BRIEF

EVANGELISTIC MESSAGES

**How To Obtain Eternal Life,**

**How To Feed the New Man,**

**How To Escape The Slavery of Sin,**

**And other subjects**

**By**

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**Index Page 2**

**Index**

**All subjects are in Memory by Page number**

**Page**

**HOW THE SON OF GOD BECAME THE SON OF GOD................................** **3**

**HONORING THE SON AND THE FATHER…………………………. 8**

**HOW TO OBTAIN ETERNAL LIFE………………………………… 15**

**HOW TO FEED THE NEW MAN…………………………………… 19**

**CHRIST THE ETERNAL "I AM"…………………………………… 25**

**CHRIST THE SHEPHERD OF THE SHEEP……………………… 28**

**THE CRISIS OF THE WORLD………………………………………. 32**

**THE BETRAYAL AND DENIAL OF THE SON OF GOD………….. 39**

**GREATER WORKS THAN THESE………………………………... 43**

**FOLLOW THOU ME………………………………………………….. 49**

**HOW THE SON OF GOD BECAME THE SON OF MAN**

This morning we begin the EVANGELISTIC CAMPAIGN BY RADIO, during which, for two weeks each morning, we propose to preach the gospel to the unsaved, in the hope that many of them may be saved.

This campaign, now beginning, differs from the BIBLE CONFERENCE BY RADIO, just ended, in that during the Bible Conference our effort was directed toward the exposition of the Word of God for saved people, while in the coming CAMPAIGN we are addressing ourselves to those who do not yet know God as their Father, having never come to him by the blood-sprinkled way. In Christ's name, dear unsaved friends, we beseech you, Be ye reconciled unto God.

Our studies for this campaign will all come from the Gospel according to John, which book was written in order to get men saved. In the 20th chapter, verses 30 and 31, it says that "many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name."

So here we have a book in the Bible written primarily for the unsaved, in order that they might be saved. And it is here pointed out that the way of salvation is by believing something-namely, "that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God." There is nothing else to be done.

Just what it means to believe-just what this saving faith is we shall see in this our first study in this Gospel. It is more than a mere intellectual attitude of assent to certain propositions about Christ the Son of God. That attitude you might have, dear friend, and still be unsaved. This will be developed a bit later.

We are to have fourteen lessons from John's Gospel; and they will all be grouped about the "double verilies," twenty-five of which are found in this book, and none of which can be found elsewhere in the Bible. In the other Gospels there are single verilies-Verily, I say unto you,"-but only in John do we find double verilies-"Verily, verily, I say unto you."

A reason for this may be that John is the book of testimony to the unsaved to point them to the Savior and convince them that he can save them. Two is the number of witness in Scripture, which says: "The testimony of two men is true" (**John 8:17**). At any rate, we shall find in John abundant testimony to convince any honest inquirer that "Jesus is the Christ the Son of God."

Let me suggest to you who hear me this morning that you search through the Gospel of John for the double verilies, and see how many of you can locate twenty-five of them. And we should like to hear from you, as to the result of your search.

Turning now to the first chapter of John, we shall find our first double verily in the very last verse of the chapter, verse 51, where the Lord Jesus says to Nathanael, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man."

Here we have our Lord's own exposition of Jacob's dream at Bethel. In **Genesis 28:12**, we read that "he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending upon it." The ladder, then, is a type of our Lord himself as "the Son of man."

Mark this: Nathanael had greeted the Lord Jesus as the Son of God, saying, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel." But our Lord in his reply said, "Ye shall see . . the angels of God ascending and descending (not upon the Son of God as such, but) upon the Son of man."

When our Lord comes to the earth in his second advent, it will be to rule and judge the world, and in **John 5:27** he says that the Father "has given him authority to execute judgment,…because he is the Son of man." The incarnation of the Son of God in human flesh as Son of man was necessary, in order that he might execute judgment as King of kings and Lord of lords.

And the incarnation was necessary also, in order that the Son of God, thus become Son of man, might become the ladder, connecting earth and heaven, thus opening the way for man to enter into the presence of God. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in; things 'pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the' people. For in that he himself has suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted" (**Heb. 2:14-18**).

In the Epistle to the **Philippians 2:5-11**, there is traced for us the way of the self-imposed humiliation of the Son of God as he became the Son of man; and then the way of the exaltation of the Son of man as such, to a place at the right hand of the majesty on high.

But before looking at the Philippian passage let us consider for a moment the question as to how our Lord, even in his incarnation, could be called the Son of man, when he was "made of a woman" (**Gal. 4:4**), and without a human father. The answer is that, being descended from the first man Adam through a human: mother, he became the Son 'of man in a generic sense, the Son of the race, the Son of humanity, the Son of mankind.

Now, returning to **Phil. 2:5-11**, let us look, first, upon his humiliation, self-imposed, for he did it willingly, cheerfully, "for the joy, that was set before him" (**Heb. 12:2**); and then we shall see his exaltation."

**I.** The Humiliation of the Son of God (Verses 5-8).

**1.** "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (5). This appropriately follows the exhortation to humility in the preceding verses: "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others."

**2.** "Who, being in the form of God" (6). That was his place, his rank. 'The Word was with God, and the Word was God" (**John 1:1**).

**3.** "Thought it not robbery to be equal with God" (6). A more literal translation, and easier to understand, would be, "thought it not something to be retained by grasping to be equal with God." He was "equal with God," but he was willing to leave that place, that form, that rank, in order to get us saved.

**4.** "But made himself of no reputation" (7). The Revised Version here reads simply, "but emptied himself." It is quite beyond human comprehend to grasp the real meaning of our 'Lord's self-humbling. "The well is deep, and we have nothing to draw with. Only think of the glory he had before the world was (**John 17:5**), and then try, much you must try in vain, to sound the depth of meaning in that little phrase of three words, "but emptied himself."

**5.** "And took upon himself the form of a servant" (7). The word is really "bond-servant" or "slave." He exchanged the form, the place, the rank of God for the rank of a slave.

**6.** "And was made in the likeness of men" (7). In no other way could he become the ladder, the way to God. In order to become the "one mediator between God and men," he must become "the MAN Christ Jesus" (**1Tim. 2:5**).

**7.** "And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself (8). He went on down, down, down, in order that he might come **where we were**,like the good Samaritan in the parable of **Luke 10**, who, when he saw the man in need, "came where he was," after the priest and the Levite had "passed by on the other side."

**8.** "And became obedient unto death" (8). And as if that were not enough, there was one step even further down, to **where we were.**

**9.** "Even the death of the cross" (8). Crucifixion was the most humiliating form of death. So degrading was it considered, that no Roman citizen was thus executed. The Son of God came all the way, as Son of man, to the place **where we were** and where **we rightfully belonged.**

The self-humbling was sevenfold and complete: (l) He "counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped" (6,RV); (2) he emptied himself; (3) he "took upon him the form of a slave;" (4) he "was made In the likeness of men;" (5) "he humbled himself (6) he became obedient unto death;" (7) "even the death of the cross."

**II.** The Exaltation of the Son of Man (verses 9-11).

**1.** "Wherefore God also has highly exalted him" (9).

Exalted whom? Not the Son of God as such, though of course he never ceased to be the Son of God. No; the one exalted was the Son of man as such; and when he ascended up to the seat at the Father's right hand, there had never been a man there before. The ladder had been set up from earth to heaven, and the way into God's presence was made manifest; even by him who said in **John 14:6**, "I am the way ... No man comes unto the Father, but by me."

**2.** "And given him a name which is above every name" (9). And that name, be it noticed, is his human name, his name as a man, the Son of man.

**3.** "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Christ Jesus is Lord, to the glory of the Father" (l0, 11). All this was prophesied in **Daniel 7:13**, **14**:

"I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him domination, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."

And the fulfilment is seen in **Rev. 5:11-14**:

"And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts (living creatures, the cherubim) and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand (a hundred million), and thousands of thousands (more millions); saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four beasts (living creatures, the cherubim) said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that lives for ever and ever."

It remains only to define saving faith, and to show the way of salvation. In the 11th, 12th and 13th verses of the chapter we have been studying, **John 1**, it is written:

"He came to his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

Our Lord has said that "except a man be born again, he shall not see the kingdom of God." Here we are told how this new birth is brought about. It comes to those who receive him, "even to them that believe on his name." Believing unto salvation is believing in such a way as to receive him as a personal Savior. Nothing short of this will avail. Salvation comes not through good works, nor through getting religion, nor through ceremonies, such as baptism, confirmation, and the like, nor through joining a church. The only way, and the oil-sufficient way, is to receive him, to take him, to confess him say "Own Savior and Lord; and when you do that you will be born, not of man but of God. Come now, for now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation.

As was pointed out yesterday morning, all our studies in the EVANGELISTIC CAMPAIGN BY RADIO, which we are now beginning and which is to continue for two weeks, are gathered from the Gospel of John, and are grouped about the twenty-five "double verilies" contained in that book. Nowhere else in the Bible do we ever read, "Verily, verily, I say unto you." The other Gospels have the single verily, "Verily, I say unto you," but no double verilies. Nor does John have the single verily ever; only the double verilies are found here.

I suggested yesterday that my hearers might begin to search for these twenty-five double verllies in John. I hope many of you will do this; and let us hear from you, as to whether you found them all; and you might send us a list of the verses where you found them.

**HONORING THE SON AND THE FATHER**

Yesterday we found our first double verily **in John** **1:51** and there we learned why the Son of God became the Son of man; and today we are to learn how a son of man- any son of any man-may become a son of God.

We have three double verilies for today's study. They are in the third chapter of John, at verses 3, 5 and .Letme read them to you:

**3.** "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

**5.** "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

**11.** "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness."

All these three double verilies were addressed by the Lord Jesus to Nicodemus, who is" described as a ruler of the Jews and, a master (or teacher) of Israel (v.10). From oilier Scriptures we learn that he was probably a member of the Sanhedrin, the Great Council in Israel; and it is our Lord himself who, in verse 10 of this chapter, calls him a teacher of Israel (see R. V.). That means that he was a religionist, a religious teacher and leader, as well as a ruler politically. He was evidently a sincere man, an upright man, a devout man. And yet he was lost. Just as much lost, just as thoroughly lost, just as helplessly lost, just as hopelessly lost, as if he were not a religious leader and teacher, just as much lost as if he were the most thoroughly degraded and despised man in the world.

