil individuals: Cain, Balaam & Korah, and throw light upon the character of the last days.

The book of the Revelation also speaks of the last days, and again we read of Balaam. This time a special doctrine is associated with his name, and also with Nicolaitanes. Now, inasmuch as both *Balaam* and *Nicolaitan* have the same meaning, namely, the overcoming of the people, we see that Satan will once more introduce his unclean doctrines at the time of the end to ensnare the people of God. Balaam’s doctrine was taught at Pergamos — “where Satan’s throne is.” Balaam stands before us as the great typical false prophet: he sins against light and knowledge and is overcome of greed: He was in

league with the forces of evil, as may be seen by the references to enchantments (Numbers xxiii. 23; xxiv. 1 and falling into a trance, xxiv. 4). Four times does Balaam utter in parable form the words that God put into his mouth. Balak takes Balaam to view Israel from three different heights, but no loophole can be found for the curse to fall upon them.

Balaam's four parables represent four aspects of the perfect standing of every true child of God. Under the first covenant Israel had undertaken to inherit the position of a kingdom of Priests by their obedience, saying: "All that the Lord hath spoke we will do" (Exod. xix. 3-8), and as a part of their preparation for the confirmation of this covenant Moses was to: "sanctify them to-day and to-morrow and let them wash their clothes and be ready against the third day" (Exod. xix. 10, 11). Alas, we know too well that Israel utterly failed, and the Lord, in grace, set aside that covenant and introduced another, a better covenant, established by better promises, resting upon an infinitely better Sacrifice, and in the hand of a better Mediator.

When Israel do, eventually, enter into their blessed inheritance, it will not be by their own obedience, neither will they be able to "wash their clothes and be ready against the third day". The book of the Revelation gives the new and better state:--

"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" (Rev. i. 5, 6).

"These are they which have come out of greater tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the lamb" (Rev. vii. 14).

"Thou hast redeemed to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, and hast made them unto our God kings and priests: and they shall reign over the earth" (Rev. v. 9, 10).

The first of Balaam's parables emphasizes the believer's separation unto God:--

"Lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations" (Numb. xxiii. 9).

This is the basic truth concerning Israel. The second parable emphasizes the perfect acceptance of every child of God:--

"He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath He seen perverseness in Israel" (Numb. xxiii. 21).

Yet on both sides of this parable of Balaam we have the record of Israel's terrible failure. The apparent contradiction is, however, removed when we remember that Balaam speaks of their *standing*, whereas Moses speaks of their *state*.

The two parables that follow emphasize the glory and the victory of the people "in the latter days" (Numb. xxiv. 14). "His kingdom shall be exalted" (Numb. xxiv. 7), and Balaam plainly prophesies that this exaltation is associated with the Messiah:--

"There shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel. Out of Jacob shall come He that shall have dominion" (Numb. xxiv. 17, 19).

Before ending the prophetic utterances, Balaam speaks of the end of the Amalekites, the Kenites and the Assyrians. Ships shall come from the coast of Shittim, and afflict both the Assyrian and the Hebrew, and then he also (that sent the ships) shall perish for ever. Daniel, in xi. 30 of his book, speaks of these "ships of Chittim", and makes it clear that they come against the Beast of the Apocalypse.

Here, then, we have a false prophet, who sets out, at the bidding of a king, to curse Israel, uttering such truths as demand nothing less than the inspiration of God as their origin. Balaam realized his helplessness in the matter, saying to Balak:--

“Have i now any power at all to say anything? The word that God putteth in my mouth, that shall i speak” (Numb. xxii. 38).

“Must i not take heed to speak that which the Lord hath put in my mouth?” (Numb. xxiii. 12).

“If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, i cannot go beyond the commandment of the Lord, to do either good or bad of mine own mind: but what the Lord saith, that will i speak” (Numb. xxiv. 13).

“And Balaam lifted up his eyes, and he saw Israel abiding in his tents according to their tribes; and the spirit of God came upon him” (Numb. xxiv. 2).

