

THE OVERCOMER

ALFRED B. HARRIS

Volume
XXI.

January
A.D. 1940.

NEW SERIES.

FIDEI COTICULA CRUX

(The Cross is the Touchstone of Faith)

The Overcomer

*A Quarterly Magazine for Christian Workers
on the deep things of God.*

“He Must Reign”—

“And the hostile princes and rulers He shook off from Himself, and
BOLDLY DISPLAYED THEM AS HIS CONQUESTS

when by the Cross He triumphed over them.” Col. ii, 15 (*Weymouth*).

THE “OVERCOMER” BOOK ROOM,
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For terms of issue, see inside cover.*

THE OVERCOMER.

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PLEASE NOTE.

All letters in relation to "The Overcomer," orders for the Book Room and all matters relating thereto, should be addressed:

**The Manager, Overcomer Book Room,
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N.B.—Letters to the Editor to the same address with a stamped envelope enclosed if reply is needed. (*Foreign correspondents accepted*).

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Will our correspondents also kindly note that the Book Room is closed on Bank Holidays, and that the Postal Regulations during the holiday season make delays at such times unavoidable.

Centre Distributors

Are at liberty to accept contributions from those who receive the paper, and forward to the office quarterly.

Change of Address. No alterations can be made during last fortnight before issue, when all the wrappers have already been prepared. Readers are asked to assist the workers by care in this matter. Please give OLD ADDRESS as well as new.

AUSTRALIA. The "Overcomer" may be obtained from Mr. H. P. Smith, The Keswick Book Depot, 315 Collins Street, Melbourne.

MONTHLY CONFERENCE

at Eccleston Conference Hall,
Eccleston Street, Victoria, London, S.W.

Meetings for Christian Workers are held on the first Thursday of each month, October to July (inclusive). Owing to War conditions, some alterations have been necessary for the Winter months:

PLEASE NOTE PRESENT ARRANGEMENTS AND HOURS OF MEETING.

- Jan. 4.—Conference gatherings, 11 a.m. and 2.30 p.m. (closing at 4 p.m.)
Speakers: Capt. J. C. Metcalfe and others.
- Feb. 1—Day of Prayer, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Led by Miss Leathes.
with brief interval for lunch (bring sandwiches).
- Mar. 7—Day of Prayer, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
(Arrangements as above.)
- Apr. 4—Conference gatherings, 11.30 and 3 p.m.

"When he saw . . . he was afraid"

"LOOK NOT AROUND THEE"

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace
whose mind is stayed on Thee".

Conferences

Arranged in connection with "The Overcomer."

THE SWANWICK CONFERENCE, 1940.

In our issue of July, 1939, we gave the dates booked for our annual Conference, so it is necessary to say here that "The Hayes" has been taken over for other purposes. If the Council are able to arrange for a smaller Conference elsewhere, due notice will be given in "The Overcomer." Will our readers please take this matter on their hearts for prayer.

CARDIFF.

Enquiries: Rev. A. Ll. Edwards, 21 Plasturton Gardens, Cardiff.

LIVERPOOL.

Jan. 23-24. Gordon Hall 3.30 and 7 p.m. each day. Speaker: Capt. J. C. Metcalfe. (Friends are asked to bring sandwiches, and tea will be provided.)

MANCHESTER.

Enquiries to Mr. W. Astley, 28 Elmsmere Road, Didsbury, M/c.

Note.—We are glad also to call attention to the following meetings for prayer and fellowship arranged by some of our readers.

Birmingham: Bible Witness Fellowship, "Kelvedon," Frederick Road, Wylde Green. First Wednesday at 3 p.m.

Bootle: Hebron Hall, Akenside Street. Monthly Prayer Meeting Second Friday, at 8 p.m.

Cardiff: Weekly Prayer Meeting. Thursday at 3 p.m. The Lounge, Y.M.C.A. (by Taff Station).

Isleworth: For particulars of new arrangements, please enquire of Miss Gravatt, 37, St. John's Road, Isleworth.

Isle of Wight: Prayer Meeting every Saturday, 7.30 p.m., at 42, Carisbrooke Road, Newport.

Liverpool: Monthly Prayer Meeting. Third Wednesday at 3 p.m. at 55, Granby Street, Princes Park.

Manchester: Prayer Meeting second Monday, 3 p.m., in No. 2 Committee Room, Houldsworth Hall, 90, Deansgate. NOTE ALTERED TIME. Enquiries: Mr. W. Astley, 28, Elmsmere Road, Didsbury, M/c. 3.

"Le Vainqueur" (The "Overcomer.")

A magazine issued quarterly, consisting of articles from "The Overcomer," translated into French. Edited and issued free by Madame G. Brunel, 3 bis, rue des Moulins, Nîmes, Gard, France.

Miss Cope, 19, Dalmeny Crescent, Heath Road, Hounslow, Middlesex, acts as Treasurer for Mme Brunel. She will gladly send a copy of "Le Vainqueur" upon application.

THE OVERCOMER

"Don't Look."

"Who is blind but my servant? or deaf as My messenger that I send? who is blind as he that is at peace with Me, and blind as the Lord's servant?" Isa. xlii. 19. R.V.

THESE words were spoken primarily of the Lord Jesus, the pattern Servant Who humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross; but they also describe those who have followed Him to Calvary, found peace with God through His blood, and accepted His Cross as theirs. Those who are joined to Him as the Living One and now through the supply of His Spirit, seek to walk in His steps, not looking at the outward appearance of things around, nor judging after the sight of the eyes, nor deciding after the hearing of the ears. (Isa. xi. 3. R.V. m.)

The life in union with the Risen Lord means that we are willing to be "blind" and "deaf" to all but God. Seeing with outward eyes, but inwardly unmoved because of the heavenly vision. Hearing with the outward ears, but deaf to all voices, because of the inward voice of God.

How are we to maintain this blessed blindness essential to one who would be faithful in all his house? God gives us some of the condition by the mouth of Isaiah:

"He that . . . stoppeth his ears . . . and shutteth his eyes from looking upon evil . . . Thine eyes shall see the King." Isa. xxxiii. 15, 17. R.V.

We must learn to stop our ears, and shut our eyes if we are to live day by day seeing the King, and be honoured to carry His messages.

"Don't look" at anything God has forbidden.

"The woman SAW that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and . . . she took." Gen. iii. 6.

The eyes need vigilant keeping if we are to walk in the light as He is in the light, under the sprinkled blood. The victory must be won over the first look. *Not one glance* must be permitted when the enemy tempts. *Don't look* even at books that you are not sure about. God will keep us if we shut our eyes!

"Don't look" at the earthly difficulties.

"Saul said, Because I SAW that the people were scattered from me, and that thou camest not . . . therefore said I, the Philistines will come down now upon me . . . and—" 1 Sam. xiii. 11, 12.

It is fatal to look around and at consequences, especially in times of crisis, or it will be impossible to be still, and wait God's time for deliverance. "Jesus came to them in the fourth watch of the night" (Matt. xiv. 25). It is always His way. God is never behind time! However dark the path may be *wait*; do not go before Him, don't "force yourself" like Saul. Shut your eyes, and trust. "The crisis demands action," we say! Nay, "dwell in stillness and wait for clearness"—wait until you are

sure of the will of God, and leave the "Philistines" to Him.

"Don't look" at the threats of the enemy.

"Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, so let the gods do to me . . . if I make not thy life as the life of one of them . . . when he SAW that, he arose and went for his life." 1 Kings xix. 2, 3.

The mighty prophet of Mount Carmel fleeing at a woman's threats! He only *looked* at the enemy, *listened*, and fled from his post. Don't *look* at the roaring lion,* or flesh and heart must fail! Hide in God, and stand unflinchingly in Him. "Stand still and see the salvation of God."

"Don't look" at another's circumstances.

"I was envious . . . when I SAW the prosperity of the wicked. Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I—" Psa. lxxiii. 3, 17.

How many have questioned the strange dealing of God that affliction comes to His children, and apparent freedom from trial to the children of this world. David said his feet had well nigh slipped because he *looked* and envied. It was after he went into the "Sanctuary" that he was able to see things in their true light, and said "there is none upon earth I desire beside Thee." "Don't look" at others' circumstances, temporarily or spiritually, and admit one doubt of your Father's love. "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth." (Heb. xii. 6).

"Don't look" at the stormy sea.

"Peter walked on the water . . . But when he SAW the wind-boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, 'Lord, save me.'"

The walk on the water is just a picture of the walk of faith in blessed blindness. It is only possible as long as we "*don't look*" at temptation, but keep under the sprinkled blood; "*don't look*" around, and admit fear of the Philistines: "*don't look*" at the roaring lion,* and be frightened from the post of duty; "*don't look*" at others, and admit a doubt of our Father's faithfulness.

"Looking into Jesus" He will uphold us, and we shall walk in triumph on the stormy sea. We shall endure as seeing Him Who is invisible.

"Thou whom I have taken hold of . . . fear thou not, for I am with thee; look not around thee; for I am Thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee." Isa. xli. 9, 10, R.V. m.

"I . . . WILL LOOK UP."

Psa. v. 3.

J. Penn-Lewis.

* This is when he "roars" through others! 1 Pet. v. 8, shows another aspect of resistance in the direct attacks of the "lion," i.e., not through others. The same is true about the "Philistines." We have to "wrestle" against wicked spirits in their direct attacks on us (Ephes. vi. 12), and "don't look" at outward things which would divert us from our standing in God, and our position of victory.

To our Readers.

DEAR FRIENDS,

It is difficult to write in these days when events follow each other with such speed. When you read this, so much more will have happened, and we know not what a day may bring forth. The unchanging Scriptures best express our hopes and fears: how much greater is the hope than the fear. "I had fainted unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living."

Many believers to-day are so confused and bewildered in this darkness that they almost doubt the "goodness of the Lord." They lack instruction because "His watchmen are blind, they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark." So it has come about that of the countless thousands who trust Christ as Saviour, few realise that His death on the Cross meant victory over all the power of hell now raging in the earth. They fear, when He says, Fear not: their hearts are troubled for the ultimate issue, when His is the power to say 'Hitherto shalt thou come but no further, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed.' So clear are these truths to us, who by grace have received better instruction, that we can hardly grasp the present distress of many brethren in these days of anguish to Jew and Gentile alike.

The hour is clamant for a double witness: an individual witness by you and by me, just where we are:—

To the unbeliever, that God has sent His Son into the world, and that the world refused to own Him, and still refuses.

To the believer, that the Christ in Whom he trusts is both an all victorious and a returning Lord.

A united testimony to these things may be difficult to-day. Meetings may be few and hard to reach for some of us especially in blacked-out cities—but the daily contacts which He gives are for all of us. There may be danger in forcing opportunities, though there is more in missing God-given ones. These usually arise naturally and are often quite unpremeditated. "Go near and join thyself to this chariot" has often been said in various ways to most of us.

I was much cheered yesterday by the word of an old coloured farmer, working in his field, who stranger though I was, answered my greeting by a reference to the Lord so natural and so spontaneous that my heart went out to him. His last word was, 'You may take everything else, but don't take Him.' The Lord indeed has His witnesses, men and women who in the daily round are still absorbed with Him. May we all be of the number.

Those who study the Word for light on present happenings will surely see significance in the reiterated and growing insistence on the guarantee of future peace by a confederation of European nations. The Archbishop of Canterbury is now reported to have added his voice to this demand. Should it find general acceptance, the final emergence of the ten Kingdoms, so long foretold, may lie in the near future. Whether such powers as Germany and Russia will be found, ultimately, in such a confederation, I suggest is more than doubtful.

Undue dogmatism in the realm of prophetic enquiry has stumbled many devout believers. Alas that the miscalculations of a few earnest students should have helped to confirm the Church in blindness to her Lord's return. So far as our Testimony is concerned this invigorating truth inspires us all, to our supreme comfort and joy. We believe that the night is far spent, the day is at hand. We join ourselves in spirit to the many thousands who know that His coming is sure: we watch for it more than they that watch for the morning.

In the waiting time, may the Lord keep each one of His own garrisoned by His peace, occupying ourselves in the place where He has put us, and holding steadfastly our union with all believers, especially so with those in Germany. May He use us to strengthen our brethren, diligent in the business with which we are entrusted, so that at the last none of us may miss His 'well done.'

Will you remember those who have grown old in the fellowship and service of the Overcomer Testimony? Many are in the war danger zone, facing the nervous strain of a second great war. Frail in body but mighty in prayer, they are standing for the Will of God against the rulers of the darkness of this world.

'The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by Him: and the Lord shall cover him all the day long.' We do not fear for these stalwart veterans, but we are lovingly concerned for them, that they may be kept by the power of God, despite illness and physical distress. We praise God for their steadfastness, may we be given grace to follow in their train.

Let me add a word of greeting to the many personal friends the Lord has given me round the world. To some I owe letters: will they be patient with me? Their letters have been a great joy. To all I would send the assurance of continued remembrance, with thanksgiving.

Yours in the patient waiting,

BERNARD W. MATTHEWS.

Bermuda,

27th Nov., 1939.

"Looking unto Jesus."

Look to Jesus, Who for thee
Suffered such dread agony;
All thy sins on Him were laid,
He has full atonement made.

Look to Jesus, He is near.
Hear Him speak, "Why dost thou fear?
"It is I, be not afraid,
Face the tempest undismayed."

Look to Jesus, prove His grace,
See the shining of His grace,
To the world His glory show,
Be His witness here below.

Look for Jesus—Jo! 'tis He
Coming in the clouds we see;
"In the air", O wondrous word!
We shall meet our blessed Lord.

J. B. Logan.

"He Must Reign."

By the Rev. John Pritchard.*

AT this meeting, which is the first of our monthly conferences since the outbreak of war, I want to strike the note of joy and gladness. My own heart is just full of praise and gratitude to God. The words of our Lord which are recorded in John 15. 16 have been very much in my mind of late, they may be read thus: 'I have *set you in position*, that ye should go and bring forth fruit.' As we think of all the turmoil and unrest about us in the world to-day what a joy it is to realise that God has set us just here in this age because He knows that here we are able to bring forth fruit unto Him.

The verses to which I specially want to call your attention this afternoon are Ephesians i. 10, 19, 20, 21, and 1 Corinthians xv. 24, 25:

"That in the dispensation of the fulness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him... according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the Heavenly Places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world but also in that which is to come."

"Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father: when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet."

The vision I want us to catch is the vision of God's ultimate purpose to gather together all things in the Lord Jesus Christ: to place Him in the position of grand and glorious victory over all His enemies—that place of high and exalted victory which is the conquest of His Cross.

Some time ago I came across this rendering of Ephesians 1. 10: 'With a view to the stewardship of the fulness of the seasons,' and the writer made this comment: "The Son is the great Steward of the Father's House; the keys of all its life and history are in His hands, and His management will at length conduct the whole operation to a goal placed and dated by God's own prescient wisdom. Then all the 'seasons' of the story of redemption will attain their 'fulness,' will be fulfilled, accomplished. What is the ideal? It is to sum up all things in Christ as Head, the things in the heavens and the things in the earth; the angelic hosts above and us mortals here below." All things summed up in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ—all things under His complete control. That is the goal to which we are most surely moving, even in these days and in spite of all the terrible circumstances that obtain in the world now.

By way of contrast to that great invincible purpose, I want to outline something of what has been happening in the history of the human family. It is clear that both Biblical and secular history teach us that Christ, and Christ alone, is able to govern the world.

Hebrews ii. 6-8 very clearly sets out the position. Please bear in mind that the writer is writing of man—not of the Man Christ Jesus, but of man himself as God created him. "What is man that Thou art mindful of him? or the son of man that Thou visitest Him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; Thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of Thy hands: Thou has put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. **BUT WE SEE JESUS.**"

God made man that he might have dominion over all His works. He placed Adam and Eve in a position of authority, to keep in subjection that part of His creation in which they were placed. God gave to Adam a sceptre of authority and power, as it were, that he might govern His creation for Him. "But now we see not yet all things put under him." Man made a muddle of his authority and he lost his power, and to-day there is no man who is capable of governing the world for God.

"**BUT WE SEE JESUS,**" who became Man in order that He might regain that dominion which man lost through sin and disobedience. From the moment when Satan entered the Garden of Eden to tempt Adam and Eve there has been one ceaseless conflict across the ages of time. When man fell, as a result of Satan's temptation, all creation was involved in that fall. There was, of course, the personal sin of Adam—an act of disobedience to God—but the effects of the fall are more far-reaching than that. I have said that God has placed, as it were, the sceptre of authority in the hand of Adam. When Adam sinned it was as if he handed that sceptre of authority over to Satan and from that moment the Devil, and not man, was the possessor of authority. From that moment Satan became the god of this world and to this very day it is he who controls this world as an organised system.

Almost immediately sin had entered and the tragic event had taken place in Eden, God declared war upon Satan—a war in which there will never be an armistice or the signing of a peace treaty. God spoke to Satan and said, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman and between thy seed and her seed." That enmity will remain until Satan is experimentally and finally overcome. The 'war aims' of Christ and His Church are nothing less than the utter and complete destruction of Satan and his regime, and the war will never end until Satan is cast—as he will be cast—into the lake which burns with fire and brimstone. This great conflict, which began in Eden, has been going on all down the ages; there has never been a period of human history when it has ceased, and there never will be a cessation until the Lord Jesus, the Victor of Calvary, finally brings to fruition the fulness of His purpose and then all things shall be gathered together in Him.

* A Message given at our London Conference, 5th October, 1939.

Now it is my firm conviction that every conflict, great or small, that this world has known, every conflict amongst men and nations, is directly or indirectly connected with this one great conflict of the ages. Even though we may not always be able to fit things into line with that conflict, we do know that somehow, somewhere, there is the connection. If we can see the connection clearly then we know how to live, act and pray in regard to it. If we cannot see it clearly then we must pray for light, and the Lord will give us light and thus enable us to take our place in the conflict.

I believe that the strife between Cain and Abel was part of this conflict. There is every evidence that Cain belonged to the seed of the serpent. He was controlled by Satan and kept back from God and from doing His will. He, who was of the serpent's seed, displayed toward him who was of the seed of the woman all that hellish hatred and murderous intent that were displayed by Satan himself to the Lord Jesus.

The failure of human government.

As we read on in our Bibles, we find that the Satanic grip upon humanity became so great that even "the imaginations of men's hearts were only evil continually," and therefore God had to destroy them all with the flood, except those who entered the Ark. After the flood God gave to Noah and his family the authority to rule over His creation for Him. Instead, however, of becoming united by faith to a Living God and Father, through Whose power and guidance they might have governed in accordance with His Will, they gathered themselves together in one place and said, 'Let us dwell here and make a name for ourselves.' Instead of governing for God, they governed for self and for Satan. Consequently God came down and destroyed their city, broke down their high tower whose top was to reach to heaven, and scattered them all over the earth. That has been, and ever will be, the fate of every form of human government apart from God. There is only One Who is competent to govern and He is the Lord Jesus Christ.

* * *

God then began again by calling out one man, Abram, of whom He determined to make a great nation; and so the Hebrew race, God's ancient people, came into existence. At first the nation was governed by God. He gave them their laws and led and blessed them. Later on He raised up Judges, who were His representatives, to lead them. But Satan was working, so insidiously, that they began to clamour for human government: "Nay; but we will have a king over us; that we also may be like all the nations; and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles" (1 Samuel viii. 19, 20). God gave them a king, but you have God's estimate of the situation in the seventh verse of the chapter from which I have just quoted, "They have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them." Saul was the king whom God gave to them and at first there was very great enthusiasm and "all the people shouted, and said, God save the king." But was Saul able to govern for God? In a comparatively short time Samuel had the sad task of announcing the

Divine rejection of Saul. There came a time when even Saul himself had to confess "I have sinned . . . I HAVE PLAYED THE FOOL, and have erred exceedingly" (1 Sam. xxvi. 21), and what is human government apart from God but playing the fool?

Then God gave them a king after His own heart—David. But as you study his history you find that even he failed, and because of his failure the most cherished ambition of his heart, to build a temple for the Lord, was not granted him. Then came Solomon—the wisest of men—and he was allowed to build the temple. But even he was side-tracked by Satan and walked not in God's ways, so that God's wrath came upon him and his kingdom was divided. So you run on through the history of God's people until you come to the sad state of affairs that existed when Christ came. At the time of His birth they were under the oppression of Rome—a heathen nation—a state which could never have existed if they had allowed God to lead them. It was human government, always influenced and often controlled by Satan, that brought them to such a position.

Then there was born in Bethlehem a Babe, who was born King of the Jews, Whose right it was to reign. Soon, John the Baptist began to proclaim that the kingdom of heaven was at hand. But you cannot have a kingdom without a king and even His own people would not receive the King (John i. 11). We read on until we come to the eighteenth chapter of John and there we see Pilate and Jesus face to face—the representatives of human and divine government. Pilate looks Him up and down and sneeringly asks "Thou the King of the Jews?" Presently Jesus says to him "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight." Pilate seizes upon the word kingdom and asks "Art Thou a king then?" and Jesus answers "Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." And yet the people presently cry out, "We have no king but Caesar," and the Lord Jesus, the King of the Jews and the King of Kings, was nailed to a Cross.

The Satanic world system.

Do you wonder that the Jews cried "We have no king but Caesar?" Caesar, the head of the Roman Empire, which they hated? No need to wonder, for Caesar and his empire belonged to the Satanic world-system, and the Jews too were in the grip of the same power. It is not remarkable that Pilate and Herod were made friends in connection with the trial of Jesus. They were enemies! Oh yes, but they were both under Satanic control, and therefore united in their enmity to the blessed Son of God. There is no longer need to wonder at the fact that Russia and Germany can enter into an alliance. But were not the Communist and Nazi systems at enmity? Yes, but only on the surface. Deep down and unseen by any except those with spiritual perception, there was a common Satanic control. The world to-day is suffering directly and definitely because of the rejection of the Kingship of the only One Who has the authority and the ability to reign—our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now all this is leading up to the coming of Satan's masterpiece, that great Satanic ruler who is presently to appear upon the scene. The Satanic plan which has been working throughout all the ages of history continues to work, and will continue until, at last, there will be produced by Satanic power, the Anti-Christ. I need not remind you that one of Satan's greatest weapons is, and always has been, the weapon of counterfeit. His last great effort will be to counterfeit the Christ of God, and that counterfeit will be the Anti-Christ, who will gather unto himself all the great stream of world government that has been flowing across the ages.

Although, in many ways, the Anti-Christ will be an amazing counterfeit of the Christ of God, there will, of course, be very great contrasts. The Lord Jesus is from above—the Anti-Christ is from beneath. The Lord Jesus came in His Father's name—the Anti-Christ will come in his own name. The Lord Jesus humbled Himself—the Anti-Christ will exalt himself. The Lord Jesus was despised and rejected—the Anti-Christ will be one of a trinity, the false prophet, the Jesus worked miracles—the Anti-Christ will perform lying wonders. The Lord Jesus was the Good Shepherd—the Anti-Christ will be the worthless shepherd. 'His Name shall be called Wonderful'—the Anti-Christ will be the wonder of the world. The Lord Jesus was exalted by God—the Anti-Christ will be exalted by Satan. It is written of the Lord Jesus 'His Name shall be in their foreheads'—it is written of the Anti-Christ that his mark shall be in their right hands or in their foreheads. The Lord Jesus was the Son of God—the Anti-Christ is the Son of Perdition. The Lord Jesus is one of a trinity, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost—the Anti-Christ will be one of a trinity, the false prophet, the beast and the Anti-Christ. The Lord Jesus is the Author of a true covenant, sealed in His Precious Blood—the Anti-Christ will be the author of a false covenant, which, at the end of three and a half years, he will break. The Lord Jesus will finally be enthroned—the Anti-Christ will finally be cast into hell.

Anti-Christ will appear as a man, and Satan's plan is to gather together in one all things in the Anti-Christ. The object of this terrible person will therefore be to exterminate the people of God, whether they be Jews or Gentiles, and he will deny both the Father and the Son. To that end things on this world plane are now moving—and they are moving very swiftly!

It may be difficult to fit the present terrible conflict into any system of prophetic truth, and there is danger in dogmatism along that line, but we can certainly see the out-working of the principles which I have endeavoured to trace through the Biblical records of history. We can see the malice of Satan for Christ and His people in the terrible persecution of the Jews in Germany. If our Lord were in Germany to-day He would most certainly be in a concentration camp! We can see the deadly hatred of Satan for the people and the Gospel of the Lord Jesus, in the lying propaganda and campaigns of hate which come forth against Great Britain from other nations. What we recognise in this is not the hatred of Germany and Russia, as nations, against Great

Britain as a nation, but the malice and hatred of Satan for a nation which, with all its faults, still preserves freedom of worship and still sends out Bibles and Missionaries to all parts of the world.

The triumph of Christ and His Church.

Now where do we come in all this? Are we going to be caught up in this swelling tide of evil? No! We have a very great work to perform and we are on the victory side! God is going to gather up all things in Christ, and it is the will of God that we should share in His triumph. What is even more wonderful, it is His will that we should have some share in the bringing about of that triumph. It is written in 1 John iii. 8, "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil." The word translated, 'destroy,' literally means to undo, unravel or to unmask. When our Lord Jesus died upon the Cross, the works of Satan were undone and Satan himself was overcome by the Blood of the Lamb. In His Cross our Lord Jesus Christ accomplished a complete and perfect victory over all the forces of evil and of darkness (Col. ii. 15).

You and I have been brought into this world, and, as I said in the beginning, set in position in this age, in order that we in faith co-operation with the Christ of Calvary, might learn how to make the potential victory actual in the circumstances in which we find ourselves. We must not be overcome by circumstances but we must reign over them with the Lord Jesus Christ, until at last He brings His glorious purpose to full accomplishment. It is His will that we shall reign with Him by and by, and we must learn the art of reigning now. Even Christians to-day often preface their remarks by saying 'Under the circumstances.' 'Under the circumstances' may be only a matter of bad English, but it may also be a matter of bad Christianity. We certainly cannot help being 'in the circumstances,' but we can help being *under* them. Whether or not you go on making that error of style, I hope you will never be guilty of that error of appropriation! In whatever circumstances we find ourselves we can be united to our Lord Jesus Christ in glorious victory.

* * * *

What is there then that we can do in this critical hour? Time forbids that I should go into detail in answering this question; to do so fully would necessitate the giving of another address or more. Let me, however, endeavour to indicate very briefly what our ministry should be. First of all we must ask the Lord to clear our vision and allow us to see the world conflict in its true light. We need the illumination of the Holy Spirit to enable us to see through the mists of propaganda. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Ephes. vi. 12). Having recognised the nature of the conflict we shall immediately realise our need of the 'whole armour of God' (Ephes. vi. 13-18), and this we must appropriate by faith, and piece by piece. Then we must take our place in the conflict, "praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit."

As the Holy Spirit continually gives us fresh light on various situations, we must learn how to focus, in prayer, the invincible power of Calvary upon those situations, not only praying 'for' certain things but also praying 'against' the power of the enemy—Satan. It is only by wielding spiritual weapons that we shall be victorious. Some people are even now referring to this war as 'a war to end war,' but the most that this war can possibly achieve is the destruction of certain systems of human government. All the weapons of human warfare will leave the Satanic spirit, that is the cause of the whole trouble, untouched. I believe with all my heart that a meeting of a few of the Lord's faithful prayer-warriors can do far more to influence the international situation than a meeting of the League of Nations, or than a meeting of the War Cabinet! It is literally true that we, as believers, have at our disposal a secret weapon against which Satan and his whole hierarchy of evil have no form of defence. It is a weapon which has been beaten out upon the anvil of Calvary.

And cannot we even now see the results of such a ministry as this? Paul in writing to the Thessalonians says: "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now hindereth will

hinder, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked One be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming" (2 Thess. ii, 7, 8). I believe that it is only the presence of the Church of Christ, and the ministry of the Holy Spirit through victorious prayer warriors, that is preventing Satan from introducing the Anti-Christ. But presently that which hinders will be removed, the Anti-Christ will be revealed and for a short time will exercise dominion. The 'seed of the serpent' will reach the zenith of its power and attain its nearest approach to victory. Then the Lord Jesus Christ, the King of Kings, will come with the hosts of His saints, Satan and his evil confederates will be overthrown, and the Lord will rule the nations with a rod of iron. And in that day those who are learning now to overcome with Him, will sit down with Him in His Throne (Rev. iii, 21). And so let us gladly and gratefully testify together:—

"They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death."

HALLELUJAH. WHAT A SAVIOUR!

*Isa. 30:15
Silence*

Voices from Other Lands.

"In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength."—Isa. xxx. 15.

Often, in days of difficulty and distress, some message comes from God's "sent ones" who are serving Him with a strong confidence in His power to keep or to deliver, in circumstances far more difficult than our own. Such words of encouragement are these extracts from two recent Missionary Prayer letters:

QUIETNESS and confidence appear before us to-day like two quiet luminous peaks, wrapped in the silence of eternity. They stand in vivid contrast to a world torn by wars and rumours of wars, as marvellous objects of God's eternal NOW, His changeless peace and everlasting Love. They are the very antipodes of noise and distress of nations. They speak to us by their silent dignity with solemn and unmistakable accents, beckoning us to ascend to heights of poise and peace.

*"Drop Thy still dews of quietness,
Till all our striving cease,
Take from our souls the strain and stress,
And let our ordered lives confess,
The beauty of Thy peace."*

Most of us need the continuous practice of silence. "Be still, and know that I am God." "I will be exalted in the earth." It is out of the silence that God speaks to us, when the door is shut, and we are alone with Him.

"Pharaoh is but a noise," could be inscribed over many a life, and over the many distractions and trials of life: and because we allow these things to find an entrance, we become perturbed and anxious, with the result that quietness and confidence depart. Needless talk, noise of words, hearing of and passing on news. Chatter and clatter follow, until the whole head is sick and the whole heart faint. Let us deliberately shut the door to all these distractions and

refuse disquietude, and we shall find the Peace of God which passeth all understanding garrisoning heart and mind; quietness and confidence will return and compass us about with songs of deliverance. O the Peace my Saviour gives! Every Christian man or woman who desires to accomplish God's purpose in life *must ascend*. "Aspire ever to things on high . . . enthroned at the right hand of God. Let your thoughts dwell on things above, not grovel on the earth . . . Then you also shall with Him shine in the splendour of His Glory." Col. iii. 2, 4 (Dr. Way).

A Quiet Time. "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." Spiritual things are only spiritually discerned. The beloved apostle was carried away from all earthly sights and sounds—shut in with God—and there God spake to him face to face—God must get our eyes and ears, all our senses and faculties, yea our entire being, all to Himself and for Himself. It is all for all. So shall we be in tune with God and heavenly realities. What God can do for one man He can do for another if the conditions be there . . . Prayer is the silence of the soul before the Majesty of God. In such silence we find our way from the mists to the mountains. We go forth from our times of prayer in the power of prayer. It was said of Bishop Westcott, "He worked in the very mind in which he prayed."

Quiet Coasts. "Keep silence before Me, O islands (coasts); and let the people renew their strength." (Isa. 41. 1). What busy places coasts can be! What traffic of steamships and other vessels—an endless going and coming—greetings and partings—ceaseless labour of fisherfolk mending nets or hauling in fish. Their labour is constant by night and by day. Storms too, arise, which necessitate continual vigilance. Is

this a picture of our life? Endless calls upon time and strength, telephones, bells, multitudinous wants and increasing responsibilities. There is a Voice that comes across life's stunning tide saying, "Peace, be still." Keep silence before Me. The wear and tear of life is often a trick of the enemy for the wearing out of the saints. Let us watch. Be still: call a halt: Stand still and see the Salvation of the Lord. He knoweth our frame.

A Quiet Mind. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee." (Isa. 26. 3).

Quietness is not inactivity, but perfect poise in action—as perfect as a bird in air—but there can be no quietness without confidence. Having no confidence in the flesh but in the Strong Arm of the Strong Son of God—our Divine Lover and Guide, Who has said:

"I will never, never let go your hand;
I will never, never forsake you."

Forsake, in the Greek, means to leave behind—conveying the idea of leaving comrades exposed to peril in the conflict or forsaking them in some crisis of danger. "I will in no wise desert you, or leave you alone in the field of contest, or in a position of suffering. I will in no wise let go My sustaining grasp."

With such a Guide, such a Friend, such a Lover, let us go forward with quietness and confidence into the unknown future—looking for His glorious appearing.