Do let me try to drive this truth home to the hearts of any unsaved ones who may be listening to me today. Dear ones, I beg of you, do not put your trust in any goodness you may be supposed to have, or in your place of leadership even in religious circles, or in your uprightness before men, or in your devoutness or sincerity. You may be going religiously to hell. Many are doing that. Religion cannot save you; a reputation for honesty and morality and uprightness cannot save you; devoutness and sincerity cannot save you. It could not save Nicodemus. Nicodemus doubtless supposed he was saved, even before he came to speak with the Lord Jesus. But he was lost; really lost; actually lost. Not threatened with getting lost, but lost. And every unsaved man is lost; already lost. As much lost as he ever will be. Lost, and dead. Not going to die, but already dead; and, unless he is brought out of death into life, he will go on for ever in the state of death and eternal separation from God the source of life. Dead now and here. Dead now, and as dead as he ever will be. Physical death has not come, but when it does come, the lost will go on in conscious existence and awful torment, for ever and ever, because he is dead spiritually. What an awful fate! May God deliver every one of my hearers from such a destiny.

Let us now consider these three double verilies, all from the mouth of the True and Faithful Witness, who cannot lie.

**1.** In the double verily of the third verse our Lord shows that the lost man is blind: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" you cannot show a blind man the beauty of a sunset or a landscape so long as he remains blind. As **I Cor. 2:14** says, "The natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Therefore, the unregenerate man, however brilliant and profound and devout and sincere he may be, must be born again before he can see the kingdom of God or receive the things of the Spirit of God.

The new birth is a birth. It is a birth as actual and real as the first birth. In the first birth we were begotten of earthly parents, who transmitted to us by generation their own life and nature; and in the second birth the believer is begotten again by the Heavenly Father, who transmits to us by regeneration his own life and nature.

**2.** In the double verily of the fifth verse our Lord shows that the lost man is impotent; he is crippled; he is unable to walk; he is helpless: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

Our Lord is not speaking here of water baptism. Water baptism has its place for the man already saved, but it has nothing to do with saving him. Baptism is not a birth, nor even a symbol of birth. It is a symbol rather of death-death and burial and resurrection-and it is ordained in order to show the way of salvation to those who learn better through the eye than through the ear.

Water, in this second double verily, is used as a type and figure of the Word of God. Many times in the New Testament is it so used. In **Titus** **3:5** it is written that "according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing (the bath) of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit." Here it is shown what is meant by being "born of water and of the Spirit." The Holy Spirit uses the Word of God in bringing about the new birth. This is shown also in **James 1:18**, where we read that "of his own will begat he us with the word of truth." And again in' **1 Peter 1:23,** where it is written that we are "born again .. by the word of God." Then in **Eph. 5:26** we read of "the washing of water by the word."

So, getting our minds off and away from ceremonies of any kind, let us learn that without regeneration there is nothing but weakness, nothing but utter paralysis. The unregenerate man can neither please God, nor obey God, nor even know God. How can such a man enter into the kingdom of God? It is out of the question. Necessity is laid upon him: he must be born again.

**3.** In the third double verily, in verse 11, our Lord shows why men are lost. It is because they will not believe:

"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen, and ye receive not our witness." The Lord Jesus knows all about it. He speaks that which he does know, and testifies of that which he has seen. He knows about it, and he tells the truth when he speaks about it. He cannot lie. And yet men, in their blindness, love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil (**John 3:19**).

Men are not lost for their evil deeds but it is because of their evil deeds that they hate the light, and will not come to the light that they might be saved. It is all put quite plainly in this very third chapter of John, in verses 16 to 18:

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believes on him is not condemned: but he that believes not is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

You see? The cause of condemnation is not your sins, but only because you do not believe.

But someone may say, "I do believe, and so why am I not saved?"

What do you believe? Have you believed unto salvation?

As we saw yesterday, saving faith is not merely to agree intellectually with some statement about the Lord Jesus; it is rather a definite receiving of him as one's personal Savior and Lord. Have you done this? Nothing less than this will bring about the new birth; and if you are to be saved you MUST, you MUST, you MUST BE BORN AGAIN.

Believe now. Receive him now. Take him now, and you will pass out of death into life. Eternal life, everlasting life, endless life-even "the gift of God (which) is eternal life. through Jesus Christ our Lord."

WE come today to the fifth double verily in the Gospel of John, and we find it in 'the fifth chapter, at the 19th verse. For clarity, I will read the context. Our Lord had miraculously healed a helpless cripple at the pool of Bethesda on the Sabbath. I read, beginning with verse 16:

**16.** And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the Sabbath day.

**17.** But Jesus answered them, My Father works hitherto, and I work.

**18.** Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was, his Father, making himself equal with God.

**19.** Then answered Jesus and said unto them, VERILY, VERILY, I SAY UNTO YOU, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he sees the Father do: for what things soever he does, the also does the Son likewise.

**20.** For the Father loves the Son, and shows him all things that he himself does and he will shew him greater things than these, that ye may marvel.

**21.** For as the Father raised up the dead, and quickens (makes alive) them; even so too Son quickens (makes alive) whom he will,

**22.** For the Father judges no man, but has committed all judgment unto the son.

**23**. That all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honors not the Son honors not the Father which has sent him.

The question raised in this Scripture relates to the person of Christ. Who is this? Who is this person called: Jesus of Nazareth? Is he just a great man, a great teacher, a great leader? Assuredly he is all that, but he is far more than that.

His enemies accused him of blasphemy; they sought to kill him, for under their law death was the penalty for blasphemy. In the 18th verse of our lesson for today we read that "the Jews sought to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, **making himself equal with God."**

Let it be remembered that in this attitude of our Lord's, enemies were perfectly consistent. Unless they received him as equal with God, they were logically driven to the position that he was guilty of blasphemy, and therefore worthy of death.

And even so it is today, Those who deny the deity, the full God head of our LORD, cannot reasonably claim to be Christians at all. He himself said, "No man comes to the Father but by me;" and surely no one can approach God by him who at the same time makes him a liar and a blasphemer.

For, mind you, he claimed to be God. Over and over again he expressly and repeatedly affirmed his own deity. In the 8th chapter of John he claimed to be the eternal I AM, who spoke unto Moses from the burning bush in **Exodus 3:14**. I read from **John 8:56-58**:

**56.** Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.

**57.** Then said the Jews unto him, Thou are not yet fifty years old, and have thou seen Abraham?

**58.** Jesus said unto them, **verily, verily**, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I AM.

Three times it is recorded in the Gospels-in **Matt. 22:41-45**; **Mk. 12:35-37**; and **Lk. 20:4l-43**-the Lord Jesus claimed to be David's Lord, referring to the first verse of the **110th Psalm**: "The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." I quote from Mark's record-**Mk. 12:35-37**:

**35.** And Jesus answered and said, while he taught in the temple, How say the scribes that Christ is the son of David?

**36**. For David himself said by the Holy Ghost, the LORD said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool.

**37.** David therefore himself calls him Lord; and whence is he then his Son?

Moreover, he allowed men to worship him without rebuke, which, were he less than God, would have been blasphemy: In **Matt. 14:33** "they that were in the ship "came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou are the Son of God." In **Matt. 28:9** the risen Christ showed himself to certain of his disciples, saying, "All hail! And they, came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him." And in **John 20:28** he received the adorning worship of Thomas, Who said unto him, "My Lord and my God."

Furthermore, he proved his deity by manifesting the attributes of deity, such as omnipotence, in **Mt. 28:18**; **Lk. 7:14**; **Jno. 5:21-23**; **6:19**; omniscience, in **John 11:11-14**; and omnipresence, in **Mt. 18:20**; **John 3:13**.

All the theophanies, or appearings of God, in the Old Testament, were preincarnate manifestations of the divine Son. Apart from him, "no man has seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he has declared him (or, made him known)" (**John 1:18**). Let us look, for an illustration of this, at one of these Old Testament theophanies. In **Isa. 6:1-13** the prophet writes of his vision and commission. In verse 1 he "saw the Lord." The word here for "Lord" is **Adonai,** meaning the Lord of all things. It is not really a name, but a title. In verse 3 the same person is called "The LORD of Hosts," and the word for "LORD" is **Jehovah.** In verse 5 he is called "the King, Jehovah of Hosts;" again in verse 11 "the Lord" **(Adonai):** and yet again in verse 12 "Jehovah." And now, by turning to the 12th chapter of John's Gospel we shall find that the person seen by Isaiah is none other than the eternal Son of God in one of his preincarnate appearings: "These things said Esias (Isaiah), when he saw his glory, and spoke of him" (**John 12:41**).

In the first chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews alone there are seven quotations from the Old Testament, all of them teaching the full deity of our Lord; and in this chapter the names and titles of the Godhead are repeatedly applied to him. They are as follows:

**1.** Verse 5, quoted from **Psalm 2:7**: "Thou are my Son, this day have I begotten thee." There are, in all, seven quotations from the 2d Psalm in the New Testament, and all of them as applied to Christ, showing his full deity.

**2.** Verse 5 again, quoted from **2 Sam. 7:14**: "I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son."

**3.** Verse 6, quoted from the Septuagint Version of **Duet. 32:43**: "Let all the angels of God worship him."

**4.** Verse 7, quoted from **Psalm 104:4**: "And of the angels he saith, Who makes his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire."

**5.** Verses 8, 9, quoted from **Psalm 45:6**, **7**, and here the Father is addressing the Son: "But unto the Son he said "Thy throne, 0 God, is for ever and ever," etc. The Father calls the Son, "God."

**6.** Verses 10-12. quoted from **Psalm 102:25-27**. and here again the Father addresses the Son, calling him "Jehovah":

"And, Thou, Lord (The name is Jehovah in the Psalm whence the quotation comes), in the beginning have laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the works of thine hands: they shall perish; but thou remain; and they shall all wax old as does a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail."

**7.** Verse 13, quoted from **Psalm 110:1**, the words addressed to David's Lord, words claimed by our Lord himself as applying to him, as we have already seen in this lesson: "Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool."

Old and New Testaments agree in ascribing praise to our Lord as God in the flesh. According to **Mt. 1:23**, **Isa. 7:14**, he is "Emmanuel, God with us." In the first chapter of John it is declared that in the beginning "the Word was with God, and the Word was God," and that "the world was made by him;" and in the same chapter John the Baptist testifies that he was sent "to prepare the way of the Lord." In the first chapter of Colossians it is declared that "by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things ware created by him, for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." This word "consist" means **to hold together.** Men speak of the law of gravitation, since they do not know what else to call the mysterious power which holds everything in its place. It is just Christ, the eternal Son of God, the Mighty Creator and Preserver of all things, who made the worlds and is now keeping every star and planet in the path that he has ordained for it. He is "upholding all things by the word of his power" (**Heb. 1:3**), for "in him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (**Col. 2:9**). In **Rom. 9:5**, we read that "Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever;" and in **1 Tim. 6:14-16** he 1s described as "the blessed and only Potentate, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, who only has immortality;' etc.

