

THE WORD AND WORK

(Volume XLVI, JULY, 1952)

The Bible

Despised and torn in pieces,
By infidels decried,
The thunderbolts of hatred,
The haughty cynics' pride—
All these have rallied against it
In this and other lands;
Yet dynasties have fallen,
And still the Bible stands.

WORDS IN SEASON

R. H. B.

CONQUERING GOD

If I might talk of God after the manner of men, as the Bible often does, I would say that in His great love He is sorely divided between the desire to rule and to be ruled. His love demands that He shall rule for the good of His universe and all His creatures; but that same love, as all love always does, fills Him with the desire to be ruled and to make Himself the servant of His beloved ones. In the one aspect of His love He must and does maintain His absolute sovereignty, His supreme majesty and power, and the unquestioned, unquestionable right of jurisdiction over all; else would it not go well with the world or with any of us. No one is safe to be at the head of the universe but God. On the other hand, while reserving to himself the right of decision in all petitions, and in all fervid attacks that faith and love may make upon Him, He loves to give in and give way to His pleading people and do for them as they request. This is the peculiarity of God's way, the ignorance of which has caused many to be puzzled over the question of prayer, why men should pray at all if God already knows what they want and need, and since He already is willing to do us good before we ask Him. Recognize this fact, and the mystery will clear away; God loves to be conquered—not by human power or arrogance, I grant you, as they attempted in the days of the tower of Babel, but by the bold, unyielding entreaties with which loving, believing hearts beset Him.

HOW THE LORD WAS DETAINED

"He made as though he would have gone farther." It was Jesus of whom this is said; and the occasion was His walk with the two disciples of Emmaus, when after His resurrection He appeared to them and accompanied them on their journey unrecognized, and explained to them the Old Testament prophecies concerning Himself. When they arrived at their destination, Jesus "made as though

he would have gone farther." In fact, He would have gone further, if, after the burning words they had heard from the Stranger's lips, they would have let him go on without question or interest. But they insisted that he abide with them; and He was entreated of them. How often God does this, and how plainly He has shown us! And yet men ask, What is the use to pray? Or even grow fatalistic and declare that whatever is coming to us will come, anyway, whether we pray or not. Or they say that our actions, not our prayers, determine what our lot shall be. As if there could be a true life without prayer! But God wants to be asked, God wants to be turned, God delights to be entreated and conquered by the importunate faith of those whom He loves. And when He yields to their attack, it will not be for a mischief to them, if the petitions are made in humble faith and love, but for a higher blessing, and a gift they would not otherwise have got.

PREVAILING WITH THE ALMIGHTY

When we look at the record of God's dealings with men, we find frequent instances of this strange trait of God's character, which is not so strange, after all, when we come to think of it. He often "made as though he would have gone farther," waiting only for a pressing invitation to do otherwise. Jacob found it out the night he wrestled with God, when he received the name "Israel"; for he had power with God and also prevailed. The mysterious opponent had already disabled him, but Jacob persistently clung to him. "Let me go, for the day breaketh," pleaded the Stranger; but the audacious herdsman replied; "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." And so "he blessed him there." The Stranger, no doubt, would have gone, had Jacob suffered him to go, and Jacob would have lost the blessing. But Jacob dimly realized with whom he had to do, and hung on with pertinacious faith. And thus he conquered God, and God was glad. Again, when in that evil day of Israel's treachery God said to Moses on the mount "Let me alone, that my anger may wax hot against them, and that I may destroy them, and I will make of thee a great nation" — God would certainly have done just as he said, had there been no interference on Moses' part. But Moses stood in the breach that day and dammed with his own person the flood of wrath that was about to rush forth upon the guilty people; and he urged his counter petition to the point of impudence — even got a rebuke for it from the Lord — but he gained the day. And it is edifying to see how he drove God, as it were, from one concession to another, until God actually agreed to do that which at first he had refused to do. How Moses must have exulted in his heart over the wonderful feat he had been permitted to accomplish, and the influence he, as the representative of his people, had wielded over the Almighty! How much gladder even was God Himself, to whom the salvation of that people was a dearer object than it could have been to Moses, that there was such an intercessor to stand in the breach and turn away that impending righteous retribution! It was a real danger, not a mere play; and certainly Israel would have been overtaken by it, had Moses not turned the mind of God. But

if you will look at it closely, you will see that God Himself had suggested Moses' course to him. "Let me alone," he said, "and I will do thus and so." Which is to say; "If you do not get in my way now, I will destroy Israel; but if you do, perhaps I will not do it." And Moses' quick eye of love took in the chance at once, and he would not let God alone. Such is God's strange way. And often our prayer lacks nerve and energy because we somehow think that God will do pretty much what he is going to do, anyhow, and there is nothing to be actually gained by prayer. But that is a great mistake. The prayer of faith is always a net gain. It obtains that which could not have been had otherwise. For God wills to be asked and interceded with and importuned; and in His loving condescension he waits to be conquered by the love and faith of his people.

NIL DESPERANDUM

Now a few times God absolutely and utterly refused to consider any petitions contrary to some particular purpose he had announced; as when Moses prayed to be permitted to enter the land of Canaan, or when David fasted and lay upon his face before Jehovah, beseeching Him to spare the life of the child Uriah's wife bare him. But those were exceptions, and God had His tender, unselfish reason for refusing even those requests. But the very fact that after God's pre-emptory statements those servants of His yet dared to pray to Him to reverse the judgments, shows how well they knew Him. And though he shut off Moses in short order, and in the case of David simply ignored the supplication, it did not shake their confidence in God in the least; and we would be going too far even in those cases to say nothing was gained by even those rejected prayers. Let us depend upon it: something can be accomplished by prayer. Often and often we are in reach of wonderful blessing, and our unbelief lets the opportunity pass by. Often we faint in prayer, and will not cling fast, like Jacob, unto the victorious end. We do not realize that true faith and love may conquer God, and that God loves to be so vanquished. We give up a situation as hopeless when a continued earnest appeal, with, when necessary, a change of attitude, would bring about a complete change for the better. Have faith in God! Lord, teach us to pray! Lord, help our unbelief!

LIFE'S SUPREME MOTIVE

That life will stay forever out of the larger fields of action which does not perceive that some other motive must dominate it than merely the motive of responding to that which makes emotional appeal to it. The one sufficing and adequate law of life is not, "What do I want to do?" but, "What ought I to do?" not, "What appeals to me?" but, "What is God appealing to me to do?" If we would discover the one loftiest and noblest thing, the one satisfying and complete thing, we shall find it where our Lord found it: It is my duty to "work the works of him that sent me, while it is day."—R. E. Speer.

NEWS AND NOTES

Greenville, S. C.: "I have just returned from an 8-day meeting with the Raiford Road Church of Christ, which is located a little way from Macclenney, Florida. These brethren and sisters really love each other. It would do many of us good just to go there and worship with this congregation a few times. Much credit is due Brother D. L. Griffis and his good wife for this work. Others to whom credit is due are Brethren Johnny Adams, J. E. Bcyd, and Dan Richardson. We had a very good meeting, although its purpose was more to confirm the disciples, than to baptize converts.

"We are now located with the Washington Ave. church of Christ here in Greenville and are very happy in our new field of labor. We have a very faithful and persevering group here that has done a commendable work under the leadership of Brother Henry Harding. They have built a nice meeting house and have been meeting in it almost a year."—Brady M. Green.

Brother Waldo Hoar recently closed a good meeting at Jasonville, Indiana. We have not received a full report of the meeting, but did receive word that four were baptized one night.

