

132

Living Water

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Living Water 132

(November– December 2015)

Recent Ministry

FELLOWSHIP WITH THE GOSPEL	Ken Hollands	1
<i>A word at a burial, Honiton, April 2015.</i>		
THE MYSTERY OF PIETY	David Burr	3
<i>London, 2013</i>		

Poetry Selection

GOD'S MIGHTY KING	E. H. Chater	13
THOU ART WORTHY	E. H. Chater	14
<i>Continuing the series of poems taken from "The Ways of God and His Praise".</i>		

Testimony Section

FIRST WORLD WAR 1914-18 CENTENARY		
● One name on a war memorial, two names written in heaven		— 14
● Jesus has not deserted us		— 16
● A report from the Western Front 1915	J. Esslemont-Adams	18

A voice from the past

NOTES FROM A BIBLE	John Taylor-Smith	18
<i>John Taylor-Smith was Chaplain General to the British Army from 1902 to 1925. For many years he made a practice of annotating his Bible with notes and comments. Here is a selection taken from the pages of the Old Testament in his Bible.</i>		

Reprinted from "Living Water" No 32

A DWELLING PLACE FOR CHRIST	T. H. Reynolds	22
<i>Continuing the series of reprints from the early issues of the magazine</i>		

A word for today

THE WORD OF GOD	F. E. Raven	22
<i>An article written specially to be reproduced in Braille</i>		

Recent Ministry

FELLOWSHIP WITH THE GOSPEL

“And on the sabbath day we” that is, Paul, Luke, Silas, Timothy, “went outside the gate by the river, where it was the custom for prayer to be, and we sat down and spoke to the women who had assembled. And a certain woman, by name Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, who worshipped God, heard; whose heart the Lord opened to attend to the things spoken by Paul. And when she had been baptised and her house, she besought [us], saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide [there]. And she constrained us.” (Acts 16:13-15).

When I heard about Joyce’s death and her departure to be with her Saviour I thought about this woman Lydia who is mentioned in the Bible in a very interesting way. Lydia was a business-woman as Joyce was — Joyce worked in the banking industry, but she had right values in her life. We read of Lydia that she was a *“seller of purple”*, no doubt purple cloth, and that she came from the city of Thyatira. Lydia was living in Philippi when Paul came there. Here is a woman in the Bible, not a Jewess, yet interested in God’s things, and the Lord opened her heart to attend to the things spoken by Paul.

What things did Paul speak about? We do not know exactly what he said but we know lots of things that he said in his preaching and teaching and he certainly spoke about Jesus. In Athens he spoke of *“Jesus and the resurrection” (Acts 17:18)*. In Corinth he preached *“Jesus Christ, and him crucified” (1 Corinthians 2:2)*, He would have spoken about Jesus having come into the world to save sinners (*1 Timothy 1:15*).

Lydia was dealing in purple. Purple dye was very expensive in those days and no doubt the people who bought the purple cloth were mainly rich people. Paul would have spoken about Jesus, the One who, *“being rich, became poor, in order that ye by his*

poverty might be enriched" (2 Corinthians 8:9). Lydia became enriched in her soul through coming to know the Saviour that Paul spoke of — our wonderful Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is a very wonderful thing to know Him, to have our hearts opened to the Saviour who came into this world to seek and to save us who were lost. He went to the cross at Calvary to put away sin by His sacrifice and then rose from the dead. He has opened up the way to heaven, opened up the way for eternal happiness through believing in the Lord Jesus Christ (see Luke 19:10; Hebrews 9:26; 10:19, 20; 1 John 5:13).

So this woman, Lydia, opened her heart to Jesus. The Lord opened it for her. We know it was true of Lydia because of the fruits in her life. It was demonstrated that the Lord had opened her heart in her subsequent actions. Our sister Joyce Plumb, now with Christ, too demonstrated that the Lord had opened her heart to take in God's wonderful message. Then, as being enriched by Jesus, she sought to be kind and generous to others.

In the case of Lydia, *the Lord opened her heart to attend to the things spoken by Paul.* The outcome was she was baptised and her house and she said, *"If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide there."* She received Paul and the others into her house and it became a base for their operations while they were in Philippi. She made her house available to the Lord's people. When we think about our sister Joyce I think we can say that she too made her house available to the Lord's people.

After he had left Philippi, Paul wrote a letter, a lovely letter to the Christians who lived in Philippi and he referred to their fellowship with the gospel from the first day until now (see Philippians 1:5). I think the first day would be that day when the Lord opened the heart of Lydia to attend to the things spoken by Paul. Then when she opened her house to Paul and those with him, what was she doing? She was having fellowship with the gospel.

