

What's in a Name? No. 2

**THE TWELVE -
THE LORD'S MEN**

**by
ARTHUR HALL**

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THE LORD'S MEN

"And he chose twelve"

Preface

The inner circle of Christ's associates has always been a ready source of spiritual material down the ages of time. One has already been interested in, why and how? Christ chose the twelve. We would like to add a little more to the voluminous data already available, most in hortatory or devotional sense. (A) What can we learn from their names? (B) Have their names any lesson for us? (C) Their own peculiar characteristics. (D) Their part in the scheme of Divine Revelation. (E) Were they men like us? (F) Were they men of like passions as ourselves?

Perhaps these points may become clearer as we study each of the twelve. First of all, may we set them out in brief detail alphabetically.

- (1) Andrew, brother of Simon. A disciple of John the Baptist. Was directed by John himself to Jesus, and Andrew introduced Simon Peter to Jesus. He was a fisherman and lived at Bethsaida (Matt.10.2, Mark 1.16/18, 13.3, John 1.35/42).
- (2) Bartholomew. It is generally recognised to be the surname of Nathanael, who was brought to Christ by his friend Philip. (Matt.10.3, John 1.35/42).
- (3) James, brother of John, son of Zebedee and Salome, cousin of Jesus (John 19.25, Matt.27.56). Partner with his brother, with Peter and Andrew in the fishing business. One of the first four disciples. James holds the particular distinction of being the first disciple to suffer martyrdom. (Matt.4.21, Mark 1.19, Luke 5.10, Acts 12.2).
- (4) James, son of Alphæus and Mary (Alphæus is also called Cleophas - John 19.25). Distinguished as James the less. On account of his stature, or because he was younger than the other James, above? (Mark 3.18, 16.1, 15.40. Luke 24.10). Greek word for 'less' is 'Mikros' and most probably refers to his having been little of stature.
- (5) John, the younger brother of James, son of Zebedee and cousin of Jesus. A fisherman, one of the 'three' favoured apostles, 'the disciple whom Jesus loved'. Prominent in the early church, laboured in Ephesus, banished to Patmos by Domitian, wrote a Gospel, three Epistles and the Revelation, died in the reign of Trajan (?). (Matt.17.1, Mark 1.19/20, Luke 5.10, John 1.35/40, 13.23, Acts 3.1, Rev. 1.4/9).
- (6) Judas, called Thaddæus and Lebbæus (Matt.10.3, Mark 3.18, John 14.22).
- (7) Judas, son of Simon Iscariot, if his surname was Iscariot. Treasurer to the apostles, sold Jesus for about £5. The traitor, confessed his guilt and hanged himself. (Matt.26.14/16, 47/30, 27.3/5, Luke 6.16, John 12.6, Acts 1.18).
- (8) Matthew, also called Levi. A tax gatherer, writer of the Gospel which bears his name (Mark 2.14/17, Luke 5.27/32).
- (9) Peter, formerly called Simon. Son of Jonas, native of Bethsaida, a fisherman. Always the first in the Apostolic lists. Made the great confession, denied his Lord, leader in the early church, wrote two Epistles and was the source of Mark's Gospel. Tradition claims that he was crucified upside down (Luke 4.38, 5.3/10, 6.13/14, 8.51, John 1.42/44, 21.15, Acts 1.12 etc.)
- (10) Philip. Lived in Bethsaida. Brought Nathanael to Jesus. (Matt.10.3, John 1.43/48, 12.20/22, 14.8/12, Acts 1.3).
- (11) Simon the Zealot, called **Simon** the Canaanite (Matt.10.4), Canaanite (RV Luke 6.15).

(12) Thomas called Didymus, both names meaning "a twin" (Matt.10.3, John 11.16, 14.1/6, 20.24/25, 26/29).

It will have been noticed that the data is relatively scarce, seeing that they were in the most privileged society, Christ's men. But of course, the burden of the Gospels is to portray Christ and not the Twelve in particular. However this may be, we may look with careful eyes into their relationship with the Christ of God, and try to fellowship with sympathetic eye, their hopes and fears and squabbles as they followed Him in His temptations (Luke 22.28).

CHAPTER 1

And He chose twelve

Why did Jesus choose 12 disciples or apostles? Could it not have been 10 or 11 or even 13? We find that this number 12 is in keeping with Bible numerology. Twelve is a perfect number, concerning the perfection of Government, or Governmental perfection, and is found as a multiple in all that has to do with rule. The sun rules the day, the moon and stars govern the night and do so by their passage through the Twelve Signs of the Zodiac, which completes the great circle of the heavens, 12 x 30 degrees or divisions, and thus govern the year (Bullinger). He also points out that we have 12 patriarchs from Seth to Noah, 12 tribes of Israel - the sons of Jacob (13 in reality, but only 12 ever mentioned in the lists: 12 judges appointed by God, 1 by usurpation (13 in reality): 12 apostles chosen by Jesus, 13 in reality, since there was a replacement through the treachery of Judas.

So we have a similar development in tribes, judges and apostles. Rather fascinating, we think.

12 is the number of New Jerusalem	Revelation 21.10/21 etc.
12 foundations	
12 gates	
12 pearls	
12 angels	
12 tribes	
12 names of the apostles etc.	

12 persons are specifically named as being anointed for governmental work of different kinds in scripture, actually 5 priests and 7 kings, in particular.

(A) All these factors are considered together in the light of Jesus "choosing the twelve" and aptly stated in the significant words of Jesus Himself in the statement "Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt.19.27/28).

(B) Here we have outlined from a highly spiritual angle, their future governmental work in the Kingdom of God. What then is the promise held out to all disciples from that day forward? "And he that overcometh and keepeth my words unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron" (Rev.2.25/27).

(C) "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in His Throne" (Rev.3.21).

(D) It will have been noticed that the future governmental project is based upon the nearer and personal angle and present-day aspect - "he that overcometh" emphasising the Biblical principle as in the Master Himself: the cross before the crown, and that overcoming in the immediate future is the first objective. Paul aptly says "Heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together" (Rev.8.17).

(E) Thus briefly outlined we may plainly discern "the end of the Lord" concerning the Twelve, and with the additional data from Jesus and Paul, the elements of our personal salvation.

(F) Should we be found "faithful unto death". This viewpoint is further seen in the composite picture of the number 12 we found presented in Rev.21.10/14. We had (you may remember) 12 gates with 12 names of the twelve tribes of Israel, through which all who would be redeemed must pass, 12 foundations of the Apostles we are to consider: 12 pearls, one to each gate. Outside this New Jerusalem are "the fearful, the unbelieving, the abominable" (Rev.21.8), "and there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie, but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life", (Rev.21.27). It would be self-evident from this teaching that the redeemed must pass into the symbolic heavenly or New Jerusalem through one of the gates bearing the tribal name or character of one of the children of Israel.

(G) Each one must stand or be based upon the foundation of the Apostles, or with at the least one dominating characteristic which links both - that is the Gate of Pearl. The way to perfection is that of living sacrifice, suffering and sharing the afflictions of Jesus (Romans 12.1/2, Heb.10.19/24 etc) (Luke 22.28, Col.1.24, Phil.1.20/26, 3.8/21).

(H) Shall we then study the training of the Twelve within the basis of this framework of Divine Testimony? Numbers 1.5/15 provides a very interesting note at the outset. In this scripture we have outlined a tabulation of the heads of the 12 tribes of Israel in their wilderness journey. A comparison of this list with those of the 12 apostles found in the gospels reveals at least two rather astounding features - set out briefly for your consideration.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>(1) Numbers 1.5/15
Heads of Israel
<u>First - of Reuben</u>
Elizur, son of Shedeur
meaning <u>God is a Rock</u></p> | <p>Matthew 10.2/4, Mark 3.16/19,
Luke 6.14/16 - Lists of 12 apostles
<u>First always</u>
Peter - a stone or Rock man because of
Simon (or Simeon) <u>Hearing</u>
Because Simon heard the Son (Luke 9.35)
he was made the Rock man by Jesus
(John 1.40/42).</p> |
| <p>(2) The last in heads of tribes
Ahira son of Enan
<u>A brother of evil</u></p> | <p>Is it not significant that Judas, the
praise of Yah, <u>always concludes the</u>
<u>list of the Twelve.</u></p> |

Jesus said, "and one of you shall betray me". Surely this correspondence is not just coincidence, but rather designed display, for our consideration. Or, putting it the other way, truly wonderful undesigned coincidence. Is it possible that the other names have a link? One further question remains before we pass on with our consideration of the individual apostles. Only eleven proved faithful out of the original twelve, so far as Scripture reveals.

Judas not only betrayed Christ, but also committed suicide and was effectively erased from being an apostle (Acts 1.6/8, Psalm 109.8). In view of this undeniable fact, who takes the twelfth place in the New Jerusalem foundation?

CHAPTER 2Matthias or Paul?

There are two applicants.

One was Matthias, Acts 1.19. He was chosen by lot to fill up the apostolic band to the original number 12.

- (A) Was the placing given to him?
- (B) Was the will of God revealed at this time in the choice of Matthias, of whom, let it be said, apart from this mention we know precisely nothing?
- (C) However, this name of Matthias is in keeping with the programme. Matthias means 'the gift of God', and also included within the derivation we have 'given wholly unto Yahweh'.
- (D) From this viewpoint a good case could be built up for Matthias, one who was God's gift to them, at this time (or, could we say, was Christ's gift to the apostolic band?)
- (E) Matthias, it would appear, was a character of tried value, one who would prove of sterling worth in the time of transition from the Law to Christ.
- (F) His own desire would fire his efforts. He would be wholly given to the Lord, no doubt a first century Caleb (Numbers 14).
- (G) But is this so? Acts 1.3/4 we are informed that Jesus being assembled with the eleven "commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father (i.e. the Holy Spirit) which, saith Jesus, ye have heard of me". It was during this period of waiting that Peter became greatly concerned over the omission of the bishoprick vacated summarily by Judas (Acts 1.15/26) and suggested that one of the men who had companied with them all the time they were with Jesus should be selected, quoting Psalm 109.8 in this direction.
- (H) Two brethren were decided upon by the apostles as likely candidates for the office of Judas, Acts 1.23: "And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias". Then they prayed in this fashion, Acts 1.24 etc: "Thou Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, show whether of these two thou hast chosen" etc.
- (I) The proceeding would appear to be most irregular on this occasion. In all the other occasions when men were called to apostleship the call came from Jesus himself.
- (J) Here, possibly, we may see the impatience of Peter once again manifesting itself. The apostles themselves chose two brethren, when as yet the Holy Spirit had not yet fallen upon them and said
- (K) in principle, "Lord, these are the two best men for the office: we are not quite sure as to which will prove the best. Will you please make your choice".
- (L) In all fairness, the relationship between the eleven had been far from perfect during their walking with Jesus, as we shall see a little further on. Now they are quite sure, even before the Spirit's guidance, that they have the best two for the position, on the short list, so to speak. Then they proceed to cast lots and Matthias made this belated entry into their company. Highly irregular, as we have suggested, at the least. Could we say that this pattern of action was adopted because they did not have the Holy Spirit? And they could not wait until that promise was given to them some 10 days hence? Be this as it may, we ask your meditations on this point.

There is, however, another strong contestant for this signal honour. One who called himself 'the least of all the apostles', he was, he said, 'born out of due time'. Our own Apostle Paul, of course, who really (one would imagine) fulfilled the true office of an apostle.

- (1) Matthias was declared by lot to be the successor of Judas.
- (2) Paul was "chosen by Jesus" as were the original twelve, and

- (3) sent forth personally by Jesus, as were the twelve.
- (4) It would appear that Old Testament usage pervades Paul's claim.
- (5) He was born out of due time, as was Benjamin, from whose tribe he sprang.
- (6) Rachel called her last born son Benoni, son of my sorrow, because his birth brought on her own death. Genesis 35.16/18.
- (7) Just so Paul, after making up, possibly we suggest, the twelve, shadowed forth the death of Jerusalem and the Law. "Far hence to the Gentiles" from now on (Acts 9.15 etc.)
- (8) After his conversion Paul became one of the greatest of the apostles of Jesus.
- (9) Before Paul's conversion by Jesus, he truly was a son of sorrow, not only to Jesus, but also to the ecclesias (Acts 9.13/14).
- (10) But afterwards a 'son of the right hand' in truth, as Jacob named Paul's ancestor Benjamin.
- (11) 'The least', in Hebrew thought, means not in stature, but the youngest.
- (12) Again it would appear to indicate Paul. Another possibility occurred to me, when cogitating over the matter. (A) Paul (it would appear), as the Gentile representative in the apostolic band, would be the Gentile foundation in the New Jerusalem, as (B) Ephraim and Manasseh represented Gentile interest in the twelve tribes. The Gentile element in both would be consistent because it was Paul through Christ who made this possible, "Be ye followers of me, as I am of Christ" (1 Thess.1.6, 1 Cor.11.1).
- (13) Paul, as did his ancestor (tribe), belonged to Jerusalem along with Judah (the city was found in both sectors).
- (14) Once again 13 tribes and 13 apostles. Only 12 are named. Who will finally get the place, do we think? We ought not to be dogmatic, except tentatively of course. These are suggested thoughts which flooded our mind as we considered the possibility and probability of both claims.
- (15) Finally, contrast under this section -
- | | | |
|-----------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| (A) Saul the King of Israel | } | Both are from Benjamin. Their name |
| (B) Saul the Apostle | | |
- means 'wished for - asked for'.
- (A) Saul the King was demanded of the people (1 Sam.8.5/7) and was finally taken away in God's wrath (Hosea 13.11).
- (B) Saul the Apostle had another name, which was Paul. Paul means little, reduced, made small etc. All these characteristics find their place within the Pauline personality. Though, potentially, the foremost Pharisee of his day, at the hand of Jesus his future Lord whom he persecuted (Acts 9.1/7) Saul was reduced dramatically. He was made little as he himself admitted. The least or last of the apostles was as 'one born out of due time'. Not only was Saul reduced in status by the Lord to commence his great apostleship, he accepted the chastening in heart, which is the great thing. That calling did all these things to Paul when Jesus, however, determined to send him 'far hence' unto the Gentiles. A merciful wish was answered by the Master, fulfilling the Sauline portion of his name. Paul was 'asked for', 'wished for' indeed of the Gentiles. "Come over into Macedonia and help us". This was the call of Luke (Acts 16.9/10) to Paul in Troas. Paul came over into Europe, so that we Gentiles might be bound up with him as founder members of the New Jerusalem.

We wonder, did Paul make up 'the twelve', or Matthias? Before long we shall not see darkly as through a glass, but in the mercy of the Father "behold them face to face". In that day - who?

Family connections in the Twelve

- It would appear that family connections had a large place in the twelve.
- (A) Simon Peter and Andrew were brothers (John 1).
- (B) Matthew and James, sons of Alphaeus, could have been brothers. It would appear so, without being too dogmatic.
- (C) It has been suggested that Philip and Bartholomew were also brothers. Attempts have been made - rather outlandish we thought - to make Judas Iscariot the son of Simon Peter, and so on. However, we hope to look briefly into the various claims as we proceed.

The meanings of the names of the Twelve

We are personally a firm believer in this teaching, as the heading concerning the series implies - "What's in a Name?"

- (1) Simon or Simeon (Heb.), afterwards known as Peter. His prophetic name was given to him to mark the progress of the scheme of redemption (John 1.42, Matt. 16.13/18).

Simon or Simeon

"Hearing" the Son, Luke 9.35

Peter

"A Stone" or "A rock man"

- (2) Andrew

Strong and manly.

- (3) James, or (Heb.) Jacob

From Heb. "Supplanter", to catch by the heel.

- (4) John

(A) Yahweh bestows mercifully

(B) Yahweh is gracious

(C) Dovelike

- (5) Philip

Lover of horses

- (6) Bartholomew

(A) Son of Talmi

(B) Son of the plowed furrow

(C) Prepared for seed

or Nathanael

(A) Given of God

(B) Instructed of God

(C) Requited of God

(D) Rewarded of God

- (7) Thomas

Joined - Doubled, twin

- (8) Matthew

as Matthias - Gift of God

Wholly given to Yah

or Levi

} Joined or joining

- (9) James (the less)

Jacob Supplanter

- (10) Lebbæus

Confessing, praising

or Thaddeus

Large hearted or warm hearted

- (11) Simon - the Canaanite, or Zelotes

Hearing the Son

- (12) Judas

Praising Yah

Iscariot

Man of hostile countenance

Man of convenience

The meaning of names of relatives and tribes will follow in due course wherever possible.

The inner circle of the disciples

Peter, James and John Zebedee.

Perhaps it would be profitable to take the three closest disciples to Jesus in a group as our first study, using the Divine protocol of adjustment as developed within the Tabernacle, where we have outlined first of all, the furniture of the Most Holy place, the things most important to the Father, then the other details following later. See "Blue in Scripture" under 'Tabernacle' (Hall). It will have been these holy things in Ex.25 as specified in Numbers 3.31, 4.15 etc , as having to be borne on the shoulders of the Kohathites during the wilderness trek, becoming their own personal testimony for God, in bearing the holy things. Simon the Cyrenian later bore the cross of Christ. We are to take up the cross and follow Jesus without the camp (Heb. 13.12/13). Divine protocol all the way. The way of the living sacrifice for us to copy and to walk in His steps (1 Peter 2.21/25).

CHAPTER 3

A threefold cord is not easily broken

Peter, James and John were the closest among the twelve to Jesus, and possibly a contrast of their personalities will highlight their particular characteristics for our purpose. Possibly one or two statements by Jesus which we have taken to be general, will take on sharper focus and a more constructive force.

- (A) Together, then, we have this information. Peter, the "rock man", preferably "A Stone", previously Simeon, "Hearing the Son", a man of Zebulun "wished for habitation". He was a partner with the sons of Zebedee in a fishing business.
- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| (1) James or Jacob <u>the Supplanter</u> | } Zebedee meaning |
| (2) John, Gift or Favour of God | |
- of Zebulun, "wished for habitation".

What a wonderful picture opens up to our eyes in this combination of a threefold cord not easily broken.

- (B) All three were men of Zebulun - no doubt comfortably off in their fishing business, with connections in the City, John apparently being the city representative and well known to the High Priest's servants (John 18.15). As such they were, in a natural sense, "dwellers in the wishful habitation". Their lives had "fallen unto them in pleasant places".
- (C) Spiritually Jesus chose them to be the future dwellers with Him in the coming 'wishful habitation', the Kingdom of God. All three were partners in the fishing business of Zebedee. All three were called to be fishers of men. The abundant fruitfulness of their efforts (about to be revealed in due time) may be demonstrated in John 21, Ezekiel, Song of Solomon) (see "Song of Solomon" by Debir Press, and "Blue in Scripture"). Simon or Simeon ("hearing the Son", combining together in Luke 9.35) who was the son of Jonas (the dove), as Jesus prophesied in John 1.42, should become Cephas, which is by interpretation "A stone". This prophecy in its primary application came true in Matthew 16.16 etc., when again Jesus said to Peter after his inspired confession that Jesus was the Son of God, "Thou art Peter" etc. The ultimate fulfilment resolved itself in the fact that because God was a "living God", then he, Peter, should eventually become or "dwell" (Zebulun) in the living temple and that Peter would himself become as Rev.21 revealed, a foundation stone along with the other eleven apostles in the New Jerusalem wherein the Father would "dwell" eternally. This prophecy became emblazoned upon his memory and he recorded it for all time in 1 Peter 2.3/5, with its inevitable consequences "to whom coming as unto a Living Stone" (1 Peter 2.7 etc) "disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious. Ye also as living stones are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifice to God by Jesus Christ". Not only so, but we are heartened in the fact that to Peter were given the keys whereby we as Gentiles might partake in this truly 'wishful habitation of Deity' (John 4.23/24, Ephesians 2.19/22). Is it not rather fitting that Peter a man of Zebulun should have this signal honour?

John Zebedee also of Zebulun was another man true to his name and tribal distinction.

At all times he earnestly sought an 'abundant portion' (Zebedee) in the 'wishful habitation,' Zebulun, of the spirit so recorded in John 4.23/24, where we read that the Father Himself also sought a 'wishful habitation' in those who would 'worship Him in spirit and truth'.

How wonderful it is and strikingly significant that the sons of Zebulun should be used by the Spirit to record all this, that the Eternal dwelling of the Holy One should be found in us and with us through the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is thought that Peter, 'a stone' of that future glory, was given the leadership by Jesus in those early days (or so it would appear), not only of the twelve in general, but also of the three in particular. Peter heard the voice of God from heaven saying in Matthew 17.6 during the transfiguration scene, "This is My Beloved Son, hear ye Him", as we have already recalled, and remembering what Jesus had said to him earlier on that Mount. "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven". Acting truly according to Simeon his former name, Peter 'heard the Son' and followed finally unto death. It was A.T. Robertson who said concerning Peter, "Peter is a man very dear to ourselves". The sheer humanness of this man makes him one of the most likeable and comprehended of Christ's first followers. His winsome personality, his impulsiveness, his eagerness, the limitations and weaknesses of his nature, and his enormous possibilities for good, appeal to every reader of the Gospels. His whole life in service to Christ with all its shadows and highlights, proves that Peter was a man worth making, and that Jesus knew it to be so is seen in that Jesus loved Peter to the end. Peter came to justify Christ's love and patience with him. When we consider Peter we are apt to find comfort (rightly or wrongly) in him, because we seem to detect some of our many failings. He had a way of speaking up on the spur of the moment (which is natural in most of us). Once, Luke 9 said, "Not knowing what he said". How often have we done this to our humiliation? Peter's natural ebullition of spirit illustrates his interest and eagerness. Sometimes it led Peter too far, as when he actually dared to rebuke Jesus, when he heard Jesus talking about His approaching death at Jerusalem (Luke 9.33), and received the sharp retort of being a 'satan', in his ignorance, by his Master. Deep sympathy for Peter's denial of his Lord at the temple has been aroused in every heart which has suffered chastening through impetuous speech and action, particularly when we have been caught up in the toils between love and fear, as Peter was at this time, and of course, every heart has been lifted up with Peter's when the Master remembered him after the resurrection - "Go and tell Peter".

We are gratified to feel then, that to a very limited extent, we can find our place and standing in Peter. But we can never attain to his stature in Christ in this life. May we strive to follow Peter closely, even though he followed afar off.

"Rock man" was a good description of his faith in general, even though Paul had to rebuke Peter later for inconsistency (Galatians 2.11/13). But who can be perfect in this life? Abraham the 'father of the faithful' was found to be inconsistent at times. It is our human heritage. Peter's fellow apostles gladly acknowledged him by this name given to him by his Lord. No doubt Peter treasured it very deeply also. Such then was the leader and spokesman general of the twelve.

James and John Zebedee

Greatly loved by their Lord, along with Peter we have James the 'supplanter' and John the 'gift and favoured of God'. We have seen that derivation of both their father's and their tribal name rightly outlined their desires and characteristics. They desired 'the abundant portion' in the 'wished for habitation' of the Kingdom.

Was it not characteristic of John's first recorded question to Jesus (John 1.35/39), "Master, where dwellest Thou?", and equally so of our Lord, whose reply was "Come and see". What John saw of that 'wishful habitation' that surrounded the Son, created within him an overwhelming desire for an 'abundant portion' of the same. For did not the son of Zebedee desire the goodly portion in the Kingdom itself? - the right hand and the left for themselves in the coming glory. Salome their mother sought the same for them - a condition not uncommon in the Truth today, known as 'Nepotism', we believe, 'family first' is the motto. "Remember, Jesus, my sons are your cousins!" would be a fair paraphrase, it would seem. (Matt.20.20/24). The meaning of Salome is, of

course, 'peace'. But the mother of James and John soon found out that her action was not akin to her name, for her impetuous request soon touched off trouble for the little band, and sparked off a rising flame of self-seeking among the disciples, which fanned into flame at the supreme crisis in the life of their Lord - who should be "the greatest in the Kingdom". And with Jesus about to face His supreme ordeal! Matt.20.17/18.

It is Mark who informs us (3/17) that Jesus had a special nickname for James and John - Boanerges, meaning 'Sons of Thunder'. This item of information is of particular interest coming from Mark's Gospel, actually thought to have been from Peter himself, and administered by rote to the believers by Mark, thus assuming his name during the process. Peter did have personal evidence of this 'hot' element within the characters of Zebedee's sons during their united following in the days of the temptation of Jesus.

James and John were passionate and vehement in their loyalty to their Master. Luke 9.53/55 recalls when the Samaritans would not receive Jesus, James and John urged in their indignation to call down fire from heaven, as Elijah did, centuries before their time. "Ye know not what spirit ye are of", came the reply from Jesus. Luke 9.49 records that they would not suffer an unauthorised person to use their master's name. When we realise the content of this sequence of Scripture we are brought to a very interesting point in that 'Boanerges' - 'Sons of Thunder' - seems to have been as good a description as Peter - 'the stone' - was of Simon. Yet this name did not come into general view. In the New Testament lists of the twelve there is no mention of it, apart from Mark 3.16/18, and elsewhere in the New Testament there is no reference to it, making the point that it could hardly have been used as Simon's new name was, indicative of the progress of the scheme of redemption, as we have already observed. Could the disuse of Boanerges be accounted for partly from a modification of the characteristics that led to its bestowal?

We wonder, thinking of the early martyrdom of James. Was his ultimate death brought on because his 'personal thunder' brought on Herod's spite? Had the passionate loyalty of James to Jesus and the Way, led him in a similar fashion to invite the personal hatred of Herod, as John the Baptist did before him? One thing, however, is certain; we gather from this information that James was a foremost member of the Truth in Jerusalem. Kings very rarely single out 'small fry' for their attention - always 'top men' are selected.

The thought comes to us. Had the query of Jesus, "Can you be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" taken root in the mind of James? The baptism which Jesus referred to led to His own early death on the cross. Had James proved his word in his early death? Did his "Yea, Lord" lead to this in Luke 9. Could we follow the example of James, do you think? In this life we never know. Tomorrow could possibly search us out. In the first century this kind of testing was commonplace for the Truth, when to assert that one was 'Christ's man' or a Christian, literally courted death every day. If such a test was to fall upon the brotherhood today it would certainly purge out the half-hearted from amongst us, and close our ranks, so to speak, and it would quickly be revealed to us as a body whether or not our loyalty to the cause was as sincere as that of James, and our love for Christ as strong.

What of John Boanerges - 'the beloved disciple'? Had he learned greater restraint in the expression of his demands which a similar loyalty urged him to make upon other people? Did 'Boanerges' come to signify to him that this vehemence when controlled and consecrated was to be of particular value in His service, and that once they had begun to learn the need of that control and consecration, that nickname would be likely to remind them of certain incidents which they would rather have forgotten? That possibly this came to be realised by their friends, and so their nickname passed away out of use? We wonder. However, in the Revelation given by Jesus to John, what do we find? - Lightning, thunder, earthquakes, fire. All are found in this Book. Did Boanerges signify that through John this final word would be given? Again, we wonder. But one thing is certain, as Stalker puts it in his book "The two Johns", we have in the Revelation the Lamb, as the central figure in His glory, and a veteran apostle, once 'Boanerges', long since softened and mellowed by His grace. It is rather interesting to note that Jesus saw fit to commit His mother into the safe keeping of this earnest while fiery character, in the hour of His agony. As usual Jesus, with the eyes of His glory, read aright that the controlled fire of John's love for his Lord, would adequately

supply the needs of Mary at that time of supreme trial for her, and no doubt, if necessary, for the rest of Mary's lifetime.

Such is a very brief sketch of "the three" who companied closest with Jesus in his temptations, the three whom Jesus always chose to be with him, to witness the most intimate revelation from the Father - raising Jairus' daughter, the transfiguration, Gethsemane, etc. They appear to be united in their friendship and in the devotion of love and service to their Master, cemented by a special intimacy with Himself and granted to them alone. Peter appears to be the undisputed leader. Perhaps if we look a little closer at the 'set up', we may well find other factors at work, which a cursory reading might well miss.