It is therefore apparent that Balaam’s utterances had no relation to his own heart, or his own moral character. He, himself, was wicked, unrepentant, and in league with Satanic powers, yet God could so come upon him that he was powerless to resist being made a mouthpiece of the Almighty. If wicked Balaam and wicked Caiaphas can utter prophetic truth by the mighty constraint of the Spirit of God, how much more may we believe that “holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” (II Pet. i. 21)?

It is sad to leave this high standpoint of the blessed *standing* of the elect of God, for the narrative of their terrible *state* which follows in Numbers xxv. Balaam’s intended curses were rendered impossible, but Balaam’s subtle doctrine ensnared the people of God:--

“And Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab. And they called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods: and the people did eat, and bowed down to their gods, and Israel joined himself unto Baal-Peor” (Numb. xxv. 1-3).

No censer of incense stays the judgment that now falls. The javelin of Phinehas “made an atonement for the children of Israel”, and his reward is remembered in the words of Israel’s last prophet (Mal.ii.4,5). The words that follow deal with abuses in connection with marriage, and the intention of the Lord in marriage — “That He might seek a seed of God” (*Elohim*) (Mal. ii. 15). They reveal the diabolical character of Balaam’s doctrine. Its connection with Cain, the fallen angels and the cities of the plain in II Peter and Jude, further emphasizes the Satanic plot at Baal-Peor, at the moment of entry into the land, to sow his own tares, “the seed of the wicked one”.

It is surely something more than an accident that the passage already quoted from Hos. ix. 10 should use the word *nazar* (“separate”), which is found in Numb. vi. 3, where we have the law of the Nazarite. What a contrast. Israel should have been “separated” as a nation unto the Lord: instead, they corrupted themselves, and “separated themselves unto that shame, and their abominations were according as they loved”. This passage from Hosea makes us think of the charge against the church of Ephesus, “Thou hast left thy first love”, although, be it said, they hated the deeds of the Nicolaitanes. Hate, however, is not so strong as love, and with the loss of the first love, hatred of the Nicolaitan doctrine waned, so that by the time we reach Pergamos, the Nicolaitan doctrine has a hold, and is coupled with the doctrine of Balaam, and answered by the seduction of Jezebel. And now Levi with his sword and Phinehas with his javelin give place to the Lord Himself, out of whose mouth goeth a sharp two-edged sword.

The last act of Moses was the execution of vengeance, a faint anticipation of the “Day of vengeance of our God”:--

“And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Avenge the children of Israel of the Midianites: afterwards shalt thou be gathered unto thy people” (Numb. xxxi. 2).

Each tribe of Israel sent 1,000 armed men to execute this vengeance of the Lord against Midian, for all Israel had been guilty, and had actually lost double this number, 24,000 having died, as Numb.xxv.9 declares. In this connection we earlier quoted I Cor. x. 8. As some may have a difficulty because that passage says 23,000, it should be noted that I Cor. x. 8 specifies how many died *in one day*, for some had been hanged, and some slain earlier (Numb. xxv. 4, 5). Phinehas, whose javelin executed the first stroke of vengeance on a daughter of Midian, led the army on this dreadful mission. This was no conquest of territory, it was not the claiming of an inheritance; it was a priestly blotting out of a sinful alliance. In this battle Balaam meets his end, unrepentant to the last. Not a single man of Israel was lost in this battle, and a thank offering was brought to make an atonement for their souls before the Lord, amounting to 16,750 shekels of gold. This was brought into the tabernacle of the congregation, “for a memorial for the children of Israel before the Lord” (Numb. xxxi. 54). This, in some measure, counters the other memorial for the children of Israel, made of the rebels’ censers (Numb. xvi. 40).

Surely we are justified in seeing in these 12,000 overcomers a foreshadowing of that great company, the 144,000 who overcome, who were not defiled with women, and who stand out in contrast with the awful doctrine of Balaam and Jezebel.

Israel now prepare to enter the land of promise, and the remaining chapters of Numbers are occupied with the numbering of the people, with laws adjusted to suit the changed circumstances, and with the special provision of the cities of refuge. These we hope to consider in our next article, which brings the survey of Numbers to a conclusion.

#90. Concluding features (Numbers xxvi. - xxxvi.).