I do not think it is given to everyone to preach the gospel but every believer can have fellowship with the gospel. That is what our sister Joyce did. Many of us have experienced her hospitality. She had fellowship with the gospel; it is an example to us all.

May every one of us here also seek to have fellowship with the gospel and support what Paul, in his wonderful teaching, spoke of – *“Jesus and the resurrection”*. Our sister is now with Christ but may we, while we await His return, be under His control and seek to be faithful to Him until He comes.

Kenneth Hollands

Word at a burial, Honiton, April 2015.

THE MYSTERY OF PIETY

And confessedly the mystery of piety is great. God has been manifested in flesh, has been justified in the Spirit, has appeared to angels, has been preached among the nations, has been believed on in the world, has been received up in glory.

1 Timothy 3:16

I call attention to this verse now because within it we find the truth of the gospel, the gospel of God concerning His Son. Some of what is in this verse is on its surface, just what we have read. And some of it is to be found a little under the surface and I seek, with the help of the Spirit of God, to go a little below the surface so that it might be used for our help.

The apostle here has been speaking in an affectionate way to his child in faith, Timothy, a man that he had taken up and had found a use for, a helper in the work of the Lord. He was a young man left in a responsible position in Ephesus and he needed help and authority to serve the Lord and the people of God there.

He needed guidance, too, as to how things should be handled in a Christian company such as was in Ephesus. The apostle

has spoken in the previous verse about knowing how to conduct oneself in God's house. He says it is, *"the assembly of the living God, the pillar and base of the truth"*. If we want to find the truth as to God Himself there are two places to look, the scriptures and wherever the name of the Lord Jesus is rightly maintained and borne witness to.

Having said that the apostle turns to the great issues of Christianity and of the faith at the present time and he speaks of the mystery of piety. Now we have spoken of one mystery in a previous occasion. The mystery that we were speaking of then is the fact that God has in mind that Jew and Gentile, English and Russian, wherever we might be, should all find ourselves on one common ground before God. It is a very wonderful thing because God made us all and the question might arise in our hearts, does God love every one equally; is He as concerned for you as He is for me? And the answer to that is to be found in the Bible – God cares about us all and wants us all to be on a safe and sound footing before Him.

Now that is one aspect of the mystery. I suppose in a certain sense most of the mysteries of scripture are the same in the sense that they involve God opening up His mind. Now what is the mystery of piety?

You and I may have some idea of what being pious is. It is often spoken of as meaning that I bring God into my concerns and circumstances, that I look to Him for help and direction down here. That certainly is piety or at least some aspects of piety. And I commend to us all, that it is a good thing to be pious: that is to say, I look to God as regards my circumstances, why I am here, why I have done the work I have done and all these practical things as to piety, seeking God's direction.

But that is not quite what the apostle says here. It goes along with it, but he is speaking now of piety not just of my seeking to bring God into my circumstances but the fact that God

Himself has come into my circumstances. God has come into this world. That is the great mystery of piety, that what I

He spoke of God with personal knowledge

believe is based upon the full assurance that God has been here and has entered into all the situations of life that are known to you and to me. That is the great underlying truth of piety, that God does not look for us to look to Him without Him having first looked to us.

If we love, it is because He first loved us. God has come into our circumstances in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. I think we may sometimes get rather used to the idea that God has come into this world. But it is a very wonderful thing that the Son of God has come here and has grown up here and served God and served men here.

We have four gospels to tell us what it was like when Jesus was here. They are well worth studying because they tell us about a Man who is unlike any other man who has been here. There have indeed been godly men and women. We thank God for them; they are to be found in the Old Testament and in the New. Jesus was different from everyone else. He never failed to love His fellow men. He never ceased to bear witness to the truth. He always maintained what was due to God.

He spoke of God with personal knowledge. He spoke of God as One whom He knew personally as His God and His Father. He spoke of God as One whose mind He knew and what He did He did in the power of God and seeking His mind and will. I have often quoted J. N. Darby's comment, that if the Lord had no word from God He did nothing: a very striking thing because there is a great deal that the Lord Jesus did do. We only have an account of a little that He did but He still found time to wait for what God would say to Him.

God did have a word for Him, we can say with confidence; He had a word for Him every day because it says of Him prophetically, "*He wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the instructed*" (Isaiah 50:4). Sometimes no doubt God told Him to wait but He was never left without a word from God. And what He did He did not do of His own accord. That is another very wonderful thing.