- (A) Evidence has shown the sons of Zebedee to be very ambitious, and a closer scrutiny discloses the fact that John, the younger son, was more ambitious than his elder brother.
 - (B) Acts 12.2. Here we find the phrase 'James the brother of John'. From the analysis of the references from the beginning of their ministry with Jesus, we would certainly have expected to read in this place 'James the son of Zebedee'.
 - (C) No longer is James notified as the son of Zebedee.
 - (D) Do we not find that the identity of John is made clear by mentioning his relationship to James?
 - (E) In fact the opposite is used - the identity of James is made clear by mentioning his relationship to John.
 - (F) James is nowhere mentioned by himself except in Acts 12. 2, which we have just mentioned.
 - (G) There is no record of any action apart from John, or any utterance for which James alone was responsible. Matt.20.20, Mark 10.35, Mark 13.3, speak for themselves.
 - (H) Originally, as elder brother, James was more prominent than John: now, as John was the surviving member, then the identity is made sure by quoting James, as the brother of John, by Luke in his treatise.
- (1) John we find is very different, he did act and speak apart from James. Mark 9.38, Luke 9.49 - in these sequences John assumes the role of spokesman for a portion, if not the rest of the twelve.
 - (2) Coming to the Acts of the Apostles, we find John quite definitely assigned as the companion of Peter, and after him, one of the most outstanding of the twelve.
 - (3) Acts 3.1 - 4.22 quite clearly outline this important fact. According to our record this incident was quite a symposium of first mentions. Here we find Peter and John associated with -
 - (A) The first miracle performed by the apostles (3.1/11)
 - (B) The first testimony before the rulers (4.1/7 etc)
 - (C) The first imprisonment (4.1/3)
 - (D) The first organisation of the first local Ecclesia outside Judea
 - (E) The first laying on of hands (Acts 8.14/25).

This study of Peter and John, however, is a little premature, revealing the end of the Lord, in their friendship. Tied together in fellowship and service they seem to fit wonderfully together. But was it always like this? Tracing back through the gospels it does not appear to have worked within the confines of the twelve. Peter is acknowledged to be the leader of the twelve, and together with James and John, made up the three most important of the inner circle of the twelve. We have seen that they were originally partners in the fishing business with Zebedee himself, close friends until, it appears, their unity became shattered by a bitter quarrel between themselves. Apparently James and John were not satisfied with their position among the three most prominent disciples. As we have seen, they wished and openly asked Jesus to make them the 'first two', being aided and abetted by Salome their mother, the aunt of Jesus, Mark 10, Matt.20.20/23. Had Jesus accepted their plea, then the most prominent places in the Kingdom would be theirs. Therefore, as far as Peter was concerned, it was nothing less than a very serious attempt to supersede him. John in particular refused to accept the ascendancy of Peter on a previous occasion. In Mark 9.32/37 we have Jesus confronting the twelve with a dispute that supposedly had taken place out of His earshot - "What was it that ye disputed among yourselves, by the way?" They had disputed who should be the greatest.

Jesus immediately took them to task with the example of a little child, saying, "If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all and servant of all". The leader acknowledged by the majority was, of course, Peter, and it would appear that 9.38/39 reveals the other contestant - John, we believe. Apparently the conflict arose between the party led by John who forbade this man. Peter, the leader of the opposition, tried to exercise authority over John, and John resisted it. From this action would arise the argument as to which was the greatest, and when Jesus rebuked them with His lesson of humility, John tried to justify himself by referring to the origin of the dispute. John was clearly one of the disputants; the other could only have been Peter, because Peter beyond doubt was the most likely person to attempt authority over John. If this is so, then John was definitely in rebellion against Peter's ascendancy.

Mark 10.35/44 follows, showing that the dispute was still going on, as we have previously noticed. We see the words "when the ten heard" including Peter; the division is clear. Strikingly similar, we find, to the split among the tribes of Israel, ten against two. Have we any further significance here, we wonder? Jesus sharply intervenes, saying that He himself was a bond slave and came (45) "not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give His life as a ransom for many". It would appear that the original friendship between the three seems to be broken and the dispute carries on right until the last supper (Luke 22.24/30). Again we find the emphasis by Jesus is is found in serving (27) - "I am among you as he that serveth", and that each of the twelve would be duly honoured in having their personal thrones from which they should judge the 12 tribes of Israel in the coming Kingdom (30). Then follows the solemn warning to Peter. But why should there have been this warning, just at this point? Was it because in the controversy with John, Peter had been giving way to feelings of bitterness against him, and had momentarily weakened his reliance upon Jesus? We note Peter's question in Matt. 18.21/22, "Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?" - particularly in the light of Matt. 18.1/2. "Who is greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?" The question is preceded by, "At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus saying ..." All this data is pertinent to the persistent struggle for leadership among the twelve. Well may Peter have found it hard to forgive John! "Master, how oft shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him?" That the warning by Jesus to Peter had reference to this unrelenting dispute, is perhaps borne out by Peter's reply in Luke 22.33. "Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both to prison and to death". We wonder, had Peter recalled that former occasion when James and John readily affirmed that they were prepared "to drink of that cup", and "to be baptised with the baptism" of their Master, and so did not want to be outdone by the sons of Zebedee. Even after the resurrection we still find the occasional reference to this turbulent discipleship between Peter and John (John 21.20/22). The answer of Jesus this time truly sufficeth, "What is that to thee? Follow thou me", in answer to Peter's query regarding John, "Lord, and what shall this man do?". Whether a reconciliation was made between Peter and James before the untimely death of the son of Zebedee, the future can alone determine. That a friendship between Peter and John was resumed and a reconciliation made, we have already seen in our earlier studies in the Acts. Not only was Peter's leadership acknowledged and the old friendship renewed, they act together with perfect unanimity and John later in his gospel, we find, is very kind to Peter's weakness, and in the Acts we have a repeated insistence on the unity of all the disciples - Acts 1.14, 2.42/46, 4.32 etc. The Spirit of the Lord had unified the twelve. The desire of John to be first had sprung from his devotion to his Master. He wanted to be nearest to Him and first among those who served Him. This fervour and loyalty which led to rivalry with Peter, and the Master's death, must have well nigh broken John's heart. It would appear that the warnings and teaching from Jesus about humility had not impressed John very much because of his self seeking. But now the shock of the Master's death had brought him to his senses. He would vividly remember and never forget. When Jesus depended upon him for comfort and love in His approaching agony, he, John, had been arguing about his own precedence and prestige. John would now realise how much the unity of the twelve meant to Jesus, and that in his own pride he had failed to respond to the call of Jesus to restore harmony among them. John would repent most readily. Peter had also failed his Master. He had fully intended to follow Christ closely even unto death, and yet sadly we observe he had been afraid to admit that he even knew Jesus, when the heat was on.

So we conclude that their mutual sorrow and self-condemnation would draw both together. They were (as we have seen) unified in faith, love, work and fellowship. Ever after this their efforts were directed to 'shepherding the flock'. Probably Peter's words in 1 Peter 5.1/6 may well be a suitable epitaph for both. 'They fed the flock of God, the oversight now taken over willingly and of a ready mind. No longer did they aspire to be lords over God's heritage, rather being ensamples to the flock. The younger (John) had now submitted to the elder (Peter). Both had humbled themselves under the mighty hand of God, that they may be exalted in due time'(paraphrase).

It is remarkable to discover that Jesus never actually intervened in this dispute, showing only a perfect example of the opposite course of life - the Godly self control of humility, service and obedience. Human nature we find could not agree even in the presence of Jesus. What can we expect today in ecclesial life? Probably we could close these remarks on the 'three' in the words of Peter himself - 1 Peter 5.10 - "But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that we have suffered a while, make us perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle us." For an extension of these ideas see "Blue in Scripture" (A.Hall).

Apostolic Symbols

- (1) Peter. According to tradition Peter was martyred on the cross. He requested that he might be crucified downward, for he was not worthy to die as his Lord had died. His apostolic symbol is a cross upside down with crossed keys. The keys represent Peter as the holder of the keys of the Kingdom.
- (2) James. His symbol is three shells, the sign of his pilgrimage by the sea.
- (3) John. It is said that an attempt was made on his life by giving him a chalice of poison from which God spared him. He died of natural causes. A chalice with a snake in it is his apostolic symbol.

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CHAPTER 4

"But he attained not unto the first three"

Andrew, the brother of Peter, comes next in order in the lists of the apostles and is introduced to us in John 1.35/40;"one of the two that heard John (the Baptist) speak and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother". Andrew is always mentioned in the top group of the twelve, but never makes the first three. We have, we think, an Old Testament counterpart to Andrew, namely Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man of Kabzeel. Both 2 Samuel 23.20/25 and 1 Chronicles 11.22/25 give a few brief verses to the exploits of this great mighty of David's, notably these two exploits: that Benaiah went down and slew a lion in a pit on a snowy day, and that he slew an Egyptian giant, a man of five cubits in height (7 ft 6 ins or so), though he himself carried only a staff, while the Egyptian had a spear like unto a weaver's beam.

These were undoubtedly great exploits, but after having carefully considered what the scriptures say about Benaiah, whose name means -

Benaiah	son of Jehoiada	of Kabzeel
(1) Whom Yah hath built up	(1) Whom Yah knows	Grasped by God
(2) Produced of Yah	(2) Who knows Yah	Gathered by God
(3) Prospered by Yah	(3) Who lays hold of Yah	
(4) Restored by Yah	(4) Understanding of Yah	

we have come to the conclusion that the historian omits his greatest efforts sustained for many years. In our way of thinking Benaiah's chief exploit was that in a place calculated to foster envy and jealousy, he preserved an even temper and good heart. That in a trying and even exasperating position he never allowed himself to become sullen or bitter, according, at least, to the scriptures we read. "Behold he was more honourable than the thirty, but he attained not unto the first three." (2 Samuel 23.23). David appreciated him and "set him over his guard". Benaiah's achievements lifted

him up quite clearly above the second rank, and yet for some unknown reason, he was not admitted into the first three. If our experience of human nature is true, never did a man occupy a harder position than Benaiah. So near and yet so far, no doubt those unattainable three would have plagued the very life out of us! Had Joab the son of Zeruiah been in a similar place, the life of the first three wouldn't have been worth a fig. But Benaiah accepted the position with understanding and a rare fortitude. "Better is he that ruleth his own spirit, than he that taketh a strong city" said the wise man. These characteristics of Benaiah and their application to his position among the mighties of David, to the writer's mind, undoubtedly represented Benaiah's greatest exploits. Why do we arrive at this position apart from the scriptures already consulted? The names associated with him will help us.

- (1) He was the son of Jehoiada - who was "known of Yah",
- (2) "who had understanding of Yah" - consequently he
- (3) "laid hold of Yah". This is through Jehoiada his father.

According to the meaning of his own name Benaiah, he had a "good understanding and high degree of intelligence" in the things of God, and knowing that it was from the Lord,

- (1) He was built up by Yah,
- (2) He had been "produced by Yah" and because of faithful service to David during the afflictions or temptations that befell the king under Saul and the Absalom rebellion, 2 Samuel 20.23, was
- (3) "Restored by Yah" when Solomon came to power, 1 Kings 2.28/35.

So then Andrew his New Testament counterpart was on this score 'greater than the eight' but not of the three, and assumed precisely the same position among the twelve as Benaiah did among the mighties.

- (A) Andrew apparently was not admitted into the inner circle and the three were.
- (B) He was not made a witness of the great experiences of Christ, as were they.
- (C) He was left behind outside Jairus's house.
- (D) He did not behold the transfiguration glory on the Holy Mount.
- (E) Andrew was left behind when Jesus took Peter, James and John to share His sorrow in the Garden of Gethsemane.
- (F) Andrew was 'betwixt and between'. The position would have no doubt been intolerable for James and John - and for us?
- (G) Yet, we find no trace of jealousy detectable in this man, no mope or murmur when his brother Peter, and James and John are taken, and he himself left behind.
- (H) Andrew was content to be passed over, content to fill a subordinate place - no doubt to assume the lowest place, should Jesus think fit.

This we believe was Andrew's crowning glory, a lesson of the highest and most striking value for us. How many living today could hold down this unenviable position? The top always in sight but never attainable. Like Benaiah, Andrew was content to take a lower seat, and he would confidently wait, until the Lord should restore him as Benaiah was restored, but in the greater than Solomon's kingdom, for which we all wait in expectancy. "Friend come up higher" will be the cry, "even to my throne", and who could wish more?

How appropriate, then, are these two worthies from the Old and New Testaments. We have studied the name links surrounding Benaiah, Jehoiada and Kabzeel. How about Andrew? Now his father was Jonas. Therefore we find -

Andrew = Strong and manly Jonas = the dove and how fitting it now appears. Peter's brother, though denied by nature Peter's brilliant leadership, had his compensation, for his father's name was 'the dove'. Therefore, the indication was, that Andrew possessed strong, manly, spiritual strength, and along with Benaiah had the distinction of being predestined as a son of God. It may be that the self-effacing Andrew will yet be found alongside Benaiah the self-forgetful in the kingdom, and although neither attained to the first three in this life, will most surely be found amongst the chiefest in the Kingdom of God. Do we have this foundation of the New Jerusalem in our character? Paul names it well for us in 1 Corinthians 13 - "the love that envieth not".

Andrew would have been out of date today, would he not? - because he was a man who thought more of service than of reputation, in fact more of the work to be done than of the place given to the worker. He would most certainly have been very unpopular with the unions, they would be up in arms against him, and very soon he would be sent permanently to Coventry! All his work would be blacked. One thing, however, is certain. Andrew along with John were the first two disciples of Jesus, Andrew believed before Peter. We wonder, could this fact have been in John's mind concerning the leadership of the twelve? Was not he (John), along with Andrew, the first to follow Christ? Peter followed on later, and Peter had been accepted as leader. Yet this question never appeared to worry Andrew: he was glad to be a disciple and follow his Master.

There are three notable things which Andrew did.

(1) Andrew was a firm believer that 'charity begins at home', particularly whenever a good thing "appeared in the offing". Any good news must be first told at home. So we read in John 1.40/41, "One of the two which heard John speak and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first findeth his own brother Simon and saith unto him, "We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ". In going to his own home and to his brother, Andrew perhaps did the most difficult thing to do in these circumstances. The household that has in its entirety received the Truth without experiencing hatred, scorn, mockery, and sometimes affliction, is a very happy one, and can hardly appreciate the situation otherwise, where the dread spectre of divided homes casts its baneful effects over the unity of the home. Yet it is at home that Jesus would have us work for Him first of all. "Go home", said Jesus on another occasion, "Go home to thy friends and tell them what great things the Lord hath done for thee". Jesus had remembered, and sanctified with His approval Andrew's reaction after their first meeting. "Charity must begin at home" and, in keeping, home must be "where love that envieth not" can be found.

(2) The second notable thing that Andrew did -

- (A) He discovered the hidden resources of a boy (John 6.1/14). Came the day when a great multitude that heard Jesus were famished. Jesus asked, "Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?"
- (B) Two hundred pennyworth a tremendous amount. Andrew the explorer, the man of decision, comes to the front, even outdoing Peter on this occasion.
- (C) John 6.8/9 - "Lord, there is a boy with five barley loaves and two small fishes, but what are they among so many?" Five tiny barley rolls and two sardines?
- (D) It was a mother's foresight that made this miracle possible, and the faith of Andrew in Jesus, along with the keen observance that accompanied it.
- (E) "Mother", the boy had said early that same morning. "I have heard that Jesus the great prophet is preaching today; could I go and hear him?" "Yes you may", came the reply, "but what about your lunch? You had better take these so that you will not go hungry."
- (F) The boy (nameless to us) did, and consequently 5,000 men, numberless women and children, were fed, and 12 baskets remained of the fragments over and above.
- (G) Not only so, a great truth was born out of that motherly care for her son: "This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world."

So was born 'the miracle of a boy's lunch', the numerology itself indicative of the fact that Christ represented the bread of God, as the chapter goes on to say. Not only for Israel (12), but for the whole world (5,000), and that of the grace of God (see "Significance of Blue, Numerology", Hall). The miracle of a boy's lunch; again the divine way is seen by using a very common thing for such a wonderful miracle. We wonder what happened to the boy after this moving incident? Imagine the amazement of his mother when no doubt he hastened home to tell her of that miracle performed out of his lunch. We have to wait for the future to satisfy our curiosity. May we be there to see. Going back to Andrew, had he remembered the wine and the miracle at Cana of Galilee? "There is a lad here", said Andrew, and when we think of the articles which can be found within a boy's pocket, surely we have the basis of many miracles, could we but have brought that boy we know to our Master. Yes! There is a lad here!

(3) The third notable thing that Andrew did

Andrew actually anticipated Peter's mission of the key of the Kingdom being offered to the Gentiles (Acts 10), because Andrew introduced a group of strangers to Christ. The strangers had heard of this man of Galilee and they wanted to meet him.

Coming to Philip on what they considered to be common ground, because the name Philip was Greek, they said unto him "Sir, we would see Jesus", and Philip, it would appear, not too sure perhaps about the Gentile aspect at this juncture, came and found Andrew and said to him, "We have some strangers outside, what shall we do?" (John 12. 20/22. Andrew was a man of decision if nothing else, and he wanted immediate action. "Let us tell the Lord". Again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus. He knew that God is no respecter of persons, he had helped Jesus to provide the bread of this life for his own countrymen. If any man (howbeit a Greek) should so hunger after righteousness, then he, Andrew, would lead them to the Lord, as he had taken 'the lad with the loaves and fishes'. He never doubted the ability of his Lord to supply their need also. It is obvious that these Greeks were either Proselytes or Devouts at this time (John 12.20 proves this point). They had come to worship at the feast of Passover (John 12.1). Jesus gave willing and joyous acclamation as we determine from John 12.23/24, 27/28, 32. Trace out at your leisure. What a wonderful person Andrew was.

- (A) He was the first of the twelve on this occasion to anticipate Gentile entry into the church.
- (B) How he brought people to Jesus.
 (1) His brother (2) The lad (3) A group of Greeks.
- (C) What a versatile brother he was -
As preacher (apostle or one sent) to Peter and his household (John 1.41)
As server to the multitude, 5,000 folk (John 6)
As usher to the Greeks, the doorkeeper of the ecclesia today (John 12.22).
- (D) Our doorkeepers today should be worthy of all honour, as Andrew was. They are with us to welcome the stranger, brethren and sisters and friends to the services, and if strangers, then to introduce them to the service. If that service is carried out in the spirit of Christ, then in this sense, as Andrew did, we introduce them to the Lord. Our doorkeepers are here to see that our friends are greeted and seated in a position to enjoy the meetings, etc. Asaph of old realised, Psalm 84.10, "It is a high office to be a doorkeeper in the house of the Lord", beyond privilege, so to speak, if we, as Andrew did, are able to pass on to them the precious Gospel of the Kingdom, especially of Christ himself.
- (E) If we can create the atmosphere of quiet thoughtfulness and friendliness in our usher duties, it becomes a large part of the welcome which should be extended to all who come. So we could go on, but Andrew must rest in peace and his influence remain with us until we may be brought by him to our Master in glory ! Let this thought remain with us.
- (1) Andrew did not complain when Peter passed him and he was left behind (not attaining to the first three). He did not say, "John can go with James, why not I with Peter?"
- (2) He asked no such favour. He did not overreach himself, but made full use of what was given to him.
- (3) He made the most of what he was in Christ's service, in fact Andrew was "Christ's man" in all things. The Lord does not ask anything more of us, only that we, as Andrew was, should be found blameless at his coming (1 Thess.3.13).
- (4) It is said that at his death Andrew, feeling unworthy to be crucified on the same shaped cross as his Master, begged that his be different. So he was crucified on an X shaped cross, which is still called Andrew's cross, and which is one of his apostolic symbols. A symbol of two crossed fish has also been applied to Andrew, because he was formerly a fisherman.

CHAPTER 5

Philip - The Lord's Everyman

Philip comes next in order in the lists of the apostles: Matthew 10.3, Mark 3.16/19, Luke 6.13/16, are alike in this fact. The name Philip has a very curious meaning, namely "a lover of horses", perhaps an allusion to the famous Macedonian Cavalry under Philip, brought to its perfection and developed by Alexander the Great as the crack cavalry of his age, with devastating power and speed of attack which led the forces of Macedonia sweepingly victorious throughout the then known habitable, as per Daniel 2 etc. The name Philip, then, would strongly indicate a lover of supreme power of some sort, which could be met in his love for Jesus, "the Son of Power", agreeing with the Hebrew conception of God, Power, Ail, etc. That Philip loved his Lord is beyond doubt, of course, but it goes further when we realise that the early name of Philippi before it was changed to honour Philip of Macedon, was Kreuides which means "fountains of waters", an allusion to the many streams which form tributaries of the Ganges. Spiritually, then, we detect that Philip was a lover of the Word of Life which had overcome him, as the Macedonian legions had swept over the earth, which led him to believe and accept without doubt (though not without query?) that in Jesus was found Messiah himself.

John 1.43 is of special interest to us, and in the matter of the calling of the twelve, very significant we believe. "The day following, Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip and saith unto him 'Follow me'". Philip, we were rather surprised to find, was the first person asked by Jesus to follow Him, or receive the call to discipleship. It would indicate the importance that Jesus attached to 'everyman' if this is true in the case of Philip. The indications are that Philip, along with Nathanael (more later) was a devout man of the Word and he had the unique distinction of being the first of the band from Bethsaida to be called by the Lord. Bethsaida has the meaning 'the house of fishing'; it was also the home of Andrew and Peter (John 1.44). This little band of fishermen waited for the consolation of Israel: little did they know that in future they were to be called to be fishers of men to catch men as indicated by Jesus (Mark 1.16/17) and symbolically portrayed in John 21.5/12: 153 great fish (see Significance of Blue, Numerology, Hall).

All waited for that consolation to come. Whilst they waited, Philip at least had drunk deeply of the living fountain of the Word. Song 4.15 reveals the happy conclusion of all who would follow Philip in this life - "a fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon".

- (1) This is the epitaph of an ordinary chap, not noble nor particularly mighty in worldly things, but absolutely saturated in the Word.
- (2) This is a door we may all enter, the gate of Philip, the gate of 'everyman' into perfection.
- (3) This is a study that gives an ordinary chap like the present writer great heart; it is a goal that is definitely within the grasp of a person who will devote his, or her, whole attention to the Word.
- (4) Shall not we, the 'everyman' in the ecclesia, strive might and main to enter into life through Philip's gate?

The reaction by Philip to the invitation of Christ to "follow him" proves, we believe, our suggestion concerning the Word.

John 1.43/45 - "Philip findeth Nathanael and saith unto him, we have found him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."

Andrew and John first followed Christ on the testimony of John Baptist (John 1.35/37). Philip accepted Jesus, and followed because he found in Jesus the Christ that satisfied the prophecies and descriptions given in the Old Testament. From this investigation we gather that Philip had an enquiring mind, and this same habit of patient and accurate examination and enquiry comes out of the feeding of the 5,000 we have first studied with Andrew. At a certain point in the proceedings Jesus turned to Philip with the question, "Whence are we to buy bread that these may eat?" Jesus was

proving Philip, He knew His disciple, the enquiring mind was 'open to his eyes'. Philip would have been making his computation. "Two hundred pennyworth of bread" came the prompt reply. He had been rapidly assessing the position and was ready with his answer. Was it because of Philip's candid inquiring mind that the Greeks approved him out of all the apostles to make their request to see Jesus? (apart from his Greek name, of course?). Was it kindly attraction that made the Greeks come to him? We have mentioned the fact that they were either devout or proselytes to the Jewish faith. We have Philip's inquiring mind to thank for one of the loveliest and most revealing disclosures by the Lord (John 14.8/10): "Shew us the Father and it sufficeth us", said Philip to Jesus. Jesus answering said, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father, and how sayest thou then, shew us the Father". We have thanked the Father many times for this sequence in the Word, and have come to realise its importance, that the moral likeness of God can be perfectly seen in Jesus our Lord. Our hope is that in the day so near at hand our own likeness may reflect a little of that of Jesus and be perfected by Him in the manner of 1 John 3.2 - "We know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is". We may not ask the question like Philip, but rather find conviction in the unity that shall exist between Christ and ourselves.

From this incident in John 14.8/10 it has been thought that Philip was a man of limited vision and imperfect faith, a good man, but slow to comprehend the spiritual truths he experienced with Jesus. Philip, they like to think, is 'everyman' (hence our chapter heading) amongst the apostles, a very good average brother. This is said by the critics in the light of not comprehending the inclusion of the Gentiles within the Jewish fold, and the lack of comprehension of the Father in Jesus. But who among his critics would have fared better? And who among his critics has been sought out and called personally to follow, by none other than Jesus Himself? So far as lack of comprehension to see the Father in Jesus was concerned, Philip most certainly was not alone among the apostles. We, as the critics, are approaching the problem in the cold light of facts, explained to us by the Acts and the Epistles etc. that have succeeded these events. Had we been with Jesus in those momentous days when they were awaiting the promise of the Comforter to lead them into all Truth (John 14.16/31), would our understanding have been any better?

The position today is still not crystal clear, even 2000 years after, and if the other disciples had recognised the Father fully in Jesus, would they, along with Philip, have fled a few days afterwards? John alone remained at the cross (John 19.26 etc.) The case is hardly likely to have happened.

There does appear something rather splendid, one thinks, in Philip, this kindly enquiring soul. Let us seek to cultivate his outlook, waiting patiently with Bible in hand, and devotion in our attitude towards it; may God grant us that 'love of the horses' or the Power of the Glory in these things, waiting for the coming of the Lord. May the love of the Lord grant us that we may drink deep of that fountain of life, so that in the service of the Master we may be able to help slake the thirst of those that 'follow' with us. Pray God that we belong to the spiritual Bethsaida, and that we may be true sons of the 'house of fishing', fishers of men indeed, and be granted by Jesus a bountiful harvest in the Kingdom of God. John 21.1/11, Ezekiel 47.10 etc. See The Song of Solomon, Hall, under this heading.

Last thought on Philip in our consideration, is of those who think that he represented the rather common herd (as the writer himself). Would they kindly remember Abraham Lincoln, who said to those who sneered at the common man, "God must have liked common folk, because He has made so many". To which we may add, the Lord Jesus must love common folk, because He has called so many to His service. And at least a throne of glory awaits Philip, the champion of the common cause, and that, may we add, is our crowning joy and foundation.

The symbol of Philip is a basket, because of his part in the feeding of the five thousand.

CHAPTER 6

Nathanael Bartholomew, the Sanctified Wrestler

Next in line in the Apostolic lists we find Nathanael or Bartholomew, who was a very lovable and noble character. He was the possessor of two names -

Nathanael	Bartholomew
(1) Given of God	(1) Son of Tolmais
(2) Instructed of God	(2) Son of the ploughed furrow
(3) Requited of God	(3) Prepared for seed
(4) Rewarded of God	

His home town Cana of Galilee?

It was Philip, Nathanael's friend, who first told him of Jesus, as we may see in John 1.45, and Nathanael's start was not too auspicious or even hospitable in tone. John 1.46 - "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Philip gave his characteristic reply, "Come and see", and Nathanael, at least intrigued by his friend's words, went. Only seven verses in John 1 give us our picture of Nathanael and in John 21 he is mentioned along with Peter and his companions who followed the lead of Peter in going 'a fishing' whilst they awaited the manifestation of Jesus to the disciples after the resurrection. Originally of Cana in Galilee, Nathanael presumably was occupied in fishing. Nathanael, a close friend of Philip, is hence known as Bartholomew; actually it would appear to be his surname. Both names are necessary to reveal the character of Nathanael, as we shall see.

John 1 records that the first thing that Philip did after being 'found' himself by Jesus, was to run with the utmost speed to tell Nathanael. Evidently Nathanael was Philip's bosom pal.

It is noticeable from the lists of the twelve in Matthew 10, Mark 3 and Luke 6 that Bartholomew always follows Philip: quite naturally then, we should think Nathanael and Bartholomew to be the same person. What kind of man was Nathanael?

