

AN OUTLINE OF EPHESIANS.

INTRODUCTION. (This study is compiled from Notes by C. L. Parker, John Wesley, and W. H. Turner.)
Ephesians Divides into Five main Sections.

1. THE APOSTLES GREETINGS. Eph. 1v1,2.

2. GOD'S GOODNESS AS SHOWN IN HIS PROVISION AND CALL TO THE CHURCH. Ch. 1-3.

1. Thanks for, and a description of the blessings, which come to us in Jesus. 1v3-14.

The believers position through Divine grace. Eph. 1:3-14. These are.

- a. We have all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ. 1v3.
- b. We are chosen to be holy and blameless children of God through Jesus. 1v4-6.
- c. We have redemption and forgiveness of sins. 1v7.
- d. We will be part of God's plan for the redeemed in the ages of ages. 1v8-12.
We have an inheritance with Christ. 1v11.
We should be praiseworthy children and show God's love and character and glory. 1v12.
We now experience a foretaste of future heavenly blessings through the baptism in the Spirit. 1v13,14.

2. Paul's prayer that the saints may have a spiritual revelation. 1v15-22.

- a. Of the glory and majesty of the Father of glory. 1v
- b. Of the calling from God to rule with Christ. 1v18.
- c. Of the incredible treasure we are to God. And His great joy when He will manifests His family. 1v18.
God's joy is totally unselfish, it is the joy of love which rejoices in sharing all His riches and blessings with His redeemed children for ever.
- d. Of God's ability to do what we are not able to do, His ability to change us and raise us to rule with Jesus, even as He raised Jesus to an exalted position. 1v19-23.

3. A statement of the saints once miserable, but now joyful position and prospects in Jesus. Eph. 2v1-22.

- a. We were dead in sin. 2v1.
- b. We were under Satan's dominion. 2v2.
- c. We were in bondage to the desires of the flesh and mind. 2v3.
- d. We were enemies of God. 2v2,3.
- e. Through Jesus, God's great mercy and love. 2v4-9.
Has quickened us together with Christ. 2v5.
Has raised us up to the heavenlies with Christ. 2v6.
Has guaranteed a glorious future to us, God is going to show us the exceeding riches of His grace in the ages to come. 2v7-9.
- f. We are very dear to God, and are objects of His loving workmanship, created in Jesus to do good works. 2v10.
- g. We Gentiles, who were outside of God's covenants, having no hope and far from God, are now brought near to God, and are partakers of all God's blessings through Jesus and His precious blood. 2v11-13.
- h. Through His cross, Jesus has destroyed the enmity between Jew and Gentile and we are now one body, and have access to the Father, and are now fellow-citizens of the household of God. We are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Himself being the chief cornerstone. 2v14--20.
- i. God is building the Church into a holy temple where God can dwell. 2v19-22.

4. The hidden plan of God that the Gentiles should partake of God's blessings through Christ. Eph. 3v2-12.

The former unknown plan of God was made known to Paul, that Gentiles should partake of God's blessings through Christ.

5. A prayer that Christians may be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man. Eph. 3v13-21.

- a. That Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith.
- b. That we being rooted and grounded in love may comprehend and experimentally know Christ's limitless love.
- c. That we might be filled with all the fullness of God.

3. THE CHRISTIANS WALK IN THE LIGHT OF GOD'S CALL. Eph. 4v1 to 6v9.

1. We are to make every endeavour to keep the unity of the body of Christ. 4v1-16.

- a. We are to walk in such a way as to keep the unity of the body of Christ. 4:1-6.
In lowliness, meekness, longsuffering, forbearing one another in love.

- b. The place of the ministry gifts in the body of Christ. 4v7-16.

1. The edifying of the body so that the saints may be perfected to minister. 4v12.
2. The need to come to unity of faith, and the knowledge of Jesus, and to grow to be like Him. 4v13.
3. The need to grow in doctrinal knowledge and stability, so as not to be at the mercy of false teachers. v14.
4. The need for unity in the body of Christ, and dependency on each other, the joy and blessing of a body welded together by love. 4v15,16.

2. The contrast between the old man and the new man in Christ Jesus. Eph.4:17 to 4:32.

A comparison between their former walk as unsaved Gentiles and those who learn and follow Jesus.

- a. Walking in vanity of mind, having a mind devoid of truth about sin and God. 4v17,18.
- b. Given over to lasciviousness, uncleanness greediness. Overcome by their desires. 4v19.
- c. Put off the old man with his lusts and corruptions, and put on the new man, learn of Jesus. 4v21-24.

Particular sins to avoid and virtues to copy. 4v25-32.

- a. Put away lying, and speak the truth. 4v25.
- b. Don't let anger stay and simmer, get rid of it before you go to bed, be forgiving. 4v26.
- c. Don't give place to the Devil. 4v27.
- d. Don't steal, earn an honest living. 4v28.
- e. Don't let foul language or unwholesome words come out of your mouth. 4v29.
- f. Grieve not the Spirit of God, He is trying to prepare us for heaven. 4v30.
- g. All bitterness, wrath, anger, clamour, evil speaking, and malice are to be put away, and we must be kind, tender hearted and forgiving one to another even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven us. 4v31,32.

3. The walk of the believer as God's dear child. Eph.5v1-20.

- a. We must walk in love, as Jesus has walked, for this is acceptable to God. 5v1,2.
- b. Fornication, uncleanness, covetousness, filthy talking, foolish talking, witty talking, jesting, are not to be seen in saints, but rather thanksgiving. There is no inheritance in the kingdom of God for those who are unchaste, impure and covetous (for to be greedy of gain is idolatry). 5v3-5.
- c. We are not to believe people who say these things are all right but we are to walk as children who know the truth yielding to the spirit of God whose fruit is all goodness, righteousness and truth. 5v6-9.
- d. We are to yield to the Holy Spirit and live in the Lord's will, and shun the sins which others revel in. 5v10-12.
- e. We are to walk circumspectly in God's will and light, and redeem the time, for the days are evil. 5v13-17.
- f. Our soul is not to be overcome with wine (drunk) but filled with the spirit, rejoicing and giving thanks always in our soul to God. 5v18-20.

4. The married life of the believer, Illustrating also Christ's relationship with His Church. Eph.5v21-33.

- a. Wives submit to your husband in everything, for he is your head. 5v21-24.
- b. Husbands love your wives with the love that Christ had for His Church, He died for it, and sanctified it. 5v25-27.
- c. Husbands are to nourish and cherish their wives as Christ did the Church. 5v28,29.
- d. The unity between a man and his wife should be as tender and close as the relationship between Christ and His Church. 5v30-33.

