

Index of Articles:	Page
<b>Boaz, a Relative-Redeemer</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Wilderness Experiences</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Paul's Metaphors—Attire</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Colossians</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Man of God</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Habakkuk</b>	<b>9</b>

## **Boaz, a Relative-Redeemer**

### **In the Field of the Reapers**

*Jim Beattie*

We must never lose the wonder of the Lord Jesus coming into the world as the Redeemer. His entrance into humanity is the most amazing event the world has ever known. The straightforward statement of the apostle John is simple, yet profound: "*And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us...*" (John 1:14). And all the ages of eternity will never reveal a greater act of condescending love. Many have spent their lifetime describing the wonders of creation; but the wonder above all wonders, is the wonder of the new creation wrought by our glorious Lord. It defies description.

Boaz coming to the harvest field in the second chapter of Ruth prefigures the entrance of the Lord Jesus into the world. This "*mighty man of wealth*" (Ruth 2:1) "*...came from Bethlehem...*" (vs. 4). He left his home and came where people were laboring: both his own people and a solitary stranger. He greets his workers kindly with the words: "*The LORD be with you*" (vs. 4). In this benediction we are reminded of the words of the angel to Joseph, the descendent of Boaz: "*...they shall call His name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us*" (Matthew 1:23). He blessed his laborers with the greatest benediction they could ever experience: God with them!

Boaz had blessed others in the past. Before the wayward family of Elimelech wended their way to the land of Moab, Boaz had blessed

them. His beneficence before they left (recorded in ch. 2:20), did not arrest their departure to the enemies of God's people. In Ruth chapter 1, There is no mention of Boaz and no evidence that he is regarded. Elimelech took his family away to Moab because he thought he had a better plan.

Perhaps they did go out "full." Naomi says so (ch. 1:21). Perhaps they thought they could protect their assets against the famine in the land. Like the nation of Israel when they had abundance, they felt self-sufficient: "*Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked: thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness; then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation*" (Deuteronomy 32:15). We are always in danger of making the same mistake when life goes smoothly. Nevertheless, if we go our own way, ultimately, we will come back "empty." Of the family of four, one lonely widow came back bringing with her a stranger, also a widow.

In chapter 2, Boaz comes from his home to the field of reapers. There seems to be no compelling reason for him to come. Yet he does. The servant set over the reapers seems competent and was handling the harvest well and there appears to be a spirit of contentment in the reapers. As he blesses them, they respond correspondingly with: "*The LORD bless thee*" (vs. 4).

To this field of blessing, Ruth comes. And in this we see the hand of God. "*Her hap was to light on a part of the field belonging unto Boaz*" (vs. 3). Concerning the Hebrew word translated "hap" *The Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* by William L. Holladay states so beautifully that it means "what happens by itself without any assistance or wish of person involved, without any known originator." It was the hand of God; He was the Originator (as was also true of the work of grace in our salvation). It is true that often some other person was an instrument in the hand of God in our coming to Christ. But ultimately most of us can look back on circumstances (sometimes very strange) that brought

## "Truths for our Day"

is a monthly publication that is freely available on the Internet and is intended to be a help to believers who appreciate the timeless truths of God's Word and who recognize the unchanging principles of God's will for His people. It is primarily intended to strengthen those who enjoy fellowship in local assemblies of believers who are gathered to the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ alone.

Editor and Publisher: Joel Portman  
1200 Forest Glen Ct. SE,  
Cedar Rapids, IA, 52403  
Write to: [mail@truthsforourday.com](mailto:mail@truthsforourday.com)

All issues of "Truths for our Day" are available by clicking on the link below. This will take you to the index:

[Truths For Our Day](#)

### Please read this notice:

We permit and encourage you to reprint any issue of "Truths for our Day" that you desire, either for yourself, or to share with other believers. However, if you wish to copy an individual article, we will forward your request to the copyright owner of the article to request his permission. For this reason, the format of the publication is locked to prevent unauthorized publication of articles that the author would prefer to reserve. Please do not copy them in any other way. We want to respect the ownership of all those who have written articles.