- (A) The information gleaned from John 1 suggests that he was a man given to study, meditation and prayer.
- (B) Presumably it would appear as we have said, that his occupation lay in the fishing business: this is implied when he followed Peter and the rest to go fishing in John 21.1/3.
- (C) Nathanael gives us a striking lesson in spiritual deportment in business life.
- (D) Proficient in business no doubt, but he never allowed himself to be completely absorbed in it.
- (E) In reality his heart was set on 'things above'. Wherever he could, Nathanael would retreat to a certain place for meditation and prayer.
- (F) He also waited for the 'consolation of Israel', and that waiting was expressed in the true way. Meditation and prayer were rightly linked with Bible study. He was absolutely absorbed in Moses and the prophets, indeed, the whole of the Old Testament, searching for the Messiah who should come.
- (G) His friends would be almost certain to find Nathanael 'under the fig tree' studying, praying and meditating. (Yes, his friends knew about that fig tree. It would represent our study today, our very private sanctum, open only to our closest friends.
- (H) Someone else knew - very much to the amazement of Nathanael. The compelling eyes of Jesus searched him through. The 'eyes of His glory' penetrated into the very depths of his soul.
- (I) John 1.48 - "Before Philip called thee, I saw thee under the fig tree". Nathanael was shaken to the very depths of his being. That fig tree was his secret place, his upper room and his most intimate place, and this said by a stranger to him. A most compelling person, who intrigued and fascinated him.
- (J) Only one person could have known that place apart from his friends, only one other person could know the struggle that had taken place with self, and only one person could have appreciated the victory given to him by God, at that time - Messiah Himself!

The viewpoint is well illustrated regarding the woman of Samaria, John 4.25. "The woman saith unto him (Christ), I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ; when he comes he will tell us all things", and 4.29, "Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did. Is not this the Christ?". This same appreciation gripped Nathanael. This was the Christ, as Philip had told him. Jesus said of Nathanael as he approached, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile", John 1.47, or to paraphrase, "an Israelite in whom is no Jacob", alluding to the struggle at Jabbok when Jacob defended himself against the Angel. Nathanael, Jesus saw, was one who had fought honourably with self and been granted the power of victory by God. What a wonderful testimony to Nathanael, who was at this time openly sceptical. "Can any good thing (or the good thing that is Messiah) come out of Nazareth?" In Nathanael's opinion the two concepts seemed utterly contradictory, the usual Jewish approach to the query about Nazareth. John 7, speaking to Nicodemus the chief priests said, "Art thou also of Galilee? Search and look, for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet". They conveniently forgot about Jonah, Nahum, perhaps Hosea and Elisha, who all arose out of Galilee. They had all conveniently forgotten also about Isaiah 11.1/4 and Nazareth, the 'flower town' etc. (see Blue in Scripture by Hall). However, to Nathanael's credit, his love for Philip and his curiosity quickly overcame his prejudice, and as we have seen, Philip's "Come and see" was accepted. This was the last time Nathanael would say "Can the good thing come out of Nazareth?" we may be sure. His comment to Jesus was definite and certain, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, Thou art the King of Israel". At one and the same time we notice that:

- (A) Philip had brought Nathanael to the very object of his devotions, meditations and prayers. "The consolation" had come and greeted him in deed and truth. Elisha the prophet of God could read the thoughts of Benhadad in his private sanctum (bed chamber) and in many ways his own fig tree was more intimate and sacred than any bed chamber. This surely was Messiah, who had been doubly gracious to him. No doubt Nathanael never let that moment go, even when his dreams were suddenly shattered in that terrible moment when the King of Israel was lifted high and by savage hands slain, hence lesson No.2.
- (B) That in keeping with all Israel at that time, a suffering saviour had never entered either Nathanael's mind or studies. He, along with all the others, had not comprehended Isaiah 53, nor yet the dying saviour of Psalm 22. Israel had been an afflicted nation and, as the Jews do today, saw the fulfilment of Isaiah 53 in themselves. That Messiah should die as a sacrifice was to them unthinkable, for "Christ liveth forever" was their own belief and the belief, apparently, of the disciples at this time (John 12.34). With John the Baptist and the rest of the twelve he expected Jesus to assume the power of the Kingdom and to reign. Nathanael, however, is not the only wrong person with his dates, is he? Our body has been out on some of them for generations. Only human of course, but humans are slow to learn.
- (C) Another very important lesson we may learn from these verses.
- (1) Prayer in a set place.
 - (2) In congenial surroundings, "pray always in the same place" said William Law in his "Serious call to holy life". Pray always in the same place. Reserve that place for devotion, and never allow yourself to do anything common in it.
 - (3) Isaac had his special place - it was a field (Genesis 24.63).
 - (4) Elijah had his special place - the mountain cave (1 Kings 19.13).
 - (5) Jesus had his special place - Gethsemane, for "He oft resorted there" (John 18.2).
 - (6) And Nathanael had his special place - it was the fig tree (John 1.48). That place felt to him as Bethel (the house of God) where his devotions and prayers and studies almost made him think the angels of God really dwelt there, and passed between heaven and that place, and that he himself was at the very centre of God's plan.

Do we have such a special place, which may be to us a personal Bethel? If we have the mind of Nathanael, we could have. Shall we not follow this brother in his example and make ourselves a little sanctuary - "Enter into thy closet" said Jesus,

"and pray". Maybe like Nathanael we shall feel the nearness of the Divine presence so acutely, during these moments of deep immersion into the things of God, that we may suddenly start thinking that we are not alone and that maybe our personal angel may be looking over our shoulder at our findings. Could we but find some inner chamber, some fig tree, some little nook, that we may keep apart for our personal devotions! True prayer is very hard (never easy at least to the writer personally). Thank God for Nathanael - man of prayer, of meditation, of Bible study, man of guilelessness, man of devout worship.

Maybe if we can but acquire these foundations in our spiritual character now, we may also receive Nathanael's future blessing pronounced by Jesus in John 1.50/51. "Thou shalt see greater things than these. Hereafter ye shall see heaven opened, and the angels of God, ascending and descending upon the Son of Man".

How fitting were the names of Nathanael-Bartholomew.

- (A) Bartholomew first (son of the ploughed furrow, prepared for seed). Here then was a mind already prepared to receive the word. Nathanael had taken Hosea's advice, Hosea 10.10/13, unlike Judah and Ephraim, he had in truth 'broken up his fallow ground', he had ploughed a furrow in his mind, through preparatory Bible study and devotion.
- (B) He was prepared for the seed of the Kingdom, and taking our cue from agricultural life as supplied by Jesus - 'that furrow was straight' or guileless. Nathanael would most certainly yield a good harvest for the Lord, even for the greater than Solomon, King of Peace, in His Kingdom, and we most certainly believe it would be in the 100-fold region (Song 8.11/12, Matthew 13 etc.)

Such, then, was the prepared furrow of the mind of Bartholomew, and if this name was the surname or foundation from which Nathanael sprang, then surely the definitions of Nathanael are well and truly named. Nathanael -

- (1) Given of God, by which we link him with Jesus for his service and appreciation.
- (2) Instructed of God, consequently the Word or seed sown would be (as we have indicated) fertile.
- (3) Requited of God, and
- (4) Rewarded of God.

The faith of Nathanael had been requited and rewarded by God, for had he not seen the "consolation of Israel" and received a wondrous blessing from Him?

- (C) The lesson for us.

If we are prepared to break up the fallow ground of our lives, plough a furrow straight and deep in it, then we need not fear. Christ will sow the seed of the Kingdom within us, we too shall be instructed, requited, rewarded of God and given to the Son, as Nathanael was, and Psalm 15 will represent our epitaph. In my Bible I have a note in my margin opposite Psalm 15 - "Nathanael's Psalm". "Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle, who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly and worketh righteousness and speaketh the truth in his heart: he that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour: in whose eyes a vile person is contemned, but he honoureth them that fear the Lord: he that sweareth to his own hurt and changeth not: he that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved".

Such is the inscription above the foundation of Nathanael in the New Jerusalem and such is the secret of entry through the gate into the City. Ought it not to be ours, enrolled as sanctified wrestlers along with Nathanael Bartholomew of Cana of Galilee?

He died as a martyr for his Lord. He was flayed alive with knives. His apostolic symbol is three parallel knives. Zondervan Bible.

CHAPTER 7Thomas - the honest doubter

Thomas (Matthew 10.3) follows on next. We follow what was presumably the calling, taking Matthew's own version first. Matthew virtually is saying here that Thomas was called before him. Thomas has another name in John 20.24, which is Didymus. The meaning of Thomas is 'joined' and Didymus means 'doubled' or 'twin'.

- (A) With whom was Thomas 'joined' and can we find out the twin complement of Didymus among the twelve? Could this be the reason why Matthew was known as Levi amongst the twelve? Because Levi, too, means 'joined' or 'joining'. Were Thomas and Matthew twins in blood as well as in spirit? We wonder. We do have the indication from their names.
- (B) Matthew, we observe, is silent about him, apart from the brief mention of him in the list of chapter 10.
- (C) It is well known deportment not to mention relatives in the writer's narrative. Titus in the Acts of the Apostles - evidence is available to suggest that Luke the author and Titus were brothers in the flesh besides in the Lord. Note also in the writings of John Zebedee the omission of James his brother and of his mother by name (John 19.25, John 21.2).
- (D) However this may prove to be, what are the lessons to be drawn from the character of Thomas? John alone mentions his activities among the twelve. We have noticed before that it is John who mainly brings these biographical notes before us.
- (E) Do they represent the questions of the brethren of his day to John, now an ageing 'Boanerges', regarding his former comrades now laid to rest in Jesus? Who were they? What were they like? How were they called? and so on. John no doubt readily responded and here is the result.

So we return to Thomas, known rather unkindly as 'the doubter'. Our personal viewpoint is that to dub Thomas with this nickname from one instance and to single him out 'all doubters' is quite unfair. Perhaps the verse which ought to supply the backcloth of our study of Thomas should be John 11.16, spoken at the time when it was thought to be plain suicide for Jesus to return to Judea after He had incurred the Pharisees' wrath in John 10.31/39. Thomas said in John 11.6, "Let us go, that we may die with Him". The devotion, then, of Thomas to his Lord is quite clear. Thomas was at this time willing to follow even until death, and no one can love more. It was Mark who wrote that Jesus called His disciples that they might be with him, and not even the prospect of death or the darkness of pessimism can keep Thomas from showing his ardent devotion. Some of us do tend to look on the darkest side of things, not through lack of faith perhaps, but because of our temperaments.

Thomas, then, was known as the patron saint of doubters. We believe the Church of England celebrates his festival on the shortest day of the year and consequently the longest night of the year.

So the general idea is quite clear, is it not? We have heard quite a lot about 'honest doubters' in our day, but the honest doubt of Thomas, we believe, did not spring from lack of faith, but rather from a natural hesitation which required similar proof to that which had been given to his fellow disciples (more later).

One point concerning Thomas is absolutely clear. In his determination to follow Jesus (which of course is the first consideration of any disciple - 'one who follows'), he was joined to the Lord by his love, amply fulfilling his initial calling.

- (1) John 14.1/6. Again, it has been said many times that Thomas was very slow to grasp the words of Jesus, and this quotation is the one at issue.
- (2) Philip, too, as we have seen from the same situation, had not been too quick to catch the words and meaning from Jesus at this time.
- (3) Subsequent information clearly indicates that none of the twelve understood this teaching.
- (4) Even Peter, who in Matthew 16 had been given definite proof direct from God through the Holy Spirit, had not comprehended.

(5) Nathanael had failed to grasp the significance of a suffering saviour, along with John the Baptist and the rest. Why should we pick on Thomas, saying that he was slow of comprehension for a normal query to Jesus? John 14.5, "Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest, and how can we know the way?" This statement was true of all the apostolic band. It is the writer's belief that this instance recorded by John was for the expressed intention of revealing the oneness of Jesus with the Father. The combination of the queries of Thomas and Philip brought forth that illuminating statement "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (John 14.9). If Thomas, then, was slow, pessimistic and dour of character, we thank God for him and his persistence for further enlightenment.

We derive from this incident two principles of great value for us to follow :

- (A) Absolute devotion to Christ.
- (B) A persistence for further insight into the way of Christ.

If Thomas was a grafter, not too quick on the uptake as we say today, how many of us are the same? But if the twin virtues of Thomas the twin are equally within us (A) devotion (B) persistence with regard to Christ and the truth, then our following Christ will not be out of place. Both these virtues were to be found in Ruth, and Elisha the man of God, before us (Ruth 1.16/17, 2 Kings 2.2/10 etc.).

The last and most notable appearance of Thomas in John 20.24/31 is the real basis of his nickname - the doubter - wherein we find several lessons of abiding worth.

(1) The importance of attending meetings

For some reason not known Thomas was not present when Jesus manifested Himself to His apostles. Had his mood of despondency kept him away? - upon the stark news of His death on the tree? This Master whom he had heard say that "He was the life" in answer to his own question "How can we know the way?"

- (2) The profound shock of the death of Jesus, and of his own forsaking and fleeing from the temple authorities at the time of the arrest, must have played havoc with such a man of determination and moods as Thomas.
- (3) Had Thomas lost faith temporarily through grief and disappointment? It is a very natural reaction for anyone under such strain. "Let us go with Him, even unto death". How often have we made similar protestation of faith, and when confronted with the real test absolutely 'funked it' and because of our failure 'under fire', we have hidden ourselves away to assuage our grief and gather strength to face up to our future responsibilities.
- (4) Certainly it is quite wrong and not the right way to go about it. The meetings are our focal point of strength in our united fellowship in Christ.
- (5) We have a kind of fellowship with Thomas on the first count. Bearing our grief and chagrin alone - with God. People very kindly try to help by asking us out, hoping to temper the grief by their kindness. But with Thomas, and perhaps with the writer, it would only make things worse. Queer mortals, no doubt, but that is the way it goes.
- (5) It becomes very easy to miss the meetings under these circumstances, but in the long run we can never benefit by it. We simply cannot afford to do this, particularly in these days when the coming of the Lord has drawn nigh - even at the door. We may miss, as Thomas did, the supreme blessing of a visitation from the Lord.
- (7) Poor Thomas! It is the Song of Solomon all over again. Song 5.2/6 clearly indicates that if we are not ready to come to Jesus when He calls, in affliction He will leave us, which will be attended with most definite heart searching on our part, and not a little remorse. "I stand at the door and knock", said Jesus in Revelation 3.20. "If any man hear my voice and open the door I will come in to him" etc., alluding to this quotation, and found historically at the period we are speaking of.

- (8) Thomas did not attend, did not wait, with the other disciples who were assembled together for fear of the Jews (John 20.19). Could it be open defiance against the rulers on Thomas's part? That he was not afraid of the Jews any longer? And so would not be cooped up with the rest of the eleven?
- (9) We cannot imagine Thomas at this state of affairs being scared of what the Jews might do to him.
- (10) In many ways most probably he would have welcomed such persecution to atone for his failure. But whatever the reason, Thomas was absent and Jesus left; consequently the blessing for Thomas was delayed. As did the Bride in the Song (of whom Thomas formed part), sometimes we, when brought face to face with the sincerity of our professions for Christ, are unwilling to live up to them and align ourselves with the Man of Sorrows, separating ourselves occasionally from the rest of our brethren and sisters, and consequently missing a visitation from the Lord. The vital point at issue is that "we must follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth".

Jesus, then, visited his followers and Thomas was absent. What do we gain from this incident? John 20.19/20: "And He showed unto them His hands and His side"; Luke 24.36/40: "And His hands and feet", and "they believed not for joy". Jesus gave the disciples a complete demonstration of His resurrection from the dead. He showed them His hands, side and feet, wherein were the signs of the wounds that He had received on that cursed tree. But still they believed not for joy (compare Peter after his release from prison, Acts 12.11/17). At this, Jesus engaged in the process of eating to finally convince the ten of his identity (Luke 24.41/43). John 20.10 continues, "Then were the disciples glad when they saw (Greek Idontes - identified) the Lord". Mark 16.14 gives collateral proof of this. Jesus appeared to them "as they sat at meat", hence the honeycomb. Also we learn that Jesus "upbraided them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen Him after His resurrection" (i.e. the women), which shows us that Thomas cannot be singled out as the only doubter at this time. What Thomas required was equal proof of identification such as the Lord had granted to the others. He, too, wished to have the threefold experience of positive identification - (A) sight (B) touch (C) hearing. But the eight day waiting period before Christ appeared to the believers again (John 20.26), Thomas then being present, must have sorely tried Thomas; in fact we believe they were really agonizing to him. We can be sure that he never forgot those fluctuating times of faith and unbelief.

- (A) Was it true? Had Jesus really appeared to them, or was it just as true as the idle tales of the women?
- (B) If Christ had risen, why had he not proclaimed Himself as Messiah?
- (C) What experience of Truth could be relied upon? On whom could he rely? On Magdalene, who was known to be more than a trifle hysterical? Simon need not be heeded, the way he had acted, after absolute profession of sincerity to Jesus.
- (D) How could Thomas be certain about their evidence?
- (E) Everybody had got worked up into hysterics, depressed over this terrible catastrophe.
- (F) How could he think straight? He wanted hard facts. Yes, similar to the others.
- (G) Yet Matthew his twin, the one to whom he was truly joined in fellowship and spirit, had been there, and he had never known Matthew to lie to him.
- What was he to think? Eight days of waiting, worry, the inkling of high hope and depressing moods of despair and remorse, these spiritual shaping tools had done their work.

Thomas was there next time the ecclesia assembled, John 20.26, and his Lord's "Shalom or peace be unto you" had special meaning for him. Since Jesus had been taken in Gethsemane, peace had departed from him, in fact his depression and worry had increased a thousandfold, during the last week. Now, like Paul after him, Thomas was well and truly prepared for the intervention by Jesus. We note that in John 20.27/29 we are not told that Thomas even touched the Lord, but answered in triumphant faith and with true prophetic insight "My Lord and my God" (see Significance of Blue - Hall). Jesus had not the necessity to eat to prove His identity. Thomas was fully convinced. He had positively identified his Lord; and Thomas is the patron saint

of those who say even today that seeing is believing. But the abiding lesson arising out of this event after observing the harrowing experiences of Thomas is in the words of Jesus, John 20.29 - "Blessed are they who have not seen, yet have believed". This is our special heritage from the Lord. Let us not mix it too freely with the depression, doubts and moods of hard fact Thomas; but a remembrance of his twin virtues of Didymus (A) steadfast devotion (B) resistance and (C) tenacity, will be secure and sound.

It is said that Thomas was killed with a spear as a martyr for his Lord. His symbol is a group of spears, stones and arrows. Zondervan Bible.

CHAPTER 8

Matthew - the honest publican

Matthew the twin with Thomas? (tentatively dogmatic only about this one) follows next for our consideration. The Lord Jesus would hardly be termed popular in Israel with this choice of disciple, taken openly in the presence of witnesses, hostile and otherwise (Matthew 9.9 personal version). It did, however, reveal how broad-minded the Master was. Undoubtedly He stood on the highest peak of idealism and His insistence upon a corresponding level of performance with this stand was clear and firm (see Blue in Scripture, Sapphire section, Debir Press). Yet it can be faithfully said that He stood far removed from the narrow eyed partisan. In the place of His interest, Christ had a niche, should we say, for the treasure house of the widow's mite (Mark 12.41/44) and He had also a place for the generous means of the well-to-do business man. The sympathetic glance of Christ scanned with unflinching clarity the whole social scale from the top to the bottom, and contrariwise from the bottom to the top. Fishermen were made prophets, and a man profitably engaged in the revenue service of the oppressing Roman power, was made not only an apostle, but a most concisely efficient writer on His behalf. "He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the receipt of custom, and said to him 'Follow me'" and without any further ado, Matthew did. It has been well said that on this occasion Christ flung all the maxims of expediency to the four winds, that He flew in the face of popular prejudice, because Matthew was a publican, a collector of Roman taxes. The depth to which Matthew had descended can be estimated by the stigma attached to his occupation. At that time, general castigation was to be seen in the local phrase "publicans and harlots", linking him with the most disreputable class known to society. Further, Jesus said, "Let him be unto thee as a heathen man (i.e. Gentile dog) and a publican". Luke 18.10/14 puts the usual Pharisees' approach or attitude: "Thank God, I am not as other men are, unjust, extortioners, adulterers, or even as this publican". Most of the taxgatherers or collectors were Romans, the patriotic Jew refusing with the utmost tenacity to hold office under the hated iron rule. Could we put it this way? He was ready to render unto God the things which were God's, but he drew back from rendering to Cæsar the things that were Cæsar's by the law of force. W.Barclay writes, "There was no class of men in the ancient world more hated than taxgatherers. Stapfer calls them a class of despised pariahs. When Cicero is talking about trades unbecoming to a gentleman and vulgar, he chooses as those which incur most odium and ill will the trades of taxgatherer and usurer. Of all the nations the Jews were the most vigorous haters of taxgatherers. For a strict Jew, God was the only person to whom it was deemed right to pay tribute. To pay tribute to anyone else was to infringe the prerogative which properly belonged to God. Murderers, robbers and taxgatherers were classed together."

- (A) A taxgatherer was debarred from being either a witness or a judge.
- (B) He was even debarred from worship, which was why the publican in the parable "stood afar off" (Luke 18.13).
- (C) Even repentance itself was regarded as being specially difficult for a taxgatherer. And Jesus was seen publicly calling the taxgatherer to follow Him!
- (D) For further information on this odious office, see W.Barclay, "The Master's Men".
- (E) So Matthew ever afterwards became "the Master's man" and it is well that he did.

- (F) Was it not significant that Matthew was called from work as were Peter, James and John; and was he not called to work?

Matthew's contribution through the grace and inspiration of God lies evident to all in the gospel that he wrote and which bears his name - the first Gospel (rightly so, we believe, and not the second as advanced by the critics, which is of course another story). Matthew was called personally by Jesus when he was sitting at the receipt of custom or attending strictly to business. Here we see a vital point emerging, when one wants anything done and done well. Jesus intimates by this action that it is wise to go to those who are doing something useful. The loafers have not much to offer. A dear friend once put it this way, "Always ask a busy man for help, because the wheels will be running, and if you are fortunate he will feed it in". (A) How true to life this principle is, and in particular for the Master's men. (B) Moses was keeping his sheep when called to service, Exodus 3.1/2. (C) Gideon was threshing his wheat, Judges 6.11. (D) Elisha was plowing, 1 Kings 19.19/21. (E) Peter, James and John were fishing, Matthew 4.18. (F) Jesus Himself was active in the profession of a carpenter prior to His calling to Messiahship. At the age of 12 years Jesus was very conscious of His calling. (G) This man Matthew was sitting at the receipt of custom; it would be natural for Matthew after his calling to think of the life to which he had been called as a life to be "always about the Father's business". He would afterwards make a business of doing the will of Him who had called him.

- (1) This call obviously would mean sacrifice. Here was a government official - a man of good position, with an assured income. The Roman government paid well. He was able, if he had chosen, to "build big barns" and cram them to the eaves with good things.
- (2) Now he was asked to leave all this assured security, to follow one who had "nowhere to lay his head".
- (3) He was called to a life of uncertainty and sacrifice.
- (4) He had the moral courage to accept and make the venture.
- (5) Men of this calibre will always add up large on the balance sheet of any ecclesia.
- (6) Matthew had learned the lesson of attending strictly to business, whether he had felt like it or not. In this man, the Master knew, were abilities of abiding value.
- (7) Is it not a comforting thought that even today the Master sees men sitting at their place of business, and He says to all "Follow me". They may be surrounded with ledgers and letter files, wage scales and price lists. They may be handling those materials in the north of the country which feed and clothe, house and warm the race. In the midlands they may make cars, heal the sick and so forth. They are called to follow Christ, not always, not commonly by leaving all this. Most of us for financial reasons could not forsake our normal employment to follow Christ. We must qualify this statement.
- (8) Nor are we asked to - rather are we urged to "follow in the employment or business with God", and if in all honesty we fail to satisfy our conscience on this level we ought to find either further employment or business, as the case may be.
- (9) Certainly we are called to work, for "if a man work not, neither shall he eat", and if a man will not support his own, he is to be regarded as a heathen. (2 Thess. 3.10 : 1 Timothy 5.8).
- (10) We are called, as Matthew was, to use our ordinary talents for the business of the Truth, and as men of business to 'follow Him' by devoting and consecrating the material and ability, indeed the whole economic process which we are helping to direct to these high ends; both the human and divine for which it was designed, knowing full well the advice of Paul under this heading, which was, "If ye are called being bound (as a slave) seek not to be free, and if free, not to be bound" (1 Corinth. 7.21 etc.). Each one in his particular niche in Christ will serve with distinction if the acceptance is wholehearted.

It is fascinating to see where Matthew records his own calling and conversion right in the midst of a chapter of miracles (Matthew 9).

- (A) He tells us how Jesus healed a man who had been sick of the palsy, rewarding the faith of those who brought him (verses 1/8).
- (B) How he cured a woman who had been suffering for 12 years with an issue of blood (20/22).
- (C) How Jesus opened the eyes of men so that they now saw clearly (27/31).
- (D) And right in the middle of all this Matthew unobtrusively slips in a word as to what the Lord had done for himself (9/10).
- (E) "He saw me sitting at the receipt of custom and said to me 'follow me'". We can hardly doubt that his calling still remained a miracle all the days of his life.
- (F) Matthew regarded his own conversion as worthy to be listed with those miracles. We are grateful for this touch.
- (G) When we come to think of it, this chapter of miracles did have something in common with Matthew or Levi. He, too, as the man sick of the palsy, was in the paralysis of sin, spiritually that is (Matthew 9.1/7). Matthew had realised the need for Christ to say to him "son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee".
- (H) Again, he had heard the Pharisees scorn, "Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?" and the penetrating answer from his Lord had cheered him and given him hope. "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick". "But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice, for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Matthew 9.12/13).
- (I) Matthew had been unclean, as the woman with the issue for 12 years (did this represent his service with the hated Roman revenue service?). He had been cast out of the synagogue for his work. He knew and understood her feeling as an outcast.
- (J) Matthew, too, along with the blind man, had his eyes opened to the Truth in Christ. We observe then the close similarity between the miracles of Matthew and the call of Matthew.
- (K) Can we hesitate to say the calling of today is not within this scope, when one casts one's mind back to one's entry into Christ and wonders why Christ should choose us to serve him, when it would appear that many others far more suited than oneself have not been so honoured?
- (L) There can be no doubt even today that "Truth is stranger than fiction". Many strange stories larger than fiction could be told as to how and why and where the Truth came to us.

The Gospel of Matthew is that of a practical man. "Not everyone that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter the Kingdom, but he that doeth the will of my Father". Again, only he who builds his moral structure upon a foundation that will stand when the rains descend, and the floods come and beat upon that house, is the one who builds upon the rock-like foundation of obedience to the will of God. How sound and sensible and business-like, in the best sense, it all is. It was Tacitus who was recorded as finding a distinct rarity in the Roman World - a statue raised "to the memory of an honest publican". One wonders whether Matthew could have aspired to those sentiments in his days prior to his calling in the revenue office. It was Macintosh Mackay who said, "Yet had but Tacitus cared to enquire, he might have discovered a more wonderful monument to a good publican than that one of stone. It was one that was raised by a humble carpenter of Syria; but it was destined to endure when the other was long obliterated and destroyed. It was the first of the four Gospels - the Gospel of Matthew, once the publican of Capernaum, now the Apostle of mankind". We say Amen to these statements. The Gospel of Matthew emphasizes three principles in particular which impel (A) fair dealing (B) kindly speech (C) unselfish action. All very far from the ways of the grafting members of his former profession. Matthew would have men "tell me the truth and not something else which looked something like it, a second or third to the truth". He would have men pay what they owed regularly and promptly, so that others might not suffer hurt or loss by careless delay. He would have men be uniformly kind and

courteous, even to the thankless and thoughtless, and His principle, "if ye salute them only who salute you, what do ye more than others? Publicans do the same". An allusion to his former life and the unpopularity of his past calling. How different he would have men to be. They were called to follow Him "who sendeth rain upon the evil and unjust" and not pandering only to those who were in favour. Like the Holy One who caused the sun to shine on the evil and the good, so that they might be children of the Highest. Matthew's emphasis is upon doing the Father's will in the round of daily life.

