

Words
Of
Peace
&
Truth

No. 102: September - December 2017
CONTENTS

	Page
By Faith Enoch was Translated (<i>G.J.S.</i>)	67
Fragment on Luther (<i>A. Sapir</i>)	71
Repentance (<i>La Bonne Semence</i>)	72
Correspondence to Christ (<i>H.F. Nunnerley</i>)	73
“You” (<i>H.D’A. Champney</i>)	81
The Greatness of the Shepherd (<i>C.A. Coates</i>)	87
Poetic Pages	93

WORDS OF PEACE & TRUTH

(*Esther 9:30; see also Zechariah 8:19 and Jeremiah 33:6*)

No. 102: September – December 2017

Editorial

“And now they will be hindered in nothing that they meditate doing” (Genesis 11:6). This is how God assessed the state of the human race when they attempted to build themselves – God was left out – “a city and a tower, the top of which may reach to the heavens.”

We are probably only too aware of the recent and continuing avalanche of immoral practices being justified and promoted (even, alas, by some churches) and now including freedom of “gender identity.” But I have just learned of an addition to the growing list of projects which must be abominable in the sight of Him by Whom actions are weighed (1 Samuel 2:3), namely the proposed setting up of a church of artificial intelligence with the aim of developing and promoting the realisation of a godhead based on artificial intelligence.

No doubt all such moves will have the result foretold in Psalm 2: “He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision.” But in the meantime, do we not groan at the folly, blindness and impudence of man and tremble at the dreadful climax of it all, which will be reached after the Lord has called His church up out of this scene to be forever with Himself?

But “Thou wilt keep in perfect peace the mind that is stayed on Thee” (Isaiah 26:3). While warning those around us of judgment to come, let us be occupied with all that is lovely in our Lord Jesus Christ while we wait and watch for His return. G.S.B.

Editor: *Geoffrey Bacon, 58 Byron Avenue, Coulsdon, Surrey, England. CR5 2JR* **Website:** www.wordsofpeaceandtruth.co.uk
E-Mail: bacon707@btinternet.com **Tel:** 020-8660.2915

BY FAITH ENOCH WAS TRANSLATED

IN the brief notices of the patriarch Enoch there are four things brought into prominence, which set forth that which ought to be true of us who compose the church of which he was a type; the last of which stands at the top of this paper.

These four things are as follows, namely:

1. Enoch walked with God (Gen. 5:22);
2. He had this testimony, that he pleased God (Heb. 11:5);
3. He prophesied concerning the ungodly (Jude 14:15);
4. By faith he was translated. (Heb. 11:5).

1. Enoch walked with God. Wonderful dignity conferred upon Enoch, amid all the results of the fall, to “walk *with God.*”

It is said of the other patriarchs in this Genesis 5 that they “lived” and they “died” only; but of our patriarch it is added that “he walked with God,” and that “he was not, for God took him.” How different the characters indicated by these notices of the men of those early days, and how instructive! They are all men of the line of Seth, yet of most it is said he “lived” so long, and then he died; of one only that he walked with God and that he did not taste of death.

Is it so, that men of God may live and die upon this earth, and never reach the privilege of walking with God? And should this content our hearts?

Ah! but to walk with God one must be agreed with Him; for, “Can two walk together, except they be agreed?” (*Amos 3:3*) No! this is impossible. And to be agreed with God we must give up our own will and ways, for it is not reasonable to expect that God should give up His, nor could we desire it.

Enoch then must have yielded his will to God, and this he did by faith, for he pleased God, and without faith is impossible to

please Him (*Heb. 11:6*). Moreover, he walked with God for three hundred years, and amid all the cares of family life, which in his case formed no hindrance to such a walk.

2. He had this testimony that he pleased God. This is the result of the walk with God, who never withholds this testimony from those who do walk with Him. It is not a testimony of acceptance; *that* Abel had in common with all who offer the more excellent sacrifice, but of acceptability; a testimony which God delights to render, and which every godly soul covets.

Paul desired the maintenance of it when he said, “Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be agreeable to him” (2 Cor. 5:9). It is here shown to be a testimony dependent upon ourselves and our walk, and not upon the sacrifice by which we approach God. Paul laboured for it. He would fain have ever this testimony, and could not be satisfied without it.

The blessed Lord Jesus Christ desires it, and counts upon our valuing it. He says, “I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.” And, “He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him.” Again. “If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him” (John 14:18, 21, 23). Here the manifestation of Christ to the soul, and the abiding of the Father and the Son, is made contingent upon obedience and love. And these manifestations are the expression of the good pleasure that the Father and the Son have in the one to whom they are made.

How marvellous this intercourse between the soul and those who, though known and loved, are unseen! How the soul that has tasted it delights in it! More marvellous still the thought that the Father and the Son delight in it; and that He who has prepared a mansion for us up there, desires nothing less than that we should prepare for Him a mansion (abode) down here in these poor hearts

of ours. We need indeed to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell thus in our hearts by faith. And in this way we do get the testimony that we please Him; and thus are enabled still to walk on with Him by faith.

3. But Enoch held out a testimony to the poor world through which he passed, warning it of God's displeasure with its course, and of coming judgment. "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all; and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him" (Jude 14, 15).

This, the word of his testimony to the world, he received from God, as the sense of his own acceptability came from Him. With an assured sense of this he maintained a testimony of coming judgment, which was afterwards taken up by Noah, and which the flood in Noah's day doubtless partially fulfilled; but it is couched in such terms that it passes over to judgment yet future, and which is the subject of the church's testimony to the world in the present day.