All this makes it perfectly clear that no one can honor the Father who does not honor the Son. "Whosoever denies the Son, the same has not the Father" (**1 John 2:23**).

He is the Way, the only Way, the all-sufficient Way to God. No man comes to the Father but by him. He who seeks to climb up by any other way Is a thief and a robber. He is the Door: by him if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and go in and out, and find pasture. Him that comes he will in no wise cast out. And he has said: "Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father which is in heaven." Come, for all things are now ready.

**HOW TO OBTAIN ETERNAL LIFE**

For our study this morning we have the sixth and seventh of the double verilies of John's Gospel. They are in the fifth chapter, just where we left off yesterday morning. I read beginning with verse 24:

**24.** Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that hears my word, and believes on him that sent me, has everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

**25.** Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour Is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.

You see, it is a matter of LIFE and DEATH. It is not a question of whether you are good or bad. No, but it is a question of whether you are alive or dead. It does not matter whether you have one kind of religion or another kind of religion or whether you have any religion the question is whether you are alive or dead. It is not a question as to whether you are going to die, but it is a question as to whether you are already dead, or whether you have escaped from death, and have "passed from death unto life."

Look, please, at that 24th verse, carefully. I like it in the old version, but I think I like it even more in the Revised Version, where it reads like this:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that hears my word, and believes him that sent me, has eternal life, and comes not into judgment, but has passed out of death into life."

That is plain enough, isn't it? In order for a spiritually dead man to have eternal life-and every unsaved man is spiritually dead-two things must be done: First, he must hear the word of the Lord; and, second, he must believe God. Believe God, mind you. Not just believe in him; not just to agree that "there is a supreme being" like you do in your lodge; you must believe him; believe what he says.

And why should we not believe him? Has he ever lied to us? Has he ever lied to anybody? He cannot lie. Every word of God is a true word. As we read in **First John 5:9-12**:

"If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he has testified of his Son. He that believes on the Son of God has the witness in himself: he that believes not God has made him a liar; because he believes not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that has the Son has life: and he that has not the Son of God has not life."

Did I not tell you? It is a matter of life or death. You, who listen to me, while you are physically alive, you may be spiritually dead. And you are spiritually dead unless you have the Son of God. The only way to obtain eternal life is by receiving him, and the moment you do that really, in your heart, and confess it with your mouth, you are born again, having passed out of death into life.

And now please listen to the 25th verse, while I read it from the Revised Version, with its marginal rendering:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour comes, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hearken shall live.

Here again, the dead referred to are the spiritually dead.

Every time the gospel is preached, it has in it the voice of the Son of God. The lost who are hearing it are dead, but if they will but hearken, and hearken in faith, they will live, being born again, and passing out of death into life.

You see, this verse cannot refer to the resurrection yet future, for it says "the hour comes, **and now** is." That hour had already begun when our Lord was speaking, and it has lasted ever since, and even today we may say, it "now is." Now is the accepted time, and now is the day of salvation. The door is still open; it stands ajar; and whosoever will may come. "Him that comes," says the Good Shephard, "I will in no wise cast out." So come now, for the hour which "now is" shall not always be. The time will come, and it may be soon, when the door will be shut, and then it will be everlastingly too late.

The future physical resurrection, indeed two of them, will be seen in the 28th and 29th verses of this chapter, where our Lord is still speaking, and says: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming (Notice, he does not say here, "and now is," for it was then, and still is, future), in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

There is not one resurrection here, as you see, but two; and they are not simultaneous. The word "hour" here, as in verse 25, is used of an indefinite period. The "hour" of the 25th verse, as we have seen, has now been going on for nearly two thousand years; and from other Scriptures we learn that the two resurrections yet future will be separated from each other by a period of one thousand years, the millennium. (The word "millennium" means a thousand years). The saved dead will be raised from the dead before the millennium, but the rest of the dead will not live again until the thousand years are finished. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years" (**Rev. 20:5**, **6**).

The entire book of the Gospel of John is a book of testimony, where witness after witness is heard, all agreeing that "Jesus is the Christ the Son of God," so that, "believing ye might have life through his name" (**John 20:30**, **31**). Look at the array of evidence in the remaining verses of this chapter:

**1.** **John the Baptist** (verses 33-35).

"Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth.

But I receive not testimony from man: but these things I say, that ye might be saved. He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light." When John the Baptist began his ministry, he was very popular; for "then went out to him Jerusalem, and all of Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins." But when he preached the truth to them, denouncing their shameful hypocrisy, he lost his popularity (**Matt. 3:1-12**).

**2.** **The works of Jesus** (verse 36):

"But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father has sent me." This was the evidence that aroused Nicodemus' interest, convincing him that Jesus was "a teacher sent from God" (**John 3:1**, **2**).

**3.** **The** Father (**verses 37**, **38**).

"And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape. And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not." There were three distinct occasions when the Father spoke openly, out of the sky, giving testimony concerning his Son:

**First**, at the baptism in Jordan, at the beginning of our Lord's public ministry, when there was heard "a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." The record is in **Mt. 3:13-17**.

**Second**, on the Mount of Transfiguration, when there came "a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." The record is in **Mt. 17:5**.

**Third**, in the city of Jerusalem, after the so-called Triumphal Entry, and when Satan attacked him by subtlety, seeking to dissuade him from the way of the cross, and induce him to go on living, ministering to the Gentiles in life, instead of dying for them to bring them to God. He decided to be like the corn of wheat which becomes fruitful through death, saying, "Father, glorify thy name." And then, just "then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." The record is in **John 12:20-33**. We shall be looking at it again and more carefully in a later study.

**4.** **The Scriptures** (verses 39 and 40).

This is better and more understandable in the Revised Version: "Ye search the Scriptures, because ye think that in them ye have eternal life; and these are they which bear witness of me; and ye will not come to me that ye may have life." Even the Scriptures cannot save men unless they come to him of whom the Scriptures testify.

Evidence, and plenty of it; evidence in abundance, to prove to any honest mind "that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God," in order that men might believe and live.

"If thou shall confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus (or, Jesus as Lord), and shall believe in thy heart that God has raised him from the dead, thou shall be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (**Rom. 10:9**, **10**).

This is the way of deliverance out of death into life. This is "how to obtain eternal life."

**HOW TO FEED THE NEW MAN**

This morning we go into the sixth chapter of John's Gospel, where we shall find the eighth, the ninth, the tenth and the eleventh of the double verilies of this book. Four double verilies in this chapter alone. They are in verses 26, 32, 47 and 53; and I shall now read them:

**26.** Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.

**32.** Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread Ij from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.

**47.** Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believes on me has everlasting life.

**53.** And Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you."

The Christian, the saved man, the really born-again man, has within him two lives. One is natural, and the other is supernatural. One is human, and the other is divine. One is physical and the other is spiritual.

All life comes from life, and through living seed, and this is true of both the natural life and the supernatural life in the believer.

The natural life comes by generation, and the superna­tural life comes by regeneration.

The natural life comes from our natural parents, who have transmitted to us that life which they inherited from their ancestors; and because that life came from corruptible seed, it is itself corruptible. .The supernatural life comes from God, through the incorruptible seed of his Word (**1** **Peter 1:22-25**), and because it comes from an incorruptible source, and through incorruptible seed, it is itself incorruptible.

Everything which is corruptible is necessarily temporary: it cannot endure forever. But that which is incorruptible is necessarily eternal; it cannot come to an end, ever. Therefore, our natural life, coming from corruptible sources and through corruptible seed, will one day vanish away; but the supernatural life, coming from an incorruptible source and through incorruptible seed, must of necessity be eternal, everlasting, endless.

Thus it is that the born-again man **"has eternal life."**

All life must be fed; it requires food for its sustenance and maintenance. The natural, physical life feeds upon that which comes out of the dust of the earth. Because the natural man is dust, and unto dust he will return (**Gen. 2:7**; **3:19**), his food comes from the dirt beneath his feet. Directly, as when we eat vegetables, or indirectly, as we eat meat, all the food for our bodies comes up from beneath.

But it is not so with the supernatural life: it feeds from that which is from above; it cannot thrive on that which comes up from beneath. The earthly life demands earthly food, and without it it must starve; but the heavenly life demands heavenly food, and without it it must starve.

In the natural realm, man eats herbs or flesh food, and turns it into human flesh. The chicken eats vegetable matter and turns it into chicken meat; the lamb turns it into lamb flesh; the steer turns it into beef; and then man eats the chicken, the lamb or the beef, and turns it all into human flesh.

But in the spiritual realm, man feeds upon heavenly food, and it remains heavenly. He feeds upon Christ, and Christ does not become human in the man; rather, Christ is formed in the man. This is the marvel of the new creation.

All this is set forth in the sixth chapter of John, in the discourse of our Lord, contained in verses 26 to 59, and punctuated by the four double verilies I have read to you. "Labor not," he says in verse 27, "for the meat" " (food) which perishes, but for that meat (food) which endures unto everlasting life." In verses 32 and 33 he says: "My Father gives youthe true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he which comes down from heaven, and gives life unto the world." In verses 47 and 48 he says: "He that believes on me has everlasting life. I am that bread of life." In verses 53 to 58 he says: "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eats my flesh, and drinks my blood, has eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eats my flesh, and drinks my blood, dwells in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eats me, even he shall live by me. This is that breed which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat bread, and are dead: he that eats of this bread shall live forever."

Little wonder that his hearers asked, as in verse 52, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" Let us put the same question, and seek an answer. The key may be found in verse 63, where our Lord encourages us to look behind the mere form of his words, saying: "It is the spirit that quickens; the flesh profit nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." Let us then get behind the flesh, the outward form of his words, end seek for the meaning under the surface.

We may be helped here by resorting to an analogy in the physical realm. When a child is born in the natural world he must be fed. And the natural way for him to be fed is by milk drawn from his mother's breast. Milk is a mysterious fluid, but we may learn what it is from what the child does with it. The child receives it into his stomach, and by the mysterious process called digestion he transmutes it into flesh and blood; which proves that milk is itself flesh and blood, and when the child nurses at its mother's breast, he is actually eating her flesh and drinking her blood, reduced to a form enabling him to receive it and profit by it.