- (1) In his Gospel we find certain teachings of Jesus that are not found in any of the others.
- (2) He is particularly interested in the treasure hidden in the field, and in the pearl of great price. Matthew 13.44/46.
- (3) In his business life he had found that the price of the best is always "all that one has". It cannot be had on any easier terms and there is no devaluing under this control.
- (4) When we understand these words coming from Matthew, we see in them a certain quality of life which can only be gained by the consecration of all one's possessions and all one's powers to the Highest.
- (5) His Gospel has been rightly named the Book of the King. Matthew took it upon himself to prove to the Jewish people that Jesus was undoubtedly the Christ "who was for to come".
- (6) His book begins with the genealogy and birth of Emmanuel according to the ancient prophecy of Isaiah 7.14 and ends with Christ's announcement "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" and His ascension to the Father until "the times of refreshing" arrive, and His second coming is imminent.
- (7) The manifesto of behaviour accepted as the protocol of the court is outlined in the Sermon on the Mount.
- (8) A whole programme of the rising of the King - His preaching, miracles and rejection - is included; also the warning of his rejection and the prophecy of His second coming. Matthew had served Rome and self well during his work at the receipt of custom, now he served wholeheartedly the King, with no thought of self, and has continued to serve with distinction for the past 2000 years or so. The others may have left all and followed Jesus: Matthew left all, but took his pen with him and has used it mightily on behalf of his Lord. One thing is outstanding about his calling - he made a feast for his Lord and past colleagues, on the occasion of accepting apostleship and leaving the Roman civil service. Like Elisha when called to follow Elijah (1 Kings 19), Matthew burned his boats in this celebration, to follow fully. It would seem upon reading the Synoptics that although Matthew followed immediately, he had been convinced for some time of the true identity of Jesus, and like Paul who followed after into the service, had experienced disturbed conscience and was well and truly ready to accept the gracious calling. We forget sometimes that the call of Christ always comes at the right time; this is one of the wonders of divine appointment. Matthew felt the same we are sure. Matthew might have been utterly drowned in destruction and perdition in that toll booth of his, had not Jesus visited Capernaum. We know that wherever Jesus went there was great curiosity to see and hear him. The excitement was such that it even spread to those who never frequented the meetings of the synagogues. The publicans and the sinners gathered themselves to hear him, and among the publicans who heard Jesus preach in Capernaum was Matthew.

Had Thomas first interested Matthew in the Lord? Or was it simply curiosity that brought Matthew to hear the great Prophet? One thing is certain - he had never heard preaching like this before; he found afterwards that he could not shrug it away, as no doubt he must have done to other preaching before. He stood and listened, compelled and fascinated. The prophet appeared to "look straight through him", and the words probed his very being. "No man", said Jesus, fixing Matthew with those eyes that strangely held Peter, "no man can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to one, and despise the other".

"Ye cannot serve two masters"

Matthew felt rooted to the ground, and his breath came in great gasps. How does this man know me? he thought. But more was to follow. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you", and again, "whosoever would save his soul shall lose it, and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it". These words remained with Matthew as he slowly wandered back to his toll booth. Things were different, and of all men in Capernaum none was more wretched and miserable than Matthew in his toll booth. The sermon would not be denied, the words "ye cannot serve God and Mammon" were burned in his mind. Poor Matthew, he became well nigh distracted and his customs desk a veritable place of torment to him. How would it have ended had not Jesus said to him that day of miracles "follow me"? Thus it came about that Jesus added a publican to the chosen twelve. It is A.T. Robertson who says that the words "follow me" in the Greek text are in the present imperative, so linear action meaning to "keep following for ever".

Matthew's feast for Christ

Had it not been for the other Synoptics (Luke, for instance), we would not have known that this was the first thing Matthew did upon being called by the Lord, Luke 5.27/29. "And Levi made Him a great feast in his house and there was a great multitude of publicans and others that were sitting at meat with Him". Now Levi is the other name of Matthew, the son of Alphæus. Perhaps his fellow friend is being kind to him in using this less known name, at least to us.

(1) The feast is said to be to honour Jesus. This is the all important thing that the feast did, and no feast was more to the liking of Jesus, one would think. It is plain also that Jesus was already known as willing to mingle with these social outcasts, for they eagerly gathered round Jesus, having gladly accepted Levi's invitation. Matthew, then, was willing to incur ridicule for Jesus. The Scribes and Pharisees had noticed the big crowd gathered at the house of Levi the Publican. They were already showing an interest in the teaching of Jesus, as a rival for popular favour. They were not invited as were the publicans and sinners to the feast of Levi (also they would have spurned the offer: it was beneath their dignity to eat with publicans and sinners). They had, however, no hesitation in standing outside the house and making remarks about the conduct of Jesus - "Why does your Master eat with publicans and sinners?" (Matthew 9.1). They clearly mean to imply that their own teachers would be ashamed to eat with such people. Take notice of the word Luke used to describe the scene. Luke 5.30 says that they were "murmuring" or "it was just like a buzz of bees", so great was the commotion at this time. This pointed criticism no doubt was a source of embarrassment to Matthew, who had given the feast, and there was nothing that he could say, because they were his invited guests. The rest of the disciples declined to accept the challenge, but Matthew found a worthy champion in Jesus which we get in a verbatim report from all the Synoptic Gospels. "The well have no need of a physician, but the unwell". "I have not come to call the righteous folks, but sinners, to repentance" (Luke 5.32). Jesus took them at their own estimation as righteous and brushed them aside. Pharisees and the other 'righteous' people would remember the conversation of Matthew, besides the publicans and sinners who had gathered to meet Jesus.

(2) It was a testimony to Matthew's own gladness of heart

Some people have the misguided notion that accepting the Truth of necessity means deprivation and loss and bondage. We well remember over 30 years ago when we accepted the Truth, our friends at that time said, "Oh look what they are losing" (i.e. in sporting activities and social outlook). What they failed to realise was the fact that Matthew's great feast announced to all his friends and enemies gathered around that in Christ he had found perfect freedom. We have studied Matthew kicking against the pricks of conscience, prior to this great day. He had grown to hate his odious trade even while he still clung to it, and when Jesus said "come and follow me" it opened up a veritable deliverance to Matthew. It was an emancipation from worse than Egyptian bondage. He sacrificed his hope of fortune. But for it he had exchanged "the peace of God that passeth all knowledge". This

feast could be compared to the slave's thanksgiving for the breaking off of his fetters that had held him in bondage. The effect can be seen in Matthew 11.28, which can be applied primarily to Matthew himself. "Come unto me, all ye that labour 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 unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light". This feast was a token of thanksgiving to God for all that He had done for him.

(3) The feast was Matthew's plan of introducing Christ to others

This was a wonderful way of taking Christ to others, or vice versa, bringing them to Him. Most of the twelve had hurried home to tell their loved ones about Jesus. Matthew decided on the spot to tell whole crowds of his fellow civil servants. This was a good day for him. He wanted them to feel the burning sincerity and zeal of his Lord at first hand. He knew that there were multitudes of men in the Roman livery just as unhappy and as utterly desperate as he was. We wonder whether among this crowd of outcasts there figured one small man with immense power, one Zacchæus, the chief publican of Jericho, and whether in the interval of time that elapsed between this incident and the entry of Christ into Jericho, his mind had undergone that agony of torture like Matthew; after all, Zacchæus was amongst the overlords in this hated occupation. This may well be the case, and if it was so, then Matthew would embrace him affectionately in that day. The words of Jesus seem to imply that this was so.

- (A) Luke 19.1/10 : "Zacchæus, make haste and come down, for today I must abide at thy house" (as Jesus entered Matthew's house to be entertained to dinner).
- (B) Zacchæus made haste and came down and received Jesus joyfully (as no doubt did Matthew).
- (C) The same scorn was attached to this incident as to the former - that "he was gone to be guest with a man that was a sinner".
- (D) The wisdom and insight of Jesus is proved by the abject repentance of Zacchæus, and the commendation is quick to follow - "This day is salvation come to this house, forso much as he also is a son of Abraham" (9/10).
- (E) So another publican is found inside the fold, Zacchæus was found and saved after being lost. One wonders whether or not Zacchæus was the publican in
- (F) Luke 18.1/14, and that Jesus came in answer to his prayer. However, whether or not Zacchæus did attend Matthew's feast, he most certainly had heard of Jesus, Luke 19.3 - "He sought to see Jesus, who he was".

Such, we believe, is the reward one can reap for presenting Christ with a glad heart to those around us. The feast joyfully declared the end of slavery to money (and the making of it, which so many of us seem to enjoy) and the freedom of true faith in Christ. On the company balance sheet it would appear a total loss, yet on the other end, anyone who has the courage to take up the venture would add largely on the balance sheet of any ecclesia.

Compare 1 Timothy 6.1/18 for a Pauline deliberation of this question how true it is we brought nothing into this world and without question we shall take nothing out. All we have is given to us by the Father: let us dedicate it back to Him in loving gratitude and maybe through his grace we may find an entrance through the Matthew gate into the New Jerusalem. We remember too that the gates were of pearl: suffering therefore must enter into our experience - Matthew would understand.

In concluding this survey on Matthew we quote the words of Dr. Whyte, "When Matthew rose up and left all and followed our Lord, the only thing he took with him out of his old occupation was his pen and ink. He himself disappears from history after the record of his great feast, but the Gospel that he wrote still gladdens our hearts in his vivid portrayal of Jesus as King. And in like manner, though we be too humble for our names to appear in any history, may we become Epistles of Christ, written not with ink, but with the spirit of the living God, not in tables of stone, but in tables that are hearts of flesh, and may shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life."

But what of the names Matthew and Levi, Alphæus and Capernaum, have they not a message for us?

<u>Matthew</u>	<u>Levi</u>	<u>Alphæus</u>	<u>Capernaum</u>
Given of Yah	Joined	A successor	Village of Capernaum
Gratuity of Yah	Entwining	A supplanter	Shelter of Comfort
Given wholly unto Yah	Loving	A leader	Covering of Compassion Covering of Repentance

How completely does this cluster of names cover the case of Matthew Levi.

- (A) It all happened in Capernaum, the home town of Jesus and Matthew at this time, and most certainly providing a shelter of comfort and compassion in which Matthew's repentance would be covered by the Lord whom he had chosen to follow.
- (B) In Matthew (1) 'Given of Yah' we see the Father's love for His Son in giving the son of Alphæus for service in following and the writing of the Gospel portrayal of the King. (2) The Father's grace to Matthew, he received the gratuity of the Father in his calling and escape from the bondage of money. (3) The third aspect of Matthew, we see the undying devotion which followed his conversion - 'Given wholly to Yah'.
- (C) The second name of Levi portrays what the apostles thought of Matthew in that he had been joined to his Lord for the purpose of entwining both Jew and Gentile to the Way, and this he had done with loving and sympathetic zeal.
- (D) Alphæus the father of Matthew
We understand that the position of his son as publican must have held very trying moments for Alphæus to face. Matthew as a Roman revenue officer could be understood as a supplanter, one who had caught his Jewish brethren "by the heel" so to speak. In true Jacob fashion, he had tripped them up and one wonders whether or not Alphæus had disowned him as his son. If so, who would succeed, be a successor to him? By the combined action of Jesus and Matthew his fears became groundless; instead of Matthew being a quisling and traitor in Israel, he had become a leader, a member of the Inner Circle of the Twelve, and so long as the Word remains, Matthew's gospel will live and the son of Alphæus will have eternal remembrance.

The apostolic symbol of Matthew is three money bags, which remind us that he was a tax collector before Jesus called him. Zondervan Bible.

CHAPTER 9

Simon Zelotes - the man of fire

We will take Simon Zelotes for our next study in preference to James the Less and Thaddeus, who of necessity must be studied together.

- (1) Simon "the Canaanean" says Mark 3.18.
- (2) The Zealot - Luke 6.15 R.V. The Canaanean.
- (3) Matthew 10.4 as Mark 3.18.

Various theories have been advanced concerning the designation of Canaanite. From the Lukan Canaanean 6.15 R.V., it has been assumed that he dwelt in Cana of Galilee, also with both Matthew and Mark, i.e. the term is geographical. This would appear to be a misconception, as we feel this word does not apply to either Canaan, the old word for Palestine, nor does it contain any reference to the Galilean village of Cana as Luther and Bengel seem to think. We believe the epithet 'Canaanean' is derived from a Hebrew word meaning "to be ardent or zealous"; hence our title. Evidently it is the exact Hebrew equivalent of that word Gk. Zelotes, which we find in Luke's account, and the English word "zealot" fairly represents its meaning. We have therefore among the apostles one who probably belonged to that party which rose in rebellion against Roman rule some twenty years before the opening of Christ's ministry. The revolt was put down with the usual

strong arm methods, for Roman governments at that time did not mince matters. The aftermath left a certain deposit of discontent, a dream of better things and a high civil resolve which endured.

Probably then, Simon the Zealot - the added designation served both as the title of a party and as a clue to his personal character.

- (A) It would appear that Simon represented political zeal; he was a patriot - a man who could not bear the thought that the Jews should be forever men without a country. In many ways like the Zionist in the 19th century, fired with a burning zeal for the homeland, insistent that Jews should rule and have political freedom as the people of God.
- (B) Simon had been fed upon the hopes and promises uttered by the Old Testament prophets until his own heart was a flame of fire. We can appreciate the fact that when Simon the Zealot prayed for the peace of Jerusalem, he did it with the earnestness of Elijah and as a patriot in fact.
- (C) There at Jerusalem the Lord Jesus had caused his name to be placed in a distinctive way, making it the centre of religious life not only in this life, but also of the future life in the coming Kingdom of God (see Gospel of Matthew under this heading). There had been mention of 'thrones of judgment'. Simon could appreciate these comments, possible centres of political influence which worthily used could only add to Israel's consciousness of being a Messianic nation in whose unfolding life all the nations of the earth would be blessed.
- (D) In Simon's eyes, joining the party of Christ would represent joining the party of protest. We can imagine the storm of indignation that overtook him at the sight of the victorious Roman eagles, and the clink of the coin, as the busy publicans collected tribute money from the Hebrews to swell the coffers of a foreign power. He stood ready to be lighted as a 'candle of the Lord' and to burn to the sockets, if only that light which never came from sea nor land might shine forth and men be led to glorify the Father who is in heaven.
- (E) In Simon we see the true enthusiast, one lit with the fire of God. He had seen the light of Christ that shone over the black darkness of Galilee at that time, and his hopes rode high. The injunction is that "it is always good to be enthusiastic in a good thing".

Simon was intent upon having a part in kindling that fire of political aspiration which should never be put out. But Zelotes had to learn very soon in the school of Christ, that the Word of God as it is found in him, is the most powerful force alive, the sword being but very puny in comparison. He saw Peter strike with anger, just before he fled along with the rest (apparently the fire within him at that moment only tended to "raise up steam" for quicker flight). Peter struck off the ear of Malchus in his wild flurry as Jesus was taken. Simon Zelotes halted. Surely this was the time to strike, but to his amazement he heard the calm words of the Master (Matthew's record 26.52/54, and these words really staggered the Zealot), "Put up again thy sword into his place, for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and He shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels". Luke gives the doctor's version, 22.51, "And Jesus answered and said, suffer ye thus far. And He touched his ear and healed him". Simon never really got over this. Put the sword into his sheath? Healing your enemies? We feel sure this moment was of lasting impression to his Zealot's way. If ever the sword could rightly be taken, it must be in the defence of the Master, and here was the Master not only refusing it, but healing those who came to take him. And Simon fled with the rest. Later brethren have had to learn similar lessons. We well remember a rather beloved brother coming for advice some time ago. He appeared rather agitated and his reason was this. He had been trespassing on a certain property, unknown to himself, falling as an innocent victim into the toils of a neighbourly feud. The property owner became irate, and demanded the removal of his vehicle from off the said property, or he would eject our friend forcibly, the sore point being that our brother before accepting the Truth had been the A.B.A. Midland Champion at boxing. Our reply was, "Well, before now all the arguments you had were settled by your fists: that has finished. Now you must use

your head". Somewhat similar lesson to Simon the Zealot's, don't you think? The lesson for all is the fact that zeal is most dangerous when it is not brought under the control of intelligent purpose and moral consecration. Simon may be either an asset or a liability. He is steam in the boiler, all right, but, as we have seen, that steam may drive an unpiloted ship upon the rocks, or escaping by some mischance, it may scald the passengers to death. It all depends. We have already recorded the thought that the steam within Simon only pressurised his fleeing away from Jesus, and we wonder, did that incident in the garden trigger off this steam. It has been well said by C.R. Brown, "We do not read of any political revolts organised or led by Simon the Zealot. He did not make himself responsible for any flaming civic campaign in Judea which might for an hour have offered a certain menace to Roman rule. But we may be sure that the spiritual temperature of the whole group of the twelve apostles was raised several degrees by the presence and influence of this warm hearted patriot. He was like a southern exposure for the ripening fruits of the spirit in that group of men." How much can be achieved by men of warm devotion, even where they lack the qualities of first rate leadership? (A) If such a man cannot be "Simon Peter", whom the world has known about and loved for almost 2000 years, (B) he may become "Simon the Zealot", who by his faithful devotion strengthens the cause of Christ. (C) If one cannot be "James the son of Zebedee", admitted to the inner circle of three among Christ's disciples, (D) he could be that other James the son of Alphæus, or the Less, (E) who had his part in the work of the twelve, whose name would be written with the names of the apostles upon the twelve foundation stones of the City of God. (F) This Simon the Zealot never did anything sufficiently distinctive for it to get into the record, but he has come down the ages as one of the twelve.

Why did Jesus choose Simon the Zealot to be an apostle? We believe that he was chosen because he was, as his name implies, a man of enthusiasm. Macintosh Mackay says that "with all their faults the Zealots had at least one transcendent virtue - they were enthusiasts. They were ready to risk all for God and country". Perhaps the current happenings in the Middle East and the Israeli victory could be put down to enthusiasm from their point of view. The writer's belief is that it came from God. But humanly speaking the heart of victory stemmed from enthusiasm born from suffering in the last Great War, and based on Zionism. Jesus loved men, this Simon: in fact it was said by a prophet of Himself, "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up". So zealous was the Master in His work for the Father, that often He had no time to eat, and His mother and brethren once actually wanted to take him home because they thought he was going 'off his head'. They said "He is beside Himself" (Mark 3.31/35, Matthew 12.46/50). Jesus at this time was the sane man, not His brethren. Enthusiasm is the one thing in propaganda without which you can make no progress. History (it has been claimed) is written by enthusiasts. The mountain peaks of time are all volcanoes. They were all raised by a hidden fire once burning within them.

Jesus then found room, as we must do today, for the enthusiast in the Truth; they keep us warm spiritually. We remember the prayer of Paul: "Brethren" he writes, "my heart's desire and prayer for Israel is that they may be saved". Paul loved Israel with a strong and deathless love, he was ready to become anathema - accursed - for his kinsmen's sake according to the flesh. This is true patriotism according to Christ, and Simon had to turn his attention towards sin, and not the hated foreign Rome. Habbakuk the prophet had to learn the same lesson when nonplussed in his prophecy (which is noted for the lack of the term of Israel as a nation), and when the oppressor who was to exact vengeance for God upon his countrymen turned out to be more wicked than Israel. He was standing upon his watchtower awaiting God's answer to his queries when the answer came suddenly - Habbakuk 2.3/4 - "The vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak and not lie, though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry. Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him, but the just shall live by his faith."

Three times Paul quotes these words in the New Testament, with telling import upon the words 'just' 'live' 'faith': the references are Romans 1.17, Galatians 3.11, Hebrews 10.38. It is noteworthy that it is quoted in Hebrews 10, for if ever a letter was written to enthusiasts or Zealots, Hebrews was - Zealots such as Simon was and for the same reasons (A) safeguarding their natural life, removing from it the scourge of oppression, (B) temple worship, (C) keeping inviolate Jerusalem the City of the Great King, and so on. Paul quotes to them direct from the one book in the Old Testament where life is by faith and that of the righteousness of God.

There is a precisely similar lesson for the people who clung to the Law. The temple and national identity had to learn that salvation is personal and not national, and for all nationalities "as many as the Lord our God shall call", Acts 15.13/21. Here is the answer to the political enthusiast of today, it is non-existent. One of the traditions surrounding Simon the Zealot is interesting at this point. Tradition has it that before the siege of Jerusalem, Simon, remembering the warnings of Christ in the Olivet sermon, led the Jewish Christians to Pella beyond Jordan, thus saving them from the awful massacres of Titus. If this is true (we can see the point of the quote), then Simon had learned his lesson of directing enthusiasm against sin and not Rome. However this may be, we are sure that under the teaching and example of Jesus, Simon's zeal became refined and purified into that noble enthusiasm which burned within Paul and Elijah.

We lastly find the presence of the name of Simon the Zealot, the fierce and untameable patriot, as a beautiful illustration of the reconciling power of Jesus Christ. One mark of the coming Kingdom will be in the power of its reconciliation. Isaiah foretells of this Kingdom (so dear to us) and the end of old antagonisms and the abolition of the most inveterate enmities. "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed, their young ones shall lie down together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain" (Isaiah 65.25). And the prophet's forecast is no lying vision: it means quite clearly that in the Kingdom of God all enmities in man and beast shall be abolished. We have noticed enmities reaching hatred among the band of the twelve. Thinking of Simon and Matthew we see enmity, and in these two apostles we find that in the natural sense they would be at daggers drawn. They would hate each other with a fierce and bitter hatred (until as in the curtains of the Tabernacle. See Blue under this heading, Debir Press). Jesus drew both of them to Him, and so drew them one to another. Think of the comparison (1) Matthew the publican and Simon the Zealot, utterly opposed to each other in principle: (2) Matthew the paid (quisling) agent of the Roman power: Simon its sworn foe: (3) Matthew the renegade Jew, and the instrument of the oppressor, and Simon the wild and turbulent patriot. (4) It is thought that they were or had been friends, and upon Matthew accepting service in the Roman power this became changed. It is not unlikely that they had grown up together and so friendship turned to bitter hate. (5) Simon called Matthew a traitor. Simon spat on the name of Matthew. (6) Simon was ready to plunge his dagger into Matthew's false and treacherous heart. (7) If ever there seemed a hopeless and irreconcilable enmity, it was that which divided Simon and Matthew - Zealot and Publican. But here we find Simon and Matthew side by side: the redeeming blood of Christ had attached them to Him. (8) No longer aliens to one another, but friends and brothers. Such Simon realised was the far reaching power of the love of Christ. "It was as strong as death, which in itself hath a flame, a most vehement flame of Yah" (Heb.), the love of Christ had an enthusiast's love and it, he found to his delight, was the very flame of Yah. Consequently he found that many waters were unable to quench this love, and true to his patriotic heart, "If a man would give all the substance of his house for love it would be utterly conterned" (Song 8.6/7). This was the ultimate, and Simon gratefully bowed his head to its greatness.

What then of Simon's name, did he fulfil it? Most certainly, like Simon Peter, he had "heard the son and followed Him". He had come to know the ultimate expression of patriotism, the heavenly Jerusalem, the City built by

God, upon which his name would be inscribed. Let all the enthusiasts in Christ take heart: here is the open door. May we not seek it diligently and remember in reconciliation the Christ who bridged the chasm that separated Matthew from Simon, will effectively do the same for us if we go to Him in prayer and faith - "Be ye reconciled to one another in love". The perfect example is Jesus, who gave Himself that man might be reconciled to God, not only the Jew, but also ourselves - Gentiles by birth and outside of Christ, outside the pale of redemption. Ephesians 2.1/22 - "But now no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God, and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief corner stone: in whom all the building fitly framed groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord, in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit".

Such are a few of the lessons that come to us as we contemplate Simon the Zealot - the flame of fire and patriot of the Kingdom of God. His apostolic symbol is a fish lying on a Bible, which indicates he was a former fisherman who became a fisher of men through preaching. Zondervan Bible.

CHAPTER 10

The unknown disciples - names and little more

James the son of Alphæus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddeus (Matthew 10.3)

How often have we stood and gazed at headstones in the cemetery and read in glowing epitaph the expression of a generation's regard and a family's affection. Yet to us, however great that person was, to us it is nothing but a name chiselled in mouldering stone, darkly stained sometimes with centuries of elements that have beaten upon them. The person whom it commemorates was evidently once useful and beloved, but now, what is she or he? The poet said -

His memory and name are gone,
Alike unknowing and unknown.

Some time ago we were strangely moved as we looked upon the grave of Mary Jones, of Bible fame.

So we come to look on the epitaphs of James the Less, and Lebbaeus whose surname was Thaddeus (Matthew 10.3). Their graves are not with us along with the rest of the twelve, we know not where they lie. But we do know their future designation, for written in the walls of the New Jerusalem there is a foundation and inscription for both, which amply proves one consideration - they were faithful in their generation, they were among those of whom it is said by Jesus, "Of them whom thou gavest me I have lost none" (John 17.12), and no one can perform more perfectly in their generation and receive greater commendation than this: "He did his best". After all, eternal life is a gift and cannot be earned by anyone.

At the commencement we had better examine a few difficulties that have arisen over the identity of our two apostles. Let us say that the difficulties are not Biblical, nor are they found within the Bible. They arise out of what R.F. Jones has called a "sickly and morbid monkish sentiment". As usual these items arise because men were not allowed to take the Bible in its plain and literal sense. The two ideas which sprang up from what J.B. Mayor called "a contumacious setting up of an artificial tradition above the written word" are briefly thus.

(A) That we are amazed to find it calmly stated that James and Jude here before us are the same James and Jude who wrote the Epistles that bear their names.

(B) It is further assumed by many writers that the James and Jude mentioned are to be identified with the James and Jude mentioned in Mark 3 as being brothers of our Lord.

Let it be said firmly that there is no basis for these identifications in fact.

With the growth of monasticism an exaggerated honour came to be attached to the celibate life. To suppose that Mary never had another child was thought to add to the dignity of Christ, and so the fathers of the Catholic church, many of them monks, taught the dogma of the perpetual virginity of Mary. It then became necessary for them to start various theories to try to explain the obvious meaning of Scripture, and prove that these brothers and sisters of Jesus were never in this relationship to him at all, but were half brothers, sons of Joseph by another wife, without a scrap of scriptural evidence to support it. This was the theory of Epiphanius.

Jerome of Vulgate fame hit upon the idea that they were cousins - the sons of Alphæus and Mary, who is supposed to have been the sister of Mary the mother of Jesus. This theory is shot through with holes like a sieve.

- (A) This theory depends on very shaky grounds, namely, on the identification of Mary the mother of James the Less and Joses mentioned by Mark (15.40) with Mary the wife of Cleophas mentioned by John (19.25).
- (B) It depends in the second place on the supposition that it is this same Mary of Cleophas who is spoken of as the sister of the Virgin Mary, and in the third place on
- (C) the identification of Cleophas with Alphæus.
- (D) But for none of these identifications is there any warrant. For instance
- (1) who ever heard of two sisters in the same family, both of whom bore the name of Mary?
 - (2) secondly, the Greek word for brother is never once used in the sense of cousin,
 - (3) thirdly, the plain statements of Scripture make this theory impossible. According to Jerome, this James the son of Alphæus mentioned in our text was one of the brothers of our Lord. That is to say, we find one of our Lord's brothers in the twelve. But the scriptural verdict is plain and lucidly clear, John definitely stated "But his brethren did not believe on Him" (John 7.5). Wherever His brethren are mentioned they are always isolated quite clearly as in Mark 3.31/35. Lastly, we happen to know that the occasion of the conversion -- of that particular brother who bore the name of James was a special appearance given to him by Jesus after he rose from the dead.

No, the attempt to prove that the 'brothers' of our Lord were only cousins and to identify them with the sons of Alphæus, one of whom is mentioned in this band of apostles, breaks down utterly and hopelessly. On the other hand, every scripture reference agrees perfectly with the plain and natural interpretation that these men James and Joses, Judah and Simon, mentioned by Mark, were true brothers (i.e. sons of Joseph and Mary). Christ is never spoken of as Mary's only son, but always as her first born son, an epithet that implies that she had other sons besides. And when we find James and Joses and Judah in constant company with Mary and distinctly spoken of as "brothers of our Lord", it is simple defiance of scripture to understand the word otherwise than in its plain and obvious meaning.

We are certain, then, that the James mentioned here is by no means identified with the James who was a brother of our Lord and who afterwards became the president of the church at Jerusalem. Nor is this Judah to be identified with the Judah in the list of our Lord's brothers. He was not, as the authorised version puts it, "the brother of James", on which translation these commentators depend who make him one of the Lord's brethren. He was, as the R.V. puts it, "the son of James".

From all this we gather that the James and Jude mentioned in this list of apostles are not to be identified with the writers of the epistles that bear their names. Apart from the fact that these two men did not write the epistles that bear their names, and are not brothers of our Lord, what do we know about them?

Absolutely nothing apart from their names, and the record of Judas asking the Lord this question in the upper room, "Lord, what is come to pass, that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us and not unto the world?" (John 14.22 paraphrase). What did they achieve, what was their personal history? We know nothing. Their names are graven in the gospel history, they are to be found in the New Jerusalem foundation, and what else? They are hopelessly sunk in obscurity as are the vast majority of the people laid in the graveyards we visit.