Frankfort, Ky.: "We at Antioch church enjoyed rich blessings from the Lord the week of May 4-11. Brother Frank Gill spoke to us on the morning of May 4; then Brother H. N. Rutherford spoke in the afternoon at the dedication of the new Bible school addition to our building. Others who preached one night each during the week were: Albert Martin of Roslyn, Ky., Ben Rake of Winchester, Winston Allen of Louisville, J. R. Clark of Louisville, Orell Overman of Mackville, and LaVern Houtz of Lexington. Two placed membership during the meeting. On thursday night Brother Dale Jorgenson came with the Portland High School chorus and gave us a spiritual feast in song. We are deeply grateful to all of these who helped us.

"From June 9-13 we had a Vacation Bible School with an average attendance of 100. This was the best school that we have had here.

"I am to be with the Cat Creek Church in Powell County from June 18 through 29 in a Gospel meeting. Brother Howard Marsh is to be with us here at Antioch from August 4-17 in a meeting."—Asa Baber.

Louisville, Ky.: "We baptized a young married man at Ormsby church a few nights ago. He had been considering becoming a Christian for some time and the church was made to rejoice when he finally took the step. As these notes are being written we have had one session of our Vacation Bible School, which is being conducted evenings. Sixty-two were present this first night and we hope for a good and profitable school. Paul Clark is to be with us in a protracted meeting, beginning Sunday, August 3."—J. R. Clark.

Winchester, Ky.: "The work here at Main Street is progressing well. We closed our spring revival with Bro. Hall Crowder the first week in May. During the meeting we had one response for rededication, two for membership, and one for baptism. One has responded for baptism since the meeting.

"We began our annual V. B. S. Monday the 16th and closed with a program the evening of the 27th.

"A few weeks ago we were privileged to have the K. B. C. chorus with us. The superb performance presented by this fine group of young people was thoroughly enjoyed by us all.

"Many of us listen faithfully to the beautiful songs and inspiring messages brought to us each Saturday morning by 'Words of Life'. May God bless these efforts richly."—Ben Rake.

Brethren Jimmie Hardison and Paul Knecht of Louisville recently closed an open-air meeting of a few nights between Sundays at Lockport, Ky. The attendance and interest grew, and the meeting was too short.

As we go to press H. L. Olmstead is in a meeting at Lily Dale church, near Tell City, Indiana. The meeting is to close Sunday, July 6, with a basket dinner and song rally in the afternoon, to which all are invited.

During the month of June the Buechel church of Christ enjoyed a series of sermons, preached by Edward Schreiner. The local minister, John T. Glenn, states that they had a very good meeting, with excellent attendance.

Business Teacher Sought

Winston Allen, president of Kentucky Bible College, is seeking a qualified business administrator teacher for the college. If you are interested in the position or wish to recommend some one please correspond with Winston Allen, 2630 Montgomery St., Louisville, Ky.

The revival at Cherry and Griffin Streets, New Albany, resulted in five baptisms and one reconsecration. Howard Marsh was the evangelist. Bruce Chowning, the local minister, was confronted with a new experience one night. He took the confession of and baptized his daughter, Janet.

The Youth Revival at Sellersburg, Indiana, yielded some 12 or 13 responses to the invitation. Orrel Overman brought good, strong messages.

Lexington, Ky.: "Home-coming day for Cramer and Hanover congregation, Lexington, is set for August 3, 1952. Preparations are being made for a great day as it will be the twentieth anniversary of the Rutherfords' ministry in Lexington. We are planning to make it a special day of contribution toward raising the \$2000 required by the Philippine government for Victor Broadus. The churches that are sponsoring Bro. Broadus and family in Manila are also interested in raising this amount. Plan to come to this great home-coming and 20th anniversary occasion."—Cramer and Hanover Bulletin.

Lexington, Ky.: "Twenty-five visitors were present in our services last Sunday morning (June 15). This makes a record of eight consecutive Sundays in which we have had no service without visitors. Brother R. H. Boll is to be with us in a protracted meeting, beginning early in August (final arrangements have not been made)." —LaVern Houtz.

Atlanta, Ga.: "Enjoying eight days meeting with Wm. Cook, who ministers here at Hapeville, and with D. R. Bridges, M.D., who is

responsible for the work being started and who is still a wheel-horse here. I am devoting each session to a study of the Apocalypse."—Stanford Chambers.

Youth Camp at Kavanaugh

The youth camp will be at Camp Kavanaugh, Crestwood, Kentucky, again this year. Junior Camp (for children promoted to from the fifth to eighth grades) is to begin with the evening meal July 20 and close July 25. Senior Camp for older youth will convene Sunday evening, July 27 and close August 2. The total fee is \$14 per person. Send your name to Hall C. Crowder with a five dollar deposit and pay the other \$9 at the beginning of camp. His address is Box 101, Gallatin, Tennessee. There will be Bible classes, singing and chapel in the mornings, recreation in the afternoons, a country store for confections and craft materials, and a short service at night.

Word and Work Book Store

The Word and Work has a little Book Store where friends may purchase Bibles, Testaments, and Bible related books. An author who visited us recently said, "You have more good books than many large book stores." Purchase your Vacation Bible School supplies from us, as many others are doing. The summer months are rather difficult for us. We would appreciate especially your Bible and book orders at this time.

Brother R. H. Boll has just closed a good meeting at Wichita Falls, Texas, and is now in a meeting at Dallas, Texas, at the Mt. Auburn Church. His tent meeting, which is held on the Portland lot, behind the church building, is to begin July 13.

Colis Campbell Emergency

Brother Campbell had planned to visit the States in about a year and a half, but now he feels it would be better for the Yokohama work and other work being arranged for him to come home in December of this year. This means that we must raise \$1200 for his passage, plus incidentals. We now have approximately \$135 to start the fund. Send contributions to J. R. Clark, 2518 Portland, Louisville 12, Ky. Please make checks payable to **Colis Campbell** and ear-marked for travel. Thank you.—J. R. C.

PAUL'S GOSPEL IV

R. H. B.

Paul has shown that in the national rejection of Israel and the calling of the Gentiles, God was neither unfaithful to His promises, nor unrighteous in His dealing with His ancient people Israel. The Jew's fleshly descent alone gave him no claim to acceptance with God (John the Baptist had told them that long before, Matt. 3:9); and now, Jews and Gentiles being equally lost and under condemnation, God was free to show mercy or to harden whomsoever He would, as seemed good to him. Having defended this sovereign right of God to do as He pleased (Dan. 4:35), Paul next points out that God was not arbitrary nor unrighteous in this matter. There was reason for the rejection of the Jews and for the receiving of the Gentiles — as shown in Romans 9:30-33. In Romans 10 these reasons are brought out yet more fully.

"My heart's desire and prayer to God is for them [Israel] that they may be saved," says Paul. Obviously he did not think of them as being under any fatal decree of rejection. He believed that by his prayers and his apostolic labor (11:14) some at least could be saved. But it is equally clear that they were *lost* indeed. The reason, as given in verse 3, was that they spurned God's offer of righteousness by faith in Jesus Christ, and sought to attain to a righteousness of their own, by way of law-keeping (Comp. Phil. 3:9).

It is not the purpose here to give an exposition of the tenth chapter of Romans—except only to bring out this feature of Paul's gospel—his vindication of God in the matter of the rejection of unbelieving and disobedient Israel.