Is not this the key to our problem? The Scriptures are called The Word of God, and Christ himself is called The Word of God. In **1 Peter 2** we are exhorted, as newborn babes, to desire the sincere milk of the word, that we may grow thereby; and it is a matter of common experience and knowledge among us, that when we are feeding upon the written word we are feeding upon the incarnate word: we are eating his flesh and drinking his blood, reduced to a form enabling us to receive it and profit by it.

Milk, of course, is baby food. As the child grows up he is provided with teeth, for solid food. And in the spiritual realm God has given us not only the milk of the Word, but also strong meat, that we may not only grow thereby, but grow strong thereby, and do the work required of us.

Think now, for a moment, of the various steps in the process of eating: There must be food to eat and an appetite for itthen there must be mastication, and digestion. and assimilation; all of which must be followed by exercise if we are to be kept in fullness of health and strength.

And so it is in the spiritual realm: There is food plenty in the Word of God, "from soup to nuts," so to spook; for there is milk, and honey, there is manna, there is bread, and there is the strong meat, the solid food, which must be pre­pared by hard work in the study of the Book. And then there must be thorough spiritual mastication or meditation, for, as physical food is masticated in order to mix it with saliva and thus prepare it for the digestive organs, so thorough meditation will cause the Word of God to be "mixed with faith" as we receive it (**Heb. 4:2**). And then there must follow the digestion, the assimilation, and, most important, there must be exercise. As **James 1:22-25** puts it: "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: for he beholds himself, and goes his way, and straightway forgets what manner of man he was. But whoso looks into the perfect law of liberty, and continues therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."

And now, you, my unsaved friend, you have up to now been depriving yourself of this heavenly life, and this heavenly food. It is here for you-a free gift-if only you will take it. The Lord Jesus Christ is not only the Bread of Life, but he himself is also the life itself. Life incorruptible, life eternal, everlasting life, endless life; Why, O why, will ye die?

We have today the twelfth of the double verilies in the Gospel of John. It is found in the 8th chapter, at the 34th verse. I shall now read it, together with its context, including verses 31 to 36:

**31.** Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed in him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;

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

**33.** They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to **any man:** how say thou, Ye shall be made free?

**34.** Jesus answered them, VERILY, VERILY, I SAY UNTO YOU, Whosoever commits sin is the servant of sin.

**35.** And the servant abides not in the house for ever: but the Son abides ever.

**36.** If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

Man by nature, as we have seen in this series of studies, is dead, and blind, and helpless; utterly unable, either to know God, or to obey God, or to please God. As it is written in **Rom. 8:7-10**, "the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ (that is, the Holy Spirit of God dwelling in him), he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness."

Today we are to learn that man by nature is a slave. A slave in the most absolute sense. A helpless, hopeless slave. A slave of sin-"carnal, sold under sin" (**Rom. 7:14**).

The slavery of sin is subtle, in that the slave does not know, or even suspect, that he is a slave. As these Jews said to our Lord, in verse 33 of our lesson, "We . . . were never in bondage; ... how say thou, Ye shall be made free?"

The sinner thinks he can do as he pleases, and that when the time comes to "turn over a new leaf and be good," he will be perfectly able to do so, without help from anyone.

There is only one who can help, and deliver the sinner from his slavery. He is the one who says in the Scripture before us, "VERILY, VERILY, I SAY UNTO YOU, Whosoevercommits sin is the servant (bond servant, slave) of sin:" and "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (verses 34, 36).

And even he could not have done it, except through his own blood. He must lay down his life for us. He must die in our room and stead, if we were to live and be made free. "The wages of sin is death," and we had fully earned the wages; "but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (**Rom. 6:23**), who bought for us the gift of life by giving up his own life.

The great passage on this subject of our deliverance from the slavery oi sin is the 6th chapter of Romans. Let us turn to that chapter just now.

Three times in this chapter we are told that we who have received the gift of God in Christ are free from sin:

**First, in verse 7:** "For he that is dead is freed from sin."

The point in this verse is that by the reckoning of God the believer was on the cross with Christ when he died for us. He died in our place. He died not only for our sins, but he died for us. Not only for what we have done, but for what weare. He died as us, and in God's righteous reckoning I 'we died. The Revised Version makes this verse read: "For he that has died is justified from sin," and in the margin reads: "released from sin." But let me read it from the Revision with its context, and the teaching will be clear; I read verses 1-14:

"What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid. We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein?" (Verses 1, 2).

And then, to show when we died to sin, the next verses explain that when we were born again we were joined to Christ and to his death by the baptism of the Holy Spirit (**1 Cor. 12:12-13**). He is not speaking of water baptism until he comes to the 4th verse. I now read on, beginning with verse 3:

"Or are ye ignorant that all we who are baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?" (3).

Thus his death became our death, and thus it is that on Calvary we "died to sin."

And now, in verse 4, comes the significance of water:

"We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so also we might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with him in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection; knowing this, that our old man was crucified with him, that the body of sin might be done away, that so we should no longer be in bondage to sin; for he that has died is justified (or, released) from sin. But if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him; knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dies no more; death no more has dominion over him. For the death that he died, he died unto sin once: but the life that he lives, he lives unto God. Even so reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey the lusts thereof: neither present your members unto sin as instruments of unrighteousness: but present yourselves unto God, as alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not .have dominion over you: for ye are not under law, but under grace."

**Second, in verse 18:** "Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness." So we exchange one slavery for another; for the word here for "servant," as before, is "bondservant," which means "slave." Ah, yes, but what a difference there is between the old slavery of sin and the new slavery unto God.

We ,could never manage for ourselves. We must have a master. And we have been freed from the mastery of sin, to be brought under the mastery of Christ. Did he not say, in **Matt. 11:28-30**:

"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

**Third**, **in verse 22:** "But now being made free from sin, and become servants (slaves) to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life."

Let me again read the context, containing the second and third of these verses proclaiming our freedom. Using the Revision again, I read, beginning with verse 15:

"What then? Shall we sin, because we are not under law, but under grace? God forbid. Know ye not, that, to whom yea present yourselves as servants unto obedience, his servants ye are whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But thanks be to God, that, whereas ye were servants of sin, ye became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching whereunto ye were; and being made free from sin, ye became servants of righteousness. I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye presented your members as servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity, even so now present your members as servants to righteousness unto sanctification. For when ye were servants of sin, ye were free in regard of righteousness. What fruit then had ye at that time in the things whereof ye are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto sanctification, and the end eternal life. For the wages of sin is death; but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

This, then, is the gospel. This is our Proclamation of Emancipation; emancipation from the slavery of sin. Halleluiah, what a Savior! and what a salvation! May it please God to carry it home to every hearer, saved and unsaved! May it save the lost, and encourage the saved!

**CHRIST THE ETERNAL "I AM"**

In the 8th chapter of John yesterday morning we found at the 34th verse the twelfth double verily of John; and this morning we continue in the same chapter, to study the thirteenth and fourteenth of the double verilies, in verses 51 and 58. I shall now read these verses, with their context, beginning with verse 51:

**51.** **Verily, verily, I say unto you,** If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.

**52.** Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou have a devil (demon). Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou say, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death.

**53.** Are thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom make thou thyself?

**54**. Jesus answered, If I honor myself, my honor is nothing: it is my Father that honors me; of whom ye say, that he is your God:

**55.** Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying.

**56**. Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.

**57.** Then said the Jews unto him, Thou are not yet fifty years old, and have thou seen Abraham?

**58.** Jesus said unto them, **Verily, verily**, **I say unto you,** Before Abraham was, I AM.

**59.** Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

Here again the issue is raised as to the deity of Christ.

Here he claims, in words that cannot be misunderstood, to be identical with the Eternal I AM, we looked at this passage briefly in a former study; but today we shall examine it more thoroughly.

Let it be again noted that when the Jews reached for stones to cast at him who claimed to be God, they were doing what they ought to do unless they were willing to believe on him and receive him as their Messiah and Lord. There is no middle ground. He was either the eternal God standing among them in human flesh, or the most wicked blasphemer; and the law decreed that the blasphemer should be put to death. He took upon himself the name of the Eternal I AM, which name belongs only to God; and in **Lev. 24:16** God himself declared that "he that blasphemes the name of Jehovah, he shall surely be put to death, and all the congregation shall certainly stone him: as well the stranger, as he that is born in the land, when he blasphemes the name of Jehovah, shall be put to death."

So let those beware who call themselves Christians, and yet deny him the honor that belongs to him. No one is a Christian who denies that Christ is indeed "Emmanuel, God with us."

There is in the world today a sect calling itself and its "patron saint" by the name of The Great I AM. That name belongs to God alone, as we shall now see.

Please turn now to the third chapter of the book of Exodus.

In this chapter we have the call of Moses to deliver Israel from Egypt. The call came from the bush that burned but was not consumed. Now I shall read, using the Revised Version, which is very important here, for it preserves for us the name of Jehovah, instead of translating it "the Lord." shall begin with the 13th verse:

And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers have sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? What shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM

THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM has sent me unto you. And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shall thou say unto the children of Israel, Jehovah. The God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations."

I have read the 13th, 14th and 15th verses of the third chapter of the book of Exodus.

Now this word, translated "I AM," is from the same Hebrew root as the name, "Jehovah." It is a mysterious name, this name Jehovah, and has been the subject of much study. The Revisers have placed in their marginal note the readings, "I AM BECAUSE I AM," "I AM WHO I AM," and "I WILL BE THAT I WILL BE." The name has been defined by Hebrew scholars as meaning "HE WHO WAS, AND IS, AND EVER SHALL BE."

And this is the name claimed by Jesus of Nazareth as his own. He himself is the ETERNAL I AM. As we have seen in a former study, "all things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made;" "he was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not" (**John 1:3**, **10**). "By him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist" (**Col. 1:16-17**).

So then he is our God-our Lord and our God. And because he is our Lord and our God, he speaks with authority, and what he says we must believe. And in our lesson for today, he not only said, "**Verily, verily, I say unto you**. Before Abraham was, I AM," but he also said, "**Verily. verily. I say unto you** If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death."

He was speaking, of course, not of physical death, though even that will one day pass away and be no more. For the present "it is appointed unto men once to die" (**Heb. 9:27**), but even from that appointment some will be excused, since "we shall not all sleep" (**1 Cor. 15:51**).