Should we then finish this study on James and Judas or Lebbaeus because of their obscurity? Has not this very condition of obscurity something very telling to teach us? - because this is the mark of James and Judas, their obscurity, so to speak.

We have learned quite a lot from the little we have uncovered around the other apostles. What can we say of the unrecognised service of "these hopelessly obscure men", as R.F.Jones describes them?

- (A) We are reminded very starkly of the almost tragic commonplace of life, wherein much that is faithful, patient, humble service, goes unrewarded and unnoticed of men.
 - (B) Again we quote the words of Jesus, "Of them which Thou hast given me I have lost none save the son of perdition". "Eleven good men" there were out of twelve, and only Judas Iscariot false and faithless. The rest laboured long and truly with devotion and bravery and in very trying circumstances all the time; it was never easy to follow the Son of man in his temptations, and it never will be.
- (1) How often have we thought how blind they are, all of them.
 - (2) Why did they fight and squabble, even with the Lord there.
 - (3) Just imagine a semi riot going on as to who would be the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven, when He was about to die.
 - (4) We should have done differently. But should we?
 - (5) Perhaps with our fuller knowledge of the Truth we may have avoided at least the pitfalls of doctrine, such as the sacrifice and resurrection of the Lord.
 - (6) But the other usual problems. Who should be the greatest, or who should take the two places of honour in the Kingdom? Or whose duty it was to wash the disciples' feet?
 - (7) We still stumble over these searchings for power even today. 2000 years later we are no different. So why should we condemn the twelve? Following Christ is still the most difficult of human problems, and how well we know it.

So the twelve followed wonderingly and often very much in the dark, but the point is, that they followed in faith and simple trust, although they were very much human. The passing years have not altered either the following or the standard performance, and "he did what he could" could be our highest estimation of performance.

They had differing gifts, as we have. Some were men of conspicuous genius. Think of Peter and John, not in the worldly pursuits etc., for the simple reason that "they left all" to follow Jesus.

Others were (as far as we are aware) men of smaller and humbler talent, like James and Judas, but we may be sure they served the Lord to the best of their ability as did Peter and John. Their words or doings were not recorded for us in the scriptures as were those of Peter and John, and not a word is said about their equally faithful service. How true to life, lowly service in the main, though humbly performed, and in impeccable style, is allowed to pass unrecorded.

Is it not true that we give a little^{or}/more thought to these utterly obscure men, faithful in their lives and determined in their future as seen in the New Jerusalem? How true appears to be the statement which says that "the unrecognised saints and heroes of earth are a vast host", which is fundamentally sound when we recognise the fact that if Abraham's seed are to be "as the stars of heaven for multitude" (Genesis 22.17) then are the saints largely a vast unrecognised host.

It would appear then from this postulation, that James the Less and Judas Lebbæus are the patron saints of this vast concourse of unrecognised talent in the Lord's service. From the human angle Gray's "Elegy" summarises in true pathos. "Perhaps", he muses in the churchyard, "perhaps in this neglected spot is laid some heart once pregnant with celestial fire, hands that rod of empire might have swayed, or waked to ecstasy the living lyre".

Full many a gem of purest ray serene,
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear,
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

And so it is with James the Less and Judas. We can tell very little about them, we know of no single achievement of theirs but most certain are we that "they did what they could". No doubt this constitutes the greatness of James and Judas. They did their best, even though men did not notice them. They were absolutely trustworthy in their attitude to work, and who can say this today, when men watch the clock? strike at the least provocation, take the longest break possible, when maintenance men sit idle most of the day, to work over at the weekend on double pay? when the foreman's back is turned chase off to the nearest washroom and so forth? In our day of weakening morals, and the natural darkness turning to gross darkness, when we work only if the foreman's eye is upon us and we send men to Coventry for working harder than ourselves, can we say when thinking of James and Judas that they were lost in obscurity, hopelessly and utterly so? We think not; they are a shining example of industry and drive in our service to Christ: it is a case where absence of details drives home the sterner lesson. They did what they could, to the best of their ability, in the fact that it is comparatively easy to work when we are observed. Lectures here and there, in this country and that, our names appearing in the different magazines, on this committee and that. We must not say to be seen of men, for this is the pharisaical attitude and should be foreign in every sense to our brethren. But whatever may be our motives, we are seen of men and are under their scrutiny. What about the James and Judas section amongst us? Again unrecognised and veritably a vast host.

- (A) Those who labour year in and year out without recognition, and their effect is only realised when we try to fill their place after their decease.
- (B) We remember many years ago a brother now nameless as far as our memory is concerned, but very much alive where his great zeal for the Lord and the Truth is concerned. This brother was for many years isolated from ecclesial activities, and this not from choice, but every Sunday he laid out bread and wine, and apart from the very few visitors who came his way, that meeting was kept by himself for over 20 years.
- (C) He was faithful in his generation, but apart from the very few intimate friends he was one of the unrecognised.
- (D) It would seem that the bulk of those who have studied the Truth throughout the years are found in this category, really acting as the backbone midst the different changes that have assailed it.
- (E) The days ahead are ominously dangerous for the brotherhood and the unrecognised will have to stand fast in the Lord.

One of the main reasons for this solidarity obviously arose from the block system of the daily readings from the Word. But when do we get asked to take them when we visit these days? How many do we find are willing to discuss the Word and the Truth? The whole atmosphere of the meetings is undergoing a change, and as modernistic views increase, what shall we see before the Lord comes? It is not without possibility that the whole structure of Truth is going to depend on the "unrecognised element" to stand firm when perhaps the "intellectual" structure may appear to be wobbling.

There is, then, a very decided lesson for us from James and Judas. Shall we take heed? Actually we have a meeting point with Andrew in James and Judas. As with him, it did not fret or irritate them that people always talked of Peter or of John

or maybe of Paul. With Andrew they just went on doing their best day by day and, as the popular saying goes, "men love thee, praise thee, heed thee not, the Master praises, what are men?" Most of us occupy humble spheres, that is comparatively speaking. We shall attain to no great fame. Our names will figure in no histories. Yet let us do our very best. The answer at the end may be "Well done, good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful in a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord" (Matthew 25.21 etc.).

The apostle Paul draws a most wonderful contrast between being "unknown" on earth and fully known in heaven - 2 Corinthians 6.9, "As unknown and yet well known", "unknown" in earthly records, but well known to the Son, "unknown" to human society, but "well known" to the angels of God. We have said that these two apostles left no account of any book they wrote, or any journey they undertook, or any miracle they wrought. They are in truth the "unknown" apostles, yet well known to the Lord, and we are greatly heartened to know from a consideration of their obscure position and glorious consummation that no faithful toil is ever overlooked or forgotten in heaven. "I know thy works". Time after time Jesus brought this truth to the notice of the seven ecclesias in Revelation chapters 2 and 3. He also gave this reward for faithful service: Revelation 2.10 - "Ye shall have tribulation ten days; be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life": Revelation 2.26 - "He that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations": Revelation 3.11/12 - "Behold, I come quickly, hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name".

No longer obscurity in the coming day. Jesus will have said, "Friend, come up higher" even to the New Jerusalem. "Amen, Lord, come quickly". The Psalmist said, "The righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance," and most certainly their names will be entered in the Lamb's book of life. Dr. Maclaren said, "After all, the apostles were not the real workers in the church, but Christ, and had the apostles been all important we should have had minute and detailed accounts of their career". Most certainly scripture says but little about even the chief of the apostles, and some, as James and Judas, it dismisses in almost absolute silence, all for the apparent reason that it is the Bible idea to concentrate upon Christ as the all-important person. For what is Paul and what is Apollos? And we may add what are Peter and John and James and Andrew? What are they but bondslaves who carried the Word as they were commissioned by Christ? Through their word men believed, every one as the Lord God gave them. They were instruments through whom the Divine Power made itself felt. It was not they that did the work: the excellency of the power was of God, and not of themselves. The real worker in the church was Christ. So these two apostles are just mentioned and then dismissed without a word.

- (A) From another passage we have learned that Matthew the publican was also a son of an Alphaeus. Could he have been brother to James the Less (Mikros Gk)? If this is so, then Mary the wife of Alphaeus must have been a mother of two of the apostles.
- (B) Which brings up a moot point. Did Salome's request that her two sons James and John should be given the senior posts in the Kingdom arise from her enmity against the sons of Alphaeus?
- (C) Why should not her two sons be granted that privilege?
- (D) Could the same accusation be levelled at Peter and Andrew? Most likely, we believe. However, what high honour had Mary wife the Alphaeus? And when we read that she was amongst the women who watched the cross and came to the sepulchre, it is impossible to resist the belief that it was largely due to her influence that her sons were amongst the twelve, and when we realise that Salome, mother of Zebedee's sons, was there also, we see how much motherhood did for Jesus.

To conclude this study we will investigate their names. What do they tell us? They are -

(A) James or Jacob the Less

Heb. Supplanter - to catch by the heel.

The lesser or perhaps younger son of Alphæus, or was he minute by stature?

Gk. Mikros.

(B) Jude or Judas	or Lebbaeus	Thaddeus
The praise of Yah	Confessing or praising	Large hearted Man of convenience

Matthew 10.3, Mark 3.18, Luke 6.16.

The fighting qualities and determination of James are matched with the large-heartedness of Judas, for in his confession of service, Judas praised Yah. He was a man of convenience for his Lord. Wherever he was called to serve, it was done (and this by both of them) with largeness of heart and to the praise of Yah. Consequently their names will be enrolled in the city of honour, the New Jerusalem, to the praise of Yah (Romans 2.29). In the one recorded saying attributed to Judas - not Iscariot - this Judas asked (John 14.22), "Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us and not unto the world?" We have a shrewd hint that Judas, like Simon, was not unsympathetic to the Zealot's cause. This information is, of course, 'tentative' but rather 'dogmatic' we think, but if this was so, then the lessons that shook Simon the Zealot in Gethsemane would equally apply to him and it is quite significant that Jesus continues in John 14.23, saying just what we thought was required as a corrective. Jesus answered and said unto him, "If a man love me, he will keep my words and my Father will love him and we will come unto him and make our abode with him". John 14.30 would sound as a death knell to a Zealot's cause - "The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me." Did the large-heartedness of Judas arise out of his zeal for the Lord? Once as Israel without knowledge, just partisanship? Here we find Jesus outlining, as we have thought before, the real channel for such emotion to run in, our love to Himself and of course the Father, and the result, says Jesus, is something that neither Simon nor Judas had known before - John 14.27, "peace". His peace he left with them, brought about through love and devotion to the Father. This peace cannot be had by a world torn with strife and bitterness in 1968, and however zealous one may be to help Britain, peace recedes further into the background. But we can have it - the peace of Christ - not as the world giveth. Judas would recall this exhortation after the descent of the Holy Spirit, when that peace became his. In like measure this peace can be ours today.

Judas had a threefold name which is rather curious. It is thought that perhaps he changed the last one to get rid of its evil association. The chosen symbol for him is the ship, because he was a missionary thought to be a fisherman.

- (A) It is said that Judas went to preach the Gospel in Edessa near the Euphrates river. There he healed many and many believed in the name of the Master. Judas went from there to preach the Gospel in other places. He was killed with arrows at Ararat.
- (B) James was a man of strong character and one of the most fiery type. Tradition tells that he also died as a martyr and his body was sawn in pieces. The saw became his apostolic symbol. Zondervan Bible.

CHAPTER 11

Judas Iscariot : the man whom Jesus could not make

In turning our thoughts to the last of the original twelve we do so with sorrow and as the Zondervan Bible says, "Judas, the man who became traitor, is the supreme enigma of the New Testament because it is so hard to see how anyone who was so close to Jesus, who saw so many miracles and heard so much of the Master's teaching, could ever betray him into the hands of his enemies." We have emphasised before that he figures always last and have drawn a parallel along with Ahira of Naphtali in the tribal lists of Numbers, whose name meant "a brother of evil" : Matthew 10.4, Mark 3.19, Luke 6.19, Numbers 1.15. Of his origin again we cannot be dogmatic, only suggestive. It is thought that the name Iscariot could mean a man of Kerioth (Joshua 15.25 - a city of Judea). Probably he was the only Judean among the twelve, and he must have had some talent in accountancy, because he was made treasurer to the apostles and therefore among the leaders. This point has often puzzled the writer. The obvious man, or so it would appear, to look after the finances would be Matthew the ex revenue man. Was Judas appointed, or did he take over himself? One thing we are absolutely certain of. He was a covetous man and at times he used his position as treasurer of the band to pilfer from the common purse (John 12.6).

There is no certain reason why Judas betrayed his Lord, and as we study his record, we should keep in mind the stark fact that it was not his betrayal that put Jesus on the cross. It was our sins!

The treasurer held a prominent place in the twelve, and as John reclined at the right hand of Jesus "on his bosom" at the Last Supper, Judas was on the left, and this is why Jesus could say to him "That thou doest, do quickly" (John 13.1/2, 21/30). Then another point emerges - the request by Salome concerning the two places of honour in the Kingdom. From this point of view, John was already there at the right hand of Jesus. Would the one who would be heir apparent be James? - to receive the treasury, thus displacing Judas from his vantage point. No wonder the ten disciples rose up against them. It represented to the ten an absolute take-over bid, as we should say today.

The city of Kerioth (Joshua 15.25) is also known as Kerioth Hezran or Hazor, the name being a descriptive term meaning "joining enclosures, adjoining pastures, cities of verdure" etc., and when we add this information to Judas - the praise of Yah - we can deeply see the possibilities in this man selected by Jesus for apostleship. A strong connection is seen in the Song 4.12 etc., where the Bride is spoken of as "a garden enclosed, a spring shut up, for her Lord" and later on in Song 4.15 she is also designated "a fountain of gardens" (other than her own) and "a well of living waters". This is where Judas Iscariot missed out. If he had acted true according to his name, then because he had "joined enclosures and adjoining pastures" in our language, he had passed on the Truth to others, by life and mouth, thinking more of their estate than his own. Because he had "enclosed" himself for the Truth, opening only to the voice of his Master, then he would have become "a fountain" to other gardens and "a well of living waters" to those around him, and the final application of Judas which we have mentioned previously, "praised of Yah", would have been found in him. But very sorrowfully we determine the undeniable facts, all that Judas did (as far as we are advised in Scripture) was for himself. He had one of the highest positions among the twelve, was entrusted with the common money bag, followed Jesus for three years, heard His words and saw His miracles, and as a final gesture from Jesus was handed the sop, a signal honour for a special guest, but even after this he betrayed his Master for a paltry sum, and sealed his wickedness with a traitor's kiss, and died by his own hand, in Aceldama, the field of blood.

From this we gather that Judas utterly failed to live up to his name and birthplace. How awful for a man with such promise to sink to these depths of despair and remorse.

We often pondered over the kin of Judas, who were they? Apparently Judeans. Could it possibly be that John gives us some indication as to who were his family and how Judas was attracted to Christ? As Christ drew near "His hour" we are told "they made him a supper at Bethany" (John 12.1/3). Mark 14.3 offers the added information that this was not only the house of Martha, Mary and Lazarus, but also of Simon the leper, meaning that by comparing the two records together we arrive at the conviction that Simon could have been the father of the three. If this be so, then the following queries occur to the writer :

- (A) Why are Martha and Mary apparently still at home, since for women not to marry was a terrible burden to carry? - because it was the Jewish belief that such would not be able to become the mother of the Christ.
- (B) Why was Lazarus still at home, because the terrible scandal could be attached to him, that he would never be the father of Messiah? (such was the belief at the time).
- (C) It would appear that the taint of this disease had frustrated the idea of marriage for each of them.
- (D) Now John (12.4) lays emphasis on Judas being "Simon's son". He was in Simon the leper's house at this time and was a Judean, as Martha, Mary and Lazarus were.
- (E) Bethany was only 15 furlongs from Jerusalem (John 11.18) and "many Jews" came to the burial of Lazarus, so it would appear that both Simon and Judas were of Judah or Judea.
- (F) Then it is our conviction that Judas was the son of Simon the leper, and brother of Martha, Mary and Lazarus.
- (G) One other point appears rather obvious - that for Jesus and his company to have been in Simon's house, Simon must have been healed, otherwise, according to the Law he would dwell in a separate or 'several' house (Leviticus 13.45/46).
- (H) A second point follows closely. Jesus must have cured Simon, to make this supper possible, and possibly a third point -
- (I) That it was due to this healing of the father of Judas by Jesus that Judas became attracted to the Truth.

This is the only possible conception the writer can find regarding the kinsfolk of Judas. Of course, it is only suggestive, but not too tentative.

- (A) A little later in time, John records in John 13.21, "When Jesus had said this, He was troubled in spirit and testified and said, verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me". Before Him, only a few hours away, lay the Garden, and the Judgment Hall, and the Cross, and the Grave. He was rapidly approaching the supreme crisis of His life. The hour was coming very quickly.
- (B) And as He sat at supper with the twelve in the upper room that night, Jesus, according to John's testimony, was "troubled in spirit". What wonder, we say, that Jesus was troubled in spirit? He knew what was before Him. The prospect of the bloodlike sweat and the spitting and the scourging and the nailing to the bitter tree was enough to make even the Son of God exceeding sorrowful even unto death.
- (C) We would never have reached the cross (at best the present writer would have died of heart failure at the thought of it).
- (D) But John observed that night that it was none of these things that moved Jesus so strongly.
- (E) It was not the thought of His suffering in the garden or on the cross that brought that look of pain into his face as He reclined at supper.
- (F) Not even the thought of the agony in the garden or those shameful indignities of the judgment hall or those awful tortures of the crucifixion that troubled Him. None of these,
- (G) But the thought of the treachery of a friend, for when Jesus had said this, He was troubled in spirit and said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me". This thought troubled Jesus very much.

- (E) In this incident we see just how human Jesus was, and that His emotions were strong and keen and very intense. The words "troubled" and "groaned" as presented by John are of tremendous significance in deciding (as far as we are permitted to go) the depths of His feeling, and would repay diligent study for anyone sufficiently interested.
- (I) For instance, in John 11.33 we find it had to do with the death of Lazarus. The R.V. gives that when Jesus saw Mary weeping and the Jews that followed her, wailing, "He groaned in the spirit and was troubled". Mary's grief was true and she wept silently, whereas "the Jews" would consist of professional wailers for the occasion, shrieking like traditional Banshees. Was it not the "half" belief of Mary, and the total unbelief of the Jews that visibly upset Jesus so much? The R.V. margin gives for "groaned in the spirit" "was moved with indignation in the spirit". It would appear then that anger was expressed visibly by Jesus at this time, and for "was troubled" we have "troubled Himself".

Temple in his readings in John's Gospel, puts it admirably. . "The passage represents the Lord as passing through a time of most severe tension; the word 'groaning' does not suggest grief, but tensivity of feeling, with an indication to indignation rather than sorrow. He is full of sympathy, truly feeling with, and not only for the bereaved sisters, 'Jesus wept' (John 11.35). But this giving way to sorrow, however natural the sorrow, is alien from Him, so that some antagonism is mingled with His sympathy, and the tension finds expression through inarticulate sounds and physical tremors (viz. "troubled Himself" - A.H.) It is not only that His relation to those around Him is a divided one; but He is preparing for a mighty act of power (viz. to be done in Him - A.H.). His signs were not wrought without cost to Him. There was self giving in them, and when a sufferer drew healing from Him without His knowledge, he was conscious that the power proceeding from Him had gone forth". Mark 5.30. See Blue in Scripture for this section.

Hoskyn and Davies in The Fourth Gospel remark on the similar passage, "The author of the Gospel shows no tendency to remove from Jesus's passionate emotion. It is, however, His intention to concentrate that emotion upon the sight of human unbelief and upon that grim reality of the death of Jesus which is the act of the love of God for the salvation of men (John 12.22, cp. Heb.5.7). The emphatic Johannine description of the grief of Jesus does not spring from a desire to contrast His behaviour with that of the poise and balance of the ideal stoical good man (Holtzman) but from the intense Christian sense of the depths of suffering which it was necessary for the Son of God to endure in order to effect human salvation. In the grief and suffering of Jesus the love of God is manifested. In this sense the explanation of the Jews is a correct explanation. 'See how He loved him' (John 11.36). The only two other references to Christ being so disturbed are found in John 12.27, 13, 21, that last quotation which commenced this short survey, and it reveals the depths of His inward reaction to 'the treachery of a friend' ".

In a minor sense, we all in one way or another have to undergo this inward commotion.

- (1) Have we ever been caught in the machination of a friend, and that because of money?
- (2) Have we ever played Judas to others and more particularly to the Lord?
- (3) Both have happened within the experience of most.

If so, no doubt the Lord will have our sympathy at this time, and also our plea of repentance. Paul saw this in its right setting in 1 Timothy 6.6 - "the love of money". In the Old Testament no doubt Judas could be found in many parts - Ahithophel with David, Gehazi with Elisha, and so on. A diligent search reveals many such parallels: of course, Judas is as old as man. The Psalms particularly are expressive of this treachery of a friend, with the result to both traitor and friend alike. Psalm 41 is indeed prophetic in this connection - "Blessed is he that considereth the poor" or "weak one" (R.V.) - which Judas did not. Nor did Ahithophel, for very personal reasons. Blunt has delighted us now for **years** with his pungent remarks: through him many years ago we found that Bathsheba

was his (i.e. Ahithophel's) granddaughter (see his "Undesigned Coincidences"), whereas Judas could have no personal relations whatsoever with Jesus.

Psalm 41.11, "Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me", "hath violently spurned me", "hath shaken off the dust of his feet on me" - an expression of intense distaste. This is what Judas did to Jesus, at least in essence. The whole sordid situation is depicted in Psalm 64 and others. In these we have heard graphically portrayed all that is found in John 11.45/57.

- Psalm 64
- (1) The dastardly conceived plot against Jesus.
 - (2) The secret counsel of the wicked.
 - (3) The bitter words shot like arrows at
 - (4) The perfect Passover Lamb.
 - (5) The diligent search to trap Jesus.
 - (6) The snare of the false witnesses.
- Psalm 64.6 The innate depths to which they are prepared to go, and (7/10) their conclusion - "Their own tongues shall be made to fall" in their heads, and ultimate degradation.

These are but two Psalms. There are many more available to the ready mind.

Finally under the Psalms, may we look at the particular "Psalm of Judas"?

(This is the designation I gave it in the margin of my Bible).

Psalm 109.8 Peter quotes from it in Acts 1.20, "Let his habitation be desolate and let no man dwell therein; and his office (or bishoprick) let another take". This Psalm is known as an imprecatory one, and the critics deny its Messianic application, as not being in the spirit of Christ. How little do they know of our Lord, or of the Father of Whom He was the moral counterpart, as He himself said to Philip. There is goodness and severity (Romans 11.22). Again, Jesus Himself claimed that "whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him, but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Spirit (R.V.) it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this age (R.V.), neither in the world to come" (Matthew 12.31/32).

If we work out our exposition on this basis, then not only shall we observe how inept and inadequate the critics are, but how true this statement is. As Ahithophel, he, Judas, had lifted up his hand against the Lord's anointed in flesh and word. Therefore the terrible words spoken by Jesus in Matthew 12.32 had fallen on Judas, and Psalm 109 gives the details of the Almighty's punishment upon one who had seen the glory of the Father in Jesus, yet had sold him for the paltry sum of the price of a slave. This Psalm will bear a diligent enquiry as to why the wrath should descend on this unhappy man. Psalm 109.8 - "Let his days be few and let another take his office", is the verse identified by Peter in his discourse. Psalm 109.16 is the next connecting point, as verses 9-15 are in parenthesis, showing the results of the sin of Judas. Verse 16 - "Because that he remembered not to show mercy, but persecuted the poor and needy man, that he might even slay the broken in heart", records the terrible conclusion of the betrayal. "That he might slay the broken in heart" - the definition cannot be better placed, for such was the death of Jesus, and so on: let our readers press on and find the joy of discovery for themselves in the wonders of the Word.

- These thoughts bring one to the conclusion that the case of
- A. Judas is the saddest of all those who came in contact with Jesus during His earthly ministry.
 - B. Others sinned grievously (and who amongst us is immune?), but Judas sinned more against light than they all.
 - C. Simon Peter denied his Lord under sudden impulse when caught in the toils of circumstances, but Judas sinned with deliberate and calculated treachery.
 - D. Pilate sinned against Roman law according to his own confession, but he palliated his conscience like some other politicians, by laying the blame upon the Sanhedrin.
 - E. The sin of Caiaphas was greater than that of Pilate, as Jesus said (John 18.11).
 - F. The Sanhedrin gleefully accepted their share of the guilt for the death of Jesus (John 19.7).

- G. The populace enthusiastically exclaimed, "His blood be upon us, and on our children" (Matthew 27.25). Guilt all round and enough for all.
- H. Enemies became friends; Sadducees, Pharisees and Herodians buried the hatchet against each other for the moment, to vent their spleen against Jesus, the common object of their hatred. Herod and Pilate (Psalm 41.7/9, Psalm 64, Psalm 22 etc.) also settled their differences.
- I. Judas, however, stands above all the rest as the supreme traitor for all time.
- J. Plummer says in Hastings D.B., "The enormity of the sin of Judas consisted in its being against all bonds of discipleship and friendship, against light, against mercies, affection, trust, warning, and his own promises and preaching." Keim argues that "it is impossible to think that the traitor of Jesus would have been invented if he had not been guilty".
- K. It is quite true to say that with all the minute research into the details of the life of Jesus in the Gospels, no serious effort has been made to show that Judas did not betray his Lord.
- L. Truly Judas does not stand alone in the history of Christianity, though he is the "head" this time and not the "tail" as in the lists of the apostles. Regrettably there are those who once preached the glory of Jesus, who have lived to curse His Name to the end.

Specious arguments have been raised to try to relieve Judas of real blame for his conduct. The commonest plea is that he was the chosen vessel to betray Christ so that Christ could die for sinners: that it was God's plan that Christ should die on the cross and that this could only happen by betrayal to the Sanhedrin because of Christ's power with the people - obviously an "offshoot" of the Sanhedrin's thoughts when they feared to take Jesus "because of the people". But this theory very lightly casts aside the problem of evil and human responsibility. We have no real ground for saying that Judas was put among the twelve in order that he might betray Jesus. Certainly Jesus did not say that He selected Judas because he knew that he would betray Him - or such is the view of the writer. Although we read in John 6.64, "For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who would betray Him", it is plainly stated from God's point of view (and therefore Christ's) that "God hath not appointed us to wrath", and let it be said that punishment only descends upon guilty heads on this plane. The term "son of perdition" was well and truly earned by Judas (John 17.12). That Judas should ultimately betray Jesus was known to Jesus at least 12 months before the end (John 6.70), though the exposure doesn't seem to seep through to the rest of the twelve at this time. Already, in John 6.66 (note the numbers here - 666 - the number of the beast) the heart of Judas was with those who stood aside from Jesus. It has been made out by others that Judas was a sort of hero, in that he tried out of excess patriotism and loyalty, to force the hand of Jesus and compel him to be King, in open rebellion to Cæsar. The idea is that Judas disliked the refusal of Jesus to respond to the popular clamour in Galilee a year before His death (John 6.15). The triumphant entry gave Jesus a great following, but even so He showed no intention of following it up in a political way. If Jesus were in the hands of the Sanhedrin, the people would rally to his standard and throw off the Roman yoke.

