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A NEW AND SINISTER CULT: SCIENTOLOGY

Another new and dangerous cult has recently set up headquarters in England. It is called Scientology. In a court action in London before Lord Denning brought against the Home Secretary by two so-called students of Scientology, some information regarding this cult was made known.

Lord Denning said: "At Saint Hill Manor, near East Grinstead, there is an establishment which calls itself the Hubbard College of Scientology of California. It is owned by an American Corporation called the Church of Scientology of California. Scientology is a word which has recently been invented. It finds no place in the English dictionaries. Its proponents say that Scientology is a religion; and that this religion, its faith and belief, its teaching and practices are taught to students at the college at East Grinstead."

His Lordship also quoted from a statement by the Minister of Health, made in the House of Commons about Scientology. The statement said: "Scientology is a pseudo-philosophical cult introduced into this country some years ago from the United States and has its world headquarters in East Grinstead. It has been described by its founder, Mr L. Ron Hubbard, as 'the world's largest mental health organisation' . . . The Government are satisfied, having reviewed all the available evidence, that scientology is socially harmful. It alienates members of families from each other and attributes squalid and disgraceful motives to all who oppose it: its authoritarian principles and practice are a potential menace to the personality and well-being of those so deluded as to become its followers; above all, its methods can be a serious danger to the health of those who submit to them. There is evidence that children are now being indoctrinated. There is no power under existing law to prohibit the practice of scientology; but the Government have concluded that it is so objectionable that it would be right to take all steps within their powers to curb its growth."

It was also stated in the Court, that the Minister of Health referred to an investigation which had been held in the State of Victoria, Australia, into Scientology, and "found it to be an evil."

This information is surely sufficient to reveal that this cult is another instrument of the devil, conceived in America, to deceive and ruin precious souls in as many parts of the world as possible. Without tending to anything of the nature of a persecuting spirit toward our fellow-men, surely if a cult is proved to be a new social evil and has its original headquarters in another nation, it should not be permitted to establish and spread in Britain. Seldom do our Government come out so seriously against any evil; and when it does, as in this case, then Scientology must be a dangerous organisation indeed.

Of course, Britain has been plagued for years now by other cults which are more fully known to us as to their beliefs and practices and are equally dangerous to the spiritual wellbeing of the people of this country. The devil is not content to war against the true faith of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, with few weapons. It appears that today he is inventing many new devices to beguile and ruin men. The device which will entangle some may not appeal to others; and so his satanic work proceeds apace devising new and subtle — and sometimes not so subtle — methods to keep sinners in his dark kingdom.

Last February we gave a public lecture in Glasgow, and mentioned that people today who were turning away from the Truth of God, were turning to fables. Fables were found with the Jehovah's Witnesses, the Mormons and other cults, including Scientology. At the end of March last, we received a letter from the "Legal Chief" of what is called on official notepaper, "The Church of Scientology of California", East Grinstead, England. We were charged with a lack of sensible judgment and also that our statement was untrue. We were requested to write an apology to the Press where a report of our lecture appeared and to submit such an apology to the above legal representative before it was printed. This letter will of course remain unanswered as far as "Grinstead" is concerned. This brief article will suffice for our answer.

There has also come into our hands a circular letter from the Hubbard College of Scientology, addressed to a medical practitioner whom we know. Along with this letter there was attached a six page printed "bulletin" purporting to contain data of interest to doctors with a glossary of the terms used by Scientology. The letter itself is signed by a man who designates himself "Deputy Chaplain". It is made clear in these documents that this cult is actively seeking to engage the interest of the

medical profession in their strange cult. We should not think any sensible doctor will be gulled by the strange theories and the questionable practices of this cult.

That these deluded people do not remain in California constitutes a grave danger to the people of Britain. Poor Britain! backsliding Britain! Our land has become an area of activity for every anti-Christian organisation, originating in America. And when the enemy is thus coming in like a flood, we need now, at this present time, that the Spirit of the Lord would lift up a standard against the enemy — and that standard is the truth. "It is time for thee Lord to work."

A HEBREW'S SEARCH FOR THE BLOOD OF ATONEMENT

In the Spring of 1898 in San Francisco, a preacher, after giving a gospel address to a "Mission to Israel", was so greatly interested in an old Jew, who addressed his brethren at the finish of the preacher's address, that he wrote down his remarks as nearly as he could recollect in his own words, which were as follows:—

"This is Passover week among you, my Jewish brethren, and as I sat here I was thinking how you will be observing it. You will have put away all leaven from your houses; you will eat the 'motsah' (unleavened wafers) and the roasted lamb. You will attend the synagogue services, and carry out the ritual and directions of the Talmud; but you forget, my brethren, that you have everything but that which Jehovah required first of all. He did not say 'When I see the leaven put away, or when I see you eat the motsah, or the lamb, or go to the synagogue', but His word was 'When I see the blood I will pass over you.' Ah, my brethren, you can substitute nothing for this. You must have Blood, Blood, Blood!

"Blood! That is an awful word for one who reveres the ancient oracle, and yet has no sacrifice. Turn where one will in the Book, the blood meets one, but let one seek as one may, one cannot find it in the Judaism of the present."

After a moment's pause the patriarchal man went on somewhat as follows:— "I was born in Palestine nearly seventy years ago. As a child I was taught to read the law, the Psalms and the Prophets. I early attended the synagogues and learned Hebrew from the Rabbis. At first I believed what I was told, that ours was the true and only religion, but as I grew older and studied the law more intently, I was struck by the place the blood had in all the ceremonies outlined there, and equally struck by its utter absence in the ritual to which I was brought up.

"Again and again I read Exodus xii, and Leviticus xvi, xvii,

and the latter chapters, especially, made me tremble, as I thought of the great day of atonement and the place the blood had there. Day and night one verse would ring in my ears, 'It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul!' I knew I had broken the law, I needed atonement. Year after year, on that day, I beat my breast as I confessed my need of it, but it was to be made by blood and there was no blood!

"In my distress, at last, I opened my heart to a learned and venerable rabbi. He told me that God was angry with His people. Jerusalem was in the hands of the Gentiles, the temple was destroyed, and a Mohammedan mosque was reared up in its place. The only spot on earth where we dare shed the blood of sacrifice in accordance with Deuteronomy xii and Leviticus xvii was desecrated and our nation scattered. That was why there was no blood. God had Himself closed the way to carry out the solemn service of the great Day of Atonement. Now we must turn to the Talmud, and rest on its instruction and trust in the mercy of God and the merits of the fathers.

"I tried to be satisfied, but could not. Something seemed to say that the law was unaltered, even though our temple was destroyed. Nothing else but blood could atone for the soul. We dared not shed blood for atonement elsewhere than in the place the Lord had chosen. Then we were left without an atonement at all.

"This thought filled me with horror. In my distress I consulted many other rabbis. I had but one great question — where can I find the blood of atonement?

"I was over thirty years of age when I left Palestine and came to Constantinople with my still unanswered question ever before my mind, and my soul was exceedingly troubled about my sins.

"One night I was walking down one of the narrow streets of that city, when I saw a sign, telling of a meeting for Jews. Curiosity led me to open the door and go in. Just as I took a seat I heard a man say, 'The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin.' It was my first introduction to Christianity, but I listened breathlessly as the speaker told how God had declared that 'without shedding of blood is no remission', but that God had given His only begotten Son, the Lamb of God, to die, and all who trusted in His blood were forgiven all their iniquities. This was the Messiah of the fifty-third of Isaiah: this was the Sufferer of Psalm xxii. Ah, my brethren I had found the Blood of Atonement at last. I trusted it, and now I love to read the New Testament and see how all the shadows of the law are fulfilled in Jesus. His blood has been shed for sinners. It has satisfied God, and it is the only means of salvation for either Jew or Gentile."

Reader, have you found the Blood of Atonement? "Behold the lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1, verse 29). Are you trusting in God's smitten Lamb — the sacrifice of God?