We also hope you will let others know about "Truths for our Day" and encourage them to subscribe as well. They can do so by simply sending an e-mail to this email address:

[mail@truthsforourday.com](mailto:mail@truthsforourday.com)

Thank you

us to Him. Like Ruth, what seemed like an accident of happenstance was the movement of the invisible hand of God.

In the coming of Boaz we sense his interest in others and we see the spirit of humility. He is neither demeaning nor does he manifest a spirit of superiority. How like the drawing power of our gracious Lord, of Whom Luke writes: *"Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him"* (Luke 15:1). The Lord Jesus was not intimidating; He was welcoming. Even little children crowded around Him.

Moreover, in his conversation with Ruth, Boaz is not disdainful. On the contrary, his kindly words overwhelm her: *"Then she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger"* (vs. 10)?

In *"What the Bible Teaches"*, brother Jim Flanigan quotes the following from W.G Heslop's commentary *"Rubies from Ruth"*:

"What wonderful condescension! The mighty Boaz becomes interested in a poor, penniless, despised, weak, helpless stranger! Marvellous grace! Matchless goodness! Boaz is interested in Ruth!" Those who love the Saviour of course can see here a beautiful picture of His grace toward them."

Boaz blesses Ruth, saying *"The LORD recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the LORD God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust"* (vs. 12). The word "recompense" is the verbal form of that well-known word "shalom." And the word "full" is the adjectival form of the same Hebrew word. In Hebrew the word is more than a greeting; it is a word with depth and fullness and has the concept of desiring all the possible good that a person could have. It reminds us that we have been *"blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ"* (Ephesians 1:3).

Furthermore, Boaz, invites Ruth to be sustained while she is gleaning, saying *"...when thou art athirst, go unto the vessels, and drink of that which the young men have drawn"* (vs. 9). And he adds: *"At mealtime come thou hither, and eat of the bread, and dip thy morsel in the vinegar"* (vs. 14). Like the Lord Jesus

who said: *"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest"* (Matthew 11:28). Ruth found rest with Boaz. We find rest in the Lord Jesus. There is no rest like the rest He gives!

As *"she sat beside the reapers... he [personally] reached her parched corn"* (vs. 14). She had come to the field of Boaz and discovered, as we too have found that *"He that cometh to Me shall never hunger; He that believeth in Me shall never thirst"* (John 6:35). Boaz was the Lord of the field, yet he sits beside this poor stranger and serves her. How like the Lord Jesus: *"This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them"* (Luke 15:2).

Here we have a further foreshadowing of the coming Redeemer. He asked his disciples: *"For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth"* (Luke 22:27).

Additionally, Boaz made no distinction between his own maidens and Ruth. He encourages her not to *"...glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens"* (vss. 8-9). The Moabites were the enemies of God. But Boaz removes the trepidation and anxiety she must have had as she begins to glean. Here we have a further foreshadowing of the work of the Lord Jesus. He gives peace individually to each person who trusts Him. *"We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ"* (Romans 5:1). This stranger from Moab, from the enemies of God's people, is brought into the circle of favor. We too, *"...when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son..."* (Romans 5:10).

Moreover, Boaz erases the enmity between his own people and this stranger by welcoming her to his field. This is a foreshadowing of our Lord Jesus removing the enmity between Jew and Gentile so that *"...now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us...for to make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace"* (Ephesians 2:13-15).

And Ruth was more than satisfied for she *"was sufficed, and left"* (vs. 14). She had more than enough. Again, a foreshadowing of the Lord Jesus who will do for us *"exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think"* (Ephesians 3:20) Thus we gladly say: *"Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen"* (Ephesians 3:21).

Ruth received some unexpected blessings: *"And when she was risen up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, Let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not: And let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for her, and leave them, that she may glean them, and rebuke her not"* (vss. 15, 16).

How many times have we been pleasantly surprised at unexpected blessings and that can only be traced to the bountiful heart and hand of God.