How little the world believe that all their ungodly deeds, and all their hard speeches against Him, are about to be brought into judgment – that they themselves shall be convinced of them! And so it is written of the men before the flood, "They *knew not* until the day that Noah entered into the ark, when the flood came and destroyed them *all*." Why did they not know? Had not Noah preached for one hundred and twenty years before the flood came? Ah yes; but they did not believe, and therefore they did not know, until the event foretold happened, and *then* they knew, although they did not believe. "*Thus* shall it be in the coming day," is the testimony of One who speaks with unerring wisdom and precision. Alas for those who believe not, and whom that day overtakes!

4. But all is not yet said of Enoch who walked with God by faith, and by faith held out his testimony to the judgment of the world.

There is still another remarkable act of faith recorded of him. “By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death” (Heb. 11:5). How could this possibly be accredited as an act of faith to Enoch? Did faith spread her pinions and bear the patriarch out of the scene in which he had walked for three hundred years, and from the death that might naturally have been expected to terminate it? Is this within faith's province? If so, would not many a saint thus fly away and be at rest? Ah, no; faith can accomplish no such achievement. This belongs to God's power, and so it written, “God took him;” and “He was not found because God had translated him.”

But it *is* within the province of faith to believe God; and God is able to reveal His mind about any subject He chooses to His saints; and as He had already revealed to Enoch that he was well-pleasing to Him, and that judgment was coming upon the world; so now He reveals to him that he should not taste death, but should be translated without dying. And Enoch believed it, and lived in the power of the expectation of it, and was patiently awaiting it when it came to pass; and so it is written, “By *faith* he was translated,” and in this way it is accredited to him as an act of faith.

This is evident inasmuch as there can be no faith without a basis for it, and faith's basis is in God and His word. Faith does not believe what *it likes* and it comes to pass. It is no act of the human mind. Whatever this may be called, it is not faith as God speaks of it. Faith must have God to lay hold of. It believes that He is what He is, a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. It rests with the most profound confidence upon every word of God.

And, beloved brethren, *we* have a word of a similar character for our faith. Here it is.

“For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and

remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord” (1 Thess. 4:16, 17.)

Do we believe it? Are we living in the power of it and patiently awaiting it; enduring all things in the immediate prospect of it? Shall we be expecting Him when He comes?

Come He assuredly will, and at the word of command, *all* the saints shall be caught up: not one of those who compose the church, which is His body, shall be left behind. *His power* accomplishes this. The serried ranks of the dead are marshalled, the bodies of the living changed, and all together go up to meet Him in the clouds.

But will it be accredited to each as an act of faith? Many have died in the faith of it, and their faith will surely be accredited. But Enoch’s act of faith is open to all those who alive and remain until He comes. Now while all are caught up, it is solemnly possible that of some – perhaps of few – only it will be said, By faith he was translated. Should we like it to be said of us? May each heart answer before the Lord. If there is affection enough to desire it, He is able to make it true in us for His glory.

*G. J. S., quite possibly G.J. Stewart (1840-1918).
Reproduced from “Voice to the Faithful” Vol. XXIII (1889).*

FRAGMENT

Luther found peace for his troubled conscience in Jesus as the righteousness of God. And because Jesus had become all in all to him he laid such stress on the Bible, where he had found Jesus. It was Jesus who riveted his heart, and it was Jesus on whose account and in whom he felt, as he expressed it, wedded to the Bible. For higher than the Bible is – not reason, not the Church, but – the Holy Ghost, who reveals Christ in the written word, so that it becomes to us, what it truly is, the word of God, the voice of the Beloved.

A. Sapir.

REPENTANCE

“He that covereth his transgressions shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall obtain mercy” (Proverbs 28:13).

Repentance is the perception of the moral disorder in which we are by nature. It is the awakening of the conscience, which turns then to God.

The man who repents experiences a sincere horror of the evil of which he is capable, not necessarily because he has committed particularly serious sins but because God has not had place in his life. In repentance there is a gleam of hope, a more or less conscious appeal to divine mercy.

Repentance shows itself by sincere regret (read Psalm 51), by confession, to God in the first place for He is the first offended, and then to those whom we could have wronged: a spouse, an employer ... Finally it expresses itself in the rectification of wrongs done, as far as that is possible, and by the abandonment of the sins confessed. The believer is mindful of the errors which humiliate him, but at the same time he rejoices in the grace which has been granted him: his sins are pardoned.

Thus repentance prepares us to accept the grace of God. It is a first movement towards Him, since by it one acknowledges that God has the right to be obeyed. There is thus an element of faith in true repentance. Do we not confess our sins because we have hope of being pardoned? And God grants His pardon to all those who believe that Jesus has borne, in their place, all their wrong-doings.

Translated from “La Bonne Semence” (“the Good Seed”), November 17th 2017.

“Metanoia” – one of the Greek words translated ‘repentance’ – “is the moral judgment of the soul upon all the past, upon all that it is as in the flesh before God” (J.N. Darby).