5. The home life of believers. Eph.6v1-4.

- a. Children must be obedient, and honour their parents, and they will experience God's promises.
- b. Parents are not to discourage children by over correction, but nurture, gently reprove and encourage them.

6. The "working life" of the believer. Eph.6v5-9.

- a. Servants are to wholeheartedly serve their masters as they would Christ, and He will reward them.
- b. Masters are not to threaten, but to realise that one day they will have to give an account to Christ.

4. THE SPIRITUAL WARFARE OF BELIEVERS. Eph.6:10-20.

a. Be strong in the Lord and put on His armour.

We fight, not against mere men, but against crafty evil angelic beings, but we can overcome them through being strong in the Lord and the power of His might, and by putting on the armour that He gives us. 6v10-13.

b. The Christian armour is seven fold.

1. Loins girt with truth. A correct knowledge of God's Word.
2. The breast plate of righteousness. A practical holy life.
3. Feet shod with the gospel (good news) of peace. An evangelical zeal and readiness of soul.
4. The shield of faith. Complete trust in God, at all times.
5. The helmet of (hope of) salvation: A firm hope in the future, and of present deliverance.
6. The sword of the Spirit God's Word: A right use of God's Word against all opponents.
7. Persevering vigilant, sincere prayer. 6v18.

c. Paul needed the prayers of others to enable him to speak out boldly the truths of the Gospel. 6v19,20.

5. THE APOSTLES CONCLUSION. Eph.6:21-24.

1. THE REVELATION OF GOD'S PROVISION AND CALL TO THE CHURCH. Eph.1 to 3.

THE MYSTERY OF GOD'S WILL. Eph.1:9.

God has revealed in the Scriptures His Eternal plan for the creation. Hitherto it had been hidden from man, although God had conceived it before the foundation of the world. Eph.3:3-8. Rom.16:25,26. Rev.13v8. 17v8.

THE PURPOSE OF GOD . A KINGDOM OF LOVE.

a. Is to make the Lord Jesus head over His creation in Heaven and earth. He will be King over a heaven out of which all enemies will have been driven. Rev.12:7-12. with 20v1-3. Is.34:4,5. 24v21. After the judgement of the Great White Throne all enemies will have been driven out of the earth also Rev.20v7-10. Only those who love righteousness and hate evil, and obey God will enter the New Heaven and earth. All the wicked love evil and hate righteousness, reject and hate the Father and the Lord Jesus, and they will have their part in the lake of fire. Rev.20v11 to 21v8. The wicked would defile God's kingdom, and make happiness impossible. Rev.21v27.

b. To join with Jesus in heaven men, as His adopted sons instead of the fallen angels (sons of God) Job.1. Ps.82. Having forgiven them their sins through the blood and brought them to perfection through His grace they will become co-heirs with Christ and the holy angels. Lk.20:34-36.

N.B. It is this life that the grace of God is able to perfect the Christian. Heb.12:28. Jude.24.

At the judgement seat of Christ the facts about our lives will be revealed, and we shall receive not grace, but a true evaluation of our lives and perfect justice. 2Cor.5:10. At that time the amount of grace we have been willing to receive on earth will be revealed and praise and position meted out accordingly. 1Cor.3:10-15. 4:5. 1Pet.1:7. Rev.22:10-12.

THE HEAVENLY PLACES. Eph.1:3,20. 2:6. 3:10 6:12.

a. Created by God before the earth. Gen.1:1. Job.38v4-7.

b. There is more than one heaven. 2Cor.12:2. Deut.10:14.

The Chinese children saw a third heaven beyond the stars.

The kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven.

c. God's abode is above them, but He moves through them on His throne when He wills to do so. Ez.1:1,12,13-27. Ps.8:1. Ps.57v5. Mt.5:2-4. Heb.4:14. 7:26.

d. It is the abode of angels. Job.1:6,12. 22:19. Eph.2:2. 3:10. 6:12. Rev.12:9.

e. The heavens were partly destroyed at Satan's fall. Gen.1:2,3. Job.38:11-15. Jer.4:23.

f. They were restored by God. Gen.1:2,3. 14-18.

g. They are to be the abode of the overcoming saints. Eph.1:3. 2:6. Phil.3:14-20. Heb.3:8. 12:22-24. Rev.3:21. 2Cor.6:8. i.e. During the Millennium.

h. For this the heavens need to be prepared. Job.15:15 Jn.14:2. Rev.12v7-9.

i. The heavens will be shaken and changed at the Lord's return. Is.30:26. Mt.24:29. Heb.12:26. Rev.6:14.

j. The heavens will finally pass away. Mt.5:18. 24:35. 2Pet.3:12. Rev.20:11.

k. The heavens will be recreated. Is.65:22. 2Pet.3:13. Rev.21:1. Perhaps because they are so full of bad memories.

PREDESTINATION. Eph.1:5.

Predestination is the translation of a Greek word meaning "to determine beforehand." "Proorizo," means, to limit or mark out beforehand; to design beforehand, ordain beforehand, to predestine. Act.4:28, . Rom.8:29,30. etc.

God is said to have predestinated certain things to happen. Act.4:28. Rom.8:29,30. 1Cor.2:7. Eph.1:1-11.

All prophecy of future events introduces the note of predestination.

There is no difficulty in understanding how God should determine His own actions beforehand. The difficulty only arises when we are told that He predestines the actions of others. At first sight this seems to do away with their free will. Even this would not be difficult to accept if it were confined to minor matters. It only becomes an acute problem when we are dealing with salvation. It is true that the salvation of an individual depends not on his own free choice but on God's arbitrary predestination

The difficulty would seem to be solved by the statement of Rom.8v29 and 1Pet.1v2. where the predestination and election of God are said to depend upon His foreknowledge. God does not predestinate men to do things against their own will and in violation of their own sense of what is right, but because He knows beforehand what they will choose ... He is able to set it down in black and white before, even thousands of years before they actually make the choice e.g.

1. 1Kings.13v2. Josiah, 300 years before his birth.

2. Is.44v4,5,6. Cyrus 240 years before.

3. Jer.1v5. Jeremiah.

4. Acts.1v16. Ps.41v9. Judas about a 1,000 years before his birth.

5. Lk.1v13-17. Mal.4v6. John Baptist 400 years before his birth.

Since God knows beforehand how men will use their free will, He is able to predestinate and elect them according to this knowledge. Men do not do what they do because of God's foreknowledge but God forearms because they will assuredly do it.

ADOPTION. Eph.1v5.

1. Man is not by nature a Son but a servant of God, he is in the likeness of God but he by sinning becomes a child of wrath Eph.2v2., or even of the Devil Jn.8v6. James.3v9. (There is a horrible parody of the new birth in Spiritualism).