Ruth labors diligently and *"...gleaned in the field until even, and beat out that she had gleaned: and it was about an ephah of barley"* (vs. 17). According to Keil and Delitzsch, this would have weighed about twenty to twenty-five pounds (enough for the women for five or six days).

So Ruth returns to Naomi: *"And she took it up, and went into the city: and her mother in law saw what she had gleaned: and she brought forth, and gave to her that she had reserved after she was sufficed."* (vss.13-18). The bounty of Boaz now affects Naomi. *"And Naomi said unto her daughter in law, Blessed be he of the LORD, who hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead"* (vs. 20). The liberality of Boaz not only blesses Ruth whose heart was already turned toward the God of Israel but begins a work of restoration in the heart of one who had earlier said: *"the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me"* (ch. 1:20).

It is as much a work of God to bring back a discouraged, bitter believer to Himself as it is to bring a stranger from a far country into a new relationship with Him. Both are the outcome of the wonderful grace of our great Redeemer. Only a heart-felt appreciation of Him can bring purpose and meaning to a wayward saint or a wayward sinner.

The person who appreciates the One who came from His home to redeem us will be the one who will sing from the heart:

Lord! to Thee my heart ascending  
For Thy mercy full and free,  
Thankful sings for grace transcending,  
Grace vouchsafed to sinful me, Even me.

Precious Saviour! great Redeemer!  
Praise, eternal praise to Thee;  
Though so long a wand'ring sinner.  
Thou hast kindly welcomed me, Even me.

Can it be that I, an alien,  
Now, a child shall ever be?  
Can it be that, all forgiven,  
Glory is prepared for me? Even me.

Lord! I thank Thee for salvation,  
Grace so mighty and so free;  
Take my all in consecration,  
Glorify Thyself in me, Even me.

## Wilderness Experiences

*Franklin Ferguson, New Zealand*

In turning to the 8th chapter of Deuteronomy, verses 2-10, there are striking references made of the experiences of God's ancient people Israel, during their journey across the desert to the land of promise. And seeing that *"whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning,"* we may gather much instruction and help from the records of that unique nation. We, too, are strangers and pilgrims on the earth, journeying to a heavenly country (Heb. 11:13-16), and the experiences which the Lord passes His church through, very closely correspond with those of the saints of old time.

Let us notice some of the things in Israel's spiritual training:

**1. A life under the guidance of God—***"the Lord thy God led thee"* (verse 2). Moses had no chart of the way they had to go, neither were there any among the people who had been on the road before and could act as guides.

What did that matter? *"The Lord went before them in a pillar of cloud, to lead them the way"* (Exo. 13:21) ; at the commandment of the Lord they encamped and at His commandment they journeyed; the cloud might remain stationary two days, or a month, or a year, as He saw fit (see Num. 9:16-23). Oh favored people, having God to lead them all the desert through! We now have His Holy Spirit with us all the way, with the full revelation of His Word for our guidance, and access to Him at all times by prayer and supplication; therefore we shall know the path wherein we should walk, if we keep our soul in close fellowship with our Lord.

**2. It was a life of humility before God—***"to humble thee"* (verse 2). To travel in company with God required a spirit of humility. Many a hard lesson is needful to abase the pride and curb the self-assertiveness of the human heart. How often did the pride of their hearts bring destruction upon them, and their haughtiness of spirit led to many a fall (Prov. 16:18). God's servant Moses was a great contrast to the people over whom he had been placed. We read that he was very meek, above all men (Num. 12:3), otherwise he would have been quite unfitted for the high position he held. There was none like unto Moses whom the Lord knew face to face (Deut. 34:10) ; beautiful type, truly, of our Lord who said, *"Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart"* (Matt. 11:29).

**3. It was a life of testing by God—***"to prove thee"* (verse 3. When a difficulty or perplexity confronted them, it was just placed there to prove what was really in their hearts and to see whether they would keep the commandments of their God. Trials are painful, and we cannot be exempted from them; but all are sent for our ultimate good, to separate the dross from us, that after the ordeal is over we may, like Job of old, "come forth as gold." How often Israel failed because they limited the Holy One and murmured at His ways with them. When His word should have satisfied their hearts and assured them of His faithfulness, they wilfully disbelieved. Nevertheless the patience of God with His people is truly wonderful and He who brought them out of Egypt into the wilderness unto Himself, did not give them up. And we may say, *"Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end"*

(John 13:1).