They had had every opportunity, Paul showed. The faith-creating, soul-saving gospel of Christ had come to them over-abundantly, and they had refused it. As long before intimated in Isaiah's prophecy ("Lord, who hath believed our report?" Compare John 12:38) they turned away from it in unbelief (Vs. 16, 17). Moses had already warned them that God would provoke them to jealousy and anger by giving preference to those who were "no people"; and Isaiah foreshadowed the reception of the gospel by the Gentiles ("I was found of them that sought me not," v. 20), and by contrast, the persistent opposition of Israel to all God's entreaties. Always they had been "a disobedient and gainsaying people." (V. 21). Was God under any obligation to them? No—at best they could only be candidates for His great mercy, the same mercy as that which was offered to the Gentiles. Thus the national pride of the Jew is levelled to the dust.

IS GOD THROUGH WITH THE JEWS?

Paul now takes up the important question whether God's special dealing with the Jews as a people is forever ended. Many have affirmed that, and many do so unto this day. But let us hear Paul's inspired word concerning this.

"I say then, hath God cast off his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast off his people which he foreknew."

It is not the purpose of this article to take up the questions and difficulties raised over the eleventh chapter of Romans, but merely to point out how in Paul's gospel God's dealing with Israel is vindicated. As we have seen, in chapter 9 Paul defends God's sovereign right to deal with men as He sees good; then in chapter 10 gives His reasons for the rejection of Israel. But in chapter eleven it is shown that, though they are now hardened, their hardening is not complete nor for ever, but partial and temporary, looking forward to their final restoration.

It must be clear to the unbiased student, that throughout these chapters, Israel, the "disobedient and gainsaying nation" is under discussion—not "spiritual Israel," and most evidently not the believing Gentiles, nor (as some noted commentators would make it) "the sum total of all the saved"—but Israel, the hardened nation, the unspiritual people over whom Paul mourned in Rom. 9:1-3, for whom he prayed in 10:1-3 that they might be saved, his lost brethren and kinsmen after the flesh. It is *their* present rejection, and their future repentance and restoration that makes up the theme of this chapter. (Rom. 11.).

First, the apostle shows that the apostasy of the nation is not complete, but, as in Elijah's time, there is a remnant according to the election of grace (Verses 2-6). These come in for the blessing and salvation which the nation as a whole had forfeited, the fate and fearful sentence of whom is given in vs. 8-10. Of these now, these who "stumbled"—not the elect remnant, not the saved "spiritual Israel"—the apostle has something further to tell us.

"I say then," he continues, "did they stumble that they might fall?" The word for "fall" here stands for an utter fall, a fall into irretrievable ruin. "God forbid," is the fervent answer. But they *had* stumbled indeed ("They stumbled at the stone of stumbling" Rom. 9:32). But it is not unto final ruin: "but by their fall [and here he uses another word, signifying a "lapse"] salvation is come to the Gentiles," which under God's providential overruling would be calculated to provoke the disobedient nation to jealousy.* It is surely an humiliating thought to Gentile Christians that their salvation was contingent upon Israel's rejection, and that one purpose of it was to provoke Israel to jealousy! But so it is written, and that is what it says, like it or not. "Now if their fall [using again the milder word] is the riches of the world, and their loss the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness?" What is meant by "their fulness" comes out in v. 15—"For if the casting away of them is the reconciling of the world, *what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?*" Rejected now, provoked to jealousy, and finally received—which issues in a world-wide blessing comparable to life from the dead."

* "Trusting and Toiling," the magazine put out by the Mildmay Mission to the Jews, reports that a secular Israel newspaper, published in Palestine, says, "Two thousand years ago we rejected our brother Jesus, and he went to the Gentiles. Now that the Gentiles are rejecting him, perhaps he will come back to us." In the same issue, this statement: "There is greater demand for Bibles and Testaments in Israel than ever before known."

All this is perfectly plain despite the dust and fog learned expositors have raised over it. The figure of the Olive Tree (verses 17-24) teaches the same truth. *The Olive Tree is not Israel*, not even "*Spiritual Israel*"; much less the church, as may easily be seen. It is the great covenant of Promise, which belonged peculiarly to Israel, and to which the Gentiles by nature had no claim (Eph. 2:12). Unbelieving Israel was broken off from it; the Gentiles, wild olive-branches as it were, were grafted in, and to this day they stand on Israel's olive tree. But the natural branches shall again be grafted into their olive-tree—"their own olive-tree" (v. 24).

Paul sums up the dealing of God with Israel and the Gentiles in verses 25, 26.

The rejection and hardening in part of Israel to make way for the Gentiles, was a "mystery"—a secret previously unrevealed. When the fulness of the Gentiles (all that will come) shall have come in, God will turn His hand upon Israel—and repenting, they shall be forgiven, and reinstated in the covenant of grace (vs. 26, 27).

"As touching the gospel, they are enemies for your sake." And how bitter has been their enmity! But it was so permitted "for your sake"—that is, for the Gentiles' benefit. "But as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sake." For the sake of the fathers, the great covenant-heads, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (a basic reason that can nevermore be changed) the nation is still and will always be "beloved." (Jer. 31:3; Isa. 54:6-10). "For the gifts and the calling of God are not repented of.

From this point Paul envisions the wondrous ways of God—how once God's far-sighted benevolence "suffered all the nations to walk in their own ways" (Acts 14:16—now to show them mercy through Israel's disobedience; and that Israel in turn might now be brought back through the obedience of the Gentiles). So "God hath shut up all unto disobedience, that He might have mercy upon all."

"O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past tracing out! . . . For of him, and through him, and unto him, are all things. To him be the glory for ever. Amen."

AIDS AND SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT

Stanford Chambers

"It is my meat to do my Father's will," said the Lord Jesus. Let it be first of all decided as to whether it is *our* meat to do our Father's will. This calls for Spirit-aided self-examination. Unless one's meat, also his drink, is to do his Father's will he may examine the Scriptures all he pleases, promote or protest, pep-talk or talk-down, embrace or excommunicate, either one or more to his heart's content, he will be all the while unapproved of God.

Preaching and teaching, or singing of spiritual songs, either may be done to be *heard of men*; communion, giving, or even attending may be done to be *seen of men*. If such be the motive the activity is thereby vitiated, rendered unacceptable to God whom we presume to worship. "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of

it are the issues of life." What we *are* is more important to Him than what we *do*, nevertheless the doing affects the doer himself, affects others, affects the glory of God. And one is not even normal who does not glorify the Creator.

Now it may not be so far afield to classify our spiritual activities as *work* or *worship*, though the one may be inclusive of the other. And indeed blessed are they who infuse the worship of their Lord into all their works.

To "work the works of Him" who has made us His "while it is called today," whether it be going, preaching, making disciples, teaching, giving, distributing relief, or ministering in any way, some equipment is necessary, the kind and amount dependent on where we go and to whom and for what. Granted capabilities to use fruitfully and the means to procure, there is found no restriction except that we shall not "do evil that good may come." Satan can make fruitful use of "signs and lying wonders" in his propaganda; the servant of God cannot propagate in that way.

At the birth of Word and Work (1909) a number of brethren were written about contributing to its columns. A preaching brother wrote us to be assured that the paper would not endorse the use of charts, maps, and diagrams for use in teaching and preaching. Once in meetings I was to preach on the "Mystical Body of Christ" (using Campbell's term). I had the likeness of Woodrow Wilson, made by the New York Times' photographing some thousands of boys in uniform so arranged as to create an intelligible profile of their Commander in Chief. It illustrated our identification with and oneness in Christ our living Head. No sooner had I tacked up the paper than a brother immediately stepped forward and took it down, expressing his sentiments as he did so. I gave my lesson using a few marks on the blackboard unprotested.