So the argument runs, but it is very feeble, and inconclusive, and overlooks too many items that demand explanation, especially the fact that Jesus calls him "a devil", or "diabolos" Gk. one who is opposite, a liar in principle, utterly opposed to God's purpose in Jesus. The argument is basically wrong in every conception. This could never be. The view that Judas was wholly evil, without any element of good, that he even sought out a place among the twelve that he might have an opportunity to betray Jesus, is in our opinion very much wide of the truth. Beyond doubt, Judas fell foul of "diabolos" intention at an early time in his walking with Jesus. Both Luke 22.3 and John 13.27, say that Satan, the spirit of adverseness, entered Judas just before the betrayal of Jesus. We have seen that Jesus made reference to the "diabolos" in Judas 12 months before this time. Evidently, then, this adversity and spirit of lying slander etc. was no new and sudden bent of mind in Judas. It is evident from John 13.2 that this spirit of diabolos in Judas had borne fruit in determined activity and that decidedly the

notion (adverse Satan) of betraying his Lord had been brooded over in his secret communings with himself. We know the way these things begin within us. Probably at the first the suggestion was more or less unconscious, but finally he became fully aware of his own purpose which later developed into a seeking of opportunity to betray Jesus into the hands of the temple authorities (Matthew 26. 14/16). Undoubtedly this unhappy man played with temptation until finally he became the tool of his evil intents. This is the last analysis that is the story of many a sordid life., Many of the younger generation today will find this experience true in their exploration of drug and sex: people usually become degenerate by degrees. There was a time when resistance was possible, ultimately it is not. Remember the advice of John: "Little children, keep yourselves from idols". When we are old it is too late. Clearly, as we have indicated before, the 'son of perdition' brought it on himself. "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6.23): this designation is truly earned. The same principle is outlined in the remarks of Jesus about "playing to the gallery" in life. "Verily", He said, "they have their reward", or, in other words, they have had their receipt in full. There is nothing else to follow (Matthew 6.16). Jesus perceived this tendency in Judas early on, and undoubtedly recognised him as "the traitor" and began to warn him; first of all impersonally, probably unnoticed by Judas, and then openly. Again the warnings against hypocrisy were either undiscerned or unheeded. When, after a time, they became personal, they were in all probability bitterly resented as 'flings' and proof of Christ's dislike for Judas, which could not be further from the truth. Jesus did everything in His power, apart from forcing Judas to relinquish his evil plan, finally giving him the sop at the last supper, making Judas the special guest for the occasion - a great honour indeed, but the die had been cast, the bargain was made for twenty pieces of silver, about £5 - £30 sterling. When Jesus saw that he could not persuade Judas from this course, and realising that His hour had fully come, He said, "That thou doest, do quickly" - "Get on with it Judas" (John 13.1/28).

It would be hardly possible for Judas to take to himself the general denunciation of covetousness and hypocrisy, or even the implication that the light in the disciples might possibly be darkness (Luke 11.35). The statement of Jesus when He said that one of them was a devil (John 7.70) is plain and distinct to us as we try to analyse the situation, but our viewpoint is tinged with a true knowledge of the dastardly betrayal and we are not in the grip of a relentless and perverted ego, as was Judas at that time; he would feel justified in passing on the epithet to others, as David did when Nathan accosted him with the parable of the ewe lamb (2 Samuel 12.1/7). Unless we are in a mind to receive these truths, they usually pass above our heads, as particularly belonging to someone else. In modern parlance, we don't want to know about it. However, at the end, the language of Jesus was unmistakable. Judas was absolutely confirmed in his purpose, nothing would deter him. "Ye are clean, but not all" (John 12.10). "He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me" - quote from Psalm 41.9 by Jesus (John 13.18). Jesus put it still more pointedly, "One of you shall betray me, even he that eateth with me" (Mark 14.18). The disciples were unaware as to who the traitor was, and looked upon each other to see any tell-tale signs that would mark the guilty. Sorrowfully and amazed they asked, "Is it I?" Judas did the same thing brazenly (Matthew 26.25). He would save his face as long as he could, although he was well aware that Jesus understood him thoroughly. Yet he persisted until some have thought that Jesus and he were in league with one another in this evil project. We find the disciples actually questioned each other on the subject (Luke 22.23), but they failed to grasp the significance of the sign when Jesus gave the sop to Judas, as he indicated in response to John's question at the suggestion of Peter (John 13.23/26).

We have already indicated that Judas got the place of honour at this last feast, a circumstance that would blacken his character still more. But Judas understood, at least, the instruction, and complied swiftly - "What thou doest, do quickly". He was absolutely committed to his terrible act, not "wholly in the grasp of the Devil" as it has been said. "He . . . went immediately out, and it was night". The most pregnant words in Scripture, Temple thought.

Judas went to his end as 'the son of perdition'. Well and truly earned, one would think. Obviously it is not possible to explain the career of Judas by one motive. It is not possible to explain the conduct of any ordinary man in that way. With Jesus it is different. One will dominated Him, and that of the Father. "I came not to do my own will, but the will of Him who sent me" (John 6.38), and it was voluntary submission in entirety. Mixed motives control most men and women; life is really most complex: with Judas it appears to be dominantly so. We think it to be true that Judas did not consciously set out to be a traitor; most likely he would have been horrified at the suggestion that he was the object of Psalm 109 and the other Psalms and Scriptures that foretold his default. We have set out our thoughts as to what attracted him to Jesus at the first. Attracted he was, and was called by Jesus as were the others. Like the other disciples he brought a pre-conceived conception of a Political Messiah, and held on to this in spite of the teaching of Jesus. It was not until Pentecost (Acts 2) that the rest saw the truth about that fundamental point, and Judas was dead by then.

Possible pointers to some of the reasons that led Judas astray:

- (1) Ambition could have been one of them. It has been thought that Judas considered himself to be the leader of the twelve. A.T. Robertson tells us that the best manuscripts of Mark 14.10 call Judas "the one" or first of the twelve. We have entered into some of the many disputes on this very point as to who was to be the leader among them: Peter versus John etc. Might not Judas enter into the field as a hot candidate? During the closing 12 months of His life Jesus took great pains to explain to the disciples the spiritual nature of the Kingdom in their age, and by degrees brought them to the fact of His death at Jerusalem. Peter, as we know, openly rebuked his Lord for speaking in what he considered such a despondent way, and brought upon himself the epithet "Satan". Even this example did not stop Judas, and as disappointed ambition and rancour entered his breast, he finally decided to follow through with his plan, carrying finally in his heart hopes for a position in a new political kingdom rather than shadowy hopes about a spiritual kingdom. If we connect the sequence, after the glory of the triumphant entry into Jerusalem on the Sunday before the crucifixion, it must not be overlooked that on the Tuesday morning in the temple, Jesus made open breach with the Sanhedrin and made it impossible for the religious leaders to accept him as Messiah (that is, from their misguided conceptions of Messiah). On Olivet Jesus had delivered an extended discourse full of woe and disaster for the city. Pessimism suddenly and powerfully gripped at the heart of Judas at the turn of events. Like Gehazi of old, he decided to save what he could out of the wreck, and so delivered Jesus to the rulers for a paltry 20 pieces of silver (Zechariah 11).
- (2) Jealousy usually finds its part in such incidents. Judas was the only 'outsider' from Judea. The rest were from Galilee, and everyone who moves from one area to another, and from one's home ecclesia to another, can feel, we should imagine, a little of what Judas felt among the disciples.
 - a) If Judas was the brother of the three at Bethany, there would be the same uncertainty about himself as about them, with his father being a leper.
 - b) Not only so, but it appears that the household at Bethany were well placed. This we gather from their having wealth enough to hire professional mourners at the funeral of Lazarus, to possess a cave of their own for burial; and the way in which Martha entertained the band at supper, and finally of having Pharisee friends from Jerusalem, who took the trouble to come to the burial (John 11 and 12).
 - c) It is not beyond possibility that Judas thought himself higher in social standing than the other apostles, and that he thought Jesus was giving preferential treatment to the others, who were Galileans, unlike himself, and honouring men of inferior powers, in preference to himself.
 - d) Again, if Judas were the brother of the three at Bethany, he would feel undoubted resentment at the public rebuke given by Jesus at the

family home when he, Judas, had made his protest against the apparent waste of money by Mary for the ointment (John 12.5). We find a rather lovely point of coincidental proof of this union.

- e) How did Judas know what amount of perfume was contained in the jar, unless he had intimate knowledge, as a member of the family, of its contents? Mark 14.4, Matthew 26.8 record that the rest of the twelve gave instant voice in support of Judas and his criticism. The rebuke of Jesus had cut him to the quick, and the breach between him and his Lord and Master is now wide open. The fact that none of them could follow Mary in her deed brings home the often stated fact that "none of them realised that Christ would die", otherwise they, along with Jesus, would have praised her.

(3) Covetousness played its ugly hand in the fall of this hapless man. John again reminds us of his pilfering from the petty cash (John 12.6), but John's comment is made in the light of the after development. At this time no one suspected him of financial crookedness. He was the treasurer of the company and had won his place of responsible leadership because of practical business ability. The covetousness of Judas appeared to him as economy and good business sense. Many of us would have excused our own stinginess by polite terms of like nature. "The love of money" cheapens a man's whole nature and does much to destroy the finer qualities. This comes out in Judas as he asks in blunt and brutal language, "What are ye willing to give me, and I will deliver him to you?" One point comes out remarkably clearly by contrast in John 14.22, "Judas saith unto Him, not Iscariot, 'Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?'" We have dealt with this so far as Lebbæus goes. Our point now is that we never find Judas addressing Jesus as 'Lord': 'Master' or 'Rabbi' yes, but never 'Lord'. Did he harbour not only resentment but also jealousy of Jesus in his dark mind? We do not know, yet these words do appear to have a singular emphasis, do they not?

Putting the best construction on the betrayal, one could say that this was an act of angry disappointment and thwarted ambition, but he stuck to his bargain with deliberation and pertinacity. He had plenty of opportunity to change his mind and to return his money. But Scripture agrees that he sought opportunity to deliver Jesus to the Sanhedrin. The shameful contract was thorough to the letter. Judas came back and took his accustomed place with the eleven, who to the end suspected nothing. In fact, in The Testimony for January 1968, brother James Carter points out that in Luke 24.33 the two disciples who had journeyed with Jesus to Emmaus returned to Jerusalem and found the eleven together, and them that were with them; Thomas was not there (John 20.24), so this could mean that Judas had not yet gone to his own place.

The suicide of Judas finally ended the sordid tale, except to mention the fact that Aeldama, the Place of Blood, was bought by his 'blood money' and his own blood was the first to lie there. The epithet 'kiss of Judas' arose out of his so greeting Jesus in Gethsemane. He kissed Jesus excessively (Gk. Mark 14.43), adding insult to injury.

There are two accounts of the death of Judas, one in Matthew 27.4/10, and the other in Acts 1.18/19. They differ in several details, but it is possible to harmonise them if one wishes to do so: briefly -

Judas may have hanged himself and have fallen down, the rope breaking, and burst asunder. The field could have been called the Field of Blood because his blood was shed on it and because also the Sanhedrin bought it with blood money, the price of the death of Jesus, and so have used it as a potter's field for burying strangers. At any rate, the Chief Priests apparently took the money that they had spurned, but used it for this special purpose, and so on.

In closing these thoughts on Judas we call to mind that the greatest tragedy of the ages carried with it the treachery of this unhappy man, and the falterings of Simon Peter, two of the leading apostles. They all deserted for a while and fled like sheep without a shepherd, as Jesus said they would. But Peter sinned,

sincerely repented, and came back and made good. But Judas "went over the cliff", or, as A.T. Robertson said, "He went down with the Niagara flood". He went down to the doom that he had prepared for himself. Harrington Lees says that Judas went down like a diver, but forgot to pull the lifeline. He never asked forgiveness. Did he realise that because he had lifted up his hand and tongue against the Lord's anointed, there could be no forgiveness for him? Or was the remorse of Judas in keeping with all the rest of his character, in that it was not real repentance, but only sorrow at the outcome of his schemes? After the actual condemnation of Jesus, Judas began to see himself in his true light. The blur of anger and resentment subsided enough for him to see his own portrait, and his reviving conscience whipped him like a scorpion's sting. "He had betrayed the innocent blood". In our heart we still think that Judas never thought that Jesus would allow Himself to be crucified. How many times had he seen Jesus withdrawn from grasping hands that would have slain Him? What Judas, along with the other disciples, did not realise, in those days, was that the "hour" of Jesus had not come. What a terrible shock it was to him when he realised that he, Judas, had hastened on that "hour". We are all caught in the web of circumstances, and at times we seem the victims of destiny that we cannot control. The drastic lesson arising from a consideration of Judas is the point that we make our spiritual destinies ourselves.

- (A) Terrible as was the fate of Judas, one must conclude that he had within him true possibilities at his beginning, as did Simon Peter,
- (B) the difference being that Simon, in spite of his ups and downs, at least became a Rock, while Judas became a 'devil'.
- (C) Both were under the tutelage of Jesus.
- (D) Both had the same privileges.
- (E) Both were men of weakness and frailty.
- (F) One fought the devil after momentary departure. The other courted the devil and listened to his blandishments.

It is terribly sad to contemplate such a fate as that which befell Judas.

- (1) He alone of the apostles had his name blotted out from the book of life.
- (2) He alone among the twelve was refused a foundation in the New Jerusalem.
- (3) It is a high and holy privilege to be allowed to come into the higher circle of Christ's followers.
- (4) It is a dread catastrophe to see such a one sink into the pit from which he was digged. "It were indeed good for that man if he had not been born" (Matthew 26.24).

How often have we thought with great sadness over the tragic downfall of Judas. He is a perpetual warning to each one of us, and we pray the Father that we shall not follow his ways. "Godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out, and having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil, which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (1 Timothy 6.6/10).

These words could read as a fitting epitaph to Judas, and the exhortation to us follows: "But thou, O man of God, flee these things, and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses" (1 Timothy 6.11/12). Such must conclude our thoughts on the last of the twelve - a veritable brother of evil, the man Jesus could not make, or could we phrase it "the man who might have been" ? We have given ample evidence why we are sure, and pray that we may avoid the pitfalls into which Judas fell. The apostolic symbol is a hangman's noose or a money purse with pieces of silver falling from it. Zondervan Bible.

CHAPTER 12

Paul - the man born out of due time

Judas should have concluded our studies on the twelve, but we have only eleven foundations apostolically in the New Jerusalem, so we thought it fitting to finish with the Gentile Apostle from little Benjamin, and make the foundation four square. After all, he is our own particular representative, that is if he did make up the twelve: again the study is suggestive. We have brought forward several of the basic thoughts concerning Paul in Chapter 2, when we considered his case for the vacant position among the twelve.

- (A) We saw how Paul completely fitted the various names that were given him, and that from being a "son of sorrow" in reality, found his place as the "son of the right hand" in the service of Christ his Lord. Paul was a man who turned his back on what the world would call the main chances of life to become a Christian.
- (B) A free born Roman citizen, and Greek also, already a Master among the Rabbis in the Pharisaical tradition, a man who had the best of both worlds in his hands. He was deeply skilled in the next best thing to the Law of Moses, that was the Roman Law. His Epistles are masterpieces from this prospect, particularly Romans, where Paul blends the Jewish thought of the Law of Moses into the wording and technical phrasing of the Roman Law. The versatility of Paul is revealed in this truly wonderful linkage. For again he called to his aid the Greek language, making in Scriptural language "a threefold cord that could not be broken" or "is not easily broken" to be correct. Much of English jurisprudence today is based on the Law of Moses and the Roman Law.
- (C) Why did Paul take such measures? Think about the enormity of his work as the Apostle to the Gentiles. Peter and the rest were sent to their own people in general, but Paul had to break out "far hence unto the Gentiles" (Acts 22.21), and he had to create a medium of understanding for his converts so that they might grasp with greater fulness the Word of Life. What should he do?
- (D) Wherever Paul went in the service of the Truth, he would find the Roman Law very much to the fore and revered throughout the habitable. He himself was a past master at it, capable of pleading his own defence against Cæsar and against other ruling bodies, as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles.
- (E) One illustration must suffice, and it is one of the utmost importance. We find the quotation in Romans 8.16/17: "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God, and if children then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together". The words underlined are they which have caused much trouble - "the heirs of God". Again Paul insists "because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father. So that thou art no longer a bondslave but a son, and if a son then an heir through God" (Galatians 4.6/7). "The heirs of God" is an expression with which we are so familiar, that its peculiarity escapes the ordinary reader. The peculiarity consists in the following fact.

Muntz, in "Rome, Paul and the early church", gives us the following details. "According to English Law, heirship connotes death, the death of the father to whom the son succeeds, but God is eternal. Hence at first sight the phrase 'heir of God' strikes a reader as being unwarranted and absurd. Let us examine that phrase. We shall first take the expression 'heirs of God', as it is commonly understood by an English reader, and consider the two conclusions together. According to our law a man may have, during his lifetime, an 'heir presumptive' or an 'heir apparent', but strictly speaking, he can have no heir. It is death, the death of the ancestor which brings the heir into existence." Blackstone says on Title by Descent, "By law no inheritance can vest, nor can any person, be the heir of another till the ancestor is dead". Hence we find that, according to the common interpretation, the absurd deduction is involved, that God, like man, is capable of death, for, as we have seen, without the death of the person from whom he inherits, the heir does not exist.

We pass from that preposterous conclusion to the only other alternative. By it we are obliged to assume that the apostle employed the expression in a manner both vague and pointless. Such an assumption would be entirely at variance with the precise and logical methods of the writer, and would defeat the very purpose he had in view, namely to bring home to the hearts of his readers the certainty and indefeasible nature of the eternal inheritance to be shared with Christ our joint heir. This remarkable phrase "heirs of God", implying succession to an Eternal Being, cannot be satisfactorily explained by the principles of our law. But the fact that the apostle was using the conceptions of Roman jurisprudence to formulate his theology removes our difficulty. "Heirs" and "inheritance" in Paul's days implied the very reverse of the conceptions involved in the modern use of these terms. A person did not then await the decease of the man whose son he was: at the moment he was born, or constituted a son by adoption, he became an heir.

A further difference to be observed in the principle which obtained in Roman Law has been well put by Sir Henry Law. He compares the Roman conception of inheritance to the notion expressed by our legal maxim "the King never dies", and so the testator was conceived to live on still in his heir. In pure Roman jurisprudence the principle that a man lives on in his heir - the elimination, if one may so speak, of the fact of death - is too obvious for mistake, the centre round which the whole of testamentary and intestate succession is circling (Maine, *Ancient Law*, p.190). Thus birth, not death, according to Roman Law, brought the heir into being. Applying these facts to the figure "heirs of God", we perceive a new import and a loftier meaning. No longer does the expression seem forced or unwarranted. Birth, not death, is the incident which initiated the happy condition of an heir of God. The new birth into the family of God, through faith in Christ Jesus, is the foundation of the right to inheritance. Our claim to sonship rests upon the new relationship established. "Ye are all the sons of God, through faith in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3.26).

Just as the very novelty and sublimity of the glorious truth no doubt caused some to question its reality, so assuredly many readers today fail to apprehend precious aspects of the same truth on account of erroneous interpretation, or overlook them by reason of familiarity with the terms. In the Roman Law Digest, by Julius Paulus, we have a quotation, that a sort of co-partnership existed in the property possessed by the family, and thus the father and his children were joint owners of the family estate. When, therefore, the father dies, it is not correct to say that they inherit his property; rather that they acquire free control of their own. A curious fact of Roman Law bears out this fact. Throughout the records of Roman history, and even in the time of Justinian, who established so much of the older law, the rule was universally observed that if a father wished to disinherit his sons, adopted or otherwise, he must do so in express terms. If he failed to do this, the will whereby he had attempted to give the inheritance to others was absolutely void, and the children inherited, notwithstanding the will, the reason being, as above stated, the law regarded the children as already, before the death of the father, co-proprietors in that inheritance. Those to whom Paul wrote, being fully conversant with the legal aspects of heirship, apprehended the lofty conception set forth in these figures of speech, and as they grew to know the truth the spiritual prerogatives portrayed.

Here and now they were partners with God in the divine patrimony. It is noteworthy that Paul asserts this privilege of spiritual inheritance in close connection with his following statement "that we might receive the adoption of sons". The Son of God was made Son of Man in order that men might become the sons of God, obviously a spiritual status involving inheritance, for "if children, then heirs of God and joint heirs together with Christ" (Romans 8.17). There is a connection with "the sufferings of this present time", or, in other words, "If so be that we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified with him" (Romans 8.17). This suffering here mentioned does not refer to sorrow in general, in which everyone is involved, whether children of God or not. The suffering envisaged is that arising solely from being in union with Christ: such suffering must be involved in our being one of His members. This truth has been stressed before in our studies and finds its answer well and truly within the teaching of the gates of pearl (Rev.21.21)

of the New Jerusalem. What we are now studying is but the Pauline setting of Peter's assurance "but inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, rejoice; that at the revelation of His glory also ye may rejoice with exceeding joy" (1 Peter 4.13). Roman Law did not contemplate - any more than our present law - an inheritance as involving only rights and privileges. The heir was responsible for any liabilities affecting the inheritance, as well as for the performance of any duties which the adopter might choose to place upon him. Thus co-heirs, according to the claims upon the inheritance to which they succeeded. It would be manifestly unjust to permit one co-heir to accept all the benefits and at the same time to refuse the liabilities, thus casting all the burden upon the other co-heir. So we cannot expect to share the glory with Christ and reject the suffering entailed, for "faithful is the saying: If we endure, we shall also reign with Him" (2 Timothy 2.1/12), and to suffer with Christ is but an evidence of our oneness with Him. We must bear the charges with Him, if we would also share the emoluments. But the certainty and the value of the inheritance encouraged the Roman heir to sustain the burden of such liabilities as might be involved in the inheritance. So, too, the child of God can say "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed to usward" (Romans 8.18). The right and title to the eternal inheritance is indefeasible, so that the true co-heir can say "to disinherit me is to disinherit my co-heir, Christ, for His title and mine are joined together in an indissoluble bond of co-heirship; according to the title, we are children of God, and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.

What are our personal claims to this inestimable privilege and what is the proof necessary that we have been adopted into the family of God? More than having a complimentary mention on the ecclesial register? Romans 8.23 is specific. "And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit the redemption of our body". Moffat says that the "first fruits of the spirit" is a technical phrase for "Birth Certificate". The production of these fruits even today is proof that we have been adopted into the family of God, and let us note, that the adopted son's rights were the same as those of the blood relative, and just as rigid legally. What is this Birth Certificate? Where can we obtain it? Paul enlightens us. Galatians 5.22: "But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance" (9 in all for finality). By the demonstration of these fruits we can lay claim to having been adopted into the family of God. This Birth Certificate is the sealing of the Spirit of Promise which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of (R.V.) God's possession unto the praise of His glory (Ephesians 1.13/14).

How do we put these first fruits into action? Can we do it in our own strength? The answer of course is in the negative. We have the splendid assurance of Romans 8.28 (R.V.) "And we know that God worketh all things with them for good". As we are co-partners with God in the inheritance, so we have His help in all things "through Christ who strengthens us". It is obvious that the first fruits look to a future harvest which is, as Romans 8.23 puts it, the "redemption of our body", when we may be conformed to the body of His glory and the faultlessness of the outward man will be united to the holiness of the spiritual life. Therefore, in Roman legal terms, we acquire free control of our inheritance.

From this rather lengthy illustration of the Pauline method we can justly acquire the sense of its importance, for the section we have introduced cuts right into the heart of Christian doctrine. It would be almost unintelligible to the Jew, but readily apprehended by the Roman Gentiles etc.

We said, you will remember, that for the father to disinherit his sons, a distinct writing was necessary. The Romans letter contains this very document against the Jews, placing them on the same plane as the Gentiles. "He counted them all in unbelief" says Paul, "that He might have mercy upon all". See the whole of Romans 11 on this aspect, but particularly verses 31-36. "For God hath concluded them all in unbelief that He might have mercy upon all", both Jew

and Greek. "For as many of you as have been baptised into Christ, have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female. For ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Galatians 3.26/29). "All children of God by faith in Christ Jesus".

This is the way that Paul our apostle and Christ's bondman carried the gospel into the Roman habitable, "turning the world upside down" (Acts 17.6). Of a truth Christ chose the right man for this most difficult task of taking the gospel to the Gentiles, and for him we are most truly thankful. Sir W. Ramsay, Deissman etc., help in their works to uncover the riches of the work of Paul adroitly using the Roman Law to teach the unsearchable riches of Christ. The student does well to make diligent use of their services in this direction. We have been at pains to postulate the fact that "in Christ" there is room for all to participate, from the brilliant minds down the scale to the less brilliant, and possibly the more phlegmatic approach of the unknowns who make up, as we have advanced, the bulk of the stars in number, that is, Abraham's seed in general.

In Paul we discern the scintillating brilliance of the Spirit in both ways.

- (1) First of all by the fact that he himself had felt its edge in his own experience.
- (2) Ably wielding the sword of the Spirit, Stephen utterly routed Paul in the Cilician synagogue, and Paul became the chief witness at the execution of Stephen in consequence. (Acts 6.8/10, 7.56, 8.1). Paul had experienced the power of the Spirit. By antagonism he knew its penetration, and the keenness of its edge.
- (3) It is not without significance that Paul wrote of the sword of the Spirit in the following terms: "The sword of the Spirit is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Hebrews 4.12). This was the imparting of his own experience to the Hebrews, just like Peter's words in 2 Peter 1.19/21. Stress is laid on the fact (v.21), "Prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit". Peter had experienced the power of the Spirit's interpretation in prophecy in Matthew 16.13/17, 16.16/17. Peter answered the question of Jesus "But whom say ye that I am?" "Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God". The joyous answer of Jesus came again. "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven". So, then, because the sword of the Spirit had probed into the inner recesses of Paul's mind and body, he knew its power and persuasion and he could pass on the experience to others.

The remainder of Paul's life was living proof that the "firstfruits" found within him were not a sham, but the absolute truth of the calling of Christ. How completely was the dedication that followed afterwards highlighted many times over in his writings. His part in the foundation is quite beyond doubt and will prove to be a Gate of Pearl, perfection through suffering. "For to me to live is Christ" (Philippians 1.21) became the dominant theme, and so thorough was this devotion that he could say in the same letter that he "counted all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord, and do count them but dung that I might win Christ" (Philippians 3,7/9). Listen to the extent of this devotion, for if our entrance through the Pauline gate has to be achieved, then a devout and sincere following must characterise us.

Deissman writes in his work "St. Paul", somewhat after the following: "With the assurance of Damascus 'Christ in me' and that other assurance of equal content, 'I in Christ', there is concentrated in the deep and religious impulses of the extremely sensitive soul of the convert (us in particular - A.H.) an inexhaustible religious energy. In all directions Paul now radiates "the power of Christ" that possesses him and dispenses "the riches of Christ", "the blessings of Christ", and the "fulness of Christ" which have accrued to him. To designate this abundant power of Christ, which streamed through him (first of all in judgment as we have seen), and took effect from him, Paul employed a well known technical religious term, the Greek word Pistis which we are accustomed to translate as "faith".

Though it is one of the most frequently discussed of Pauline conceptions, Deissman thinks that "the Apostle's faith can be still more precisely formulated than it usually is."

The term "faith" as used by Paul is generally defined as "faith in Christ", with no special stress on the preposition, so that the phrase is equivalent to "believing in" or in the archaic language of the English Bible (but beautiful prose - A.H.) "believing on" Christ. We might therefore conceivably employ a hyphen between 'in' and the preceding word. Again, the not infrequent genitival combination "faith of Christ Jesus" (Galatians 2.16/20, 3.22, Ephesians 3.12 etc.) and prepositional phrases "faith in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3.26, 5.6, Colossians 1.4, 2, 5 etc.) and to believe in Christ Jesus (Galatians 2.16, Philippians 1.29 etc.) are identified with believing in or believing on Christ.

Deissman considers that this procedure obliterates a characteristic feature of Paul in a most important feature. Faith with Paul is faith in Christ, with accent on the 'in' and hyphen between 'in' and 'Christ'. That is to say, that faith is something which is effected in the vital union with the spiritual Christ. That is the meaning of the passages in which Paul combines the preposition 'in' with the words 'faith', 'faithful' and 'believe', and also of the passages in which the genitival combination occurs. Deissman again considers that "it has not been generally recognised that Paul's use of the genitive 'of Jesus Christ', is altogether very peculiar. There are a number of passages in which the ordinary grammatical scheme of subjective genitive and objective genitive proves insufficient. With Paul it would be possible to establish a peculiar type of genitive, which we might call the mystic fellowship of Jesus Christ, and which is here in the main, identical with 'in Christ'. 'The faith of Christ Jesus' is the faith in Christ (concerning which the translator says that in German the mystic genitive can be best imitated by a compound substantive)" (Deissman). Accordingly, in the next sentence his word formation is 'Christ-faith', 'Christ-love', 'Christ-hope', 'Christ-gentleness', 'Christ-mercy'. Many other religious roots are also combined with the mystic genitive.