**4. It was a life sustained from God—** *"He fed them"* (verse 3). All around in that great desert was nothing to support life; they must all have died had God not given the daily manna from heaven. No single day did their food supply fail those forty years; and the water of the smitten rock followed them (1 Cor. 10:3-4). Those forty years they lacked nothing, even their clothes wore not out, and in His manifold mercies He forsook them not (Neh. 9:19-21). Their sustenance was from God alone, and they lived to prove it. Israel's God is our God, who has pledged Himself to *"supply all our need, according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus"* (Phil. 4:19).

**5. It was a life of total dependence on God—** *"by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live"* (verse 3). They had to learn there was more than mere bread required to sustain them—their souls needed every word of God. They had found themselves dependent upon Him for all temporal requirements; they had to learn the further lesson that the soul has its needs too, which the Lord alone can meet by His word. It seems to take a long time for us to learn the lesson, *"without Me ye can do nothing,"* and to lean hard upon Him all the days.

**6. It was a life of hope in God—**the prospect of the promised land (verses 7-9). The far reaching monotonous stretches of sand, and the tireless landscape was not to meet their sight for ever; a little longer and then a land, the finest on earth was to be theirs, most beautiful and abundantly fruitful. So they journeyed on in hope of reaching Canaan and the enjoyment of all the promised goodness. They hoped in God, and not in man. We, too, seek a country, a better, that is, a heavenly; it is the paradise of God, and its glory gleams afar, seen by faith's vision.

**7. When they should reach the land, it was to be a life of praise—** *"Thou shalt bless the Lord"* (verse 10). Yet, it was not alone His purpose that only then they should bless Him; they should meantime offer praises for daily mercies and anticipated blessings. Did ever a people have more cause to be a thanksgiving people than Israel of old time? With God so near to them, caring so minutely for them, with promises of so great blessings in the future! By

all their wilderness experiences may we learn the same lessons meant to teach them and strive by grace divine to succeed better than they, that the Lord may be glorified.

## Paul's Metaphors Attire – The Clothes

*Alan Davidson*

To illustrate the deep profound doctrinal teachings of Paul's Epistles, he often took simple practical metaphors from every day life. In his inspired writings we learn from the illustrations drawn from different types of clothing. Among Jews, Greek, Barbarian, bond and free he would have seen many different forms of Attire.

The Scriptures speak of God Himself as; *"Clothed with honour and majesty. Who coverest Thyself with light as with a garment"* (Psa 104:1-2). God has suitably clothed creation. *"If God so clothe the grass of the field"* (Matt 6:30). God clothes the countryside in richness and beauty, more beautiful than Solomon in all his glory. Even in winter, creation is not unclothed but carpeted in vestures of brown, green and purple. These beautiful blendings are not in outrageous colours giving a shocking glare. The verdant green of the fields, hedges, trees and shrubs reflect the handiwork of an all wise Creator. The brilliance of the nocturnal sky reveal the "Glory of the celestial" (1 Cor 15:39-41). The beasts, birds and fish all have suitable attire, described by Paul as the "Glory of the terrestrial" (1 Cor 15:39-41). Each little animal has its own milliner. The wardrobes of the birds provide their beautiful plumage. Membranes of scales suitably clothe the fish for their environment. Nature distinguishes male and female and teaches us humans not to negate this law of creation visually or orally.

It is interesting to see that Saul of Tarsus himself is first introduced in the Bible as associated with clothes. *"Witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul"* (Acts 7:58). The stoning of Stephen painfully pricked the conscience of the proud young Pharisee (Acts 9:5). In the Epistles penned by Paul we learn about clothes we are to "put off", and garments we should "put on".