Here He was: God manifest in flesh and with the full authority of Godhead. He is the One by whom the worlds were made; the scripture is definite about that (Hebrews 1:2). Nothing has received being apart from Him, the Word of God (John 1:3). These are things that Christians are called upon to believe. I say that simply. There are things you have to believe if you are to be a Christian.

There are companies that sometimes call themselves Christian but who say you can believe pretty much what you like. But that is not true. We have to be governed by the truth of scripture and Christianity is a revealed faith. It depends on what God has said and in particular what He has said in and through the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ.

So we are entirely dependent upon the word of God. We cannot bring our own notions or speculations to the word of God. We cannot have the parts of the Bible that suit us and say the other parts are just things that represent how people thought 2000 or 3000 years ago, but we have learned better now. You cannot count upon tradition or upon evolving thought and current opinions. There are many ideas that pass muster amongst professing Christians these days but are simply based on what the world thought up to a few years ago. It is usually a little bit behind but basically it is what the world has been thinking. But the Christian cannot think like that. The Christian is obliged and is glad to be obliged to think with God. It is the only safe way.

And so, when Jesus was here He did not act on His own authority although He had a perfect right to do so; He acted in the power of the Holy Spirit. It is quite plain from scripture that the Lord Jesus did not begin to minister until two things had happened. One was that He was baptised. Now, you and I understand, I think, that on being baptised we are to leave the old behind and make way for the new. You might say, 'Could it possibly be that the Lord Jesus, the Son of God, had anything that He needed to leave behind?' The answer to that surely is that there was nothing that Jesus needed to leave behind. There was no sin in Him. There was nothing ever wrong with Him. But He pointed the way that every believer in the Lord Jesus Himself, every believer in God, would need to go and He led the way. He is the author and completer of faith (Hebrews 12:2) and He went the way that every one else would need to go. He shows the way. And so He did not begin to serve in public ministry until He had been baptised. When He had been baptised God immediately took the opportunity to commend Him and to say, *"Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I have found my delight"*. There was no doubt; He had God's approval in what He was and in what He had done.

The second thing that He needed was the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. *"He saw"*, it says, *"the Spirit, as a dove, descending upon him... and it abode upon him"* (Mark 1:11, 10; John 1:32). So there are two things that Jesus waited for before He took up public service. One was to pass by way of baptism and the other was the coming of the Spirit upon Him.

From then on all that He did was in the power of the Holy Spirit and that, I think, is part of what is meant when the apostle says, He, *"has been justified in the Spirit"*. All that He did was right and bore God's commendation.

What did He do? Well, by the Spirit of God He cast out demons and by the Spirit of God He ministered the word of God. Then, most of all, by the Eternal Spirit He offered Himself without spot

What basis have we for preaching Him as Saviour?

to God. I will come back to that in a moment. But I just wanted to take you through the importance of what these words have to say. Jesus was God manifest in flesh. All that He did was in the power of the Spirit.

It says He, *"appeared to angels"*. Not much need be said about that. Angels have their place in scripture and they have their place in our lives but it was a great time for the angels to look upon their Lord, the One who had supreme authority over them, to look upon Him when He was here.

"Has been preached among the nations". And that begins to bring us all in. He has been preached among the nations. To speak of the name of the Lord Jesus Christ would be a very great thing but that does not of itself bring salvation. To proclaim the name of the Lord claims His rights but when the apostle says, *"preached among the nations"*, I think he is calling attention to the way that the name of the Lord has been presented to mankind.

Notice, it is to the nations. It is not confined to the Jew. What is preached is salvation in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. I wonder if you have ever reflected that it is interesting how that Christians, ourselves among them, seek to spend the Lord's day: to gather first to the name of the Lord Jesus and to call Him to mind and to seek to join together in the service of God. Then to have the opportunity to read the scriptures, see what God has to say to us. And the concluding public service of the day, and we are not alone in this by any means, is to preach the gospel, the good news concerning the One whom we seek to serve, the One to whom we belong, seek to present His name as Saviour and as Lord.

What basis have we for preaching Him as Saviour? It is because of just what I said. That He has once offered Himself by the

Eternal Spirit without spot to God (Hebrews 9:14). Why did He need to offer Himself? That is because of your sins and mine. I would seek to impress us all once again with both the gravity of sin and the amount of sin that there is in the world and the amount of sin that is in your heart and mine and the need for all that to be forgiven if we are to have peace with God.