*E. G. Dempsie,
Japan Rescue Mission.*

"Thou art my Hope in the day of evil."

—Jer. xviii, 17.

HOW, in these days, our hearts seek refuge anew in God's Word, not only for ourselves in China . . . but for all who will be affected by war in Europe. "Our God reigneth"—the words have a steadying and comforting power, as well as God's statement in Isa. ix. 6-7, ". . . the government shall be upon His shoulder," i.e., the government of our own individual lives, as well as of the world; and, "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh . . ."

I find the only way that I can have peace of heart is this: after every reading of the newspaper, or listening to the radio news broadcast, to go alone with God. With my Bible open before me, to wait silently before Him until He speaks to me by His Spirit and His written Word regarding the news I have read or heard, giving me His viewpoint of it, and His purpose in it all. "Shall I hide from Abraham the thing which I do?" "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him." Each time, without fail, He gives me anew the promise of His care under all circumstances . . .

I become more and more aware that life consists of a constant battle between God and Satan, as to who is to have the jurisdiction over our lives—God, the rightful Sovereign, our Creator and Redeemer, or Satan, the present "prince of this world." Because of this fact, which both Bible and world affairs declare, I feel that we, the 'redeemed of the Lord,' should daily decide and declare anew (with

an oral declaration) in the presence of God, when alone with Him in the early morning, on whose side we are, and pledge our whole-hearted allegiance to Christ our God, just as a soldier salutes the flag, thereby declaring his allegiance to his country and his submission to its laws . . . It is equally necessary daily to renounce the foe, "for we are not ignorant of his devices." I personally fear the subtlety of Satan which he might use unawares at any time, engaging my mind or any other part of my personality in his service. I realise that I must daily commit this matter of being kept from 'evil' into the mighty Hand of the Captain of our Salvation (also by an oral declaration) together with an oral declaration of my love to God.

Equally necessary it is to give the entire rule of the day over to Christ, and to make Him Lord of our lives and of every situation, telling Him that *we will* have Him to reign over us, reign supreme and reign alone; asking Him to take the government of every life committed to Him upon His shoulder, doing wonders. Thus we place Christ 'in the midst' as Lord of all that will take place during the day, with expectation for 'the wonderful,' His Name being 'Wonderful' . . . The oral declaration can be very simple . . . The important thing is to realise the situation which requires the declaration . . . the times we live in are so serious and seem to require our taking a definite stand with God daily . . . It is precious to see the rest of heart God gives, and His wonder working in and for any individual, family, or group, who give the entire rule over to Christ and make Him LORD of their life and of every situation.

Our own experience of war, and of the wonderful things which He has done for us and is still doing for His own in this land who preserve the fear of God in their hearts, and who trust and obey Him, encourages us to ask and expect that He will do the same for all His own who will be affected by war in Europe. Distinctly we have seen, over and over, how "God made a difference between 'Israel' and 'Egypt.'" May you see the same in whatever circumstances He may permit you to be placed. We are surrounded on all sides by heathen. If political things should not be kept in check by God, and these thousands of close neighbours turn against us, the situation would be most serious for us Missionaries, and for the girls and children in our care (HIS care!) but so far he has kept in check, and we go in and out freely among them—His witnesses.

"Whoso hearkeneth unto Me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil" (Prov. i. 33).

"Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth . . . seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger" (Zeph. ii. 3).

*E. G. Dieterle,
Children's Refuge, Shanghai*

"God is Faithful."

He cannot fail, for He is God;
He cannot fail, He pledged His word;
He cannot fail, He'll see me through,
'Tis God with whom I have to do.

M.E.B.

The Battlefield of Prayer.

THE record of Hezekiah's prayer when Jerusalem was surrounded with the hosts of the mighty Assyrian Army, as given in Isaiah xxxvii. is replete with its spiritual message for us in these strange days. At verse 21, we read, "Then Isaiah, the son of Amoz, sent unto Hezekiah, saying, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel—Whereas thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib King of Assyria; this is the word which the Lord hath spoken concerning him." Then follows God's word of judgment upon the destroyer of nations. This ancient record must be important for our instruction since God gives space for it in three places in His Word: 2 Kings, ch. 18 and 19, and 2 Chronicles, ch. 32, and here in Isaiah, ch. 36 and 37.

This is more than a record of ancient history. It is a word from the Lord unto us, of guidance and encouragement. Hezekiah prayed in a definite manner in the hour of his need. He prayed against a mighty destroying ruler and his army. And be it specially noticed, he prayed for a specific purpose. We read in verse 20: "O Lord our God, save us . . . that all the Kingdoms of the earth may know that Thou art the Lord, even thou only."

This was the hour of Crisis. Hezekiah recognised it as such. A great host encompassed Jerusalem. They were intoxicated with their recent victories. Then there was the bombastic speech of Rabshakeh. All this was Satanically engineered to weaken the courage of the men of Jerusalem.

This was a violation of an earlier agreement (2 Kings, ch. 18). Hezekiah had stripped the House of God to appease this devourer: but Sennacherib had no respect for such an agreement. God speaks loudly to us in this. Never let us try to passify the forces of evil—neither by yielding to them, nor by compromising with them.

This was an assault upon God. This boastful ruler at once belied God, and defied God (ch. 36, 10-15, 18-20). Such is ever the way with the hidden power of darkness. It is well for us that we are not ignorant of his devices (2 Cor. ii. 11).

This, too, was an assault upon faith in God. The enemy often suggests in the warfare, "Your God cannot do it, or will not do what you ask of Him—why delude yourself?" He would create the spirit of fear or fearfulness in our heart. Such is his method. But he is a liar, a blasphemer, and a destroyer of faith in God and in His Son our Lord Jesus. The hour of crisis comes to us every one, at one time or another, in one form or another. But God is sufficient, and his provision is abundant.

There was the refuge of prayer (Chapter xxxvii. 15). Hezekiah did two things when on this battlefield of prayer. First, he prayed unto the Lord (verse 21)—"To Me," not to Sennacherib! Second, he *prayed against* Sennacherib. What does this mean? Praying against a mighty powerful enemy! It means, praying in fellowship with Christ our Lord for the full accomplishment of His purpose and His Will. Standing in with our Lord against the mighty invisible hosts of darkness, upon the ground of His finished work upon the Cross. Such is this battle-

field of prayer. It is costly, but it is triumphant. Hezekiah proved this as he stood with God against Sennacherib. He only used the name of the Assyrian despot *once*. Suffice it, he was with God on the battlefield of prayer. This is supremely important to us. Prayer warfare will fail upon any other ground. Do we not at times get taken up with Satanic forces, and their hellish work, in naming them much before the Lord, rather than having our Lord supremely before our vision? This is how Hezekiah prayed: God in His glory first, in praise and adoration, then the Assyrian afterwards. This gives strength to us in our prayer conflict.

The issue was one of Victory. It could not be otherwise. "This is the word which the Lord hath spoken concerning him." The record which follows, showing how God dealt with Sennacherib, is one of sovereign power, and this for the deliverance of Hezekiah and Jerusalem. In verse 29 we read, "Therefore will I put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips." In Romans viii. 31, the Apostle asks "If God be for us who can be against us?" then follows what Dr. Way describes as "The Hymn of Triumph in Jesus." This then is the battlefield of prayer, to which we are called and in which, through the infinite grace and power of Christ, we shall conquer. *George Harper.*

"Thy paths in the great waters."

TOO many, at the close of the year, go pensively back to the stern, watching the receding shores and the angry frothing water as it escapes from the screw in passionate foam. To spend the closing hours of the dead past in sad review of our sins and failings is not to put them to the best account. Let us confess them, and leave them, believing that for Christ's dear sake they are absolutely forgiven. Failure often provides material for success, and our dead selves become stepping-stones to higher things. Let us forget the things that are behind and reach forth to those before!

Therefore, let us leave the stern, with its backward look, and make for the Bow! Besides, God's Hand is on the stern. He guides our course. With infinite wisdom He has planned it. What seas we are to traverse, what shores touch, what cargoes exchange. The past is 'under the Blood': sin confessed is forgiven and blotted out. There are blanks in God's Book of Remembrance! (Isa. 43: 25).

True, the sky before is dark with storm-clouds, driving up before a freshening wind. The weather prophets say that the world is shedding its old sanctions without replacing them with better ones; that the dark ages are upon us; that seven civilizations have already passed, and we are to see the death of the eighth. Be it so, but they forget that God holds the waters in the hollow of His Hand; that Jesus walked the threatening billows to succour His friends: that the Almighty has His way in the whirlwind and the storm, and the clouds are the dust of His feet. They forget that in the earliest creation, when the earth was without form and void, the Spirit of God brooded in the darkness and storm, creating the new Heavens and Earth.

Behind the storm-clouds there hang illimitable curtains of azure sky! and beyond the miles of storm there is an immeasurable expanse of calm still water! Each age ends in travail, out of which a new age is born. Listen! It is the Voice of God—"Behold, I make all things new!"

F. B. Meyer.

The Offence of the Cross.

By J. C. Metcalfe, M.C.

WHAT a remarkable phrase "The Offence of the Cross" is, and an examination of the passages which shed light on it brings out two equally remarkable facts: (1) It is *to the religious man* that the Cross is a stumbling block, and (2) When a man stumbles at the Cross, he himself becomes a stumbling-block to others.

Let us take fact number one first. The message in which the Apostle speaks of 'the offence of the Cross' is one where he is dealing with those teachers who were emphasising the old legal ceremonies at the expense of spiritual truth. The devil has always managed to make considerable capital out of such an emphasis. Controversy regarding the externals of Christian worship has proved to be the rock upon which many promising spiritual movements have foundered; and an excessive value placed upon outward forms of worship are a plain evidence of a low and powerless level of spiritual life.

There are two main reasons for the constant re-appearance of this externalism. In the first place the natural man, when he becomes religious, likes to be able to rid himself of responsibility by an appeal to the efficacy of a ceremony. John Wesley, commenting on Galatians v. 11 says: The grand reason why the Jews were so offended at his preaching Christ crucified, and so bitterly persecuted him for it, was, that it implied the abolition of the law. Yet St. Paul did not condemn the conforming, out of condescension to the weakness of any one, even to the ceremonial law; but he *did* absolutely condemn those who taught it as necessary to justification. John Wesley, seeing that "Jesus Christ and Him Crucified" was the only message needed by men and women if they were to be saved, himself put aside religious convention. If a Church was not available he preached in the open air. If bigoted men could not stomach the enthusiasm of his converts, and shut them out from the Church's ceremonies, he encouraged them to go for themselves to the Word, and to 'provoke one another to good works' by personal testimony. He strenuously held to the Church of his upbringing, but resisted with all his might the suggestion that adherence to her outward rites could be a means of salvation, or sanctification. To-day most of the divisions amongst Christians have their root in ceremonial or Church government. The message of the Cross strikes hard at such divisions, and their emphases. "If ye be dead with Christ" it says "from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances" (Colossians ii. 20). It is therefore an offence to those who place undue stress upon ritual, and Church government. *But it is the message of the Cross that saves men and makes new creatures of them.*

In the second place, since the natural religious man prefers to place his reliance in externals, rather than in the discipline of a close walk with God, it is obvious that ministers may expect to keep good congregations together by stressing these, and keeping the implica-

tions of the Cross in the background. "As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh (and who is there that has not naturally some such desire) they constrain you to be circumcised, lest they should suffer persecution for the Cross of Christ" (Gal. vi. 12). Often the price that must be paid for promotion and popularity with professing Christians is compromise. Then the 'offence of the Cross' becomes very real because its message is the utter condemnation of the flesh, and the value of the new creation; and it points out much too clearly the fundamental failure of a policy of compromise.

It is the religious man who stumbles at the Cross. It is striking, on the other hand, how men who are outside the Christian Churches respect a refusal to lower the standard, and shrug their shoulders at the petty jealousies, and uninspiring dogmatisms of the varying sects and schools of thought. The message of the Cross can never be said to encourage the "hiving off" of a host of new bodies, in rebellion against the forms and doctrines of the established denominations. It is the message that places the external in its proper place—a secondary one; and uplifts the Lord Jesus Christ as the "pre-eminent" One. A Christian's business in life is not to evolve new systems of religion, but to become Christlike.

There is another aspect of the same weakness. The natural man, when he becomes religious, does not necessarily lose his affection for the ways and outlook of the world. He wishes often to have a foot in both camps. He is anxious to ensure his eternal salvation, and at the same time make certain of worldly advantage, prosperity, and pleasure. Christian ministers are here faced with this problem: The message of the Cross—the only effective means of bringing men to a knowledge of the justifying, sanctifying grace of God, is uncompromising. What are they to do? Are they to proclaim simply and fearlessly the whole counsel of God, or keep the approbation of their people? "Many walk," writes Paul, "of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the Cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things" (Phil. iii. 18-19). "Paul wrote this weeping," says Wesley, "for such are all cowardly, all shamefaced, all delicate Christians."

The world is in the throes of a terrible convulsion. Men need a robust, wholehearted gospel that brings them into vital contact with God. It will never be given by those who stumble at the Cross.

Stumbling blocks.

Now for the second fact mentioned in our opening paragraph. The Greek word used in Galatians v. 11 is found in other passages, which clearly show how, when the Cross is not the centre of Christian life and preaching, the outside world is not only robbed of all life-giving witness, but cruelly stumbled:

In Matthew 16. 23, the Lord Jesus, in rebuking Peter's rebellion against the Cross says: 'Thou art

an offence unto Me.' The Son of Man came to die for a lost world, and 'It is a faithful saying, for if we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him' (2 Tim. ii. 11). A 'gospel' that takes a lower level than this is a stumbling-block to those that hear it, and see it lived out. 1 John ii. 10 tells us 'He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is no occasion of stumbling in him.' Exclusiveness, criticism, dogmatism, a refusal to work with our brethren in Christ, these are stumbling blocks which cause many to fall, and fall so disastrously that they never find a way into the kingdom of God. "Let us not therefore judge one another any more, but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling-block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way." (Romans xiv. 13).

Revelation ii. 14 gives us the message of the risen Christ to the Church in Pergamos, and how up-to-date it is! "I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit fornication." The call of Christ is a new-creation walk of purity and

pilgrimage with himself. In Vanity Fair, Christian and Faithful were faced with the temptation to compromise along this line, and many in Christian work are also tempted to-day, not, perhaps, so much in their own lives, but because it is the line of least resistance to do the work of Balaam in the lives of those about them. It is only necessary for them to keep the Cross in the background.

"It is impossible," declared the Lord Jesus, "but that offences will come: but woe unto him through whom they come" (Luke xvii. 1). In the time of the greatest human need God has always sought those through whom could meet that need and they have invariably been those who have embraced the way of the Cross as their own. All others would only cast a stumbling-block before those who are already blinded by Satan. To-day the world is in need, and the call comes to preach the Cross. We must uplift a Living Saviour, who will bear for ever the marks of wounds received on Calvary. Can we not get away from 'religion,' and give men the Bread of Life? May this question be constantly before those of us who are in Christian work: "Am I an ambassador, or a stumbling block?" Remember, the Cross is the plumbline.

Prayer

On the Watch Tower.

"Elijah was a man of like nature with us, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and it rained not . . ." (Jas. v. 17. m. American R.V.).

HE prayed fervently," i.e., with intensity. Elijah understood both supplicating and ruling in prayer. He knew his God, for he lived in His presence (1 Ki. xvii. 1): hence his boldness—"there shall not be dew or rain these years but according to my word." "This is the boldness we have toward Him," writes the Apostle John (1 Jno. v. 14, Amer. R.V.), and in Heb. iv. 16 we are bidden to "come boldly unto the throne of grace . . ." In the French version the word for boldness is "audacity."

A Christian worker in Europe wrote recently:—"I was struck, in reading a report of an interview with one of our Generals on the French Front, that he spoke of 'this invisible war.' That is just what it is. It is in the 'invisible' that all Satanic decisions are taken and all his movements are inspired. It is in the 'invisible' that prayer works, that our Lord and Captain wields His powers and makes His authority felt. It is in the 'invisible' that we must come with boldness. May God give more courage to our faith, more virility to our spirits, and more audacity to our petitions."

Notice God's word to Moses in Exodus xiv. 15-16: "Wherefore criest thou unto Me? *Speak* unto the children of Israel that they go forward, and *lift thou up thy rod*, and stretch out *thine hand* over the sea and divide it." So to-day, as we are "hid with Christ in God"—encased in Christ, clad in His complete armour—we may use His authority to repulse the enemy's attacks on the Church and the world. "He that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the

nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of My Father" (Rev. ii. 26-27).

"Let us remember," says the writer of the letter already quoted, "that as Pharaoh had his magicians and Nebuchadnezzar had his, so Hitler has his. They are beginning to turn their swords one against the other. 'Confusion of tongues' is becoming a reality in this modern Babel. There is discontent, disintegration and division going on under the iron armour of Nazi-ism." Let us praise God that prayer for confusion in the ranks of the enemy is already being answered. It was so in the case of the Midianites (Jud. vii. 22). Read also the story given in 2 Chron. xx. 20-24, where, in answer to the faith of God's people, their enemies turned upon one another, and Jerusalem was saved, because "the Lord fought against the enemies of Israel." It will be the same at Armageddon—"a great tumult from the Lord shall be among them and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbour, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbour" (Zech. xiv. 13).

Nevertheless, continues my correspondent, "the power of Nazi-ism is still very great, and a reign of terror has begun in Czecho-Slovakia, Austria and Poland . . ." Let us remember that at the back of this world upheaval is Satan, whose objective is, to destroy Christianity from the earth, and blot out the very Name of Christ. It was reported a short time ago that the Japanese had warned the Chinese to sever all connection with Christianity, because Britain was the bulwark of Christianity, and when Britain fell, Christianity was doomed to fall with her! In spite of Britain's sins, she is still a chief source of the sending forth of the Word of God and

the Gospel: hence Satan's special determination that she shall be destroyed.

PRAY against the spirit of deadly hatred which is being worked up against Britain by German propaganda: and for the liberation of the German people from the evil domination which makes them unable to speak their own mind, or even to think their own thoughts; and especially for the children, who are being taken from their parents and trained in lies and hatred, and paganism. Pray very specially for God's children in all countries at present under German rule, that they may have faith and courage to stand firm in this evil day, and that the Lord will, in love and mercy, deliver them.

PRAY for all God's suffering and persecuted ones in all lands, and especially for the Jews, that they may be restored to their own land, and that all Satan's efforts to frustrate it may be brought to nought.

PRAY that God's saints everywhere may be delivered from panic and fear.

PRAY for our Government and all who are in authority, that they may understand that those who fight against us are but puppets, and their Dictators themselves but tools in the hand of Satan, through whom he is trying to gain world domination. Pray that all the nations may come to know that "the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will" (Dan. iv. 25).

PRAY also against the spread of Communism. Russia is providing in her budget the sum of six million dollars, raised by voluntary subscription, to maintain the world's largest printing press, which will be used to print anti-Christian and anti-religious books in five languages. So long as the Church of Christ remains on earth, we need to be on the alert to lift up a standard against the enemy. "The mystery of iniquity" is at work everywhere, but "He Who now hindereth will hinder, until He be taken out of the way," when the Spirit-indwelt people of God are removed (2 Thes. ii. 7).

Do not let us fear to face the facts of these days. But our chief concern must be absolute and complete obedience to Him Who is our Captain. He alone knows the whole situation in every land, and be assured, He has everything in hand, and though He seeks our co-operation in the conflict, He has already won the victory over Satan and his hosts. If we watch and pray, we shall not how already there have been definite answers to prayer on matters of great significance and importance during the past three months—proof that He is still ruling in heaven and that neither men nor demons can go beyond his permissive will. One prayer is always effective: "Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven." We can use this prayer for all countries, and over every situation. Pray it again and again, and be confident that in the midst of the fiercest conflict, we may be kept in perfect peace and have the assurance of absolute security, for our God is on the Throne: "He doeth according to His will in the army

of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay His hand or say unto Him, What doest Thou?" (Dan. iv. 35). Therefore let us rejoice.
E. M. Leathes.

Standing before God.

"Who hath stood in the counsel of the Lord . . ."
Jer. 23: 18-22.
"I sought for a man . . . to stand . . . before Me"
Ezek. 22: 30.
"And Abraham stood yet before the Lord"
Gen. 18: 22.
The word is used in connection with the immediate presence of God, and admittance to His counsels (Of. 1 Kings 22: 19).

I. The Presence Chamber and Council:

- (1) "The sons of God came . . ."
Job 1: 6.
- (2) The "seven angels" who stand . . .
Rev. 8: 2.
- (3) The assembly: "a God terrible in the council of His holy ones"
Ps. 89: 5, 7, R.V.
- (4) The King—above Him "stood the seraphims"
Isa. 6: 1, 2.
- (5) The authority of the Council—see judgment on Nebuchadnezzar
Dan. 4: 7, 17, 24.
- (6) The executive:
Gabriel: sent to Mary
Luke 1: 19.
sent to Daniel
Dan. 8: 16 9: 21-22.
Michael: (Of. Dan. 10: 13, 21. 12: 1.
Contends with Satan—see Jude 9.
Helps messenger to Daniel—Dan. 10: 13.
Stands for the Jews—Dan. 12: 1.
Leads the war against Satan—Rev. 12: 7.

II. The admittance of some on earth:

- (1) Abraham, regarding Sodom
Gen. 18: 2, 17.
- (2) Moses, regarding the deliverance of Israel—
Num. 7: 89.
- (3) Elijah, judgement on Baal—1 Ki. 17: 1 and 18: 17.
- (4) Isaiah, woes upon Israel—Isaiah 6.
- (5) Daniel, concerning the "latter days"—
Dan. 9: 3, 20-24.
- (6) Jeremiah, "over the nations"—Jer. 1: 10, 18.
- (7) Ezekiel, vision of the Millennium—Ezek. 1.
- (8) Paul, revelation of the Church, the body of Christ—Ephesians.
- (9) John, concerning God's final dealings with the world—The Apocalypse

III. A picture of one admitted: (Zech. 3).

- (1) The man—a brand from the burning—v. 2.
- (2) His state—clothed with filthy garments—v. 3.
- (3) The Adversary—Satan—v. 1.
- (4) The change—"a change of raiment"—v. 4.
- (5) God's condition—"If . . . if . . ."
v. 6-7.
Example: Jeremiah, "if thou wilt take the precious from the vile . . ."
(Jer. 15: 19).

IV. God seeking for even one man:

"I sought for a man to stand . . ."—Ezek. 22: 30.
"If they had stood in My counsel . . . then . . ."
Jer. 23: 22.

V. The authority of those who "stand":

Example: Elijah, "thou shalt not see . . ."
1 Ki. 17: 1, 18-19

VI. The New Testament fulfilment:

- (1) Elijah as our example—Jas. 5: 16, R.V.
- (2) Priesthood of all believers, "kings and priests"—
Rev. 1: 6.
- (3) The way in, "into the Holiest by the Blood"—
Heb. 10: 19. "Ye are come . . ."—Heb. 12: 22-24.
- (4) The warrior host—see—Rev. 12: 7, 11.
- (5) The effect of prayer—Rev. 8: 3-5.
- (6) The call to "STAND"—Ephesians 6: 10-18.

From Mrs. Penn-Lewis' Bible.

A Spiritual Atmosphere.

IN the Spiritual realm, no less than in the natural, atmosphere counts for a good deal. The Holy Spirit does not work in *any* atmosphere. It must be clear for His unhindered operation—Satan knows this, hence his continual attempts to insert poison into it. An atmosphere in which the Holy Spirit can work freely has to be created; it does not already exist in the Church as a whole, and certainly not in the world.

How can such an atmosphere be created? The answer to that question is simply this—by prayer. Prayer is both the power station and the purifier of the atmosphere in which the power of God operates. The Powers of darkness know so well what an irresistible force true prayer is, when prayed by those who have learned the secret of being "atmosphere-proof," that they dread it more than anything else, and bend all their energies to hinder it.

The following illustration was given by a Minister of the Gospel some time ago. In a certain city on the other side of the Atlantic there stands a monument which, in a comparatively short time after its erection, became disfigured and defaced by the chemicals emitted into the atmosphere from surrounding factories and works. The Authorities had the monument cleaned, and then protected by a specially prepared wash, containing certain ingredients which were calculated to counteract and throw off the harmful effects of the chemicals, and so render the monument atmosphere-proof as long as the wash lasted. That is exactly what you and I need to know in daily experience for continuous victory in personal life, but even more, for getting out God's message to others.

To be atmosphere-proof, God's children need to know the secret of the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ in its protective power. They need to know how to appropriate by faith the protection of the precious Blood, as well as its wondrous cleansing from sin. Only those who are proving this experimentally in personal life, are in a position to wage warfare against the powers of darkness and their works, beyond the range of their own personal needs, by prayer against them wherever their presence is discovered or suspected.

Why do meetings often go flat and lifeless, and fail of positive fruit? Is it to be accounted for by sin always? Is it the fault of the congregation? or is it that the message proclaimed is not the pure gospel? Not necessarily so. Why do we see the "cloud as a man's hand" appearing on the horizon, the promise of the showers, the droppings beginning, the foretaste of revival, and then—a reaction, a check, and the blessing stopped? Is it not because we fail to understand this secret, of keeping a pure atmosphere for God to work in? May there not be something—perhaps everything—in this?

Through various means our adversary the devil emits his poison into the air, which is his special sphere of action in the present age, for he is the "prince of the power of the air." By factions and bickerings, jealousy and coldness among God's children; by false doctrines which mislead souls,

veiling the Cross of Christ and obscuring the true value of His Atoning Death; by undue play upon the emotional life in meetings; or by the exalting of the human instrument which God has fitted and designed to use—by all these and other means the atmosphere may become polluted and unfit for the pure action of the Spirit of God, and thus His gracious working may be checked, if not stopped altogether. Therefore the greatest need is intelligent co-operation with God on the part of His own people, and for this there must needs be knowledge of the power of the Cross to create and maintain a clear atmosphere in which the Holy Spirit can freely work. The knowledge of these things gives a new impetus and value to prayer.

There is only one kind of praying that can accomplish this, it is the prayer from the Throne (Eph. ii. 6), the prayer of authority, the prayer of a victorious faith, the prayer which dares to say to Satan. "Go" in the Almighty Name of Him Who, at Calvary, bruised the serpent's head. Such prayer, on the ground of the Precious Blood and in the all-prevailing Name of our Glorious Victor Prince, cannot fail in effective working, albeit offered by the weakest saint. What do we know of this kind of prayer?

Do you seek revival in your Church? in your district? The key is to be found in a little band—it may perchance be only two—of God's children learning to detect the working of the enemy, and how to hinder and paralyse it by prayer: learning to watch against his lies and dry them up in their very beginnings, so that the rivulet of blessing can flow on unchecked, and grow into the mighty rivers of revival power.

This was the truth our Lord taught the disciples from the incident of the barren fig tree (Matt. xxi. 17-22)—the prayer of authority. He spoke to the tree and it withered—there was authority in His Word. Oh yes, there was authority in His Word, but what authority can there be in ours? None whatever apart from Him. It is not our authority but His, exercised by us in co-operation with Him, that has power. Having spoken the word, He turned to the little group of wondering disciples and said: "Verily I say unto you, if ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also *if ye shall say* unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done. And whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer believing, ye shall receive."

Here we have from His own lips the credentials which authorise us to pray as He prayed, the prayer of authority. Lord teach us to use this mighty weapon against the foe for the casting down of his power and the bringing in of Thy Kingdom and glorious reign.

F. Webb.

... "All teaching about spiritual truth is only a finger-post pointing the way to something that has to be purchased at a great price, and . . . all the pleasure the teaching gives is only to lure us on to pay the price needed to secure the treasure

William Law.

Concerning the Literature.

"THE OVERCOMER."

AT the close of another year—a year fraught with much sorrow and anxiety, yet with so many strange happenings which believers cannot but recognise as fulfilling the prophetic Word—we send greetings to our readers in every part of the world, and our warm thanks for all their help, by prayer and gift, for the continuance of this ministry. Since last September, many have written begging us not to discontinue the magazine, and we would assure them that this will not be done so long as the Lord makes it possible to 'carry on.' Costs are, naturally, rising, and we have felt it wise to reduce the number of pages from 16 to 12, but by using this cover page, the actual reduction is only three pages of reading matter. We know we have the prayers of all our readers that "Philippians iv. 19 may be fulfilled to us—"ALL" will include spiritual wisdom and guidance in all that concerns our testimony to the Cross of Christ, in these days of intense need.

Thousands of believers are praying for revival, and have been doing so for years, but is it not true that God has a work to do in the lives of many of His servants before the answer they seek can come? How can God send the over-flow of blessing into churches rent by divisions, by unkind criticism, or where the Holy Spirit is grieved through worldliness and self-love? "What will a church walking in the shallows do in the darker days that may be ahead?" we asked in these pages twelve months ago. The darker days are already upon us, and the need for a deeper work of God in the churches more apparent. We pray that Christian workers who read these words will be willing to let the Cross of Christ do its severing work in their lives, cutting them off completely from the self-love and self-seeking of the 'old creation,' so that the 'new creation' may be a clear channel through which the Holy Spirit can work unhindered.

A New Leaflet on Prayer.

In an article in our last issue, Miss Leathes quoted freely a message on prayer by Mrs. Penn-Lewis, written during the Great War. A Minister wrote that if he could have that message in leaflet form he could distribute hundreds of copies in the prayer groups he visits. Others have written also of its helpfulness, so we have reprinted it under the title, "Praying in the Will of God" ("Overcomer Leaflet," No. 3). The price is 3d. per dozen, or in quantities, 1/6 per hundred.

TO READERS IN THE U.S.A. AND CANADA.

Our Price List in American currency is now very out of date. Because of the fluctuating state of exchange, it is not possible to print a new one, but if the amount in British money is stated to the Postmaster at any American or Canadian P.O., he will make out a Money Order for the correct sum. Or dollar bills may be sent, in which case literature to the value of the prevailing rate of exchange will be forwarded. \$1.00 = 4 shillings, in normal times.

Cheques on American Banks are not negotiable in England.

Money Orders should be made out to "The Overcomer Literature Trust", and PAYABLE AT BOURNEMOUTH, England.

"Thy Hidden Ones."

This lovely message on the Song of Songs has been in great demand recently, and ran out of print at the end of the Summer. We are thankful that we have been able to reprint it before war conditions made the cost prohibitive. It is now available in both cloth boards, and stiff paper cover.

The Censorship.

Under war-time regulations, no periodical or other printed matter may be posted to neutral countries in Europe, Asia, or Africa, by any private individual. We hold a Censor's Permit for all our literature, and if readers who have been in the habit of posting 'The Overcomer' (or books) to friends in such countries will send names and addresses to us, we will gladly post direct from the Book Room.

The Censorship does not apply to France, the British Dominions, or to North and South America.

The Overcomer Literature in French.

Madame Brunel writes that she has given hundreds of copies of the French edition of "God's Plan of Redemption," and "The Cross of Calvary" to Christians in Switzerland and in France, and to the Army Chaplains, etc., for giving to soldiers, and she asks our prayers for this distribution, and for those who receive the books. Pray also for "Le Vainqueur." The October number was reduced to four pages, on account of wartime difficulties in France, but Madame Brunel hopes to send out an eight-page issue for January, 1940, containing, among other matter, the third and fourth Bible Reading given by Rev. A. R. Boughen at our Swanwick Conference last May. This little French 'Overcomer' was founded in 1911, and has been greatly used of God among French Christians, and Missionaries in French-speaking lands. It is not entirely self-supporting, and any who would like to have a share in this work may send their gift either to the Editor or to Madame Brunel direct. Her address is: 3, rue des Moulins, Croix de Fer, Nîmes (Gard), France.

The following books are obtainable in French, from Madame Brunel: The Cross of Calvary, Thy Hidden Ones, Soul and Spirit, Face to Face, War on the Saints, and God's Plan of Redemption. She has also issued a new edition of "The Word of the Cross" booklet, but it was not possible to produce them at the low cost of the English Booklet, which is printed in very large quantities from metal plates, and sold at actual printer's price.

"The Overcomer" for 1939 is now obtainable, bound in stiff paper covers, with Index, price 2/- (post paid 2/2)

The "Word of the Cross" Bible Booklet."

This little Booklet was compiled by Mrs. Penn-Lewis, in 1908, and consists of 16 pages, 3½ by 2 inches in size, with pale blue cover. It contains in the words of Scripture the Message of Calvary in its fullest aspects, both for the sinner and the saved. It has been issued in about 80 languages and dialects and the circulation has reached over eleven million copies.