*"That ye put off concerning the former conversation (manner of life) the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts" (Eph 4:22). We are to strip off the old sinful pre conversion person, that is all that we were as a result of the Fall. The 'old man' is the man in Adam before we got saved, who is to be crucified and put to death. The 'old man' is not the flesh or the old nature which we still have to restrain. "And that ye put on (wear) the new man, which after (according to) God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph 4:24). Having become "new" in Christ we are to be individually clothed in practical righteous actions and purity in harmony with God's will. Evidence of this is, "Putting away (having laid aside) lying" (falsehood) as an old filthy garment - Deut 4:25. This was the first trouble in the church. "Thou hast not lied unto me, but unto God" (Acts 5:4).*

*"But now ye also put off (cast aside these garments once and for all) all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication" (Col 3:8). These are the clothes of the old man. These garments are defiled, antiquated and useless. "And have put on the new man" (Col 3:10). We are to be clothed in the new creation of which Christ is the Head and is manifest by the beautiful garments of likeness to Christ.*

*"The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light" (Rom 13:12). It is not appropriate to wear night clothes in the day time. We are to put off the night clothes of moral darkness and put on soldiers day attire. In view of the day of the Lord's return, we are left as light in the darkness, as reflecting His beauty in the battlefield of abomination.*

### **What are the garments which we are to "put on"?**

The wardrobe of the new man is given in (Col 3:12-13). *"Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye".* These are seven items of beautiful apparel. The more these garments are worn

the better they fit. We can continually wear these clothes knowing that they will not wear out.

When we look into the mirror of godliness, how do we look? Do we show a heart of compassion: goodness: disposition to benefit others; lowliness; give honor to others; decline to assert ones rights but rather suffer personal injury; refuse to retaliate under provocation; holding back from encounter; personal wrong completely canceled, free from complaint and fault finding, reflect the Spirit of Christ? *"And above all these things put on charity (love), which is the (uniting) bond of perfectness" (Col 3:14). Love is the girdle that draws the vesture together into the oneness of maturity and unity and is the denial of any class system among the people of God.*

In these Papers we have already considered the battle in these times of conflict and the necessity to put on the whole armour of God. Suffice then to quote 1 Thess 5:8 *"Putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath (to go through tribulation wrath), but to obtain salvation (by the rapture, from the very presence of sin) by our Lord Jesus Christ".*

As the Bride of the Lamb, we will wear garments of white linen, clean and white. Meantime, dear child of God, let us lay aside the garments of the flesh, and let us; *"Put on Christ" (Gal 3:27).*

*"When I stand before Thy throne,  
Dressed in beauty not my own;  
When I see Thee as Thou art,  
Love Thee with unsinning heart;  
Then, Lord, shall I fully know,  
Not 'til then how much I owe."*

## **Colossians**

*Larry Steers*

**T**he ancient Biblical city of Colossae was located on the Lycus River in Asia Minor (now known as the modern country of Turkey). An assembly had been planted in the city. But

also in the immediate area of the Lycus valley would be found two other assemblies.

There was an assembly at Hierapolis located east of Ephesus and approximately ten miles north of Laodicea. Hierapolis was nineteen miles northwest of Colossae.

There is little known about the assembly in Hierapolis other than Paul's reference in Col. 4:13. Far more is revealed to us relative to the conditions existent in Laodicea. John had been banished and was a prisoner on the lonely island of Patmos. The Lord as the priestly judge of the assemblies in Revelations 2 and 3, unfolds to John the conditions He found in Laodicea (Rev. 3:14-22). This assembly was a burden upon the heart of Paul as well. He wrote an epistle to Laodicea (Col. 4:16) of which we do not have a copy.

The readers of scripture are far more familiar with Ephesus. First, because of the Lord's evaluation of that assembly in Rev. 2:1-7. Also, Timothy was at Ephesus when he received Paul's first letter to him. Along with the references to Ephesus in Acts one must be convinced that the believers there had been richly blessed.

The area where these assemblies were found had been permeated with the Gospel of the grace of God.