Our sins are a great obstacle to knowing God and to having peace with God. The prophet Isaiah said that, the Spirit of God moved him to say it, *“your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he doth not hear” (Isaiah 59:2).*

Why was it that Adam and Eve ran away and hid themselves? Because they did not want to see the One against whom they had sinned. And there is a huge quantity of sin in the world. Some of it very public and blatant, some of it not so well known. But it comes into the history of each one of us. What it calls for is repentance; that I am sorry for my sins, I desire God to look upon them and to forgive them and I need to know that He has a right and proper basis to forgive me. And we are told in the scriptures is that it is not by making more sacrifices, it is not by going every week to confession or anything of that kind; it is by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ as the One who has borne our sins in His body on the tree. There is nothing to be taken away from that and nothing to be added to it. His work is complete.

I used sometimes to wonder why preachers spoke about the finished work of Christ; was it just one of those phrases? But actually it has a meaning. The finished work of Christ is His bearing our sins, making atonement for them, going into death on our account and being raised again for our justification – that is Christ’s finished work. He will never pass that way again.

It does lead to the question “Has He an unfinished work?’ The answer to that is, Yes, there is an unfinished work; He is *“always*

living to intercede" for those that love Him (Hebrews 7:25). He is exalted now as a Prince and a Saviour, One to be relied upon as we go through life here and One for whom we look, He is a Saviour.

He is also Lord. That is also part of the preaching, that if you have come to the Lord Jesus as Saviour you have to recognise Him as your Lord, accepting that He has as supreme authority over your soul. I say that very soberly. It is a real issue as to whether, in coming to the Lord Jesus as Saviour you and I have also come under His authority as Lord.

When Peter was preaching he said, *"God has made him, this Jesus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ"* (Acts 2:36). He is the anointed One. You see, if you have any reservations as to whether Christ is Lord you actually have a reservation as to whether He is the Son of God. *"The Father loves the Son, and has given all things to be in his hand"* (John 3:35). Are you in His hand? Well, it might be a very happy thing to say I have peace and security. But to be in the hand of the Lord Jesus means that I am at His disposal, I have come under His sway. I need to do what He would have me to do.

The apostle Paul is a great example to us of that. Once he was converted he says, *"What shall I do, Lord?"*. He acknowledged Him as Lord, *"Who art thou, Lord?"* (Acts 22:10, 8). It is important in these days just to keep insisting upon this. There is no truth in the idea that you can have Jesus as Saviour and make a separate question whether you are going to have Him as Lord. Down that road lies the kind of life that many people live who go in and out of church, who may recite the right sounding words but their lives are not changed.

We are not saved by changing our lives, but the fact that our lives are changed is evidence that we are saved. If you look at someone, if you look at your own heart: Am I different from what I was before? It is shown in its extreme form in the case

of the man, the madman whom nobody could do anything with. When Jesus came into his life, they found him clothed and sensible and sitting at the feet of Jesus. (Mark 5:1-21). That is what it is to be converted, to come under the power and authority of the Lord Jesus Christ.

do not let your life become a wreck

He *"has been believed on in the world"* and that invites the question whether I am among those who have believed on Him. Many have and we are thankful for them. We hear of them in many countries. In this country in which we are, many seem to be a very long way from Christianity, any knowledge of it, any appreciation of it, any enjoyment of it. Be assured, there are plenty up and down the world who are finding peace and joy in believing on our Lord Jesus Christ.

It was good, in the week, to hear from a friend from Russia as to the kind of people who are converted, and who need to be converted; alcoholics and drug addicts converted and their lives changed. That is what it means to be saved. They would not be in any doubt that they needed to be saved; their lives were wrecks.

Dear friend, do not let your life become a wreck. There are plenty of wrecks around. There is salvation available to all. Let us consider what we are doing with our lives.

He *"has been received up in glory"*. I was going to say that was the final touch and in a certain sense it is: the Lord Jesus came out from God and He was going to God (John 13:3). He says Himself, *"If then ye see the Son of man ascending up where he was before"* (John 6:62). In a way that is the end of things, for Jesus to be received up in glory. It says prophetically in the Psalms, *"Lift up your heads, ye gates; yea, lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in"* (Psalm 24:9). He was restored to His proper place.

But there is just one thing to add. I am not adding to scripture if I say it because it is elsewhere in the Bible. He has been received up in glory and He is coming again. He will come out from the place where He now is and He will come to receive us – those that love Him – to be with Himself.

He will come forth to reign. You can read of that in ample detail in the scripture (Isaiah 32:1; Luke 1:33; Revelation 19:16, for example). But He has been received up in glory and because He is in glory He can be preached as a glorious Saviour but do not forget, He is coming again to reign. For those that love Him that is a wonderful and cheering prospect. We are not going down to the grave. The hymn writer says, *The sky, not the grave, is our goal.* We often sing it and I trust we mean it.