The English Booklet can be obtained from the "Overcomer" Bookroom, at a charge of 15/- per 1,000 (printer's cost), 1/6 per 100, with postage extra.

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Volume
XXI.

April
A.D. 1940.

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(The Cross is the Touchstone of Faith)

The Overcomer

*A Quarterly Magazine for Christian Workers
on the deep things of God.*

*“Fear not . . .
I am the Living One”*
Rev. i, 17-18.

“And the hostile princes and rulers He shook off from Himself, and
BOLDLY DISPLAYED THEM AS HIS CONQUESTS
when by the Cross He triumphed over them.” Col. ii, 15 (*Weymouth*).

THE “OVERCOMER” BOOK ROOM,
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*Published (D.V.) Quarterly on the first Thursday in January, April, July, October.
For terms of issue, see inside cover.*

THE OVERCOMER.

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PLEASE NOTE.

All letters in relation to "The Overcomer," orders for the Book Room and all matters relating thereto, should be addressed:

**The Manager, Overcomer Book Room,
"Cartref," Westbourne Park Road,
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N.B.—Letters to the Editor to the same address with a stamped envelope enclosed if reply is needed. (*Foreign correspondents excepted*).

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Will our correspondents also kindly note that the Book Room is closed on Bank Holidays, and that the Postal Regulations during the holiday season make delays at such times unavoidable.

Centre Distributors

Are at liberty to accept contributions from those who receive the paper, and forward to the office quarterly.

Change of Address. No alterations can be made during last fortnight before issue, when all the wrappers have already been prepared. Readers are asked to assist the workers by care in this matter. Please give OLD ADDRESS as well as new.

AUSTRALIA. The "Overcomer" may be obtained from Mr. H. P. Smith, The Keswick Book Depot, 315 Collins Street, Melbourne.

MONTHLY CONFERENCE

at Eccleston Conference Hall,

Eccleston Street, Victoria, London, S.W.

Meetings for Christian Workers are held on the first Thursday of each month, October to July (inclusive). Owing to War conditions, some alterations have been necessary.

PLEASE NOTE PRESENT ARRANGEMENTS AND
HOURS OF MEETING.

Apl. 4.—Quarterly Conference, 11 a.m. and 3 p.m.
Speakers: Rev. Geoffrey King and others.

May. 2.—Day of Prayer, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., led by Miss Leathes. Only a brief interval for lunch—bring sandwiches.

June. 6.—Day of Prayer from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. as above.

July 4.—Quarterly Conference, 11 a.m. and 3 p.m.

The Twenty-first Annual Conference
on

The Message of the Cross

in connection with

The Overcomer

will (D.V.) take place at

"Slavanka"

Southbourne, Hants

from

July 8th to 13th.

(See Notice on back cover)

CARDIFF.

Apl. 4. Cornwall Road Baptist Church. Speaker: Rev. J. Kyk Paisley (N. Ireland).

Enquiries: Rev. A. Ll. Edwards, 21 Plasterton Gardens, Cardiff

LIVERPOOL.

June 11-12 (Tuesday and Wednesday), at Gordon Hall 3.30 and 7 p.m. each day. Speaker: Rev. A. R. Boughen. (Friends are asked to bring sandwiches, and tea will be provided.)

MANCHESTER.

May 6th. Houldsworth Hall, 90 Deansgate (No. 2 Committee Room). Meeting 7 p.m. Speaker: Rev. A. R. Boughen.

Enquiries to Mr. W. Astley, 28 Elmsmere Road, Didsbury, M/c.

Note.—We are glad also to call attention to the following meetings for prayer and fellowship arranged by some of our readers.

Birmingham: Bible Witness Fellowship, "Kelvedon," Frederick Road, Wyld Green. First Wednesday at 3 p.m.

Bootle: Hebron Hall, Akenside Street. Monthly Prayer Meeting Second Friday, at 8 p.m.

Cardiff: Weekly Prayer Meeting. Thursday at 3 p.m. The Lounge, Y.M.C.A. (by Taff Station).

Isleworth: For particulars of new arrangements, please enquire of Miss Gravatt, 37, St. John's Road, Isleworth.

Isle of Wight: Prayer Meeting every Saturday, 7.30 p.m., at 42, Carisbrooke Road, Newport.

Liverpool: Monthly Prayer Meeting. Third Wednesday at 3 p.m. at 55, Granby Street, Princes Park.

Manchester: Prayer Meeting April 8; June 10; and July 8, at 7 p.m., in No. 2 Committee Room, Houldsworth Hall, 90, Deansgate. NOTE ALTERED TIME. Enquiries: Mr. W. Astley, 28, Elmsmere Road, Didsbury, M/c. 3.

"Le Vainqueur" (The "Overcomer.")

A magazine issued quarterly, consisting of articles from "The Overcomer," translated into French. Edited and issued free by Madame G. Brunel, 3 bis, rue des Moulins, Nîmes, Gard, France.

Miss Cope, 19, Dalmeny Crescent, Heath Road, Hounslow, Middlesex, acts as Treasurer for Mme Brunel. She will gladly send a copy of "Le Vainqueur" upon application.

THE OVERCOMER

The Cross in the Light of the Resurrection.

"I am He that liveth, and was dead; and behold I am alive for evermore." Rev. i. 18.

THIS is the message of the Cross. It is beautiful to note the touch of light and glory with which these simple words invest the Cross. It is not said, "I am He that was dead, and live," but "I am He that *liveth*, and was dead." Life is mentioned before death.

There are two ways of looking at the Cross: one is from the death side, and the other from the life side. In the first case we see the Ecce Homo—in the other, the glorified Jesus, with only the marks of the nails and the spear. It is thus we are to look at the Cross. We are to carry about with us *the memory* of the sepulchre, but the glory of the Resurrection. It is not the 'Ecce Homo,' but the Living Christ Who abides with us, and therefore our crucifixion with Him is to be so real that it shall be lost in our resurrection, and we shall even forget our own sorrow, and carry with us the light and glory of the Easter morning.

So let us live the "death-born life"—resurrected, not raised. There is much in this distinction. The teaching of human philosophy is, that we are to raise humanity to a higher plane. This is not the Gospel. The teaching of the Gospel is, that corrupt humanity must die and sink out of sight, and then be resurrected, not raised. Resurrection is not improvement, it is not elevation, but it is a new supernatural life, lifting us from nothingness into God, and making us "partakers of the Divine nature." It is a "new creation," infinitely above the highest plane of earthly life. Let us not take less than *resurrection life*.

The principle of death and resurrection is the central theme of Christianity. It is pictured for us in nature, in the transformation of the chrysalis; in the buried seed bursting into the bud and blossom of the Summer; in the transformation of the winding-sheet of Winter into the many tinted robes of Spring. We see it all through the Bible, in the symbol of circumcision with its significance of death and life: in the passage of the Red Sea and Jordan—leading out and leading in: in the Cross of Calvary and the open grave of the first Easter morning. We see it in every truly spiritual life, for all real Life is death-born, and the more real the death the truer the life. Doubtless the years that have passed have shown us many a place in our lives where there ought to be a grave, and many a shred of the natural life and sinful nature which we would gladly lay down in a bottomless tomb. May God help us to pass the irrevocable sentence of death, and then to let the Holy Spirit make the interment eternal! Let us turn away from the grave with the glad resurrection song:

"Awake and sing,
"ye that dwell in the dust!"

"The law of the Spirit, of life in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death."
(Rom. viii. 2).

There is a natural law of sin and death, and if we just let ourselves go, and sink into the trend of circumstances, we shall go down under its pressure, and under the power of the tempter. But there is another law—the law of spiritual life in Christ Jesus through which we can rise up and overcome the other law that would drag us down. To do this requires spiritual energy, fixed purpose, and the habit of faith. There is a spiritual attitude of choosing, believing, abiding, and firmly holding steady in our walk with God, which is essential to the working of the Holy Spirit in our sanctification, and in all our spiritual life.

"We are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end."
(Heb. iii. 14). G.R.

Joy in Trial
"Count It All Joy."

TIMES of trial are often our times of greatest joy. It was when the apostles were turned out of Antioch by a mob of respectable men and honorable women, that the record was added, "The disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost." It was when the fig tree refused to blossom, and the vines were stripped of their accustomed fruit, and nature was robbed in a winding sheet of death, that Habakkuk's song rose to its highest notes of triumph, and he could say: "Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation."

It is a blessed testimony to the grace of God and the Spirit's abundant love, when we can rise above our circumstances and "Count it all joy when (we) fall into divers temptations."

If we would know the full comfort of the Holy Ghost, we must coöperate with Him, and rejoice by simple faith, often when our circumstances are all forbidding, and even when our very feelings give no response of sympathy or conscious joy. It is a great thing to learn to *count* it all joy. Counting is not the language of poetry or sentiment, but of cold, unerring calculation. It adds up the column thus: sorrow, temptation, difficulty, opposition, depression, desertion, danger, discouragement on every side, but at the bottom of the column God's presence, God's will, God's joy, God's promise, God's recompense. "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." How much does the column amount to? Lo, the sum of all the addition is "*All joy*," for "the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed. . ."

That is the way to count your joy. Singly, a given circumstance may not seem joyful, but counted in with God, and His presence and promise, it makes a glorious sum in the arithmetic of faith. We can rejoice in the Lord as an act of the will; and when we do, the Comforter will soon bring all our emotions into line, yea, and all our circumstances too. They who went into battle with songs of praise in front soon had songs of praise in the rear, and an abundant, visible cause of thanksgiving. Therefore, let us say with the apostles, "I therein do rejoice, yea and will rejoice."

A. B. Simpson.

To our Readers.

DEAR FRIENDS,

Those of us who looked forward to the reunion of another Conference at Swanwick must comfort ourselves for personal disappointment by the remembrance that nothing can sever our fellowship since we remain for ever one in Christ Jesus. I remind myself that cancelled passages don't make a separation. Such things are included in the list that cannot separate us from the love of God, or of each other in Him.

The world is facing such a crisis that our personal interests fade into utter insignificance. Perhaps it is good for us to fall back on the assurance that we are of more value than many sparrows and forget ourselves, if we can, in prayer for God's Will in this awful upheaval.

A beloved friend of our Testimony, who has stood for its message in active fellowship for many years, writes from the Pacific Coast: "For the first time I have begun to really sense that the coming of the Lord is near. Even so!" I wonder how many of us could have said 'Amen' to that lively hope during these recent months. We walk by faith and not by sight, yet there are times when the veil seems lifted and our hearts go out to meet the Blessed One for Whom we wait.

It is of the nature of Faith that it deals with things real but hoped for, true but unseen. In these days when the evidence of things seen would cause the heathen to say, "Where is now their God," it is our part still to live as seeing Him Who is invisible.

The great enemy would have us watch present world happenings from the earthly position which is ours by nature, whereas faith calls us to view them from the heavenly position which is ours by Grace. How often do we remind ourselves that God hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus? Yet when faith challenges us to act upon this we so easily lose the heavenly vision. We listen to news by wireless and read it in the daily papers, and our 'natural man' clamours for the only reaction he knows. He would view the turmoil as a good British subject, or as a good neutral, or whatever he may happen to be. We forget that though few can be seated with prime ministers and presidents, the humblest believer is seated by faith in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

We are given this privilege that we may realise the true nature of the conflict and value at their real worth those human efforts at world appeasement, which being conceived without Christ as their foundation, can only end in adherence to the antichrist. What part can we have in him whom the Lord will destroy with the brightness of His coming?

Revelation xii. (v. 7 to the end) is surely a spiritual war report of the utmost significance for believers. We see in this the approaching culmination of the conflict of the ages that lies behind the visible human forces which the world is watching with anxious eyes. The Christians attitude to earthly things is governed by the closeness of his walk with his Lord. We are not less the lovers of mankind because we know heavenly things are true, nor need we be afraid of loving our

country less because we love Christ's Kingdom more. Yet the eyes of faith see clearly the futility of the best intentioned schemes that mankind may devise to secure the peace and freedom the world longs for. What man-made panacea can give the nations real security?

Earnest voices are heard pleading for so-called moral re-armament; others demand the subordination of nationality to a union of nations too strong to be threatened by aggression from recalcitrant powers. Even the professing church finds hope in such dreams, and many for lack of knowledge throw themselves into advocacy of a world order lacking the sovereignty of Christ. Can we do more than stand in spirit for the Will of God and against the deception of Satan, as we watch the attempt of mankind to adjust itself without its rightful King and only Saviour?

As for our daily walk, may the Lord keep us in the Spirit. Samuel Rutherford was humbled, 'that practice was so short and narrow and light so long and broad,' and that in great troubles he had received 'false reports of Christ's love and not believed aright in His chastening: whereas the event has said "all was in mercy."' It was he too who wrote, 'It is not safe to be pulling and drawing with the Omnipotent Lord. Let the pull go with Him for He is strong, and say Thy Will be done.'

Our prayers will be in that Will if we follow the pattern given. We would not be telling Him what to do with the world He made, but just trust in Him. He knows what He is doing and our lives are hid with Christ in God. In this certainty lies our strength and peace: strength to comfort our brethren, peace to stand alone in these things, if needs be, and the grace of endurance to the end.

Yours in the patient waiting,

BERNARD W. MATTHEWS.

Bermuda,
March, 1940.

Our Annual Conference.

FOR the past twenty years, readers and friends of "The Overcomer" have gathered each year in April or May, at "The Hayes," Swanwick, for five days of happy fellowship and quiet study of God's Word. As we stated in our January issue, The Hayes has been taken over for other purposes, and many of us will feel a little strange as the Spring days go by, and our annual pilgrimage to Swanwick is not taken!

We are living "extra-ordinary" days, and it may be that God is shaking us out of our ordinary ways to awaken us to new needs—new urgency in prayer, a new apprehension of all that "Calvary" stands for. So we call attention to the preliminary notice on the back cover, of a Conference to be held (God willing) at "Slavanka," near Bournemouth, from July 8 to 13 (Monday to Saturday). Any who desire to remain over the week-end may do so, and the Sunday services at "Slavanka" will be undertaken by one or other of our Conference speakers.

We especially hope that readers in the Southern counties, who have been unable to go to Swanwick because of the distance, will take the opportunity of joining us this year, and that many young people, for whom the dates in early Spring were impossible, may also be with us. "Slavanka" is only a few minutes walk from the sea.
Ed.

The Living One.

By Mrs. Penn-Lewis.

"Why seek ye him that liveth among the dead?" Luke xxiv. 5, m.

THE women went to the tomb to look for a dead Christ. They did not know Him yet as the Risen Lord. As we think about His death, let us never forget that He is the LIVING ONE. Some people worship the dead Christ, and spend every Good Friday weeping over Him as the crucified One, but if any who read these words are thinking only about His death, may the Holy Spirit flash the light upon Him as the Living Lord.

"Why seek ye Him that liveth among the dead? He is not here, but is risen," said the angel messenger. As the women listened they were affrighted and perplexed. They went to seek Christ in a tomb, and found it empty! Praise God for the empty tomb! He is not there; He is risen! He is risen! When the women went back to the disciples to tell them that He was risen they disbelieved it, and said it was "idle talk," and so it is often only idle talk to us, until the Risen One Himself draws near.

Later we read that the disciples were gathered in an upper room, and the doors were shut for fear of the Jews. They had been to Calvary, and surely they had passed through the spiritual "Calvary" in the blasting of all their hopes, but they did not become witnesses full of power and strength from God until they knew Jesus as the Living One. Death is negative: it is Life that brings the positive power.

What did the resurrection mean to Christ Himself? In Rom. i. 4, we read these words: "Who was declared to be the Son of God with power . . . by the resurrection from the dead." By the resurrection He was proved to be the Son of God. Read again Ephes. i. 19, 20: "According to that working of the strength of His might which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead, and made Him to sit at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule, and authority, and power" (R.V.). Look next at Rom. vi. 9: "Knowing that Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him. For the death that He died, He died unto sin once; but the life that He liveth, He liveth unto God."

Four great truths are made clear in these passages of Scripture. First of all, that by His resurrection, the Lord Jesus was *proved to be the Son of God*. Second, that He was lifted above the powers of darkness into a place of triumph. Third, that death had no more power over Him. And fourth, that He entered a new sphere, a sphere where He ceased to live on the earth-ward side of Calvary, and lived only unto God on the God-ward side of the Cross.

"That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection," cries the Apostle Paul. But how is it possible for us to share the power of His resurrection? Writing to his converts in Rome, Paul tells the whole story, and we see that the resurrection of Christ is the pattern of our spiritual resurrection:

"Are ye ignorant that all we who were baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death? We were buried, therefore, with Him through baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with Him by the likeness of His death, we shall be also by the likeness of His resurrection" (Rom. vi. 3-6).

"If we become united with Him by the likeness of His death": or in other words, if we have been brought by the Holy Spirit into *vital knowledge* of His Cross. In a note upon this verse, Conybeare remarks that "the meaning appears to be, if we have shared the reality of His death, whereof we have undergone the likeness." This means something more than a mental assent, or even an attitude of steadfast faith. The Scripture speaks of a vital planting into His death, an assimilation of His death; a fellowship with Him in His Cross in a very real way.

If we have thus shared the REALITY of His death, we may be perfectly sure that the union with Him in life will follow. We are to share His LIFE as well as His death. This fact is repeated in Romans vi. 8: "But if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him." The death is a means to an end, so to speak. What do we know about casting ourselves upon the power of His resurrection for our daily life?

There are those who have light on the Sixth of Romans, and take by faith the attitude that they are identified with Christ in His death and share His resurrection: but it is easy to see that they have not been *vitally united* with the likeness of His death. Others revolt from this (what they call) theory, and say they want something more—they want the Holy Spirit to do a very real work in them. Whereupon He begins to teach them what it means to be united with Christ in His death, and then sometimes they go to the other extreme, and stay about the tomb so long that there is no evidence of Divine power energizing them to walk in continual victory.

Do not let us forget that LIFE is to spring out of death. It is true that we must be vitally planted into Him in His death; but we must also be joined to Him in His resurrection. When you are brought to know His death, you will need to cast yourself upon Him for His energizing life, or you will be powerless in your practical walk. Let us thank God for the light He has given us about the Cross of Jesus Christ, and for the light He has given us about the way He will conform us to His death, but let us see to it that we also know the power of His resurrection, and the life of living union with Him.

In the darkest hour of conflict, in the hardest testing time you may ever be put to, if you are joined to Him you will be able to say, "I am with my

Risen Lord, above this. I refuse to go under this, for I stand with Him in the place of victory—I believe in the God that raiseth the dead."

Only in this way can faith be matured, until it becomes a faith that can live and triumph in impossibilities.

We have seen that the resurrection of Christ meant that death had no more dominion over Him. Spiritually, this too will be true of us. In the midst of the deathly atmosphere around us on every side, are we affected by it? If we are living in the power of His resurrection it will not be able to chill us! We are joined to Him as the Living One, therefore naught around us shall have dominion over us, or have power to drag us down. The deadness around us shall not chill us any more, but we shall, in union with our Risen Lord, overpower by His life the atmosphere of death, and be His messengers of life to dying souls.

Let us look briefly at the practical way of proving the power of His resurrection, shown to us in 2 Cor. xiii. 3, 4:

"Seeing that ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, who to you-ward is not weak, but is powerful in you; for He was crucified through weakness, yet He liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak with Him, but we shall live with Him through the power of God toward you."

Practically, we are always weak in ourselves, but we are to know that His power is working through us simply by *seeing it work in others*. You seek the proof, do you, that Christ speaks in you? You have it here—He is mighty in others, blessing them through you! As if Paul said "I know I am weak, but I know I am living with Him in His life, because I see Him working in you Corinthians." We shall know the power and life of God working in us by its effect, so to speak, in others around us. This takes us away from watching ourselves and our experiences!

There are therefore these three things in practical experience: First, in ourselves we are "always handed over to death" and weakness, that the life may pour out to others. Secondly, it is always death to ourselves so that we may not trust in ourselves, but cast ourselves upon the God Who raiseth the dead. Thirdly, we can only recognise God's power by the effect it produces, not by our consciousness of it.

In Heb. xi. 17, 19, we see another aspect of the power of the resurrection:

"By faith Abraham, being tried, offered up Isaac . . . accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead."

This is a further stage in the knowledge of Christ's resurrection, and indicates the way in which God matures our faith. In practical life the attitude over everything is to be, "Father, I lay it down in the faith that Thou canst raise it up." Everything can go then to His altar without hesitation. This is the power of the resurrection as regards all our possessions, even the very gifts of God—faith laying

them down, believing that God can raise up, even from the dead.

As we close, let us remember that Jesus Himself is in our midst, and He is THE LIVING ONE, the living Christ within the veil. He is interceding for us every moment. The sprinkled blood is being applied for us. We have come to Mount Zion, to Jesus the Mediator, and the blood of sprinkling. Through the opened heavens we see Jesus the Son of God, standing in the Presence of God for us; and we see ourselves there in Him. As we go forward with the opened heavens above our heads, let us say, "There is nothing between; I see the sprinkled blood before the Father, speaking for me. The way is clear! God helping me, there shall never be a shadow between us again."

Therefore let us not henceforth seek "Him that liveth" among the dead, but at God's right hand, and we with Him." "*Accepted in the Beloved.*"

Prayer Life

The Prayer Life.

Romans viii. 26-27.

AS indispensable as the unceasing intercession of Christ asking and receiving from the Father above, is the unceasing intercession of the Holy Spirit within, asking and accepting from the Son what the Father gives.

"We know not how to pray as we ought." How often this has been a burden and a sorrow! Let it henceforth be a comfort. Because we do not know, we may stand aside and give place to One who does know. We may believe that in our stammerings, or even sighs, the Mighty Intercessor is pleading. Let us not be afraid to believe that within our ignorance and feebleness the Holy Spirit is hidden, doing His work. . . .

Here, as elsewhere, all leads up to one point: the Holy Spirit's indwelling must be our one care. In faith that holds the promise, in tender watchfulness that waits for and follows His leading, in the entire surrender of the flesh to death, that He alone may rule and lead, let us yield to our Beloved Lord to fill us with His Spirit. The Spirit will do His work.

Andrew Murray.

* * *

"All approach to God should be in the Holy Spirit's power. The true believer has no confidence in the flesh (Phil. iii. 3, R.V.). The flesh may prompt me to pray for many things. That is no reason for asking them. I should no more follow the promptings of the flesh in praying than in sinning. I should submit every desire to the Holy Spirit, and seek His guidance in prayer. Very much prayer of many excellent people is in the flesh, and is, of course, not answered. Many a Minister's longing for revival, many a wife's longing for the conversion of her husband, is thoroughly carnal. We should pray in the Holy Spirit, under His prompting and guidance. As the disciples said to Jesus during His earthly life, "Teach us to pray," so we should look constantly to the "other Paraclete" (Jno. xiv. 16; xvi. 7) to teach us to pray, and He will.

This thought disposes of all the objections against prayer from the standpoint of "subjecting the infinite wisdom of God to the foolish whims of finite creatures." Those who thus talk are ignorant of the Bible doctrine of prayer. It disposes also of most other objections that the spiritually superficial and ignorant urge against prevailing prayer."

R. A. Torrey.

The Shaking of Things Perishable.

By J. C. Metcalfe.*

WHAT is God doing? Since the outbreak of war, most folk have concentrated almost all their attention on outward happenings and events. This is perfectly natural—but then, the Christian life is not a natural life, in the sense of being hedged in by purely earthly considerations. I cannot help getting tired of hearing so much of the doings of men, and the activities of the powers of darkness, and I long to understand WHAT GOD IS DOING in these wonderful days in which we live.

Perhaps we get a clue in Hebrews xii. 18 to 29—especially in those words in verse 26—"I shake." I am not sure that we are not now at the place when this prophecy is being fulfilled before our eyes, for to-day things are actually being shaken as rarely, if ever, before; and we must bear in mind that God is permitting, or even ordering, it.

To clear our vision shall we ask ourselves another question. What is God particularly interested in in this age? Not in laws, regulations, or political schemes to bring about world peace. He will see to all that in a new era, yet to come: but *in building up His Church*, in 'calling out a people for His name.' We may expect, then, to see God's objective for His Church being helped forward by the promised shaking of the perishable things.

The Greek word translated "shake" in our passage, as so often with the Holy Spirit's deliberate choice of words, is of considerable assistance in determining the nature and scope of God's shakings. In the first place our verses take us back to the days of the Old Covenant, when Israel was given the law as their basis of life. God's voice then shook the earth; the hearts of men were moved, and even Moses said, 'I exceedingly fear and quake.' The earth, the sphere of external things, experienced the shaking of divine power. Afterwards, as the Hebrew nation advanced into the Promised Land, Jordan was shaken out of its course, the walls of Jericho were shaken down, and the seven races of Canaan were shaken out of the strongholds they had inhabited for centuries, not by the might of arms, but by the 'arm of the Lord.' All these things were a demonstration to God's earthly people that they might place absolute confidence in Him, and that He was indeed sufficient for their every need.

Then the scene changes, and we have set before us the glory of the New Covenant, that of sovereign, redeeming grace. "Ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched . . . but ye are come unto . . . the heavenly Jerusalem . . . to the church of the firstborn . . . and to Jesus . . . and to the blood of sprinkling . . ." What thrilling verses! How solid the heavenly things are! It is hard to realise how the worldling makes shift without their comfort in the present circumstances. The pity of it ought surely to move our hearts to prayer, and stir us to action

while there is yet time. It is in the realm of spiritual things that the present shaking is most manifest. And its object? "Now He hath promised, saying—Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are made, *that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.*"

Now shall we see if pursuing our Greek word into other passages will give us further light? It is used in Acts iv. 31. The early church was gathered in one place, and with one heart, to lay a desperate need before God; and He granted a mighty filling of the Holy Spirit, the power of which overflowed so that even the external things were moved, 'the house that they were in was shaken.' Do we not need to-day such an equipment of power by the Holy Ghost? Is there anything else that can penetrate the spiritual barrenness that surrounds us? Is there anything else that can shake the mighty strongholds of sin, indifference, and unbelief? There can be no question as to the need, but we must remember that God will only move out in shaking power at the cry of united Christian hearts. In international affairs the Allies are taking considerable pains to achieve unity of mind and concerted action in the prosecution of the war. They mean to win. In the spiritual realm much prayer has been offered for revival, but often without taking much account of the conditions in which God will work. There is, in fact, a tragic failure to realise that the divisions amongst God's children are one of the main causes of the Church's powerlessness.

Count Zinzendorf, of whom it was written that 'he did more than any other man to redeem the eighteenth century from the reproach of barrenness, in relation to evangelical teaching and work', was faced with this very problem at Herrnhut: "How to unite in faith, and love, and service the pious but disputatious followers of Huss, Luther, Calvin, Zwingle, Schwenkfeld, etc., seemed a hopeless problem apart from divine intervention." It was, however, accomplished, and God granted a revival that shook the world. It is my firm conviction that every plan, every edifice, every crusade however promising, is doomed to be ignominiously shaken out of effectiveness without the backing of such unity. With it God can and will shake the fortresses of Satan to their very foundations. Let us take our eyes off others. Is our heart and spirit right in this? What contribution are you and I making, or are we prepared to make, that real unity amongst true Christians may be brought about? Can we not scrap our exclusiveness, silence our criticisms, and prove our God?

The next passage to which our hunt takes us is Acts xvi. 26, the story of Paul and Silas, bound, beaten and bleeding, but full of joy. Circumstances were indeed all against them, but in answer to their praise God shook their prison, and at the same time

* A message given at our London Conference.

shook their jailer out of the devil's kingdom into His own. Many Christians are being placed in strange and difficult situations in these days. To give just one example: I encountered recently, whilst taking meetings amongst the troops, a young fellow who had not long been called up. He accosted me with—"It is good to see you. It reminds me of the good times we had at the—Conference. But everything is dark, and difficult here." He was rather, as they say, 'under the weather,' and who can blame him? "Listen" I said, "Were you one of the fellows who stood up in the missionary meeting and said you were prepared to go anywhere for the Lord?" "Yes" was the reply. "Then what about thanking Him for answering your prayer so soon, and giving you a whole barrackroom full of men as a mission-field?" He had not thought of that, but I believe it supplied the needed tonic. That young fellow is typical of many of us. Our religious externals, our meetings, conferences, etc., have become so precious to us, that the loss of them depresses us, and we miss the God-given opportunity of seeing Him shake, and deliver us and others through His shaking.

The parable of the man who built his house on the sand seems to dovetail in here (Luke vi. 48). The one thing that is precious to God above everything, is the work of the Holy Spirit in the heart of His children, building up in them the new creation, the life of the Lord Jesus. This work He founds on the rock of His Word. His plan for the finished article is to make us like His Son, to conform us to His image. To do this He has to shake down the things that are useless, that we have erected on the sand of our self life. If He is to have His way with me in this, then I must take my stand on His truth. I must believe that Jesus died for my sins, that I died with Him on the Cross, and that I am raised up in Him far above all 'principalities and powers!' Then *what I believe* has to be made a reality, worked deep down in the innermost recesses of my being, if there is to be a gracious work of the Holy Spirit building a new creation.

I often find myself in positions where it seems that my plans are being thwarted, and where those with whom I am working seem to completely misunderstand what I am after. The old 'me' at once becomes full of fret and impatience. But it is really God at work, shaking my reliance on anything but Himself. I must submit joyfully to His shaking if I will have heart rest, and see Him at work. Is not this your experience too? We can always comfort ourselves with the knowledge that all that is imperishable will most assuredly remain.

We are nearing the end of the examples of the use of this word. There is one, however, that is wonderful indeed in Matthew xxiv. 29, and in the parallel passages in Mark and Luke. "The powers of the heavens shall be shaken." This promise undoubtedly refers to the evil forces at work behind international affairs. We can have no doubt as to *their* objective, which is the overthrow of God's plans

for His Church. They will, if they can, drive the Christian Church out of action. But the gates of hell 'shall not prevail.' God, seated upon His throne, will use these powers as His instruments of chastisement upon the nations, and will then shake down their power for ever. Russia has said, 'We know no God,' and has sought to drive all mention of Him from their national life. Germany has step by step driven the Truth into the background, and is in the grip of a regime which is busy evolving an anti-christian creed. But God's love cannot be rejected with impunity. His judgments are abroad in the earth. When these are finished He will shake down the "powers of the heavens." Then the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our God, and of His Christ. What a glorious prospect! And that man must be blind indeed who does not see in it the only hope of this world of ours.

My dear friends, the question has been upon my heart this last year or so in an increasing measure, What of our own land? Will not God use these evil powers as instruments of His chastisement against England, if she is allowed to drift on in her present apathy concerning the living God? One sad and remarkable thing to-day is the lack of any spirit of enquiry amongst the older folk. There does seem to be the dawning of a movement of God amongst the younger people, specially, perhaps, those who are outside of the ordinary rut of church life. But where are they to get the help that is their right? If you seek to stand for the vital fundamental truths of our faith in the large majority of the churches and chapels of our land, you will be politely shown the door. I am sometimes afraid for our land and its religious life. When God begins to shake, what will happen then?

Things which cannot be shaken.

Our final reference is in Acts ii. 25, and it brings a breath of real encouragement to conclude with. "Because the Lord is on my right hand I shall not be moved" (or shaken). The one thing that remains unshaken for ever is the "soul, who on Jesus has leaned for repose." To such an one, the Lord is not outside but in. He is in me, and I in Him, complete in Him—blessed union—and because of this I shall not be shaken, nothing shall be able to budge me. Christ dwells in my heart by faith. I have been crucified with Him, now He lives in me. The life I now live in the world, amidst all its darkness, I live by the faith of the Son of God, not by my own faith. When I saw this it changed my whole outlook.

Do not fret and fume about your weakness, your failures, your circumstances, etc. Get down on to the "*I died*," and you will find that your life is *hid with Christ in God*. What will be the result? The life you live in the world will be lived in the power of His faith, and you will not be moved. Heaven and earth will certainly pass away, but He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever. Shall we set up our banners together: "We shall not be moved," because His grace and power are unbounded. What a wonderful salvation is ours!

"God's Fellow-Workers."

By Mrs. Penn-Lewis.