While the Ephesians knew the Apostle Paul personally, he had never been to Colossae. Yet he impresses upon them the great burden which he had for those who had not seen his face in the flesh (Col. 2:1).

With this before us we surely learn that our burden and exercise for assembly testimony are so often limited. Our thoughts, concerns and prayerful exercise may not go beyond the fellowship we are identified with. As is clearly evident in this epistle, what creeps into one assembly will soon spread to others.

Epaphras was a Colossian. Could it be suggested that he may have had a large part in the initial Gospel work in the city, and had some responsibility for the planting of the assembly. Paul refers to him "*who is for you a faithful minister of Christ*" (Col. 1:7), and also "*Epaphras who is one of you*" (Col. 4:12). As Paul wrote this epistle to the Colossians, Epaphras appears to be with him in Rome and is referred to by the Apostle as "*my fellow prisoner*"

(Philemon v.23). No doubt Paul heard about the Colossians from a very troubled and concerned Epaphras. Paul shared the burden for the Colossian assembly with this servant of Christ.

How we should thank God for every brother of the Epaphras character who has a burden and exercise for the well being and spiritual health of the assemblies. May our God raise up amongst us brethren of discernment, whose eyes are open and who can discern conditions developing so rapidly in our day.

I am going to use a word, well known today, but which has a very pertinent significance when used in the context of what follows. The readers of "Truths for our Day" and all computer owners are well aware of the sinister significance of the word "virus". Those with malicious, devious intent can create havoc. Their evil intent is to cripple the computer world by the introduction of a "virus".

Satan operates with an identical intent. His evil purpose is to introduce a crippling virus into the assembly as revealed in the Colossian epistle, but no less so today. We must be fully aware of the wiles of the devil as Epaphras and Paul were. Satan's purpose is to ruin the influence of assembly testimony on his realm. And to weaken the power of the Gospel that in years past has assailed his dominion.

Epaphras was greatly troubled because he was well aware of the satanic virus which had insidiously invaded the assembly he was identified with.. The solemn warning is loud and clear in this epistle. Exercised brethren have spent much time in prayer with tears over the condition of the assembly, while others are unconcerned.

In Colossae the virus of "*enticing words*" (2:4), of "*philosophy and vain deceit after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ*" (2:8), issues of meat or drink – of holy days – of the new moon – or of the Sabbath days (2:16), worshipping of angels (2:18), ordinances (2:20-22), will worship and humility and neglecting of the body (2:23).

Brethren, we are not immune from the onslaughts of Satan today. While the virus may be of a different character, the disastrous consequences are the same., the weakening of

assembly testimony. Today, new ideas and creative thinking are introduced without searching the Word of God. The result is departure from the old paths so richly blessed in years past but often frowned on today.

We must acknowledge with contrite hearts that there is much failure in testimony today. Also there is a lack of discernment to grasp the destructive schemes of Satan. What may seem like simple changes which are being introduced are only, to use the proverbial expression, the tip of the iceberg. Many of these changes are symptomatic of underlying discontent.

Writing to the Colossians Paul gives us the great antidote for the virus. He presents the Colossians and us some of the great Christological passages of the New Testament. The remedy for the errors which were afflicting the Colossian assembly would be found in Christ. Paul brings the Lord into the epistle to warm the souls of the saints and exhorts them to consider Him. What a delight when the believer is rejoicing in their Redeemer.

Have you noticed that so often our conversation one with another dwells on trivial things? So rarely do we have an in depth meditation one with another that centers on Christ!

**Colossians 1:15** Dwell on these words for a long time. You will never exhaust them.

In the passages touching the Lord we are given a beautiful revelation of the deity, creative power and supremacy of the Son of God.

He is the image of the invisible God. The word image is the translation of the Greek word "EIKON". This word implies "likeness". This likeness does not embrace a physical concept but emphasizes a moral intrinsic worth and value. Solomon describes this likeness in Song 5:9-16, each statement presents the beauty and perfection of the Saviour. Who could disagree with Solomon's conclusion. "*Yea, he is altogether lovely*" (Song 5:16).