Yes, the grave lies before many. If we are left here many yet will be taken. Any of us may be among them to be with the Lord, passing by way of death. But the grave is not the goal. Being with the Lord is the goal. That is what gives hope and joy to the believer. The burial of a saint of God should be a time of triumph and encouragement. I know it means a parting of the ways and sometimes very, very deep sorrow for those who are left. But as for the one being buried they have passed from death to life; they have passed into the presence of the Lord:

The sky, not the grave, is our goal.

That is something to look forward to, a cheering prospect. May we be touched by the blessings of our faith. For His Name's sake. Amen.

David Burr

London, 15 September 2013

Poetry Selection

GOD'S MIGHTY KING

Mighty king with glory crowned,
Theme of everlasting praise,
Thy return anticipating,
Joyous songs Thy saints now raise.
"Thou art worthy, Thou art worthy,"
Gladly we Thee Lord, acclaim;
Joyfully, with hearts adoring,
Magnify Thy holy Name.
Thy right hand shall wield the sceptre,
Thy blest brow shall wear the crown,
Thou shalt sit in state enthroned,
All the world Thy rights shall own.
Every knee shall bow before Thee,
Every tongue confess Thy Name,
Every saint with joy adore Thee,
Celebrate Thy worth and fame.
See Thy foes subdued before Thee,
Come with blessings from above,
Come and fill the world with glory,
Sin's corrupting blight remove.
King of Kings, all kings shall own Thee
Sovereign universal Lord,
All the nations then shall serve Thee
Governed by Thy living word.
Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour,
Jesus, lowly sufferer here,
We would now by our behaviour
Tell to all that Thou art near.

E. H. Chater - 1910

“THOU ART WORTHY”

Lord and Saviour, we adore Thee,
Seated on God's lofty throne
Crowned with honour and with glory
Higher than our thoughts have known.
“Thou art worthy, Thou art worthy”
We with joyous hearts now own.
Mighty victor, theme of wonder
To the heavenly angel host,
We rejoice that none can sunder
Us from Thee, our joy and boast.
“Thou art worthy, Thou art worthy”
Thou who cam'st to save the lost.

E. H. Chater – 1912

In 1913 a collection of the hymns of Edward Chater (1845 – 1915) was published with the title, “The Ways of God and His Praise”. This book is long out of print and can be difficult to obtain. A selection of poems from the book is being included regularly in issues of this magazine.

Testimony Section

ONE NAME ON A WAR MEMORIAL – TWO NAMES REGISTERED IN HEAVEN

Only a few weeks into the war a German submarine operating near the Hook of Holland attacked three British cruisers, HMS Aboukir, Hogue, and Cressy, one after the other and all were sunk in just over an hour. The incident caused a national outcry but the loss was most keenly felt in towns such as Chatham and Sheerness where the majority of the 1459 men who lost their lives in the attack had lived.

One Saturday, not long after the disaster the Salvation Army band was playing in Sheerness with intervals in the music to allow for a gospel message to be given and an invitation to any who were interested to follow the band to the Salvation Army

Hall. A group of sailors followed the band that night, including Peter Ross who had been a crew member on HMS Aboukir.

He returned the next night and gave a testimony. His actual words are not known but here is an account from someone who was present:

Peter Ross said that he had never thought about God in the past, nor had his people but he wanted to give his heart to God now because of something that had happened to him. He went on to tell us that he had been on HMS Aboukir when she was torpedoed and that after he had been swimming about in the water for some time he came across a shipmate named [Ernest] Brumpton who was a Salvation Army man. When feeling rather exhausted, they found a spar which would keep one of them afloat but not both together, as it was not large enough. So after a bit, Brumpton wished him goodbye, and said, 'Death means life to me, but it will be death for you if you go down without being converted; so you hold on and save yourself'. Ross said that it had made a great impression on him and he wanted his life to be different.¹

Ernest Brumpton was a Marine and he had found 'his life to be different' about fourteen years earlier; kneeling at midnight under one of the big guns of a battleship he had trusted in Christ as his own Saviour and Lord. Just how complete the change was is witnessed to by a man who knew Brumpton in Portsmouth. Before his conversion Brumpton 'had been given to drinking, fighting and swearing but afterwards his chief concern was to help others to get the blessing which had transformed his life'²

Brumpton was born in May 1878 but when he was about fourteen he left home following a huge row with his father and joined the Marines. After doing his time with the Marines he left the navy becoming part of the Royal Naval Reserve. During this time he married and had two children – a son and a daughter

¹ "Souls in Khaki" Arthur E. Copping (Hodder & Stoughton) 1917 p 9-10

² Ibid P24

who would have been about 8 and 6 years old respectively by the time their father drowned. In 1914 Brumpton was called up and served on HMS Aboukir.