"**W**E are God's fellow-workers" (1 Cor. iii. 9) who "watch for souls as those that shall give account" (Heb. xiii. 17)* therefore:

(1). Seek to meet souls on their own level and to look at difficulties from their standpoint (1 Cor. ix. 22). Give them sympathy (1 Pet. iii. 8, m), but gently lead their thoughts away from the human to the Divine viewpoint. Give encouragement, and do not cast them down (1 Thes. ii. 11, v. 14). Always teach them that the ground of their peace is the priceless Blood of Christ, not their feelings or experiences.

(2). Seek to be but a voice used to direct souls to Christ. Be willing to pass out of sight and be forgotten, and do not allow your thoughts to dwell upon the honour of being "used." See 2 Cor. xii. 15 A.V., John i. 37, and iii. 26-30.

(3). *Fear the human impress* upon the souls you help, for that must pass away. Covet to be but an instrument through whom the Holy Spirit can work unhindered. (Col. i. 29, Rom. xv. 18).

(4). Seek grace to discern the working of God in souls, so as to co-operate with Him, and be able to wait with, and for, Him in His "long patience" (Jas. v. 7). Fear to push souls beyond their measure and thus hinder His work in them. See Isa. xlii. 3, 4: 2 Cor. vi. 1. Pray for heavenly wisdom to know the "grace" wherein a soul stands experimentally (Rom. v. 2), that you may lead it on to the next stage. Never scold those who do not "see" all at once: God is tender with His children. He does not force them on, but "allures" them (Job xxxvi. 16, m.) See John xvi. 12, and 1 Cor. iii. 2.

(5). Seek earnestly to know the "silence of Jesus," and never talk of "where people are" in their spiritual growth. The 'measuring rod' is for ourselves as to *our* limits, not for others (2 Cor. x. 12-17, m.) Give diligence to cultivate the unity of the Spirit and do not dwell upon 'divisions,' but pour out the love of God upon all who appear to misjudge you. Enter into the interests of others (Rom. xv. 2). Be fervent in prayer and silent in speech over all un-Christlikeness (1 Pet. iv. 8).

(6). Seek to manifest that lowliness of mind which makes it easy to take the lowest place (Phil. ii. 3). Never argue, nor enter into discussions that 'gender strife' (2 Tim. ii. 23). Note the symptoms of the soul-sickness described in 1 Tim. vi. 4 (margin), that you may not "minister questions, rather than godly edifying." (1 Tim. i. 4, A.V.)

(7). Do not dogmatize over anything, much less 'doubtful' things, nor be anxious for others to walk by your light (note 1 Cor. vii. 17). Lead souls to search the written Word of God to know the mind of the Spirit for themselves. God will teach honest souls. Give credit to others for integrity of heart in

desiring to do the will of God. (See Rom. xiv. 1, A.V.)

(8). Seek to live in unbroken communion with God, so that there may be a continuous inflow of Divine life to quicken all past knowledge of His truth. '*Light*' *without life is our danger*. Witnesses are needed to tell out what they know, not what they think. To such testimony the Holy Spirit will bear witness also (John xv. 26, 27), and the Word will not merely lodge in the intellect of others, but as living 'seed' will sink into the heart and bring forth life eternal (2 Cor. iii. 6).

(9). If we teach from last week's experience without the fresh life of God passing through us to-day, we shall become as 'sounding brass,' empty and powerless; but if we draw direct from the Living Lord, *He* will make use of our capabilities, old experiences, and knowledge—a very different thing from *our* making use of them, and depending upon them instead of upon Him.

(10). A soul that is an 'instrument' has nothing to 'maintain'; does not cling to 'views' nor seek to fight *for* God. It prefers not to say 'I think,' or 'This is my opinion,' lest it should intrude between God and others. Therefore it says 'It is written,' and leaves the rest to Him. See the attitude of the Lord Jesus in John vii. 16, 17.

(11). Spiritual life and practical results must run side by side. The 'deep things of God' are to lead you to be spent out for souls. So often practical people are too absorbed in being practical, and spiritual people in being spiritual. Others have a right to gauge our 'spirituality' by our 'practicality.' We need the balance, to be healthy. See 1 Cor. ii. 10; Eph. iv. 1, 2; 1 Thes. ii. 12; 2 Cor. vi. 4, 9; 1 Pet. ii. 12.

(12). Above all things press on to know God, and the deepest meaning of the life "hid with Christ in God," leaving behind all craving for emotional experiences and 'manifestations.' You must ceaselessly 'press on' if what you already know is not to lose its power. See Phil. iii. 10-14.

Let your ceaseless position, as to the past, be:—
"I have been crucified with Christ" (Gal. ii. 20)
whilst every moment, under the cleansing blood, you "present yourselves unto God as ALIVE from the dead, and
your members as INSTRUMENTS" (Rom. vi. 13).

"If it die . . ."

"If it die," oh, hear the message
Falling from thy Lord,
"If it die," much fruit it beareth,
Tis thy Saviour's Word.

Thou shalt learn the blessed secret,
He shall live that dies,
From a life poured out in secret
Shall a harvest rise."

(Freda Hanbury-Allen.)

* References from Revised Version.

Possessing the Land.

A Bible Study by Captain Allen Cooper.

1. The Promise:

"Arise, go over this Jordan, thou and all the people, unto the land which I do give them . . . Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you." (Josh. i. 2-3).

2. The Conditions:

"Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do all the law . . . turn not from it . . . Thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then shalt thou make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success." (Josh. i. 7-8).

3. The "Army List" of the Forces:

See Numbers i—the protective forces for wilderness warfare. These, it is interesting to note, were numbered by their "polls." This word means "skulls" and in the original is the same as the word meaning "Calvary" in the New Testament. This is the "hall mark" of the warrior.

Numbers xxvi—the forces selected to go in to possess. They were divided as follows:

i. Fighting units—those armed, who went always before the people.

ii. Ministering units—the Levites, whose sole task was the ministry of worship.

iii. General Service units—those to whom no special task had been allotted, but whose duty was the humdrum of life.

4. The Order of march for all units:

Josh. i. 14: "Ye shall pass before your brethren armed (marg. marshalled by fives) and help them, until . . ." The order of the march "by fives" of the Church of God is set out in 1 Cor. i. 27, 28:

i. *The foolish*—who, having no wisdom of their own, do not think it clever to doubt God.

ii. *The weak*—who, having no strength of their own, do not oppose God.

iii. *The base*—who, having no influence of their own, do not lean on human help for the furtherance of God's work.

iv. *The despised*—who, having no position of their own, find it easier to be separated unto God.

v. *The "are nots"*—who have lost their identity in being crucified with Christ. It is no longer "I." These are God's great reserve.

5. The Spiritual Position of the People:

i. They had been to Punon (= 'ore pit,' a place of wealth). Num. iii. 42, 43; where they had looked at the uplifted Healer. Therefore they had all passed from death to life.

ii. They had escaped the Council of Hell (Num. xxii-xxv) comprising Balaam, Balak, and divination, by the fiat of God. Therefore they were a people over whom Satan had no power.

iii. They had escaped the plague (Num. xxv) which slew those who *would* mix with Midian. They were a separated people.

6. The nature of loyalty demanded of the forces:

In the four mentions of death in Num. xxvi. are embodied great principles which are not permitted to obtain in the armies of God:

i. *Discontent* (ver. 9): Korah, Dathan and Abiram, as sons of Kohath, had as their sacred task the burden of the Testimony on their shoulders (Num. iv., vii.) By permitting discontent to reign over them they

(a) Organised a rebellion against Moses and Aaron; (b) Failed to see the importance of the meeting-place between God and the people; and (c) Struck a blow at public worship, which was not possible until the Ark arrived at its resting place.

God is dependent upon those who bear the Testimony to-day. Read 2 Cor. v. 19-21 with Esther iv. 14.

ii. *Lack of Vision* (ver. 19). Compare Gen. xxxviii. 7-10. Onan was more occupied with himself than with the Hope of his people, the Seed Who should bruise the serpent's head, and could not visualise the Coming of the King.

iii. *Mixture in Worship* (ver. 61). Nadab and Abihu, as sons of Aaron, had the right of entry into the holy places, but in doing so, ignored the holiness of God's law and offered their own fire.

It is essential that God's ministering servants separate themselves from any departure from His commandments.

iv. *Murmuring* (ver. 65). All who said 'Let us go back' because of the hardness of the way, showed they had not appreciated the God-given goal before them.

Let us mind the goal, not the difficult way.

7. Two notable exceptions—Caleb and Joshua:

These two were faithful, and against immense odds declined to associate themselves with the murmurers. It is interesting to note that Caleb was a Gentile, and his name means 'a dog.' It surely symbolises both Jew and Gentile who, rising above themselves and their surroundings, will rise and enter the Land together as "one in Christ Jesus" when He appears.

8. The entrance—Joshua iii.

i. *The greatest of all tests*, walking into a flood-tide of the Jordan. A small company of priests, still bearing the burden of the Testimony, dared to believe and to obey and God used them to stand firm in the midst of Jordan "till all the people were passed clean over."

ii. *The greatest of all assurances*. The step of faith having been taken, God swept back the waters a great distance (see Ps. cxiv. 5). Under cover of a blood-stained Mercy Seat and the Word of God (on tables inside the Ark) they went in to possess.

Without doubt the moment of our entrance into our possessions will be when the flood tide of the enemy effort is highest, but God is calling His little band who will dare, with the Testimony of Jesus Christ—crucified, risen, crowned and coming—at His bidding to make that way open for the people to pass through into the rest of His promises.

9. The weapons against the enemy's gates, Jericho:

Nothing is more disconcerting in warfare than to be encompassed by a silent army. This army was contemptible in appearance; no show of force, no action to show its intentions, no searching for weak spots in the defence; armed with trumpets only, against strong walls. But they were "through"—that is, assured of victory—in spirit, and that quiet, orderly, confident persistence that came from touch with the Captain of the Lord's host, would un-nerve the stoutest resistance, as they marched daily round the city.

Of His Church our Lord declared, "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. xvi. 18). But 'the gates' *do not come to us*: we go up against them, and as they are spirit-held gates, only spirit power can break them down. Hence, our 'weapons' are not 'of the flesh' (2 Cor. x. 4) but they are 'mighty through God to the pulling down of strong-holds,' in the hands of the 'are nots,' who alone are qualified to handle spiritual weapons.

On the Watch Tower for Prayer.

By E. M. Leathes.

Gal. 6:12
Prayer, Revival of 21

"I beseech you brethren, by the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me" (Rom. xv. 30, R.V.). "For ours is not a conflict with mere flesh and blood, but with the despotisms, the Empires, the forces that control and govern this dark world—the spiritual hosts of evil arrayed against us in the heavenly warfare." (Eph. vi. 12, Weymouth).

I WOULD recommend every reader to study carefully the little booklet by Mrs. Penn-Lewis called "A Revival of Prayer Needed."* If you have read it before, you will probably see the message in a new light and find it vital for this present hour. Referring to James v. 17, she says of Elijah: "This man had power to close the heavens, yet he was a man 'of like nature (R.V.m.) with us . . .'. To be able to pray so that the heavens close *over a whole country* is work indeed! . . . But prayer is a definite work, greater and vaster in its issues than any other service to be done on earth, if the soul understood *how* to pray."

Such prayer indeed is greater in its issues than all the power of our army, navy and air force together: but Elijah was a man who knew his God. Mrs. Penn-Lewis continues: "What we need is a mind open to the possibilities of such prayer, and to set ourselves to *know God* . . . If you could learn to know God, to know the mind of God—when God wanted such and such a thing done—you could pray like Elijah . . . he knew *the Will of God* so as to pray the prayer that worked for Israel. You too could touch the whole country, yea the whole world, in the same way if you knew God's Will; for prayer *according to the Will of God* 'availeth much in its working.'"

But to pray as Elijah prayed entailed much suffering and privation for himself. He had to be willing to be the scape-goat upon whom all the wrath of the king and the nation would fall, as being the cause of those three-and-a-half years of famine. If we would pray the prayer that 'works' to-day, we must be willing for the deepest work of the Cross in our own lives, for if Satan has any ground in us upon which he can fasten, or if there is any hidden self-motive, or desire for our own comfort, there will be no results from our prayers.

We are living in times of infinitely vaster issues than Elijah's day. We are hearing of tragedies and catastrophies that shock and horrify us, and of deeds of brutality which are almost inconceivable; but though governments and authorities are strenuously striving to create a settlement that will bring order and peace, they seem to be utterly blind to the inconceivable magnitude and dynamic strength of the prince of the power of the air, who is massing his invisible forces for a final drive for world dominion. This has been his aim from the beginning, and Hitler and Stalin are but pawns on a chess board, moved about by the master hand of Satan himself.

"BUT GOD . . ."

But let us remember that God has His supreme purpose and plan for this world, and He is calling into fellowship with Himself men and women who know their God, to co-operate in spirit with Him in this last great battle of the present Age. Men may talk of a Federation of Nations and a New Europe, but it will only develop into the reign of the Man of Sin, to whom the Dragon will give his seat and authority (2 Thes. ii. 8; Rev. xiii. 1-8). Nothing but the personal return of Christ to take upon His Shoulders the government of this world will ever restore peace to this poor warring earth. But Satan knows that his time is short, and his doom certain.

Again Mrs. Penn-Lewis refers to the uplifted hands of Moses on the Mount. "What was Moses doing?" she writes: "Surely lifting his hands against the unseen foe at the back of Amalek's attack on the people of God . . . and in that position of unbroken resistance Moses had to remain until victory was complete. It was not such easy work as his work of supplication, for it meant prolonged suffering until the victory was gained . . ." So great was the strain upon Moses that he had to be supported by Aaron and Hur!

This leads us to the writer's reference to Paul's appeal to the believers in Rome, "I beseech you that ye *strive together with me* in your prayers for me." She writes: "If two people pray, and one is intense, with a deep purpose towards God, and the other is just as weak, without purpose, without intensity, then there is no 'striving together' in their united prayer." The Apostle needed prayer, so does every other messenger who goes out in the teeth of the foe with God's Message to-day. They need a mighty gripping force of prayer behind them—prayer that they may be kept in the will of God, prayer for open doors, prayer that while the Day of Grace is still with us, no doors shall be shut that God would have entered.

"It is not more power that we are needing" (to quote the booklet again) "but more definite prayer, prayer focussed on the right points. We have been vaguely praying 'O Lord, send down Thy Spirit,' instead of taking pains to find out the need, and pray on the need itself." Then we are referred to Ephes. vi., and the victory of prayer through the uplifted hands of the armour-clad Christian.

"The prayer warrior learns in much suffering something of the fight with the spiritual hosts of wickedness and of the 'wrestling' in hand-to-hand warfare; but 'having overthrown them all' (Conybeare) in their personal attacks, he now 'stands unshaken' on the hill-top to watch and share in the world-war of the foes of God against His Church. In time the vision grows clearer, and he sees that it is a world-battle, the final 'war of the ages': then he hears the Master's voice, 'Sit down with Me'—'from henceforth expecting'—and he settles down to wait and watch, and hold the weapon of victory with steady faith, irrespective of feeling or even a sense

* Inner Life Series, No. 14 (see Booklist).

of ability to 'hold on' until the end (Rev. ii. 26) . . . Here is the *focussed* prayer of the prayer-warrior standing on the hill of his heavenly position 'IN Christ Jesus.' With the Lord he watches the battle to-day [in Finland, in Germany, and other countries] and holds the 'rod of God'—the Word of Victory through the Christ of Calvary—over the foe in the place where the conflict rages, and settles down in spirit to a quiet dogged, steadfast holding up 'holy hands' unto God until that phase of the conflict is over . . ."

Focussed prayer! Remember that our warfare is not against "flesh and blood," and that Satan will camouflage his points of attack, and unless we "watch" as well as pray, we shall fail to focus prayer where the need is greatest. Let us conclude with a few 'focal points' where prayer is needed at the present time:

Let us stand with all the Christians in Finland, that they may hold fast to their faith in God, and praise Him that, though they have lost so much, He has answered prayer in that the Finnish people have not come under the godless rule of Russia.

PRAY for the sending forth of the Word of God in all countries, and for the Bibles and Gospels distributed among the Russian prisoners, that they may be read, and that by the illumination of the Holy Spirit many may be brought to the knowledge of salvation through Christ.

PRAY for revival among the true members of Christ's mystical Body, those whom He has chosen to share in His rulership over the nations. Many, though engaged in Christian work, still need the release of their spirits from selfish objectives. The result is that prayer meetings are lifeless. Many come so bowed down and crushed by personal burdens that they are not free for the Holy Spirit to express through them the needs of the world (*cf.* Rom. viii. 26).

PRAY for our Government, that God will raise up men who will stand for righteousness, who will seek to know the will of God and openly declare it, and who will have courage to denounce all compromise with wrong. Pray against any evil or psychic power being exercised upon any member of the Government, or men in authority.

PRAY that all lying propaganda may be exposed and disproved, that all Satan's deceptions may be laid bare and overturned.

PRAY that the nations who are on the side of right and justice may realise their utter helplessness against the state of things that exists to-day, apart from God's aid, and that a permanent peace will only be brought about by the Return of Christ to reign over the earth, and the casting of Satan into the abyss. That knowing this, the nations may humble themselves before God, confessing the sin of their increasing departure from Him and His laws.

Satan *World Power behind* The Power behind World Upheaval. How Satan became "the Prince of this World." By F. J. Huegel.*

THE flagrant realism of Holy Writ is the most amazing thing on record. God defeated! The crown of creation, man, a veritable cathedral, in ruins. The fallen Prince, once the Son of the Morning, introducing himself into God's fair Garden to wrest man from the hands of his Creator, and to plunge him into the night of alienation from his Father and his God. A darker picture could not be conceived . . . Why does the Spirit of the Almighty inspire the sacred writer with such an awful vision? The Crown of Creation snatched from God's Hand and made to serve diabolical purposes! Why are such things recorded?

These things are recorded because they are true. But how could Satan have achieved so amazing a stroke? The story is found in the third chapter of Genesis. Man is placed in a Garden. The purity of Edenic God-consciousness is something which only the inspired writer could describe. For some reason, which is not disclosed, the Evil One is permitted to enter the Garden. Man is to be tempted. His loyalty to God is to be challenged. A choice is to be made. Obviously this had to be. If God had not created man free, with the power of choice, and with the capacity of utter self-determination, he could never fulfil the hopes of His Maker. Man's devotion

to God, if it was to have any value, must spring from personal volition. It must be put to the severest test; one in which the possibility of disloyalty should be paramount.

God takes an awful risk. "That old serpent the devil" is permitted to steal into the garden. How entrancing this account of the fall of man becomes when we get beyond the oriental symbolism to the eternal truths embodied. Of course there are trees. Life is a tree. "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die": thus spoke the Lord of Life. What does it mean? It means that man's freedom and joy and privileges had but one boundary. The "tree of the knowledge of good and evil" was DISOBEDIENCE. So long as self should not dictate and God should be obeyed from the heart, all would be well. Man should not pivot on "self." God should be his centre. God's love obviously would place no restrictions save those which man's own highest good should necessitate . . .

However much a father may love his child, there must be certain restrictions—the greater the love the more binding they become. In Eden all was beauty and pristine loveliness. Sin had not yet prepared pit-falls for innocent feet. "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest eat." Naturally. There was absolutely nothing to harm. But one thing was

* From "That old Serpent—the Devil," by F. J. Huegel. Marshall Morgan & Scott Ltd., London.

forbidden. It, too, was symbolised by a tree. What was it? Let Satan answer the question. We have lost great wealth by not getting to the basis of this Edenic tragedy.

Now the one thing outlawed in Eden was the very thing Satan must thrust man into, if he was to get hold of his heart strings. How did he go about his task?

First of all we must bear in mind that he approached the first man as he ever approaches man. He is an invisible spiritual being. He always disguises his true motive. He comes, to use Paul's word, as an angel of light. "Now the serpent was more subtle . . ."—he began by asking a question. Bear in mind, the question, from man's viewpoint, just naturally raises itself. So it seems, but back of the question is the Evil One. "And he said unto the woman, Yea hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?"

Oh, the immeasurable depths of that question. A book could be written on the psychology of it. Have you ever tried to gauge the power of a seemingly innocent and inadvertent question? . . .

The Birth of "Self."

"Hath God said, ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" How queer! Am I not free? Why these limitations? Why should I not do as I please? If God really loved me, would He thus restrict me? A whole chain of questions surge in upon man. It is only after the question has done its deadly work that the Serpent flatly contradicts God's command, "ye shall not eat of it; neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die," boldly declaring, "Ye shall not surely die." "*Ye shall be as gods . . .*" There you have the key. The Serpent begins by questioning and ends by affirming. Affirming what? That the forbidden fruit (disobedience) will lead to greater freedom, more power, a fuller life. The tree was seemingly so "good," and oh, so "pleasant to the eyes." To be as gods. To do utterly as one pleases. Oh, how "good." How the way of personal caprice shone in that hour. Eve took the step. What step? Why, she gave birth to "SELF." She would be as a god. In a word she would love her "self." When you get to the roots of sin, whatever its outward expression, you find "self"—simple, unadulterated, simon-pure selfishness.

It takes us back to the passages in Ezekiel and Isaiah: "Thou hast been in Eden." "Thou wast upon the holy mountain of God." "Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty." "I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God." The serpent had cunningly injected into man's life-blood the deadly principle of "self." That was sufficient. Loving dependence upon a loving God was at an end. When we begin to eat of the tree of "self," the tree of life *ipso facto* loses its savour. There would hardly have been any need to drive man out of Eden and to place cherubims with flaming swords to keep the way of the tree of life. I know that when I began to eat of the tree of self-love, the tree of life lost its charm and was forsaken. Furthermore, you can't have both God and "self." It is either one or the other.

Now Satan puts on the fireworks, so to speak, so

that man may not discover that the drop from God-consciousness to self-consciousness is a plunge into spiritual death. For a while it is all so "pleasant" to the eyes, so "good," so like being a veritable god. We fondle "self" and oh, how sweet. How good to be free. But at last Satan's fireworks give out; the flame of "self-love" reduces itself to the ashes of death. We are plunged into the night of separation from God. "And the eyes of them both were opened and they knew that they were naked." Stripped of the glory of God. The rebellion which broke out in heaven ages before, breaks out on earth. "Self" has challenged God's sovereignty, and cast down his rule.

How terrible, I repeat; the facts revealed in Holy Writ as regards the origin of evil. God does not hide the fact that the great cathedral which He had so carefully reared, has collapsed. Man, for whom earth had been so painstakingly prepared, has become God's enemy. Satan has triumphed. He is now the "god of this world," he is now supreme in the affairs of earth.

By choosing "self" man has unconsciously adopted the life-principle which animates the "prince of this world" and has acknowledged his government. God will not coerce man to love Him and to obey Him. Man must abide by the consequences of his choice. Deceived by the Serpent, he has preferred the false greatness of self-love; then in the unhappy realm of bloated pride, which is spiritual death, he shall live. "Because thou has eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee saying that thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it thou wast taken; for dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return . . ."

How great and good, yet perfect, God is, even when He fails. His failures, let it be understood, are the failures of infinite love—a love which takes all the risks involved in the creation of a man who could, if he chose to do so, turn against the Hands that fashioned him. But God's failure is rather *man's failure to love Him perfectly*. He might have done so, as the Second Adam, the Son of Man, reveals. Furthermore, God's failure, great as it seems, is made the occasion for a yet more overwhelming manifestation of Love. Love will make defeat the occasion for an infinite multiplication of itself, in which the hellish work of the Deceiver-Prince shall be undone, completely and for ever.

But God was not taken by surprise by what the Enemy achieved in the Garden. He had foreseen it all. He would over-rule it all and bring out of it infinite good. He does not curse man. He curses the serpent. It is one thing to be deceived, it is another thing to be the prime agent in causing evil. Immediately comes the promise of a Redeemer. God shall not be permanently frustrated in His plans as regards man. In the fullness of time the Messiah would come, reversing the processes provoked by the serpent's lie, by constituting Himself as the Second Adam, invulnerable even in the immeasurable testings of Calvary, the Federal Head of a Redeemed Race.

To the serpent the Lord says: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel . . ."

The seed of the woman at last appears. A woman had been the door for Satan. A woman shall be the door for Christ. How amazing are the plans of God. Satan wins in Eden. But his victory, foreseen, was already being woven into the pattern of the Redemption of the Son of God. In the final consummation it would be made to serve the glorious purposes of the Most High God, out of which would come a family of redeemed men, fashioned after the likeness of Christ—a New Race springing from the Second Adam that should for ever triumph over "that old serpent the devil," and fully vindicate and truly glorify the God of Heaven.

* * *

The "course of this world," Paul says (Eph. ii. 2) is governed by the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience. In the garden the serpent, disguised as an angel of light, promising greater power and glory than that which man possessed, was able to inject into his heart the principle of self-love. It plunged man from God-consciousness into self-consciousness. It was as if you suddenly turned out the electric light. Before, the thin wires in the bulb were unseen. All you saw was light. After the turning the switch, all you are able to see are the cold dead wires. Man sinks down into "the vessel of the soul," he becomes "flesh" (Gen. vi. 3). This terrible devotion to "self" has become transmitted to all men.

Now *the basic principle of Satan's existence is "self."* So the affinity is established. See the nations of the earth in a frantic scramble for more power. See the children of men consumed with the fires of self-love. Earth is plunging madly toward the abyss, because Satan continues to fan the flaming greed for more wealth, more power, more show, more pleasure—in a word, "self." That is what the Scriptures mean by saying that men in the unregenerate state walk "according to the prince of the power of the air." That is what Paul means by saying that Satan is "the god of this world." That is what Christ means by saying that the Devil is "the prince of this world." That is what is meant in Holy Writ by the amazing affirmation that "that the world lieth in the Evil One."

* * *

These extracts from Ch. 3 and 4 of Mr. Huegel's book are given because they so clearly answer the "WHY?" that is in many hearts in these days of world tragedy. That we may not leave the matter there, we quote the opening sentences of the author's last chapter.—Ed.

If there are those who feel that in the picture I have painted there is an overdue prevalence of the darker hues, I am so glad now, in the closing chapter, to literally splash the canvas with flaming colours. Terrible as it all is, it is but a moment in God's great clock. Satan's rebellion will be put down and wiped out for ever. Then in the light of eternity we will

discern the true meaning of the momentary process, opened with the fall of Lucifer, son of the morning, and closed when he is cast for ever into the lake of fire. The cloud which for a brief day appeared in God's spotless sky disappears never to return.

Notes from the Book Room.

WE are now able to record once more, to the glory of God, that the whole cost of printing, postage, and office expenses in connection with the publication of "The Overcomer" during 1939, were covered by the free-will offerings of its readers. We praise Him for this token of His good hand upon us, and also for the thousands of testimonies to definite blessing through this little magazine. We wish it were possible to write personally to all the friends who send these words of encouragement, and so often give us a glimpse of their own difficulties, and the Lord's wonderful over-rulings and leadings: but we ask each one to accept our true sympathy and thanks. We would specially remind readers that the month preceding the issue of a new number is a month of very intensive work and pressure, and that many letters which need a reply, received at such times, are of necessity put aside until later.

Some of our readers in the United States have begged for news of the personal well-being and safety of those responsible for "The Overcomer." To these dear friends we would just say that Bournemouth is considered a more or less "safe" area, and there is no question of our removing elsewhere on account of war conditions. But "Psalm 91" is our real safe-guard, and we are kept in perfect peace, our minds stayed upon Jehovah. Thus far, the literature work continues without hindrance, except for the rising cost of almost everything—which will affect the work more later on as books need to be re-printed. We know, however, that "He Who has led will lead," and will enable for all that in His Will.

"Nothing lies beyond the reach of prayer, except that which lies outside the Will of God."

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PRELIMINARY ANNOUNCEMENT.

**THE TWENTY-FIRST ANNUAL CONFERENCE
FOR CHRISTIAN WORKERS**

in connection with

The Overcomer

will (D.V.) take place at

"Slavanka"

Southbourne, Hampshire

from

JULY 8th to 13th, 1940

Arrangements for speakers, etc., are not yet complete, but Bible Readings on the Message of the Cross will be given each morning by

REV. A. R. BOUGHEN.

We also hope to have with us, among others, Revs. George Harper, J. W. Brown, Arthur Harries, B. G. Lovelace, John Pritchard, Capt. J. C. Metcalfe, M.C., and on July 12th Miss A. Mildred Cable will speak on the "World Outlook for Prayer and Action."

INFORMATION: Full particulars of arrangements and programme will be ready at the end of April, and may be obtained (stamped envelope) from the Overcomer Book Room, or from the Conference Secretary:

Mr. H. E. Hoyton, "Hafod," Merstham, Surrey.

The Guest Fund.

We warmly thank all who have contributed to the Conference Guest Fund in former years, and trust that, in spite of the many and urgent calls of these days, some who are unable to come themselves will be able to contribute toward the expenses of a 'substitute.' The blessing of God in the past has had its repercussion in many centres as His servants have returned to their work for Him with a new vision of His power and the victory made possible for us by the atoning work of Christ. Our prayer is that the change of date and place may bring to the Conference many 'newcomers' to share in the blessing of the 1940 gathering.

Gifts may be sent to the Editor, "Cartref," Westbourne Park Road, Bournemouth.

Volume
XXI.

July
A.D. 1940.

NEW SERIES.

FIDEI COTICULA CRUX
(The Cross is the Touchstone of Faith)

The Overcomer

*A Quarterly Magazine for Christian Workers
on the deep things of God.*

*"I will trust
and not be afraid."*

Isa. xii. 2.

**"And the hostile princes and rulers He shook off from Himself, and
BOLDLY DISPLAYED THEM AS HIS CONQUESTS
when by the Cross He triumphed over them." Col. ii, 15 (Weymouth).**

THE "OVERCOMER" BOOK ROOM,
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*Published (D.V.) Quarterly on the first Thursday in January, April, July, October.
For terms of issue, see inside cover.*

THE OVERCOMER.

FOUNDED BY MRS. PENN-LEWIS, 1909.
Issued by the Council of the Overcomer Literature Trust.
EDITOR: M. N. GARRARD.

VOL. XXI. JULY, A.D. 1940. Number 3.

Published Quarterly on the first Thursday in January, April, July and October.

TERMS OF ISSUE.

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PLEASE NOTE.

All letters in relation to "The Overcomer," orders for the Book Room and all matters relating thereto, should be addressed:

**The Manager, Overcomer Book Room,
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Bournemouth, England.**

N.B.—Letters to the Editor to the same address with a stamped envelope enclosed if reply is needed. (Foreign correspondents excepted).

Remittances of every kind should be made payable to The Overcomer Literature Trust.

MONEY ORDERS PAYABLE AT BOURNEMOUTH, ENGLAND.

Will our correspondents also kindly note that the Book Room is closed on Bank Holidays, and that the Postal Regulations during the holiday season make delays at such times unavoidable.

Centre Distributors

Are at liberty to accept contributions from those who receive the paper, and forward to the office quarterly.

Change of Address. No alterations can be made during last fortnight before issue, when all the wrappers have already been prepared. Readers are asked to assist the workers by care in this matter. Please give OLD ADDRESS as well as new.

AUSTRALIA. The "Overcomer" may be obtained from Mr. H. P. Smith, The Keswick Book Depot, 315 Collins Street, Melbourne.

MONTHLY CONFERENCE

at Eccleston Conference Hall,
Eccleston Street, Victoria, London, S.W.

Meetings for Christian Workers are held on the first Thursday of each month, October to July (inclusive). Owing to War conditions, some alterations have been necessary for the Winter months.

PLEASE NOTE PRESENT ARRANGEMENTS AND HOURS OF MEETING.

July 4.—Quarterly Conference.

11 a.m. Prayer and Fellowship.
3 p.m. Rev. John Pritchard.

AUGUST and SEPTEMBER—NO MEETINGS.

Oct. 3.—Quarterly Conference.

Days of Prayer and Conference

in connection with

The Overcomer

at Slavanka, Southbourne
(Near Bournemouth)

July 8th to 13th, 1940.

CANCELLED.

After much prayer for guidance, the Council has cancelled the Conference. Up to the present time (June 20th) the arrangements have been proceeding but since these islands have now become the battle front of the West, conditions are changed. The majority of people are unable to leave their work spheres of influence, and the place of all who have power to help or advise others is at their accustomed post. The Council deeply regret that, for this and other reasons, it will not be possible to hold the Conference in July. We suggest that those who hoped to join us seek to "mobilise the prayer forces" in their own districts in these days of grave peril.