Will some visible object like Caesar's coin, or some mother's child, or a catch of fish aid in "putting across" the lesson of truth? Then it is *not to be protested*. If the truth has thereby been taught, if its presentation has thereby been aided, that surely justifies the use of the "aid." The use of some object to aid in getting off a stunt is a different matter. "Aids" for the sake of the "aids" is also a different matter. Does the tail wag the dog?

In the realm of activities properly belonging to God's house there are admittedly more restrictions. Since God is God we shall not ignorantly worship, shall not offer unto Him just anything that suggests itself. Just anything sincerely offered ever so scrupulously, or however appropriate the offering might seem (e.g. cite Cain), is not therefore assured of acceptance with God. Jesus was responsible for His disciples' *not* practicing as was expected of them the religious washing of hands before eating as did the Pharisees after the traditions of the elders. Such was vain worship, and He would not have His disciples engage in vain worship. There *is* such a thing as vain worship, and it can be an activity not wrong in and of itself. The vanity may be from offering what God has *not asked*. He once said, "Who hath required this at your hand?" There *is* such a thing as going "beyond what is written," such a thing as offering strange

fire upon His altar, as well as failing of sincerity and truth. To offer unto God things He has indeed asked, *some* equipment is required: place, seating, furnishings or utensils for the Lord's supper, the material elements, lights if the gathering is at night or in a cave. A scroll or volume containing the Word and a collection of spiritual songs are considered necessary, though good memories might sometimes enable an assembly to carry on without these. Besides the minimum requirements further aids may be used *if* they do aid in rendering unto God the things He has asked of us as worshippers. Aids in doing *other* things, things unasked, cannot be put on the same footing. Objections to practicing such things cannot be put on the low plane of objecting to things that do aid in doing what He has revealed as His will. Some adopted "aids" are *not* aids toward the end in view, though *avowedly* they are.

Our Romanist neighbors try to explain that they do not worship the crucifix or statue or painting before which they bow down; they say they bow before it for the aid it is to them in their worship of God. (Truth is that everywhere the Bible calls such bowing down worship, and worship unto the object bowed down to). And so the worship is perverted and is rejected of God. They are "aided" in transferring their worship from God to the image. "Aids" thus become a subterfuge.

Aaron yielding to the people made the golden calf. "These be thy gods, O Israel, that brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." And they worshipped! No one thought the golden calf just from the melting pot had *actually* brought them forth, but they knew mighty forces had operated, and the calf was a symbol to them of such forces. Their chosen symbol was to them an "aid" to worship. Had they broken with Jehovah? "Tomorrow shall be a feast to Jehovah." But Moses' interpretation of the whole was also the mind of God, and the action taken was drastic. Objections to "aids" that really aid in doing God's will cannot be elevated to the plane on which rest objections to things not within the will.

Before me lies the proposed 1952 budget of a prominent church identified with the "Restoration Movement." Some items: Organist \$416; treble clef director (9 mos.) \$160; quartet \$640; music \$240; other music expenses \$150. Adds up to over \$1600. (Previous cost of instruments, pipe organ, et al, not in this of course.) The *avowed* purpose withal is to aid and improve the singing. The *real* purpose is to have a better music program than singing of itself could possibly be. Opposition to sermon outlines or notes to aid in teaching God's word is not in a class with objection to the kind of thing found in this budget, and spiritual discernment here is not to be frowned upon. This writer is not in hearty support of the "song service" practiced for, "a program" for the worship hour being the end in view. A "program" may be a very different thing from acceptable worship.

I confess to a conscious inclination toward the kind of thing being provided for in this budget, but for that very reason I exercise spiritual discernment and put myself on guard against making any "provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof," even the alleged higher inclinations or ambitions.

PAUL'S USE OF SUPERLATIVES

Dennis L. Allen *

A Spanish ambassador once said to a French ambassador, making reference to the Mexican mines. "My master's treasure house has no bottom." The student of New Testament Greek must surely reach the same conclusion as he explores the mines of God's truth.

This discussion of Paul's use of superlatives is not intended to be technical but to point out some of the salient features of this prominent characteristic of Paul's epistles. By the term "superlatives" is meant the phrases and statements which express superlative things or ideas rather than words that have superlative form which are of course rare in the New Testament Greek.

Scattered throughout the epistles of Paul are found expressions which transcend the bounds of human thought and experience. Ephesians, for example, is often referred to as a book of superlatives. Thus we find such expressions as : "The exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe" . . . "the love of Christ which passeth knowledge" . . . "the exceeding riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus" . . . "the unsearchable riches of Christ" . . . "Now unto him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think." (Eph. 1:19; 3:19; 2:7; 3:8; 3:20.)

Why does Paul use these superlative statements so often? Is it simply to be attributed to his style or to the over-exuberance of his spirit?

It is commonplace in our present day speech and writing to use gross exaggeration and to mean very little by it. Hollywood and other commercial advertisers have given great impetus to this trend. The terms "wonderful," "colossal," "terrific," "stupendous," have been applied so often to mediocre things that they have lost much of their original force and meaning.

This was not true of the Greek language. The Greeks were a people of the subtlest intellect, given to close and accurate habits of thought. They saw distinctions where others saw none and were not given to using terms carelessly or indiscriminately: It is well known that the Greek is unusually exact and rich in context of meaning. A single Greek word often requires two or three words for its reproduction in English. Even then an explanation must often be added.

The Holy Spirit chose the most perfect vehicle possible through which to convey His revelation of Divine truth. However, even the Greek has limitations. No language has been developed by man which conveys thought perfectly, and when God's thoughts are to be cast into human molds it is to be expected that words must often be given a higher content of meaning and that even new words will have to be coined to convey the greatness of the truth. This we find to be the case throughout the New Testament, yet in spite of this we find that even the Greek often breaks down under the weight of

* Speech delivered at the University of Kentucky Foreign Language Conference [Biblical and Patristic Languages Section,] April 25, 1952, Jonah W. D. Skiles, director.

the surpassing glory of the Divine truth.

To one who accepts the Divine inspiration of the Scriptures it is unthinkable that Paul was just over-exuberant and that we should discount the literal force of these superlative expressions. If Paul wrote as he was moved by the Holy Spirit he indulged in no exaggeration. God's words are tried "as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times." (Ps. 126.) Therefore we may give our most careful attention to every expression and let it have its full force.

Of the twenty-eight words compounded with *hyper* in the New Testament twenty-two are found in Paul's epistles and twenty of them only there. The fact that these superlative expressions are used almost exclusively by Paul is to be explained by the fact that to him was granted a deeper insight into the mysteries of the gospel of the grace of God. It was because of the exceeding greatness of these revelations that he was given a thorn in the flesh to keep him from self-exaltation. (2 Cor. 12:7.)

Homer, Aristotle, and Demosthenes wrote and spoke on exalted themes, but none of them used the superlative expressions that Paul did. Several of these words Paul apparently coined by piling one preposition upon another. Since there was not a word in usage to express the truth he must convey, he compounded one and even then it is apparent that the expressions are not fully adequate.

First of all we see that Paul uses these expressions to give his converts an exalted conception of the person of Christ. In 1 Timothy 6:15, 16, he describes the exalted Christ in these words: "Who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in light unapproachable; whom no man hath seen nor can see: to whom be honor and power eternal. Amen."

These words far surpass in sublimity anything found in the writings of the best Greek poets. Human language could hardly be carried higher in a description of the supreme Being.