CORRESPONDENCE TO CHRIST

*1 Corinthians 15: 45-49; John 6: 56-58; 13: 12-17;
1 John 3: 1-3; 4: 17-19*

I DESIRE to bring before you the thought of correspondence, and how we are brought into it. In Romans 8 we see the goal in relation to God's purpose, that we are to be conformed to the image of His Son so that He may be "the firstborn among many brethren." Think of that vast company, and each one in the likeness of Christ! In the light of that it is said that "all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to purpose." So it is the privilege of each saint to work out every incident in his pilgrim path in the light of that day when our glorious destiny will be realised, and we shall be conformed to the image of His Son. We are reminded in that striking passage of the unique position that the Lord Jesus occupies. There will be the myriads of the many brethren, but *He* will ever remain the Firstborn among them.

Having that in view, brethren, I would like to show how this thought of correspondence is being worked out, how the ways of God are being brought into it, so that in relation to all God's ways He has the ultimate thought of His purpose in view; and then we are subjects of divine workmanship. Each one here is the subject of the work of God.

I would like to illustrate it from the tabernacle, which is figurative of the great moral system in which God is to be served for His pleasure. In the epistle to the Hebrews we are told that the tabernacle is a figure of the universe; the universe is to be the great tabernacle in which the worship and service of God is to be carried out. The ark of the covenant is the centre of the divine system, that which we might speak of as its glory. Everything ranged round the ark of the testimony and all the divine thoughts stood in relation

to it. We are told the materials of which it was composed. One was the acacia wood, setting forth the incorruptible and holy humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ, which bows each of our hearts in a sense of profound worship, and then the gold which was placed upon it. We have been reminded that that sets forth God's perfect committal to the Lord Jesus Christ, as coming out of the waters of baptism in the presence of the opened heavens, the descending Spirit, and the Father's voice which came from heaven saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." It is then that the gold comes into evidence. Now the boards of the tabernacle were made of the same material. We think of the Lord Jesus as typified in the ark, the One who said, "Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me), to do thy will, O God" (Heb. 10: 7). As we think of Him carrying out the will of God from the sunrise at the waters of the Jordan, and closing in the gloom of Gethsemane and the still deeper darkness of Calvary's cross, we are impressed with the greatness of the Person who did the will of God. The boards set forth the saints at the present time. They were made of the same material and every one was to stand up in a socket of silver, speaking of the power of redemption. We are to be in correspondence to Christ as the One who did the will of God, as we are told in the epistle of John, "he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (1 John 2: 17). I desire that each of us may be brought into more living and closer correspondence to the One who did the will of God.

Then in relation to the great thought of suffering we find that the vessels were made of the same material as the altar. The Lord Jesus will ever stand out as the greatest sufferer in the universe. He will ever have that place of peculiar pre-eminence. There have been martyrs who laid down their lives, who sealed their testimony with their blood, but the One who stands out pre-eminently in suffering will be the

Lord Jesus Christ. There are millions in this world who have been brought into correspondence with the Lord Jesus in the path of suffering, so that this great principle of correspondence enters into every divine thought. God is working it out in His holy discipline of love, all the ways of God bending towards it, so that He might accomplish the purposes of His love in every one whom He has picked up in His divine sovereignty.

I refer now to a third thought, and this is in regard to the veil. The Spirit of God has given us the variety of colours. We are told in the epistle to the Hebrews of the curtains of the holy place, surrounding the inner sanctuary. They were made of the same material.* How precious that is brought before us in the gospel of John and in the epistle of John, the Spirit of God reminding us of this great principle of correspondence! That which is said of Him is true also of us, so if we think of the veil, with the one exception that there were the cherubim there, the great principle of correspondence is worked out in the divine nature. We love to think of the divine nature, and look upon the brethren and clothe them with divine thoughts and affections, and what is true in Him is true also in them.

In chapter 15 of 1 Corinthians the apostle is speaking of these exalted thoughts and presenting the Lord Jesus in a unique way. “As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.” He could not speak to them in the earlier part of the epistle of the deep things of God; he had to speak to them as babes; but now, when he touches the resurrection world, the apostle presents these great thoughts in relation to the

** I think the speaker may have been referring to the three “doors,” to the holy of holies, the holy place and the court respectively as described in Exodus 26:31,36 and 27:16 – Ed.*

Lord Jesus Christ. He is the last Adam, the Head, the One who infused the breath of life into God's creation, the One who is the quickening Spirit and will cause the universe to throb in responsive affection to God. Then He is the second Man. He is the pattern of the heavenly family, and we love to think that "as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." We bear the image of the earthy, but the moment is not far distant when we shall bear the image of the heavenly. "As is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly." We are heavenly in our origin, heavenly in our destiny, but are we heavenly in our spirits? The children of Israel were to put ribbons of blue in the border of their garments. Everything that the saint touches at the present time is to be heavenly; he is to bring the heavenly into the domestic circle, into his business, into his assembly relations. If we get an impression of the heavenly, it would revolutionise everything. We should find our interests too in the circle of the saints and we should have the light of the world to come on everything that we have to do. One trusts that the Spirit of God will give a touch in the soul of the youngest here and give an impression that we are heavenly.

Now in the sixth chapter of John it is the thought of food. It is one of the greatest chapters, I suppose, in John's ministry and one of the most testing chapters, so that we are not only to have the pattern of the heavenly before us but we are also to have a constitution that has been formed by what we are feeding on, so that we become heavenly in every detail of our lives.

One would remind you that in John 6 we see the Lord Jesus in three great positions. The first is in incarnation, as One who has brought all the living grace of heaven into this scene. The incarnation has been spoken of as the unshakable pillar of the moral universe.