Note.—We are glad also to call attention to the following meetings for prayer and fellowship arranged by some of our readers:
Birmingham: Bible Witness Fellowship, "Kelvedon," Frederick Road, Wyde Green. First Wednesday at 3 p.m.

Bootle: Hebron Hall, Akenside Street. Monthly Prayer Meeting second Friday, at 8 p.m.

Cardiff: Weekly Prayer Meeting. Thursday at 3 p.m. 1 Lounge, Y.M.C.A. (by Taff Station).

Isleworth: For particulars of new arrangements, please enquire of Miss Gravatt, 37, St. John's Road, Isleworth.

Isle of Wight: Prayer Meeting every Saturday, 7.30 p.m., 42, Carisbrooke Road, Newport.

Liverpool: Monthly Prayer Meeting. Third Wednesday 3 p.m. at 55, Granby Street, Princes Park.

Manchester: Prayer Meeting second Monday, 7 p.m., in No. Committee Room, Houldsworth Hall, 90, Deansgate.

NOTE ALTERED TIME. Enquiries: Mr. W. Astley, 28, Elms Road, Didsbury, M/c. 3.

"Le Vainqueur" (The "Overcomer.")

A magazine issued quarterly, consisting of articles from "The Overcomer," translated into French. Edited and issued free by Madame G. Brunel, 3 bis, rue des Moullins, Nîmes, Gard, France.

Miss Cope, 19, Dalmeny Crescent, Heath Road, Hounslow, Middlesex, acts as Treasurer for Mme Brunel. She will gladly send a copy of "Le Vainqueur" on application.

TO READERS IN THE U.S.A. AND CANADA.

Our Price List in American currency is now very out of date. Because of the fluctuating state of exchange, it is possible to print a new one, but if the amount in British money is stated to the Postmaster at any American or Canadian P.O., he will make out a Money Order for the correct sum. Or dollar bills may be sent, in which case literature to the value of the prevailing rate of exchange will be forwarded. \$1.00 = 4 shillings, normal times.

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THE OVERCOMER *Love*

Walking in Love.

"And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment." —Phil. i. 9.

A LONG what lines should our prayers for the saints run? Surely along the line of God's great purpose for them, the perfecting of the work He has begun in them. Prayer must be a co-operation of the soul with God in thought and desire and constant will-ing. So, though the Philippian Christians were sufferers on account of the Gospel, Paul does not pray for the cessation of their sufferings—it may not be well that this suffering should cease in view of the perfecting of their Christian characters.

In the mystery of its production, this perfection of character is LOVE—love abounding more and more. Love is the state of soul in which it acts utterly free from self-seeking. Love is a principle within you which enables you to overcome all the limitations set upon your life by your sense of "self" and the interests of self.

Note that in Paul's prayer love has no object. It is a *principle*, which all know more or less, and the prayer for the saints is that this principle should abound, should flood the entire being, burying and destroying all that begins and ends in *self*. This love should abound more and more, not merely in intensity of feeling or in range of objects, but in "knowledge and in all judgment." These two together mean wisdom, the power to recognise, to sense, the things that are excellent. Love, joined to knowledge and judgment, gives the power to distinguish and rightly appraise the things that differ; to distinguish not only between the good and the bad, but between the good and the better, the better and the best.

A gift of God.

And this Love with wisdom and knowledge is not an outgrowth of your regenerated nature, but a *gift of God* for which you are to pray. There is no greater prayer on behalf of the people of God.

So we see that the "fruits of righteousness" (ver. 11) means the perfection of Christian character, which God will finish with a view to its standing the test in the Day of Jesus Christ. The essence of such perfection is love abounding more and more—the very flooding of the soul, the overwhelming and possessing of it by love, so that its spiritual sensibilities may be keen and active in relation to things that excel: that is, that we may duly appraise spiritual realities, just as really as men are able to distinguish material values in the material world. Even Love cannot clothe itself in the glory of the fruits of righteousness unless it be betrothed to spiritual knowledge and discernment.

In the second portion of the Ephesian letter the practical outcome of the doctrine of Christ's mystical body may be reckoned to be summarised in these

words: "Be ye followers of God as dear children" (Eph. v. 1). How can we be followers of God? "*Walk in love*, as Christ hath loved us, and given Himself for us" (ver. 2.). The doctrine of the Body of Christ can be merely a "hobby," and as such it is of no value. The devil knows, intellectually, more than all of us about doctrine. It is possible to hold strongly the doctrine of the Body of Christ, and yet to know nothing whatever of this "love abounding" which is the atmosphere in which that Body is to live and move, which determines the tone and quality of our conduct in the relationships of life—husband and wife; parent and child; master and servant.

In the Philippian Epistle, this same love is spoken of as an *inward principle*, stretching forth until it fills the whole soul with its own life and makes it so sensitive to the things of the Spirit as to become highly selective of the highest in preference to the lower, until it blooms forth at last in a beauty of holiness called "the fruits of righteousness." It is made clear that this Love, and the growth of it, is not a mere natural result of holding the doctrine of the Body of Christ, but is a gift of God through His Spirit, and the growth of love is from the ministry of the Spirit.

"Love abounding" is seen throughout this beautiful epistle: how it sees, understands, looks at things. How it tends to behave; how it sacrifices, hopes, trusts, in the world that now is. "Love abounding" sees through all earthly confusion and the smoke of battle, the salvation of God (Ch. i. 12-26). Abounding love sees through all the clouds the sunlight of the love of God—all is well because it has turned out "to the furtherance of the Gospel" (i. 13). Abounding love seeks to conduct itself in a super-human fashion—"let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus" (ii. 5). Abounding love sees clearly and grasps firmly the supreme end of life in Christ, and what the God of all grace has laid up in store for its future inheritance—"I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (iii. 14). Abounding love finds sufficient and suitable supply for all situations, all the way Home (iv. 19). By its God-giver perception, this love is calm in confusion, noble in behaviour, it grasps the meaning of God's promises, and knows no need which God cannot satisfy.

W. S. Jones.

I will hear what God the Lord will speak:
for He will speak peace unto His people,...
but let them not turn again to folly.

Ps. 85:8.

To our Readers.

DEAR FRIENDS,

What a comfort it is to realise that in the Scriptures which point to the end of this age the word of doom and judgment is always joined with the word of mercy and blessing. The mercy follows the judgment, and the end is *Victory for the Lamb*.

I am writing at a time of acute crisis in the awful struggle of the nations. As men and women we are bowed down with the weight of the issues being fought out in the Low Countries in blood and tears, but as those who fear the Name of the Lord there remain to us the promises. Only let us believe that He means what He promises, and that no assault from the pit can affect one word of His.

God is the refuge and strength of His people in all the nations: therefore will not we fear though the earth be removed. Some of us are very near to the centre of the storm, others are further from the sound of the wheels of the chariots. Wherever we may be, let us remember that we are joined together in the Lord, to stand as one for the will of God and the destruction of the work of Satan in all the shaking of mankind which is taking place to-day.

How can we pray; how uphold and strengthen the hands of our brethren at this time? Many of us are watching the situation with anxiety for loved ones and a great longing for our country's cause. As we confess our own sins of unbelief and hardness of heart, we remember and confess the sins of our nation in turning from the living God and His Christ. To us indeed belongeth confusion of face, but to the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against Him, neither have we obeyed the voice of the Lord our God to walk in His laws which He set before us.

Let us plead the 'mercies and forgiveness' in the Holy Name, and a great turning of the people to the true Light, that many amid the shaking of the earth may find their part in His eternal and glorious Kingdom.

Our beloved Lord is the one who says to us to-day, 'Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.' Now is the time to rest our faith upon that word. The enemy's plan is to reduce our prayers to silence by depression and lethargy. Shall we sink under the suggestion that prayer is exhausting, and useless, or shall we take the shield of faith wherewith we shall be able to quench these fiery darts? We are called to join the company of those who by faith subdued kingdoms and obtained promises.

The promises are to those who overcome and are obtained through union with Him Who has overcome: weak men and women, like ourselves, who live in the darkest hours as seeing Him Who is invisible. These receive a Kingdom which cannot be moved, and can declare in the face of all hell, 'Allelujah, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth.'

Shall we of this Testimony join with the blessed company of all faithful people in declaring from earth, amid all the raging of the enemy, that which is declared in heaven, "Worthy is the Lamb that was

slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and blessing."

* * *

I fear the future is bound to bring problems in regard to the details of our work in England. May the Council be guided in everything. I must leave the Editor to write of future activities, and pray that the blessing of God may be continually upon you all.

Peace, perfect peace, the future all unknown.

Jesus we know, and He is on the throne.

Yours in His keeping,

BERNARD W. MATTHEWS.

Bermuda,
20th May, 1940.

Dear Friends,

We are thankful that the Lord has enabled us to send forth another issue of "The Overcomer," and believe that the messages it contains have been given by Him for the present hour of need. It may be that the day of grace is rapidly drawing to a close, and the great task of the Church is unfinished. Shall we not pray that the vision of that task may come upon her as a 'burden' which must be discharged at all costs: that, throwing off the heaviness and lethargy which oppress her, she may labour and fight and pray in union with her victorious Head.

Soldiers of Christ arise
And put your armour on,
Strong in the strength which God supplies
Through His eternal Son.

Clad in this armour, "strong in the Lord and in the conquering power of His might," the gates of hell shall not prevail against those who are 'building' and warring as fellow-workers with Him Who calls us to be His disciples.

In response to some enquiries from the United States, we are glad to say that the Book Room is still able to 'carry on' much as usual. Our mails arrive safely—we do not think any have been lost thus far though sometimes they are longer on the way. We have a good stock of back numbers of "The Overcomer" which we should like to get out, and will gladly send to those who can make good use of them. (Please say about how many can be used).

Again we send our very warm thanks to all who write to us, for their prayers, and for their gifts toward the ministry in our hands. We specially thank all who have remembered the heavy burden of increased postage rates (now double on all magazines, receipts, etc. and greatly increased on parcels and letters).

In a recent broadcast talk, a great English lawyer referred to Elisha and his servant (2 Kings vi.), and said, "We know that 'they that be with us are more than they that be with them,' for millions all over the world are praying for us" in the struggle for Christian civilization. We here at the headquarters of our Testimony are constantly comforted by the knowledge that so many of our readers daily remember us in prayer. A letter just received from Boston tells of a group meeting for special prayer regarding the war and adds: "We are pledged to stand in this gap with you all by His grace. We are all one in Christ Jesus—God grant that we may stand shoulder to shoulder with each other and our blessed Head."

Even since the type was set for this issue, the darkness has deepened over Europe—but "with Him is no darkness at all," and He is with us.

Yours in our Reigning Lord,

M. N. GARRARD.

The Conference at "Slavanka."

It has been found necessary to cancel this Conference (see notice inside front cover).

The Burden of Vision.

Mrs. Penn-Lewis.

THE BURDEN of the valley of vision" (Isa. xxii. 1). The prophets constantly used the word 'burden' to describe the message which God gave them to deliver. Cruden says the word means, among other things, 'a load, or weight of anything, as much as a man can well carry,' a 'burdensome prophecy.' The "Word of the Lord" was to the prophets of old a burden, a load or weight which they were compelled to discharge before they could find relief. The burden was generally connected with vision—not 'visions'—not apparitions or revelations, even in a rightful sense, but vision which is the outcome of an acute spiritual insight, or power to see spiritual realities with the inward eye as clearly as men see with the outward eye the things of earth and time.

The inward spiritual man has special senses, as truly as the outward man has five senses as part of his normal condition. While the "new creation" is in its earlier stages these senses are untrained and undeveloped, but as the inward man grows, the spiritual senses become awakened and unlocked, until the "things not seen" by the outward eye become clearer and clearer to the inward vision. "Having the eyes of your heart enlightened," or "filled with light" (Conybeare) writes the Apostle Paul to the Ephesians; and in Heb. v. 11-14 the "senses" of the "full-grown" believer are said to be needed to "discern good and evil." To discern is to see.

According to an old writer, this spiritual eyesight is quite distinct from the imagination. The imagination too much at work "draws the spirit into the admiration of pleasant pictures instead of true substance," so the "continual exercise of the Cross is very necessary, that by it we may cast down imaginations," and be led into the stage of spiritual development where the "eye of the understanding" sees beyond the working of the imagination. "The understanding of spiritual things by image and mental conception instead of by internal sight," says Bromley, "is a sad effect of the Fall"; but as we progress in spiritual growth we come to "see spiritually as the outward eye materially," understanding by simple vision or insight, the "essences of all things."

This digression is useful in showing the danger of the imagination being inflamed by the adversary to "see" pictures of spiritual things which are but fantasies, useless and even harmful, which keep believers living in an imaginary realm of spiritual delight, and divert them from gaining the true knowledge of God, and the pure, clear, inward sight, which is far above imagination, and enables them to see things as they are in God's sight.

This was the 'burden of vision' which the prophets of old knew, and it meant to them pain and suffering. "The burden of the valley of vision" lay heavy upon the men who had it. "I will weep bitterly; labour not to comfort me," said Isaiah,

because he saw the people given up to joy and gladness when the Lord called to weeping and mourning over the condition of the land. To see is to suffer! To see the world in any measure as God sees it is to suffer. To see sin in its wounding of the heart of God is to suffer. To see men blind and ignorant of the ways of God is to suffer. Yes, vision, in the sense of seeing things as they are, means pain.

And those who have the "burden of the valley of vision" are the "watchmen" given by God to the world and to His people in every generation. They may be called prophets, seers, watchmen, or, as in the New Testament, "witnesses," but they all have the same marks upon them. They have: (1) the burden of vision; (2) the pain of vision, and (3) they bear the penalty and responsibility of vision.

In the days of Eli, it is said, "there was no open vision"; therefore "the Word of the Lord was 'rare' in those days" (1 Sam. iii. 1, R.V.m.); for Eli, the aged priest, placed his family interests before the righteousness of God, and God could not give him 'open vision' for His people. Alas for the people, when the representatives of God lose 'vision' through self-interest brought about by the lawful relationships of life. God must be first in all things if His servants are to be given 'open vision' to communicate His will to the people with authority (see Deut. xxxiii. 8-10 amplifying this, and Matt. x. 34-40, Matt. xii. 46-50). "I will raise Me up a faithful priest," said the Lord to Eli, through the mouth of a man of God (1 Sam. ii. 27, 35), for neither vision nor "voice" could be vouchsafed to him direct whilst he was a partaker of sin, by restraining not the sin in his family (Prov. xxix. 24, 25). So the "open vision" came to a little child who grew up to be the "faithful priest" whom God and Israel needed.

"Where there is no vision the people perish" or "cast off restraint" (Prov. xxix. 18, R.V.), said the Preacher, and "vision" clear spiritual vision, is the great need of the Church in our day; power to see, even though it mean the burden and pain and penalty of sight. But let us note that:

(1) *The watchman becomes a watchman, not by choice, but by finding himself with the burden upon him!*

"O Lord, Thou hast enticed me, and I was enticed: Thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed": cried Jeremiah (Jer. xx. 7, 13). When the Lord revealed Himself one day to him, and putting forth His hand, touched his mouth saying: "Whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak," Jeremiah did not know all that it would mean. He was "enticed" by the Lord, he said, or drawn on into a path from which he could not afterwards retreat, however much it cost him. And with the command to speak, Jeremiah was given the power of vision—or spiritual sight. "Jeremiah, what SEEST thou?" He saw a rod of the almond, or "wakeful

tree," as a symbol of the Lord's watching and hastening the fulfilment of the word which He would give his servant. He saw also a "seething cauldron"—a boiling pot, symbolising evil breaking forth, in the midst of which God would make Jeremiah "a defenced city, and an iron pillar," standing alone with God. "They shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail," said the Lord. Jeremiah was given the power to see the purpose of God, and the condition of the land, and the "burden" and the "pain" were sure to follow, as they truly did, until he often cried out that it was more than he could bear.

It is so to-day with God's witnesses. They are "watchmen" with the burden and pain of vision for the Church of Christ, and find no way of escape from it, any more than the prophets of old. They are to be found in every section of the professing Church, men and women lifting their voices, after secret agony and prayer, against the worldliness, the selfishness, the unrighteousness, and, above all, the thrusting aside in the pulpits of the ATONEMENT OF CALVARY as the only hope for a dying world. God be thanked for the "watchmen" of to-day.

(2) *The watchman has a responsible duty which he is compelled to discharge, whether he will or no.*

"Thus hath the Lord said unto me, Go, set a watchman; let him declare what he seeth . . ." (Isa. xxi. 5). It is his responsibility to say what he sees—not what he wishes, or what he would desire to come to pass, but what he sees! "If the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned, and the sword come and take any person . . . his blood will I require at the watchman's hand" (Ezek. xxxiii. 6). "I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel," said the Lord to Ezekiel. "Warn the wicked . . . warn the righteous man that the righteous sin not . . ." (Ezek. iii. 17-21). And Ezekiel "warned" by telling what he saw! "I looked," "I saw," he repeats many times; "then I spake . . . all the things that the Lord had showed me." The "burden of vision" was upon him, with its responsibility, as well as its pain. The "watchman" must say what he sees, not what the people wish or desire. He is not responsible for the success of his message, nor for its reception. He has but to "deliver his soul."

(3) *The watchmen with the "burden of vision" are the ones who can truly pray.*

"I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem; they shall never hold their peace day nor night" (Isa. lxii. 6). The "burden of vision" impels the believer Godward as well as manward. "Hear the word at My mouth, and give them warning from Me. When I say unto the wicked . . ." (Ezek. iii. 17)! The "watchman" with the "burden of vision" can only keep his vision clear, and "declare what he seeth," as he is in continual communication with the Lord of Hosts, dwelling in the mount with God; or, in Isaiah's language, "on the walls of Jerusalem"—in the place of vision. Aside from the crowd, looking on from a place 'with God' at the doings on earth, he holds not peace day

nor night, crying to God in his spirit with the 'burden of vision,' and holds not peace man-ward when God says "declare what thou seest."

How intensely both the Church and the world need such intercessors—souls with 'the burden of vision' who, "hid with Christ in God," see the whole position from the view-point of God, and not from the circumscribed sphere of earth, or local circumstances—"watchmen on the walls," seeing the "sword," the first signs of the "enemy" attacking in different parts of the world. "And he cried as a lion, O Lord, I stand continually upon the watch tower . . . and am set in my ward every night: and behold here come chariots . . ." (Isa. xxi. 8, 9, R.V.m.).

(4) *The watchman can lose his vision and burden by the least entrance of self-interest.*

"His watchmen are blind, they are all without knowledge; they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark, dreaming (talking in their sleep, A.V.m.) lying down . . . shepherds that cannot understand, they have all turned to their own way, each one to his gain . . ." (Isa. xli. 10, 11). Eli lost his power of vision simply by taking the negative attitude, he "frowned not upon" what he knew to be wrong.

The sin of silence.

That the sin of silence is reckoned partnership in sin is plainly shown in Lev. v. 1, and sifts us all in these days of blurred lines in the way of righteousness. On every side the enemy of souls is having free course because men will not speak the truth to one another, and "deliver their souls" before God. Oh, how terrible for the Church of God in an hour of peril if the watchmen are dreaming, and "talking in their sleep," not knowing what they are saying, unable to "blow the trumpet" to warn the people; "lying down" instead of alert and vigilant on the watch tower. Let the children of God who have had the "burden of vision" take heed. Personal interest must be put aside in every shape and form, for the very least trace of self-interest, in fearing loss of reputation or friends or influence, will blur the vision, and make the erstwhile faithful watchman blind, and unable to speak in the hour of need.

(5) *The watchman with the "burden of vision" must expect to suffer through his vision, both in body and soul.*

"The burden of the wilderness . . . a grievous vision is declared to me . . . Therefore are my loins filled with anguish . . . I am pained . . . my heart panteth . . ." (Isa. xxi. 1-6).

Isaiah saw in the land what the people did not see, and so he must suffer. The "burden of vision" was given to Jeremiah, and he had to deliver his "burden" whether he would or no, even though it meant the stocks (Jer. xx. 3) and prison (Jer. xxxvii. 15, xxxviii. 6); but this was little by comparison with a broken heart. He cried: "Mine heart within me is broken . . . because of the Lord, and because of His holy words" (Jer. xlii. 9). He saw the hands of evil-doers strengthened, because the Word of the Lord was not declared faithfully. The very words "the burden of the Lord" were being used by men who declared a "vision of their own heart," and words

of "peace" were being spoken which the Lord had not given.

The men of "vision" are men with broken hearts. Was it not so even with the Lord Himself? "He saw the city, and wept over it, saying, Oh that thou hadst known in this day, even thou . . ." (Luke xix. 41, R.V.m.). And Paul the apostle had the same "burden of vision," saying to the elders at Ephesus, "I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God . . . by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears . . ." (Acts xx. 27, 31). "Am I become your enemy because I deal truly with you?" he wrote to the Galatians, and, "Who is stumbled and

I burn not?" (2 Cor. xi. 29) to the Corinthians.

Yes, the men with a true "burden of vision" are men with broken hearts, "speaking the truth in love." Believers who will be "eyes" to the Body of Christ, with power to see clearly from their place "within the veil," and "teach (God's) people the difference between the holy and the common, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean" (Ezek. xlv. 15, 16, 23), so that the Church may pass safely amidst the perils of her course through the hosts of darkness to the Throne.

May God give an increasing number of such "watchmen," such "witnesses," to the Church in these days of peril.

Tribulation, the Lord's "Threshing-sledge."

By Mrs. Penn-Lewis

THE origin of the word "tribulation" is the Latin *tribulum*, a threshing-sledge.

1. The Lord's threshing floor:

"Whose fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly cleanse His threshing floor; and He will gather His wheat into the garner, but the chaff He will burn up . . ." Matt. iii. 12.

The Lord has charge of His threshing floor, into which all the corn is brought as soon as it is fit for the threshing. The "fan" represents the blessed Spirit of God. Whose special work is the cleansing and separating of the chaff from the wheat.

2. The Lord's careful dealing with His own:

"Is bread corn crushed? Nay, he will not ever be threshing it, and driving his cartwheels and his horses over it; he doth not crush it."

Isaiah xxviii. 28, m.

Horses were used in threshing in Asia Minor. In Syria oxen trod out the corn which, as it was detached from the ear, being heavier than the straw, either fell below it or was pressed into it, thus escaping bruising (Rev. J. Neil). When the Lord brings His corn into the threshing floor and bids the oxen and cartwheels of sorrow pass over His precious wheat, the outward man alone is bruised and broken. The true grain is protected as the inward man is pressed deeper into His hand and heart. Nay, He will see that it is not crushed, but simply purified to be His own "bread corn."

3. The individual dealing of the Lord:

"In that day . . . the Lord shall beat out His corn . . . and ye shall be gleaned one by one. O ye children."

Isaiah xxvii. 12, m.

In the day when God's judgments are abroad in the earth, He is "beating out His corn," separating and detaching His true grains of wheat from their surroundings and gleaned them "one by one" into His garner.

4. How God sometimes does His threshing:

"He hath gathered them as the sheaves to the threshing floor. Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion; for I will make thine horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass, and thou shalt beat in pieces many peoples . . ." Micah iv. 12, 13.

Although this is spoken primary of Israel's triumph over her enemies, yet spiritually it portrays the way in which the Holy Spirit does His work now in preparing God's people for the Lord's return. He often uses Spirit-equipped instruments in the work of threshing, and if we yield to the "sharp threshing instrument" (Isa. 41. 15) wielded by God, He will not need to use more painful means.

5. The threshing inevitable in the Last Days:

"Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe . . . multitudes, multitudes in the valley of threshing"

Joel iii. 13, 14, A.V. m.

God has other instruments for the threshing of His wheat, for at the close of the age "there shall be wars, and rumours of wars . . ." He often uses "the wrath of man" to praise Him, and the wicked for the heart-circumcision of His own. David cried in Psalm xvii. "deliver me from the wicked, *which is Thy sword*; from the men *which are Thy hand* O Lord, from the men of the world . . ."

6. Tribulation is always God's threshing-sledge:

"Confirming the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God."

Acts. xiv. 22.

(a) The world is God's threshing floor for His people:

"In Me ye may have peace. In the world ye have tribulation." (John xvi. 33.)

(b) Knowing the object of the threshing, let us rejoice:

"Let us also rejoice . . . knowing that tribulation worketh patience . . ."—(Rom. v. 3.) "Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation" (Rom. xii. 12.)

(c) Christ is with His own in the threshing time: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or anguish . . . Nay" (Rom. viii. 35, 37.)

(d) The Father's comfort abounds:

"The God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation," (2 Cor. i. 3, 4.)

(e) The Risen Lord limits the threshing:

"I know thy tribulation . . . ye shall have a tribulation of ten days. Be thou faithful . . ."

(Rev. ii. 9, 10, m.)

6. The Time of the End:

"All these things are the beginning of travail. Then shall they deliver you up unto tribulation . . . for then shall be great tribulation . . . for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened,"

(Matt. xxiv. 8, 9, 21, 22.)

8. The Promise to the faithful ones:

"Because thou didst keep the word of My patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of trial, that hour which is to come upon the whole inhabited earth"

Rev. iii. 10, m.

9. The vision of the glory:

"These are they which come out of the great tribulation . . ." The blood-washed ones before the throne of God, serving Him day and night.

*Tribulation, the
use of*

"My Disciple".

Rev. Geoffrey R. King.*

I WANT to turn your thoughts this afternoon to what I consider to be amongst the Lord's most severe words to believers, given to us in Luke 14. 25 to 35. May I first point out to you the key words of this passage, repeated three times: "he cannot be My disciple" (ver. 26), "cannot be My disciple" (ver. 27), "he cannot be My disciple" (33).

"My disciple!" That is our subject. While our great emphasis is rightly upon the sovereignty of Christ—that He, from the throne of His cross, means everything to the believer—yet there is also our responsibility, and in these words of the Master He has laid emphasis upon our part rather than upon His part. He points out very clearly that many of those who call themselves by His Name have no right whatever to claim to be His disciples. These words of our Lord challenge us afresh, and humble us to the dust. Here the Master gives us the TERMS, the TASK, and the TEST of discipleship. The terms of discipleship are given in verses 26, 27, and 33. In verses 28 to 32, under two parables, Christ gives us the task of discipleship, and in the last two verses of the chapter, by a most dramatic change of figure, He gives us the test of discipleship. Please read the whole passage.

The Lord is going up to Jerusalem, and by now the disciples and adherents feel sure that something great is going on. As the Master comes out of the Pharisee's house, great multitudes followed Him, and Jesus turned to face them, and said some of the severest things He ever said to the crowd. I believe He deliberately wanted to get rid of some of these adherents. I think this is Gideon's method. Christ felt, as He looked at that eager superficial crowd, 'I cannot afford to have all these with Me, I must sift them down until I have got, not quantity, but quality.' No doubt many turned back and ceased from following Him after these words, and I think that is what the Master wanted. So He turned and said unto them—and if only we had never read these verses before with what power they would come to us:

"If any man come to Me, and hate not his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, *he cannot be My disciple* . . . And whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after Me, *cannot be My disciple* . . . Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, *he cannot be My disciple*."

"For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first and counteth the cost, whether he hath sufficient to finish it? . . ."

"Salt is good; but if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill . . ."

This is what it means to be a disciple of Christ. I wonder if you are an adherent or a disciple? Most of us here are Christian workers and I can say this, the tragedy with nearly all our places of worship now is, that we are simply making converts—and

some churches not even converts, only adherents, who have never been born again. But the church of Christ has never been built up merely by making converts, but by making disciples. "Go ye into all the world, and make disciples of all nations" is His command, and a disciple is a convert plus something. A convert is one who has received eternal life and is safe for all eternity, but only that. A disciple is a convert consecrated, one who is going all out for Christ, being moved by His Calvary love to yield his strong and tireless allegiance that Christ may be all to him, and he may be all to Christ.

There are Christian people who give every evidence of conversion, and who yet are not disciples. They are all obviously converted and doing good work, yet they are not fulfilling the conditions of discipleship, and the Master says that the urgent work of His kingdom is only being done by disciples. What are we doing for eternity? We are very busy, but is it just through the energy of the flesh—doing nothing that is in the Spirit of the Master?

The terms of discipleship.

Here is what the Lord Himself considered to be the secret of discipleship. Let us take His words and try to see what He means:

"If any man come to Me and hate not father, mother, wife, children, brethren, sisters" (that has to do with family life); "and his own life also" (that has to do with personal life); and "whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after Me (that has to do with social life) *cannot be My disciple*." Then the words of verse 33 are underlined to all: "so likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, *he cannot be My disciple*." The terms of discipleship—briefly, the Lordship of Christ in the disciple's family, personal, and social life.

The Lord begins with the family life. Surely He cannot mean that I am to love my enemies but to hate my wife! Surely He does not mean we are to take an attitude of lovelessness to our closest and dearest! No! here the Lord is using figurative speech. He is using the language of contrast in the strongest way He can, and what He means is this, that HE must come before my nearest and dearest. That if anything in them would seem to distract me from loyalty to Him, I must hate that thing, and my love for Him must be first and foremost. Christ is seeking to guard against competitive loyalties, rival claims. He senses the peril of an earthly life coming between Him and the life which He demands from His disciples. He means that there may come a time when I shall have to say to my mother, who went down to the gates of death to bring me into life—'My dear mother, the claims of my Master come even before your wish, I must even hurt you to be true to Him.' It may be that a man may have to say to his wife, that one whom he is pledged to love and cherish, 'My wife, the demands of my heavenly love must take precedence over what you require.' It may be that our closest

*Notes of a message at our London Conference, April 1940.

and our dearest may sometimes have to be gently but firmly held back, that the Lord Jesus may be supreme. It may never come to that, but that is *the quality* of the love He requires of His disciples. He meant to say: It may be the best in your life that will keep you from Me. The greatest enemy of the *best* is the *good*. A man's foes may be those of his own household.

How does this first point challenge us this afternoon? Have you anyone whom you are loving more than Christ? In being true to someone at home are you being false to Christ? It may be the claims of Christ have come second and not first. When I think of this I wonder whether I can claim to be a disciple. But that is only the first thing:

"Yea, and his own life also." Here we come from the family to the personal life. How many of us who profess to be disciples are really loving Jesus Christ more than ourselves? Is it not difficult to know how to keep Christ pre-eminent? But here is the condition of discipleship—are you willing to hate your own life? He laid His own life down:

Thy life was given for me,
Thy precious blood was shed—

What a tremendous challenge. How much do we spend on ourselves, on necessary things, and yet perhaps not so necessary—we might be better without them. But of a disciple Christ demands all.

"And whosoever doth not bear his cross, cannot be My disciple." Christian people have a way of misinterpreting the cross. We have all heard some suffering or hardship referred to as "my cross," but nothing you ever have to suffer personally can be a cross. The idea of the cross, if we take the standard of Calvary, is that my cross is *nothing I bear for myself*, it is what I bear for others. Christ's cross was not for Himself—He Who knew no sin was "made sin" for us. It was not for Himself but for us, and if I want to know what my own cross is that I must bear, it can never be anything I simply carry for myself; it must be something I suffer for Him. Your rheumatism is never your cross! A cross must of necessity be a vicarious suffering. Suppose the case of a son who, for devotion to his mother, has refused the joys of married life in order to shelter her and be everything to her—that is a cross. When I see a man like C. T. Studd giving up all his earthly ambitions and wealth to live for Christ and the unsaved, that is a cross. That is bearing something, not for self, but for others. Jesus says: 'If you do not take upon yourself your own cross, in the spirit of My cross, and bear it with Me, you cannot be My disciple.'

I think that has to do with our social living. We are not Christians just for our own spiritual good. God's purpose for every Christian is an entirely unselfish one, yet how tragically selfish so many of us are—living utterly selfish Christian lives, seeking our own soul's good. I do hope I am not presuming, but I have known some most devoted people who spend their lives going to Conventions, but never lift a finger to save anyone else, and I sometimes feel I would like to scrap some of our Conventions and turn the Christian people to evangelism. I must be

willing to put myself to some inconvenience, to bear reproach, entirely for the sake of others for whom Christ died. Or, to bring it nearer home, I must be willing to submit to what Mrs. Penn-Lewis called, the cross being "worked in," and "worked out" in daily life, not for myself, not that I may be an overcoming Christian merely, but that my life under the mastery of the Holy Spirit may mean something in Christ's cause to other people.