2. Man after sinning and cutting himself off from God needs to be born again and adopted into a new family the purchase price is the blood of Jesus Christ. Jn.1v12 3v5. Rom.8v15. Gal.3v26. 4v14. 1Pet.1v18,19.

3. Though this adoption is well known to God, yet there is not public recognition of the change until God manifests His Sons to the universe. Rom.14v23. Col.3v4. 1Jn.3v1,2. N.B. The spirit is quickened and born again, the soul is adopted. Gal.4v1-7.

A saved person is not good, you are justified, you are extremely lucky. The saved brother and the saving brother. you are not the same once you are saved as if you had never sinned.

Predestination. To say that God predestines us without any choice of ours coming into it would make God a very wicked person, for there is no doubt that there will be many people in Hell forever and if they have been put there by the will of God it would make God's character worse than those Germans who so cruelly ill-treated people and put them into gas ovens. But it is obvious that it is true that God is love and that His heart is broken over man refusing to go in the paths that will lead to glory (Hosea.11. all) and going to Hell. Surely the cross is the answer to the thought that God does not let us choose for ourselves, if He does not why have a cross, and why let us sin at all. Lk.13v34,35. 19v41-44. These prove beyond doubt that we have a free will and choose for ourselves what our destiny will be.)

THE MYSTERIES OF GOD. Eph. 1v9.

1. These are the purposes of God for His Creation hidden from the foundation of the world, but they are revealed to God's own children by the Holy Spirit as they are able to bear and understand them. Eph.1v17. Mt.13v11.

2. Those who understand these mysteries are responsible for passing on this knowledge to others as they are able to bear it. 1Cor.3v1,2. 4v1,2.

3. These hidden purposes of God have been kept secret since the foundation of the world. Mt.12v17-35. Rom.16v25,26. Eph.3v5-11. Col.1v26.

4. In the same way Satan has his mysteries which he reveals to his servants. These God has revealed to us also. 2Thes.2v1-12.(esp. v7.) Rev.2v24. Is.14v12-14.

THE INHERITANCE. Eph. 1v11.

1. Just as God had an inheritance on earth for the children of Israel Deut.4v21., so also now He has an inheritance in Heaven for His Sons. 1Pt.1v3-5.

2. To receive the inheritance it is necessary to be born into the family, for only Sons inherit by right and not servants. Mt.21v38. Rom.8v15,16.

3. Yet to receive an inheritance it is necessary to be worthy of it. God will only give praise and entrust power where He can do so honourably. Lk.14v10-12. Rom.8v17. Col.3v26.

4. Bad disobedient Sons will find that they have no inheritance. 1Cor.6v9,10. 3v10-15. Eph.5v5. Lk.16v11,12. Prov.17v2. Gal.15v19-21.

5. We must therefore be fit to act as Sons of God, and only God can make us fit through the Spirit and the Word. Acts.20v32. Col.1v12. 2Tim.3v14-17. 2Pet.1v4. Eph.3v13-20.

6. On our part therefore we need keenness and patience and faith to gain our full inheritance. Heb.6v12. Rev.21v7. 2Jn.8.

7. Let us not be like Esau and despise our inheritance and let it go for the sake of earthly gain and fleshly desire. Heb.12v16,17. Phil.3v18,19.

8. Things that will cause us to miss our inheritance as shown in Heb.12.

a. Not accepting our chastening 12v12,13. Turning back from God's way for us.

b. Unwillingness to accept God's grace.

c. A root of bitterness defiling us. 12v15.

d. Bondage to fleshly desire and earthly things. fornicator and profane person. 12v16.

THE HOLY SPIRIT. Eph.1v13,14.

1. As a Seal.

"Ye were sealed," is "esphragisthete," the aorist passive indicative of "sphragizo," to set a seal on one as a mark or stamp, sometimes the marks of ownership or of worship of deities like "stigmata" in Gal.6v17.. Marked and authenticated as God's property and heritage as in Eph.4:30., "And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed ("esphragisthete") unto the day of redemption." A seal is an evidence of ownership. We read in Jn.6v27., that the Father sealed Jesus at His baptism with the Holy Ghost. Here Jesus uses the aorist indicative active of "sphragizo," 4972, to mark with a seal, (with a signet or private mark), for security or preservation, to confirm, attest: and authenticate, to conceal and keep secret.).

In 2Cor.1v22., "Sealed us," is "sphragisamenos hemas." From "sphragizo" a verb which is common in Septuagint and papyri for setting a seal to prevent opening, as in Dan.6v17., or in place of signature in 1Kings.21v18.. The examples in the papyri show a wide legal use to give validity to documents, to guarantee genuineness of articles and produce, as sealing sacks and chests. In 2Cor.1v22., "The earnest of the Spirit," is "ton arrabona tou pneumatou." It can be spelled as both "arabon" and "arrabon." It is common in the papyri as earnest money in a purchase for a cow or for the dowry to "purchase" a wife. It only occurs in the New Testament here in 2Cor.1v22. 5v5., and Eph.1v14.. It is part payment on the total obligation, and we use the very expression today, "earnest money." God, says Paul, has done all this for us and God is Paul's pledge that he is sincere. He will come to Corinth in due time. This earnest of the Spirit in our hearts is the witness of the Spirit that we are God's.

So God seals us 2Cor.1v22. for it is as Sons that we receive the Spirit. Gal.4v6.

A seal is both for ourselves and outsiders to see. The baptism in the Spirit has a Scriptural manifestation to others in speaking in tongues.

2.As an Earnest.

An earnest is a foretaste, and so a pledge of what is to come. The Holy Spirit takes us up in spirit into the Heavenly places as a pledge that one day we shall be there in body. 2Cor.1v22. 12v1-4. 5v5. This is for our enjoyment. Eph.1v14.

In Eph.1v14., "An earnest," is "arrabon," , a deposit, pledge, earnest. See 2Cor.1v22. 5v5. Here "of promise" "tes epaggelias" is added to the Holy Spirit to show that Gentiles are included in God's promise of salvation and the gift of the Holy Spirit.. God's gift of the Holy Spirit is the pledge and first payment for the final inheritance in Christ.

"Sealed," is. "esphragisthete," the aorist passive indicative of "sphragizo," to set a seal, mark, or stamp on someone, seals were used not only of a mark of ownership, but also as a guarantee of the correctness of the contents. Christians are authenticated as God's heritage and property, as in Eph.4v30.

THE INDIVIDUAL NEED OF A REVELATION. Eph. 1v15-23.