But the real death, the death that really counts, the death that really matters this is the death of which our Lord here speaks; namely, that spiritual death which separates men from God the source of life; that spiritual death which will be prolonged into and through eternity by the awful second death in the lake of fire, and into which all will be plunged who are "not found written in the book of life" (**Rev. 20:11-15**).

From that death-from that awful fate-we are delivered and forever delivered who have believed on him unto salvation. We 'have heard his' word and ''believed him who sent him, and he himself says: "If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death." He gave himself to the death of the cross, "that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (**Heb. 2:14-15**). It is "our Savior Jesus Christ who has abolished death, and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (**2 Tim. 1:10**).

So the Christian is delivered from death, and from the fear of death. His body may die, and it may not. But what matters it? Bodily death, after all, is a mere incident, and if it comes it will only be to release us from all the sins and failures of this present existence and usher us into the presence of him who loves us and whom we love. Let it come: we do not need to fear it.

Of course, there is ever before us "the blessed hope" that we may not be called upon to experience even physical death, but may be among those alive and remaining until the day of the catching up of the saints to meet the Lord in the air. That would indeed be delightful.

"0 joy, 0 delight! Should we go without dying!

'No sickness, no sadness, no dread and no crying!

Caught up through the clouds with our Lord into glory,

When Jesus receives his own."

But many there have been who indulged the hope that they might go on here until that day, and they have gone on "through the subway," They are awaiting that day with eagerness, for without us they cannot be made perfect. Since not until that day will they have their glorified bodies.

"0 Lord Jesus, how long, how long.

Ere we shout the glad song,

Christ returneth! Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Amen!

Hallelujah A-men!"

With those hearing me today who are not yet saved, I plead. 0 my friends, let not this day pass; nay, let not this hour pass; nay, let not this precious moment pass, without your salvation. Now, you may have it, now. Receive God's precious boon, so freely offered you, even "the gift of God, which is eternal life, in Christ Jesus our Lord."

**CHRIST THE SHEPHERD OF THE SHEEP**

This morning's lesson is in the tenth chapter of John, where, in verses 1 and 7, we shall find the 15th and 16th of the twenty-five double verilies of this book, the gospel ae reading to John. I read:

**1.** Verily, verily, I say, unto you, He that enter not by the sheepfold, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.

**2.** But he that enters in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.

**3.** To him the porter opens; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calls his own sheep by name, and leads them out."

**4.** And when he puts forth his ownsheep he goes before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.

**5.** And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.

**6.** This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them.

**7.** Then Jesus said unto them again, Verily,

verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.

**8.** All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.

**9.** I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be served, and shall go in and out, and

find pasture.

**10.** The thief comes not, but for steal, and to kill and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

**11.** I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd gives his life for the sheep.

In these verses, and the verses that follow, it is easy to discern that our Lord was delivered a scathing rebuke to the false religious leaders in Israel, who had failed to shepherd the sheep. They had acted the part of hirelings rather than that of shepherds.

If you will observe the closing verses of the preceding chapter, John 9, you will see that this tenth chapter consists of a reply to the question raised by the Pharisees in verse 40 of chapter 9. They said to him, "Are we blind also;" to which he replied, "If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remains." Then follows the reproving words of the tenth chapter. They were not true shepherds; they were hirelings, whose own the sheep were not, and they cared not for the sheep. He, the good shepherd, was about to lay down his life for these sheep of the house of Israel, and for other nations besides: "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold (rather, flock), and one shepherd" (verse 16).

It is in this great chapter that our Lord gave such conclusive teaching concerning the believer's eternal security. In verses 27-30 he told the whole truth about it, leaving nothing to be desired. I read:

**27.** My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

**28.** And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man (any one, anything, any power) pluck them out of my hand.

**29.** My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man (no one, no thing, no power) is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

**30.** I and my Father are one.

You may depend upon it: once he gets you, he will never give you up.

The Scriptures present our Lord in three phases as the Shepherd of the sheep.

**First**, **as in this l0th chapter**, **he is "the good Shepherd."**

It is as the good shepherd that he gives his life for the sheep.

**Second**, **as in Heb. 13:20. 21**. **he is "the great Shepherd."**

It is as the great Shepherd of the sheep that he now, in resurrection life and by resurrection power, is guarding and guiding his sheep to resurrection glory: "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

**Third**, **as in the 5th chapter of First Peter. he is "the chief Shepherd."**

It is as the chief Shepherd that he will one day come in power and great glory to reward his faithful under-shepherds. Peter writes: "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the suf­ferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory, that fades not away" (1 **Pet. 5:1-4**).

These three phases of the shepherdly work of our Lord are beautifully illustrated in the 22d, 23d, and 24th Psalms, all of them "shepherd Palms," under-Shepherds together into one, called The Trilogy, the three-word Psalm.

In the 22d Psalm we see the good Shepherd laying down his life for his sheep, suffering the agonies of Calvary that they might be saved. He cries out in his affliction, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" "They pierced my hands and my feet;" "They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture" (verses 1, 16, 18).

In the 23d Psalm the great Shepherd of the sheep is leading and feeding and caring for his sheep in the power of his resurrection. The 23rd Psalm has been described as a kind of suspension bridge, leading from "the sufferings ot Christ" in the 22d Psalm to "the glory that follow" in the 24th Psalm (see **1 Pet. 1:11**). "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want;" "He leads me;" "He restores my soul;" "My cup runs over;" "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow we all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

Then in the 24th Psalm there is the glorious and triumphant coming of the chief Shepherd as "the King of glory: the Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory."

How good it is to know him. To know him as the good Shepherd who died for us; to know him as the great Shepherd who now lives for us; and to know him as the chief Shepherd who one day is coming for us, and whose glory we shall share.

And how strange it is that anyone should reject such a Shepherd He died, he lives, and he will come. Meanwhile he stands with out-stretched hand, saying, "Come unto me;" "Whosoever will may come;" and "him that comes I will in no wise cast out." Come, and come now.

**THE CRISIS OF THE WORLD**

We have now come to the 17th of the double verilies in the Gospel of John, in chapter 12, at verse 24: "VERILY, VERILY, I SAY UNTO YOU, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abides alone: but if it die, it brings forth much fruit."

In order to understand the significance of this word from our Lord's mouth, we must acquaint ourselves with the context.

In verses 20-22 we are told that "there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast," who came to Philip and expressed a desire to see Jesus. That was something new, for these people were Gentiles, and our Lord had confined his ministry to Israel. How many there were of these Gentiles we are not informed: there might have been few of them or many. It may be that their reason for approaching Philip was because he hailed from Bethsaida, which was just on the border of Galilee, and, Philip bore a Gentile name; it may be that they reasoned that for these causes he might be sympathetic with their desire to see the Lord.

It seems that Philip did not know what to do about it, and he went to Andrew and asked him about it. These two 'men often worked together, and it is little wonder that we should have in these days a "Brotherhood of Andrew and Philip." These two went and told Jesus.

It is a mistake to assume that the Lord received these Gentiles. Quite to the contrary, he did not receive them. Instead, he seemed to have been thrown into a state of agitation by their request. This will appear as we go on with the study. It is evident from the whole passage that our Lord saw behind this request a subtle attempt by Satan to turn him from the way of the cross and induce him to go on living in the flesh and ministering to the world as a teacher, rather than dying for it to bring it to God.

Study carefully our Lord's words. He makes no reply to the Gentiles' request to see him; apparently he was too greatly and deeply stirred.

Verse 23: "And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified. VERILY, VERILY, I SAY UNTO YOU, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abides alone: but if it die, it brings forth much fruit."

He is the corn of wheat, and he again confirms his decision to die. Verse 25: "He that loves his life shall lose it; and he that hates his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal."

Then he reminds his disciples that their way too, as well as his, should be the way of sacrifice and self-abnegation. Verse 26: "If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honor."

Verse 27: Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour?" I have punctuated this as a question, following the marginal rendering of the Revisers. It is as if he were putting a question to himself:

"What shall I say? Shall I say, 'Father save me from this hour?' " Should he say that? No; rather, he says, "Father, glorify thy name!"

It was a momentous decision, as he again dedicates himself to the death of the cross, that he might bring us to God.

"Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."

Three times during the earthly ministry of our Lord, the Father thus spoke aloud from heaven, expressing his pleasure in his Son; and each time it was just as his Son was dedicating himself to die for man: First, at his baptism in Jordan, and that baptism, symbolizing the death and burial and resurrection he had come to accomplish (**Mt. 3:17**). Second, on the Mount of Transfiguration, where he talked with Moses and Elijah "of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem" (**Mk. 9:31**). Third, here in **John 12**, where he again sets his face as a flint toward the cross.

Now, if you please, we will look at verse 31; it is of the first-most importance that we understand its deep significance. Our Lord is speaking, and he says:

"Now is the judgment of this world."

What can that mean? In what sense was this "the judg­ment of this world?"

There are two ways by which a word may be taken over from one language to another. The first and most usual way is by **translation**,changing the form of the word entirely. The second way is by **transliteration**,by which the word is taken over, with little or no change in form, and adopted into the new language.

The Greek word for "judgment" is **krisis.** But we have taken over this Greek word into our language, changing its spelling but not its sound, and the result is "crisis."

I am satisfied that by transliteration, rather than by translation, the word should be used here, thus making the statement read: "Now is the crisis of this world." For indeed it was the world's crisis; and what a crisis! The eternal fate of millions was at stake in the subtle temptation flung into the path of the Son of God; and we tremble to think of the result if his decision had been other than what it was.

"Now," he exultantly cries, "Now shall the prince of this world be cast out." He had again met the adversary face to face, and again he had defeated him.

Careful now, as we look at verse 32: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth will draw all men unto me." It is one of the most abused verses in all Scripture. How many sermons have been preached on this verse to show that if the Lord Jesus is exalted in preaching, all men will be drawn unto him! Of course, it never does work that way; and yet men will go on using, or rather misusing that text in that way. The next verse should have saved the preachers from such a blunder, for it says: "This he said, signifying what death he should die." And what death did he die? He was lifted up from the earth on a cross, as he himself had already several times predicted. In **John 3:14**, he said that "as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up;" in **John 8:28** he said: "When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he;" and in **John 18:32** it is explained that the reason he was not stoned to death was in order "that the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spoke, signifying what death he should die."

Notice also, that those to whom he spoke in Our present lesson understood his meaning perfectly, for they said:

"We have heard out of the law that Christ abides forever: and how say thou, The Son of man must be lifted up?" (verse 34).