In Colossians 3:11 he says simply: "Christ is all, and in all," and yet what profound depths of truth open up as we try to comprehend this statement! Again he says it was God's good pleasure "to sum up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things upon the earth." (Eph. 1:10.) And finally in this same chapter he describes the exaltation of the risen Christ placed at God's "right hand in the heavenly places far above all rule, and authority and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age (margin) but also in that which is to come, and he put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." This language transcends our powers of comprehension and shows us that Paul had a conception of Christ far beyond what most have ever seen.

These truths concerning the greatness and the infinite power of Christ were of intensely practical import to Paul, for all of the resources of Christ are available to the believer in Christ. Thus he prays that the Ephesian brethren might know "what the exceeding (*hyperballon*) greatness of his power to usward who believe." (1:19.)

Here we see again the struggle of language with the immensity of the divine mysteries and the riches of divine grace. The same word, (*huperballo*) is used in Ephesians 3:19 where Paul prays again that the brethren might "know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled unto all the fullness of God." The fact that they can know the unknowable can be explained only on the basis of Paul's statement in 1 Corinthians 2:14, 12: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness to him: and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually judged. . . . But we received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is from God; that we might know the things that were freely given to us of God." And why does he so earnestly desire that they have this knowledge of Christ's love?—"that ye may be filled unto all the fulness of God." To be filled with God is a great thing; to be filled with the fulness of God is still greater; but to be filled with all the fullness of God, goes utterly beyond all comprehension and understanding. Yet do we dare to tone this down? Can we think that the Holy Spirit would have chosen words thoughtlessly or that meant more than He intended? No, these were blessings that his converts could and must obtain.

The third chapter of Ephesians closes with the amazing assertion: "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us." Here we find the compound *huperekperissou* which means "beyond all measure." This word is not found in classical Greek. In addition we have the words *huper panta* i. e. God is able to do super-abundantly above all the greatest abundance. We can ask for all the good that we can comprehend and yet we have not begun to tap the resources of God. And if He *can* do this is there not implied an assurance that He will do it?

When referring to his own experience of salvation, Paul says: "The grace of our Lord abounded exceedingly with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." (1 Tim. 1:14.) The original here is very emphatic: *huper pleonase*. The grace was in exceeding abundance. Someone has described the word abundant this way. If you hold a glass under a water faucet it will fill up to the brim and then begin to overflow on every side. That is abundance. But the grace of God is exceedingly abundant.

Again when Paul begins to make reference to the reward which is in store for the redeemed he must dwell in the realm of the superlative. He tells the Ephesian brethren that we have been saved that "in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus." (Eph. 2:7.) There are ages yet to come and throughout all of them the overflowing riches of his grace toward us will be plainly manifested to all of His creatures. Again looking to the reward he says: "For our light affliction, which is for the moment, worketh for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory." (2 Cor. 4:17.) Note how the words are set off—"for a moment"—"eternal"; "light"—"weight"; "affliction"—"glory." The words *kath huperbolan eis huperbolan* which are rendered "more and more exceedingly" are so strong that they can-

not be fully expressed by any translation. It is exceedingly unto excess.

Finally, we must call attention to a few superlative statements which reveal to us the intensity of Paul's ministry. In 2 Corinthians 1:8 he says: "For we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning our affliction which befell us in Asia, that we were weighed down exceedingly, beyond our power, insomuch that we despaired even of life." Here again the language is exceedingly emphatic. As the Revised Standard renders it: "We were so utterly, unbearably crushed that we despaired of life itself." This was literally true, yet in comparison to the glory to be revealed he calls it a "light affliction."

Later he tells these same brethren: "I am overflowing (*hyperperisseuomia*) with joy in all our affliction. (2 Cor. 7:4.) This can mean nothing less than a veritable flood of joy. This is an extremely rare verb, not found in classical Greek and nowhere else even in the New Testament except in Romans 5:20 when Paul says: "where sin abounded, grace did abound more exceedingly."

The intense concern and love of Paul for his converts is shown by two passages in I Thessalonians. In 2:17 he tells them: "We . . . endeavored the more exceedingly to see your face with great desire." Again he assures them that he was "night and day praying exceedingly that we may see your face." (3:10.) Here we have again the double compound, *hyperpekperissou*, late and very late, meaning literally "more than out of bounds, or overflowing all bounds." Can we take such statements for granted? Must we not rather endeavor to enter reverently into the full force and significance of them?

Paul's knowledge of the greatness of Christ caused him to think less and less of himself. In Ephesians 3:8 he says, "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, was this grace given, to preach unto the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." To lay himself as low as possible in order that God's power might be magnified Paul is obliged to coin a new word by forming the comparative degree not from the positive but from the superlative. Thus we have *elachistoteros* meaning literally less than the least. To such a one was given the unsearchable riches of Christ. The word *aneksichnistas* translated "unsearchable" is exceedingly well chosen, meaning that which cannot be tracked out. Paul attempted to track out the untrackable in Christ, so that we might know of the inexhaustible resources at our disposal.

There is a field of study here for the student of New Testament Greek which is richly rewarding, because it opens to our view and puts at our disposal the power of God to usward. Our technical knowledge of Greek grammar and syntax will do us little practical good if we do not use it on such passages to catch sight of the surpassing greatness of the Lord and the riches of His grace.

NEW COURSE SCHEDULED

The Kentucky Bible College wishes to begin a Home Economics Department this fall. About \$250 is needed to set up the sewing course, which is scheduled for this fall term. Gifts for equipment will be appreciated.

THE SEVENTH LESSON IN ROMANS

R. H. B.

THE BLESSEDNESS OF THE JUSTIFIED (Rom. 5:1-11.)

After the great faith-and-grace chapter, Rom. 4, follows a paragraph of eleven verses, rich and sweet, which tells us of the believer's new position in Christ and the blessings that spring from the "justification by faith" which he has received. Seven items stand out:

1. He has peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 5:1.)
2. He has access, through Christ, by faith, into this grace in which he stands (v. 2.)
3. He rejoices in hope of the glory of God. (v. 2.)
4. He rejoices in his tribulations also, for they bring strength and hope to him. (vs. 3, 4.)
5. The love of God is shed abroad in his heart through the Holy Spirit which is given to him. (v. 5.)
6. The knowledge of this love is his assurance of salvation. (vs. 6-10.)
7. He rejoices in God, through the Lord Jesus, through whom he has now received the reconciliation. (v. 11.)

Let us give these seven items more particular notice.

1. When we are justified, (i. e., accounted righteous) by faith in Jesus Christ (See 3:21-24 and 4:23-25) there is perfect peace with God, all cause of controversy, alienation, fear having been removed. We have this peace in fact, and by covenant, though not always in our feeling and realization; for many who stand upon this ground of peace with God through Christ allow themselves for one reason or another to be troubled by fears and misgivings. (This may account for the preference given by some to the reading "*let us have peace,*" which indeed has strong authority in Greek manuscripts, but seems out of place at this stage of the apostle's argument. For here Paul is declaring, not exhorting.)

2. The justified man stands in grace. Not only was he saved by grace through faith (Eph. 2:8), but by this same faith in Jesus Christ, he has now obtained entrance into the realm of grace. He stands on grace-footing before God.

3. This being the case, he foresees the victory, and therefore rejoices in hope of the glory of God—i. e., of sharing His likeness and glory. (Comp. Rom. 8:18.)