Are we willing to reckon ourselves dead, not for ourselves but for the sake of others? Not that we may get a crown in glory, but that we may be used to bring others into those courts with ourselves. Do you not think that is what cross-bearing means? What have you done for the spiritual well-being of others? Some of us who are always going to meetings may lose our own soul because we do not use the Master's methods, throwing our lives away for the sake of others.

The words of the Master stand out on the page—the terms of discipleship in family, personal, and social life, and then He sums it all up, in verse 33: "Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be My disciple." That does not mean all are to be missionaries, but that everyone who is really a disciple of His has to be willing to renounce his own personal claims upon all he has. For fifteen years I belonged to Geoffrey King, but since then I have not belonged to that fellow any more. I belong to Jesus Christ. We ought sometimes to survey all we have—our home, our clothes, our loved ones. Our first reaction will surely be: How marvellously good God has been to me! And then we are to look on all these things and say, 'Dear Master, these things I call mine are not mine: I renounce any claim I have ever had upon them. They are only mine in so far as Thou canst use them through me. Master, deliver me from ever being the proprietor of these things, and enable me to be the steward of them.' All that I have! No, it is not mine, I only have it on trust. This verse gets right across our daily programme and our whole outlook upon life; yet it is here, and if you have any complaints, it is not my word, but His. "My disciples"—these are the terms of that discipleship.

The task of discipleship.

In verses 28 and 32 we are shown the task of discipleship, and the Master tells two stories. Here is a man building a tower, and he cannot finish it—or a king making war, but without computing the cost of its commitments, whether his ten thousand men can do anything against the enemy's twenty thousand. So while the enemy is still a great way off, he is obliged to send an ambassador and entreat for peace, before the fight begins.

The usual interpretation of this parable of our Lord is, that before we enlist in His service, we must count the cost. I do not believe that for a moment. I do not think Christ ever meant us to "count the cost." The moment He calls there is to be no second thought but an immediate and willing surrender. I think there is a cost here, but it is *the cost of not following Christ*: "cannot be My disciple"—that is the price you have to pay if you

do not follow. A terrible cost. But this is not so much the Christian counting the cost, as Christ counting the cost. I feel the interpretation is, that Christ is explaining why His terms are so severe. He is not exhorting the crowd to say whether they are willing, but just explaining why He has to make His conditions so hard. He is saying, 'You are shrinking from the severity of My terms, but My work is so important that I cannot afford to have half-hearted men and women, superficial adherents, who may run off home and let Me down. My terms are severe because I have to count the cost, and I can only do My work and wage My warfare with the very finest material in human life.'

That means that the task of discipleship under the Master is two-fold. He is constructing something, we are here to help Him in His building; and we are here to help Him in His warfare. The task of the Christian disciple in the service of the Master is first, building, but that building entails battle. That is a principle in the Christian life. Christ said, "I will build My Church," that is His programme, His primary objective on earth in this dispensation. He also said: "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." In that building Christ encounters hostility; there is a fight to be fought, a fight to be won.

Spurgeon called his little paper "Sword and Trowel," and he got his idea from Nehemiah iv. 17, when the Jews who were building the wall of the city worked with one hand, and in the other held a weapon, and "everyone had his sword girded by his side." In the Christian life we have the trowel, we are building the Church of God; but Sanballat and others are there opposing the work, and while we are building, sometimes we have need to lay down the trowel and take to the sword. You can sum up the Christian life and the kingdom of heaven in that two-fold way. Because of the Enemy, there must be, with the building, battle. Christ is saying to you and to me, 'For the building of My spiritual temple, the Church of the Living God on earth, I must have disciples who really mean business; and because the enemy is so strong, for the warfare My work entails I must have warriors, who will go all the way with me.'

So the situation to-day is this: the real work of Christ is being carried on by DISCIPLES, and they are being used by the Spirit of God to build the Church of Christ. The work is being done, and Satan's kingdom is being assailed. Then there is the great majority of the professing church, who are not disciples: they are just getting on with their work in their own way. I want to be in the Master's work—I want my life to count constructively in the building of His Church, and destructively against the powers of darkness. I wonder how many of us, under His scrutiny, are really disciples, and how many are counting for nothing in the actual building, so that Satan is laughing at their efforts?

The test of discipleship.

"Salt is good, but if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit for the land nor yet the dunghill, but men cast it out."

Here, surely, is the test of discipleship. How

quickly the Lord turned from one figure to another. What has salt to do with building, or battling? Salt is the great antiseptic influence in the world—that is a matter of science. But for the salt water constantly keeping it fresh, we should all die of putrid action. The world is kept sweet by the salt. The Christian is meant to be the salt, wherever God has placed him, and it is the presence of God's people on earth that is keeping back the powers of corruption, and arresting the decay. When the Lord calls them away the world will become absolutely rotten.

Your saltiness is the test of your discipleship. The final test is not how many bricks you made, nor how well you have done on the battlefield, but whether or not your life has a tang of real sanctity. It is not how busy you are in the Master's service, but, is there that saltiness in your life? It is not what your pastor thinks about you, but what your servants and tradesmen, your fellow business men, think about you. One of our young men said to me recently, "I have had such an encouragement. A man in our work came to me and said, 'do you know, I wanted to tell a dirty story the other day, and then I noticed you were in the room, and I could not tell it.'"

Surely that is the ultimate test of discipleship and only if I have that tang, that Christ-likeness, in my daily life, am I a disciple of His—not just an adherent, but a real disciple.

Fear

"I will fear no evil."

FEAR is the greatest foe to happiness. There is no suffering more intense than that produced by fear. Fear hath torment.

God knows that a fearful man is helpless and useless, and therefore every divine communication to man is prefaced by "Fear not."

There are three scriptural remedies for fear. They are faith, love, and knowledge.

Faith and fear are mutually exclusive. They cannot coexist. Where fear begins, faith ends. To be fearful is to be faithless. To be faithful is to be fearless.

Fear and doubt grow by nursing. If we believe our doubts and doubt our beliefs, we shall lose all faith, and doubt will overwhelm us. If we cherish our fears, we shall become panic-stricken. On the other hand, if we believe our beliefs and doubt our doubts the doubts will disappear, and faith will grow.

"What time I am afraid, I will trust in Thee."

Another antidote to fear is love. Love is the master passion, ruling, and, if need be, expelling all other passions for the soul. "Perfect love casteth out fear." A timid hen will boldly face the hawk that threatens her helpless chicks. The love of country will send the patriot cheering against the cannon's mouth. The love of Christ will send the Christian, shouting hallelujah, to the stake and to the cross.

Another remedy for fear is knowledge. "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Jesus delivers from all bondage. Are we afraid of Satan? Scripture declares he is a defeated foe. Are we afraid of death? Christ has abolished it by bringing life and immortality to light. Are we afraid of adversity? All things work together for our good. Do we fear temptation? God will make a way of escape.

There is nothing to fear in life or death. It makes no difference where the child of God may be, or what perils may encompass him, he can calmly lift his eyes to heaven and sav. "I will fear no evil, for thou art with me." "God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."

Selected.

A Controversy with God.

IF that which happened to Israel of old is written for our admonition, upon whom the end of the ages is come, it is not difficult to see how little apostate Christendom has availed itself of the warning. One of the recurring themes in the history and prophecy of the Old Testament is the invitation to repentance and return to obedience on the part of God's earthly people. Tragedy lies in the fate of a people who saw no need for repentance, and refused to obey. Israel saw no reason for the warnings and reproaches of their prophets, and hard was the lot of those who spoke to them in the Name of the Lord.

The closing words of the Old Testament sum up this long-standing controversy between the Lord and His people. Malachi voices the argument which Jehovah condescends to engage in with a backsliding Israel:

I have loved you, saith the Lord.
Yet ye say, Wherein hast Thou loved us?
Where is My fear? saith the Lord of Hosts unto you, O priests, that despise My Name.
And ye say, Wherein have we despised Thy Name?
Ye have wearied the Lord with your words.
Yet ye say, Wherein have ye wearied Him?
Return unto Me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of Hosts.
But ye said, Wherein shall we return?
Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed Me.
But ye say, Wherein have we robbed Thee?
Your words have been stout against Me, saith the Lord.
Yet ye say, What have we spoken so much against Thee?

How impudent is man, and how patient is God. This very book is shot through with renewed promises of Grace; promises abundantly fulfilled in the person and work of our blessed Lord and Saviour Himself. We may well sorrow as we contemplate the course of Christendom from the days when the meal, in our Lord's parable, was pure, through the years that the heaven began to work until the whole was leavened.

Believers live under the new Covenant of Grace abounding: our obedience, belief on Him Whom God hath sent; our righteousness, the righteousness of Another; our work for God, the work of the Holy Spirit in us. All that is acceptable in us we know to be the fruit of our abiding in Him Who is our Life.

Whether we know it or not, the position of those born again by faith in Christ is that God has brought us to an end of ourselves in our union with Christ in His death, in order that His life should be lived in us by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. Henceforth our spirits are to be energised by His Spirit, our minds quickened by the mind of Christ to know His will for us, that as we have received Christ, so we might walk with Him.

The failure of the professing church to accept such a drastic repudiation of the 'natural man,' in practice if not in theory, is sufficiently patent to us all, and there is no need to labour the extraordinary parallel

between the spiritual history of Israel and that of Christendom. Such a likeness need not be wondered at, for it is simply the outcome of the life of the 'natural man' in each case. The conduct of both springs from the carnal mind which is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

Were such a likeness to exist only in the case of apostate Israel and apostate Christendom we might well be content to turn aside with a sigh at the devastating result, for both Jew and Gentile, of going about to establish their own righteousness and refusing to submit themselves unto the righteousness of God. Such complete misunderstanding of the ways of God and the helplessness of man has, alas, also been found amongst the true children of God throughout the days of Grace from the apostolic age until now. Paul's epistle to the Galatians shows the danger that existed from the beginning, of supposing that the Spirit is received by the works of the law instead of by the hearing of faith. Beginning in the Spirit and seeking to be made perfect by the flesh has not been confined to the Galatian believers, but has been a perpetual cause of stumbling to the whole Church of God.

Christian 'flesh' is as stiff-necked as the flesh has always been. Many is the prayer meeting held in these very days of the world's trouble, where men's arguing with God may still be heard. The omission of more than perfunctory confession of sin—our own and the nation's—is a common one:

But ye said, Wherein shall we return?

The empty reiteration of well worn, if not worn out, phrases, which have long since ceased to carry the spirit heavenwards must surely be a wearying of the Lord with our words:

Yet ye say, Wherein have we wearied Him?

There seems a great conspiracy of silence as to the Lord's Person as the Lamb of God, Son of the Father, having a Name which is above every name; *And ye say, Wherein have we despised Thy Name?*

How often nominal support—and nothing more—is given to any effort to seek the revival of the church and the quickening of God's people;

But ye said, Wherein shall we return?

Daniel's prayer for his people is surely given us for our admonition, that we too may stand in intercession for our brethren. 'Oh my God, incline Thine ear and hear; open Thine eyes and behold our desolations . . . For we do not present our petitions before Thee for our own righteousness, but for Thy great mercies. Oh Lord hear; Oh Lord forgive; Oh Lord, hearken and do.'

Such a prayer was heard then and will be heard now though the answer may not be as we had thought. But the end will be mercy: mercy to the physical Israel and mercy to the whole Israel of God.

"Surely I come quickly. Amen, Even so, come Lord Jesus."

Bernard W. Matthews.

The Power of Weakness.

By J. C. Metcalfe.

ONE of the most difficult lessons the Christian who is seeking to 'go all the way with God' has to learn, is the power of weakness—the glory of being placed in positions where he can do literally nothing, and when perhaps even God seems silent. Yet it is probably just here that the greatest victories are won, and the greatest work accomplished for the salvation of souls. I have had great help along this line from the accounts in the gospels of the arrest of the Lord Jesus in Gethsemane. Matthew's account runs as follows:

"Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people. Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is He: hold him fast. And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said Hail, Master; and kissed him. And Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherfore art thou come? Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus, and took him. And behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest's, and smote off his ear. Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled that thus it must be?" (Matt. xxvi. 47-51).

Why was that prayer never uttered? His Father had revealed to Jesus that only through Calvary could salvation be secured for a lost world. He had accepted this fact with all His heart—therefore he could neither call upon the armies of heaven, nor descend from the Cross when taunted by His enemies. His weakness constituted the mightiest power the world has ever known.

How far is the Church of Christ faced with a similar position to-day? How far have we violated the law of the Cross in recent years, and counted upon our organisations — societies, meetings, conferences, written propaganda, and such like? How far have we in this way given Satan the opportunity to weaken and water down our witness—and nullify its effectiveness?

Is it not possible that God is to-day answering the cry of so many of His people for a movement of the Holy Spirit, by stripping the Church of all that she considers to be her equipment and armaments in her conflict? Perhaps in this way only can He make her helpless enough to be mighty.

But let us bring things right down to the individual. After all, the one factor that, ever since Calvary, has been effective in overcoming the devil's plans to blot out the witness of the gospel, has been the individual life brought into living union with the Lord Jesus Christ. Am I as an individual prepared to share the suffering of a distracted world—leaving myself in the hands of God, and not trying to insist on the appearance of the 'legions of angels' on my behalf? Can I, if necessary, leave my pulpit, my study, my routine, my quiet life of ordered service, and die to all these things that I may live Christ next

to the man or woman who is driven here and there by the stress of war conditions; and perhaps even facing the disruption of all that seems to make this life worth living? Can I forget my own needs in the great, burning, overwhelming purpose, to be God's instrument for the salvation of others?

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who . . . made Himself of no reputation . . . and humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross" (Phil. ii. 5-8) wrote Paul, who could also say, "Are they the ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths off . . ." (2 Cor. xi. 23-28). The conversion and ministry of Paul were picked out of the world's greatest happenings by the first Earl of Birkenhead as one of the 'turning points of history.' The apostle had learnt the lesson of power through weakness. If the Church of Christ is to be an instrument in the hand of God to bring about another 'turning point of history' you and I will also need to learn this lesson.

Turning to Mark's vivid account we will continue at the point at which we left off in Matthew's record:

"And Jesus answered and said unto them. Are ye come out as against a thief, with swords and staves to take me? I was daily with you in the Temple teaching, and ye took me not: but the scriptures must be fulfilled. *And they all forsook Him and fled.*" (Mark xiv. 45-50).

How wonderfully God was working to programme. How quietly He, Who 'knows the end from the beginning' was bringing His gracious purposes to fruition. He also has His programme for His Church to-day. The earthly ministry of His Son was carried through under His own eye, and with the protection of all the powers of Heaven, until Calvary. Then the protection was removed. But even so, all that happened, happened by the 'determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God.' The ministry of the Church is also prepared beforehand by God (Eph. ii. 10). If, according to His purpose, we too must face Calvary, what shall we say? Human nature neither understands, nor can it face the Cross. His closest followers, not as yet endued with power by God the Holy Spirit, all forsook Him and fled. There are differing ideas amongst Christians as to what constitutes 'the fulness of the Spirit,' some of them strange and unbalanced. Of one thing we may be quite sure. If you and I are filled with the Spirit we shall infallibly be taught, guided, and enabled to walk the way of the Cross. If 'He, through the Eternal Spirit, offered Himself' (Hebrews ix. 14), we too shall offer ourselves when the same Spirit indwells us. It will not then make any odds if our protection is removed, and we find ourselves utterly alone for the sake of the salvation of others. The Holy Spirit Who is aiming to conform us to the image of Christ will finish the work He has begun, if we are willing.

Luke has one particularly striking detail not given by the other Evangelists. He leaves on record that

Jesus said to the officers who arrested Him, " *This is your hour, and the power of darkness* " (Luke xxii. 58). He has just, by an act of sovereign mercy, healed the ear of Malchus, cut off in the impetuous attack of Simon Peter. Now He calmly faces the awful unleashing of Satanic powers against Himself, accepting by faith as well the present position as the assured triumph to follow. The story of Job shows clearly that it is God Who sets the limit to the extent of the devil's activities and power. He may go to the very last inch of the bounds permitted to him, BUT he may not pass them. From the human angle the Cross looked to be a colossal failure. In it the victory of the powers of evil SEEMED complete. But "the weakness of God is stronger than men" or demons, and by the power of weakness He "spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it" (in the Cross) (Col. ii. 15).

Centuries have passed since then. To-day the Church of Christ stands at a place where her power and influence seem to have ebbed almost away. Even the civilization that her triumphs won for the nations seems to be in the process of violent disintegration. Such a situation provokes many questions. How will it all end? Will God grant a great revival? Is the coming of the Lord really imminent? and so on. Perhaps the real battleground is our heart attitude as Christians. There is a verse of a hymn I find myself humming again and again in these days:

Jesus triumphant: when in work for Thee
Sad and disheartened no result we see:
When gathered force of evil seems to win,
And work for God seems lost in work of sin.

Can I stand firm and unafraid, facing the enemy; not pretending he is not there, nor becoming so occupied with him that his might fills my whole horizon? Can I say "This is your hour, and the power of darkness, BUT the conflict does not end here. Victory is with the Lion of the tribe of Judah. There will be countless souls delivered from you now, in our day and generation, and soon you will finally and for ever be 'bruised under our feet' "? Surely you and I can afford to be radiantly triumphant. God is teaching us to use the power of weakness, and once we learn to wield it aright, we shall be moving on towards a mightier triumph than we can well realise.

Last comes John's version. Here we find the majesty of almighty Kingship mysteriously interwoven with obedient sonship. "Whom seek ye"? Jesus asks His captors. "Jesus of Nazareth" comes the reply. "I AM" declares the One Who is indeed 'God of God, Very God of Very God,' and "they went backward, and fell to the ground." He "thought it not robbery to be equal with God," and we too, if we are His, are "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." We can and should rejoice greatly in such a relationship with the Living God; and there will be times when men will have to recognise the reality of that relationship. This manifestation of deity was soon followed, however, by the rebuke to Peter. "Put up thy sword into the sheath: *the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?*" (John xviii. 11).

What a wealth of love lies behind this question. The Father had put a cup into the hand of His dearly loved Son. That cup was bitter, full to the brim with a world's sin and woe, but it came from the Father's hand. That made all the difference. Since that was so it could be drunk without fear or doubt. The Father's purposes were bound to end in untold blessing. "His way is perfect." Fallen human nature could fret and fight to be free from the suffering and darkness that lay ahead, but He would not attempt to save Himself. He loved the Father too greatly for that.

Do you not think that the Father covets our love too? That He values it more than all our knowledge, and activities of Christian work? "Love beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Love never faileth" (1 Cor. xiii. 7-8). Does not God plan every detail of the lives of those who yield themselves to Him? If He grants us peaceful surroundings, religious liberty, and useful spheres of service, do we not praise Him for His goodness to us? If He permits us to be placed in circumstances of strife, persecution, or seeming lack of opportunity for Christian work, what shall we say?

I dare not choose my lot;
I would not if I might;
Choose Thou for me my God,
So shall I choose aright.
Take Thou my cup and it
With joy or sorrow fill,
As best to Thee may seem;
Choose Thou my good and ill.

This is no passive attitude, but one of active ambition to see the pleasure of the Lord prospering in His hand under any and every circumstance. A radiant spirit, thoughtful for Him and others, is of priceless worth in these days. Such a spirit will always triumph. It will have learnt the central lesson of Christian service—the power of weakness—the way of the Cross.

Divine Possibilities.

I DARE to say that—IT IS POSSIBLE, for those who really are willing to reckon on the power of the Lord for keeping and victory, to lead a life in which His promises are taken as they stand and are found to be True.

IT IS POSSIBLE to cast all our care upon Him daily and enjoy deep peace in doing it.

IT IS POSSIBLE to have the thoughts and imaginations of our hearts purified, in the deepest meaning of the word, through faith.

IT IS POSSIBLE to see the will of God in everything, and to receive it, not with sighing, but with singing.

IT IS POSSIBLE, by taking complete refuge in Divine power, to become strong through and through; and, where previously our greatest weakness lay, to find that the things which formerly upset all our resolves to be patient or pure or humble, furnish to-day an opportunity—through Him Who loved us, and works in us an agreement with His will and a blessed sense of His presence and His power—to make sin powerless.

These things are DIVINE POSSIBILITIES, and because they are His work, the true experience of them will always cause us to bow lower at His feet and to learn to thirst and long for more. We cannot possibly be satisfied with anything less than—each day, each hour, each moment, in Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit—TO WALK WITH GOD.

H. C. G. Moule (*Bishop of Durham*).

Why No Power?

An Analysis.

ONE of the most characteristic phenomena to be noted in the religious life of our day is the vast disproportion between the amount of truth possessed and the amount of practical good resulting from it. The past has supplied notable examples of great saintliness with relatively little light; this day, above all others, supplies melancholy evidence that it is possible to possess great light with very little saintliness.

In this country a veritable multitude of people receive and embrace the emancipating doctrines of the New Testament, without thereby coming into possession of that exalted state of moral and spiritual power which those doctrines plainly promise and teach. "All power" is given unto believers potentially; pitifully little power is being appropriated by them actually. What is the reason for this discrepancy . . . ?

The stock answer will be "lack of consecration," but every experienced Christian leader could tell of the scores who frequent religious meetings—meek, eager, surrendered, but nevertheless bewildered, confused, fruitless, and all but powerless. And this condition is not confined to one locality, or to one school of evangelical thought. It is universal. In those churches which make the most extravagant claims to spirituality, a simple check-up will disclose the fact that they are as devoid of real power as the rest.

Even among that minority in all churches who seem to have entered into a more satisfying experience of Christ there is yet an absence of spiritual dynamic, a marked tendency to "enjoy" their religion rather than to *impart* it. The drive, the urge, the thing that turns "the word upside down" is missing . . .

We venture to point out some conditions which may be at the root of the trouble.

Inverted Mysticism.

First, *a morbid and unhealthy mysticism*. The term "mysticism" simply means "the practice of the presence of God," the belief that the heart can commune with God directly, moment by moment, without the aid of outward ritual. This is at the very core of real Christianity and is probably the sweetest and most soul-satisfying experience the child of God can know. But like every other blessing it can be abused. Many of the most prayerful persons fall into this snare. They learn to live *within* so constantly, and to enjoy it so deeply, that they become soft and lose contact with reality. Soon the outflow of power ceases, but the pleasure of mystic communion continues. They settle down into a state of chronic inwardness, and soon become a little world in themselves.

So they spend the rest of their lives tiptoeing along as if afraid of waking themselves from their state of hypnotic blessedness. The psychologists, with their customary brutality, have called this "the soul's flight from reality," and have pointed out that it is an evidence of weakness and defeat, rather than

of power. This is hard to take, but we believe it is true nevertheless.

An open-eyed study of the lives of Christ and the apostles would help to correct this condition, for certainly they were too normal to give way to morbidity, and too busy to waste any time in fruitless introspection.

Fear.

Another cause of spiritual stalemate in many lives is *fear of the flesh*. The teaching of the Bible that man's *unaided efforts* are fruitless and that his most earnest labours without God are unavailing, has been so misunderstood and abused that many sincere Christians are afraid to raise their hand for fear of getting "into the flesh . . ."

Obedience Necessary.

We name as another contributing cause of the condition we are investigating, a *widespread misunderstanding of the function of truth*. Bible truths are mostly taught and received as ends in themselves, as if here were some virtue in merely believing one thing instead of another.

Truth is never an end. It can only be a means to some end. This is such an important distinction that it would be hard to over-emphasize it. Where Bible doctrine is received as a religio-philosophic system, its function ends with its reception into the mind. Those who hold it and promote it, do so for the satisfaction they receive from the consciousness of possessing truth. This is a subtle thing, for there is a high intellectual pleasure which is akin to religious emotion, and many cannot distinguish the difference.

On the other hand, where truth is known for what it is, viz., *a means towards securing action*, it becomes instantly operative in the life. The Bible is *to be obeyed*, not merely memorized. Its function is to jar loose the dead-locked will, and drive it forward in vigorous obedience. Obedience is the transmission which connects truth with conduct. Where it is missing, there can be worlds of truth without an ounce of power. Obedience will close that deadly gap between faith and conduct, and give power instead of palsy.

We have no doubt that courageous thinking on the three phases of Christian experience named above, would result in great good to anyone who would give himself to it. And if to thought were added a fearless ordering of the life in conformity to the truth, there might be released through the life a veritable flood of pent-up power.

A. W. Tozer (Chicago).

Note on the "flesh" or fallen nature.

"Listen to Paul as he tells of the only safeguard against this danger: 'We are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God, and glory in Jesus Christ, and have no confidence in the flesh . . .'

"Our only safety here is the Holy Spirit . . . God's will is that we 'walk not'—never for a moment—'after the flesh; but after the Spirit.' Let us accept: God's will. The Holy Spirit has been given to bring our life into conformity with it. May God show us how entirely the Holy Spirit can *dispossess the life of the flesh*, and Himself become an entirely new life in us, revealing Christ as our life. Then we can say, 'It is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me.'"

Dr. Andrew Murray.

"Accounting that God is Able."

IN this "hour and power of darkness" one thing becomes ever clearer: it is that the real warfare is not against flesh and blood, but against the forces of evil behind the 'flesh and blood' foe making a bid for world dominion. The struggle is between countries whose leaders have set themselves to destroy the Christian faith, and countries where there is liberty for the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In such a war "the battle is the Lord's," and the weapon in the hands of His children is PRAYER—praying 'against' the supernatural powers, as Hezekiah prayed when Jerusalem was surrounded by the hosts of a powerful enemy, and his plea may well be ours—"O Lord our God, save us . . . that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that Thou art the Lord, even Thou only."

Though ours is without question a righteous cause, we have no merit of our own to plead, for even nations professedly 'Christian' have largely forsaken the faith of their fathers. While we praise God for every public acknowledgment of Him as Sovereign, yet there is need to pray for a real turning to Him in repentance and confession of the fundamental sin, that they "have not believed on the Name" of the Son of God (Jno. iii. 18). How little mention of that Name there is to-day, even in many calls to prayer for the nation's need—yet it is "through faith in His Name" that miracles are wrought and prayer is heard. No man cometh to the Father but by Him Who is "the way"—it is only because of His shed Blood that we "have boldness to enter into the Holiest," the presence of God, with our petitions. (Heb. x. 19).

Pray also for a ringing testimony to the necessity for the New Birth, the efficacy of the Precious Blood, and the personal return of Christ to establish His reign over the nations. Nothing less will ever restore a settled peace to this war-torn earth.

Mr. H. Alexander, of the Geneva Bible School, describes in his current news-letter a large map he has made, representing "the night which is falling on the world. The countries where the Bible is officially forbidden were painted black, those where it is only tolerated or threatened, in dark grey, or in lighter colour according to the political situation affecting the Bible . . . only countries where there is complete religious freedom, where the Bible is respected and where it can be distributed without restriction were in white." The "white" included our ally France, and all her territory in North Africa. All this, says Mr. Alexander, "was a revelation of the menace which is at the root of war, and which brings night everywhere, in the darkness of which the Antichrist hides, waiting for the opportune moment to manifest himself."

These are surely the last days of the Church's opportunity to fulfil her Lord's command, and Christians throughout the world may rejoice that in such days the Gospel is reaching thousands who might otherwise have remained in careless ignorance of it. The Bible Societies, and all concerned in the distribution of the Scriptures, agree that there is "a great door and effectual" opened among the vast numbers of young men brought together at this time in unwonted ways of life. Mr. Alexander writes of urgent requests from both officers and men in the French services for New Testaments. One officer wrote from the front: "Our soldiers complain that they have nothing but secular books at their disposal."*

We have much else to praise God for. The proclamation of a national Day of Prayer was in itself an answer to prayer, and also the national response in full churches and mission halls throughout Great Britain, and in many parts of the Empire. Many remembered that the Day of Prayer appointed on January 6th, 1918, was followed by a marvellous turning of the tide in France, and in a few months, by victory. The week that followed the Day of

Prayer, on May 26th, 1940, was filled with events which might have spelled the greatest military disaster of history, but out of which was wrested such a victory of moral courage and deliverance, as can only have been the answer of God to the prayers of His children, and the national recognition of Him as the One able to save. As a nation we have taken His Name upon us, and we believe that, though we pass through the fires seven times heated, He will yet deliver us from our enemies. Meanwhile we can only pray that His eternal purposes shall be wrought out, and His Name glorified in the outcome.

The story of the evacuation of 350,400 men from the beaches around the Channel port of Dunkirk is well-known in Britain, but readers in other lands may not have heard sufficient details to realise, as we do, that this was nothing less than the hand of God intervening in answer to our cry. For their sakes we quote a few sentences from an article in the *Daily Telegraph*, of June 8th:

"Two great wonders stand forth," said the writer, C. B. Mortlock. "I have talked to officers and men who have got safely back to England, and all of them tell of these two phenomena. The first was the great storm which broke over Flanders on Tuesday, May 28th, and the other was the great calm which settled on the English Channel during the days following. Officers of high rank do not hesitate to put down the deliverance of the B.E.F. to the fact of the nation being at prayer on Sunday, May 26th . . . After a careful survey of the position had been made, the maximum number whom it was thought could possibly escape death or capture was 30,000. Instead of that, more than ten times the number were safely embarked."

Of the 'great calm' the writer says: "It is undoubted that there was such a calmness over the whole of the waters of the English Channel for that vital period of days as has rarely been experienced. Those who are accustomed to the Channel testify to the strangeness of this calm; they are impressed by the phenomenon of nature by which it became possible for tiny craft to go back and forth in safety" "So the two miracles made possible what seemed impossible. In the darkness of the storm and the violence of the rain, formations which were eight to twelve miles from Dunkirk were able to move up on foot to the coast with scarcely any interruption from aircraft, for aircraft were unable to operate in such turbulent conditions . . ."

In the same article we read that "the consciousness of miraculous deliverance" pervaded the camps where the troops were housed temporarily on arrival in England, and in some cases informal services of prayer and thanksgiving were held at the request of the men themselves. Yes, God is "able to save by many or by few," and in the 1914-18 War the Allies were saved from defeat, not once nor twice, by the forces of nature which only God controls. Let us lift up our hearts in praise, and pray on.

M.N.G.

The "Word of the Cross" Bible Booklet."

This little Booklet was compiled by Mrs. Penn-Lewis, in 1908, and consists of 16 pages, 3½ by 2 inches in size, with pale blue cover. It contains in the words of Scripture the Message of Calvary in its fullest aspects, both for the sinner and the saved. It has been issued in about 80 languages and dialects and the circulation has reached over eleven million copies.

The English Booklet can be obtained from the "Overcomer" Bookroom, at a charge of 23/- per 1,000 (printer's cost), 2/4 per 100, with postage extra.

Note: The Bible Booklet has been out of print, but an increased demand for it as suitable for distribution to men in the forces and others, has led us to reprint it in spite of the increased cost. It will still be sold at actual printer's price.

* As we go to press the great catastrophe has overwhelmed France. Let us pray that the Word of God distributed may bear fruit in this time of sorrow.

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Volume
XXI.

October
A.D. 1940.

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(The Cross is the Touchstone of Faith)

The Overcomer

*A Quarterly Magazine for Christian Workers
on the deep things of God.*

*"Faith is . . . the Test
of things not seen."*

Heb. xi. 1, R.V.m.

**"And the hostile princes and rulers He shook off from Himself, and
BOLDLY DISPLAYED THEM AS HIS CONQUESTS
when by the Cross He triumphed over them." Col. ii, 15 (Weymouth).**

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*Published (D.V.) Quarterly on the first Thursday in January, April, July, October.
For terms of issue, see inside cover.*

THE OVERCOMER.

FOUNDED BY MRS. PENN-LEWIS, 1909.

Issued by the Council of the Overcomer Literature Trust.

EDITOR: M. N. GARRARD.

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TERMS OF ISSUE.

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Are at liberty to accept contributions from those who receive the paper, and forward to the office quarterly.

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AUSTRALIA. The "Overcomer" may be obtained from Mr. H. P. Smith, The Keswick Book Depot, 315 Collins Street, Melbourne.

MONTHLY CONFERENCE

**at Eccleston Conference Hall,
Eccleston Street, Victoria, London, S.W.**

Meetings for Christian Workers are held on the first Thursday of each month, October to July (inclusive). Owing to War conditions, some alterations have been necessary for the Winter months.

PLEASE NOTE.—

October Conference Cancelled.

The Council much regret that, because of unsettled conditions, it has been found necessary to cancel the Conference arranged for October 3rd. As soon as it becomes possible to hold the meetings again, notices will be found in the "Life of Faith" and "The Christian" for the previous week.

Arrangements for December will also be found in the 'Forthcoming Meetings' lists in the above papers.