We have now considered the teaching of the Book of Numbers up to the end of chapter xxv. From this point to the end of the Book, we have eleven more chapters. Had our intention in this series been a study of each book as it stands, we should have dealt next with the structures and analysis of the remaining chapters. This work had been partly done, but upon weighing the matter over, and considering the teaching of these remaining chapters in the light of the title, “*Fundamentals of dispensational truth*”, we have decided to replace this detailed study by the briefest of summaries. So much of the ground is retraced in these chapters of Numbers, the new matter being largely connected with the re-adjustment of the people in view of the entry into the land, and the summary will be sufficient to lead on to the study of the fifth book of Moses, that of Deuteronomy.

Numbers xxvi. is occupied with the numbering of the people. This is the third census. The three occasions on which a census was taken are as follows:--

- (1) Before the building of the tabernacle (Exod. xxx. 11; xxxviii. 25). This provided silver for the work of the tabernacle.
- (2) At the opening of the Book of Numbers, in the wilderness of Sinai (Numbers i.).
- (3) The third numbering is recorded here in Numbers xxvi. The record is followed by this solemn comment:--

“These are they that were numbered by Moses and Eleazar the priest, who numbered the children of Israel in the plains of Moab by Jordan near Jericho. But among these was not a man whom Moses and Aaron the priest numbered, when they numbered the children of Israel in the wilderness of Sinai. For the Lord had said of them, They shall surely die in the wilderness. And there was not left a man of them save Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua, the son of Nun” (Numb. xxvi. 63-65).

Even Moses is not spared. He, too, must suffer loss, because of his failure to sanctify the Lord at Meribah:--

“And the Lord said unto Moses, Get thee up into this mount Abarim, and see the land which I have given unto the children of Israel. And when thou hast seen it, thou also shalt be gathered unto thy people, as Aaron thy brother was gathered. For ye rebelled against My commandment in the desert of Zin, in the strife of the congregation, to sanctify Me at the water before their eyes” (Numb. xxvii. 12-14).

With these solemn words we may compare the witness of the apostle Paul:--

“Lest by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be disqualified All our fathers were under the cloud all all all all, but with many of them God was not well pleased Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall” (I Cor. ix. 24 - x. 12).

“Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief. Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us any of you should seem to come short of it” (Heb. iii. 7 - iv. 1).

“This one thing I do, forgetting reaching forth I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” (Phil. iii. 13, 14).

As we read these words, who among us would have the temerity to say that we are sure that that crown and prize are ours? We do not, of course, mean to cast the slightest doubt upon the absolutely perfect and inalienable position that every believer occupies in grace. The passage in view is not dealing with position in grace, but with service, running a race, fighting a good fight, finishing a course. There is as much difference between these two things as between the rock foundation once laid, and the subsequent erection built upon it that shall be tried by fire (I Corinthians iii.). When we are dealing with Israel in the Book of Numbers, we must remember that they are a redeemed people. Redemption had delivered them from the bondage of Egypt, and the Red Sea flowed between them. Moses himself was a saved man; yet he “suffered loss”. The reader would be helped in his study if he were to read Psalm xc. & xci., noticing that Psalm xc. speaks of those whose carcasses fell in the wilderness, while Psalm xci. speaks of those who, being under twenty years of age, were preserved for those forty years, and led into the land under Joshua.

A beautiful spirit is manifested in the reply of Moses in Numbers xxvii. to the sentence of death. He makes no complaint, he offers no excuses; he bows before the Lord, but asks that a successor shall be appointed.

Numbers xxvii. deals with the request of the daughters of Zelophedad, and the Lord’s answer. The latter, together with the further enactment given in the last chapter of Numbers, has to do with the law of the kinsman-redeemer, an important principle which underlies the beautiful account in the book of Ruth and the teaching of Scripture in connection with the Redeemer Himself (*See the series on “Redemption”, volume XII, p.109*). Chapters xxviii. & xxix. restate the law regarding various offerings and feasts. This was necessary for the guidance of the people about to enter the land, but does not demand a detailed study here.