When the ship was torpedoed on 22nd September 1914 the Captain wrongly assumed that the ship had hit a mine and as Aboukir sank very quickly he called for Hogue and Cressy to assist. The two cruisers closed in and began to pick up survivors. While doing this HMS Hogue was torpedoed and sank in about ten minutes. Brumpton and several others were picked up by HMS Cressy but that ship was also torpedoed, capsizing at 7.30am so Brumpton found himself back in the water.

The situation seemed hopeless. With all three ships sunk the survivors were likely to be in the ice cold water for several hours until Navy ships from Harwich could reach them. Some survivors were picked up by Dutch trawlers, but for others, including Brumpton, it was a long wait. One of the survivors, Walter Wood, recorded: "I was supported by a piece of timber – a plank - and I clung to it with all my strength, though from time to time I endured agony from cramp. In spite of the torture I never let go..."¹ Swimming around in these conditions Brumpton found himself sharing with Peter Ross a spar that could only support one of them in the hours of waiting.

"BRUMPTON E.W". – there is his name on Panel 5 of the Southsea/Portsmouth Naval Memorial. But, far more importantly, his name is registered in heaven and, as a result of his last testimony; the name of Peter Ross is confirmed there as well.

JESUS HAS NOT DENIED US

The tension between the Armenians and the Turks living in the Ottoman Empire went back a long way and had deep historical, political and religious roots. Over the years there were sporadic outbreaks of violence against Armenians and there were certain

¹ "The Live Bait Squadron" Henk H.M. van der Linden. Aspekt 2012 p.117

restrictions placed on Armenians within the Empire. As a race the Armenians tended to look to Tsarist Russia for support and protection against the majority Muslim Ottoman population.

When in November 1914 Turkey entered the First World War in support of Germany, the Turkish army found itself in direct conflict with Russian forces and since Armenia lay on the Turkey/Russian border the Government decided to evict the Armenians from the area on the grounds that they were more likely to assist the Russians than to support the Turkish army.

Armenian communities were broken up and people were sent on long forced marches in the Syrian and Iraq deserts in the Summer heat of 1915. The horror of these marches, where women and children, who sometimes had seen their husbands or fathers murdered, were forced to cover vast distances with little food or water and were subject to constant harassment from their guards, or from marauding bands of Kurds and others is beyond description. The New York Times for August 1915 reported: "The roads and the Euphrates are strewn with corpses of exiles and those who survive are doomed to certain death".

Not all the Armenians were Christians, but some most definitely were. There are many records of Christian witness by Armenians who prayed for the salvation of their persecutors. Many who had lost everything else by way of possessions, clung tenaciously to their Bibles, and those who were given the opportunity to spare themselves further persecution by converting to Islam steadfastly refused to do so.

A pastor of a Syrian church at Ourfa where there were thousands of women and children lying on the ground, exhausted with the desert journey, and knowing that they faced yet another march in the desert the next day, saw some of the women chalking on the rocks:-

**JESUS DID NOT DENY US, DO NOT DENY HIM
WE HAVE NOT DENIED HIM, FOLLOW US**

Those chalked words say it all.

A REPORT FROM THE WESTERN FRONT – 1915

'...it remains strictly true that multitudes have had their faith deepened and multitudes have learned as never before the need and value of faith in God. The book read most of all is the New Testament. A Quartermaster tells how he found grooms reading it together in the battalion stable, a machine gun officer writes to say that he never read much of it at home, but that it is the only book he can settle to read as he sits through the long nights in the trenches beside his gun; a platoon of Guards in the Ypres section in the early days of the war was grateful that though there was not a Testament among them, one man who was a Roman Catholic had a Douai Bible.

'To many Jesus is real as never before in all His radiant glory as Sacrifice, Substitute, Saviour. Men who had heard of Him with indifference and suspicion say that now their eyes see the King in His glory'.

Chaplain Adams goes on to note that the soldiers' choice of hymns at field services show their faith. The hymns most often being requested were:

Rock of Ages, cleft for me

Jesu lover of my soul

How sweet the Name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear

J Esslemont Adams (Chaplain to the Forces—United Free Church of Scotland)

Extracted from "The Chaplain and the war" (1915) Pps 38-39 & 46

A voice from the past

NOTES FROM JOHN TAYLOR-SMITH'S BIBLE

John Taylor-Smith (1860 – 1938) was Chaplain General to the British Army throughout the First World War. He was brought up in a Christian home and when he was eleven came to know the Lord as his personal Saviour. For much of his life he carefully

annotated a Bible – underlining important passages and adding pithy notes in the margins of the Bible. What follows is a selection of those notes from the Old Testament.