Conferences.

In view of the difficulties of travelling, and un-wisdom of gathering together unnecessarily in these days, the provincial Conference have been dropped for the present. These are days when God giving us an unique opportunity to put into practice all we have learned through the years, and it is hoped that many of our readers will "mobilise the prayer forces" in their own districts.

We are glad to call attention to the following meetings: prayer and fellowship, arranged by some of our readers:

Birmingham: Bible Witness Fellowship, "Kelvedon," Frederick Road, Wylde Green. First Wednesday at 3 p.m.

Bootle: Hebron Hall, Akenside Street. Monthly Prayer Meeting second Friday, at 8 p.m.

Cardiff: Weekly Prayer Meeting. Thursday at 3 p.m. T Lounge, Y.M.C.A. (by Taff Station).

Isleworth: For particulars of new arrangements, please enquire of Miss Gravatt, 37, St. John's Road, Isleworth.

Isle of Wight: Prayer Meeting every Saturday, 7.30 p.m., 42, Carisbrooke Road, Newport.

Liverpool: Monthly Prayer Meeting. Third Wednesday 3 p.m. at 55, Granby Street, Princes Park.

Manchester: Prayer Meeting second Monday, 3-5 p.m., in No. Committee Room, Houldsworth Hall, 90, Deansgate.

NOTE ALTERED TIME. Enquiries: Mr. W. Astley, 28, Elmsmead Road, Didsbury, M/c. 3.

BOUND VOLUME OF

"THE OVERCOMER" for 1940.

The issues of 1940 may now be obtained bound together in six paper covers, price 2/- each, postage paid 2/2.

"Le Vainqueur" (*The "Overcomer."*)

We have had no news of Madame Brunel since the collapse of France. Pray for her and her husband (a Protestant Pastor), and for all Christians now in territory controlled by the enemy.

The "Word of the Cross" Bible Booklet.

This little Booklet was compiled by Mrs. Penn Lewis, in 1908, and consists of 16 pages, 3½ by 2 inch in size, with pale blue cover. It contains in the words of Scripture the Message of Calvary in its fullest aspects, both for the sinner and the saved. It has been issued in about 80 languages and dialects and the circulation has reached over eleven million copies.

The English Booklet can be obtained from the "Overcomer" Bookroom, at a charge of 23/- per 100 (printer's cost), 2/4 per 100, with postage extra.

TO READERS IN THE U.S.A. AND CANADA.

Our Price List in American currency is now very out of date. Because of the fluctuating state of exchange, it is not possible to print a new one, but if the amount in British money is stated to the Postmaster at any American or Canadian P.O., he will make out a Money Order for the correct sum. Or dollar bills may be sent, in which case literature to the value of the prevailing rate of exchange will be forwarded. \$1.00 = 4 shillings, normal times.

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THE OVERCOMER

Christ's Triumphant Chariot.

"Having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it" Col. ii. 15.

THIS great classical statement found in Colossians ii. is of tremendous significance to us at all times, but never more so than at the present moment, when Satanic forces are being let loose upon the earth in an unprecedented manner. It is interesting and instructive to see how the Apostle leads up to this statement, and then applies it.

In verse 13, Paul reminds these Colossian "saints and brethren in Christ Jesus" that at one time they were dead in their sins, but the life-imparting grace had come to them through Christ, and now they could rejoice in Divine forgiveness of all their trespasses. The "blotting out" of verse 14 signifies the cancelling of the demands of the law of Moses, especially that of circumcision—"nailing it to His Cross." In former times it was the custom when a debtor found he could not pay (if the creditor happened to be of a gracious disposition) to cancel the debt, meanwhile authorising the forgiven debtor to nail this information over his door.

And then follows verse 16—we are free from the law only because, in our union with Christ, the law is fulfilled in us. Between these revelations of Divine grace there is verse 15, giving us one of the most remarkable statements concerning our Lord's victorious death on the Cross and its effect upon the hierarchy of hell.

Who were these principalities? Why were they mobilised at Calvary? How were they defeated there? Such questions seem to challenge us here. Dr. Handley Moule speaks of them as "Governments and Authorities." He defines them as "the dreadful hierarchy of evil." Weymouth describes them as "hostile princes and rulers." They were not merely the common rank of wicked spirits, they were the "Luciferites" (See Isaiah xiv. 12, etc. and Ezek. xxviii. 12, etc.)—not fallen angels of the rank and file. They were those who rebelled in heaven against the supremacy of God with the "Son of the Morning," and they doubtless held positions in the great Underworld of Darkness—leaders of the "shock troops" of Satan. Such beings were assembled around the Son of God at Calvary. They had taken counsel together against the Lord, and against His Anointed (Ps. ii.).

But why were they at the death scene of the Son of God? There was a reason. They were there not merely as spectators—others were, but not these. They were there to make the consummate assault upon Christ. During His earthly life they had made repeated assaults upon Him. We can easily recognise this in Herod's slaughter of the infants, in the wilderness temptation, when He preached at Nazareth (Lk. iv. 29), and when He was asleep in the boat on the lake of Galilee as the storm raged. In John xiv. 30, we hear our Lord saying "the prince of this

world cometh, and hath nothing in Me"—no foothold of advantage whereby he might achieve a victory over Him. But this Satanic assault upon the dying Son of God was the consummation. We are told that He was crucified in weakness. It was the hour and power of darkness.

The intention of this assault is obvious—to make His death upon the Cross of none effect. Let me repeat, Upon the Cross. It was the only place for His redemptive work. Death at the hand of Herod, or from the pinnacle of the temple, or over the rocks at Nazareth, or in the waters of Galilee, would not have availed for our redemption. The only place was the Cross, as is made clear in Gal. iii. 13, where we read, "Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree." It was there He was "made a curse for us." The intention behind the challenge to "come down from the Cross," was to prevent our Lord from dying on the tree, and thus frustrate the redemption of a lost world.

In this terrible onslaught, these evil powers made use of instruments, one visible, the other invisible. There was the mob, the thief, the rulers—the cry against the Lord was truly the cry of unrighteous men; but it was more. It was the voice of controlling wicked spirits through them. Who can speak of the sufferings of Christ in His body? But the agony in His Spirit was beyond that of His body. In Ch. i. 16, we read "By Him were all things created"—thrones, dominions, principalities, powers—"created by Him and for Him." But now, these of His own creation seek to overwhelm Him, to thwart His purpose of redemption for a lost humanity. The awful suffering of God's dear Son was increased by the knowledge that such a redemption would not avail for these mighty super-powers of darkness. They were utterly lost to Him.

But the question remains to be answered: how were these mighty antagonising forces from the invisible world defeated at the cross? How did our Lord win? First, by *accounting for* His enemies—He stripped them off from Himself, as a wrestler throws from him his beaten antagonist. Not only so, "He made a show of them openly," or as Weymouth translates this, "He boldly displayed them as His conquests." Rotherham speaks of this as "openly celebrating a triumph over them thereby." What a glorious Saviour is ours! But this is not all. Our unspeakable privilege is, to share with our Lord in the conquest of His Cross. It is thus we are "more than conquerors through Him that loved us."

The crowning of this Calvary victory was by *accomplishing the work* of redemption in all its completeness for us. When our Lord uttered the word upon the Cross, in all His bodily weakness, "It is finished," it was the word of a Conqueror. The Cross became Christ's Triumphant Chariot—and it is ours too, in our vital union with Him.

George Harper.

A Word to our Readers.

DEAR FRIENDS,

I listened in recently to the end of a service in a London Church, where petitions were being offered for those who serve the nation in arms, and for all suffering the strain of the enemy's assault by sea, land or air. As each company of those for whom prayer was desired was named—sailors, soldiers, airmen, workers in our factories, and those who were unable to take so direct a part in the struggle—the congregation joined in this response:

Holy Father, please do with them, in them, and through them—what You want.

This prayer was made for our enemies also, and finally for the whole congregation:

Holy Father, please do with us, in us, and through us—what You want.

Surely such a prayer expresses in simplest terms the longing of us all.

In all prayer at this time, for the world and for our own beloved nation, we feel a special significance in St. Paul's words, 'We know not what we should pray for as we ought.' Yet God's people are cast upon intercessory prayer in a very special way. The fact that our physical contribution may be entirely lacking serves to call us the more urgently to our knees for prayer which only the Holy Spirit can give.

I think most of us find it easier to pray for 'all saints' than for a world which has refused God's Christ, but we can ask the Lord to do with it what He wants, and to destroy the work of the devil. Can we hold on in this work of prayer—hold on without seeing the obvious or immediate answer—sure of His love, whatever He allows?

Last year at the Canadian 'Keswick' we were drawn into close fellowship and personal friendship with a young American doctor and his wife, then on their way to their first Mission Station on the Sudan-Abyssinian border. Now comes the news of their death together, by machine-gun bullets from an Italian aeroplane. They ran out of cover to display the American flag, and thus tried to save others from attack.

'Who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been His counsellor?' We do not understand God's ways with us or His thoughts toward us, but we have seen Jesus: He Who said, 'He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.' One look at our blessed Lord, and we can trust our friends and ourselves in His hands, and the world to Him Who made it, and gave Himself for it.

Our Editor may perhaps wish to give us a word as to the prospect for future issues of this magazine. I know that the Council will seek to maintain the ministry of 'The Overcomer' while it is possible under present conditions.

Never was a clear witness to the victory of Calvary more needed, nor testimony to the spiritual conflict lying behind this agony of the nations. God is preparing the final vindication of His Son. Let us each declare it with full certainty, in the face of hell if need be, to the glory of our all-conquering Lord.

May He bless and keep you, doing with you, in you, and through you—what He wants: and may this be true in these dark days of us and every child of God the world over.

Yours in full assurance of His Triumph,

BERNARD W. MATTHEWS.

Bermuda.
September, 1940.

The Motto Card 1941.

"God is able to deliver . . ."

ONLY BE . . . VERY COURAGEOUS."

Josh. i. 17.

"Christ Jesus our Lord . . . enabled me."

Bournemouth, Sept. 1941

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

It is with a sense of deep gratitude that we are sending forth the last issue of our magazine for this present year—a year of fierce shaking of everything that 'can be shaken' but also of proving the Rock of Ages, which cannot be shaken. We again thank all who have shared with us in the ministry of 'The Overcomer' by contributing toward its cost, which has been met thus far. We are sure the Lord will not fail to provide for this issue also, and as long as He has need of this little messenger. For the sake of new readers, we may say that no specific charge is made for 'The Overcomer,' and that gifts sent toward its cost are used for the printing and postage of the current number.

With regard to the future, this is in the Lord's hands, and our leading is, to go on from quarter to quarter as long as He makes it possible. We have sufficient paper for several issues in stock at the printers, and no doubt can get our "ration" afterwards, though at a much higher cost.

Some of our readers in America write to ask if it is safe to order literature, or send contributions for the magazine because of the present state of war. We can only say that we have no evidence that any of our mail have been lost in either direction. Others write that they suppose we are quite unable to carry on! I think these friends would be surprised if they could see how normal is much of the life in Great Britain still. There have been grievous happenings in London, and elsewhere, but the damage is often confined to comparatively small areas. A letter received this week from one of England's largest and most vulnerable ports says:

"There has been damage here and there, some more serious than others, and some lives lost. But in the main God has wonderfully preserved us. If you were to come to X . . . in the ordinary way, you would have to enquire where the damage had been done. The main part of the town is untouched."

The newspapers tell of the splendid morale of the British people, but more wonderful still is the deep settled calm of those whose trust is in the Lord as their Rock of Defence; and there have been many experiences of His power to deliver. When the siren sounds in the night we at Headquarters betake ourselves to the entrance hall (considered the safest place in an air-raid), and hang in there—painted on a large piece of wood, brought to us from Dohnavur—is this text:

"The Lord Reigneth."

In moments of danger we often repeat these words aloud, and we know they are true, however the devil may rage. It has been a wonderful experience to be kept by our heavenly Father, not only safe, but "quiet from fear of evil" (Prov. i. 33). An experience shared by hundreds of Christians.

Those members of our Council who live in London have also been kept in safety thus far, and we ask the continued prayer of our readers for them especially. Captain Metcalf is back in the army, finding many opportunities for witness, and we are glad to have a brief message from him for this issue—written, he says, "under difficulties," in a very busy life.

I will not apologise for the personal character of this letter, for we know many of our readers who pray for it, and this work unceasingly, will want to hear how it is with us. The bond in Christ is very real in these dark days, and we believe that "through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit" we shall be kept, and enabled to continue the ministry committed to us, in the will of God.

Our Motto Card for 1941 is now ready, and it will be well to order them as soon as possible to avoid disappointment. Last year we reprinted the card several times, but this year it may not be possible to do so, because of the need for economy in the use of cardboard. The 1941 Bound Volume of "The Overcomer" will also be ready early in October.

Yours in the Master's service,

M. N. GARRARD.

"Faith is the test of things unseen . . ."

By Mrs. Penn-Lewis

FAITH is . . . the *test* of things not seen, for therein the elders had witness borne to them" (Heb. xi. 1, 2, R.V. m.). "The testing of your faith—being more precious than that of gold . . . may be found to result in praise and glory and honour at the reappearing of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. i. 7, Weymouth). These two verses in contrast are very striking. Faith tests God, and God tests the faith of those who trust Him, and thus through faith, we may reverently say, God and His children learn to know one another. "God did *prove* (or test) Abraham," and then said, "Now I *know* that thou fearest God" (Gen. xxii. 1, 12, R.V.).

How to "test" the "things not seen," or the verities of the unseen world, is one great question to-day. How to translate into "substance," or visible fact, the things we hope for on the authority of the Word of God. For in their dealing with God, the writer of the Hebrews tells us, that "therein"—i.e., in the testing of "things not seen" by the exercise of "faith"—the elders had *witness borne* to them. God responded to their test of faith, and "things not seen" produced "things which do appear." Faith was the medium for translating into visible facts the unseen things of the spiritual realm.

Faith is the test.

How many of the children of God understand this *testing*, or proving of God, so that for themselves they learn to know God, and to walk with Him, without being disturbed or shaken by the voices of men? They know "faith" as the medium for obtaining assurance of salvation, and sometimes "faith" in some further degrees of the spiritual life; but, on the whole, the majority live upon what this or that one says concerning the things of God. They "believe" because they trust the person who says a certain thing, and really base their faith in the "wisdom of men." This is a mark of infancy in the spiritual life, for Paul writes to the Ephesians to be "no longer children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine"—the thought is "carried by a nurse," and *any* nurse! God is permitting the present sifting of His most earnest children on purpose to shake them off all reliance upon others—the being carried by a nurse continually, even though it be a good nurse! We must all learn to "test" for ourselves what is of God and what is not, and "*Faith . . . is the test . . .*"

But what is the faith that tests the things not seen? The writer to the Hebrews quotes a passage from an Old Testament prophet describing the "life of faith," ere he passes on to draw a series of brief vivid pictures depicting faith in its tangible results in the lives of God's people, and its effect on the whole outer world. "It is by *faith* that My righteous servant shall live, and if he shrinks back (flinches), My soul takes no pleasure in him" (Hab. ii. 3, 4, Weymouth). The R.V. marginal rendering of Hab. ii. 4 gives the words: "The just shall live in His faithfulness," or in the text, "by his faith." The faith that tests

the things of the unseen realm is, therefore, faith piercing through the outer and visible things, to deal with a PERSON, and that Person a Faithful God; for "he that cometh to God must believe that HE IS, and that He is a rewarder of them that seek after Him" (Heb. xi. 5).

Faith dealing with God.

But upon what basis can faith deal with God so as to be sure of "witness borne" in response? How can faith test the things not seen? The answer is that faith deals with God through His Word! Faith tests the things not seen by (1) seeing in God's Word a statement concerning "things not seen" which God declares exist; then, (2) faith rests on God's statement in His Word, and deals with Him as a Person through that Word, trusting Him to fulfil what is written; and, finally, (3) God bears witness to the faith that relies upon His faithfulness to keep His Word, and in the fulness of time gives the substance, or visible results. Then FAITH HAS PROVED "THINGS NOT SEEN" TO BE TRUE.

But is this path of faith an easy one? The prophet's words suggest that it is not, and our own experiences say it is not; therefore the constant temptation to turn aside to an easier path, where faith is not needed, and where Satan can allure with fantasies and "experiences" not of God. But the mind of the Lord for His people is clear: "It is BY FAITH My righteous one shall live!" This righteousness means imparted, as well as imputed, righteousness, as stated by Paul in 2 Cor. v. 21, and 1 Cor. i. 30. Faith in God to test and obtain His response in witness cannot exist with anything in heart or life contrary to righteousness. Hence the Lord said: "How can ye believe, which receive glory one of another, and the glory that cometh from the only God ye seek not?"

A single eye toward God with no thought of the judgment of men, is a primary condition for exercising a faith which obtains response. But this is not an easy path. The Book always speaks the truth. "Things as they are" are clearly written there. No fantasies, or coverings, no glamour, or imaginations, but plain, honest, unvarnished truth, upon which every human being can rest without a fear. "By faith," My child shall live, and "if he *flinches . . .*" (Conybeare), or "draws back through fear," then "My soul hath no pleasure in him."

It is faith, *faith*, FAITH, in a Faithful God, which will have "glory and honour" at the Lord's appearing. "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel," said the Lord, marvelling as He heard the words of the Roman centurion: "I speak—my word carries in it power and effect in the world of men. Do Thou speak, O mighty Lord, and in the unseen realm Thy word is enough, and Thy command over 'things not seen' shall be proved by the visible result in the healing of my servant." "I will come and heal him," the Lord had said, but His bodily presence was not needed, for "so great faith" was

content with the Word of the Lord of Life—his faith tested the “things not seen” and had witness borne to it.

There is great danger of the Lord's children “flinching” from the path of faith and going back to seek the life of the “senses” instead of pressing on into the greater triumphs of faith in the path “whereunto we have already attained.” “Stretching forward to what lies in front of me, with my eyes fixed on the goal, I push on to secure the prize of God's heavenward call in Christ Jesus . . . Whatever be the point we have already reached, let us persevere in the same course,” writes the Apostle Paul (Phil. iii. 14-16, Weymouth). The course for the believer is “from faith to faith.” What confusion on a racecourse if the runners suddenly cease pressing on, and turn back, or turn aside to various side-tracks, having ceased to “persevere in the same course!”

But is the faith that tests the unseen, to have no “manifestation”? The eleventh of Hebrews plainly says yes; but it is manifestation in *effect*, and not merely in “feeling.” “The Kingdom of God is not in word, but in power—i.e., not in talk, but effect! Faith believes God in His Word, and deals with Him on His Word, and there is effect in (1) practice, and (2) result. For example, Noah was “warned of God” of “things not seen as yet,” and he believed God for one hundred and twenty years in a scoffing world; so that he “prepared an ark to the saving of his house.” The outward witness to his faith did not come until the windows of heaven were opened, and the earth deluged by a flood; *then he knew* that his faith had tested the unseen, and found the warning of God true. True faith in God is not in a hurry for “manifestation,” or for proofs to be given to other men of its walk with God. It settles itself down, so to speak, upon the character of God Who cannot lie, and waits God's time. There is, of course, an inward witness, such as Paul refers to in Rom. viii. 16: “The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit . . .”; and again in 1 John, v. 10: “He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in him . . .”; and this was given to Abel as he offered the sacrifice of blood. Enoch, too, had the inward witness that he had been “well-pleasing to God,” but he had the outward “manifestation” only when the moment came that he was translated. Abraham and Sarah had faith in the promise of the seed, but it was many years before the manifestation, which proved their faith, was given.

Mighty works of faith.

And so we might run through the whole wonderful chapter. Time fails to tell of Gideon, Barak, and the others who “through faith” did mighty works in subduing kingdoms, in bearing sufferings, mockings, scourgings, bonds, and imprisonment; they were stoned, sawn asunder, tempted, slain with the sword, destitute, evil entreated, wandering in deserts, and mountains and caves, but nothing could quench their FAITH in a Faithful God. Where are the “manifestations” here? And where are their like in the twentieth century? Shall we ever see them

until we cease looking to one another, and being “tossed about” like children by every wind that blows in the spiritual realm?

The “greater works” that God wants to see in the Church of Christ will come only on the same principle as the mighty works wrought by the heroes of faith enrolled in the eleventh of Hebrews. We are compassed about by them as a “cloud of witnesses,” who watch to see us “fling aside every encumbrance,” so that we may run with “patient endurance,” fixing our “gaze upon Jesus, our Prince Leader in the faith”—He who for the “sake of the joy which lay before Him, patiently endured the Cross, looking with contempt upon its shame . . .”

How does the faith come which produces the “greater works”? In the first place it is said to be a gift of the Spirit of God. “To one is given through the Spirit . . . faith in the same Spirit” (1 Cor. xii. 8, 9). “Faith so as to move mountains . . .” (1 Cor. xiii. 2). And, in the second place, it is developed by use and by testing. It is not merely a mental belief that God is, and that God can do all things, but it is really a part of the “new man” which grows with his growth and knowledge of God, and depends upon the Word of God for its sustenance and development. It is increased just so far as it is cultivated, by the believer being willing to part with all dependence upon the life of the senses, and choosing to rely upon the Word of God alone. The craving for “conscious experiences” and “outward evidences” and “seals” and “tokens” and “signs” must be put aside, for all dependence upon these things weakens faith, and enervates the whole inward man.

But if the faith that produces mighty works is a gift of the Spirit, ought we not to seek for this gift? The passage 1 Cor. xii. 4-31 gives the pattern of a body with the Spirit of God ruling and working through the members of the Body, dividing to each one the supply of the Spirit necessary for the fulfilment of its own office. All the members of that Body must be fitted into place, and “made to drink of one Spirit,” so that all may be tempered together in one harmonious whole. Individually, God “sets” each in place, but each may “desire earnestly the greater gifts,” leaving to the Divine Spirit the fulfilment of the desire as He wills.

Faith to remove mountains.

“Faith, so as to remove mountains”—how will the Holy Spirit give it? By His own indwelling in the believer, and then by leading the soul into circumstances where that faith which is within, is called out into action, and tested to its utmost power of endurance.

Faith is said to be a gift of the Spirit, and a fruit of the Spirit, because it is not merely a mental process; but even as a gift of the Spirit it is not miraculously given as some possession to be held and used at will. It is a “gift,” and at the same time it is *produced and developed by testing* so as to be found able to endure all the tests of God. The reason for this is that man is not a machine to be worked like a clock by some spring within, but an intelligent

being, called into partnership with God. "It is God that worketh in you," writes Paul, but also, "*I labour according to His working . . .*" The whole man is to co-operate with God. God gives "faith" by His Spirit, but the believer must exercise that faith in God for its growth and development. God reigns in the spirit of man, and brings his will into perfect harmony with His own, and then, from the throne of the will, exercises and uses the mind and body in intelligent co-operation. We may, therefore, say that no supernatural power is of God which places the exterior man—mind and body—out of the control of his will, as it is energised by God Himself.

"Faith is *the test of things not seen.*" How is this to be acted upon? How are we to test "the things that differ?"

(1) By turning from all men to God, with a sincere desire to know the truth as it is in Jesus, with no thought of the "glory of men" or the condemnation of men. (2) By dealing with God as a Person, Who is certain to respond to any true seeking unto Him. (3) By appealing to God on His Word to bear witness to the victory of Christ on the Cross

over all powers in the spiritual realm seeking to lead human beings astray. (4) By "resting faith" in God that He does respond and give victory. Thus faith can "test" all things with assurance by direct dealing with God.

Faith appealing to God.

Faith can appeal to the Lord of Hosts, and test God upon His Word; then in return God will test His redeemed one, to increase that very faith which has tested Him! How simple it is! Did ever the faithful Lord turn away from a soul in need? Can we not test, or prove, each for ourselves the "things not seen" by direct dealing with a living Lord? Can we not for ourselves use the weapon of His Word, and prove the things that differ? Faith is the only way to know God, by putting Him to the proof, and receiving His witness to His Word. Let us, then, trust God for power to suffer, power to endure, yea, until even the "*faith of the Son of God*" is brought to maturity in us, and we know something of the "faith of God," and can "say to the mountain, Be thou taken up and cast into the sea," and believe that it "cometh to pass."

The Aggressive Prayer Warfare.

By Rev. Gordon Watt, M.A.

PRAYER is a real business for God. A real thing, through which we can do something of *real* business in the spiritual realm of God, and for the interests of His Kingdom.

The first great essential I think we require is *knowledge*. KNOWLEDGE HOW TO PRAY. Prayer is not a string of words. Prayer is not something that is carried on in a spirit of fatalism, where we say something, and believe that God will do the rest. Prayer is a Divine piece of work, and we need to have knowledge how to pray. You remember the old story of a working man saying to a college-bred man, "God does not need your knowledge," and the college man replied, "God cannot use your ignorance." Both of them were right. God does not need our knowledge, our great ideas, but we need His knowledge. It is not the knowledge that comes from human imagination, but knowledge which is the outcome of Divine illumination. We need that in the fight. But what the college man said is also true—God cannot use our ignorance; but Satan can, and he will and therefore we want knowledge of the right way of doing things.

Knowledge is a gateway to spiritual power, just as it is the gateway to material success, and our experience is governed very much by our knowledge. I believe many are not found in prayer because they do not know how to pray, or what to pray for.

When the Greeks used the word "understanding" or "mind" they thought of it as the faculty of feeling, of judging, of determining. We are needing in the Christian life to possess—and to know how to use—the faculty of feeling and perceiving and judging and determining. The man of prayer who is to

exercise power in the spiritual realm and make prayer a force, and an instrument of doing real business for God, is the man who *sees* and *understands*.

Elijah on Mount Carmel said to his servant, "Go and *look* . . ." The man came back and said he saw nothing, and yet, though there was to the outward senses nothing to be seen, that prayer was going to be answered. Elijah sent him again and again and again, seven times. Why? Because Elijah *saw God*. He had seen Him as the God of the brook, meeting his personal needs; and then he had seen Him as the God of the Mount, and found that there was not an evil power that could stand against Him, and so his vision penetrated beyond the horizon, and saw the clouds beginning to roll up, and knew that Jehovah would not fail.

You remember also how Elisha was situated at Dothan—everything was against him—but he saw God, and the vision of God made him understand the might of Jehovah, and the whole situation, and whilst the young man saw the armies of the Syrians encompassing the city, Elisha saw the armies of God encompassing him inside the city. So there was no fear, no weakness, no surrender, nothing but a triumphant faith.

When we get the right vision of God we know how to pray, and it is in the light of the vision of God that we catch the vision of what the prayer warfare means, because we catch the vision of the church in her commission. We need the vision of the world and its needs, and of Satan and his power, as well as his limitations. I pray that we may never forget, in the prayer warfare, the limitations of Satan—that we may never either minimise the powers of Satan,

or magnify his limitations. "Satan to Jesus, must bow," and therefore, to get a true perspective of things divine, human and Satanic, is to gain a right understanding of what it means to pray, and the more knowledge we can acquire of prayer, and what to pray for—of all the adverse conditions, and OF ALL OUR ASSETS AS WELL—the more we shall be able to make prayer a part of our lives. Prayer is a *business* into which you and I have to put the whole strength of mind and spirit and body, just as really as we do into the business of the world in which we may be engaged.

There are other great essentials I will just mention.

Be definite.

We need to learn DEFINITENESS IN PRAYER. I was rather struck some time ago in looking up the meaning of the Hebrew word for speech. I found that it primarily meant setting words in a row in order to convince. We want to have our facts right, and to marshal them and be definite, and not lose time and valuable opportunities in the use of our access to God. He says, "Produce your cause, bring forth your strong reasons." That is what He wants us to do in prayer.

There is a wonderful saying in 1 Peter iv. 7, "*Watch unto prayer.*" The Greek word is extremely emphatic, it means to *keep yourselves completely awake*. We have to be in a condition of complete wakefulness to know how to bring prayer to bear on things, and how to throw in our prayer-force as a spiritual reinforcement where we see God working, and where He reveals to us the enemy at work.

Another essential is found in Romans vi. 11. WILLINGNESS TO PAY THE PRICE OF VICTORY. I do not believe that one of our prayers in the spirit, for the glory of God, need go unanswered, if we are willing to pay the price. The price is PERSONAL RIGHTNESS WITH THE LORD. It is striking to find that the common word for prayer in the O.T. has two meanings. The first is to pray habitually. The second is to judge oneself. Get into the habit of praying, and remember that *praying is coming into the light*. The light that reveals is the light that heals, and God is willing to do the rest, if we will pay the price.

There are one or two things we need to *emphasise* again and again in this prayer warfare.

(1). First, there is constant need in this warfare for CLAIMING THE PROTECTION OF GOD. There is not one of us in the prayer warfare to-day, who does not realise in greater or lesser measure what the strain is, and all strain means considerable danger, and therefore we need to be constantly claiming all that Calvary stands for as a protection for us in the fight.

I say to people sometimes, and I do not think I am wrong, never take the keeping power of God for granted, in a fatalistic spirit. There is no power for us unless we *claim it*. A lady told me the other day of a young Christian man who said to her, "I never ask God to keep me, because He has promised to do so." I said to her, I think that is one of the wildest suggestions of the evil one. There is no

promise of God for us, apart from our faith, unless we appropriate it, and we require definitely to claim all that there is in Calvary for us, by faith. If you give the devil an inch he will take an ell, and if we do not forestall him he will forestall us. "Give no place to the devil." If he can get at your body he will do it, if he can get at you through your circumstances he will do it, if he can burden your spirit he will do it, if he can shut up your spirit in prison, worry you, depress you, he will do it, and therefore point by point, moment by moment you and I ought to keep in mind the necessity of continually claiming for ourselves, for our work, for everyone connected with us, the protecting power of the finished work of Christ on Calvary.

In Ephes. vi. you will see that the armour which Paul speaks of there, whilst it is for all Christian work, is especially for *prayer work*, for he says that we wrestle not with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers and the world-rulers of this darkness; then he says, "*Wherefore*, take the whole armour of God." The armour is evidently especially connected with the wrestling with the spirit forces of evil.

(2). A second thing is, PRAYING PROGRESSIVELY, from the centre outwards. Lift up your eyes from your own surroundings, church, parish, mission, and see the vision of the future Kingdom and the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, and let your prayer life take a big sweep. Give the Holy Spirit the opportunity of doing big things, and of hastening the hour of the Advent of the Lord, and the translation of the Church.

What are you seeing from your place of death-union with the Lord Jesus Christ? What is the vision you have got? Is it a limited vision, or are you looking for and stretching after the regions beyond? That is surely what our Lord lays upon our hearts in these days, that we may get a big vision of what there is for us to do in prayer, to the glory of His holy Name.

(3). Then thirdly, there is constant need for PRAYING AGGRESSIVELY. Now what is prayer? Is it only words, is it a posture of the body, it is an ecclesiastical ordinance that we are to attend to at stated times? Or is prayer a force? A "form"? or a "force"? Is it something by means of which we can effect some great spiritual purpose, just as by our bodies and their earthly methods we effect some purpose in business? If we understand and remember that the Christian life is a conflict, a spiritual conflict, in which we have to meet and deal with the powers that oppose us in our daily lives, in all that is good, then we shall understand that there must be some weapon given us by God to meet and overcome these powers, and that weapon is prayer—aggressive prayer.

I like to use the word prayer with four prepositions. First, we pray FOR. That is the simplest form of prayer, and we must always keep a place for that in our prayers, for our Lord said, "Ask and ye shall receive." Then we need to pray WITH. With whom? With the Holy Spirit—in co-operation with the Holy Spirit. I believe that very much of

our failure in the prayer life and in our Christian work, is due to the fact that we do not rightly recognise our partnership with the Holy Ghost. Our Lord Jesus Christ, before He went back to His Father, revealed the co-operation between the Holy Spirit and the disciples as something that was indissoluble. "He shall testify of Me, *and ye also*," "He" and "ye." And you and I have to learn how to pray in co-operation with the Holy Spirit. Make it a daily prayer that God will give us the wisdom and power, in co-operation with the Holy Spirit, to hinder the devil wherever we see him working. To stand in his way, and having done all, to stand.

In the tremendous German offensive in March, 1918, when our men had their backs to the wall, the German strategy was to drive a wedge in between the French army and ours. That is a picture of the plan of God for you and for me. To carry that idea of strategy into the spiritual warfare, and seek wisdom how to drive a wedge in between the Satanic powers and ourselves and our work, and then for those for whom we are praying. In brief, we should, in co-operation with the Spirit of God, bring the victory of the Cross to bear upon the points where the devil is hindering, and God is working.