A SERMON

by Rev. John Nicolson, Ness

"Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God, and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean." (2 Kings, chap. 5, v. 14).

The subject of this narrative, Naaman by name, is described as "The captain of the host of the King of Syria"; no mean title. He was greatly esteemed by his king because of his heroic deliverance of Syria from her enemies. His office was an high one in that it filled the most important one in the Syrian dominion, and with his conspicuous bravery he enjoyed great honour. But the honour and glory afforded him, which might be envied by some, was marred by one solemn fact — he was a leper. This was a fatal disease for which no cure was known. Each day he grew worse. Yes, every sunrise heralded his certain end, and although the love and esteem of his relations, friends and servants wished his cure, there was no apparent hope.

Naaman seemed to be a kind master as well as a brave soldier. This we assume from the pity his sad condition evoked in a little Jewish maiden taken captive in some of the Syrian incursions into Judea, and who acted as attendant to Naaman's wife. Observing the distress of the Syrian general she expressed a wish to her mistress, "Would God my Lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria for He would recover him of his leprosy." The wheels of providence then began to move more swiftly than hitherto, with the eventual result of Naaman's complete cure.

The fact of history recorded in this part of Holy Scripture is very interesting and edifying. This episode is the only record we have of this great soldier, apart from mention being made of this incident by the Saviour on the day when He stood up to read in the Synagogue. We see from this that there was a spiritual significance between this incident and Christ's coming. See Luke 4, 16-27. This then teaches us that there is a spiritual lesson to be derived from the above incident. There is no doubt that the Holy Spirit in Scripture employs the fatal disease of leprosy as a symbol of sin, the most devastating and evil principle that ever entered the human race. Leprosy affects some of the

human race, but sin affects **all** without exception. There was One only born into this world without sin, being born in the womb of the Virgin Mary, by the power of the Holy Ghost, and He was called Jesus (Saviour).

In Jesus Christ God has provided a remedy for the leprosy of sin by which the human race is **contaminated**. No other remedy is provided to take away the fatal disease of sin, and if this sole remedy is not used " . . . Ye shall die in your sin". Men, by nature, despise God's remedy as folly and cling as leeches to their own wisdom, "professing themselves to be wise, they became fools" (Rom. 1, 22). Yet, the fact remains that "without the shedding of blood there is no remission" (Heb. 9, 33). As we will see later, Naaman, at first, refused to comply with the instruction received; but, by persuasion, relented and used the appointed means. The Atonement of Christ is the only biblical foundation for salvation, "neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4, 12). If we are to be saved, it must be through God's remedy alone.

In order then to illustrate more fully our need to be healed of our fatal spiritual disease, the remedy provided and its efficacy, let us consider the words of our text using them as a basis for our subject. In the first place let us consider **1. Some things true of Naaman**. And in the second place, **2. His attitude towards the instruction received**. Thirdly, **3. His eventual obedience and its results**.

1. Some things true of Naaman. Many things were outstanding with respect to Naaman's character and his circumstances; but the most palpable feature was that "he was a leper". A man may be famous or infamous as to his moral character; he may shine through his morality and thereby be an asset to society, or on the other hand lead an immoral life and fit only for the prison-house. Yet, by nature, both classes are spiritual lepers; though, in God's sight, the latter is more so than the former. How little of this is heard in the pulpits of Scotland today, where the "new morality" is the prevailing trumpet-sound. Hence men joke over sin and cast over their shoulders as utter nonsense the scriptural dogma of our sinful nature. Others try to minimise the fact of sin, by calling it "sickness", and only aggravate the condition by their puerile attempts at healing. Scripture makes it very clear that sin must be, and **will be** punished. It is a free act against God's revealed law and authority and thus merits His just anger. The first sin consisted in man's eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. This act was of the free, unhindered will of man, against a forbidding command of God. "Thou shalt not eat of it" (Gen. 2, 17). This disobedience plunged

the human race into a moral evil which they cannot cure whatever high standard of education or culture may be used. Man alone is responsible for this moral evil, and for the just sentence of condemnation under which he lies, "the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6, 23). In the history of the world there has been no era such as ours for education, culture and scientific attainment. Surely no one, without bias, can assert that we live in a moral age. Immorality of every description is rampant and virtually unchecked in the "Welfare State". Laws are being passed today which would make the profligate of bygone generations red in the face with shame. Some noted "churchmen" adding their blessing to such God dishonouring laws forsooth! The fact still remains and is very evident that we are all by nature, lepers.

Now Naaman had all the honour and esteem one could wish for: he was courageous and heroic in battle, and, as far as we know, a moral and influential member of society. He enjoyed many privileges tied up with his office which were denied to many others. But, "he was a leper". Likewise, many are the privileges we enjoy which are denied to others. Some have much honour and esteem among men, others are courageous and achieve fame with it. Others again, by the restraining grace of God, are found moral and upright in their lives; and these privileges are not to be despised. But the greatest privilege above all is the preaching of the glorious Gospel of God's grace to poor perishing sinners. This is a privilege which is despised by many and the other privileges desired in its place. Yet, Naaman's privileges could not cure him of his leprosy; nor can our privileges cure our sinful nature, however precious they are.

Another thing true of Naaman: he knew of his disease. As far as he was concerned this only added to his misery, for, as yet, he knew no way of cure. The knowledge of his disease did not alter the fact that "he was a leper". In like manner the true sense of our sinful condition is not a cure. Although it is most necessary that we be convinced, by the Holy Ghost, of our sinful condition before we can realise our need of a cure; this, in itself, only adds to our misery. The Psalmist under a sense of his sinful condition had to confess to the Lord "Mine iniquities are gone over my head; as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me" (Ps. 38, 4). His sins became innumerable in his spiritual experience, and try as he would, he could not get rid of them. The blame was not directed to the Lord, but squarely placed on himself, "My wounds do stink and are corrupt: because of my foolishness" (v. 5). Lest any timid child of God be brought into temptation through not having such an extreme experience, let me add that it is not the degree of the experience that matters, but the nature. All who are taught by the Spirit of God have, in

some measure, the Psalmist's experience, and is generally the preparation for a greater revelation. This leads me to the second point for discussion.

2. **Naaman's attitude to the instruction received.** Little did Naaman think that, in the providence of God, the little maid he carried captive was one day to be the means of leading him to the cure of his sad condition. Was she not but a captive slave? What help could she be to this great Syrian general? Yet, it remains as ever it was, "God works in a mysterious way; His wonders to perform", as Cowper the godly poet wrote. Nevertheless, it pleased God to use such a little maid, and it is revealed to him that there is hope for him despite the fatal nature of his disease. By his actions on hearing of the hope set before him, we notice a trait in his character unnoticed before. Naaman was a proud man. It is seen that he acquiesced with the King of Syria's action in sending to the King of Israel to cure him of his leprosy. No, a man of his rank must be attended to in a big way; it was beneath his dignity to deal with a mere prophet; no less than the King of Israel would do. The little maid had led him to the prophet, not to the King.

When a sinner is under a sense of his sinfulness, he has many things to grapple with; not the least of these his pride. Pride was the downfall of our first parents Adam and Eve, "... and ye shall be as gods knowing good and evil" (Gen. 3, 5). These were the words which instigated Eve to disobey the solemn command of God. Many an unwarranted misery the poor convicted sinner brings upon himself by his foolish pride. O, were the Lord to leave him to his proud folly, he would die in his sins. Yet, as it was with Naaman, God had decreed from all eternity that he was to be cured. The wheels of Providence so worked out that Naaman must come to Israel, he must leave his own land and come to where the remedy was to be got. God has appointed the means whereby a sinner can be healed. Although it is not the means of grace which save the soul, but the Christ of the Gospel: yet Christ is found only in the Word of God. Faith in Christ is indispensable to salvation and, "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Rom. 10, 17). Let no soul be under the solemn delusion that Christ and faith in him can be got, by rational adults, apart from the appointed means. Such a theory is unscriptural and therefore, "to the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isa. 8, 20). "He that decreed my salvation decreed it in the use of means: and if I neglect the means I reprobate myself" (Watson: "Body of Divinity"). So reader, if you value your soul in the light of the Great White Throne, neglect not the means of grace. As sure as

Naaman was brought to Israel from Syria, so is the sinner in his effectual calling brought from the world unto the Gospel.