Philistine.	d See Num. 13. ↓ 31.	How we judge others by ourselves. Saul was King + Goliath is – tallest in height! – Shriek in Courage!
33 And Saul said to David, "Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth."	Dent 9.2 6th World discourages	
34 And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock:	6th World discourages	God's mercies in the past ought to strengthen us for the future.
35 And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth, and when he arose against me,		
- Stone but a strong character would risk his life for a lamb.		
- Little faithfulness leads to great faithfulness!		

Part of a page of his Bible.

"The Lord said in his heart" Genesis 8:21

Without inspiration how could this be written?

"Now the Lord said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred and from thy father's house... Genesis 12:1

A beautiful illustration of personal connection – God calling us to be His friends. To all such as respond, He is shield and reward... Age, position, prospects are nothing to the man of God, all are counted loss for Christ.

What a fool Abraham must have appeared to his worldly relatives! He could not see the One who called him and they did not believe in Him.

"And he (Moses) looked this way and that way" Exodus 2:12

When a man looks this way and that way he is not fit to be a deliverer. Had he seen a man: what then? The man who looks up and sees God cannot see man.

"And Moses said unto God, Who am I?" Exodus 3:11

It matters not who or what I am, if God be with me. God will manifest His power to His servants. No ordinary education will suffice for God's service.

"Fear ye not, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord" Exodus 14:13

The first attitude of faith is to stand still. It is easier to go, to do, but recruits must be drilled ere efficiency is reached. Restlessness can neither add to our stature nor change the colour of our hair. Neither Israel, nor we, can scatter Egyptians, level the mountains or dry up the sea. Running people do not see things properly.

“And it came to pass when Moses held up his hand that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed”
Exodus 17:11

Prayer is not so much words as an attitude. The edge of Moses’ prayer is sharper than young Joshua’s sword.

“And God came to Balaam in the night, and said unto him, If the men come and call thee rise up and go with them”
Numbers 22:20

When we are determined to have our own way, God sometimes allows it, to our own hindrance.

“And Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the Lord in Gilgal”
1 Samuel 15:33

Spare not the king of our besetting sin, but hew it in pieces before God.

“And Micaiah said, As the Lord liveth, what the Lord saith unto me, that will I speak”
1 Kings 22:14

Well done Micaiah!

“Jehosaphat made ships of Tharshish to go to Ophir for gold: but they went not; for the ships were broken at Ezion-geber”
1 Kings 22:48

How often the Lord disposes of our plans, all for our good! He sinks our ships.

“Trust in him at all times... Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie”
Psalm 63:2

Trust neither the low nor the high: go higher!

"The day is thine" Psalm 74:16

Each day a special gift from God – use it well.

"Can God furnish a table in the wilderness?" Psalm 78:19

Yes indeed He can, and a good one too. It is from daily manna that heroes are made

"Bless the Lord, O my soul" Psalm 103:1

Soul music is the best after all and beats even Nebuchadnezzar's band (Daniel 3:5)

"As far as the East is from the West, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us" Psalm 103:12

These two, East and West, can never be brought together, so our sins and us when once forgiven.

"For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven" Psalm 119:89

The Bible may be disputed here by many, but it is copyrighted in heaven.

"The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise" Proverbs 11:30

What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder – holy living and soul winning.

"Thus saith the Lord, thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb" Isaiah 44:24

He that formed me did so for a purpose.

"But the house of Israel will not harken unto thee; for they will not harken unto me" Ezekiel 3:7

We have nothing to do with results. God only requires faithfulness.

"Behold I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment" Zechariah 3:4

The purpose of our cleansing and clothing is that we may serve before God for ever.

John Taylor-Smith

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A DWELLING PLACE FOR CHRIST

"That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith"

Ephesians 3:7

The Testimony of old, that is the law, with its requirements of God from man, was put into an ark, a box overlaid with gold; but with Christians the Christ is to dwell in our hearts by faith. The ark was the depository of the will of God for Israel but the church is not mere depository where the truth is held. Man has tried to make it so, and hence there are articles of faith and systems of doctrine, and the attempt to reduce Christianity to a religious system.

But what we have really is Christ dwelling in the heart. It is not any longer a box overlaid with gold, but the hearts of believers which become a dwelling-place for Christ. A dwelling-place is for that which is living – Christ dwelling in the heart by faith.

T. H. Revnolds (1830 – 1930)

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If there is an article from a past issue of "Living Water" which you would like to see reprinted please contact the editor.