The second way in which we see the Lord is in death, coming within the range of our appropriation, as He said to them, “Unless ye shall have eaten the flesh of the Son of man, and drunk his blood, ye have no life in yourselves.” If we are to live, if we are to enter into the realm of eternal life, it involves our appropriation of what has come out in the death of Christ. “Unless ye shall have eaten the flesh” – involving a complete removal of man in the flesh, the entire displacement of the man after the earthly order, and the introduction of the second Man who is out of heaven. And then we have, “He that eats my flesh and drinks my blood.” The blood is the great witness of the love of God and that forms a spiritual constitution in each believer, so that we can move in the realm of what is heavenly.

The last position in which the Lord is presented is in that of ascension, ascension being the plane on which the assembly (*or ‘church’ – Ed.*) is at the present time, the great distinctive truth of Christianity. There will be other families in the spiritual universe, but the assembly will occupy that exalted place that is presented to us in ascension. The Lord Jesus says so touchingly that “As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.” One loves to think of the pathway of the Lord Jesus; in every step the incense went up to God, a life of absolute devotedness. “As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.” If you take the man of the world, when the world’s system fails him, the man dies, but the Lord Jesus whilst passing through this scene lived by reason of the Father. He is the great pattern. We are formed in correspondence to Him and the life of the Christian is, “As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.” God is working all this out, working it out in a thousand details with an

infinite variety of ways in each of His sons. The work of God has one end in view, for God is moving on the line of His purpose; it renders us triumphant, it makes us victorious, and we live in the light of the purpose of God, and that involves complete correspondence to His own Son.

I refer now to chapter thirteen, where we get correspondence on the line of service. The Lord laid aside His garments to wash the feet of His disciples; thus He inaugurated the great ministry of serving love amongst His own, and He would bring each one of us into correspondence with this service of love. So the Lord Jesus reminds us, “Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.” As He had done, so should we render this same service one to another. We are under an obligation to wash the feet of every saint we come across. That involves a ministry of refreshment so that our spirits may be free, but we need to have the pattern in view. We need, dear brethren, to get the food that will bring us into correspondence to Christ, and so we see our great Model stooping in the service of love to wash the feet of His disciples. He has inaugurated the ministry of serving love, and He says, “Ye also ought to wash one another’s feet. Sometimes the young people say there is nothing to do. If you will only find from Scripture what you are to do for one another, you will have an occupation that will last you until the Lord comes. We are to bring a spiritual, refreshing ministry that will lift the spirits of the saints above this scene, and the Lord is the great Model, the great Example for each of us, and thus we are brought into correspondence on the line of serving love.

Now in the epistle of John, chapter three, we have: “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed

upon us, that we should be called the children of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the children of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.” This chapter opens up to us the great feature of correspondence. Think of the touching way love has taken, “that we should be called the children of God,” and we are brought as children into that relationship and into the enjoyment of the service of God. Mr. Raven used to say in regard to sonship that it is *love at rest*. All the counsels of God will be accomplished, all those imperishable eternal purposes brought to pass; all that has originated in the divine mind will be brought to accomplishment, and the sons secured for divine pleasure eternally. But when we think of ourselves as children, it is *love in activity*; we are in the relationship of children as being in an adverse position in the world. We are often misunderstood. It says, “Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not,” but the Father’s love rests upon His children in the midst of their sorrows and adversities. Every heart says, “Beloved, now are we the children of God.” It is a sweet, holy and precious relationship; love would expand in the enjoyment of it. It is not the thought of persecution, which comes in other scriptures; but that the world does not know the springs that govern the Christian. The world never understood the Lord Jesus; not a single motive of His was ever understood by the world. The world knows nothing of the Father’s love, but we have been brought into the blessedness and joy of this present relationship. But as to the future, the apostle says, “It doth not yet appear what we shall be.” The scripture is very positive. We have no light given us in regard to the Lord’s glorified body; we have precious references to the holy body

in which He moved down here, doing the will of God; we have references to the resurrection body, but as to the actuality of the glorified body of Jesus, we are content with what Scripture says, “for we shall see him *as he is*” – not *as He was*. What a destiny awaits the children of God! We are going to be completely conformed to the Lord Jesus, and then he gives us the present effect, “And every one that has this hope in him purifies himself, even as he is pure.”

In the last scripture we read, “Herein is our love made perfect [*or, herein has love been perfected with us*], that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love.” What a comfort that is! “There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. We love him, because he first loved us.” Scripture speaks of boldness in remarkable places, boldness to enter the holiest, boldness in the day of judgment, and it says, “because as he is, so are we in this world.” At the present time we are brought into correspondence to Christ. The third chapter refers to our actual correspondence in relation to His glorified body, but this scripture says, “because as he is, so are we in this world.” The epistle of John presents the Lord Jesus characteristically to us. We may think of the Lord personally, we may dwell on the official place that He has in God’s universe, but it is well to look at Him as He is presented here characteristically. The first thing in the epistle is that He is the *righteous* One. We are brought into correspondence with Him as the righteous One. In the third chapter He is the *pure* One: “And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.” What a great thing it is to be brought into correspondence with the Lord as the pure One! Then He is spoken of as the *holy* One: “But ye have an unction from the holy one.” We are brought into correspondence with Christ

as the holy One. And then finally, at the end of the epistle, the whole idolatrous system is swept away, and the Lord Jesus is enshrined in the hearts of the saints as the *true* One. The whole idolatrous system is broken when the saints are brought into correspondence with Christ as the righteous One, as the holy One, as the pure One, and finally as the true One. In the light of that we can say, “as he is, so are we in this world.”