We may ask here, "did Naaman lose this pride, which was such a stumbling block, when he relented to come to Israel?" If we read the narrative further we will see that, although he took a step in the right direction, he was still proud. Yes, he came to Elisha the prophet, but, as we see, still looking for great things, "Behold, I thought, he will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper" (v. 11). How often has this attitude brought more unwarranted misery to a poor soul that can be measured. "I thought", I thought the Lord would hear me whenever I would call upon Him. When the Lord would come I thought I would experience great things. I thought that He would speak to me with audible voice. "I thought" in many, many ways comes to the troubled soul. Ah, but the Lord says, "My thoughts are not your thoughts". He has sent his messengers to proclaim the Gospel which is the power and wisdom of God and, "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness that the man of God may be perfect thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3, 16-17).

The fact that a messenger instead of the great prophet came to Naaman evoked this haughty attitude in him. Yet the messenger was a true herald and only spoke that which his master had commanded. Naaman was instructed to use means, not as he thought, in some magical way his recovery would occur. The Great Prophet of the New Testament, Jesus Christ, has sent out His messengers in every age with the Plan of Salvation. They have come, not with words of their own wisdom, but with the command and instruction of their Master. "Go ye therefore and teach all nations . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matt. 28, 19-20). An uncountable number of the human race will praise the Lord throughout the endless ages of eternity because they heard the Gospel of God's grace. And the very core of the Gospel is in the wonderful inspired words of the Apostle Paul, "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners . . ." (1 Tim. 1, 15).

Yes, my dear friends, whatever excuses fallen nature will bring to bear on the mind; the truth remains, without faith in Christ Jesus as He is freely offered in the Gospel, we will die in our sins, and the wrath of God will abide on us — John 3, 36. When the Roman Jailor was brought to a sense of his great need, in the light of death and judgment, to be saved, he cried out earnestly, "What must I do to be saved." Paul and Silas, who had the mind of the Great Prophet did not say to him, "You will grieve

over your sins, and do penance, and this and that; then when you are sufficiently humble you will then be ready to be saved." No, friends, but the answer given to the most momentous question ever asked by the jailor was, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." Granted, no man can call Jesus Lord, but by the Spirit. Yet the fact, surely, cannot be denied that it is we who must believe. Christ Himself said, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3, 16). Yes, reader, the Great Prophet Himself said, "Come unto Me . . . for My yoke is easy, and My burden is light."

Yes, the fault lies not in God, but in our own proud fallen nature. He alone can help us. What need then we have of calling upon Him to come to our deliverance, for if left to ourselves we will die in our sins. Had Naaman been left to his pride and rebellion he would certainly have perished in his leprosy. This was the only way to be healed, no matter what great deed he was ready to perform, it **would not** cure his leprosy. He would gain more applause from men for being so lion-hearted and zealous, but he would still be a leper. O proud, proud heart, are you going to lose the chance of being healed? Must you grow worse in your leprosy, become so vile that you become unfit for society? "Go to the Jordan? How dare he instruct me in this manner. Are not Abana and Pharpar rivers of the great metropolis of Damascus better than all the waters of Israel, may not I wash in them and be clean?"

Need we, in our unchanged nature, cast a stone at poor Naaman? Are we not as proud? Yes, even under a sense of sin we may try to wash ourselves in the rivers of morality, self-righteous bigotry, patching up of a past sinful life. Yet, all this is in vain, as sure as washing in Abana and Pharpar would be to Naaman. No, friends, we must go by the Prophet's instruction, we must go down to Jordan: to the "blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel". Yes to the Atonement of the Gospel. The blood of Jesus Christ shed for the remission of sins, who Himself became the High Priest, Altar and Sacrifice which eternally satisfied the Divine Justice of God on behalf of poor hell-deserving sinners such as we are. Yes, we must resort to that unique Person of whom God, the Father witnessed on this earth, by an audible voice, "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well please, **hear ye Him.**" And one of the many outstanding things said by this wonderful Person was, "All that the Father giveth me **shall** come unto Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6, 37). This brings me to the third place.

3. Naaman's eventual obedience and its results. It is impossible

to assess the inestimable damage done to the soul of man through inherent pride. This is the root of all disobedience to God our Creator and Judge. The Gospel therefore is the most humiliating message that has ever come to the ears of the unrenewed man. It exalts the sovereign God of love, and debases proud man. Yes, pride is part of our very nature and fosters our rebellion against God's mercy and grace; which is, of course, truly the height of madness. Man is a totally fallen creature and is admirably described by the Holy Ghost through his prophet Ezekiel — see Ezek. 16, 1-5.

It is because of man's sad condition that a new birth is necessary; yea, a new creation must be formed, and there is but one Creator. "Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again" (John 3, 7). Man must be born anew by the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit" (John 3, 6). Only the renewed nature in a man enables him to be submissive to God and His law. Those who think it an easy matter to turn to God, and that there is plenty of time to do that at a more convenient season, would be wiser to think again. This assumption is contrary to Scripture and to the experience of God's people. As sure as God alone created all things that were and are created, so sure is it that He alone is the Author of the "new creature in Christ Jesus". The evidence of which is, obedience to God's law and faith in Jesus Christ, that is, the Jesus Christ of the Gospel so ably defined by the Westminster Divines. (See Confession of Faith, Chap. 8, Section 2). All God's people are thus made willing in a day of God's power (Ps. 110, 3).

Naaman was eventually persuaded to do as instructed. What a blessing Naaman had in his wise and faithful servants. It was very apparent that their desire was for his good, were it otherwise they would have left him to go away in his rage. But the Lord, who has all hearts in His hands, purposed it otherwise; for the wheels of Providence kept grinding away towards an ultimate end. Naaman must be healed, and to effect this result he must use the appointed means. There are some of God's people who praise Him for faithful parents and friends, who were used by the Lord to persuade them to seek Him. It may have been by a sharp rebuke or a heart-felt exhortation, or timely warning. O, that there were more of that in our own day. We tremble to think of the account that must be rendered by most of the parents of this generation. At the peril of your soul, reader, despise not the entreaties of godly parents and friends. One never knows what the Lord may bless. Notice here, Naaman did not turn in rage toward his servants but, "then went he down and dipped himself seven times in Jordan".

The name Jordan has the Hebrew meaning of "the river of descent" from the Hebrew root jarad—to descend. This brings to the mind, the manner in which a poor sinner, bearing the fruits of the new birth, comes to Christ to be washed. Gone is the rebellion and haughtiness of his depraved nature; he is now humbled, knowing he has no inherent claim whatsoever on the sovereign God to wash him. Yet, at the same time, hoping in God's revealed mercy and love in Christ, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out". Believing in His promises gives glory to God. Scripture maintains this by the example of Abraham of whom it is said "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God" (Rom. 4, 20). It is not the degree of faith, but its exercise which glorifies God.

Naaman, now a more humbled man, obeyed the instruction of the man of God and, "dipped himself seven times". One wonders why he was to dip himself so often; would once not be sufficient? May we not detect a lesson here for the sinner washed in the blood of Christ for the remission of sin? It is true, once a sinner is enabled to exercise faith in a crucified, risen and exalted Saviour he is, at once and forever, justified in the sight of God. This glorious doctrine is not to be denied. But, what is to be denied, and strongly denied, is the fallacy that once washed the sinner has no more need of being cleansed. Nothing is farther from the truth. The experience of the people of God both in the Old and New dispensation, is their continued need of the cleansing of the Blood. The day of their union by faith was the day of their Justification: but the process of sanctification calls for the exercise of faith in the blood of Christ continually. In fact, the more exercised they are the more they resort to the "fountain opened . . . for sin and uncleanness" (Zech. 13, 1). The maxim, that, once washed, the sinner has no more need of being cleansed leaves a lot to be desired, as it is based on mere reasoning and not on Scripture or the spiritual experience of God's people. We would as well say to Naaman, "Once will be enough, Naaman"; but we know that would be contrary to the instruction received. It must be pointed out, however, that repentance for the past sins and a cordial reception of the Saviour through faith is necessary for a renewed application of the Blood.