"Image" also implies an exact copy of the original. It was used to describe a mold. What was poured into the mold had the same form as the mold. Our Lord as the image of God was and is the perfect, and exact expression of God.

Notice the beautiful statement in Phil. 2:6 along with Col.1:15. The word "form" in Phil. 2:6 is MORPHE meaning "nature". "Being" is the present participle which indicates existence previous to what follows, and also continued existence, never ceasing to be. So that all that God is He always was, presently is and never ceases to be.

He came from heaven to express to those on earth the perfect expression of God; to reveal God to man. He said "*No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him*" (John 1:18). And again "*he that hath seen me hath seen the Father*" (John 14:9). John himself writes "*For the life was manifested and we have seen it, and bear witness and show unto you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested unto us*" (1 John 1:2).

Again, with no fear of repetition, He is essentially the perfect expression of the invisible God.

Satan marshaled his forces against the Colossian assembly by introducing false doctrines leading to the decay of their testimony. Computer owners install virus protection. The Holy Spirit, through the words of Paul, gives protection from that which is false and destructive. The soul that is filled with Christ has no time or room for that which is false.

This is echoed in one of the beautiful hymns we sing:

I journey through a desert drear and wild  
Yet is my heart by such sweet thoughts  
beguiled  
Of Him on whom I lean my strength and  
stay  
I can forget the sorrows of the way.

## The Man of God

WIS April 1942

What a simple yet expressive title for the servant of Christ to bear! Twice only does it occur in the New Testament, and in both instances it is applied by the apostle Paul to his

son Timothy. What a position does it involve in an evil world and a Laodicean church, where man and not God rules, where principles adverse to the claims of God more and more prevail! The expression should be true of every experienced believer, as should another, which the apostle uses of himself, "A man in Christ"; but both of these expressions ought to be especially applicable to those who have to stand, as Timothy did, in the forefront of the church's battle against the world and sin and Satan, and to maintain their position as good soldiers of Jesus Christ.

The significance of this beautiful epithet is more manifest if we turn to the Old Testament Scriptures, where it is used of Moses, Samuel, David, Elijah, Elisha, and a few other prophets, as well as of the angel who appeared to Manoah's wife. What distinguished all these was, that they delivered prophetic Messages for God, having reference both to things present and things future. So now, the man of God, the minister of Jesus Christ, comes with a light from God, and bears testimony to the will of God in the present and to His purpose in the future.

The two passages in the Epistles of Paul to Timothy claim the careful attention of those who would seek in these days to gain the honorable title of "Man of God".

In 1 Tim. 6:11, the apostle says, "*But thou, O man of God, flee these things, and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou wast called, and didst confess the good confession before many witnesses.*" The things which the man of God is called upon to flee are those evils to which money can especially minister; and the love of money, which is characteristic of these days, needs to be discerned as an evil root, which leads both to departure from the faith, and to many self-inflicted sorrows. The faith is looked at objectively here as the revealed truth of God; and in marked antithesis to departing from the faith is the precept to "*fight a good fight of faith*".

2 Tim. 3:17 shows the connection between the title "Man of God" and adherence to the Word of God: "*All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction (or, setting right that*

which has gone wrong), *for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.*" Timothy was soon to be bereft of the presence and fatherly counsel of the beloved apostle, but he is put in mind of the all-sufficiency of God's Word, as the Ephesian elders had been previously put in mind by the same apostle.

This parting message of Paul is of the deepest moment for us in these days when the Scripture as God's Book is being on all sides deprived of its authority and power. Again, part of Scripture will not suffice to make anyone a trustworthy guide of others. Indeed nothing more unfits a man to be a teacher in the church of God than a partial knowledge of God's Word, or still more, partiality in dealing with His Word. It is well also to notice in Paul's words to Timothy the sacredness attached to the Scriptures, "*From a babe thou hast known the sacred writings.*" (R. V.) In the original there is a connection with the word "priest," which means a sacred person, and with "temple," which means a sacred place. The person, the place, and the Book have an especial relation to God. May all who enter the holy place ponder there all the holy writings, and thus be preserved from the scepticisms, the perversions and the departures from the truth which are so rampant in these days. And may all who serve our Lord Jesus Christ give diligence to seek God's approval, as workmen that need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

## Lessons from Habakkuk

E. B. Roy, California (WIS Jan. 1935)

The lessons which the prophet Habakkuk learned from God were no doubt among those "*written for our learning upon whom the ends of the age are come.*" We first notice that he learned directly from God. This is our privilege also. But alas! too often we have to learn by bitter experience instead of getting our instruction from God's Word.