4. Even tribulations, such as Christians must always suffer (Acts 14:22) can not dishearten him but rather add to his joy; for the enduring of such tests confirms him in patience, and brings to his heart a sense of God's approbation, and the experience of His power in our weakness (2 Cor. 12:9,10) which in turn results in a new and firmer hope.

5. This hope, he knows, can never "put to shame"—i. e., end in disappointment. For through the Holy Spirit which is given him, a realization of the love of God is shed abroad in his heart. (Here is the first mention of the Holy Spirit in reference to the Christian.)

6. The proof of the love of God (which he describes and contrasts with human love) is that when we were yet without strength,

aliens, sinners, and enemies, Christ died for us. (1 John 4:16.) If He loved us that much *then*, certainly now that we are justified, will He save us to the uttermost and will not let us perish. (Rom. 5:9, 10.) (How does He save us by His life? Not only as in Heb. 7:25, but by sharing His resurrection life by union with Him. John 14:19; Col. 3:3, 4.)

7. Now, since through the Lord Jesus we have received the reconciliation, God Himself is our joy. Time was when the thought of God was unwelcome. It filled us with dread and terrors of judgment. But now, having received the "reconciliation" (which is the work of Christ, that "love which broke every barrier down"), the justified man *rejoices* in God.

These verses are worthy of our most earnest thought and meditation. Commit them to memory: they will come to your help in future times of need. Here we have the Christian's blessed state—far greater and better than aught the world can give or know. If Christians generally fall short of this blessedness which is described in these verses, it is not because it is not theirs, or because they cannot have it. The apostle sets forth facts. These things are ours, by grace. God's word is true, and the promise is to us who believe. Let us take possession by faith in Jesus Christ our Lord of that which He has wrought for us and freely gives to us.

Our next lesson covers the rest of Romans 5 (verses 12-21). Go over it with care. At first reading it may seem difficult to take in. Note how in v. 12 the apostle begins a sentence, which is never finished. Perhaps you may be able to finish it. Try and see. Verses 13-17 can be looked on as an excursus—a sort of side explanation. His main thought is resumed in v. 18. Note the contrast that runs through these verses between Adam and Christ; and how the whole argument turns on the connection between "*the one*" and "*the many*." Also the triumphant conclusion in vs. 20, 21.

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER

How is the Past, Present, and Future of God's children set forth in verses 1 and 2? On what is our "peace with God" based? What further three things follow upon justification by faith? Why is the Christian's hope so sure to him? How does he show the superiority of God's love over human love? What is the argument of verse 10? Why does the Christian now rejoice in God?

THE TYPICAL COWARD

Pilate is the typical coward. The man whose heart went out to Christ, who saw the beauty of Jesus' bearing, and yet the man who dared not take one step toward Christ, because he was afraid of the crowd. . . . And mark you, Pilate is not dead. There are men and women in modern society who sit in Pilate's place and who in themselves are not hostile to Christ. They admire him, and they would be his followers, but they dare not contradict their surroundings.—John Douglas Adam.

TWO KINDS OF PROFESSORS

Stanford Chambers

"A man had two sons; and he came to the first and said, Son, go work today in the vineyard. And he answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented himself and went. And he came to the second and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go sir: and went not. Which of the two did the will of his father? They say, The first."

Here are represented two classes, professors and non-professors. Actually there are two classes of each of these, professors making an empty profession, and those making an honest and sincere profession. They who say, "I go, sir," and *go*. Jesus does not apply the point in the parable to these but only to the *empty* professors. The others are to have their portion with the hypocrites, for such they are.

Of non-professors are two kinds: those who repent and obey the Father, and those who *never* repent. The first son in the parable represents those non-professors who *do* repent.

Who? What? When? Where? the short parable outlines itself thus. *Who?* The Father calls upon his *sons* for service. None else can serve His purpose. Hirelings need not apply. Slaves cannot render this very particular service required. *What?* *Work*. The need is for work. Loafers and shirkers are not wanted. Go into the vineyard and play? That is not the call. His vineyard is not intended as a *playground*, nor an entertaining society. Go into the vineyard and knock? It does not say that. Many think they are justified in inactivity if they find something to criticize. Go into the vineyard and *boss?* One only is Lord and Master, and He has made no provision for the religious *dictator*. The word is WORK, and work is what the vineyard needs. *Where?* "In the *vineyard*." But "I can work just as hard and do as much on the outside." Grant it, but that is not what the Father asks of His sons. The vineyard needs attention. He does not obey the Father who expends his time and energies *outside* the Father's vineyard. Many church members need to get this point. The lack of obedience and the shirking of responsibility, leaving the over-work to others will never be overlooked by the Father in heaven. *When?* *Today*. The vineyard needs attention today, right *now*. "Today, if ye hear his voice, harden not your hearts." Many who express good intentions as to some future time need to note that God says, NOW. To procrastinate is not to obey.

For sons *only* Yes, for sons only. But you can *become* a son. Who are the sons? Sons are *born* — "Ye must be born again." Accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior. *Apply* for sonship through Him. "Ye are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ" (Gal. 3:26). And sons are supposed to have sons' interests in the Father's vineyard. That is *normal*. It is their delight and chief joy to "be about my Father's business." Can you discover yourself in this parable? You are there, in one class or the other. What the Bible says of and to you is every word true.

THAT TIRED FEELING

The world is full of tired people. But, as the Frenchman said, "One can go a long way after one is tired!" Some are work-weary; others are bored-weary; others are worry weary.

There is more than one kind of tired feeling. The body is the house we live in. We *have* bodies, but we *are* souls. And multitudes, not weary in body, but burdened with an arguing intellect, an accusing conscience, an aching heart.

To some, life seems an empty, futile business that hardly pays its expenses. They feel frustrated and are without hope. They may put on a smiling face, but the man behind the face may be very different indeed! They are tired of not knowing what they are in the world for.

Others are tired of uncertainty about the future. They know there is something beyond the grave, and they are not ready for it. In their more serious moments, they instinctively and rightly connect death and the after-life with Divine judgment, and they are ill at ease. Guesses and hopes—or fears—will not do.

Others are tired of trying the world's pleasures for satisfaction. They have tried many things, but are disillusioned and disappointed.

Others are weary of constant moral defeat. An evil thing in their life is their master. They have struggled against it, but they have not won the day. And heart and hope have sunk down baffled and exhausted.

Others are tired of trying to make their peace with God by their own efforts and merit. Along that road they will *never* obtain peace and certainty.

There is a cure for all these kinds of tired feeling. You know where it is to be found. You could quote the words that speak of rest for the burdened: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." That can be *yours*.

But there is a condition. You must act upon what you know but have not heeded. You must *go* to the Lord Jesus Christ in personal surrender and trust.

In this way, and in this way alone, you will obtain rest for the arguing intellect, the accusing conscience, the aching heart. You will obtain forgiveness of *your* sins; a new inner freedom and strength will be yours: a real purpose in living, and assurance about the eternal future.

And you will have within you a new life which is like a well of water within the soul, the unfailling spring of endless satisfaction.—E. Adams.

A BRAND FROM THE FIRE

Such is the divine economy, that God makes much of brands, fragments, castaways. The enemy says: It is so worthless and useless, so nearly eaten through with fire, so black and charred. What others regard as unworthy of their heed is dear and priceless to the great Lover of souls. Divine skill will always avail.—Dr. F. B. Meyer.