Wonderful are the consequences of this willing obedience when the soul is persuaded and enabled to embrace the Lord Jesus Christ as he is freely offered in the Gospel. Remember this, reader, Christ is freely offered to you, whoever you are, whatever you have been, and whatever excuse you make. Naaman was a Syrian, an idolater and enemy of God; but when he came to be healed he was not rejected on that account. The blessed Gospel

of God's grace is offered freely to the most profligate sinner, "Look unto me and be ye saved **all the ends of the earth**, for I am God and there is none else" (Isa. 45, 22). Blessed be His Thrice-holy Name for that!

Yes, friends, Naaman came and found the results to be certain "And his flesh came again unto the flesh of a child". This is the fruit of being washed in the blood of Christ. The Saviour Himself said, "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 18, 3). They are like little children in that they believe what their Father in heaven says before they will believe the greatest scholar in the world, if the scholar disagrees with the word of the Father. Again, they are as children in their readiness to be taught. Further they are children of God adopted unto His spiritual family, and entitled to all the privileges including an inheritance that will never be taken from them. They are the children of promise in that by the promises of the Gospel they are sustained, comforted and secured unto eternal life. What a change took place in Naaman! From a body scarred and broken with leprous wounds to one like a child without blemish. Such is the healing power of God. Infinitely greater is the change under the efficacy of the blood of Christ. One who was, not only an enemy of God but, "full of wounds and bruises and putrifying sores" (Isa. 1, 6) being changed into a glorious new creation fit for the eternal society of holy angels; yea, even of God himself. All this is free unmerited Grace bestowed upon poor lost and hell-deserving sinners.

The next thing we are told of Naaman is that "he was clean". I venture to think that Naaman never in all his life felt so clean after dipping in the Jordan. Whatever fears and doubts he may have had later regarding his condition, yet at this time the devil himself could not prevail on Him to believe he was not clean. "Now are ye clean through the Word I have spoken unto you" said Jesus to His disciples, that is, they were justified in God's sight by faith in Christ as revealed through the word of the Gospel. They who have thus received Christ are vitally united to Him, having all their sins forgiven them, the curse of the law removed and the restoration of the divine favour. Thus they are in a more secure state than our first parents were in a state of innocence. It is true that Adam and Eve in their first estate were judicially clean and were thus enjoying the Divine favour; but, they were liable to fall from that happy condition, which was proved during their time of probation. They who are washed in the blood of Jesus are judicially clean eternally, because they stand, not in their own merits, but on the infinite, eternal and unchangeable merits of the eternal God in our nature; who offered Himself in

love as the propitiation for their sins, and in fulfilling the terms of the everlasting covenant to the letter. Is it any wonder then that Moses coming to the end of his journey in this world, through a faith's view of the excellence of Redemption by Grace, exclaimed in ecstasy "Happy art thou, O Israel, who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord . . ." (Deut. 33, 29).

The above, of course, is only true of the believer in reference to his "state" before the tribunal of God. As has been already intimated he has often to resort to the efficacy of the shed blood to cleanse him respecting his "condition". This is what makes the true religion an experimental one, scoffed at by the mere "professor", but a solemn reality to the poor and needy of the Lord. This process is the sanctification of the believer, distinct from, yet inseparably connected with, the judicial act of justification. As ably defined by the Reformed Theologians, "Justification removes the guilt of sin; Sanctification removes the pollution of sin. Justification takes place outside of the sinner at the tribunal of God; sanctification takes place inside the believer gradually making him perfect in holiness. Justification is a complete act once and for all, he cannot be any more justified than he is when he appropriates Christ by faith; whereas sanctification is a continuous process never completed until the end of the believers earthly life." Yes, the work is a sure work because it is God's work and not left to man. God the Father declares the believer righteous, and who shall condemn? God the Holy Spirit makes the believer righteous and who can resist Him? The merits of God the Son procures these unspeakable benefits, and how can they fail?

Those who say that such teaching leads to licentiousness or legality prove their ignorance of the fruits of this cleaning power. Surely, we can say that Naaman would have an experimental fear and hatred of leprosy and would be found avoiding every chance of a recurrence. Likewise the justified sinner hates sin and desires to be rid forever of the same. And as a holy life is the only evidence of sanctification their endeavours are toward that goal. Notwithstanding their confessed failings their hope and confidence is placed on Him who has said, "Fear not, for thou shalt not be ashamed; neither be thou confounded: for thou shalt not be put to shame . . ." (Isa. 54, 4).

Friends, in conclusion, let us each ask the solemn question, "Am I thus clean?" If the answer is, in the light of God's word and our consciences — No; then where lies the blame? "Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there? Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?" (Jer. 8, 22). If, on the other hand, however tremulous, we can say the answer is, Yes; then praise God and, "give diligence to make your calling

and election sure". Knowing this, that He who said, "I have loved Thee with an everlasting love" also said, "They shall all be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in the day that I make up my jewels". The process of sanctification may be grievous for a time — if need be — but the ultimate end is to be fitted as a polished jewel in the crown of Christ on whose head it shall flourish; while His enemies shall be clothed with shame and everlasting contempt. "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." (Rom. 8, 24).

THOUGHTS ON THE PSALMS

by Rev. Alex. McPherson

(continued from page 185)

Psalm Three

Verse 3 (continued)

There is another reason which may account for the feeling of desertion sometimes experienced by the Lord's people, a reason not shameful like the first in that it is not a chastisement for any particular form of sin. God in his wisdom may produce this sensation in order to strengthen grace and make his power manifest to others. God had the latter purpose in view when the Saviour gave sight to the man born blind. (John 9, v. 1-7). "Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him." Angels are to discover what divine power operating through grace in men's hearts can do. "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God." Men also are to find out that there is a power at work in true Christians which sustains and enables them as nothing else can. So that no matter what trials and afflictions they pass through, oppressive experiences which might seem to indicate the averting of God's face from them, grace keeps them steadily on their way to heaven. Crosses, losses, sorrows, disappointments and inward darkness only serve to reveal the broken and contrite heart which follows on to know the Lord. In the darkest periods they readily acknowledge, "He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities." They continue to humbly pray, "Cast me not from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me."

From such experiences there comes the exercise and growth of such graces as faith, patience, resignation, submission, peace, hope, love and penitence. Instead of the resentment, or petulance,

or rebellion so natural to fallen men, there issues a humbler, more careful walk, and an increasing desire for the light of God's countenance.

"Lord, thee my God, I'll early seek:
my soul doth thirst for thee;
My flesh longs in a dry parch'd land,
wherein no waters be:
That I thy power may behold,
and brightness of thy face,
As I have seen thee heretofore
within thy holy place." (Ps. 63, v. 1, 2)

Does it not then become evident whose Spirit indwells the people of God? "The spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you." "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples."

A third reason can be mentioned to explain why believers are sometimes gripped by a feeling that they are forsaken by their God. It is that evil spirits may be instructed and humiliated by this phenomenon of apparent desertion which they try to turn to their own use by making it a ground of despair. Who can say how many demons surrounded David at this time when everything seemed to be against him, and the allegation, "There is no help for him in God", aroused strong fears that this might actually be so!

Job's was another case of the same, but when things were at their worst, he still declared, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." Child of God, however afflicting your circumstances and gloomy your outlook, yield not to unbelief, but despite all the reasons you can think of which would justify your being forsaken, hold still to Christ as He is presented to your view in the everlasting covenant. That is exactly what David did, as the next verse shows. Hear what God says to such, "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." Trust in the Lord's revealed character and written Word. "The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe." Seek more grace to follow the example of the Saviour who; "in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared." You shall never be deserted as He was, and He will never leave you nor forsake you, for that is his promise.