- (A) Side by side with the 'faith of Christ', we find in Pauline writing the 'love of Christ' (2 Corinthians 5.14, Ephesians 3.19, Romans 8.35).
- (B) 'The hope of Christ' (1 Thessalonians 1.3).
- (C) 'The peace of Christ' (Colossians 3.15).
- (D) 'The meekness and gentleness of Christ' (2 Corinthians 10.1).
- (E) 'The tender mercies of Christ' (Philippians 1.8), which thoughts may be identified with the German construction just quoted above.
- (F) 'The patience of Christ' (2 Thessalonians 3.5).
- (G) 'The obedience ~~in~~ Christ' (2 Corinthians 10.5).
- (H) 'The truth of Christ' (2 Corinthians 11.10).
- (I) 'The fear of Christ' (Ephesians 5.21).
- (J) 'The circumcision of Christ' (Colossians 2.11).
- (K) 'The suffering of Christ' (2 Corinthians 1.5, Philippians 3.10).
- (L) 'The afflictions of Christ' (Colossians 1.24).

One may trace other similar connections in technical expression. In each case it is presumed that the particular experience in Christian life takes place in the mystical and spiritual fellowship with Christ; yet not ethereal but eminently practical. It is all centred in and around the 'faith of Christ' or 'Christ faith' as we have seen, dominant because it is of Christ, for without Him, where would we stand? This faith is alive, just as He was or is (again Pauline thought) 'the crucified' or, in other words 'was dead and is alive'. A live faith is based upon a living Christ who is 'the crucified'. Consequently we are taken back to a live fellowship in Christ, and it is 'faith in God', who raised the Son by His glory to this eternal life, and it is identical in content with the faith which Abraham held, unconditional trust in the living God, in spite of all temptations, no doubt. See this point brought out beautifully in Genesis 22, and of course realise that this 'trial' did not come on Abraham in his apprenticeship in faith (Genesis 12 and 13 etc), but when Abraham was of mature faith, and fully persuaded in his own mind as to the verity and truth

of God's promises. This faith to which we all prescribe and adhere could not be annulled by the law of Moses that followed (Galatians 3.12, 13), and is indeed possible and effectual in Christ. Paul aptly enjoins that separated from Christ we are in the cosmos (or world without God) and yet how different in Him; we can approach with confidence the Throne of God (Ephesians 2.12, 13).

It is then from Paul, this Apostle once a 'wolf' indeed according to his tribal symbol, who ravaged the flock, before he was enlightened, who gave his all afterwards in service "far hence unto the Gentiles" and became, as Thessalonians tells us, "father and mother and brother to his children in Christ" (Acts 23.21, 1 Thessalonians 2, 11, 7, 8/9) and has brought all the rich variety of his experience to us in his writings, revealing the spirit of testimony and deep humility that filled his life ever afterwards.

Paul's faith therefore is the union of God which is brought about in the fellowship with Christ and which is an unshakeable confidence like that of Abraham, in the grace of God. Could we say a 'family trait' centuries old, but ever young in the spirit of God? As we draw to a close this study of the Lord's Men, we are brought to a start, as we realise the truth of the old maxim, 'last but not least'. This is absolutely true of Paul, though his name means 'to be little' (and so he became in his own eyes, because he had 'persecuted the church of God'. He takes it further. "Who am not worthy to be called an Apostle" (1 Corinthians 15.8/10). Yet we are sure that Paul did not come behind the rest of the Lord's men, in either talent or faith. He stands out like a beacon in the darkness of his times. Paul was a man among men in every aspect of the term, in intellectual brilliance and courage, tender in affection and loyal as a friend, and who can ask more from human flesh? He allowed himself to become malleable in the hands of the Great Potter, and showed complete disregard for personal gain. He stands out to us as a true devout. Neither shipwreck nor the privations of hunger and frost, thirst, heat and coming martyrdom could move him from his set purpose in preaching Christ, and establishing the ecclesias he formed 'through Christ' who worked in him.

Until in the end of his life in the cells at Rome we see him, feeble in health, brutally ill-treated, brought down by hunger, and no doubt fever; nevertheless completing a life work that as a mere physical performance challenges our admiration. We find him at the end of his days awaiting his long expected execution. While Nero lived, the leaders of the Truth were in constant danger of his malevolent wrath. Paul knew that the sadist Nero would finish his work in him, although he was acquitted at his first stand before him; and we leave him with his own words, physically worn out, but spiritually mature and keen, the spirit truly willing, but the flesh woefully weak and tired. He realises that death is near, in itself meaning nothing to him. Had he not faced the dread spectre in a hundred various ways as 2 Corinthians 11 and other scriptures prove? Forty stripes save one had been endured with the stoicism associated with this 'old wolf'. He knew the terror of being adrift in the Adriatic, but throughout all his trials, "I will show him what great things he shall suffer for my name's sake" (Acts 9. 15/16), said Jesus, and the Lord never left him. "Notwithstanding, the Lord stood by me and strengthened me" (2 Timothy 4.17). The time had now arrived when he must meet death by the sword, honourable death as his position as a Roman citizen would allow. His Master had seen fit to retire him from the scene of combat to the peace of sleep in Him. "For to live is Christ" had been his slogan all his days, but "to die in Christ would now be gain", and his words ring still clear with courage and fortitude, "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course. I have kept the faith". These words are the convictions of a man who is undefeatable and undaunted, a man who will walk with dignity to the execution block, like the Bride in The Song. "As an army with banners undefeated with colours flying" (Song 6.4). See exposition by present writer.

What is Paul's dying conviction? "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing" (2 Timothy 4.6/8).

"Unto all them also that love His appearing". Is not this an invitation to us to follow Paul - maybe as the days darken prior to the return, to follow his example. There is a quote, and a foundation, reserved for all them also, (could we possibly be among them?) that love His appearing. Do we aspire to be the "Lord's Men"? Shall we not then follow hard after Paul, for in so doing an entrance will be ministered unto us in that day. May we not increase the joy of Paul at our meeting for, as he wrote to the Thessalonians: "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming? For ye are our glory and joy".

The Christian symbol of Paul was a sword behind the scriptures, representing the sword of the Spirit. Ephesians 6.17. The Zondervan Bible.

CHAPTER 13

THE TWELVE TAKE STOCK OF US

It is only right and proper that we should allow this inspection of ourselves by the Twelve, whom we have closely investigated.

What would they think of us, should they think that we were WORTHY of the honour?

We have often mused over what would be the result, should our characters, actions, and motives come under close scrutiny for the next 2,000 years! Taking this thought further back, think of the abuse Adam and Eve must have collected in almost 6,000 years. One must admit that considerable praise had been added to those whom both Scripture and ourselves have deemed worthy, and we must remember that this close scrutiny has occurred daily during the centuries, as we have studied the Bible in our generations.

Reversing the process then, what would the twelve find in us, as they take their stock of what has been acquired in our generation, and particularly in ourselves as individuals.

1. Peter

What would Peter's appreciation of us have been?

How would he have defined our leaders today?

Would he have found them with a quick and roving eye and a voice in the community that sounded like a captain's? Volatile as he was, and with a sting in their tongues like his? Honest and outspoken for the Truth and purity of the Way, fearing none and showing partiality to neither rich nor poor in his judgment?

A few years ago perhaps these things would be found, but times and people have changed, and there can be seen service to the "Higher Educated", and the dominance of that voice that stirred like a captain's, is not to be found amidst the sound of the waves of today as we await the coming of the Lord. Where do we stand?

We want the leadership of another Peter, not with university qualifications a necessity, but those of a Godly man with a deep and sound mind in the scriptures of Truth. As Peter was, and in many ways as John Carter was, a man of kindly character and manly bearing. We think that Peter as leader of the twelve would seek these qualities in his counterpart today.

Peter no doubt would look kindly on our struggles to believe, and would most certainly have smiled warmly, when we walked on the water to meet our Lord. His sympathy would be aroused when our faith failed momentarily, as his did, and no doubt he would become most agitated when in the moment of extreme tension and danger - we denied our Lord. There would come the happy smile of understanding when the Master sought us out, and strengthened us with His

forgiveness and understanding. His heart would go out to us as with quickened faith we surged on to preach Christ and Him crucified.

Would his will have been with us, as he contemplated our handling of the colour problem in our days, for had not he himself been taught that he should not call any man common (Acts 10.28)? And doubtless he would have hidden his head with us in shame, as we put a difference between ourselves and other people at times, e.g. when we like to go to forbidden places privately, and will speak out against it when in the company of Brethren and Sisters. Gal. 2.12: the eating with Gentiles in this verse, bears a relation to all other things which fall into this category in our experience. It is to be hoped we have never given Peter the pain of hearing Jesus saying to us, "Get thee behind me satan", but rather that he would rejoice with us when, after "hearing the Son", we quickly forgive our brother who may have transgressed against us as he did John Boanerges. "What shall this man do?", is too easily on our lips, and we do well to take heed to the answer of Jesus. "What is that to thee? follow thou me" (Jno. 21.21/22), and with Peter we shall "Feed the flock of God not by constraint, but willingly and of a ready mind". (1 Pet. 5 1/4). How high would our stock be in Peter's mind?

CHAPTER 14

James the Son of Zebedee

What would his appreciation of us be?

Along with his brother John, he merited the nickname "Boanerges" or "Son of Thunder". As we have already advanced in an earlier study of these brothers, it would appear that their temperament merited this designation by the Master. James was a man of abrupt and forceful decisiveness. He had the effect of clearing the air, and we should imagine his intervention in debate was often like a "thunderbolt". His was the mind that drove straight, and sometimes ruthlessly to the point, as when he, along with John, asked for the honoured place in the kingdom. (Mk. 10 35/40) He was known for his taking abrupt short-cuts to the point. Along with Peter he was a true enthusiast, aflame with the fire of God.

Would he find these characteristics in our personal stock shelf? Are we really enthused with the fire of God? Do we think and talk straight, and not go all around the country to get next door? These are the ones who will survive in the darkening days ahead. We must see the standpoint of the Truth clearly, amidst all the debris not only of world opinion, but in Ecclesial thought; and James will receive this stock gladly, and place it beyond doubt under the classification of "essential materials".

His face would cloud if he found anything like egocentricity within us, when we push for the highest seats in the Ecclesia, and at work in the company. Whilst one must do his best in the matter of performance, either in Ecclesia, company, or practice, yet, as James later realised, it must be for the Lord, and not ourselves.

No doubt he would muse contemplatively over our outside efforts, and often, over our ruthless exposee of the falsity of other religions. He would remember his erstwhile impatience with the Samaritans who would not receive Jesus (Lk. 9 54). Who were these people? (in his intolerant devotion to his Master), to put a stumbling block in the way of Christ? These miserable Samaritans who professed to serve the true God, and to share the expectation of Messiah, "Call fire from heaven to destroy them". James had forgotten in the heat of the moment, that neither would Jesus be received at Jerusalem, and his own race would crucify Him. This the Samaritans would not have done! It makes one think, or rather one should think. This same intolerance has long rankled amongst us, and our outside efforts ought not to become religious cockfights. These jousts are not seemly in the

main, unless our beliefs are attacked. James appealed to Elijah and got an outstanding rebuff from Jesus (Lk.9 55) "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of". This rebuke to James comes with a timely warning to us, "Do we know what manner of spirit we are of?" Do we know what is involved and what we are saying? Lk.9 56 gives us the true perspective. "For the Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives but to save them". James having learned this lesson will look very carefully at our reactions. "Jesus Christ and Him crucified", should be the burden of our message as it was in type in Joshua's day when the Ark of the Covenant and obedience of the people, destroyed the wicked city of Jericho. (see Significance of Blue in Scripture - Debir Press)

We can imagine the ironic sympathy of James being aroused when he finds our rather depleted stock of personal endeavour, and smile in reflection as he finds the completed satisfactorily section, almost entirely vacant. "Can you take the cup that I drink?" comes back to him over the years. "Yes, Lord", was his reply. It arose out of genuine love for His Lord and it found true consummation when he bated that hated fox Herod in his den, as did John Baptist before him.

Not many of us can have the doubtful privilege of being the first of the Twelve to pay the supreme sacrifice as James did! and that willingly, we believe. How much stock of this commodity would be available on our shelves, for the appreciation of James? Possibly he would allow us to have some under the title of Intent, and be gracious to our endeavour. Had James, (or Jacob, as his Hebrew name means), taken the words of Jesus to heart, which were spoken to Nathanaël and translated them into his own personal experience, "An Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile", or had cast out Jacob. (paraphrase). Jno.1 47.

Would James have written in Truth, "Brother" or "Sister" at the end of his analysis?

CHAPTER 15

John, the Son of Zebedee

It is not without some timidity and uneasiness that we see the younger half of the "Sons of Thunder" approach us. The king-like mien is observable in his eagle-like visage. Here are the far sighted eyes and the talon-like claws of absolute faith predominant. What will he see in our stock? - one who is so heavenly in thought and yet so intensely practical in life, so intensely observant, and keenly decisive in execution; one who can reveal to us "The word that was with God", in its human aspect as Jesus the Son of the Father, and can say later, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of Life. For the life was manifested and we have seen it, and bear witness and show unto you that eternal life, which was in the Father and was manifested to us." (1 Jno. 1 1/2)

John will be seeking for fellowship with the Father and with the Son on our spiritual shelves, and we panic. "How much stock shall we have under this section? How can we have this fellowship of light, and could John possibly detect this sublime union at a glance?

- A. If we have walked in light and not in darkness then the union will be self evident.
- B. If we have kept His commandments then the truth will be in us.
- C. If we have kept His word then the fellowship of the love of God will be found in completion.
- D. If we have loved our brethren then the witness will be that we have loved God, for how can we love God whom we have not seen, if we do not love our Brother whom we can see?

E. If we love the brethren then do we know that we have passed from death to life (1 Jno. 1.7, 2.3/5, 3/14. etc.)

Although these great truths are seen with the eagle-like eye, yet are they manifested in basic fundamental fact. None of us then, should we anticipate Kingdom entry, must have that terrible notice "Out of stock" printed over the head of this section!

John himself had a very long experience in the Truth's service, full of thunder as a youth, full of life and eagerness, rather contemptuous in youth as to the aspirations of the older Disciples. He wanted to get on with it, to receive the top place in the coming Kingdom, but he had to learn that it was Jesus who chose his leaders, and the Father who had allocated the first two places in the Kingdom. So he bent the knee, being John the Beloved, and he had to learn the lesson that though one is specially loved by His Master as he was, it did not necessarily mean that he had the inherent qualifications as leader, to be given the highest place of authority. John will look for this spiritual approach in us, that we have not just loved our Brethren and Sisters for their attainments, so to speak, but rather for what they are, members of the Divine family in particular. Attainments not standing in themselves are insufficient, but rather that because God sent His Son into the World, we might live in Him, and as God so loved us then we also ought to love each other.

This is the primary basis that John will seek as he closely investigates our stock, and his closing words in 1 John 5.21, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols", will provide another searching query into each personal stock; Ecclesiastes reveals upon a little contemplation that the whole world lieth in idolatry, everything that is not of God is idolatry. Under this heading we pray the legend will read "Do not stock", that John will have extreme delight in discovering that the "unholy Trinity" of the 1 Jno. 2.16, "The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life", are not found in us, but can we say that these sins have never found root in us? Most definitely not. They will have been erased in the blood of the Lamb.

By the time that our stock is ready for the scrutiny of John, we hope that we shall have come to realise that "The world passeth away, and the lust thereof", and we shall have abundance of experience in practical Christianity, and gratefully accept that "he that doeth the will of God abideth forever".

The final thought we would like to express in John's scrutiny of ourselves would be the one he loved best and wanted most. 1 Jno. 3.2, "But we know that when He shall appear, we shall be LIKE HIM, for we shall SEE HIM as He is".

This is the stock we all would pray for, the eagle eye, the strong talons of faith, and bountiful supply of practical Christianity.

CHAPTER 16

Andrew, the brother of Simon

What would this dedicated and disciplined disciple hope to find in us? He would most certainly seek for similar traits of character, and not to find "soiled stock of ambition"; seeking to put oneself first because we saw the Lord first, as did John and himself. (Jno. 1.40).

Andrew will seek in us the will to serve to the best of our ability, even if it does not take us to the first, second, or third place in the honoured role, like Benaiah of old, and himself. We shall never reach above fourth place. But why should this worry us? The Master will not ask more than we are able, so if we do stoutly those things to which we are called, and that well, shall we in any way be behind the leaders?

He will most certainly search for this trait and if it be found will view it with very distasteful eyes. Occasionally we find a bin full of unfilled desires, bearing the caption "Over-reached ideas", so because our brother happens to be a leader of merit, such as Peter, we shall not over-reach ourselves to live up to him. "Living up to the Jones" is a dangerous business in these days, but "living up to be a Peter" is far more deadly. Andrew would have us follow him, and be a real stout No.4. Such knowledge would give him undoubted pleasure. A fulfilled Andrew is far better than an overreached Peter. Another bin marked "For the Master's attention" would really delight our stocktaker, because this was a habit through all his discipleship. Thousands of people received their food because Andrew observed the contents of a little boy's pocket. "There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves and two small fishes". Jno. 6. 9. Andrew always brought the problem to Jesus, and received his answer. How many problems of ours are earmarked "For the Master's attention?" No matter what it is, Jesus can do more than we care to think. This aspect is a must in our stock cupboard, because wherever we find it, there is also a complementary section marked "Problems settled satisfactorily". Andrew would have our personal stock of faith in the Lord to match his own, and look most searchingly for evident sign of proof within us. There is another essential Andrew would love to find, that is a compartment labelled "Companionship" - the combination of brethren and sisters working together with the same object in view, that is, to bring Christ to the world, or obversely to bring the world to Christ.

From time to time we are greatly heartened as we are helped throughout the world in this endeavour, in the distribution of literature towards this end, and in other ways also. The many hours of research and study are made light by this enthusiasm, and our grateful thanks go out to this host of brethren and sisters. Is it not a true proof that we belong to the Divine Family when this love is present among us, that we collectively love the Word and our Lord, and most of all the Father who made it all possible? Jno. 12 20/22 gives the beautiful prototype of this fellowship, the Greeks come to Philip, Philip cometh and telleth Andrew, and again, Andrew and Philip tell Jesus. This is the order of spiritual companionship, or fellowship, in everything that has to do with Discipleship.

Finally Andrew will look very carefully for a spiritual commodity known as "Gossip" in our personal files. Let me emphasise what is meant by gossip, not the modern idea which pulls the characters of other people to shreds, and not that gossip which would have made the "Daughters of Gath rejoice", in fact not street talk, or idle chatter, but in its old English version of being a kindly soul of the commendation of a friend. This Christian trait of kindness fairly shone out of Andrew, there was no sourness with him, no chip on the shoulder, so to speak.

Andrew will be overjoyed along with ourselves when this quality is found among the items for his scrutiny, taking us back to the "friend that sticketh closer than a brother", even the Lord whom he served so well. He will not be unduly alarmed should a section called "Defection" be hidden away in a dark corner, because he fled too along with the rest of the disciples when Jesus was taken in Gethsemane, but with panic now over he returned and served Jesus throughout the rest of his life with his old assurance and kindness, no doubt bringing many other Peters to His Lord. This kind of brother is joyous to follow.

CHAPTER 17

Philip

What would be Philip's evaluation? He would look out for sections marked "Practical Christianity". Jesus looked to him for snap decisions such as catering for 5,000 and more people. "How much would it take, Philip?" He knew that already the situation had been sized, or weighed up, by Philip. We have often wondered why it was that Judas was given the honorary appointment as treasurer by Jesus when Philip was available? Again, he was something similar in character to Peter. When Nathanael demurred to believe that Philip had seen Christ the argument was cut short by three terse words, "Come and see". "Seeing is believing", was Philip's maxim. It is a very sound maxim, but sometimes it falls short. Occasionally we hear it said of some person, "He cannot see beyond his nose", and it is rather interesting to note that that man who said "Come and see", could not see 'beyond his eyes' in one particular sequence, or could we say he could not see because of his eyes. Jno. 14. 6/11 etc. Philip had just said, "Show us the Father and it sufficeth us", when the reply came from the Lord, "You know Him and you have seen Him".

We can imagine that when Philip hears these words his eyes almost start from his head. His eyes have no record of this marvel and after all he reasons, "Can anything he said to have been seen, of which the eyes have no record". How could God look on sin? His Bible studies had proved this point in Ex. 33 and 34. Later on he realised when the Comforter had led them into all truth the effect of the following words by Jesus: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father". He had seen greater things than Moses. Moses heard the name pronounced, Philip had seen it in flesh in Jesus. Philip will look a little 'old-fashioned' when he comes across this section in his personal or spiritual stock. 'Come and see by all means, but look always rather closely, and a little beyond what your eyes see', would be his advice. He will want to find it clearly signed as a by-product of "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God" Matt. 5.8. He will be most gratified should they both be shown as in stock.

Philip will also enquire diligently if there is a section duly marked "Bible Student" in our equipment, and will be most careful to see whether or not he will find another caption under this heading, that is, of "Twins". He will realise how fortunate it is when one finds a fellow spirit in the deeper study of the Word. Particularly as students in these days often languish alone, where appreciation without jealousy can be enjoyed, for Nathanael obviously was his twin in this respect.

It would be a common thing for either of them to say when they met, "Look what I have found", as we do today when we want someone to share our joy of discovery.

This was the greatest treasure trove of spiritual wealth ever uncovered. The Greeks sought out Philip as we have seen. Was it because of his Greek name? Or his kindly nature? We do not know. What we do see quite clearly is the fact that it all finally centred around the Lord Jesus.

May this same curiosity be found in us, maybe before so long (as the drums of war rattle once again over the Suez and as Russian might straddles Europe) maybe we shall hear those long awaited words, "The Master cometh and calleth for thee"

May we be privileged to see with immortal eyes the character of the Father in the face of Jesus. We shall joy with Philip then in the more perfect understanding. All will be well should Philip be pleased to authorise what we have to "show" on our shelves, meaning simply that we have truly seen "the Father in the face of Jesus". May the Father grant to us this inestimable privilege.

What concerns us is the problem of the purity of heart, impossible in our own strength, but we have the certainty of the help of Christ, should we put our trust in Him, and with Paul "we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us". (Phil. 4.13)

CHAPTER 18

Nathanael or Bartholemew

What would be his appreciation of us? How should we fare from his attention? His would be with the scrutiny of a devoted Bible student. Would he find any stock in our shelves? A real dedication to Moses and the prophets and a devoted place for prayer and meditation all fairly marked out and clear. He would be most anxious that this should be so. Would he accept our plea that we live in a busy world? That we don't have time enough for the daily readings? Hardly, we would think. The law that he would firmly lay down for future "taking stock" would be:-

- A. That we find a place comparable to his "fig tree", where we may be found regularly studying the scriptures.
- B. That meditation and prayer be made here in this one particular place. Not that we should neglect any opportunity for this spiritual exercise, but that we may have one special place, sacrosanct for this purpose.
- C. That we study with an open mind, in the right sense of course, (as it is too easy to do this anyway for most of us).

Should he find a section marked "Israel without Jacob" he will be specially pleased, knowing full well that we have received a similar commendation from the Lord. Further, should a rather remarkable caption under the heading of "Anticipatory Stock" be found, he will rejoice with us into the joy of the time when we may see the heavens open and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of God. (Jno. 1.51/52.)

Nathanael will not be pleased to find an abundance of articles placed under the heading "Traditional Stock", because he himself had indulged in it on that very day he had found Jesus. "Can the good thing come out of Nazareth?" he had said. Jno. 1.46. He was a man that really wanted to discover the Bible for himself in general, he had made this mistake however, and accepted the Rabbis' view of lowly Nazareth, instead of using his normal practice of searching the Jewish scriptures for his answer. Perhaps Philip had caught him at a wrong moment (quite easy for ourselves to be caught in such a trap). Nathanael would have us to be searchers for ourselves in the Word of God and not particularly trust to tradition. This is the trap that Israel fell into. To reinforce with authority their words they said: "Rabbi Gamaliel says it". In our day, "Bro. So and So says it", fits the bill. Search the scriptures for yourselves and prove from them whether a certain point or doctrine is correct; this would be the advice of Nathanael to us.

Perhaps a section marked "Divinely Curious" would keenly attract his attention, for although it would appear that he was far from being convinced by Philip's excited shout. "We have found Him, of whom Moses in the Law and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph", yet knowing that his old friend and student friend had never lied to him, he went and found God's Christ.

This trait is a very necessary one for all of us wherever Christ is said to be, let us go with Divine curiosity leading us. At the present He is everywhere in the Word. Very soon the notification will be a stirring command, and maybe the call will come as we seek Him in Genesis as Nathanael did, and find with his astonishment that our Fig Tree is none other than a Bethel, the House of God.

A final section would find a ready place in Nathanael's heart marked "Top Priority". He too, presumably was a fisherman, because we find him along

with Peter going 'a fishing in Galilee', whilst they awaited the pleasure of the Lord, after resurrection. Jno. 21 1/3 etc. The food that perisheth for the body, and the spiritual food of the Word, Nathanael thinks must find a true balance within us. Money-grabbing was not with him. Family responsibilities, yes, but the Fig Tree sequence received his constant attention and a further caption would be marked out as "Devout Student" to receive his commendation.

Perhaps in keeping with his other name, Bartholemew, he would seek carefully for the section named with a threefold inscription, "Furrowed, Ploughed and Prepared for Seed". Knowing by experience, should we aspire to become "Israel without Jacob", that these are essentials, true students in every age and clime will hope to have an abundance of stock for Nathanael's approbation.

CHAPTER 19

Matthew or Levi

Many of us would not fail to be uneasy under the practised eye of Matthew, once a publican or tax gatherer in the employment of Rome. No doubt he would want to find something to do with taxing or the "rendering unto Caesar his dues". Whilst our allegiance is to the highest power of God, yet, as Paul insists, we owe taxes and dues and consideration to the laws of the land. "Show me a penny" is forever our standard of due. "To God the things of God and to Caesar the things that be Caesar's". Matthew would be immediately pleased to find that we had fulfilled our dues in the right manner and spirit of a Christian. We hope that he will never find a sub-section earmarked "Ways of Tax Evasion", and obvious signs that we have sailed too near the wind in our business life - Sunday saints and Monday dragons so to speak - to find that we put much faith in "the old stocking". He knows that they have a grave danger of getting moth-eaten and all our gold and notes will roll out. The root of evil is very powerful and tenacious, and our fingers love to linger around its glittering hoard. But it 'flatters only to deceive'. "This night thy soul shall be required of thee", Lk. 12 20 etc. is the Divine answer to all "old stocking" hoarders. We must respect as Paul admonished, "the powers that be are ordained of God". In many ways life appears to be just the opposite, but even the worst of men are sometimes necessary, as Daniel tells us. (Dan. 2, 21. 4, 17).

Matthew will search diligently with a stern face for a section hidden in the darkest corner of the room named "Graft". We suppose that modern business matters have altered little from 1st century days, that human nature has the same basis of craft and greed and initiative. The modern business world is one where "Graft" is glorified, as it was in Jericho many years ago when Zacchaeus was Chief of the Tax Gatherers, the "boss of Graft" so to speak. Matthew, when brought to his senses by Jesus, would become well aware of this evil. We must avoid it like poison should we want his approbation of our stock.

We are given disturbing details by men who have to survive in the 'jungle' of business life when television, fridges, year's supply of tea and the like are demanded for "openers" before business talks can begin. The evidence is open of men who exist in this kind of life. "Little America" in gangster days, has been an apt description of our days. The Brother or Sister of Christ can have none of these things if he hopes for Matthew's approval. "No Stock", "Never Kept", must be our headline.

Matthew will look carefully for a section marked "Fealty to the King". He will have hoped that when we accepted the Truth like him, we accepted the "King whose banner is love". (Song 2. 4.) That the Union Jack would be entirely buried, with voting definitely out, and all means of "bearing up the columns" have been left behind, apart from the things we have to respect by Divine order, taxes and so forth. The maxims of Christ the King should be seen very much to the fore, ready for Matthew's scrutiny, and a show of diligent attention to detail must be evident.

Matthew would give the lie to that rather glorified method of preaching without notes, so much adored by the Mutual Class - why, we do not know. What is there to be clever about in speaking without notes? Nothing in particular, unless we want to become members of the "Hum and Ha" Society, which savours of little preparation and slow tongues. In Matthew we have evidence of very careful detail taken down in copious notes, albeit as we know he was directed by the Holy Spirit. The written man in general makes the accurate man; at least he has evidence of what he has said.