The true meaning of his words, "And if I be lifted **up** from the earth, will draw all men unto me," is that as he hung on the cross he drew unto himself the whole human race, "all men," from Adam to the last member of the race, and died for them all. On that cross, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them" (**2 Chron. 5:19**), for the very good reason 'that he was imputing their trespasses unto him. He tasted death for every man. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. "Behold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world" (**John 1:29**).

That is what he came for, nineteen centuries ago. He himself said in **John 3:17-18** that "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world! through him might be saved. He that believes on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

There it is, my friends. Whether you take it or leave it, there it is. The Son of God came not to condemn you, for you were already condemned. Rather, he came to save you from condemnation. He took upon himself your condemnation, in order that you might go free. If you are lost, it is not his fault; neither is it because salvation has not been fully wrought out for you and offered to you as a gift, even the gift of God which is eternal life.

You may, if you will, here and now, wherever you are whatever you are, whatever you may have done or failed to do; you may, just now, if you will, be forever delivered from condemnation, delivered from death, delivered from slavery, delivered from your helpless and hopeless condi­tion, and be translated out of the power of darkness into kingdom of God's dear Son. God grant that you may no longer despise God's grace! Come now! Come, and live.

**CLEANSING BY THE BLOOD AND THE WORD**

The 18th and 19th of John's double verilies come before us this morning for our study. You will find them in the 13th chapter of the Gospel of John, as verses 16 and 20, which I read as follows:

**16.** VERILY, VERILY, I SAY UNTO YOU, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.

**20.** VERILY, VERILY, I SAY UNTO YOU, He that receives whomsoever I send receives me; and he that receives me receives him that sent me.

These two verses are found in the narrative of the last Passover celebrated by our Lord and his apostles, when he washed their feet. There is rich teaching here, and we must not miss it.

In the first verse of the chapter we are told that "before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end."

This language is calculated to arrest the reader's attention, indicating as it does that something of importance is about to transpire.

The scene here, remember, is . These men were not sitting at the table as we westerners do: rather, they reclined on divans or couches, each resting his head upon his left hand, leaving the right hand free to convey the food to the mouth. Their feet were bare, as is the eastern custom. They might have just come from bathing, but on the way their feet, not clothed with shoes and socks, but only with sandals, would become soiled. It was customary for the host to provide a place for the sandals to be removed upon entering the house, and water for washing the feet from the defilement of the street. Sometimes a servant was provided to wash the guest's feet and care for his sandals until his departure; and sometimes, when the guest desired to pay especial honor to his guest, he' washed the guest's feet himself.

But in the case before us there was no host to make these arrangements, and so these men reclined at the table with unwashed feet, and of course these soiled feet would be the most prominent things in the room.

No one had volunteered to wash anybody's feet, not even the feet of the Lord himself. It may be they felt it "beneath their dignity" to wash feet. But the only person present with any dignity worth speaking of, took upon himself to perform this service for them.

There was real purpose in it all. The Lord Jesus had arranged everything in the picture, in order to teach the men there present, and us who have followed them, a most "Wonderful and vital lesson. Let us tread softly as we contemplate the scene.

**1.** "And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him" (2). All this was known by him who knows all things and looks upon the heart.

**2.** "Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God" (3). Talk about dignity! Which of those other men had any such dignity as that?

**3.** "He raised from supper, and laid aside his garments and took a towel, and girded himself" (4). A symbolical action, surely, typifying the self-imposed humiliation of the Lord of glory, equal with God, laying aside his glory and taking upon himself the form of a slave (**Phil. 2:5-8**). And why did he do this? We shall see directly it was in order that we might be "clean ever whit."

**4.** After that he pours water into a basin, and began to wash the discip1es feet and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded" (5). The water is a type of the Word of God, and the basin a type of the Book containing it. The towel, too, had a significance, as we shall presently see.

**5.** "Then comes he to Simon Peter" (6). Something now is bound to happen. The others might maintain silence in their embarrassment and confusion, but not so with Peter:

Peter might always be depended upon to speak out. And it is well that he did: for in his conversation with the Lord we have the key to the whole picture.

**6.** "Lord, do **thou** wash **my** feet?" (7). You must emphasize the question thus if *you* would get the full force of it. "THOU! Do THOU wash MY feet?"

**7.** "What I do thou know not now" (7). Well, there were surely some things that he knew right then and there. HI!: knew that he was thoroughly humbled, and so ashamed of himself, that he had not offered to do this job of foot-washing, rather than leave it to his Lord; He knew that; but there was something, and something of much deeper significance, that he did not know.

**8.** "Thou shall never wash my feet" (8). Dear man! He intended to stop all this, for he felt he could no longer endure the shame of it.

**9.** "If I wash thee not, thou have no part with me" (8). Get that word, "part." It suggests "partnership," "fellowship, communion; and that is the exact point of the lesson. Let us go on.

**10.** "Lord not my feet only, but also my hands and my head" (9). If it were to be a matter of partnership or fellowship with the Lord, Peter was willing and eager, not only to have his feet washed, but to be washed all over.

**11.** "He that is washed (that is, bathed) needs not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit" (lO), The teaching is now clear enough. The bath spoken of is the "washing of regeneration" of **Titus 3:5-7**. These men had been born again, and were therefore clean-"clean every whit." They had been washed from their sins in the blood of the Lamb, even the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, which cleanses from all sin (**l John 1:7**). How wonderful, to know that we who have come to God by him are "clean every whit!"

**12.** "And ye are clean, but not all. For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean" (l0,11). Judas had never had the bath of regeneration; he had never been born again; and washing his feet would never make him "clean every whit." No matter how much *you* may cleanse the unbeliever's walk; no matter how much *you* may improve his behavior and make him "do better;"--all that will never save him; all that will never make him in God's sight "clean every whit."

In the verses following, our Lord again took his garments and sat down, and began to teach them. It was after he had made us clean every whit by his precious blood, that he sat down in the heavenlies, and began, by means of his Word, to sanctify and cleanse his church, in order that finally he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish (**Eph. 5:25-27**).

For there are two cleansings for the believer. There is, first, the cleansing by the blood, from the guilt of sin; and this cleansing makes the believer, once for all, in God's sight, "clean every whit." This is the believers' standing in Christ, and it never varies. But there is another cleansing, which is not once for all, but rather it should be going on continuously; and this is the cleansing by the Word, from the defilement of sin. Unless we are continually cleansed "with the washing of water by the Word" (**Eph. 5:25-27**), our fellowship is interrupted, and for the time being we have "no part" with him. The need is not that we should have the bath of regeneration repeated-for that is "once for all; and "he that is bathed needs not save to wash his feet." When the Christian sins, it is for him to confess his sins, and God is "faithful and just to forgive" (**1 John 1:9**). If he fails or refuses to confess his sins and judge himself, then God must in faithfulness chasten him, that he be not condemned with the world (**1 Cor. 11:31-32**).

Now, returning to our chapter, listen to our Lord, beginning with verse 12:

"Know ye what I have done to you? 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 I ye should do as I have done to you. VERILY, VERILY, I SAY UNTO YOU, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

Again he is careful to exclude Judas from his exhortation, for Judas had neither part nor lot in this matter. He said:

"I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the Scripture might be fulfilled (**Psalm 41:9**), He that eats bread with me has lifted up his heel against me." Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he. VERILY, VERILY, I SAY UNTO YOU, He that receives whomsoever I send receives me; and he that receives me receives him that sent me."

There are certain groups in the church of God who practice foot-washing as a church ordinance, while other groups do not so regard it. "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind" as to that. But there can be no doubt that there is a spiritual foot-washing appointed to all of us. And Our instructions for this work are clearly set forth in the Word of God. In **Gal. 6:1-2**, it is written: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."

To preserve fellowship with one another in the church of God, it is needful that fellowship be preserved between God himself and the individual members of the body. Church discipline is almost a lost art in our day, and that is a great pity. Let us Christians be more careful to attend to this ministry appointed to us, in the case of brethren who fall into sin. "Ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness."

And when you set yourself to this task of cleansing a brother's walk, don't forget the towel. After you have thoroughly cleansed his feet, wipe them. Make him comfortable and happy in his restored fellowship.

As for the unsaved friends who may be listening today, let me invite you into the family of God. The way in is to be born again; and this way is open to you all. Only come by the Door, even by him who said, "I am the door. By me if any man enter in, he shall go in and out and find pasture."

Here for you is salvation: "he shall be **saved."**

Here for you is freedom: he shall **"go in and out."**

And here is satisfaction: he "shall find **pasture."**

**THE BETRAYAL AND DENIAL OF THE SON OF GOD**

In our study for this morning we have the twentieth and twenty-first of the double verilies of the Gospel of John, and we are still in the thirteenth chapter. The two double verilies are in verses 21 and 38. In the first of them we have the betrayal of the Son of God, and in the other a denial of the Son of God. The betrayal was by an enemy, hut the denial was by a friend. Judas Iscariot was the enemy who betrayed him, and Simon Peter was the friend who denied him.

In these two parts of our study there is a complete illustration of the two kinds of cleansing of which we were studying in the earlier part of the chapter yesterday morning. Judas, having never: really believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, and haying never experienced the "washing of regeneration" which makes "clean every whit," was never restored after his sin in betraying the Son of God; but, on the other hand, Simon Peter, being a regenerate man, "clean every whit," washed from his sins in the blood of Christ, was restored from his fall into sin, "with the washing of water by the Word" (**Eph. 5:25-27**). Having been thus made "clean every whit" in "the washing of regeneration," he needed not "save to wash his feet." The illustration is complete, and it is beautiful.

1. **The Betrayal (verses 21-35).**

**1.** "When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, VERILY, VERILY, I SAY UNTO YOU, that one of you shall betray me . . . He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon ... He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night" (21-30). Thus was the stage set for the greatest event of human history. There is much mystery about it, and some have believed that no blame should be attached to Judas, since he was doing what was predetermined from the beginning. But there can be no doubt about Judas' blameworthiness. While it is true that the Son of God was "delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge ofGod," it is also true that his betrayer and murderers took him, and "by wicked hands" crucified and slew him (**Acts 2:23**). According to our Lord's own testimony, Judas from the beginning was "a devil" and when he died by his own hand he descended "into his own place" (**John 6:70**; **Acts 1:25**).

**2.** "Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him" (31,32). Here we have the same note of triumph as in **John 12:24**, **31**, **32**. He saw the victory just ahead, when he, having been delivered up for our offenses, should be raised again for our justification (**Rom. 4:25**). This was "the joy that was set before him," making him willing to endure the cross and despise the shame (**Heb. 12:1-2**).