The "Selah" at the end of the verse is a word about whose exact meaning there has been much speculation. It may have had some connection with the musical setting of the Psalms,

and signify a pause. Certain it is that many of the occasions of its use fully warrant a pause with prolonged thought on what immediately precedes it.

Verse 3. "But thou, O Lord, art a shield for me; my glory and the lifter up of mine head."

Here now is David trusting, despite all appearances, in God his Saviour. Between him and his foes was God, his sure shield. No charge laid against him would stand because his trust was in the blood, and righteousness, and faithfulness of Immanuel. "Who is he that condemneth; it is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." No device formed against him could prosper; no evil would befall him because a reconciled God was his shield.

He also claimed God as his glory. Men were doing their utmost to put dishonour and shame upon him, but God had, and would again put honour upon him. And however low the people of God may come in their own minds and in the estimation of others, God who has dignified them with a new nature and a title to heaven, and the adoption of sons as well, will give them an eternal weight of glory.

David's head was now held low in sorrow and with a sense of humiliation, but God would lift it again in gladness and a living hope. Like David, every gracious soul really believes that there "is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky." (Deut. 33, v. 26).

STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF THE APOSTLE PAUL

by Rev. A. M. Cattanach, M.A.

VI — Barnabas goes in search of Saul

The **narrative basis** for our last five studies has all been taken from one chapter in the Book of Acts, namely, **the ninth**. For our **present study** we move on to the **eleventh**, where we find ourselves taking up the story of Saul once more. The intervening portion is one which deals with Peter and his activities in and around Joppa and Caesarea. While Peter is thus engaged in the Lord's work in connection with the spread of the Gospel to the Gentiles, **Saul himself**, to whom belongs the title, pre-eminently, of '**Apostle of the Gentiles**', is **at that time** far away from the lime-light, resting **at Tarsus**, his native city, and waiting for the Lord's call to the next phase in his ministry. We shall now see how **that call** came to him through the **working of the Divine Providence** and the **instrumentality of Barnabas**. The centre to which our

thoughts will be directed, is the third city of the Roman Empire (after Rome and Alexandria). Antioch, the capital of Syria.

Let us then, as enabled, meditate on these three matters:

- (a) **The Lord's work at Antioch.**
- (b) **The Church of Jerusalem sends Barnabas to Antioch.**
- (c) **Barnabas goes to Tarsus in search of Saul.**

The Lord's work at Antioch.

Like other great cities of the past and of the present, Antioch was a place where godlessness prevailed. The secular records of the time leave us in no uncertainty as to the wickedness, idolatry, superstition, uncleanness, and general ungodliness of the vast majority of its teeming multitudes. Many Jews had settled there; they built their synagogue, they worshipped the God of their fathers, they observed their ancient customs. Yet, as in so many other cases, their lives were spent in worldliness and pleasure too. Riches and prosperity abounded, side by side with abject poverty. Events in Judaea and Galilee had had little, if any, effect upon the minds and hearts of the vast majority of the citizens of Antioch. They may just have heard, possibly, of one Jesus, put to death upon a cross, outside Jerusalem, but what did that mean to them? Yet God had purposes of mercy for some of those poor benighted citizens of Antioch and, in His own way, and at His own appointed time, the precious word of grace was to be declared in Antioch and the name of Jesus to be heard declared in all its saving power, and a church of believing disciples to arise, to whose members would be first given the name, whereby they were ever after to be designated — **"And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch"** (Acts xi 26).

How, then, did the good news from a far country first reach this great city? Let us listen to the words of the inspired historian and wonder at the steps of majesty of our God and our mighty King in the Divine and gracious Providence — **"Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, Cyprus and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only. And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord."** (Acts xi, 19-21).

The steps of majesty are these — let it suffice, for the moment, to mark them and leave them for your own consideration —

Stephen's death; the subsequent persecution; the disciples scattered about; their way directed to Antioch; some preach to the Jews only; others, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, venture further and preach Jesus to the Grecians.

Truly, there is often, in Providence, a wheel within a wheel.

The crucial matter would appear to be the preaching of the Lord Jesus to the Grecians. There is a point of controversy here, arising out of different readings of the Text, which we shall refrain from entering into, namely, the reading, "Grecians", i.e. Greek-speaking Jews, is found in the Revised Text, but some other copies of the text have "Greeks", i.e. Gentiles proper. To preach to the former would not have been unprecedented, whereas to preach to the latter would have been, if the news contained in the earlier portion of this chapter, consequent upon Peter's vision, "Then hath God also to the Gentiles (i.e. Greeks) granted repentance unto life" (verse 18), had not as yet reached these brethren in Antioch.

The reception of the news of these brethren preaching thus, by the church at Jerusalem (verse 22), need not, of itself, be inferred to mean that they regarded the work as unprecedented. Whatever feelings the men of Cyprus and Cyrene may have had, in going out to their fellow-Grecians, would soon have been put at ease, by the obvious blessing of the Lord upon their efforts. **"And the hand of the Lord was with them"** (verse 21); a phrase, so reminiscent of the Old Testament, is here used to signify that the Word was with power. **Well might these brethren rejoice** to see the right hand of the mighty Lord doing valiantly (as of old in other ways) as **"a great number believed and turned unto the Lord"**. The seal of Jehovah upon their work was there. What better sign could they ask for, that the venture was of the Lord, that the work was His, and all was done for His glory and the furtherance of His cause on earth?

Beloved, what better sign can His servants ask yet? As they go forth, sowing the good seed beside all waters, venturing into new fields, breaking up virgin soul, or toiling in the long-established manner in appointed means, what more do any consecrated servants of the Master long for, than this — that the hand of the Lord might be with them? And when any one of them has reason to believe that this is true, O, what a humbling effect this ought to have upon them, as they realise how unworthy they are that He should acknowledge their effects thus.

Dear child of God, you too, in your own private life, (or public life, for that matter of it also) will want to know the same blessedness — the hand of the Lord with you, for good. Seek it ever earnestly and pray lest you ever be left to rest satisfied without this blessing. **Remember the example and blessing of Ezra.**

The Church at Jerusalem send Barnabas to Antioch

The news of the good work at Antioch soon reached Jerusalem,

and was received there with great interest by the disciples. **"Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth Barnabas, that he should go forth as far as Antioch."** (Acts xi 22). The brethren at Jerusalem, when they heard of these things, felt that it would only be right for one of their own number to proceed to Antioch, to see for himself what had been done. Although we are not expressly told that Barnabas, upon whom the choice of the church fell for that mission, was to report back, in word, if not in person, to them, we may safely assume that such would be the natural outcome of the mission. The disciples would be anxious to know how matters stood. Many questions might arise in their minds, to which they would like some definite answers. Whatever be the case, the fact that they took upon themselves to send Barnabas out to investigate the situation, shows clearly that they were still regarded as the mother church, **the centre from which the Gospel had first gone forth, ("beginning at Jerusalem")** and that they were therefore interested in every form of advancement of the Gospel, **"among all nations"**, upon which the evident seal and blessing of God had rested. As to this work at Antioch, whether preceded or unprecedented, the fact was, that there brethren, without specific Apostolic authority from Jerusalem, had gone forth and brought the Word of Life to many in their city, and **'the church' at Jerusalem was anxious to establish that the work was indeed of God.** The fulness of the Gentiles had not yet properly begun, we must remember, and many in the church then were slow to understand that the precious Word of saving grace was to be carried beyond the borders of Judaism, even to the uttermost ends of the earth.

So Barnabas left for Antioch. The choice fell upon the right man indeed. Not everyone would have performed the task as well as he did. Truly, the hand of the Lord was with them too, in their choice.

Thus we read of him, **"who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord."** (verse 23).