A word for today

THE WORD OF GOD

What strikes one as the great witness of the Scriptures being the word of the living God is the one great voice that is speaking all through them in powerful moral accents. It is evidently from beginning to end the same voice, speaking different things, but never things that are inconsistent with one another. It is a mighty voice with no uncertain sound, always addressing itself to us.

Had sin not come into the world there might not have been the necessity for this voice to speak, but since the time that Adam departed from God, this voice has never been silent. This voice

I have hated my brother, and murdered him

will at times address the most solemn questions to us, questions which every man and woman must at some time or other provide an answer.

It may be well to consider the earliest of such questions, which indicated an estrangement of man from God. The first is that addressed by God to Adam, when the latter had in the sense of shame hid himself from the voice of the Lord God in the trees of the garden in which God had placed him. It was a very pertinent question: "*Where art thou?*"

Nothing could be more strange than that the man that God had just created should be hiding himself from God. It indicated an immense moral revolution in the man. And it was a very poor answer that Adam could give to the question; he could only give an answer that exposed him. He was afraid, what a change! He had no reason to be, for he had good proof of the goodness and consideration of God. But when once estrangement from God has come in, sin made rapid progress, and we soon come to another question which God had to address to man, not indeed to the same man, but to his immediate descendant. Here the question is of a different character: "*What hast thou done?*" Cain was not in the garden, nor could he hide himself amid the trees of the garden, perhaps he had no mind to do so, for he was a man of violence. The only true answer that he could have given was, 'I have hated my brother, and murdered him'. How sad that there should have been the necessity for these questions to come in. But they have come in and everyone needs to find an answer to them.

My object is to point out the only satisfactory answer that can be found. If we might suppose for a moment these two questions being addressed to the younger son in the parable in Luke 15, what answers could have been given? To the first he must have said, 'I have come into the far country that I may be out of the reach of my father, so that I may have my own will'. And to the

second, 'I have wasted the goods that my father gave me in riotous living'. No other answers were possible for him, and they would have been self-condemnatory. And the truth is that every man and woman, as having to do with God will have to find an answer to these questions, and the answer cannot ever be other than such as will be self-condemnatory.

Nothing can be more certain than that, like the son of Luke 15, man is well content to be in darkness and ignorance of God, and to use the opportunities that God has given him, not for the praise of God, but for his own pleasure and according to his own will. Now what I would point out is the answer to these two questions that God in grace has provided, for us in Christ. In the warning to the serpent there was an intimation on the part of God that He had in His mind purposes of mercy to the man and woman that He had created. All was bound up with the seed of the woman. And in due time the seed of the woman appeared, who was found to be the Son of God, and He was manifested to undo the works of the devil. Man was to find in Him the answer to the two solemn questions with which he was faced.

The truth is that in Christ, God came out of His place to seek man in his distance from God, so that He might find him, and not only so, but that an answer might be found in redemption to all that lay on man. The two issues that God raised with man were thus to find a perfect solution in Christ, the Son of God. Christ entered in spirit into the sense of man's distance from God, and suffered all that that distance entailed, becoming thus the propitiation for our sins. This was the way that God intervened in grace on man's behalf. And now, as the answer to it, Christ is sitting at the right hand of God, the witness that the work of offering is done, and He is there as the Head of every man, so as to be available to every man and woman.

He has accomplished redemption, so that every claim of God has been met, and through redemption we may receive remission of sins. Such is the position of Christ at the present moment,

and the testimony is going out to the entire world to show that God has provided answers to the questions that He had raised at the outset of Adam's course of estrangement from God. But if God has provided the answers, it remains to each one of us to apply the answers for themselves. The questions are there whether one has found the answers or not, but there are no answers apart from Christ, and it is a great point when we have come to God, having found them in Christ.

Of necessity we must have the answer to the second question first, for there can be no change of place for us till we have remission of sins – that is the blessed answer to the question, "What hast thou done?" Remission of sins is received through the gospel, it is made known in the gospel as the mind of God in regard to all; and as a man or woman believes the testimony of Christ, they turn by it to God, and find that they are without their sins in the sight of God. They have remission of sins. Now, being with God, they have a perfect answer to the question, "Where art thou?"

In all this we see the blessed way in which God has come out in grace to meet the questions which if we had had to answer we could only answer to our own condemnation. It is in the apprehension of this that we confess Christ as Lord, and so come into the reality of salvation; we desire the sincere milk of the word that we may grow up thereby unto salvation, having tasted that the Lord is gracious. We find that God has not only provided righteousness, but that He is our Saviour to deliver our souls from all the entanglements in which sin has bound us.

May God lead us into the great reality of that grace that carries with it salvation for all men.

F. E. Raven