**3.** "Little children" (33). Here is a touching thing. Never before had he called them by this tender term, "little children." It is from the Greek word **teknia,** and it never occurs elsewhere in the four Gospels. Literally, it is "little born ones," or as a Scotch mother would say, "bairnies." Paul uses it once, when in **Gal. 4:19**, he compares himself with a mother in labor pains, saying, My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you."And the word is often used in the First Epistle of John where we who are saved are looked upon as the "bairnies" of God.

**4.** "Love one another" (33-35). This is his "new commandment," and it is still his commandment (**1 John 3:23-24**).

**II. The Denial (36-39).**

**1.** "Simon Peter said unto him, ... I will lay down my life for thy sake" (36,37). How greatly this self-confidence was misplaced, we shall see later.

**2.** "VERILY, VERILY, I SAY UNTO THEE, The cock shall not crow, till thou have denied me thrice" (38). It was a faithful warning against Peter's confidence in the flesh, but for the moment it was unheeded, much to Peter's distress afterward.

The backsliding of Peter and his restoration by the Lord Jesus should be carefully studied, that we might ourselves be freed from self-confidence and avoid the pitfalls to which it leads.

When I use the term, "backslider," I do not imply that Peter was lost through his backsliding. There is a distinct difference between apostasy and backsliding. Judas was an apostate, whose profession all the time was false; Judas never lost his salvation, for he never had any salvation to lose. But Peter was a saved man, and therefore he could not apostatize; but he could, and he did backslide, losing not his salvation, for salvation cannot be lost, but losing his joy, and his fellowship with God, and losing his testimony. This may happen to any Christian, though it need not happen to any of us.

The failure of Peter and his recovery we shall now trace. Each had seven steps, for both of them, the failure and the recovery, were complete.

**THE DOWNFALL**

**1.** Boastfulness. In **Mt. 26:33**, Simon Peter said: "Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended." What did this mean, unless it meant that he loved the Lord more than anyone else loved him? It is a dangerous place to be in, when one boasts of how much he loves the Lord. And how much, how very much, of this is done in the singing of subjective hymns and songs! Let us take heed how we boast, even in song, of our love for him, which at the best is a weak thing, compared with his love for us. Why not sing of that?

**2.** **Unwatchfulness,** and

**3.** **Prayerlessness**, Peter, James and John were the inner circle among the apostles, and they went with the Lord further than the others into Gethsemane; but finally even they were not permitted to go on with him into the thick darkness, for he said unto them, "Tarry ye here, and watch with me." You will find the record in **Mt. 26:36-46**. When he returned he found all three of them asleep, but he reproved Peter only, for it was Peter who had led in the boasting, "What," he exclaimed, "could ye not watch with me one hour?" And then he said, "Watch and pray ... the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." This should have aroused them, wouldn't you think? but when he again returned the second time from his agony, and yet again the third time, he always found them asleep. The lesson for us here is that **boastfulness** is apt to lead to **unwatchfulness** and to **prayerlessness.**

**4.** **Fleshly activity.** Peter was mighty unhappy by this time, as every backslider is, for no child of God can be happy out of fellowship with his Lord; And Peter made the mistake so often made by backsliders. He felt he "must **do** something for the Lord." Thus would he show that he did love the Lord, despite all appearances. And so, instead of going to the Lord and confessing his failure and his sin he cut off a man's ear in the garden when the soldiers came to arrest the Lord. Of course, this did no one any good. The Lord rebuked Peter, and healed the injured man. The Gospel writers all tell of the incident, but only John tells who did the sword wielding (**Mt. 26:47-54**; **Mk. 14:47**; **Lk. 22:50-51**; **John 18:10-11**). Too often the backslider by mere fleshly activity, in religious zeal, goes about cutting off people's ears, and hindering them from hearing and believing. "Faith comes by hearing," and how can folks hear without ears?

**5.** **Following afar off.** This we read twice, in **Mt. 26:58** and **Mk. 14:54**. This is the usual way for the child of God who is out of fellowship. He follows "afar off."

**6.** **Seeking comfort among the Lord's enemies.** Evidently, John went with the Lord Jesus, and he even went outside to bring Peter in, but Peter did not go all the way in; he remained in the outer court where the servants and officers had made a fire to warm themselves. Read the account in **John 18:12-18**. Here "they warmed themselves: and Peter stood with them, and warmed himself." Poor Peter He at least tried to warm himself, but he could get no real comfort. His heart was heavy, and his joy was gone. The backslidden child of God is likely to try this way, but it must ever fail. Like the "prodigal son," he somehow cannot satisfy his hunger with the husks that the swine do eat.

**7.** Three threefold open denial (**Mt. 26:69-75**; **Mk. 14:66-72**; **Lk. 22:56-62**; **John 18:15-18**, **25-27**). And so it came to pass even as the Lord had predicted. The downfall was complete; and now we shall see how complete was also the recovery.

**THE RESTORATION**

**1.** The prayer of Jesus (**Lk. 22:31-32**): "I have prayed for thee." His intercession began before the sin was committed which led te the backsliding (compare **Heb. 7:25**).

**2.** **The warning of Jesus** (**John 13:38**). "Thou shall deny me."

**3.** **The look of Jesus** (**Lk. 22:61**): "and he ... wept bitterly."

1. **The message from Jesus** (**Mk, 16:7**): "and Peter."

**5.** **The interview with Jesus** (**Lk. 24:34**): "The Lord has appeared unto Simon."

**6.** **The threefold open confession** (**John 21:15-17**). It is lovely to notice here that the Lord had a fire, and food too, to comfort and satisfy his dear ones, teaching us that we 1 need not go for comfort to the fire kindled by his enemies.

**7.** **Restored to his work** (**John 21:15-17**): "Feed my lambs, "feed my sheep, feed my sheep."

And that is the kind of Savior we have. "O, he is the Savior for me." Let him also be the Savior for you.

**GREATER WORKS THAN THESE**

And now comes the twenty-second of our double verilies.

It is in the 14th chapter of John. Our Lord is speaking, and we read, beginning with the 12th verse:

**12.** VERILY, VERILY, I SAY UNTO YOU, He that believes on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

**13**. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

**14.** If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.

Here is a most wonderful statement; or rather, several statements; and a most wonderful series of promises.

And all these promises are conditioned upon one premise: they are for the man who believes: "He that believes on me;" to him all these wonderful promises are made.

Just what does it mean to believe on him? We must know this, if we are to understand and profit by these promises.

In the first chapter of John, at verses 11 to 13, there is a Biblical definition of saving faith. Let me read it to you:

**11.** He came to his own (that is, to the people of his own nation, Israel), and his own received him not.

**12.** But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.

**13.** Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, no of the will of man, but of God.

Let us study these verses. Our Lord's own people, the Jews, for the most part, rejected him. But there were some, as there still are some, among the people of Israel, who did not reject him, but received him; and these are described as "them that believe on his name."

So that is what it means to believe on his name; it is the equivalent of receiving him. That is to say, those who received him did so because they believed on him, and no one who has not received him has really believed on him unto salvation. It is not enough to say, I believe; nor is it enough to believe something about him: there must be a definite personal reception of the personal Savior and Lord.

According to the 13th verse, these receivers, these believers on his name, are "born," that is, born again. And this new birth is "not of bloods." For the word is plural: it

"Trust and obey.

For there is no other way

To be happy in Jesus.

But to trust and obey."

In tomorrow's lesson we shall have more about the secret of power in prayer; but this morning I want to close by showing what our Lord meant by the words relating to the Comforter, that is, the Holy Spirit, when he said; "He abides **with** you, and shall be in you." Then, too, there is that other word in **Luke 24:49**, from the lips of the risen Christ:

And. behold, I send the promise of my Father **upon** you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye he endued with power from on high."

He was already with them, he should later be in them, and also **upon** them. All this was fulfilled. In **John 21:22** the risen Christ breathed on them saying, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost;" and then in **Acts 2:1-4**, he came upon them and they were baptized in the Holy Ghost and filled with him. He was now **with** them, and in them, and **upon** them. That great event of Pentecost ushered in a new dispensation, or order of things; and now in this present time these five things have been true of every child of God:

**1.** He is **born** of the Spirit, through believing the Word of God (**John 3:1-8**; Ja**s. 1:18**; **1 Pet. 1:22**·**25**).

**2.** He is **baptized in** the Spirit and **into** the body of Christ. This takes place at the moment of the new birth, for it is the common lot of "all" believers (**1 Cor. 12:12-13**, RV; **Rom. 6:3**; **Gal. 3:27**; **Eph. 4:4·6**).

**3.** He has received the Spirit as the **Anointing** from above, and as such the Spirit in his **infallible teacher,** ever guarding him against apostasy (**1 John 2:18**,·**27**).

**4.** He is **sealed** by the Spirit. who is the **earnest of his Inheritance** until the day of redemption (**2 Cor. 1:21-22**; **Eph. 1:13-14**).

**5.** He is indwelt by the Spirit (**1 Cor. 6:19-20**, RV; **Rom. 8:6**,·**11**).

All these five things are true of every believer; and in addition is every believer's duty and privilege to be filled with the Spirit and controlled by him; as set forth in **Eph. 5:18·21**:

"And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves (that is, to one another) in Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

**THE NEW ORDER OF PRAYER**

The 23d and 24th double verilies of the Gospel of John come before us this morning. They are in the 20th and 23rd verses of the 16th chapter. They are in separate paragraphs, dealing with different subjects, and yet they may very well be considered in the same lesson.

**I.** The Lord Jesus tells of His Coming Death and Resurrection and of His Present Heavenly Ministry (16-22).

**1.** "A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father" (16). This was mysterious language, and the disciples could not comprehend its meaning.

**2.** "What is this that he says unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, A little while, and ye shall see me: and, Because I go to the Father? What is thisthat he says, A little while? we cannot tell what he says" (17,18). We have the advantage over these perplexed people, since we have seen how the Lord's words were followed by the fulfilment of his predictions. For "a little while," following his death and burial, they did not see him. Then he rose from the dead, that he might go to the Father, and during forty days he showed himself to them, and thus for another "little while," they saw him.

**3.** "VERILY, VERILY, I SAY UNTO YOU, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy ... And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man takes from you" (20-22). So it is today, is it not? He has become our joy. Though we have not seen him, we love him; and in him, though now we see him not, yet believing, we rejoice, with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (**1 Pet. 1:8**).