In a few words, the **Holy Ghost declares to us what Barnabas saw** when he reached Antioch — **the grace of God.** Nothing else could account for it: the presence of a great number who believed, where once there were none, could only be accounted for upon the one basis. What a commentary here on the words above! **"The hand of the Lord was with them."** Where that mighty hand had worked, in saving power, in mercy and in lovingkindness, there indeed was the grace of God.

Again, the **Spirit tells us how Barnabas felt — he was glad.** No greater testimony could have been given of grace in living

exercise, in Barnabas himself. He had had no part in the work; no apostle either had been there; the work was done by comparatively unknown brethren, especially some from Cyprus and Cyrene. Yet Barnabas can rejoice in spirit, can welcome this refreshing sign of the Lord's purposes to extend His own Kingdom, and can hail it, without any spirit of jealousy or ill-will, as the Lord's work. This, surely, is of grace.

Finally, the penman of the Holy Ghost tells us what Barnabas did — he encouraged them to stand firm in that grace, to go on in strength of God the Lord alone, to persevere unto the end — **"to cleave unto the Lord"**, as Ruth did unto Naomi.

Ah yes, Barnabas was capable of all this, because, as we are immediately told, **"he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith"** (verse 24).

Dear friends, are we not ashamed of ourselves, you that love the Lord, when we read thus of Barnabas? Have we never grudged a brother in the Lord, the honour of doing God service in a better or more successful way than we ourselves have done? Instead of rejoicing always, when we hear of a work of grace performed by means of someone else, on whose labours has rested God's own blessing, have there not been times when we have been jealous, or even worse, sceptical about it? The only remedy is to be found in the words above quoted. Let us seek to be filled with that same spirit, as we serve the Lord, in much weakness and unworthiness.

What **now was Barnabas to do?** We do not hear of him going back to Jerusalem, although the church there would be waiting to hear from him. He weighs up the situation — possibly, he gave himself, for a time, to this gracious work, only to feel that he was not the right man to take charge of such a task.

Whatever he did, we read of him in the very next verse, leaving the work, setting his face to the road again, but not for Jerusalem, whence he had come, but rather, for Tarsus — **"Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul; and when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch."** (verses 25, 26).

Barnabas goes to Tarsus in search of Saul

These words bring us, at last, back to Saul, the subject proper of these meditations. Although we may have taken rather a long time and travelled rather a long way, we trust it has not been unprofitable. These remarks above were necessary to show how the Lord's call to Saul came to sound in his ears, and how, after spending some time in the comparative seclusion of Tarsus, he was brought forth to take his place in the very fore-front of the battlements of the Kingdom to fight the good fight of faith, and to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ, from this

time forth, until he finished his course, outside Rome, and received the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, had laid up for him.

Barnabas had not forgotten Saul. How could he? Had it not been he who had first espoused Saul's cause and brought him to the apostles? Had he not persuaded them to accept Saul then? Had he not been present when the brethren escorted Saul to safety in Tarsus? Now Barnabas remembers the young man again. In his opinion, there is no one more suited for the work of the oversight of the young church at Antioch. **The question for Barnabas is — where to find Saul.** It would seem that all he knew for certain was that Saul was in Tarsus: but Tarsus was a large city and communications were not then what they are today — even postal communications. All this is implied in the use of the **special Greek word for "to seek" Saul.** It would seem to indicate that he only found him **after much difficulty in locating him.**

He had to ask, perhaps, many questions before finally he found him; to go up and down the streets of Tarsus, to search him out. It is implied that **he did not know Saul's exact address in Tarsus.** Think, then, of this good man, trekking up and down, asking if any knew of Saul, or heard where he might be found: think of his **earnest search for the young friend,** whom he was so anxious to trace: then, think of the joy which would be his, after all his difficulties, **when at last,** as it is written, **"he found him"**! O what a wonderful re-union that must have been! **What a day for Barnabas!** He, more than Saul, would have joy in his heart that day, as he poured out all his pent-up emotions in regard to Saul and the work at Antioch, to which, by the guidance of God, he had now come to call him. O yes, never fear! **Though we say that Barnabas searched carefully and diligently, yea long,** before he found Saul, **yet Barnabas was nevertheless guided by Him,** whose **"way is in the sea, and His path in the great waters"**, so that he did not search in vain.

This word to "seek", is one which is only used once more in the **New Testament,** in the narrative in **Luke (the author of Acts)** concerning **Mary and Joseph looking for the child Jesus,** who had disappeared in the crowd, on the return from the Passover at Jerusalem. We read there, **"And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him"** (Luke ii 45). He tarried behind in Jerusalem, but Mary and Joseph did not know of it: a day passed, while they thought he was somewhere in the company: then they sought Him there (the same Greek verb) not sure if they would find Him, but hoping that they would. No, He was not there: so then, they turn back to Jerusalem, seeking Him. **After three days** (this too may well come into shade

of meaning in the Greek verb) **they found Him in the Temple.** Would that have been their first place of call, I wonder? **See now the sequel to it all** in His own answer, part of which was "wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" Mary had put a question and made a statement, but in her statement and in the first part of Jesus' answer, the word used in the text for seeking is just the ordinary simple verb — as if Mary had now forgotten all the difficulty, save for this, that she adds to the verb the fact that it was with sorrow they had done it. Jesus' answer, too, makes no mention of the sorrow or the difficulty, as if He too, wished to pass it by.

Mary and Joseph 'seeking' the child Jesus — Barnabas 'seeking' Saul: in the same spirit, in much the same way. **Is there no parallelism in thought?** To some of us, at least, this affords sweet food for thought.

"And when he had found him — yes, somewhere in Tarsus; somewhere, amidst much spiritual joy and with much spiritual conversation. What then did he do? "He brought him to Antioch." To begin the great work to which, in all the events noted above, he felt himself called, as of God. Saul was to leave his place of retirement, no doubt much strengthened and refreshed, to begin a wonderful year of ministry in the great city of Antioch, a companion and friend to the gracious Barnabas, who had felt that this was the will of God, both for Saul and for himself.

Truly, **God prepares his own man for the work.** Saul had been secretly prepared in Tarsus. Barnabas was chosen to lead him forth once more; Barnabas was willing to step down and give over the work to the man, whom he knew, in his spirit, could perform it far better than he himself ever could.

And so we leave them meantime, **journeying back together, from Tarsus to Antioch** — fellow-pilgrims and soldiers in Christ. How different the return journey must have been for Barnabas — he had found his young friend, and now he could look forward to his oversight of the young church at Antioch, rejoicing to leave the issue with him, under God, assured that as the hand of the Lord had been already with the disciples at Antioch, so now that same precious hand would be with Saul, in the great work to which he had been called. **Like Ezra of old, he could rest assured that Saul would be strengthened as the hand of the Lord his God was upon him** (cf. Ezra vii 28).

No doubt the subject-matter of this last section of our meditation is of a specific and official nature, and so one which does not lend itself readily to general application. Nevertheless, if we consider the principles involved, we might do well to learn, **from Barnabas' reaction to the situation at Antioch, ever to be ready 'in lowliness of mind' to 'esteem other better than ourselves';**

while, from Saul's ready response to the call presented to him, we ought also to learn every to be ready to close in with such a call, in what ever sphere of action it might come, when we are also assured of the truth of that word which says, 'This is the way, walk ye in it'. (Isaiah xxx 21). May the Holy Spirit lead us all, then, into the truth as it is in Jesus — into the sweet land of uprightness, where the Sun of Righteousness continues to rise with healing in His wings upon such as dwell therein.