May this thought of Christ enter into every part of our lives, our family life, our business life, our assembly life, so that we may attend to every place that we occupy in the path of the divine will in moral correspondence to the Lord Jesus Christ, as we shall be actually when we see His peerless face! May He grant it for His name's sake!

Address given by H.F. Nunnerley at Portsmouth, October 18th, 1947.

“YOU”

John 15: 14-16.

THE subject of interest in these verses, dear to my own heart and to many, I trust to all here, is embraced in that little word “you.” It may be called by different names – such as the company, the flock, the assembly, or the body – but we all know what that “you” means, and that little company is privileged beyond all others. There never has been one so highly favoured, and never will be again. They are a very special and privileged people. I do not say you can point out that company now and say – there it is, but still it is here, and, thank God, we know it is. They have what no other company has or ever will have as far as scripture shows us. They are marked in a wonderful way – they love one another. It is the only company on earth of which that can be said. Till that company was formed there never had been an assembly

marked by love to one another. The Lord spoke to them on that last night of what was to characterise them in His absence; when He spoke to them of love and joy He meant what He said. No doubt He saw that company coming out in all the beauty of Christ, and the Father getting fruit for Himself from them. He saw it beforehand and told them what it was the Father would value. Nothing of Christ was to be lost. The love which He brought into the world was to remain, it was not to be lost. It was to be in that company, “As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you.” It is special to it. As to *where* you can find such a company now, it may be difficult to say, but its unfailling mark is love – they love one another. That love does not belong to nor find its proper scope in any *sect*, nor could it. The very fact of a sect means that they who form it have a creed of their own, their own tenets, and their own rules by which they are bound together. It is not the great moral bond of divine love. *That* belongs only to that company which Christ has brought out of the world for the Father and which the Father has given to the Son. The point to me is not where we can *see* that love, but that we should seek to show it, that we should seek in the power of the Spirit to manifest that love which is characteristic of the company – it is fruit for God.

Another thing that marks them is, they have *His joy*. “That my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.” When Christ was here joy was here. There never had been such joy on earth or joy so deep till then. The world did not know what He had, but He had it; there was a deep, wonderful spring of joy in Him, and it was to continue. So two things mark that company according to the mind of God, and did at the beginning – they love one another and have the joy of Christ. “My joy,” a deep spring of joy altogether outside this world. They *love one another*; it is not that they love those who have the same tastes as themselves, nor those who hold to certain

principles as in a man-made community – they love one another. The world would not thank you for love like that – divine love. The Lord brought it here, and the world did not appreciate it, nor want it, but the saints prize it. It is very precious now. There was plenty of it seen at Pentecost, but it is precious now – too precious in a way, there is so little of it. If you want to find love and joy you will not find it anywhere, but in that “you,” that company which Christ has got for Himself. And what can be more attractive than love and joy!

There is another thing that marks that company – they are extremely *wealthy*. “All things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.” It is well worth belonging to that company to get such things; they are nowhere else – the Jew has not got them, the heathen has not, nor were they given to any sect. It is a person in the light of the assembly (*i.e. the church – Ed.*) who gets what is true of the assembly, and enjoys what belongs to it. It is a great thing to get the light of the “one flock,” the one company. What communications can equal what Christ heard of His Father? And He has deposited these communications in the assembly. No creed can contain them. These things were deposited among His own, the “you.” “All things which I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.” The more you get into the light of the assembly the more you get into the light of these communications. I would not go to a sectarian to open out the Father’s things. If I knew anyone in the consciousness of what the assembly is I am sure he would open out to me these communications of the Father more than any sectarian could. And these treasures are never *lost* – they are kept here in the power of the Spirit. These communications are still here, no thanks to us, but thanks to the power of the Spirit. They are not lost, they are maintained here, and as people get into the power and light of the assembly they find them. They find the most blessed things that could possibly be told out.

And then, dear friends, it is a *praying* company. “Whatsoever you shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you” (Chap. 16,

v. 23). They have a peculiar access to the Father, a privilege that belongs to no other assembly on earth. What a wonderful thing it must have been to hear that company pray at the beginning! They were not selfish prayers – praying for anything of their own – they had nothing of their own. The Lord gives these blessed things to His own. The more you are in the light of the assembly the more you know how to pray. Prayer is more in accord with the mind of God, and with the Father’s heart as we know what that “you” is. Are you going to narrow that “you” to any special party? You cannot; nor can you, on the other hand, enlarge it to take in what is not of Christ. What a wonderful company the assembly is! They are a people who know love and joy, and who have communications from the Father, and who pray with the certainty that it is the pleasure of God to receive their petitions. There is only one company on earth who address the Father, and who are certain of the Father's hearing them, and that is the company who are the continuation of Christ down here – His own assembly, His own body.

But along with these privileges they must expect hatred on the part of the world. The people who *love* are the people who are *hated*.

The world is a universal idea. They are the object of universal hatred. In other things the world can find something to like or to patronise: they can patronise religion; but this assembly has nothing in it attractive to the world, or which the world could be the patron of, nor does the assembly in any way desire the world’s patronage. The world hates them because they are like Christ and chosen by Him out of the world. It is not the first instance of universal hatred, but the continuation of what was shown to Christ Himself; they are still hated by the same world. But, strange to say, though they hate that company the world greatly gains by its being here.