LESSONS ON THE BOOK OF ACTS

J. Edward Boyd

COUNTERACTING MISREPRESENTATION. The apostle expected trouble from the disobedient Jews; but there was also another problem at Jerusalem. The elders told him of false reports that had been circulated among the thousands of Jewish Christians in Judea. They had been informed that he was teaching all the Jews who lived among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, not to circumcise their children, and not to walk according to their national customs. Now these Jewish believers in Judea were still zealous for the law; they were not personally acquainted with Paul nor with his teaching; and they probably took it for granted that these reports were true. We of today know full well how easily false rumors concerning a brother's teaching gain credence among the churches. And the Judaizers, smarting from the defeat of their attempts to impose circumcision and the keeping of the law upon Gentile Christians and from rebukes that Paul had administered to them, were continuing their campaign of misrepresentation and slander against him. Legalists are not usually over-scrupulous about the methods they use to gain their ends; so we need not be surprised at a "whispering campaign" designed to destroy his influence. The elders at Jerusalem were concerned about the situation. What effect would it have upon Paul's efforts to bring about a closer fellowship between Jewish and Gentile Christians by means of the offering that he had brought with him? Would the Jewish believers refuse to receive it from his hand, and thus defeat one of his main objectives in bringing it? (2 Cor. 9:12-14.)

It was the suggestion of the elders that Paul disprove these reports by a public demonstration of his own loyalty to the law. That should be more convincing than verbal denials. "Actions speak louder than words." In Jerusalem were four Jewish believers who had a vow on them. This was the Nazarite vow, which was taken voluntarily. Regulations governing it are found in Numbers 6. During the days of his consecration the Nazarite was to abstain from strong drink and from all products of the vine; and he was not to cut his hair. When the period of his vow was fulfilled, he was to make certain offerings and shave his head. It was considered proper, indeed meritorious, for one to bear the expenses of these offerings for others who had taken the vow. The plan was for Paul to join these four men, purifying himself with them and paying all the expenses. Thus it would be seen that he himself was keeping the law, and that therefore the charges that had been made against him were not true. As for the Gentiles, the elders pointed out, they were on record in the decrees that had formerly been issued as to the things required of them. To this suggestion Paul readily agreed; and the following day he entered into the temple with these men to engage in the Nazarite ceremonies.

Paul has been often criticised for this action. It has been called a "specimen of religious politics," "the greatest mistake of his ministry," a denial of what he had formerly taught, a step which he was

induced to take only "because of his intense love for his Jewish brethren." Such views have indeed been expressed by fundamentalist expositors of outstanding ability. But to this writer it seems that the apostle was acting in perfect harmony with his established principles. Some years before this he had cut his hair at Cenchreae, thus signifying that the days of a vow were fulfilled. (Acts 18:18.) He had vigorously opposed the imposition of circumcision upon Gentile converts, and with such success that not even Titus, a Greek, who was with him at the time of the Jerusalem conference, was compelled to be circumcised (Gal. 2:3); yet not long afterward he himself took Timothy, whose mother was a Jewess, "and circumcised him because of the Jews that were in those parts" (Acts 16:1-3). It is quite apparent that with James and the elders at Jerusalem it was the accepted thing for Jewish believers to continue the observance of their ancient customs; and it is equally clear that Paul concurred with them in this view. Not even at the Jerusalem conference had *their* right and privilege to do so been questioned. If it had been, the scope of the controversy would surely have been broadened. As it was, only Gentile Christians and their relationship to the law were involved.

It was not that Paul considered these observances to be of any value, even to Jews, toward obtaining salvation. Indeed, he had formerly declared: "We being Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, yet knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we believed on Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the law: because by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." (Gal. 2:15, 16.) And later he was to write, concerning those things regarded so highly meritorious among the Jews: "If any other man thinketh to have confidence in the flesh, I yet more: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; as touching zeal, persecuting the church; as touching the righteousness which is in the law, found blameless. Howbeit what things were gain to me, these have I counted loss for Christ. Yea verily, and I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but refuse, that I may gain Christ. . . ." (Phil. 3:4-8.) And concerning circumcision he had written: "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision: but faith working through love." And again: "For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." (Gal. 5:6; 6:15.) It is true that the Gentile could not receive circumcision without serious consequences (Gal. 5:1-4); for thus to put himself under legal bondage was to discredit the finished work of Christ on his behalf. But the Jewish Christian was in a different position. As a Jew, he was at liberty to continue these observances, until for him also they would vanish away. (Heb. 8:13.)

So to Paul there was no inconsistency between opposing the circumcision of Titus the Gentile and insisting upon the circumcision of Timothy the Jew. And circumcision was the focal point in the

controversy. (Acts 15:1; Gal. 5:3.) No doubt he would have been amazed to hear such criticisms against his action at Jerusalem as have been expressed in modern times! In 1 Cor. 9:19-22 he had expressed a great principle of his ministry: "For though I was free from all men, I brought myself under bondage to all, that I might gain the more. And to the Jew I became as a Jew, that I might gain Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, not being myself under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are without law, as without law, not being without law to God, but under law to Christ, that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak I became weak, that I might gain the weak: I am become all things to all men, that I may by all means save some." Few have so fully comprehended our freedom in Christ as he; and few have been so willing to sacrifice these liberties for the sake of the gospel and the good of others. (Rom. 14:1-6, 13-21; 1 Cor. 8:8-13; 9:12, 19-23. He would do anything that he could do in righteousness, not to gain popularity for himself, but to win men to Christ. And it was according to these principles that he acted in taking part in the Nazarite ceremonies.

BOOK REVIEWS

How to Speak and Pray in Public—J. Vernon Jacobs. 96 pages. 85¢.

A book written expressly for people who think they cannot speak in public. The author has himself used these methods successfully in the congregation where he labors. Since one of our greatest needs is leadership in the local church, this book aims at meeting a vital need. The book is well adapted for use in a class or for personal study. There are practical exercises and assignments at the end of each chapter.

The following are some of the chapter headings: How to Overcome Fear, How to Read Scripture, How to Pray, How to Lead a Discussion, How to Make Calls, How to Win People to Christ. The chapter on Prayer leaves something to be desired as to its true meaning but may be helpful to those beginning to pray in public.

If you desire to be of greater usefulness in the Lord's work this book will be of practical help to you. It begins at the beginning.

Blessings of Suffering—by William Goulooze. 175 pages. \$2.00.

Here is an ideal gift for your sick or suffering friend. Written by one afflicted with a disease pronounced incurable by physicians, the book recounts the great blessings which the author received by the grace of God during his siege of illness.

In addition to his own testimony the book carries the witness of over a thousand other patients. Thus it speaks from the patients' point of view. It was written out of suffering and can reach the hearts of those who are passing through the same thing. The author says:

"This book is sent forth with a prayer that many souls may find edification and strength in time of sickness and sorrow. It is my earnest hope that souls may be won for the Lord Jesus Christ. Only Christ is the answer to our problems of sin, suffering and sorrow."

Each chapter contains favorite Bible passages and poems submitted by those who have gone through periods of suffering. Out of gratitude for his recovery the author has refused any profit from this book. On the contrary he offers it free to all sick and shut-in people who cannot afford to buy a copy. It will also be sent free to unsaved sufferers. Address the author, William Goulooze, 385 College Avenue, Holland, Michigan. (Books may be purchased from this office.)

“FAITH OF OUR FATHERS”

E. L. J.

PROPHECY: HERMENEUTICS AND APPLICATION

Dr. J. T. Barclay

The key which has heretofore been found so exactly to unfold the prophecies already fulfilled is that which will, and can alone, satisfactorily unlock the treasures of prophecy yet unfulfilled. And that the system thus educed is, in *general*, what is termed the *natural, rational, literal* or *grammatical*, as opposed to the *quib-libet quo-libet* scheme known as the “spiritual” or “spiritualizing,” . . . or any one of the divers other hermeneutic nostrums and private interpretations, there cannot be the shadow of a doubt.

