

To whom is it addressed? What part has it in the parallel God is drawing between the rain and His own word?

The Bible is magnificent literature. What seems in superficial reading to be a rhetorical blunder usually resolves itself, when really grasped, into only a higher touch necessitated by the wealth of the thought to be conveyed.

To whom is this verse addressed? It will be impossible to apprehend its relation to the context unless this point is clearly seen.

In order to ascertain to whom it is addressed, it will be necessary to study the pronouns. It is very important to study the pronouns in the word of God. Isaiah 35 becomes luminous once the pronouns become clear.

"Ye" in the first part of the chapter manifestly refers to the crowds called to God's feast. "Thou" in verse 5 as manifestly refers to the Son of David Himself. "Ye" in verses 6-9 means the invited crowds again. Has "ye" in verse 12 the same general signification?

If it has—if it is these invited crowds that are here addressed, then the aptness of the statement thus thrown in between two points of the parallel is certainly not apparent, and its meaning when so considered is not clear.

But let us suppose that the people addressed in this verse, are not the crowds called, but those out of the crowds, who have responded to that echoing "Ho"! That these words in the 12th verse are now spoken to those, who came at God's invitation and sat down to study and feast upon God's word of grace, who have been led by that word to the Leader, and have been led again by that Leader back to a deeper study of the word and God's thoughts about the word—to those whose hearts are now so filled with the glory of it all, that their deepest desire is to pass on to others what they have found.

To them God speaks in this twelfth verse. To them He says: "The desire of your heart shall be fulfilled. This word you love shall be in your mouth, of weapons of blessing. 'You shall go out with joy and be led forth with peace. The mountains and hills of difficulty that stagger human strength, shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field—all the inhabitants of the earth—shall clap their hands.'"

Then the results come in the right place. "Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree."

Thus the parallel between the rain and the word is completed in proper order. It is more than completed, for there is this fourth point, the work of him who publishes the word, to which the story of the rain offers no counterpart, which is boldly inserted in its right place.

The millennial power and glory of which this chapter is full wait for fulfilment until God's people shall heartily accept His invitation to His own word, shall sit down to it as their chosen feast, find covenant hold in it, and a living Leader in it, and shall finally take fully in God's own expressed thoughts about its power to produce beneficent results on the most gigantic scale.

The Lord make us to delight in the law of the Lord, and in His law to meditate day and night, that we may be like trees planted by the rivers of waters, bringing forth fruit, much fruit, in our season.

Ottawa Ladies' College.

Why should we go through life with bells tolling and drums muffled and flags at half mast when God says, "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world!"

Ministers' Widows' and Orphans' Fund.

Personal letters have been written to a number of individual friends throughout the Church, presenting the claims of this Fund. These have already met with a generous response. While this is the case, contributions from congregations of the Churches on behalf of this Fund are very disappointing and at the present date, the outlook is far from satisfactory. The committee, in circulars recently issued, sought to lay this matter on the heart of every minister of the Church in the earnest hope that he and his session would take immediate steps to present the claims of the Fund to their people. Unless this is very generally done and contributions forwarded within the next two or three weeks, the committee will not be justified in paying the annuities. The annuities due next month amount to \$11,000 to meet which there is less than \$2,000 on hand at present. Will not every minister and session give their people the opportunity to contribute towards this scheme?

The Glory of Growing Old.

Growing old and getting old are very different things. There are many in the world who get old, but who never grow old at all. Growing old is a progress, like growing wise or growing good. As the years pass by some people, they bring gifts, they add continually to their lives. As they pass others they are forever taking away something subtracting from their lives. One man loses physical powers; he cannot eat as much, or sleep as well; or enjoy his bodily life as thoroughly, and it is all a loss and burden. Another man goes through the same experience, and he discerns it to be God's voice saying to him. "You cannot now live as much in the body as you have been doing; you cannot get your pleasure that way; you must look to the mind and the heart and the soul for pleasure and interest and power in living." The first of these gets old, and it brings nothing to him. The second grows old, and it is enlarging, enriching, beautifying experience. Aging is like every other way of life; if we take it from God, as God meant it to be taken, it is a great blessing; if we miss the divine Providence in it, it may be a misery, and even a curse. In the great French drama one says to Cardinal Richelieu, "Art thou Richelieu?" and he replies, "Yesterday I was Richelieu; to-day I am a poor old man; to-morrow I know not what."—S. S. Times.

A Prayer.

BY SIMON PATRICK.

O Lord, who has breathed into me the breath of life, and endued me with an immortal spirit, which looks up unto Thee, and remembers it is made after Thine own image, behold with grace and favor the ardent desires which are in mine heart, to recover a perfect likeness of Thee. Endue me with more contentedness in what is present and less solicitude about what is future, with a patient mind to submit to any loss of what I have or to any disappointment of what I expect. Fill me, O Lord, with the knowledge of Thy will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. Fill me with goodness and the fruits of righteousness. And fill me with all joy and peace in believing that Thou wilt never leave me nor forsake me, but make me perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle me, and be my God for ever my Guide even unto death. Amen.

Flowers in the Wilderness.

A spiritual life may be fitly called a wilderness, by reason of the many sweet flowers which spring up and flourish where they are not trodden under foot by man. In this wilderness are found the lilies of chastity and the white roses of innocence; and therein are found the red roses of sacrifice, when the flesh and blood are consumed in the struggle with sin, and the man is ready, if need be, to suffer martyrdom—the which is not easily to be learned in the world. In this wilderness, too, are found the violets of humility, and many other fair flowers and wholesome roots, in the examples of holy men of God. And in this wilderness shalt thou choose for thyself a pleasant spot wherein to dwell; that is, a holy life, in which thou mayest follow the example of God's saints in pureness of heart, poverty of spirit, true obedience and all other virtues. —Master John Tauler.

Whitefield & Wesley.

Rev. Dr. Stalker writes in his book, "Man and Morals," the following tribute to preaching: "Dr. Johnson told Boswell, that in his native town of Lichfield every householder went to bed drunk every night, and nobody thought the worse of him. Profane swearing was a mark of good breeding. On Sunday the people gathered for cock fighting and bull bating; and even the clergy took part in these cruel sports. Before the century closed there was a complete revolution in public opinion, and the whole tone of manners was altered. And to what was the change due? These things had not been put down by legislation; nor did the educated and cultured classes lead the fashion in the direction of better things. No; but the preaching of Whitefield and Wesley raised up all over England a sprinkling of converted men and women living the Christlike life. Each of these became a kind of mirror in which the age beheld its own hideousness; each became a little window through which people saw out beyond their own evil customs to a better time.

Many a man sneers at faith, but has a fresh fad for every day in the year, and snaps like a Muskoka trout at every ism that whirls before his eyes.

Keep your most refined and gentle manner for the home.

Never refer to a mistake that was made with good intentions.

When a wrong is pardoned, bury it in oblivion.

According to the Methodist Kalendar, there are now 45,258 ordained ministers throughout the Methodist world, 104,425 local preachers, 7,529,585 church members, 792,914 Sunday-school teachers, and 6,311,988 scholars.

The blessedness of the future will depend on whether we hang "Thy will" or "My will" over the main entrance.

"The pure, the bright, the beautiful,
That stirred our hearts in youth,
The impulses to wordless prayer,
The dreams of love and truth;
The longings after something lost,
The Spirit's yearning cry,
The strivings after better hopes—
These things can never die."