1. We need to have a spirit of wisdom and revelation imparted to us to open our eyes, after we have been saved and baptised in the Holy Ghost, to the following four truths.

- (a) The revelation of the Father of glory. v18.
- (b) The hope of His calling. v18. Heb.3v1. Eph.4v1.
- (c) The joy awaiting God when He can manifest those children of His who have overcome. v18.
- (d) The ability of God to do what we cannot attempt to do, and to make us fit for our wonderful destiny. v19. 1Thes.5v25. Phil.1v6.

2. The evidence that God is able to do this wonderful thing for us, raising desperate sinners into His own presence, is contained in the historical fact that He has already raised Jesus to His own throne, although Jesus for our sakes was made sin and suffered the pains of a sinners doom for us. This man, broken and smashed in body, forsaken and cursed by God in soul, separated from the Father in spirit, yet has been raised to the loftiest position of all. This is a proof that God is able to do the same for us, however broken in body, sick in soul, dead in spirit we may have been. God has the same power and is willing to use it in the same way for all who trust in Jesus.

3. The essential thing for us to remember in meditating on this great salvation is that the whole glory belongs to God. It is marvellous that He should be willing not merely to save drunken murderers from Hell, but actually to place them near Jesus and Himself in Heaven: and if this were not enough to give them power, glory and authority, and that forever. But God insists that we should remember and proclaim that this is His work and not ours, and left to ourselves we would not even believe His Word, much less raise ourselves from our fallen condition. Heb.2v1-5.

THE CHRISTIAN'S CALLING. Eph.1v18.

1. The Christian after he has passed from death unto life hears his Saviour calling him to honour and glory. 2Thes.2v14. 1Pet.5v10. 1Thes.2v12. 2Tim.2v10.
2. This calling is to mount up into Heaven, and to live in God's kingdom not as subjects, but as kings. Heb.3v1. Phil.3v14. Col.3v1.
3. We need to have the full glory of this calling revealed to us by God. Eph.1v17,18. Phil.3v15.
4. We are not to suppose that we are certain to enter into our calling but are to strive and press forward lest we lose it. 1Cor.9v24-27. Phil.3v12-14. 2Pet.1v10,11.
5. Indeed many are called but few are chosen, and they that are with the Lamb are "called chosen and faithful." Mt.22v14. Rev.17v14. 2Thes.1v11. Eph.16v1. Heb.3v15-19. 1Cor.10v1-13.
6. God alone is able to make us worthy of this calling, as we humble ourselves and cry for grace. Eph.1v19,20. 2v6. 1Thes.5v24. Josh.5v13-15. Ps.44v1-8. Jude.24.
7. Although God will reward us according to our works of fleshly determination or ability, which lead to pride, but rather the gracious fruits of the Spirit. Heb.12v28. Gal.5v22,23. (though they are not works of fleshly determination or ability they are works of diligence. These rewards are the reward for works of faith working by love.

THE CHURCH THE BODY OF CHRIST. Eph. 1v22,23.

1. The Lord being absent in body now, can no longer work in person as He used to do, but requires the bodies of His own people. They are therefore called in the Bible His Body, i.e. that through which He acts. Eph.1v23. 1Cor.12v27. Col.24. Eph.5v29,30.
2. The head of the body is that part in which the mind and directive faculty lies. i.e. The head is Jesus. Col.2v14-19. 1Cor.2v16. Eph.4v15. 5v23.
3. If the body is unwilling to do, or ignorant of what the head desires, Jesus is paralysed and unable to get His will done on earth, unable to move. Jesus wants to be a mighty man of war but it depends on our obedience. Jn.15v1-6. Col.2v19.
4. The body has different members with different faculties and functions, so the members of the church have different offices, works and gifts. Rom.12v4,8. 1Cor.12v12-31. all members are vital, the prominent ones are not the most important. e.g. heart and arm.
Each member shall apply himself to his own particular calling, remembering that he is not an individual, but part of an organism.

5. The various members of a body are dependant upon one another; the pain or dishonour of one is the sorrow of all, the ability or success of one brings blessing to all. 1Cor.12v20-23. Eph.4v16. Col.2v19.

6. The members are held together by a common love one for the other. 1Cor.12v25,26. Eph.4v15,16.

7. Jesus cares for His Church as a man cares for his body, and a husband for his wife. Eph.5v25-32.

8. Just as in a human body, the whole body is dragged down by a sick part, and all the unaffected members supply strength to the diseased or sick part in an endeavour to heal it, so it should be in the body of Christ.

A diseased member is a common danger and all the members should be dissatisfied until it is healed. 1Cor.12v25,26. Gal.6v1,2. Jesus a leper e.g. Naaman cant fight, only thinks about getting healed or have children. He is ashamed.

9. Division in the body of Christ is traceable to carnality and pride. 1Cor.3v1-9.

10. There are diseases so dangerous and infectious that they need to be isolated or cut off lest all be infected. For such members constant prayer should be made, and all feeling of enmity avoided. Love hopeth, suffereth and endureth all things. Rom.16v17. 2Thes.3v12-15. Titus.3v10,11. 1Cor.11v29-31. 13 all.

11. It is clear that just as a man whose body is sick or paralysed cannot do what he would, so also our Lord cannot do what He would unless we, His Body are in perfect health.

It is therefore not hard to see, that any member who through self-will has continually thwarted the Head, will in the end be rejected as useless in the service of the Lord Jesus. Though for the present Jesus is hindered by the body being sinful and disobedient and ignorant of His will, yet in eternity He will choose for His executives only those to whom He can say "well done, good and faithful servant," the bad servant will lose all opportunity of future great services for Jesus.

After being called to the throne we must be faithful in the work we are given here, and prepare ourselves faithfully so that we may be chosen. Rev.17v14. with Mt.22v1-13. for the throne and a co-heir with Christ. Rev.2v26,27. Rev.3v21. 21v7.

THE AGES. Eph.2v7-21.

1. An age is a period of time having specified and clearly marked characteristics of its own.

"Age," "aion" 165, is a period of time of significant character; a life; an era; an age, perpetuity of time, eternity. "The ages to come," "tois 3588, aiosin 165, tois 3588, eperchomenois," 1904, which literally means, "the ages, those which are coming on." "Dispensation," is "oikonomia" 3622, it primarily signifies "the management of a household, or a stewardship of household affairs" ("oikos," "a house," "nomos," "a law"); then the management or administration of the property of others, and so "a stewardship," as in Lk.16v2-4. It only occurs elsewhere in the epistles of Paul, who uses it to describe the responsibility entrusted to him to preach the gospel. 1Cor.9v17. Eph.3v2. Col.1v25. "Dispensation," in the KJV is "oikonomia") See also Col.1v25. Eph.3v2. It is used of God's administration of the "times and the seasons," and "the fullness of the times" or seasons, when God will sum up and bring to head all things in Heaven and earth in Christ. Eph.1v10. 3v9. See also 1Tim1v4.