In proof of the exact manner in which prophecy (and especially that of a mere verbal character) has received the most complete and minute fulfillment upon the *literal* or *grammatical* principle in times past, we need only appeal to the faithful historic record of the rise and fall of certain cities, countries and empires, as compared with predictive announcement concerning them; and it will be observed that Providence has endorsed this principle of exposition in the most complete and satisfactory manner. Of this literal and precise fulfillment of even the minutiae of prophecy, we also have the most incontestible proof in the exact manner in which the minute account of the predictions of the prophets concerning many incidents in the life and death of the Messiah, as recorded by the Evangelists, was fulfilled. Let the following short collation in relation merely to one or two topics testify in behalf of the general principle of literal accomplishment.

PREDICTION

The Lord himself shall give you a sign: behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son; and shall call his name Immanuel.—Isa. 7:14.

And thou Bethlehem Ephratah, out of thee shall He come forth unto me that is to be ruler over Israel.—Micah 5:2

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion, shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! behold thy King cometh unto thee. . . . lowly and sitting upon a colt, the foal of an ass.—Zech. 9:9.

And all that see me laugh me to scorn; they shoot out the lip, and laugh me to scorn, saying, he trusted in the Lord that he would deliver him; let him deliver him, seeing he delighteth in him.—Ps. 22:7, 8.

I hid my face from shame and spitting.—Isa. 50:6.

He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth.—Isa. 53:7.

FULFILLMENT

Then Joseph took unto himself his wife and knew her not till she had brought forth her first-born son . . . this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet. . . .—Matt. 1:22, 25.

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, . . . behold there came wise men . . . saying, where is he that is born king of the Jews?—Matt. 2:1, 2.

And they brought the colt to Jesus, and He sat upon him; and they that went before and they that followed cried, saying, “Hosanna! blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.”—Mk. 11:7.

And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads and saying, . . . “If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. He trusted in God; let him deliver him.”—Matt. 27:39.

Then did they spit in his face and buffet him.—Matt. 26:67.

And when he was accused of the Chief Priests and Elders, he answered nothing.—Matt. 27:12.

He was despised and rejected of men.—Isa. 53:3.

And I said unto them, "If ye think good, give me my price, and if not forbear." So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver.—Zech. 11:12.

And the Lord said, "cast it unto the potter."—Zech. 11:3.

They gave me gall for my meat, and in thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.—Ps. 69:21.

He was numbered with the transgressors.—Isa. 53:12.

They pierced my hands and my feet.—Ps. 22:16.

They parted my garments among them and cast lots for my vesture.—Ps. 22:18.

He keepeth his bones: not one of them is broken.—Ps. 34:20.

And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death.—Isa 53:9.

Now most evident is it from this simple exhibit that if the figurative, spiritualistic, mystical system be the true one, then Christ has not yet come! for these prophecies have not yet been in any way figuratively, but altogether literally fulfilled.

It might well be supposed that such exact and complete accomplishment of plain verbal prophecy would afford to the contemporaries of Jesus of Nazareth the most incontestible proof that he was the promised Messiah; but the scribes and the lawyers found it not at all a difficult task, by means of the same spiritualizing, figurative system of interpretation, now so generally in vogue, to mystify and misapply these predictions as to show him up as an impostor and a malefactor! Most confidently did the Jews look for a great Deliverer at the period of the first advent; but they entirely overlooked those prophecies—however numerous and explicit—declaring that they must first undergo dispersion, before he would come in his glory, and enter upon the government of his kingdom in its new phasis.

But if literal fulfillment is the prominent characteristic of prophecy heretofore fulfilled, does not the same principle dictate the rule of interpretation for prophecy of the same general character, yet unfulfilled? If the events of the Redeemer's life of humiliation were so exactly fulfilled on the principle of literal exposition, according to

Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas. . . crucify him.

They covenanted with Judas Iscariot for thirty pieces of silver.—Matt. 26:15.

They took counsel and bought the potter's field, to bury strangers in.—Matt. 27:7.

They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall.—Mark 15:27.

With him they crucified two thieves, the one on his right hand and the other on his left.—Mark 15:27.

Except I see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my hands into the print of the nails, I will not believe. Then said Jesus, reach hither thy hands and behold, and be not faithless but believing.—John 20:25-27.

Then the soldiers took his garments and made four parts—to every soldier a part, and also his coat. Now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout. They said therefore among themselves, let us not rend it but cast lots for it—that the Scriptures might be fulfilled.—John 19:33.

But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs. . . . that the scriptures should be fulfilled.—John 19:33.

When the even was come, there came a rich man named Joseph. . . . He went to Pilate and begged the body of Jesus; and laid it in his own new tomb.—Matt. 27: 57 - 60.

the sure word of prophecy that went before, why should not those of his exaltation be just as literally and truthfully fulfilled? If he was literally born at Bethlehem, and literally ascended from Olivet, why shall he not just as literally so come to Olivet on the clouds of heaven in like manner as he went up? What reason can be logically assigned for the application of the literal principle in one case, and the mystifying, spiritualizing system in the other? Altogether evident is it indeed, from every consideration, that the only system of hermeneutics that can reliably unfold the arcana of unfulfilled prophecy is the key that has so successfully unlocked the door to prophetic revelations already accomplished—the “literal system,” as it is generally styled. *If Christ’s throne be merely spiritual, as some contend, then consistency requires that the Scriptures announcing his birth, his sufferings, and his death be so construed as to make them merely spiritual and unreal too!*

Let it be conceded by the mystic spiritualizer that the Lord does actually design doing what is claimed by the more literal interpreters, for Jerusalem, Judea, and the Jews—I ask what plainer language could have been used than that by which the Holy Spirit has indicated these matters?—and surely they are not at all impossible, unreasonable, or improbable. If the various matters predicted in the concluding portion of the Book of Zechariah, as attendant upon the advent of Christ, must be spiritualized, as is maintained by so many commentators, what kind of prophecy can possibly be literal? Indeed, such spiritualization of Jehovah’s language absolutely deprives him of the power of communicating anything whatever of a literal character.

Has mighty Tyre become a place for the spreading of nets?—Has Judea been desolated, Jerusalem overthrown and the Jews led captive amongst all nations? Did the Lord really mean that Jerusalem should be encompassed with a trench? and does authentic history verify the truth of these predictions? Then why may not Mount Olivet be really cloven asunder? Was it easier for Titus to surround the city with his entrenchment than it will be for Him who made all things to cleave the mountain in twain? If Moses could strike the rock in mount Horeb and cause the gushing stream to rush forth, and follow the Israelites in their devious wanderings through the desert, is it too much to believe that the Lord Jesus will smite Mount Olivet and cause the healing flood of living waters from Mount Moriah to flow through its cloven base? Did the Sechinah manifestation overhang the Tabernacle of old as a pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night, and shall not the Holy City, in the “latter day” be impended by the same cloud of glory in the form of an immense tent or canopy, as foreshown by the sure word of prophecy!

If such plain verbal prophecies be not fulfilled literally, what is the value of prophecy in proof of the inspiration of the Scriptures? If they be not literally fulfilled, well may we excuse the skeptic for stigmatizing the Bible as “an enigma, a fable, a myth!”—*Millennial Harbinger*, 1867, p. 303.

(Concluded next month.)