Chapter xxx. is devoted to the question of vows: their fulfillment and their cancellation. A special place is given to the woman in the matter. Her vow can be rendered void either by her father, if she be unmarried, or by her husband, if she be married. The words, “He shall bear her iniquity” (xxx. 15) give us a faint picture of the relationship between Christ and His people. Moreover, the passage throws light upon the true status of women. It is introduced by the words: “This is the thing which the Lord hath

commanded". A word here may perhaps be in season when the tendency of the times, even among the Lord's people, is to throw over the restraints of Scripture in the interests of a false "liberty" and "equality". The treatment of the daughters of Zelophedad, taken together with this chapter, would help to give a balanced judgment.

In Numbers xxxi. Moses is commanded to avenge the children of Israel upon the Midianites. This is the last command laid upon Moses: "afterward shalt thou be gathered unto thy people". Midian is defeated. Balaam is slain. The spoils of war are purified with fire and the water of separation. A great difference is made between the levy imposed upon those who actually went out to the battle, and the remainder of the congregation who stayed at home.

The prey taken was of three kinds: persons (verses 12, 18, 35), beasts (32-34) and money & goods (22 & 50). These were divided among the congregation and the army. In this we have an anticipation of David's ruling concerning "his part that tarrieth by the stuff" (I Sam. xxx. 24). On the other hand there is due recognition of the active part played by the soldier, whose levy was "one soul of five hundred" whilst that of the congregation was "one portion of fifty" (Numb. xxxi. 27-30). At the close of this levy, a census was taken of the warriors, which revealed the fact that there "lacked not one" of them. Moved with gratitude, they bring an oblation, to make an atonement for their souls.

Chapter xxxii. is mainly concerned with the request of Reuben and Gad, that their inheritance should be allotted to them in the land of Gilead because "the place was a place for cattle". They requested that they should not be brought "over Jordan" (xxxii. 1-5). Their request was granted, upon condition that they sent their quota to war, until Israel had entered into their own possessions. There is an important lesson here, which we shall probably consider in our study of the Book of Joshua and its typical teaching. We may anticipate, however, without going into detail:--

- (1) It was the possession of cattle, not the glory of the Lord, or the following of His will, that influenced Reuben and Gad.
- (2) It was an attempt to reverse God's order — which was the conquest of Canaan first, and then the spreading out to occupy the land "from sea to sea".
- (3) The gaining of their request meant that many never returned to wife and children or inheritance. And when Israel began to be taken into captivity, they were among the first to go.

It is "natural" to shirk the crossing of Jordan, but it is foreign to the teaching of Scripture.

Chapter xxxiii. is occupied with a record of the journeys of Israel. The word "journeys" in verse one is, in the Hebrew, "pullings up", and has reference to the tent pegs. The whole is a record of pilgrimage, and a remainder of the way in which the Lord had led the people, suffering their ways, providing food and raiment, and eventually leading them into the land of promise.

Chapter xxxiv. fixes the bounds of the inheritance.

Chapter xxxv. provides for the tribe of Levi forty-eight cities, of which six are reserved as cities of refuge for the man-slayer (verses 1-6). Three of these cities were in the land of Canaan, and three on the other side of Jordan (verse 14). The avenger of blood is the kinsman-redeemer; and this chapter, together with those that deal with the problem of the daughters of Zelophedad, provided a twofold aspect of the work of the Redeemer, corresponding to the two words, "destroy" and "deliver" in Hebrews ii. 14, 15.

From another angle, the avenger of blood may be regarded as symbolizing the law, from whom the man-slayer was not freed until the death of the High Priest.

Chapter xxxvi. brings this book to a close with the added statement already considered regarding the case of the inheritance passing to the daughter of a family. Marriage within the tribe is the only

restriction; freedom of choice is allowed within these limits. This may well be taken as an illustration of the vexed question of the freedom of choice among moral agents. Man must of necessity be free; otherwise he ceases to be either moral or responsible. His freedom, however, is not absolute but relative; for God's will shall with certainty be accomplished. Freedom of choice is not permitted to spoil the inheritance or ourselves or of others, for this inheritance has much to do with the great purpose of the ages. We ask the reader to observe that we use the words, "freedom of *choice*" and not "freedom of *will*". Who among us can say "I will" and not feel how much he is bound by circumstances?

With this survey we conclude our study of the book of pilgrimage; and look forward with interest to the restatement which is contained in the book of Deuteronomy.