Then they are a *witnessing* company. It was a blessed witness at the first that came out from that great evangelistic company, for they were all evangelistic then, and would to God there was the

same blessed witness now. In their love to one another they were the great testimony to the love of God. No man can get into the light of the company without being evangelistic. It is like being in the light of the sun. How could you be in the light of God's love and having got that light be unaffected by it? The world is the gainer when the moon catches the light of the sun and reflects it, and so the witness of the company is a gain to the world just in proportion as the church is in the light of Christ, and His love is manifested in us. The gospel was successful in the most marvellous way in the beginning because of the testimony that came out from the "you."

Then another thing: it is a company that is *persecuted*; they follow you up, they want to get rid of you, and the persecution is more particularly from those who think they are doing God service; they persecute that company.

Then again, I do not believe any one knows the true character of the world like the man who is in the truth of the assembly. Who can tell you the character of the world except the church? The world could not tell it you – the only ones who could are those in Christ's company, the "you." The Spirit has come, and He convicts the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment. More than that, they are *in the light of things to come* – they see the things of the world passing away and they are in the light of the world to come – they see all the elements of the world gathered up in its prince, and passing away, and they are in the glorious light of what is coming. To no other company is the light of the world to come given.

Then they are a *rejoicing* company – they have a joy which no man taketh from them. But they do not rejoice in the same circumstances which the world rejoices in: "Ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice." The church has no joy which it shares with the world. When the world has a high day the church does not put out its flag, for what the world exults

in the church does not. The church exults in Christ. It is true still; that joy was given 1800 years ago, and it remains – the joy of seeing One risen from the dead, the joy of seeing all the pleasure of God in Christ, the accomplisher of all God’s purposes of blessing and the centre and sun of the great world to come.

There is just one other thing more I would mention which we get in a previous chapter – the world thinks we are *orphans*. The world saw a dead Christ, and His followers without Him. But wonderful to say, though bereaved we are not bereaved. It is the only case of bereavement where we have the One of whom we are bereaved. That company, so truly blessed, knows what it is to have the presence of Christ, “I will come to you.” They come together in His name and under the impulse of His love, and He comes to them. If we are conscious of being in the assembly, we are certainly conscious that He is there. He cannot be separated from His own assembly. The world and the church have nothing in common and they cannot rejoice together. No doubt the world will rejoice when we are gone; the assembly has been an impediment to them – they want their own man, the “man of sin.” When we are gone there will be no impediment to his being revealed. Jesus says to us: “I will come again and receive you unto myself.” It will then be found that nothing that was left here of Christ was really lost. We have till He comes the light of the Father’s house, love, fulness of joy, all the Father’s communications – everything which the Lord brought and left here. Though in great failure outwardly, it will be found that all the Lord brought here has been preserved in the power of the Spirit – love, joy, and the light of the Father’s things will all be found in His own when Christ comes for them. He will not come for any special party, but for that same company who are marked by love and have this deep spring of joy. Then they will expect nothing more; everything is fulfilled, they have got all the “things to come” – they have come. The

world has passed, and He brings in all that which the church now is in the light of!

May the Lord give us to see it! I wish I could speak of it! It is very dear to me. I trust I would rather lose my life than lose the light of that company. Let us see how dear it is to God, and then it will be dearer to us. Evangelists will not be less evangelists because they are in the light of the greatest thing that God has ever brought about down here.

Address given by H.D'A. Champney at Quemerford in May 1900.

THE GREATNESS OF THE SHEPHERD AND HIS SERVICE

Micah 5

ISAIAH said about the same time that Micah prophesied, "And a throne shall be established in mercy: and in the tent of David there shall sit upon it, in truth, one judging and seeking justice and hastening righteousness" (Isa. 16: 5); and again, "For Jehovah is our judge, Jehovah our lawgiver, Jehovah our king: he will save us" (Isa. 33:22). The thought of salvation is thus clearly connected with the judge, as also in Judges 2: 16, 18. I believe it is in this sense that Christ is said to be "the judge of Israel." If they had repented He would have secured to them blessings in righteousness. He would have taken up their cause on God's behalf, and administered righteous grace to them. But they refused Him in this blessed character. "They shall smite the judge of Israel upon the cheek" (Micah 5: 1). This was really the rejection of Jehovah's salvation by His people; and perhaps it is significant that Gentiles had part in this, as intimating that the Gentiles would follow Israel's lead in this dreadful and contemptuous refusal of God's delivering power and grace in Christ.

But the Spirit of God brings in at this point the divine greatness of the One who should come forth out of Bethlehem Ephratah, David's city. He was, in that character, David's Offspring, but He was also the Root of David, for His goings forth were from of old, from the days of eternity. He is the eternal God, but He came forth to rule His people as a Shepherd. He came in to take personal charge of the flock, and the remnant of Jacob became His flock, as we know from John 10. He has had to give Israel up, according to Micah 5: 3 "until the time when she which travaileth shall have brought forth: and the residue of his brethren shall return unto the children of Israel." But this did not suspend His shepherd service. That service went on amongst the sheep who were in the Jewish fold, and it has extended now to the "other sheep" (*John 10:16*) who were not of that fold, but whom He has brought that there might be "one flock and one shepherd."