POSADH AN ANAMA RI CRIOSD

Leis an Urr. Eideard Pearce (A.D. 1672)

(Air a leantuinn bho t.d. 187)

4. Air dhuibh a bhi gun Chrìosd, tha sibh fodh'n lagh, agus mar sin fodh'n a mhallachd. Agus cia cho duilich 's a tha so! bho nach eil ann ach dà choimh-cheangal, an seann choimh-cheangal agus an coimh-cheangad nuadh; agus nach eil ann ach dà cheann do'n a coimh-cheangail so, a cheud Adhamh na'n t-Adhamh deireannach; agus mar sin tha'n a h-uile dhaoine air am faotainn fodh aon na aon eile dhiubh. Am feadh, uime sin, a tha sibh 'n ar coigrich do Chrìosd, tha sibh fodh'n lagh: oir mar so tha'n t-Abstol ag ràdh, "Oir a mheud 's a thà a dh' oibre an lagh, tha iad fo'n mhallachadh: oir tha e sgriobhta, Is Mallaichte gach neach nach buanaich anns na h-uile nithean a tha sgriobhte ann an leabhar an lagha chùm an deanamh." Gal. iii. 10. Cha'n eil tròcair aig an lagh, na caomhnadh air a luchd-brisidh; oir air son gach briseadh air tha e leagadh an anama fodh'n mhallachd. Nis, bhris sinn uile an lagh; bhris sinn uile e deich mìle uair thairis 'us thairis 'n ar pearsachan fein; agus anns a dà rathad sin thàinig sinn gu bhi tuiteam fodh'n mhallachd. Agus anam, an aithne dhuit ciod a tha mallachd a lagha a ciallachadh? Tha e giùlainn ann bàs agus dìteadh gu brath. Air dhuinn a bhi fodh'n lagh, tha sinn mallaichte 'n ar pearsachan agus 'n ar comhfhurtachdan. Tha fearg Dhé a luidh air ar 'n anamaibh, agus thà mallachd Dhé a luidh air gach nì a tha sinn a sealbhachadh, thà ar dearbh bheannachdan air a mallachadh air ar son, Malachi ii, 2. Thà sinn a leughadh anns na Sgriobhturan mu shluagh mallachd Dhe; agus is tusa aon dhiubh, anam, co air bith thù, ma thà thù mach a Crìosd. Oh cia cho brònach, cia cho muladach 's tha'n suidheachadh so!

5. Air bhi dhuit a bhi as eugmhais Chrìosd, agus dealaichte ri Crìosd, thà thù'n a do luidh fodh chionta pheacaidhean nach gabh a bhi air an àireamh, a dh'fheumas tù fein a ghiùlain gu bràth. Is ann an Crìosd agus troimh-san a mhàin, a thà E saoradh bho chionta, ach a mheud 's a thà air am faotainn Ann

agus fodh chumhnanta pòsaidh Ris? A mhuinntir sin glanaidh fhuil-san bho gach uile pheacadh. I Eoin i. 7. Agus Ann-san tha saorsa aca tre fhuil, cadhon maitheanas am peacaidhean. Ephes. i. 7. Ach a thaobh a chuid eile, tha E'g innse dhoibh gu soilleir gu'm faigh iad bàs 'n am peacaidhean. Eoin viii. 24. Oh ciod cho duilich 's a tha'n suidheachadh so! Anam tha thù ciontach do pheacaidhean do-àireamh, an aon is lugha dhiubh tha gu leoir ann gu bhì dhà do dhamanadh gu siorruidh. Tha agad mìltean, agus deich mìltean do pheacaidhean corcuir agus sgàrlaid, peacaidhean air an còmhach le antromachaidhean dubh agus a tha glaothaich gu h-àrd, na'n luidh ort; agus iad so uile na'n uile chudthrom cionta agus peanas air an cur as do leth leis an Dia mhòr gu siorruidh — cia cho truagh 's a tha so a nochdadh do shuidheachadh a bhì!

6. Air dhuibh a bhì dealaicht ri Criosd tha sibh fodh eigin a bhì peacachadh, agus mar sin a bhì cur r'ar damanadh gach latha. Tha duine a mach a Criosd a deanamh, agus cha'n urrain e ach a bhì deanamh peacaidh; oir cha'n eil e umhail do lagh Dhé, agus cha'n urrain dhà bhì. Rom. viii. 7. Agus mar a tha e ghnàth a peacachadh, tha e ghnàth a tasgadh fearg fodh chomhair latha na feirge dhà fein. Rom. ii. 5. Oh cia cho duilich 's a tha'n suidheachadh so! 'S e eigin chruaidh a tha'n so, mar a tha **Austin** dha ghairm, agus tha e labhairt air suidheachadh an leithid sin mar nì glé mhuladach. A bhì a ghnàth a peacachadh an aghaidh Dhé, agus a ghnàth a tasgadh suas fearg do dh'anam an duine fein, is e so an ath nì do dh'ifrinn, agus ann an seadh nì's miosa. A chùim a bhì toirt dhuibh sùim an iomlain:—

7. Air dhùibh a bhì dealaichte ri Criosd, cha'n eil nì agaibh a riarachas ceartas Dhé, a tha ullamh gu greim a dheanamh oirbh, cha'n eil nì agaibh gu bhì ciùnachadh fearg Dhé, a tha ullamh gu briseadh a mach 'n ar 'n aghaidh; cha'n eil nì agaibh gu bhì seasamh eadar dioghaltas Dhé agus bhur 'n anamaibh peacach. Ciod a their mi? Tha agaibh mòran luchd-casaid, agus leo-san tha coireachan tròm air an toirt air adhart 'n ar 'n aghaidh; agus air dhuibh a bhì as eugmhais Chriosd, cha'n eil fear-tagraidh agaibh gu bhì tagradh bhur cùis, cha'n eil aon agaibh gu bhì labhairt focal maith air neamh air bhur taobh. Agus nach eil so duilich? Tha sibh gu domhain ann am fiachan, deich mìle tàlant, do cheartas Dhé tha sibh ann am fiachan, agus air dhuibh a bhì as eugmhais Chriosd, cha'n eil nì agaibh gu paigheadh, ach tha sibh ann an cunnart a bhì air bhur tilgadh ann am priosan dorchadais siorruidh, far nach eil saorsa. Agus nach eil so duilich? Tha sibh fodh fhiachan a bhì coimh-lionadh mòran dleasdanas; agus air dhuibh a bhì as eugmhais

Chriosd, tha sibh fodh eu-comas anbarrach a bhì coimhlionadh aon diubh gu taitneach. Tha sibh fodh bhreitheanas ditidh, agus air dhuibh a bhì as eugmhais Chriosd, cha'n eil nì agaibh a nì tearuinte sibh air son aon latha, aon uair, aon mhòmainte, air an taobh so do lasraichean siorruidh. Agus Oh cia cho duilich agus truagh 's a tha so! Mar sin chì sibh bhrì dealachadh ri Chriosd, agus mar an ceudna 'ur truaighe (ann an cuid) a thaobh an dealachaidh sin. Nis, ma's a bu mhaith leat aonadh agus co-chomunn fhaotainn Ris, saothraich gu bhì gu domhain mothachail air an dà nì sin.

III. Am bu mhaith leat dà-rìreadh a bhì pòsda ri Chriosd; an sin saoithrich a bhì gu fallain a faotainn dearbh-shoilleireachd, agus a bhì gu domhain mothachail air meudachd agus an-tromachaidh peacadh diùltaidh Chriosd agus tairgseachan a ghràidh. Anam bhochd, tha thù seasamh a mach an aghaidh Chriosd; tha Esan a tàladh, agus a gairm, agus dha do chuireadh dha ionnsuidh Fein, ach tha thusa a deanamh dì-meas agus a diùltadh na h-uile nì. Agus so tha thù smuainteachadh 'n a ghnothuch beag; ach innseam dhuit, is e peacadh ro-antromaichte agus anabarrach a th'ann. A bhì mionnachadh, a bhì mort, a bhì goid, a bhì fodh'n mhisg, a bhì neo-ghlan, agus an leithid sin; orra so tha thu'g amharc mar pheacaidhean dubh agus gràineil; dà-rìreadh 's math a dh'fhaodas tù, oir is peacaidhean iad de nàdur nì's an-tromaichte agus nì's gràineil na'n cùntas. Ach gidheadh biodh fhios agad gu'm bheil do pheacadh ann a bhì diùltadh Chriosd, agus tairgseachan a ghràidh, nì's motha, agus nì's motha a tha brosnachadh na iad sin.