A dispensation signifies the plan which a member of a family or his steward establishes for the management of his house. In each age of the worlds history God has had a different, clearly marked dispensation.

2. Before the creation of Heaven and Earth with their respective inhabitants, there were (it seems) no ages.

The Three Persons of the Godhead dwelt together eternally (in unchanging life? or does God like we, like variety of life.) It seems that there were no dispensations either, for God had as yet no house to manage. This period of time before creation or the ages is referred to in the Bible 1Cor.2v7. Titus.1v2. Gr. before the ages of time. time,

3. In Hebrews.11v3., we are told that God planned the ages of time from before the creation.

From that date, age has followed age in a clearly marked sequence. By His foreknowledge God was able to map out the entire sketch of time, and has revealed to man the outline of His plan. Eph.3v11. "Eternal purpose" is, "prothesis ton aionon." Literally, "the purpose (and plan) of the ages." "Prothesis" 4286, means, a setting forth of a thing, a placing of something in view, i.e. a proposal, intention, or plan.

4. Before the ages which began with the creation of man Adam, the Bible clearly reveals to us other ages.

We do not know their history in detail, but the following broad outline is shown by the Bible.

a. THE HEAVENLY AGES referred to in Gen.1v1. Job.38v4-7. In this period the heavens were created and filled with angelic beings, referred to as Sons of God. It appears the angels were trained in this period for the next age. Ez.28v12.

b. THE EARTH AGE UNDER LUCIFER. In this age the earth was created and filled with inhabitants, and put under the rule of a perfect angel called Lucifer. The age ended, when because Lucifer had filled heaven and earth with violence the earth was judged and Satan or Lucifer was cast out for the pride that had caused so much sin and havoc. Gen.1v2. Jer.4v23-28. Ez.12v19. Is.14v12-19. Job.38v8-15.

c. THE AGES OF CHAOS OR JUDGEMENT. during which this earth lay without form and void of life, waste and desolate. Job.38v30. This appears to be the ice age. There have been found Masttodus animals which live on "tropical" vegetation were found in the icy lands of Siberia frozen in ice, but fit to eat, this shows there has been a great judgement and that it happened in a few hours for the animals had not had time to go bad before they froze.

The Proof of this age.

1. Lucifer means light-bringer, angel means messenger. To be a light-bringer you must have a creation to bring it to.

2. Gen.1v11. "Who-so-seeds itself on the earth" the grass, herb, fruit, trees, seed were on the earth proving there had been a former creation.

3. God created the heaven and the earth. Gen.1v1. same word. Gen.1v21. Making of sea monsters. In Ps.51v10. to the formation or creation of a clean heart; Ps.89v12. to the appointment at the north and the south. In Ps.102v18. to the formation of the people. In Is.4v5. to the producing or bringing of a cloud and smoke, also in Is.45v7. 57v19. 65v18. 48v7. Jer.31v22. Ex.21v30. 28v13.

Amos4v13. Ex.23v47 with Josh.17v15,18. The whole word created for preparing can have in the thought of completeness.

4. God said to Adam and Eve go and replenish the earth. A.V. R.V. i.e. fill up again, check with Young's literal, lit. to fill, but see Ps.90v3,4.

5. Satan is prince of this world, he was put over it to rule but he had fallen when Adam and Eve came on the scene and so he must have been ruling over a former creation. Jude.9. Heb.2v14.

6. Science should in no wise clash with Christianity but it does unless this view is taken. If the view of a creation then a fall is taken it gives scope for all the geological ages and fossils which are no doubt correct.

The ages of judgement was probably to try and bring the angels to repentance, by seeing what their sin had caused and to show us that this would not necessarily produce repentance, for many with Satan more still determined to sin.

The age of chaos ended with the referring of the earth as described in Gen.1v2.

5. There followed, revealed in the Bible the ages which God deals with man in seven different ways leaving no method untried where by men might be induced to live righteously.

a. THE AGE OF COMMUNION. in which God deals with man in His own glorious and loving person. This is ended by man's preference for Satan's path of disobedience and sin. The temptation to sin would have come (and possibly had come) some time apart from Satan so Satan was allowed to tempt Adam and Eve with the intent of putting backbone into them and making them hate sin. 1Pet.1v6,7. James.1v12-17. The good and lovely desires God had given were the basis of the temptation. "good for food, tasty." "A man loving his wife more than God." Gen.3v6. Gen.1v2 to 3v22. Scripture. Period.

b. THE AGE OF FORBEARANCE. in which God leaves man to his own choice, after making a way to return to God, by offerings. This age could well be called the Age of Conscience. This age is ended by universal violence and misery, which forces God to send the flood in kindness on the righteousness, (and the wicked who were so grievously hurting one another.) It was kinder to let them die than to let them live. Scripture Period. Gen.3v23 to 8v19.

c. THE AGE OF STERN JUSTICE. in which God leaves man to live in memory of a fearful punishment, and gives them a law against murder. This is ended by rebellion at Babel. Gen.8v20 to 11v9.

d. THE AGE OF PROMISE. in which God ceases to deal with all mankind, and gives a glorious promise of universal blessing through a single family in response to faith. Gal.3v6-9. This is ended by a family, now grown to a nation, forgetting and neglecting these promises, where upon the Lord gives them the Law. Scripture Period. Gen.11v10. to Ex.19v1,8.

e. THE AGE OF LAW. in which God gives to a select nation such a perfect code of law as the world had never seen, with the intention that the heathen nations realising its superiority might desire to join themselves to Israel and enjoy its perfect happiness. Israel however, constantly rebelled and forsook God and broke the law, and this flung its privileges and rights away. (Rom.3v1,2. the Jews privileges,) and preferred the cruelty and wilderness of heathendom to the Law and goodness of Moses. Scripture Period. Ex.19v1,8. to Mt.27v51.

f. THE AGE OF GRACE. Since Israel rejected the justice and Law of God. He is showing through His Church His sacrificial mercy and grace, exhibiting Himself as one who would suffer to the end for His creatures, hoping thus to win their love and confidence. Instead, of this the world has made use of grace to continue in sin without the fear of punishment. Jude.4. Scripture Period. Mt.27v51. to Rev.11v15. (N.B. It is most dangerous to make use of God's grace to continue in sin, God hates sin. Rom.6v1-4. 8v6-13. Gal.5v19-21. If we live in sin the grace does not cover us, forgiveness is only for the repentant sinners, who forsake sin. Acts.2v38. 3v19.)

g. THE AGE OF STERN DIVINE GOVERNMENT. There is coming a time when God will rule men with a rod of iron and outward righteousness will be compulsory, yet man who has tasted the blessing of perfect government and ideal conditions, will take advantage of the first opportunity to re-introduce crime and violence. This age will end with the passing of the present Heaven and earth. Ex.38v10-16. esp. v10,11. Scripture Period. Rev.11v15. 20v1-6. to 20v7-10.