Jeremiah could enumerate the messages from God for over 20 years at will, and without notes - but he was inspired by the Holy Spirit!

Finally, Matthew would be intrigued to find a rather small printed section entitled "Small Things", but having great effect. Have we followed the directions of Matthew 25/35 etc. "I was a hungered, and ye gave me meat, I was thirsty and ye gave me drink. I was a stranger and ye took me in, naked and ye clothed me, I was sick and ye visited me. I was in prison and ye came to me". Matthew will rejoice with us if this stock is ready and to hand, and the gracious answer from the Lord will be (25.40), "Verily I say unto you. Inasmuch as ye have done it to the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me".

CHAPTER 20

Thomas Didymus

This stern matter-of-fact brother will give a calculating estimation of our stock. What would he look for in particular?

The first section he would be interested in would be Loyalty, because when things were beginning to 'hot up' for Jesus in Judea, Thomas said: "Let us also go, that we may die with him". Jno. 11/16.

The Apostolic band hung back from what would appear to be this fatal trip to Bethany. They sensed danger ahead, it might be death for themselves. Peter hung back, leadership forgotten - "he didn't like putting his neck in a noose". John hung back, he who told his nostalgic story almost 70 years afterwards! He had not forgotten, even then, the grip of fear that clutched his heart at the very thought of it. Neither wanted to be leader in this venture. But Thomas stood forward to go. Thomas the critical disciple who could reason out and weigh the danger most surely of them all. There is something about this courage and the cold firm vigour of this act. Like (if you will pardon the illustration) a Company of the Guards marching with firm steady tread into a hail of bullets. We are called to be soldiers for Christ, and in Thomas we have our lead. We tend to forget that the service of Christ has all the excitement, and terror occasionally, of a perilous enterprise, and the outcome will either be eternal life or shame. No matter what may overtake us, we follow the Lord and "keep rank"; without playing truant, as Paul advises in 2 Thess. 3.11. Let the courage of Thomas sustain us and let us "go with Jesus", no matter how dangerous the situation might prove to be. Remember David's men and how they hazarded their lives for the drink of cold water at Bethlehem. We shall stand fast by the colours of Christ.

Perhaps Thomas may find a "skeleton shelf" in our cupboard, with an inscription we would dearly love to hide, "Headlong Flight". He will appreciate our shame, when he remembers how he fled headlong into the darkness of the shadows in Gethsemane when Christ was taken. "Let us go with him, that we may die with Him", was said while the enemy was afar off, and no doubt most sincerely meant, but absolute panic when actually faced with the personal danger. The precision of the guards must be ours, and their courage too when death looms. If we lose our life for Christ's sake we shall find it, but if we seek to secure it now, then we shall have had our receipt, there will be nothing more to come.

The section, should we possess one in our stock room, titled "Personal Doubt" would arouse considerable sympathy with Thomas, who had been nicknamed "The Personal Saint of the Disciples". How he demanded physical proof of the Resurrection of the Lord. We should be in a fine state should we ask in such a pertinent way today. But there are 2,000 years intervening between our day, and those incredible times. Yet how often have we said in spirit. "I will not believe unless I can see, touch and thrust my hand into the side of Jesus", and many of these physical senses allowable in Thomas's day and experience (see 1 John 1.1 etc.) have their counterpart within the spiritual experience of each one today.

Do we feel the presence of the Father and Son at our Breaking of Bread each first day? Is the twofold presence equally felt at our squally business meetings? Can we feel the presence of the resurrected Lord in our study moments, or at the Bible Class? Or are we like Thomas on that sad occasion when the Lord appeared to the apostles - "Missing", and, along with Thomas, the experience felt by others only becomes a goad to us? If so, then this compartment would be headed, "Missed Opportunities". What a sad admission this would prove to both parties. Thomas would be fired with, no doubt, "Godly Jealousy", at a notice which can be gloriously shared by all who live today, "Blessings for Belief Without Seeing". Our Lord should be just as alive to us in His Eternal Youth today as He was in those momentous days when Jesus chided Thomas. Thomas, absolutely honest and no longer jealous of the opportunities that he had missed and others had experienced, would rejoice that many had taken the advice of His Lord at that time. The final searching would be for a caption entitled "Absolute Certainty of Conviction". For did not he himself make the absolute statement, waiting to be echoed by the Israeli Parliament in due course, "My Lord and My God!" May we be guided into such conviction and pray, "May the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us".

CHAPTERS 21 and 22

James the Less and Judas (not Iscariot)

These two would make a combined check upon us, and would quicken into rest to find in our materials for exhibition the remarkable caption, "The Unknowns" or "Big Men for their Size".

James not less in importance than the other more prominent James, but possibly smaller in bodily size, or at least the youngest in the family. Probably he was a little man. But usually what the little man loses in height he gains in courage! (It has been said that he has to be so. He is like the fat man; running is useless, he has to stand and face the consequences). Being little of stature matters little except when we want to see in a crowd. Then we climb higher, as Zaccheus did, and should we climb (not in the social climb, but to see Jesus), then we shall find the reward of Zacchaeus, "I must abide at thy house". Has mountaineering ever obtained such a vista, and received such a reward do you think? To remain small in one's own eyes is the message of the Bible, "Less than the Dust" is true, more than Woodforde Finden ever realised. No matter how big the size, it takes a really big man to arrive at this conclusion, and this is the purpose the Word has for us. Think of Saul, King of Israel, head and shoulders higher than anyone in Israel, yet a tiny chicken at heart.

Courage, then, will be very prominent in our stock. We will hold on to the truth with the tenacity of a Yorkshire terrier, and with the fire of a Bantam, and we shall not be unknown for valour in the service of the Lord, although we might get lost in the crowd because of our size. If we are among the Lord's "little ones", then are we most beloved by Him, and the enemies of Christ had better beware, or else! The millstone of the wrath of Christ is not a thing to be lightly tampered with. It will not matter in that day whether we are six feet two or four

feet one, so long as we have been faithful. If James was the younger brother of Matthew, then he would truly suffer the despite of his contemporaries and feel like a mouse at times. Family shame has made men like mice throughout the ages, but it does not alter our standing in Christ Jesus. To the "little ones" the Lord will say, "Friend, come up higher". Then with James the Less we shall assume a nobler and higher standing in Christ. Largeness of heart and not stature marks our stature in Christ now. Our deeds in this day of small things may be unseeing and unrehearsed, but they will be remembered by the Lord of Life. Lack of opportunity, and maybe ability, may bedevil our service in these days, but we always remember the words of Paul, "It is accepted what a man has". If we give all that we have in service to Christ we have done our all, whether or not it comes to light in our day. It will be disclosed and fittingly rewarded at the day of Christ.

Judas, not Iscariot.

On his part he will be on the look out for one very important section, "The Recognition of Authority". "How is it, Lord?" are the only words he uttered, that is, singly. "Not Iscariot," saith the record. (Jno. 14.22). We have already intimated that Judas Iscariot never called Jesus "Lord". We have hazarded a query, why? However, the opposite is testified of the other, and from a standpoint inferior to the treasurer of the Twelve. But who fared best in the end, and which along with James the Less, will have his name in the walls of the New Jerusalem? Here we clearly see the "end of the Lord". Let us rejoice as Judas (not Iscariot) will do with ourselves, veritable unknowns, when the Lord returns. Authority in every sphere, and on every subject today is questioned - children rebelling and not accepting parental discipline, teacher bound not to physically make Johnnie realise that he has done wrong. The word 'student' in our day has taken on a new meaning; we are almost surfeited with the protests and demonstrations against universal university authority. So it goes on, "the sea and the waves roaring" (Lk. 21.25 etc.) How tired one becomes of this repeated sequence. The marital laws being openly flouted, and articles are appearing in the most conservative of papers entitled, "Is marriage on the way out"? Not quite, we reckon, because Jesus said: "As in the days of Noah" they would be "marrying and giving in marriage". (Lk. 17 26/37). But authority is being flagrantly and openly flouted, the laws of God never consulted or recognised. Judas would have us do the opposite of these things, "respecting and obeying all authority that is of God" (paraphrase of Romans 13. 1-2), giving the Father and Jesus their rightful place at the top of our authorities, Jesus being our rightful Lord and Master. So be it.

CHAPTER 23

Simon the Zealot (Zelotes)

What would this keen-eyed apostle search out in our stock-in-trade? Toleration would stand high on the list of priorities. This was the lesson he himself had painfully learned. He had been a man of fire, a revolutionary, and had made the mistake so often made by like personages, in expecting that Jesus would attack governments and other authorities which according to his thinking had gravely maltreated Israel.

Before Simon had come to hear the Son, his yardstick was a sword and a dagger, or, in modern parlance, a tommygun and Molotov cocktail. Simon was a leader in "Hate thine enemy with all thy might" - to love one's enemy was out of mind until he came face to face with Jesus. It was a credit to the attractive power of the character of Jesus that Simon became sufficiently interested to follow Him so closely and completely. There can be no doubt of the influence of the Master in teaching tolerance to this erstwhile political firebrand, who found to his surprise that love is far stronger than force in the long run, and this is where toleration is seen to win. Political aims with Simon the Zealot were the end of all things, he would have given his life so that Israel might be free. Toleration taught him to

give it in willing sacrifice to his master. This word must figure prominently in our stock-in-trade of the Truth, the age in which we live has forgotten the Word. It is the age of demonstration, of seeking personal gain and of worshipping the ego. "Behold the Man" today has little appeal in its larger sense and true perspective, that is "The Lord Jesus Christ". Behold the Man today - Me or I, that is, man himself, and when this happens, we become most intolerant of others.

This is the real lesson that Simon **Zelotes** has for us.

- A. That brother who keeps on asking the same question for years. Some of us have had 14 years discipline in this sort of thing, the answer is given on every occasion, and it either doesn't sink in, or "there is not much depth of earth" one is tempted to say, but one must not, for this is intolerance. Perhaps we may get satisfaction with Paul who had fourteen years to settle his mind.
- B Again, the brother-minded Christian, whom we meet in the meetings - that this Brother, honoured and beloved of us all, is almost offered up as a Saint. In fact, this Brother, dead now many years, would, we believe, trounce his so-called followers for their sheer folly, most thoroughly. How can Man, however great he is, understand the whole of God's Word? No man ever lived who could trace to its outset one word of the Living God. The Word is Divine and exalted above the very name of God, and yet we have the temerity to think that ONE finite Man can understand the whole! This type of thing with all that surrounds it, speaking in the same language, praying in the very words of his writings, excluding all others as cast-off offal who do not agree with their protocol (nevertheless that love the Brother for his undoubted works' sake and love of the Truth). The refusal to sing hymns that do not appeal to their finite minds. These things, we say, take a good deal of toleration from us all.

And Simon will also look for a section (however reluctant we may be to find it) strikingly named "Stumbling-Blocks - 20th Century"

Believe it or not, the things we have just mentioned, present to most folk a stumbling-block. No doubt they would be the last to admit it, but the truth is there, unmistakably so. It is a most dangerous thing to present a stumbling-block for our Brethren and Sisters. We can equally do so by trying to destroy the effects of this servant of the Lord. Probably if both sides would show a little more toleration the stumbling-block section could be officially designated as "Stock Terminated" and this would be To the Glory of God.

Most probably, as we have suggested, the thoughts of Simon regarding political schemes were rudely brought to a halt when Jesus restored the ear of Malchus, which Peter had removed by his sword. Simon would be greatly exercised by this incident.

We have not got to misconstrue "the sword of Peter" for the Sword of the Spirit as the world does. Really the Sword of the Spirit is for promoting life in ourselves, and should be so used, remembering what Peter himself wrote, "Judgment will begin at the House of God", and the Sword of the Spirit, which many hope to use in the future upon them that know not God may have surprising results in that we ourselves might be the first to feel the edge! Let us then make doubly sure that toleration finds front page in our stocksheets and that "Stock Terminated" is used for "Stumbling-Blocks."

CHAPTER 24

Judas Iscariot

Whilst his name will not appear on the walls of New Jerusalem, Judas, of all the Apostles deserves to look us over. Perhaps we may think that the stock-taking will be one-sided and biased. This will be the first point for him to notice. Do we stock "Oddfellows" or "Bias" in our spiritual stock?

He knows that it is almost impossible to view him without bias because he betrayed our Master. This is true almost of everyone naming Christ. Being found guilty of such heinous behaviour to the Son of Man, even worse than Ahithophel the Gilonite against David. Ahithophel had reason; he failed because he lifted up his hand against the Lord's Anointed, which no man can do and live. Judas did far worse and for no reason, indeed especially in view of the Lord's endeavours to dissuade him. Jesus safeguarded Judas' position as treasurer (in the Kingdom, or treasurer elect so to speak) when refusing the request of James and John, "to sit one on the right hand and the other on the left". Peter was the other one who would have suffered from this angle. Jesus trusted Judas with "the bag", and gave him the "sop" at the Last Supper - a very great honour - yet this did not turn Judas from the bias he had selected to take.

Judas will search restlessly for such a fleshly trait in our stock, and if it is formed it will be for our condemnation.

Another section, "The Love of Money", would be sought for by this man. Judas loved money so much that he sold his Master for approximately £5.

- A. How much are we prepared to sell Him for?
- B. How much have we sold Jesus out for?
- C. To put it in the present tense - How much do we sell Him for? "Every heart knoweth its own bitterness".

This stock must be disused and terminated should we want to meet the challenge of Judas. A third section would be keenly sought - "Initiative". Judas was one to be "smart", to make what our American Brethren would call "a fast buck" or "quick dollar". Did Judas really think that the Lord would allow Himself to be taken? Every other time Jesus had passed through them (Jno. 8.59). Judas had not taken notice of the words of the Master on this wise - "Because His hour was not yet come". Another caption that is intended to keep us alert should be found for the attention of Judas - "Precise Bible Study". Not forming our own opinions of what we think the Bible says, but what is distinctly quoted, again not taking for granted what some one else says. The common rumour in their days was that "Christ continueth ever" (Jno. 12.34). We have in lieu of what Judas did, to make sure that we understand this principle, so that we do not fall into the same error (1 Tim. 6.19 etc).

"Rightly placed priorities" must be found in our supply, and for this reason we do not question why. God, for instance, placed so much reliance on detail in the Tabernacle, or caused Solomon's Temple to be the dearest edifice the world has ever seen, or why Mary used the spikenard on Jesus! Judas lost his entirely. "Why should not this money be given to the poor, as it was worth a man's whole wages for a full year?" John's comment is electric. "He said this not because he loved the poor, but because he was a thief." We must have this commodity on full display for the prying eyes of Judas.

The most terrible of stock-in-trade for us is that of "Hypocrisy" known as "the Judas Kiss". Please God that this may never be found in us so that Judas will not have to rejoice over us and to welcome us to a suicide's grave in Aceldama, "The Field of Blood".

How does our stock stand with regard to the scrutiny of this most unhappy of men? How often am I a Judas at the Breaking of Bread,? should be our query.

Do we dwell in light or shall we follow Judas out of the presence of Jesus into the black night of oblivion? May the Lord our Master not appeal to us in vain. Let us heed his plea, and pray "May the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us".

What is our appreciation of our Master? "£5 worth of silver?" or "Head of fine gold and the fairest among the ten thousand." (Song of Solomon. 5.11) The decision is entirely our own.

CHAPTER 25

Matthias - the in-between man

His stocktaking ability would not be as extended as the others, or so we feel, and he would look most carefully for "Emergency Measures", on our stock sheet. One old brother's advice when asked "What should a young brother do to best serve the Lord?" was "Always be ready". Throughout the years this wisdom has held good. Instant service on many occasions, whatever form it may take. This is the stock which will give Matthias most pleasure. His name means as we have seen, Gift of Yah, and also Given to Yah, the secondary sense being seen in wholehearted service to his God. Whatever task he was asked to perform, he did it thoroughly and quickly, as Peter and the other Apostles had perceived beforehand. No man could have done better than he, he wonderfully fulfilled the transition period in the vacancy caused by the default and death of Judas Iscariot.

But, as we have observed with only "tentative dogmatism", he did not fulfil the calling of an Apostle as did the others, and Saul the Pharisee after him. His was a task not many of us would have liked to accept knowing that we were going to be makeshift. (probably Matthias was unaware of this fact when he accepted the role to fill up the 12 Apostles.) But we know, and must appreciate the conditions with our fuller knowledge.

'Fill the gap' is a must, and in these days of broken appointments, a Matthias is of great importance to us. In whatsoever field we are called upon to serve the Lord there is a pressing need to fulfil it in the example of this man, who was "chosen by lot" to serve the Lord. We know of many and grievous questions that have been settled by this means. It is to be hoped that all parties concerned participated with the understanding of Matthias. Maybe their names will not be found in New Jerusalem with the Twelve, but along with countless others they will receive within the walls a memorial and "a name better than of sons and daughters". (Isa. 56.5)

Shall we not, then, be always ready to "fill the gap" in whatsoever task we are called to do? Our Brother Matthias will not then have laboured in vain as the "emergency man".

CHAPTER 26

Paul - "one born out of due time"

What will Paul the Apostle to the Gentiles, our own particular Apostle, hope to see?

In his own words he would love to find this caption, "Blameless in Holiness" as key stock, meaning that we try our best at all times to follow him as he followed Christ. "Be ye followers of me", he said. The task is absolutely beyond our reach in keeping step with Christ, although we must agonize to do so. With Paul the conclusion is somewhat nearer. Probably if the Lord Jesus represented the Sun, and Paul one of the nearer stars, the comparison would be more understandable to us, and we must not forget that Paul exhorted us to "Shine as luminations in the World". (Phil. 2.15). If we agonize our best to follow, then are we blameless at His coming. So we may be found as Paul's "joy and crown" at the appearing (1 Thess. 3.13; 2.20.etc) With this campaign in mind Paul would look keenly into the Armoury Section and for a

title styled "The-Armour of Light". As our battles for this season will all be nocturnal, then the characteristics of a Sentry will not be amiss, and the Song of Solomon's advice to "keep our swords by our sides for fear in the night" will come to us with added warning. We must appreciate and be aware of the danger of the night, the Gentile night under which we live. The danger of evil in high places, of spiritual wickedness, of a whole world rotating further and further away into oblivion and outer darkness, which is reserved in blackness for ever.

- A Paul would have us to be keenly aware of the false doctrine that would turn many away in our days;
- B Defend stubbornly the inspiration of the Bible, and
- C The set pattern of doctrine once delivered unto us and which for all time must be upheld should we hope for salvation. The division between this present evil world and ourselves will be made by the double-edged sword of the Spirit. This rightly directed will make the severance obvious to us.

Paul would be very interested if a section indicated by the words "Family Bible Reading" could be found, as he indicated to Timothy regarding his boyhood and the teaching received from the women parents. (2 Tim. 1. 5). The benefit of Daily Readings keeping us familiar with the whole purpose of God (apart from the special avenues of private study) is of great price, and the bringing up of children in the nurture of the Lord more precious than gold. May Paul find that we have not neglected our Bibles in that day, or we shall not be found "blameless" either in holiness or before the Lord at that Day.

Paul will obviously look for a notable sign reading "Godly Manners". In a world largely bereft of such protocol, ere long this gentlemanly trait will only be a memory. Respect for older people and gallantry towards women is rapidly disappearing from view. With the emancipation of women the usual ritual of giving one's seat in a bus to such a person is said to be "as dead as the dodo". Why should we" they argue. They wanted equality. Then these manners die with it. Not so in Christ; they will remain until He comes.

Paul will doubtless call in a special way for Toleration to be on view. The union battles that bedevil civil and business life would be swept away, should the world accept Christ and Paul biblically and literally -

- (1) Treat your employees as Christ would treat you, and
- (2) Serve your employer as you would serve Christ, are his advice to us.
- (3) "Let wives reverence their husbands and husbands love your wives - as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it". (Eph. 5. 24/33).

Paul touches on every aspect of life under the heading of Toleration, Master and slave, husband and wife, parents and children, ecclesial life, etc. He also would expect Sincerity to be prominently on display, and his panacea for all ills spiritually - "Agape" the Divine Love, through which he himself was called to be an Apostle - to the Man and the Cause, he had once hated so fully, but now loved so fiercely.

The concluding section must be "Righteousness." Paul as a Pharisee had sought it earnestly under the Law of Moses, but what he thought would lead to life he found could only bring death. Paul had to die himself to see it, and exhorts us to do the same. By so doing we may inherit with him, of the Lord's Grace, "a crown of righteousness that fadeth not away". (2 Tim. 4. 8).

CHAPTER 27The Lord Jesus looks at us

Finally, having looked at the Twelve (or thirteen as it may be) and suffered under the scrutiny of their enquiries, could we reverently consider what Jesus might think of both the Twelve and ourselves at this time?

Of the Twelve it is said. "Having loved His own He loved them to the uttermost". This is divine language, for the word uttermost is not in human capability. The wording although applying to the Twelve primarily must also apply to those further away, even, should we hope, to ourselves. No one was left out, even Judas received the evidence of this divine love. It is a love as cruel as death and as relentless as the grave, never letting up. (Song. 8¹/₆.) Jesus with the Father will never, never forsake us. (Heb. 12. etc.) This does not mean, however, that our sins and failings go unnoticed or disregarded. How can they? Jesus is our Mediator, the greater Eleazar that made the perfume for the censer and golden altar acceptable to the Father. He must know all about us, else He could not mediate for us. This comes as a shock as we imagine that everything interests the Master. He knows what is in Man, and we are deeply grateful that all judgment has been committed to Him as a son of man. (Jno. 5.27. RV. No definite article in the original). He will judge us with the appreciation of our position as once being a man Himself. (Heb. 2. 14/18). For this thought we are profoundly grateful - absolutely fair treatment and with sympathetic understanding.

Jesus will look for mercy as well as truth in us. For if we show no mercy then must we expect none. He will carefully analyse our dealings with other people on this basis. "As ye have done to others so will I do to you". Forgiveness both ecclesially and personally most certainly will be in prominence. We must see that our actions are not to be construed so as to exclude from mercy any who seek it in truth. Our service to God and man will be adequately viewed and noted accordingly. Our attractions whether of heaven or money power will be diligently surveyed, and keen watch made to see whether or not we have one foot in heaven and one on earth. Our inward motives will not outwit His inspection, if they do others, no doubt He can read our desires and ambitions far better than we can ourselves. That progress that we strived for but never made - what will He think? That progress that was barred through worldly ambition - will He know about this too?

He will most certainly look for the Good Samaritan attitude within us. And will be most pleased should He find it.

To summarise briefly:

- (1) He would like to find in us the persistence of Peter.
- (2) The enthusiasm of James Zebedee.
- (3) The love of John his brother.
- (4) The solidarity of Andrew.
- (5) The commonsense of Philip.
- (6) The meditation and studentship of Nathanael.
- (7) The loyalty of Thomas.
- (8) The forthrightness of Matthew.
- (9) The contentedness of James the Less.
- (10) The faithful acknowledgement of Judas, not Iscariot.
- (11) The stout heart of Simon Zelotes.
- (12) The undying love and zeal of Paul.
- (13) He will not, however, want to find the machinations of Iscariot in our stock.
- (14) The anticipatory reaction to emergency of Matthias.

Should these characteristics find only a faint acceptance in us, we pray that our Lord would be pleased and invite us, along with our worthy ancestors in the Lord before us, to the Marriage Feast of the Lamb.

"Let my beloved come into His garden, and eat His pleasant fruits". (Song.4 16)

"I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey. I have drunk my wine with my milk". "Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved".(Song.5)

"Father I will that they also whom Thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world". (Jno. 17. 24).

"With men it is impossible, but not with God, for with God all things are possible". (Mk. 10. 27).

"Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom". (Lk.12 32).

In conclusion, what can we say but quote the advice of Henry Ainsworth, who died in 1622. It is thought that he was murdered for his belief in God and His word. Concluding the preface of his work, "Annotations on the Pentateuch, Psalms and the Song of Solomon", he says: "But forasmuch as my portion is small in the knowledge of holy things, let the godly reader try what I set down, and not accept it because I say it: and let the learned be provoked into more large and fruitful labours in this kind. The Lord open all our eyes, that we may see the marvellous things of his law".

THE DISCIPLES AND THEIR MASTER

(John 16:30)

Although his eyes show changing moods like ours,
They smile, they weep, they see the sun and showers,
There is a light of truth within their look
The scribes and elders cannot brook.

Although he speaks our native northern speech,
He pleads, entreats, doth tenderly beseech:
There is a power residing in his voice
Awakes the dead and bids rejoice.

And though his hands show marks of common toil,
For these have made the plough that sifts the soil:
There is about his touch and gesture fine
A peeping through of things divine.

We apprehend a being more than man,
Although he too with Adam's flesh began:
And as we walk beside him, sandal shod
We all perceive he came from God.

We dimly see the One Who stands behind
Upright and true, considerate and kind:
And shining through his stern but homely face
We see the light of YAHWEH'S grace.

Harold Tennant

MATTHEW. THE KINGLY ASPECT

Matthew the scribe, on customs bent
 Looked up one day and saw a king,
 Received a call to leave his dues,
 Then evermore went following.

In regal style his gospel shows
 Great David's Son of royal descent:
 The lion's head is plainly seen,
 The Judge of Judah heaven sent:

His record speaks of kingly birth:
 The wise men haste to bow the knee:
 False Herod seeks to vent his wrath
 Upon the new born majesty.

He stands amidst the Elohim,
 They see his shape and hear his voice:
 In him the kingdom has approached,
 The blind, the lame, the deaf rejoice.

The Heavenly Kingdom is at hand:
 So runs his gospel's clear refrain:
 Ten parables he straitly gives,
 Ten pictures of Messiah's reign.

He rides on clouds of glory bright:
 An Angel host his steps attend:
 He parts the nations left and right
 His kingdom comes and hath no end.

Harold Tennant

MARK. THE SERVANT ASPECT

Mark's record shows a servant born:
 One sent from God to do his will:
 He labours in the gospel field,
 Then dies his mission to fulfil.

Mark gives no trace of high descent:
 We see a slave whose ear is bored:
 He shows the servant aspect plain
 And never calls his Master 'Lord'.

The patient ox is here portrayed:
 He wears the yoke and bows the head:
 He walks beneath the load of sin
 With rhythmic step and measured tread.

He serves the poor from morn till night:
 His human attributes are seen:
 He makes a meal for thousands sat
 In ranks upon the verdant green.

Forthwith he comes, 'straitway' he goes
 To serving ministry resigned:
 He waits upon the halt and lame
 And tends the wounds of all mankind.

He wends his way to Calvary,
 A sacrifice to slaughter led:
 Then nailed upon a wooden cross
 To serve the sheep his blood is shed.

Harold Tennant.

LUKE. THE HUMAN ASPECT

The well-loved Luke, of Paul the friend,
 Who from "the very first" began:
 Doth paint with wisdom from above
 A picture of the ideal man.

We learn as though through Mary's lips
 The study of the childhood days:
 We see the shepherds in the fields
 We hear the Angels sing his praise.

The busy Marthas tend his needs,
 The Marys seek their spiritual meat:
 They 'noint his head with spikenard
 And with their tears do wash his feet.

We see the good Samaritans:
 The prodigals with hope restored:
 The publicans do lift the head
 And bow before a new-found Lord.

We mark the man of sorrows here:
 A man of woe assailed by grief:
 Who with unerring sympathy
 Forgives the now repentant thief.

He takes our stripes to heal our wounds:
 Prepares to pay our utmost debt:
 He shrinks before the bitter cup
 And cries to God with tears and sweat.

Harold Tennant.

JOHN. THE EAGLE ASPECT

John's gospel tells of lofty things:
 We see an eagle in its flight:
 The Lord is soaring heavenwards,
 Into the clear and perfect Light.;

He shows the One-begotten Son:
 The Father's likeness full impressed:
 The Word that first had dwelt with God
 And now in flesh made manifest.

Christ is the Light that lightens all,
 Coming from God to end man's strife:
 He is the all-sustaining food:
 The resurrection and the Life.

John plainly shows the Gift of God:
 The Son Divine, His Holy Dove:
 Born of the flesh, yet Spirit-made,
 The Day-spring of the Father's Love.

Christ is the precious food of heaven:
 The Living Water of the rock:
 The door of entrance to the fold:
 The Shepherd of the tender flock.

He sees the sinless Son of God.
 The substance of the shadows shown:
 The vine that feeds the pendant branch,
 Engraved upon the Temple stone.

Harold Tennant.

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