**II.** The Lord Jesus Introduces a New Order of Prayer (23-27).

**1.** "And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. VERILY, VERILY, I SAY UNTO YOU, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father IN MY NAME, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing IN MY NAME: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full" (23,24). This is entirely new teaching on the subject of prayer. He had briefly mentioned it in verse 13 of chapter 14, but here he goes into the matter thoroughly, emphasizing the new condition of prayer: it must be in his name. The so-called Lord's Prayer, given to his Jewish disciples at the opening of his ministry, had no mention of any name but the Father's; but now he insists that there must be a new method of prayer: prayer, he teaches here, should be addressed, not to the Son-on that day ye shall ask me nothing" (verse 23), but to the Father, and in the name of the son-"Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father IN MY NAME, he will give it you."

**2.** "At that day ye shall ask IN MY NAME: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you: for the Father himself loves you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God" (25-27). Thus we are encouraged and emboldened to approach the Father with confidence. "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (**Heb. 4:16**).

Let us consider a little further the condition of successful prayer as set forth here. It says-and the words are from the lips of our Lord himself who cannot lie--that whatsoever we ask in his name will be given us. Whatsoever I Not "something just as good." "WHATSOEVER ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give IT you."That is definite, and it is plain. There is no misunderstanding of it; and it is either true or false. To think of anything false coming from him who is the True and Faithful Witness is quite impossible.

Well then, have you ever asked the Father anything in the name of the Lord Jesus which he did not give you?Maybe you think so, but it is not so.

For what does it mean to pray IN HIS NAME? Is it just to say the words at the end of a prayer, "This I ask in Jesus' name?" Would that necessarily be praying in his name? Suppose you were praying for something he disapproved; something to which he would not sign his own name; would it then be praying in his name? No, it would not.

In **John 15:7**, our Lord Jesus said this: "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done to you." That is not a new and added condition of success in praying it is only saying in the words the same thing he said in our lesson, for today. If we abide in him, and have his words abiding in us, any prayer we might offer would 'be a prayer in his name, whether we mentioned his name or not; for it would be a prayer that he would approve, a prayer to which he would sign his name; and it would bring a definite answer.

Again, in **Eph. 6:18** we read that all our praying and supplication should be "in the Spirit," that is, in the energy of the Holy Spirit. And again that is not another, and added condition of successful prayer: it is only the same thing said, in other words. Whenever we pray in the Spirit, we are abiding in Christ and his Word is abiding in us; for if it was otherwise we could not pray in the Spirit at all; and again, whenever we pray in the Spirit, we are praying while abiding in Christ and his Word is abiding in God, and we are praying in Jesus' name.

Then there is the word of **1 John 5:14-15**: "And this is 'the confidence that We have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he hears us: and if we know "that he hear us, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him." And here again, this is not another and additional condition of successful prayer: it is only the same condition as before, though stated differently. For, don't you see that no one could truly pray against God's will while praying in the Holy Spirit, nor while abiding in Christ and with his Word abiding in him, nor while truly praying in the name of the Lord Jesus?

And let no one make you believe that praying in his name can ever be denied. How could it be denied since it would be "in the Spirit" and "according to his will?" Such prayers can have but one result: they must be answered, and they must be granted.

Then Paul learned that in praying for the removal of his infirmity, of the flesh was praying contrary to God's will, he stopped praying, and began straightway to rejoice in the will of God (**2 Cor. 12:7-10**). He had not been praying "in the Spirit," nor according to God's will, nor in the name of the Lord Jesus.

In **I Peter 3:1-7** there is an exhortation touching the home life as related to the prayer life. Let Christian husbands and wives, take careful heed to the words found there, "at your prayers be not hindered." I read:

Likewise, ye wives, be in be in subjection to your own husbands: that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation (conduct, behavior, manner of life) of the wives; while they behold your chaste conversation (conduct) coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair and of the wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.

"Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel. and as being heirs together of the grace of life, THAT YOUR PRAYERS BE NOT HINDERED."

How good it would be if everywhere Christian husbands and wives, Christian fathers and mothers, and Christian sons and daughters as well, should key their lives in the home according to such a standard!

Finally, let it be said that prayer is the exclusive prerogative of the Christian. No one else has any right to pray. "When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts?" In order to pray, one must come into God's presence; and there is no way into his presence but by the blood of Christ. Come thus, and you may come, and welcome.

**FOLLOW THOU ME**

We have now come to the 25th and last of the double verilies of John. It is in the last chapter of the book, at verse 18, which reads as follows:

"VERILY, VERILY, I SAY UNTO THEE, When thou was young, thou gird thyself, and walk whither thou would: but when thou shall be old, thou shall stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou would not."

In the verse that follows (**John 21:19**) it is explained that "this spoke he, signifying by what death he should glorify God." This means that he was informing Peter beforehand that he must die by crucifixion. Tradition, probably reliable, tells us that Peter died by crucifixion, and that by his own request he was crucified with his head downward and his feet upward, because he felt too unworthy to die precisely as his Lord had died.

You will remember that in our study of Peter's downfall and restoration, both the downfall and the restoration were complete. He went down all the way, even to the threefold open denial, and then he was so completely restored that, after a threefold open confession, he had his work again committed into his hand, the Chief Shepherd saying, "Feed my lambs, feed my sheep, feed my sheep," and followed that with the word, "Follow me." That is the way the Lord Jesus restores his people from their wanderings and backslidings, when they can be brought to self-judgment and confession. When it is otherwise, he faithfully deals with them in discipline.

"Follow me," but whether? What does it mean to follow him? There is at least a partial answer to that, in his words dedicating himself, as the "corn of wheat," to die rather than live. He said: "He that s his life shall lose it; and he that hates his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me,him will my Father honor" (**John 2:24-26**).

To follow him, then, means to tread in his footsteps. Those footsteps led to Calvary, where, denying himself, he laid down his life for us. "Hereby know we love, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (**1 John 3:16** RV). "For the love of Christ constrains us; because we thus judge, that one died for all, therefore all died; and he died for all, that they that live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto him who for their sakes died and rose again" (**2 Cor. 5:14-15** RV).

Peter lived for something like forty years after he heard the Lord's word telling him of his awful death at the end of the road; and so during all those years he knew he must die one day. How different it is with us: for we know that "we shall not all sleep" (**1 Cor. 15:51**).

The apostle John was present when Peter heard the prediction concerning his own death. "Then Peter, turning about, sees the disciples whom Jesus loved following; ... Peter seeing him says to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do?" (vs. 20,21). Peter wanted to know how John was to die.

"Jesus says unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me."

This gave rise to a saying among the disciples that John would never die at all, but should live on here until the Lord's return. "Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die."

But John, who himself is the writer here, corrects that saying. He writes: "Yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?"

And so, while Peter knew for many years that he must die, John lived during all those years not knowing that he should ever die at all. As a matter of historic tradition, again apparently reliable, John was the only one of the twelve apostles who did not die a violent death; he is supposed to have died in peace in his old age at Ephesus, after caring for Mary, the mother of Jesus until she died.

But now, why did Peter need to die, and by the death of the cross? John died quietly in bed, while Peter endured the agonies of crucifixion. Why does God deal so differently with different people? Why do the Godly suffer? Why does not God keep them from all suffering? Is it because he cannot? Is he unable to preserve his people always in health and strength and free from all suffering?

Of course, we do not believe that he is unable to keep us from suffering, for we believe him to be omnipotent, all powerful.

What then? If he could thus keep his people from suffering and does not do so, is it because he does not love them? Of course, we do not believe that, for God loves even his enemies: he so loved the world that he gave his Son to die for it; and how much more does he love his own.

Far from delivering his people from trial, he actually appoints them to it. "In the world ye shall have tribulation." "Through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom." "I will show him how great things he must suffer for my sake."

True, he gives us grace to bear the trial, but why the trial? Why has he allowed his precious people to, be broken on the rack, starved to death, drowned in the sea, thrown to the lions, burned at the stake, and so on?

Of course, much of God's children's suffering is for their own chastening; and this we can understand. We can comprehend why a faithful Father must chasten his dear ones, in order that they might be trained in the right way. We can appreciate that we ought not to despise the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when we are rebuked of him: "for whom the Lord loves he chastens" and so let us be "exercised thereby," that we may derive the greatest possible profit (**Heb. 12:4-1l**).

I say, we are able to understand the object of that suffering which is for the purpose of chastening or child-training; but our problem relates to the other kind of suffering. Why did Paul suffer as he did? Why was John Huss burned 'at the stake? and William Tyndale? Why were Cranmer, and Ridley and Latimer put to death?

In my own circle of friends, I have known many who for many years suffered beyond measure, and they have been among the most godly people I have ever known? What about the sufferings of Frances Ridley Havergale, Fanny Crosby, Annie Johnson Flint, James H. McConkey, Harry Miller of Vermillion, Ohio; Mrs. Alexander of Jacksonville, Fla.; Mrs. Dunn of Erie, Pa.; Mrs. Nicholson of Wilmington, California and the numberless others who have borne' in. describable suffernigs, for no apparent reason?

Ah, but there is a reason, whether it be apparent or not.

Have you ever noticed that little phrase occurring twice in **Heb. 11:35-36** and others?" Look at it. Most of the chapter tells us of the thrilling triumphs and spectacular victories of faith; of the mighty ones of old "who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, the escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to fight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again.

Now, watch it:

**-and others** were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a be better resurrection:-

Watch it again:

**-and others had** trial of cruel rnockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment; they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goat-skins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth."

Now, what shall we say of these "others?" Had they lost their faith? Nay; for the next verse says that "these ALL" obtained the same "good report through faith;" that is, they ALL had the testimony from God that they pleased him (**Heb. 11:2**, **5-6**).

But what then was the reason for all their suffering, when so many of God's children seem to have so little of it?

The answer to all these questions, I am convinced, is found in **Col. 1:24**, where Paul rejoices, as he says, "in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind in the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church."

The church which is his body (**Eph. 1:22-23**) is being built up through the process of birth. Member by member, each of them born again, are added to the church, and this must go on till the "body is completed.

In the natural world, birth is always accompanied by suffering. The mother suffers, at the risk of her life, and often by its sacrifice, in order that her child may be born. And so it is in the spiritual realm: the birth process by which the church is built up, and by which it must be completed, must be accompanied by much suffering. And God has appointed certain of his people to the ministry of suffering, to fill up that which is behind in the afflictions of Christ for his body's sake, which is the church."

May God give us grace, that we may be willingly and glad to suffer for his sake, that his body may be edified, and finally glorified.