N.B. Better names might be found for the ages, but the main thought is that in each age God has tried a new plan with man, and man has defeated it by deliberate wickedness and proved that however God deals with him, he is in rebellion against even the best of government. The happiness of eternity will depend on the truth that we know God has done all He could and has been even willing for the cross in an effort to save man.

6. The Bible again reveals to us, stretching forward into a vast eternity, THE AGES OF AGES. During which the redeemed will taste with exquisite joy, the infinite variety of God's love and wisdom and power. This begins with the judgement of the great White Throne. Through its portals the vast myriads of creation pass either to unending life and peace or an existence of never dying misery and darkness.

THE MIGHTY WORK OF JESUS IN THE NEW CREATION. Eph.2v11-22.

1. We do well to remember that we were before grace found us, hopeless both in this life and the next, living in a world of evil cruelty and unhappiness.

2. With this we are to contrast our present position God has raised us to a position infinitely higher and more blessed than Moses, David or Daniel. We are God's sons and able to enter the most Holy presence of God in the spirit.

Though an old testament saint had no opportunity of this they will have the opportunity of being adopted, if they were faithful. Prov.17v2. 29v21. Gal.4v4-7. Mt.11v11.

3. This has come to us, not by our own self efforts, but by the mighty, tremendous struggle and victory of the Son of God, who by the sacrifice of Himself has brought us back to God.

4. The full extent of this blessing is that through eternity God will dwell in His Church, and fill it with His glory, as He dwelt in Solomon's Temple and filled that with His glory.

THE TEMPLE OF GOD. Eph.2v21.

1. Under the figure of a temple the church is looked upon as a body of people in whom God can dwell, and who are devoted to His praise. Eph.2v20-22. Ps.29v9. God longs to dwell with us so that He may bless us. Ps.132v13-18.

2. Just as Solomon's temple was built of stones carefully quarried and prepared underground, and fitted together noiselessly on Mount Zion, so the eternal temple of God is built of living stones carefully shaped and prepared by God on earth and fitted together in heaven. 1Pt.2v4-9. 1Kings.5v7,18. 6v7.

This world is the quarry, and it is essential to realise this or else we wonder why we have so many trials, it is to prepare us for our heavenly position. If we lose sight of the ages to come we get worried over why we are so chastened. Rom.5v2-5. Heb.12v3-17. Ps.73v13,14,24.

3. The foundation of this building is composed of the twelve apostles and the Lord Jesus Christ, the church cornerstone. It was not as man that the apostles formed the foundation, but as prophets, because through their mouths God spoke as He did through Jesus. Yet the revelation of the truth God gave through Jesus is supreme. The apostles could not add to what Jesus taught, they could only explain His words. Eph.2v20. Rev.2v14. 2Pt.3v2. Jn.15v20. 16v13-15. 1Pt.2v5-10.

4. In other Scriptures the same figure is used of the individual believer, but not its significance, is always the same; dedication and praise to the worship of God. 1Cor.4v19. 2Cor.4v16.

THE DIVINE APOSTLESHIP OF PAUL. Eph.3v1-13.

1. God has foreseen from the beginning the coming of Jesus as Saviour and Head of Creation.

2. This plan however had not been revealed to man in the past, only after the death and resurrection of Jesus did God reveal this mystery to man by means of the apostles. Col.1v26.

3. They were entrusted with the stewardship of God, having the responsibility of revealing to man and angels all that God intended to do through Jesus Christ. 1Cor.4v1. James.3v1. Rom.1v14. 2Cor.4v1-7. Col.1v24. Col.2v3.

4. It is remarkable that God should have chosen for this work creatures who had been His enemies, so great is the undeserved kindness of God. Rom.5v6-11.

THE PRISONER OF JESUS. Eph.3v1.

It would seem that Paul who was sent especially to the Gentiles by the Lord Himself. (Acts.9v15. 13v44-50. esp.47.) Paul always had a personal desire to go to the Jews. Rom.9v1-4. We find Paul hurrying across Europe and Asia Minor, without leisure to visit Ephesus one of his own churches, and in need of help, (Acts.20v13-38. esp. v16,22. 30v38. in order to go to keep a feast at Jerusalem. Acts.20v16. Paul knew it was the last time the Ephesians would have the opportunity of seeing him. Acts.20v38. yet he went to Jerusalem.

No one knew better than Paul that all such feasts had passed away with the old covenant, yet Paul even enters into the temple to purify himself with other Jews, in order that they may think him to be orthodox in Jewish law, which was nothing but hypocrisy. Compare Gal.2v11-14. Acts.20v18-26.

The Holy Spirit told Paul not to go to Jerusalem but Paul did not listen. Acts.21v4-13. Therefore the Lord, for the sake of the gentiles, made him a prisoner in Gentile hands, separated him from Jews and Jerusalem and incarcerated him in Rome the centre of the Gentile world. Never again, should the Gentiles Apostle neglect His converts for the sake of the Jews. (Paul when he was about to die said that he had fought a good fight, he had kept the faith. 2Tim.4v6-8. this does not mean that he never failed, it means that his attitude to God generally was with a full sincere heart.)

THE ANGELS. Eph.3v10.