"And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of Jehovah, in the majesty of the name of Jehovah his God," v. 4. The Lord's position and service amongst His own, when He was here, was unique, and their position and privilege were also unique. There will never be anything like it again. For He was not only Israel's Messiah, in the most blessed relation as Man to Jehovah, and bringing all that amongst His own so as to cause them, as having faith in Him, to know its blessedness; but He was personally the Son of the Father, and His being here brought the Father's Name here, and made that Name available for them. He was amongst them as the Revealer of the Father, making known the Father's Name, and giving them to understand that they were to know God as Father. Our minds are so familiar with the thought that we, perhaps, hardly conceive what it was to the disciples to hear Him say, "Your Father," "Thy Father," "that ye may be sons of your Father." No Old Testament

saint had ever known God by that Name. But the presence of the beloved Son with His own brought that Name to them, and He kept them in it (*see John 17:12*). What could only be the portion of men through redemption, and through having the gift of the Spirit, was brought near to men so that in nearness to Him they could have something of the joy of it anticipatively, though not yet having the Spirit. This explains how the Lord could say so much, particularly in John's gospel, that was really anticipative of the full result of His being glorified. As it has been said, the Lord did much for them which was afterwards the work of the Spirit. He led and fed His flock not only in the majesty of the Name of Jehovah His God, but in the added blessedness of His Father's Name.

His sheep were capable of appreciating their Shepherd and His feeding. For they had their origin in the Father, as He says in John 17: 6, "They were thine, and thou gavest them me." They were "his own sheep" because the Father had given them to Him, and He lays His life down for them. He feeds them in a manner which is wholly divine, but which harmonises perfectly with all the requirements of their nature. Every one of the sheep is conscious of the need of pasture; the fact that the Lord says, "shall find pasture," implies that they have been looking for it. They have a different nature from those who are not the Lord's sheep, as He said to some, "Ye do not believe, for ye are not of my sheep, as I told you," John 10: 26. Through the sovereign working of the Father the sheep of Christ are inwardly different from all others. They answer to Christ as the disciples did when He called them. They hear His voice and know it; they know not the voice of strangers, but flee from them. Their requirements are such that only the personal service of a divine Shepherd can supply them.

It is wondrous to think that the majesty and blessedness

of the Name of His God and Father gives character to His feeding His flock. We should perhaps hardly have thought of bringing that into His Shepherd service, but Micah 5: 4 suggests it. We need not be surprised that it is so when we remember that He said, "I know those that are mine, and am known of those that, are mine, as the Father knows me, and I know the Father," John 10: 14, 15. He feeds His flock in the blessedness of His Father's Name so that they may know the love of the Father to His Son, and know that they are loved in Him. We have to grow up to it by His feeding: none other than Himself could make it known to us; "For all things which I have heard of my Father I have made known to you." "All things that the Father has are mine; on account of this I have said that he (the Comforter) receives of mine and shall announce it to you." "The words which thou hast given me I have given them, and they have received them, and have known truly that I came out from thee, and have believed that thou sentest me." These words show how the Son identifies His own with Himself, and He feeds them by His words into the blessedness which He knows so well.

What a comfort that Micah 5: 4 adds, "and they shall abide"! "Abide" is a characteristic word of John's writings, occurring about 40 times in his gospel and about 20 times in his first epistle. The sheep are brought into what is permanent. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give them life eternal, and they shall never perish, and no one shall seize them out of my hand. My Father who has given them to me is greater than all, and no one can seize out of the hand of my Father. I and the Father are one" "John 10: 27-30. Those whom He feeds have the abiding consciousness of this; their blessedness is in Christ and in the Father's love.

"For now shall he be great even unto the ends of the earth."

This verse extends the greatness of Christ far beyond Israel. At the present time it links with, “And I have other sheep which are not of this fold: those also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one flock, one shepherd,” (John 10: 16). “And this man shall be peace,” v. 5. It is not here that He makes peace, or gives peace, but He Himself is peace. The force of this seems to be that *before* the enemies are dealt with Christ Himself becomes peace to those who know Him. Wherever He comes peace comes; it was so in John 20. There is not an anxious thought or a fear in the heart of Christ, and He says, “These things have I spoken to you that in me ye might have peace,” and this was after telling them that those who killed them would think to render service to God! Peace is as much for us in Christ as righteousness or salvation. Before the prophet speaks of the Assyrian coming he gives this blessed word “and this man shall be peace.” It is what He is at this very moment; it is there in Him for all His own. In the Scripture before us it is given to qualify the flock to meet the Assyrian, who in the prophets is the last enemy to come up against Jerusalem – Daniel’s “king of the north.” * I believe that Assyria as a type represents the violence of men against God and His Anointed; Babylon represents corrupting influences. So that the two original characters of evil – violence and corruption – will be headed up in Babylon and Assyria. Babylon will be destroyed before Assyria. · There can be no doubt that violence will specially mark the closing period of this age. The beast makes war with the saints and overcomes them (Rev. 13: 7). At the present time the Assyrian represents what is definitely opposed to God and to His people, which would take an active form if not restrained by God. But in the meantime, before God deals with it in judgment He meets it in a remarkable way.

**Except that the forces of “the uttermost north” will come down into the land of Israel when they are at last dwelling in safety (Ezekiel 38, 39) – Ed.*

“Then shall we raise against him seven shepherds, and eight princes of men,” v. 5. This is a very beautiful touch. The enemy is to be met by shepherds and princes (literally, anointed ones). That is, he is to be met by those who have taken character from Christ, who appears so definitely in this book as the Shepherd. “Princes of men” are those who can move in the dignity of the anointing. Such are God’s great power against the Assyrian. It is in keeping with God’s design, made known elsewhere (*Psalms* 8:2), to still the enemy and the avenger by the praises of babes and sucklings. God meets the violence of men by the Spirit of Christ; let us ever remember this.