We learn from the opening verses of the first chapter, that our "Prophet" had a "burden" to bear; but he wisely brings his burden to God. What a lesson for us in these days of much

planning and scheming apart from the revealed mind of God.

We see from the nature of his complaint that he lived in days very similar to ours. They were days of violence, lawlessness, strife, and contention, and wrong judgment. How much better for us to follow the example of our prophet, and in our *"contending earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints,"* seek to eliminate all recrimination and controversy. (Jude 3)

On the other hand we see that the "prophet" had his eyes down here, and his heart was sore as he viewed the sad state of affairs among the people of God. But God saw the honesty of heart of the prophet, and graciously condescended to reveal His purposes to His depressed servant, for, *"The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him"* (Psalm 25:14).

From verses 5 to 11 inclusive, God is speaking to the prophet, and we learn that God is above all, and can use even the very opposition of those who trouble the people of God as a rod to chastise and bring about the restoration of His people. But woe to the man or nation thus used of God, for the time will come when God will in turn deal with them.

And so, the prophet, having heard God's message, believes it, and exclaims in verse 12, chapter 1, *"Art Thou not from everlasting, O Lord, my, God, mine Holy One! We shall not die. O Lord, Thou hast ordained them for judgment, and O mighty God, Thou hast established them for correction."* In verse 13 he gives God His true character of a holy God, and then honestly asks a question, which many have asked since, for it is a common sight still to see the wicked and unrighteous prosper, while the lowly and humble followers of the Lord suffer adversity.

The next chapter gives the divine answer to the prophet's question. He is here seen on his watch tower, not to watch the lawlessness, the violence and strife down here. Oh, no! he is now occupied with something better: he is waiting and watching for God's delivering message: and he has not long to wait: neither is he disappointed. God's message to His waiting, watching servants is ever one of assurance of coming deliverance and reward. And so we read: *"And the Lord answered me*

*and said: 'Write the vision and make it plain upon tables that he may run that readeth it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak and not lie: though it tarry wait for it: because it will surely come; it will not tarry. Behold his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.'"*

Such was the answer to Habakkuk in his day: but what is the Spirit's message to us in this day of high talk and low walk? The times we are living in are but spiritual antitypes of the times of Habakkuk, Jeremiah, and others, so we may well ask, is God silent to his tried servants? Not at all! For we read in 2 Peter 1:19, *"We have also a more sure Word of prophecy whereunto ye do well that ye take heed as unto a light that shineth in a dark place until the day dawn and the day star arise in your hearts"*. And again, Rev. 3:11, *"Behold I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."* There is room here for the exercise of faith. The Lord's servant who has his heart fixed upon the coming again of his Lord can afford to wait though his path is a lonely one: and though he be ignored and misunderstood, he has the assurance that all will be manifest soon before a just tribunal.

We now come to the last chapter of our prophet. Habakkuk is now seen in the attitude of prayer and intercession. What a change: at the beginning he was complaining to God and calling for judgment; but now, having had personal dealings with God, he rises to a higher service and stands between God and the people. This service is little known by us in these days: but what an honor to follow the example of our Lord who *"ever liveth to make intercession for us."* This is a secret service: unseen by human eyes but seen by the eye of God, and will get a sure reward. This Habakkuk proved, for, before the end of the chapter is reached, we find him rising still higher, and as he rises he sings a triumphant song of praise. Earth recedes, and the trials and cares of earth become insignificant as his soul is filled with the glory of the power and goodness of God. In view of all this, which do we prefer? "To be led, or driven?"