1. God created them perfect through His Son. Jn.1v3. Col.1v16. Ez.28v15.
2. They were called by God "the sons of God." Gen.6v2. Job.1v6. 37v7. Ps.82.
3. They were made and present when God created the earth. Job.38v4-7.
4. The greatest of them Lucifer fell through pride, drew others with him and so wrecked the earth he was created to bless. Ez.28v11-19. Jer.4v23-27. Gen.1v2. Job.3v8-15. Is.14v12-19.
5. At Satan's fall, the angels were divided into two camps, part following God, part following Satan. Between the two camps there has been and is continual perpetual warfare. Rev.12v7. Dan.10v13,20,21. Mt.25v41. Jude.9.
6. The occupation of God's angels has been to do His will succouring His saints. Ps.104v4. Heb.1v14. 2v2. Gal.3v19. Acts.12v7,11. 1Kings.19v5,7. Lk.22v43.
7. The occupation of Satan's angels is to separate man from God and to persuade them to follow in the way to destruction. Their only delight is in destruction and they will find their joy in making others suffer. Jn.10v10. A striking example of this is the moment the demons were allowed to go into the pigs they destroyed them. Lk.8v32,33. Rev.11v18. 9v11. (demons are a different being to angels but they have the same state of heart as the wicked angels.
8. God allows the saints to battle against these wicked angels to make us hate the sin which has made them so hateful, and to put character and backbone into us so that we may be fitted for heaven. These temptations are only as strong as we can stand, or God will not allow the angels to tempt us. 1Pt.1v6,7. James.1v12. Job.1v1,6-22. esp.v10. 23v9,10. Lk.22v31,32. Heb.10v4-15.
9. The time is approaching, when just as the disobedient angels of Gen.6v1-7. esp. 2. were shut up after invading the earth, so Satan himself and his angels will be shut up. Rev.12v9-13. 12v21. 20v1-3. Jude6. 1Pt.3v19,20. (Just as in Gen.6v2. they mingled with the seed of men, so they will do again in the last days. Dan.2v43. The world becomes so wicked that Christ returns to destroy the people, who have again made the world unfit to live in. Is.13v9-16. esp.12.)
10. Col.1v20. tells us that the reconciliation of Calvary extended to the things in the Heavens. At the same time Mt.25v41. tells us that Hell is prepared for the Devil and his angels, and Rev.20v10. shows us the final doom of Satan. Though provision for forgiveness has been made through Calvary, it is clear that these evil angels will not accept it. These angels are in the group "who have tasted everything that God has," and have seen God and hated Him, and realising fully what they were doing have turned fully to evil, and so it is impossible to renew them to repentance. Heb.6v1-9. esp.v4-6. John.15v22-25. The torment of Hell is produced by the evil within a person, the torment of a sinful perverted mind, that loves evil and rejects the truth. Rom.1v18.
11. The last act of Satan in Rev.20v7,8. shows his determination to sin forever, his free will is irrevocably fixed, and even punishment cannot alter his character. Having a foretaste of the isolation and hopelessness of Hell does not necessarily bring repentance.
12. In Rev.20v11,12. Jude6. 1Cor.6v3. we see the angels at the judgement seat of Christ, being judged by Himself and the saints.
13. Heb.2v5. shows us that the angels will never again be entrusted with the ruling of men, after the coming of the Lord. This will be the work of the Sons of God. Rom.8v14-23. esp.19,21. It is obvious that any angel who has been faithful and is " a being after God's own heart will be included in this Royal family.

A PRAYER FOR THE REVELATION OF GOD'S LOVE AND PURPOSE IN JESUS. Eph.3v1,14-21.

1. God is willing and able to do mighty things for those of His children who trust Him.
2. By the things which God does for us, we have brought home to us the real nature of His purpose, love and power.

3. But before God can command deliverance for Jacob; or rescue David, or fight for Jehoshaphat, or set Peter at liberty, they for their past, must put their faithfulness to God (not folly), have allowed themselves to get into difficulties and dangers.

4. To do this demands from us spiritual strength and vision. If Jesus is to dwell in our hearts we must be willing to face the worlds hatred for Him, which will surely come if we believe Jesus is able to work on our behalf.

5. Four stages are shown here clearly.

a. Strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man. That

b. Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith. That

c. Ye being rooted and grounded in love may comprehend and know Christ's love. That

d. Ye might be filled with all the fullness of God.

1. Branham will not go to a place until all denominations are included, he will not go as a Pentecostal merely. There is a very practical difficulty. Jesus always seemed to have wanted quality not quantity, He spoke tremendous sermons to people with wrong motives. Lk.9v22-26. 14v25-35.

2. There are two unities mentioned in this chapter, the unity of the New Birth, and the unity of maturity. We are to endeavour to keep the one and arrive at the other. This calls for great humility and patience on our part, and cannot be achieved without suffering. Rom.5v2-5. We are to forbear with each others faults.

3. There are however cases where outward unity must be broken, even, though inward unity be recognised. The following four reasons for breach of unity are given in Scripture. a. Mt.18v15-17. A private enemy who has been scripturally dealt with.

b. 2Thes.3v6,14,15. Christians who deliberately walk in an unruly fashion. c. Rom.16v17,18. Those who cause diversions.

d. Titus.3v10,11. An Heretic who has been properly dealt with.

4. Eph.4v3,13. In all these cases the reason for discipline is not personal hatred, but such offenders are a public danger to the body, and by their own actions bring discipline on themselves. The aim of the church in cutting them off from the fellowship is not perpetual separation, but safety for the rest of the body while the danger is there, and if offenders repent then there is restoration and reunion. 2Cor2v5-8 with 1Cor.5v1-5.

5. The unity of the body includes great variety, not all members have the same work; but all alike are to cleave to Jesus, and by doing that work which He assigns to them, help in the growth, not simply of themselves,(this perfecting of ones own soul leads to pride we are to have an whole hearted interest in the souls of others Is.65v3-5.) but the whole body.

THE CHRISTIAN WALK IN THE LIGHT OF GOD'S CALL Eph.4v6.

False prophets and teachers often seek a following of disciples.

Paul warned the Ephesian Church about ambitious false teachers, but they did not heed this warning, and like many other churches, they succumbed to them for a while. Acts.20v28-31. In 2Tim.1v15., Paul said, "All they that be in Asia be turned way from me." Many Christian leaders today resist God-appointed ministries, and are like the power loving Diotrefes, who would not even allow the beloved apostle John into his church. 3Jn.v9-12. God will personally search out and deal with such wickedness on judgement day. Lk.11v46-54.

Mature spiritual Christians can easily discern a servant of Satan, or a Christian with false doctrines and false revelations. However, in Eph.4v14-16., Paul warns us that baby Christians can be easily blown to and fro by every wind of doctrine, and be deceived by crafty false teachers, who with "unscrupulous cunning," "panourgia," methodically deceive, "methodian," the unwary, by throwing loaded dice, "en tei kubeia."). 2Cor.11v1-15. Gal.3v1-3. We read in Heb.5v10 to 6v12., that people who have been Christians for a long time can still be spiritual babes in doctrine and experience; this has grave spiritual dangers, and there is a real need to go on to maturity, or deception by false prophets is a real possibility. Heb.6v1.