Does it not give us a new vision of prayer and a new encouragement in prayer, to realise that we are not sent at our own charges? But God says "He" and "ye."

Then we have to pray *against*. Against whom and what? Not against flesh and blood—not against men and women, but against the prince of the power of the air, the god of this world, and all his plans and schemes. And I think there is something here that we need very much to have in our minds, and that is, to pray continually against *his interference with us*. His interference with our bodies, his inter-

ference with those who are around us, with our minds, with our spirits, with our wills. We want to know how to pray against things and against all the influences that are in opposition, and to resist the devil.

A leading Christian worker once said to me: "I believe that 'revolution' is coming, and I am not to pray that it shall not come, because I think it is the only thing that will bring the people to their senses." I think he was wrong, very far wrong. I am certain that the Church is here to-day to stand against everything that is of the devil, until the purposes of the Lord have been so completed, with and through the Church, that He will take His people away. I feel that God is calling us, just in the places where we are, to stand against evil of every kind wherever we see it, and if we do not do that, we shall find these evil forces coming in upon us and crushing us. Perhaps that is the reason why this one and that one gets crushed and falls in the fight.

Then there is one other preposition, and that is the word *through*. PRAY THROUGH. You have noticed that word in Ephes. vi., "Praying always, with all prayer . . . with perseverance." That is how we have to pray. *Pray with perseverance, pray through*. Someone has said that the secret of successful prayer is never giving up. Hold on, hold on, hold fast, even though it may be weeks or months or years before God answers the prayer. One of the greatest victories that I have seen in my own ministry was not given to me until between four and five years of praying. *Hold on and pray through*. Let us stand in aggressive warfare against all that is against God day by day. Praying in co-operation with the Spirit of God, the source of all prayer and might against Satanic influences, Satanic lies, Satanic workings, Satanic powers, and praying through until we have the victory to lay at our Redeemer's feet.

On the Watchtower for Prayer.

Prayer

By E. M. Leathes.

IN the midst of the terrible conflict of these days, let us ever bear in mind that God is working out His own eternal purpose, which He purposed in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. "I AM GOD," He declares in Isaiah, "and there is none like Me . . . My counsel shall stand . . . Yea I have spoken, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed, I also will do it" (Isa. 46. 9-11); and in Heb. iv. 3, we read "His works were finished from the foundation of the world."

Compare this with Ephes. i. 4-11. The central Figure and supreme objective of this great purpose of God is Christ, "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." In God's appointed time, Christ came to work out and bring to an issue that eternal purpose for the salvation of mankind, and the utter overthrow of Satan and all his hosts. During His sojourn on earth He perfectly fulfilled His Father's will, doing on the earth what the Father was doing in heaven (Jno. v. 19, 36, Ch. ix. 4). Satan used every strategy he knew to turn our Lord from that

divine purpose, but He steadfastly worked out His Father's plan. In Gethsemane He sought the co-operation of His disciples, so desperate was the conflict, but they failed Him and fell asleep. In the mighty strength of the Life of God He went alone to Calvary and grappled with the foe, and there on the Cross He "disarmed the Principalities and the Powers [which fought against Him], and put them to open shame, leading them captive in the triumph of Christ" (Col. ii. 15, Conybeare).

There is ample evidence that we are now standing at the most vital period of the world's history since Calvary. Wars in olden days were confined to but a small portion of the earth; even during the 1914-18 war, air-warfare was only at its beginning. But now, owing to the speeding up of movement, the whole world is rapidly becoming involved in one vast conflict. No human being, however wise, is able to foretell the end of these hostilities, which are being waged with a ferocity before unknown. Those who know their God see behind it all the master-mind of

the Dragon of hell, endued with Satanic wisdom, seeking to bring to a final issue his audacious plan for world dominion; and to forestall and avert (if that were possible) the reign of Christ, when, as he knows, he will be consigned to the abyss. Therefore he inflames and empowers his chosen instruments for the work—for the extinction of Christianity in preparation for the reign of the Man of Sin (2 Thess. ii. 8; see also Rev. xiii).

The greatest danger we are now facing is not air-raids or even invasion, but something much more subtle. The following quotation from a speech by General de Gaulle on the cause of the fall of France is most enlightening. He said: "The enemy's trickery, and the lies of his accomplices, were able to create such a pernicious atmosphere that they anesthetized France" ("The Times"). And we may add, country after country in Europe has been thus anesthetized by Germany, until they have fallen an easy prey, just as a little bird is paralyzed by the serpent till it can no longer use its muscles, and so falls into the mouth of its devourer. Whole nations have been hypnotized by the enemy until all power of resistance has been taken away, and they surrendered to his awful Satanic spell. It is not likely that England will be let alone, when for so many years she has been God's instrument for sending His Word to all nations, translated into more than a thousand languages and dialects. We must be prepared for attacks, from without and within. There are traitors in this country, and we should pray that they and their works may be uncovered, and all new schemes which may be on foot for our undoing, for we are up against more than a 'flesh and blood' enemy. A letter appeared in "The Times" recently in which the writer said "That 'subtle change' in the outlook of the R.A.F. mentioned by your Aeronautical Correspondent has been observed in other Forces also. A few days ago a friend was telling me of the difference he had noticed between the Dominion Forces of this war and the last. "Then," he said, "they came to fight for the Empire: this time they have come to fight the Devil." Few words could put the difference more succinctly.

Satan's plan for world domination.

I have been reading a book entitled "*Hitler Speaks*," by a German named Hermann Rauschning, who was a member of Hitler's inner circle in the earlier days of his career. During his years of intimacy he recorded the conversations which took place in the innermost circles of Nazidom, from 1932 to 1934. I can give here but a glimpse of the significance of these revelations, but here you see portrayed Satan's plans for gaining world dominion, and strange to say, all these plans are traced out in imitation of the eternal purposes of God for the Church and the nations. Well has Satan been named 'the ape of God.' We find that Hitler, Satan's chosen instrument, has his twelve 'Apostles,' and assigns to each of these men a special department for the carrying out of his devilish designs. He speaks of forming a 'new Herren class,' a selection made by the Fuehrer, a new creation, chosen to guide not only the German people, but the world! "Our true

object," declares Hitler, "is to set up our rule for all time, and to anchor it so firmly that it will stand firm for a thousand years." He speaks also of the great 'liberation' of mankind—"It is that of the liberation of the sons of God"—and also of his 'New Testament,' which contains "the last and highest of all, the religious revelation, the first tentative sentences of the new Holy Book which he will confer on the world, if he lives."

Surely God has led the author to write as he has done, that Satan's intentions might be revealed to us. As long as the Church of Christ is left on the earth, it is for the main purpose of *watching with Him* in this hour of the world's agony. The three disciples chosen to watch with our Lord in Gethsemane could not stand the strain, and failed Him in that crucial hour; and we shall only endure to the end as we know in experience our living union with Him in His death. Are we willing for the depths of the Cross? Remember, He "maketh the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over" (Isa. li. 10). We cannot escape the suffering if we are to share His Throne and His reign over the earth—"if we suffer (or endure, R.V.) with Him, we shall also reign with Him" (2 Tim. ii. 12, Rom. viii. 17). If He has chosen us to stand with Him in these last and terrible days, we must know the fullest surrender and obedience to our Captain—there must be no flinching or turning back. Like Gideon's three hundred warriors, we may be faint and weary, but we must be still pursuing the enemy (Judges viii. 4). We may even come to a point where Satanic pressure upon us seems beyond endurance (2 Cor. i. 8-9), but be sure of this, God will always make a way of escape. It was in a wounded, broken body, in physical weakness and helplessness, but yet in the divine might of God, that Christ defeated the foe. We must be willing for the same pathway "That I may know Him" cried the aged warrior Paul, "and the power of His resurrection, being *made conformable unto His death*." This is the way by which "they overcame him (Satan) by the blood of the Lamb."

But it is at this point when the tension is severe that we are tempted to relax our vigilance; when after incessant prayer and supplication there appears no break in the clouds, no apparent answer. When darkness is around us, and our enemies are vaunting themselves, do we not often cry out as did Habakkuk (Ch. i. 2-3)? But if we read on we find that he ended with a shout of victory (Ch. iii. 17-19). So beloved, no matter what the future may bring, or what the Adversary may spring on us, stand firm in your position in Christ (Eph. ii. 4-6), and be sure that every prayer inspired by the Holy Spirit will be answered. But there must be no relaxing, no spasmodic praying. Remember Eleazar, the man who fought alone with David when all Israel had fled, "till his hand clave to his sword"—BUT—the Lord wrought a mighty victory that day.

We may deplore the awful sins, and neglect of God, so prevalent in our country, but remember that over and over again in past history, God has worked through the few, not the many, and that H.

"chooses" the weak things of the world that He may "put to shame the things that are mighty" (1 Cor. i. 27, Rotherham). God has His companies of praying ones who are crying to Him day and night, "Lord, avenge us of our adversary," and He has been working for us in wondrous ways, far beyond our human understanding. If we take account of the terrible perils that have threatened us, and the many times God has intervened to intercept them in ways we little dream of, especially in the past few months, then we shall praise Him with very full hearts, and take courage for the future.

Let us "CONTINUE in prayer, and watch in the

same with thanksgiving." However fierce the fiery furnace now, it will all seem as nothing when the Glory dawns upon us and we hear His "Well done" (Rom. viii. 18).

On to the goal! Press on!
Alone, yet unafraid;
He cut the path who beckons thee,
On then, and undismayed.

On to the goal, press on!
Look not behind thee now,
When just ahead lies His "Well done"
And crowns await thy brow.

M.E.B.

Healing, Christian

"Though it be Tried with Fire."

By J. C. Metcalfe, M.C.

HOW full the Scriptures are with encouragement for God's people! And what ample provision has been made "that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." The real problem seems to be, how can the good coin of heaven be transmuted into wealth that can be shared out to those who have no knowledge of the grace of God, and in spite of all that is going on around them, are wholly blind to their need? The promises of God are indeed untold treasure, and the Church is rich beyond all imagination, but how can it be that, like Peter, we can say to men, "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee?"

Does our heading provide us with a clue to the solution of such a question? I am at present living amongst men to whom the familiar story of Abraham's test in the offering of Isaac is 'savage folk lore'; the trial of Job a meaningless fable; the book of Ecclesiastes the height of pessimism, and so on. Yet these same men are braver, kinder, more tolerant, than I am, and indeed than most professing Christians. And yet, in Christ I have all things, and without Him *they* are spiritual paupers. How can my wealth be shared with them? I have put this in the first person singular because it is probably precisely the same query that stands against the lives of many of our readers.

"*Though it be tried.*" Surely our heavenly treasure needs just this refining before it can be shared. The faith of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego held no reality other than an obstinate holding to principle for Nebuchadnezzar, until he saw for himself the "fourth . . . like unto the Son of God" in the furnace. Then his unbelief was dealt a staggering blow, and this beggar clothed in royal apparel caught a glimpse of a heavenly fellowship beyond his comprehension. The parable is not difficult to read, in fact its meaning seems to lie right on the surface. All that I can say to others, whether in private or from the platform or pulpit, is of no avail unless it is actually drawn direct from

the mint of the Spirit of God, where it has been tried to the utmost.

Christ is real. The Name of Jesus is mighty. But is the real gold of an absolute confidence in Him indisputably mine? If so, others will undoubtedly see it, and an impression will be left upon their hearts and minds that will abide, and carry with it healing, life-giving properties.

"*Though it be tried with fire.*" Fire, to me, always has a rather frightening sound. Fire burns—and burning is a painful process. And yet when I stop to think, it seems to me that that word 'fire' speaks of the tremendous value that God sets upon the coin of His realm—FAITH. He is a great God. Nothing but the very best will do for those He loves. In the days of Solomon silver was of no value, and he gave the Queen of Sheba nothing but priceless treasure. Will the One Who gave His only begotten Son for us, give us after that, anything but the very highest? No! Every heavenly gift is tried with fire, and may be unhesitatingly used by us. The world may laugh, the devil may rage, but you and I may pay our way with heavenly coinage, and others seeing will glorify our Father in heaven.

Satan has impoverished the world to the very brink of bankruptcy by unbelief. He is draining utterly the resources of his occupied territory. But we hold the secret of unbounded, unchanging stores of grace, and have the privilege of meeting the needs of those about us—"give ye them to eat" is our order.

I am more and more convinced that these days of human extremity are in reality the days of the Church's magnificent opportunity. All things are ours, and we are Christ's, and Christ is God's. The Son of God is indeed with His people; and even if the fires of testing blaze up, heated sevenfold by a malignant enemy, God will give a triumphant witness of His wisdom and power that there will be no gain-saying. The Word of Truth reveals a living Saviour Who can never be defeated, and we are complete in Him.

"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for He is faithful that promised."

Truth
Freedom

Freedom through the Truth.

By Rev. John Pritchard.

"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free . . ."

John viii. 32.

FREEDOM' and 'Truth'—these are words to conjure with in these dark and difficult days! 'Freedom'! The word looms large upon our hoardings and in our newspapers, we hear it again and again over the radio. 'Truth'—how anxious we are that our enemies should know it, we even drop fragments of it in leaflets from their skies. Yes, and how anxious we are to know it ourselves and how we grumble at The Ministry of Information if we feel that we are not given enough of it. Surely these words of our Saviour will come to us now with new force and meaning, 'Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.' Our text and its context teach us very emphatically two great lessons: (1) There can be no freedom apart from *spiritual* freedom. (2) It is the truth, and the truth alone, which will bring freedom.

I. *There can be no freedom apart from spiritual freedom.*

The Jews, to whom our Lord uttered these words, objected violently to the suggestion that they were, or ever had been, in bondage to any man (John viii. 33), but He quickly showed them that they were in the slavery of sin and of Satan. There is a very real danger that our own beloved Nation may make the same mistake as these Jews made—the mistake of imagining that we are free, when in reality we are in bondage. It is terribly easy to sing 'Britons never never shall be slaves' when all the while we are the victims of a spiritual bondage to sin and to Satan. Let us examine some of the things to which men are pinning their hopes of established freedom and see how inadequate they are.

(a) The destruction of an external power does not, of itself, bring freedom.

We have not far to look for an illustration of this fact. The Israelites were delivered from Egyptian bondage, and the Egyptian hosts which pursued them were drowned in the depths of the sea. The external power which so long had held them in bondage, was destroyed, but were they thereby made absolutely free? No! for whilst they were out of Egypt the spirit of Egypt was not out of their hearts. There is Biblical evidence for saying that these people, when they left Egypt, carried with them, even under their bloodstained doors, some of the gods of Egypt. These gods were evidently carried through the Red Sea and handed down to succeeding generations during their wilderness wanderings, they were carried through the Jordan and right into the Promised Land, so that Joshua, in his last message to the people, had to urge them to put away the gods which their fathers served in Egypt (Joshua xxiv. 14, 15 and 23). It is evident that their slavery was not so much the slavery of an external foe as the slavery of sin in their own hearts.

(b) Legislative Enactment alone does not bring freedom.

There is no need for me to emphasize this. In these days when promises are made, treaties signed and laws made and broken almost immediately, the truth is evident. The fact of the matter is that there is no ultimate freedom by means of an external law. The law given by God through Moses was a perfect law in every detail, but it did not bring freedom. Men who are in bondage to sin cannot keep the law. Freedom will not come, as some men think, by exchanging one system of government for another, though of course, such an exchange may go some way towards providing it. Are we out to crush Nazism? Then let us beware that we do not exchange it for Bolshevism! Is our aim ultimately to crush that also? And if we succeed in doing so shall we thereby have established freedom? Maybe we shall be some way toward it, but beware, lest having driven out two devils, we admit to the house that has been emptied, swept and garnished, seven worse devils than before!

(c) The use of force alone does not bring freedom.

Again let me say that there are instances on record where the use of force has provided a certain measure of freedom, but lasting, eternal freedom will never be achieved by force. The Children of Israel were commanded by God utterly to exterminate the Canaanites. God evidently used Israel as His battle-axe of judgment against that evil nation. He may still do that kind of thing amongst the nations to-day. But were the Israelites *made* free in that way? Again the answer is no, for there were Canaanites of evil in their own hearts and consequently such temporary freedom as they enjoyed in Canaan was followed by bondage in Babylon and later by bondage to Syria and to Rome.

Peter made the mistake of thinking that the freedom of his beloved Lord could be established by force when he drew his sword and cut off the ear of one of those who came to take Christ prisoner. But our Lord's words to Peter show us that they who take the sword are in bondage to the sword until at last they perish by the sword. It is, I think, very evident that any freedom which is established by force can only be maintained by force, and such is true of all earthly freedom, so called, and of all earthly kingdoms. Did not our Lord Himself recognize this when He said to Pilate, 'If My Kingdom were of this world then would my servants fight.' (John xviii. 36). Earthly kingdoms may be established and maintained, for a limited time, by force, but as long as we live in a sinful world we shall never be entirely free from wars and rumours of wars. That Kingdom for which we all long, wherein is perfect freedom, will never be established by force of arms but by the Redemptive Power of

the Cross of Calvary and by that same power will it be maintained.

(d) Civilization alone does not bring freedom.

There is no need for me to labour this point, it is painfully obvious. Someone has rightly said, 'Civilisation contains within itself the elements of a fresh servitude. Man conquers the powers of nature and in turn becomes their slave.'

Now, I have been dealing all the while with freedom in its national and international sense, what of individual freedom? Paul realized his spiritual slavery when he cried, 'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' (Rom. vii. 24). And what is the answer to such a question? I might go over each of my points again and apply them to the individual. No man can be made free merely by the destruction of adverse external circumstances. Freedom is not a question of environment. A person is not free because he strives to live according to certain laws or adopts a number of 'absolute' standards. Neither can a man win his own freedom by fighting and struggling for it, and certainly freedom does not come by reformation or 'moral rearmament.' As it is true of nations so it is true of individuals—there can be no freedom apart from spiritual freedom.

II. *It is the truth, and the truth alone, which will bring freedom.*

Again and again we hear it said in these days, 'How wonderfully the truth would liberate the German people—the truth about themselves and their rulers, the truth about those whom they call their enemies.' One of the reasons why we know that the power behind Nazism is Satanic is because of the tremendous lying campaign which characterises it. In the passage from which my text is taken our Saviour exposes one of the hall marks of Satan—'He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: FOR HE IS A LIAR and the father of it' (John viii. 44).

Man first entered into the bondage of Satan through two great lies. The first was a lie about God, and the second was a lie about man. The lie about God is in Genesis iii. 5, 'For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.' The lying suggestion was this; God was jealous of His own position, and did not desire man to become like him. The truth was the exact opposite. God had made man in His own image and after His own likeness, and His great desire was that man should be conformed to the image of the Eternal Son. The lie about man is in Genesis iii. 4, 5, 'And the serpent said unto the woman, We shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day that ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.' There are really two lies about man here, the first is that God's statement is false and man will not die even if he does disobey God, and the second is that if he takes the forbidden fruit he will become like God.

It is quite true to say that all the lies of Satan

are moulded upon this pattern. Take just one example—the popular doctrine of the universal fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man. What is that but a lie about God and a lie about man? It is not true to say that God is the Father of all men, except in the sense in which He is their Creator. Neither is it true of man to say that he is a child of God, except in the sense in which he is God's creature. We know that God is only the Father of those who have received Christ as their Saviour, and that it is only as men do this that they become the sons of God. Now it is only as man relearns the truth about God and about himself that he will be made free. And again let me say that what is true of the individual is true also of nations. It was to bring this truth that Jesus came, for He said 'For this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth' (John xviii. 37): and again 'I am the Truth' (John xiv. 6). And surely it is at the Cross of Calvary that we learn what God has to teach us. Let us think of some of these lessons briefly.

When our Lord began His public ministry, His message was 'Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.' But that great Kingdom of Freedom and Truth was not immediately established because men rejected their King. Later when Pilate asked 'Shall I crucify your King?' the people cried, 'We have no King but Caesar.' At the Cross we learn the lesson that mankind has rejected our Lord's Kingdom of Truth and Freedom, and exchanged it for Satan's kingdom of lying and bondage. But, thank God we learn something more. We learn that it is by the power of that very Cross that the great Kingdom, for which we long, will be finally established. For it was by His Cross that our Lord triumphed over Satan, and put him to an open shame (Col. ii. 15). At the Cross we receive the assurance that Jesus shall reign, and that one day the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ. Small wonder that Satan hates the Cross of Calvary!

At the Cross we also learn God's verdict upon sin and upon the fallen nature of man. The Lord Jesus hangs upon the Cross as the bearer of my sins for "God hath made to meet upon Him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah liii. 6). My sin is so hateful that it caused the crucifixion of my Saviour! But not only did Jesus bear my sin in His body on the tree, but He carried me with Him there also. The fallen unregenerate man is so incurably sinful that the only thing God can do with him is to crucify him with Christ. But I learn also that out of that death comes life—new life, the life of Christ. "If any man be in Christ he is a new creation; old things have passed away and behold all things have become new."

Briefly let me summarize. At the Cross we learn three great truths—

1. *In His Cross* the Lord Jesus has dealt once and for all with the problem of human sin and guilt. The learning of this truth will bring freedom from *sin's penalty*.

2. *In His Cross* the Lord Jesus has dealt with the problem of the 'flesh'—the fallen nature of man. The learning of this truth will bring freedom from *sin's power*.

3. *In His Cross* the Lord Jesus has overcome Satan and the whole hierarchy of evil. The learning of this truth will bring freedom to the individual, from the power and bondage of Satan and his demon

hosts. It will also ultimately mean that all the kingdoms of the world shall be liberated from the bondage of Satan, in which they are at present labouring, and in that glad day the whole creation will enter into the glorious liberty of the sons of God!

"And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free."

*Life
will of God*

The God-planned Life.

By the Rev. A. R. Boughen.*

LET me begin by saying that it is possible to live a God-planned life—a life wherein God's plan and purpose is dominant, and is being worked out day by day, a God-centred, God-controlled, God-inspired life. God has a plan for every life, and as the plan is His and allows for no compromise or deviation, the method of its out-working must be His, and His alone. All creation shows that God's method of working is from within, outward—He always works from the centre to the circumference and never vice versa, and to ignore this Divine method is to smash the plan and fail before we begin. This means that, if our life is to be lived in the will and plan of God, He must be in complete control at the centre of our being, the "control room" of life must be in His hands entirely. Nothing less will suffice.

But control at the centre is not sufficient by itself. To work out His plan, He must have the response of all the faculties of the soul and the members of the body, the instant obedience and undivided loyalty of every part, for He Who planned such a life alone can work it out. Centuries of human life have proved that. All man's efforts from the beginning have ended in ghastly failure. In His Book God has spoken His mind and will to His creatures. Men of God wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, and in the last days God has spoken to us in His Son. The Son who came, and the men who wrote said the same thing—and the Son said it twice over. He both proclaimed the God-planned life and He lived it. Only once in the history of man has God's plan been worked out to the full, and that was by the God-Man, Christ Jesus.

(1) HE TAUGHT US THE PATTERN OF THE GOD-PLANNED LIFE:

"Be ye . . . perfect even as your Father who is in heaven is perfect." "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind" (Mt. v. 48; xxii. 37). The heart as the centre of the affections; the soul as the fountain of thought, imagination and judgment; and the mind as the place of decision—all yielding obedience to God with one desire, to please Him and to help others in the same direction. This imperious command for perfection in the personal life is at once the centre and the climax of all our Lord's teaching. All His other counsels and commands are included in its scope. This is God's will, and He will not be content until His plan is made actual in each of us.

(2) HE LEFT US AN EXAMPLE:

Our Lord lived a perfectly holy, human life, using only the resources open to each one of His creatures. His life was God-planned, God-centred, God-controlled, and God-inspired from beginning to end. The warp and woof, every thread in its strength and colour and design, was perfectly worked in to God's pattern. "What wilt Thou have me to do?" was His constant prayer, and not in one iota did He deviate from that plan. In His inmost spirit He

waited the impress of the Spirit of His Father, discerning between what came from the Holy Spirit and impressions registered from without. The God-planned life is a perfectly poised life. There is no clashing of the intuitions of the spirit with the faculties of the soul, or the members of the body. There is discernment between what is purely soulish and what is spiritual. This discernment can be seen in the choices Jesus made. Take the desire of His friends that He should evade the cross. All suggestions along this line were immediately set aside, because in His spirit He knew the mind of God.

How He loved the home at Bethany! To Him it was as a haven to a tempest-tossed mariner. Yet when those sisters sent for Him because of their brother's illness, He deliberately delayed going, and when He did arrive, Lazarus had been in the grave four days. To the worldling and the carnal Christian how heartless such behaviour would seem! yet Jesus was not heartless, He "loved Martha and her sister, and Lazarus." The appeal to His soul was as great, yea greater, than to any of His followers, and yet He did not go. Why? Because He knew in His spirit that the delay would be for the greater glory of God.

And this, remember, is the Captain of our Salvation, Who said to us in the moment of our decision for Him, "Follow Me." He Whose life never lost for a moment its true centre and balance in God, ever sensitive to His voice, obedient in every detail, perfect in discernment of His Will—He says to us, "FOLLOW ME."

The God-planned life will be opposed.

The very fact that this perfectly adjusted life was lived out in a maladjusted world speaks of inevitable opposition and conflict. It could not be otherwise. The one aim of the present world-system is to break up and break into this God-controlled life. "The whole world lieth in the evil one." The moral structure of this world system is energised by Satan, the arch enemy of God. The Bible is clear upon this point. How malignant was the opposition that dogged the footsteps of the perfect Pattern, and "as He is, so are we in this world." Peter learned this lesson, and wrote, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial that is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you; but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy" (1 Pet. iv. 12).

How this life is made possible.

Beset by opposition on every hand from the cradle at Bethlehem to the tomb in Arimathæa's garden, our Lord resolutely set His face to overcome it, and presented to His Father a life wholly planned and controlled by Him. Then came the cross, deliberately staged by the world, and engineered by the Wicked One—"This is your hour, and the power of darkness," declared the Saviour. In that hour He completely triumphed and gloriously overcame the powers of darkness, but more than that. HE DID THE ONE THING ESSENTIAL IF MAN WAS EVER TO BE ABLE TO LIVE IN THI

* Mr. Boughen has kindly sent us this outline of the first of four Bible Readings, prepared for the Conference at "Slavanka," which was cancelled owing to war conditions.

WILL AND PURPOSE OF GOD. He dealt once and for all with the old creation life ruined by the Fall, which is "corrupt according to the deceitful lusts."

God is holy, and for man to be "holy as He is holy," a desperate and radiant work must be affected at the very centre of human life. New foundations must be laid, and a new creation set thereon; the "new man," which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness," for the "old creation" life cannot be holy. All this Christ made possible at Calvary. When He took our sins in His own body to the Tree, He took the sinner there (Romans vi. 6), and He Who knew no sin BECAME SIN for us, tasted death for every man, and defeated Satan and all his powers in the process. To talk of a God-controlled life apart from this work of the cross being made effectual **WITHIN THE BELIEVER** is to talk of an impossibility. God cannot build on a corrupt foundation. The new creation alone can satisfy His heart and meet His righteous demands.

Two human examples of the God-controlled life.

(1) **DANIEL**, "a man greatly beloved" (Dan. x. 11, 19; ix. 23), yet we know from the Book that he was also a man greatly hated. Loved by heaven, hated by the world. A life devoted to duty, steeped in the Scriptures, saturated in prayer. A mind that knew and declared the plan of God for his own life, and in general outline, for the Gentiles and for his own nation. This man, amid the splendours and wickedness of Gentile courts, kept his soul and character unspotted from the world. On every possible occasion he confessed God before the mighty world rulers of his day, and took no credit to himself for the wisdom he so often displayed. Cast from youth into circumstances which well might have embittered his soul, he lived in uncomplaining loyalty to God. No man has faced up to more danger and difficulty than Daniel did, yet not for one moment did he deviate from the plan laid down by Jehovah—and this was the life which remained quiet and confident, this was the life God honoured with His secrets, the light and lamp of prophecy in a very dark day.

The climax of this life is seen in Ch. x. The Lord Jesus gave him a vision of Himself, and the effect is seen in ver. 8; "I was left alone and saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in me, my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength." Here is the personal experience realised in every God-planned, God-controlled life: "In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." To see Him Who is thrice holy, suffering for sin on the cross, and realise that it was my sin—nay more, my sinful nature, He dealt with there, is to abhor myself and to say with Daniel, "my comeliness was turned into corruption." Let a man get there, and Christ can begin to build the new life, but as long as we hold on to a shred of our own righteousness, or good works, as acceptable to God, so surely the plan will be marred and hindered.

(2) **PETER**. One is tempted to turn to Paul for the N.T. illustration, but I choose Peter, the man who, before the cross became effectual in him was such a bundle of contradictions and inconsistencies that he comes much nearer to us than does Paul. Think how in the early days of discipleship he confessed his sin—"Depart from me, for I am a sinful man O Lord." Yet after that, on no account would he have the cross, and with vehemence declared, "This shall never be unto Thee Lord; be it far from Thee." How many there are like Peter at that stage of his life. Confessions many, but as to the inner working of the cross in their lives, or even a suggestion as to its deeper meaning for the personal life, they have no knowledge, alas no desire, or worse still, it is met with resentment, and God Himself cannot work as He desires.

Think of the up-and-down life of Simon, before the Lord was able to make him "Peter"—yet withall, he clung to Christ when others began to drift away because of His deeper teaching, foreshadowing the

Cross (John vi.) Jesus spoke of His flesh as "meat indeed," and of His blood as "drink indeed," and said "except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you"; but of such an appropriation and assimilation of the sacrifice of our Lord for us they had not the faintest conception. Even when the Lord said "It is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life," many of His disciples went away, and "walked no more with Him." They were not seeking fellowship with His cross. They were willing to follow Him as Leader, but not to crucifixion. The cross, in this sense, is still an "offence," and many walk not with Him. As a Teacher of ethics, yes. As the greatest example of humanity possible, certainly. But the Cross—never!

Peter stood firm on this occasion, but how little he understood all that it involved! Nevertheless, after the denial and deep repentance, the appearances of the Lord after His resurrection, and the coming of the Holy Spirit, how great a change was wrought. Instead of denying the Cross, he proclaims it to be fundamental and central in the purpose of God (Acts. ii. 22-36). Think of the place Peter gives to the Cross in his Epistles. From an attitude of rejection he came to see that there can be no plan or purpose of God wrought out in any life except the precious Blood of Christ be constantly applied, and the cross of Christ be central and real as the very basis of all divine life, making the sinner "dead indeed unto sin" and alive unto God. When he writes of election into grace it is by the "sprinkling of the Blood of Christ." His great reference to redemption has its roots in "the precious Blood of Christ." No longer something which could be evaded, he shows it to be the very warp and woof of the texture of redemption.

In 1 Pet. ii. 13-23, he sets forth Christ as the great Example Whose steps we should follow. Peter had learned the utter futility of attempting the imitation of Christ apart from initiation into His death, so when he gave these five steps in the example of Jesus, he followed it immediately with one of his great statements on Calvary: "Who His own self bear our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, **BEING DEAD TO SINS**, should live unto righteousness: by Whose stripes ye were healed."

Again in Ch. iii, after writing some immensely practical truths touching the life and character of the believer, he says that the background of it all is that "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but quickened by the Spirit." From all this we see that the great hindrance to the holy life God has planned for us all is the sinful nature. Once we realise that our Saviour dealt with this old life on Calvary, that "our old man was crucified with Him," a new creation becomes possible, and in a new way, without struggle or strife, I rest in Him and realise that I am here to fulfil His plan and purpose.

So real did this become to Peter that he writes, "Arm yourself likewise with the same mind," the mind of Christ. How willing our Lord was to go to the deepest depths for us. He "became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross." Dear friends, are you willing for this? Here is the secret of the life of victory which is God's plan and purpose for you. It is of no use dealing with sins, or habits, or temperaments, **UNLESS THE ROOT FROM WHICH THEY SPRING IS EFFECTUALLY DEALT WITH**, and that is what Christ did at Calvary (Rom. vi.). Am I willing for the death of Christ to be made real in me by the Holy Spirit? My answer to that question will determine the measure in which my life here will be in the plan of God and under His control.

The plan is **CHRIST**, the way is **HIS DEATH**, the means by which it works is **HIS LIFE IN ME**, and the issue is victory and glory.

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