Then the remnant of Jacob gets an extended mission as dew from Jehovah, as showers upon the grass, v. 7. They will go out to bring the refreshment of what Jehovah is to many peoples. It is a gentle influence, corresponding in character with the personal service of Christ, but carried on by His Jewish brethren far and wide in the Gentile world. It is to be noticed that it is the persons themselves who are the dew and the showers. They are personally permeated with what they have been fed upon by their Shepherd, so that wherever they go there is dew and rain. It is not what they say, but what they are, which brings the divine refreshing. It does not wait for some change in man. It is just itself, and it falls with subduing power wherever it goes. This is the place and abiding service of the saints to-day; we may not have gift or great human ability of any kind, but we can be true to what we are as having the Spirit of Christ. People will be tested by how they regard it, just as the presence of Christ’s brethren will test all the nations in a coming day; see *Matthew* 25: 31-46.

But there is another and a very solemn side. The dew of grace rejected becomes a lion. The remnant of Jacob will have this character also. They will destroy their enemies, as many scriptures show. This is because they can only have their

promised portion on earth by the destruction of those opposed to them. Hence they pray for this in various Psalms, which is sometimes a difficulty to those who do not understand the differences between an earthly people and those called to heavenly blessing. The partakers of the heavenly calling know that they are going to be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, to be for ever with Him. But the portion of an earthly people can only be secured to them by their enemies being destroyed. *Our* enemies are spiritual enemies, and they have to be destroyed by spiritual power and spiritual weapons. Human or natural strength is of no avail in this conflict, nor, indeed, will it be in Israel's battles. They will have to prevail by divine power alone.

Extracted from summaries of Bible readings with C.A. Coates at Teignmouth between 1940 and 1943.

POETIC PAGES

Around a Table

Around a table, not a tomb,
He willed our gathering-place to be;
When going to prepare our home,
Our Saviour said – “Remember Me.”

We kneel around no sculptured stone,
Marking the place where Jesus lay;
Empty the tomb, the angels gone,
The stone for ever rolled away.

Nay! sculptured stones are for the dead!
Thy three dark days of death are o'er;
Thou art the Life, our living Head,
Our living light for evermore!

Of no fond relics, sadly dear,
O Master! are Thine own possessed:
The crown of thorns, the cross, the spear,
The purple robe, the seamless vest.

Nay, relics are for those who mourn
The memory of an absent friend;
Not absent Thou, nor we forlorn!
“With you each day until the end!”

Thus round Thy table, not Thy tomb,
We keep The sacred feast with Thee;
Until within the Father’s home
Our endless gathering-place will be.

Elizabeth Charles.

The Unchangeable God

We praise Thee, O God, that Thou never dost change;
For ever the Same, in Thy greatness Thy range
Is far above nations and devils to reach,
Thy wisdom and knowledge beyond man to teach.

His glory Jehovah to no-one will give;
The nations e’er long He will sift with His sieve;
His purposes sure they can never defeat;
His ways shall His counsels in all things complete.

In righteousness, holiness, mercy and love
Thy nature and attributes soar far above
The scope of our minds to search out or embrace,
Except as Thy Son has revealed it for faith.

We praise Thee for Him, who continues the Same
Through yesterday, now and the ages to come;
In Whom all Thy fulness was here pleased to dwell,
In words, works and ways Thine own glory to tell.

And where like His cross was Thy glory displayed,
When Thou upon Him our iniquities laid?
He only could yield what we never could pay
When there He restored what He took not away.

Our God, we rejoice that the claims of Thy throne
Were thoroughly met when He suffered alone;
For mercy and truth both were met in that place,
And righteousness able with peace to embrace.

But Thou by Thy glory hast raised Thine own Son,
Declaring Thy pleasure in all He has done,
Then lifting Him up to Thy right hand above,
Displaying in Jesus Thy glory and love.

Our Father, we wonder at ways such as Thine,
Untraceable, showing Thy wisdom divine;
Bright glories they bring, that redound to Thy Name,
Yet when all is done Thou art ever the Same.

Let all rise in worship to God ever blest,
Who works that, as sons, we should share in His rest.
To Him, of Whom, through Whom, and for Whom alone
Are all things, be glory for ever. Amen.

G.S.B.
6th August, 2017.

Oh! To be emptier, lowlier,
Mean, unnoticed and unknown,
And to God a vessel holier,
Filled with Christ and Christ alone.

Nought of earth to cloud the glory,
Nought of self the light to dim;
Telling forth His wondrous story,
Emptied to be filled with Him.

Anon.

Erratum

In the ‘fragment’ on page 38 of WPT No. 101 reference was made to “the two synoptic Gospels.” There are, of course, three!

Editor

NOTE

The Editor trusts that the selection and composition of material for this magazine has been undertaken with the Lord’s guidance and that the contents are of moral and spiritual value and appropriate to present needs. The only infallible statement of truth, however, is found in the Holy Bible and the reader is, therefore, urged to follow the practice of the Bereans, who “received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so” (Acts 17:11). The Editor is always happy to receive comments and inquiries, and to consider suggested articles for inclusion in future issues.