Satan's most severe attacks against the Church have occurred, when he has come as an angel of light, with a Bible under his arm and a text in his mouth, as when he tried to tempt and corrupt the Lord Jesus. Mt.4v6. However, Satan's attack on the early Church through false prophets and teachers, who came as angels of light, was more successful than his attacks by persecution. Acts.20v28-32. 2Cor.11v13-15. Satan ministers can look like apostles and angels of light, but they are deceitful workers; and they are under Gods curse for their false Gospel. 2Cor.11v3,4,13-15. Gal.1v6-10. Jesus said that religious people, who are under the influence of Satan, will kill God's children and think that they do God a service. Jn.8v37-44,59. 16v1-3.

1. THE UNITY OF THE BODY OF CHRIST. Eph.4v1-16.

a. God has made unity in His family by begetting them all of one spirit. However else Christians may differ, in their ability to believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, they are united. This family unity is our business to preserve. We are not to make it, but to realise that God has already made it. We are no longer individuals, but members of a body.

b. There is however, another unity which we do not find already made by the new Birth, but are exhorted to aim at, that is a unity of faith and knowledge. When we are born again, we are only babes in Christ, and our natural opinions on spiritual things will inevitably vary, some times very considerably. God has therefore set in the church officers whose work it is to bring all Christians to the same mind on all points i.e. the mind of Christ. 1Cor.1v10,11. 2v6,16. Heb.5v11 to 6v2.

c. This process of teaching and training is thus rendered more difficult by the fact there is another set of men who try to mislead us on these important matters, and it is the more essential for Christians to realise that the work of a teacher is not to teach his own theology but to enable his hearers to understand the Scriptures for themselves. James.3. should be studied in this connection. One cannot fight with or stand on another mans teaching in the day of battle but only on that truth which you have made your own and which is a part of your soul and experience. The Christian Foundation is shown in Heb.5v11. to 6v2.

N.B. Unity of Spirit leaves room for infinite diversity of organisation. e.g. C. I. M. Since Christ is to be the head of all, different organisations can work in harmony and co-operation, if they seek His will and not their own.

THE OLD MAN AND THE NEW MAN. Eph.4v17-24.

1. The old man has in him desires for personal gratification which deceive him into thinking that he wont be happy until he has satisfied them. In order to satisfy them he is obliged to disregard the happiness of others. This hardens his heart and in the end makes him completely insensible to the feelings of others, so that like Pharaoh or Herod he can murder little children without a pang.

2. This determination to be selfish causes him to hold down the truth about God and so keeps him in ignorance of spiritual things, so that he has no understanding of his own life or the purposes of God in creation. His mind is full of thoughts but is empty of truth. Rom.1v18. have ended up "utter fools" Rom.1v22. worshipping anything except God. The folly of this forsaking God is seen especially in the nature, he is always possessed by fear and has no hope. Jer.2v12,13. Rom.1v18-32.

3. The end of such a life is a ceaseless determination to lay hold of everything there is and use it for ones own pleasure regardless of others, as Napoleon or Nebuchadnezzar.

4. We are to live a different life altogether, anointed by a different Spirit. We are to live like Jesus Christ, whose desires were not for Himself, but for others. For love is a desire for the blessings of others. Satisfaction is the result of seeking the happiness of others and not ones own happiness, the person who selfishly seeks their own happiness ends up by destroying the happiness of those around and their own.

5. Jesus was the only one who did not give way to selfish desires, everyone else did and as a result of it left God. Ps.14v1-3. Rom.3v23. Jesus was the only one who did not live selfishly or give way to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, or the pride of life, though beyond doubt He was more severely tempted than anyone else to do so.

PRACTICAL INSTRUCTION FOR THE CHRISTIAN LIFE. Eph.4v25 to 5v20.

a. Since we live in evil world we need practical wisdom in daily life that we may walk not only in love, but in prudence.

b. Since the Holy Ghost has come to dwell in us, His feelings are always to be considered, that He may find joy and not grief at our society.

c. We are not merely to avoid what is evil but to aim at the highest that we may be a blessing to others.

d. Life and death are in the power of the tongue, and therefore Paul emphasises the importance of the right use of this little member.

e. The place of praise and thanksgiving is clearly pointed out, we are to walk in hope, not gloom, in thanksgiving, not dissatisfaction.

THE PRINCIPLE OF SUBMISSION TO AUTHORITY IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE. Eph.5v21 to 6v9.

Those in authority are to rule with love and wisdom. Those in authority are to submit with fear and trembling. Those in authority are to remember that there is a reckoning day coming when their Master will ask of them an account of their rule. Those under authority are to submit for Christ's sake trusting Him to protect them from injustice. All alike are to be in humility, knowing that the chief Master is in heaven.

THE CHURCH AS THE BRIDE OF CHRIST. Eph.5v22-33.

1. Under this figure is pictured the close union of heart that should exist between Christ and His Church, just as under the figure of a body is portrayed the close union of action that Christ Jesus desires.

2. It however remains with the Church to appropriate God's offer of this union in experience, just as Israel had to gain in fact what God said He had already given to them. Those who failed to enter the land, never did in fact actually possess God's promise because of their unbelief and disobedience. Heb.3v16-19. 4v11.

3. Eph.5 and 2Cor.11v2,3., show us that while this great cause is held out to us as an incentive, yet we must allow ourselves to be made fit for it by doing the Word of God and not allowing Satan to corrupt our mind. Acts.20v32.

4. Just as a bride longs for her husband, so the Heavenly Bride will be marked by the same longing for the Lord, the same separation to Him, and the same bold avowal of His name. There must also be a glorious fellowship and union of spirit in marriage - for marriage can only really be undertaken when two peoples purposes, aims, desires, plans and joys are the same. Rev.19v7-9.

THE CHRISTIANS WARFARE AND ARMOUR. Eph.6v10-20.

The Christians enemy is not fleshly only but spiritual. The world is under the dominion of Satan and his angels, who are put in charge of nations etc. e.g. Lk.4v5-9. Dan.10v13,20,21. Their aim is to keep man in a state of ignorance and unbelief about God. It is against these that the Christian fights, for he brings light to disperse the darkness.

The essence of Satan's attacks is that they are wily, 2Cor.11v3. and to defeat them we require the wisdom and power of God. This comes through putting on the whole armour of God which is seven fold.

1. A true understanding of the Word of God.
2. A life of Practical Holiness.
3. An Evangelical Zeal and a heart which is ready and prepared to preach the Gospel.
4. An Unwavering Faith.
5. Assurance of deliverance at all times, with the hope of a glorious future.
6. Ability to handle God's Word against opponents.
7. Intelligent, vigilant, persevering prayer.

N.B. Witnessing Its Difficulty and need.

- a. Paul speaks of his obligation to witness for the Lord.
- b. Paul also points out the difficulty of doing this freely.
- c. Finally, he shows that prayer is needed that God may give him a word, and enable him to open his mouth and say it as he should.

NOTE:

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