(R'a leantuinn)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

American Commission on Violence on Television

In 1968, President Johnson established a Commission to study and advise on violence on television and a draft Report has been issued. It concludes that violence on television encourages real violence, especially among children of poor and disorganised families. It recommends a sharp reduction in the volume and type of violence portrayed on television. The Report states: "Violence on television encourages violent forms of behaviour, and fosters moral and social values about violence in daily life which are unacceptable in a civilised society." It further observes: "The image of the adult world which most children get from television drama is by and large an unwholesome one." It is a

pity that there is to be no enforcement of recommendations for the eliminating of this evil state of affairs; but broadcasting companies concerned are to be left rather to voluntary action. When civil authorities in America or Britain do not refer to the moral law and Christian principles in their governing, then there is a reluctance to legislate even to prevent the children of a rising generation from being polluted with the kind of entertainment provided by adults which encourages positive wickedness. There are those in Britain who wage a constant campaign against any form of restriction or censorship upon obscenity or violence included in different forms of entertainment. Satan indeed has his willing servants in the entertainment world. Then as a consequence, increased crime becomes a national menace.

The London Squatters

The country has read in the press details regarding the hundreds of young men and girls who occupied property in London and had to be ejected by the police. Their leaders were only too ready to make known their views in relation to the society in which we live. They are against all institutions, like the family, school, detention centres, and so on, which they say compel them to be a normal part of "straight society". As to their dislike for detention centres, these are the centres to which many of these 'irresponsibles' should be sent for protracted periods of discipline and instruction in personal cleanliness. When police and officials entered one of the buildings recently occupied by these young people, they found themselves ankle-deep in filth and there was refuse in every room and obscene writings and drawings on every wall. A security guard refused to take his dog into the building because he said the conditions were too filthy. One of their 'speakers' said when threatened with eviction that they would meet violence with violence. The violence they were to oppose was of course the officers of the law in the discharge of their duty. Here we have a view of man without God, without the influence of the Word of God and defiant as to the claims of the law of God. From a gospel and Christian standpoint such young people are to be pitied — and how much they need the mercy and compassion of the Lord Jesus, who can have compassion on the ignorant, and them that are not of the way!

A strange suggestion at Conference on Alcoholism

A conference was held in Glasgow in September on alcoholism. One speaker suggested that the brewery industry might be asked to finance a long-term research programme covering both medical

and sociological aspects of alcohol in relation to crime. £10,000 was suggested as a contribution to such a project. It does seem strange to us to ask for money from such a source, from whence drink is provided at a price, paid by the regular drinker. Half the male offenders in Scottish prisons were there either directly or indirectly because of the influence of alcohol. Certainly research is needed as to how alcoholics can be prevented from returning to the use of alcohol. If this had general success the brewers' money spent on advertising drink would be lost cash. The saving influence of the gospel of God's grace in and upon the hearts of men is what will certainly deliver men from drunkenness and crime and from every other evil. The hearts of God's people, when they sit down and think of such social and moral misery, yearn for a day of power to bring all classes in our nation back to the reading of the Bible in the home, to experience its blessed influence in the divine kindness.

The United Nations Organisation

At a recent meeting of the United Nations organisation, Mr Stewart, our Foreign Secretary, made a strong speech on the Rhodesian situation, in condemnation of the ruling party there and their racial policy. The nations who continue to assist Rhodesia in the economic field and do not apply sanctions to Rhodesia, were castigated. Good and well! Yet we can never remove from our minds, when thinking of the United Nations Organisation, of its complete and utter lack of decision and action on the brutal and overwhelming oppression of Czechoslovakia by Communistic Russia. When a real active stand **cannot** be taken by U.N.O. on such an invasion of a small nation, for one reason or another (a nuclear war) — then this massive organisation is a useless and worse than useless instrument for peace in the world. What has it done about the Nigerian War? Yet it interferes with the people of Gibraltar who wish to stay British. It issues statements about Arab and Israel conflicts. It is a forum for talk and talk only and some of it dangerous talk. God is not in this organisation. The Lord Jesus Christ, the King of Nations and the Prince of Peace is not recognised by this gathering of representatives of many nations, great and small. It does not enjoy the divine blessing. We were indeed disappointed to hear that a wealthy American lady had recently left in her will, no less a sum than £160,000 for U.N.O. What a waste of money, which might have been devoted to some other really worthy purpose!

Drought in South West Scotland

In these modern times homes and places where large industrial concerns require immense quantities of water daily, a protracted period of dry weather causes great anxiety. At the end of September it was stated that there was the prospect of 50,000 people being rendered idle, in Renfrewshire and North Ayrshire, unless the water supply improved in two or three weeks. It was thought necessary to stop domestic supplies in some areas. This situation should remind men of how dependent we are upon the providence of God in sending rain and providing ample supplies of water to which we are so accustomed. God is speaking to us in such shortages; but do we recognise that every good and perfect gift cometh from Him? We are so materialistic today that God does not come into our thinking in face of such problems as the above. Yet, in Him we live and move and have our being. And how despised the water of life in Christ Jesus is by the most. "If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink."

CHURCH NOTES

New Editor of Free Presbyterian Magazine

We, after some consideration, resigned from the Editorship of the Free Presbyterian Magazine, at the meeting of the Synod last May. Our main reason for doing so was that we thought it was an opportune time to hand over our editorial duties to one of the younger ministers of the Church. We are sensible of the condescending mercy and kindness of the Most High in enabling us to issue the Magazine for a period of twenty years. We appreciated always the help and contributions of ministerial brethren and other thoughtful friends.

The new Editor appointed by the Synod in May is Rev. Donald B. MacLeod, M.A., 13 Prince of Wales Mansions, London S.W.11. His duties begin with the issue of the January 1970 number. Therefore all contributions for January issue should be in Mr MacLeod's hands not later than the end of November 1969. Thereafter all copy should be sent to Mr MacLeod more than a full month before any issue. For example, for February 1970 Magazine, copy should be sent to the Editor before the end of December 1969.

We wish the new Editor success under these fresh burdens for the Church and Cause of Christ Jesus, our Lord; the Lord helping him graciously and constantly. It is well for the servant of the Lord to be learning increasingly, "Without me ye can do nothing."

London Communion Services

The London communion services will be as follows (D.V.): Thursday, 4th December, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Friday, 5th December, 11 a.m. (Prayer Meeting), 3.30 p.m. (Gaelic) and 6.30 p.m. (Fellowship Meeting); Saturday, 6th December, 2.30 p.m. (Gaelic), 3.30 p.m. (English) and 6.30 p.m. (Prayer Meeting); Sabbath, 7th December, 11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.; Monday, 8th December, 7 p.m.

The weekday services will be held in the Bridewell Hall, London City Mission, Eccleston Place, S.W.1, and the Sabbath services in St. Michael's Hall (opposite Victoria Coach Station), Eccleston Place, S.W.1. Rev. Alex. MacAskill, Lochinver, and Rev. A. Cattanach, M.A., South Harris, are expected to assist at the communion (D.V.)

Bible Readings Card

Will ministers of the Church please send to — The Librarian, Free Presbyterian Church Bookroom, 160 Pitt Street, Glasgow, for supplies of Bible Reading Card D.

It will be much appreciated if these cards are in the possession of the young in all our congregations before the end of this year. — A. E. W. MacDonald, Convener, Bible Training of Youth Committee.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF DONATIONS

The General Treasurer, Mr Wm. D. Fraser, 20 Daleview Avenue, Kelvindale, Glasgow, W.2, acknowledges the following donations with sincere thanks.

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The Treasurers of the following Congregations acknowledge with sincere thanks:

Lairg — Mrs Campbell, 4 Oykeil Bridge, by Lairg, £5, per W.B.S.; Anonymous note "Someone who lives the Lord", 5/- P.O., Chells, Stevenage, Herts, stamped, received at Lairg Manse.

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