

The Presbyterian Guardian

March 10, 1942

VOLUME 11, NO. 5

J. Gresham Machen
Editor 1936-1937

One Year—\$1.50

Published Twice Each Month—Ten Cents a Copy

Eight Months—\$1.00

1505 Race Street
Philadelphia, Penna.

EDITORIAL COUNCIL
John P. Clelland John Patton Galbraith R. B. Kuiper
Edwin H. Rian Leslie W. Sloat

Thomas R. Birch
Managing Editor

The Epistle to the Ephesians

A New Series of Expository Studies

By the REV. FLOYD E. HAMILTON

A Minister of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church and Author of "The Basis of Christian Faith"
and "The Basis of Evolutionary Faith"

Introduction

WE ARE now commencing one of the richest of the epistles—one in which the Holy Spirit unfolds much of the purpose and love of God to the children of men", said William Graham, in his *Lectures on the Epistle to the Ephesians*. "We are here permitted to drink from the fountain-head and refresh our souls from the waters of life. The author is God; the writer is a servant and an apostle of God; the subject is salvation; the persons interested are the whole human race; and, as to utterance and lofty eloquence, there is no composition known to man, in the Bible or out of it, containing more ennobling doctrines and moralities, more earnestness, variety and sublimity, than the Epistle to the Ephesians". These words by a great Irish missionary to Germany, at a time when Higher Criticism in its most destructive form had reduced the church in Germany to a deadly formalism, give us a fitting tribute to this great letter of Paul to the Ephesians. When men and women depart from the belief in the great truths of the Word of God embodied in this epistle, the step downward to the Hitler of today is one of the myriad paths to error into which the unbridled mind of man can lead him.

Today, when the foundations of our country are attacked both by the enemies across the sea and by the far more dangerous, because generally unrecognized, foes within who reject the Bible as the Word of God,

and as a consequence reject the Christian standards of morality taught in the Bible, we need to get back to the Word of God whose teachings alone offer any hope for mankind. We need to regain that tenacity of purpose and unwavering faith which the Apostle Paul had through the contemplation of such high themes as characterize this epistle. It is with the hope that our minds may be enlightened and our faith strengthened to stand the terrible tests which we must all undergo in these trying times, that we take up the study of this, in many respects, the most marvelous of Paul's epistles. This is not milk for babes: this is strong meat for full-grown men! It deals with the deepest themes in the Christian religion. It takes us into the Holy of Holies, into the very presence of the Father Himself, and gives us a partial revelation of God's eternal purpose regarding us, His adopted children, especially in the church—not of course in the visible church, but in that invisible church, which consists of all true believers in every denomination, or in no denomination, who in very truth trust their crucified and risen Saviour and Lord as the only way of salvation in this world or the world to come.

The epistle was written by the Apostle Paul during His first imprisonment in Rome, mentioned in Acts 28:30, probably toward the end of that imprisonment, about 61 or 62 A. D. During those two years in his own hired dwelling in Rome, he had ample time and

"the day of God". But it is also the same in meaning as *parousia*. As was earlier pointed out, Peter's purpose in this chapter of his epistle is to assure believers that in spite of the skepticism of the scoffers the Lord will surely come again. For the scoffers His coming (*parousia*) will mean overwhelming destruction, like that of the earth. It is a dread day indeed for the unbeliever. But for the Christian it is a day for which he is to prepare by a holy manner of life, by true godliness; it is a day for which he is to look and toward which he is to hasten with eagerness, because for him it will mean the ushering in of eternal glory in a new heaven and a new earth.

I have often wondered why the Scofield Bible offers no explanation of this passage. Dr. Feinberg, who in so many ways follows the Scofield system and thus is also a representative of dispensational premillennialism, speaks passingly of II Peter 3, as follows:

It is objected further [to premillennialism] that a great conflagration takes place at the coming of Christ, according to the prophecy of Peter. The apostle speaks in his Second Epistle of the burning of the heavens and the earth and their displacement by the new heavens and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. It is impossible, so goes the objection, for all this to happen before the alleged millennium. Premillennialists do not place this before the millennium, but after it.

Now it is all very well for premillennialists to say that they place II Peter 3 after the millennium; there is of course nothing else to do and maintain any semblance of the chiliasitic scheme. It is another matter entirely for them to show that they have the right so to treat II Peter 3. Careful Bible study does not permit the arbitrary assignment of passages of Scripture to a place that will accommodate them to a particular system of interpretation. The only sound method is that of accurate exegesis; our system of belief must be drawn out of the Scripture, not imposed upon it. I do feel that the almost offhand manner in which II Peter 3 has been dealt with by some premillennialists has had an unfortunate effect upon the credit of the premillennial position. A more detailed examination of this passage will be undertaken later on in these studies. Enough has been said, however, to show that there is strong reason to

hold that the events Peter describes are to occur at the coming of the Lord. Another argument is therefore forged against the distinction some would make between the "day of Christ" and the "day of the Lord".

The study of the terms used to denote the second coming of Christ has served to disclose that they may be fairly held to be interchangeable. *Parousia*, *apokalupsis*, *epiphaeneia*, to *telos*, *sunteleia* tou *aionos*, and *hemera* in its various combinations, all have reference to the coming of Christ in glory, to the resurrection and blessedness of the saints at His coming, to the judgment that will befall the wicked, to cosmical changes that will occur at Christ's return. No distinction may be made on the basis of the use of these terms between "the rapture" and "the revelation". The return of Christ, insofar as these New Testament designations permit us to describe it, is one unified event having final reference to all men and to creation itself.

It is evident, I think, that the study of the New Testament expressions for

the second coming of Christ has raised serious objections to the validity of the premillennial system. It may be asked whether any implications may be taken concerning the relative merits of postmillennialism and amillennialism. The answer would seem to be that amillennialism has received support. The world to which Christ comes is not, in the Scriptures passages considered, a world that has been converted. It is a world which has been hostile to the gospel of Christ and which has heaped tribulation upon His people. The postmillennialism with which we are most familiar has not been in the habit of so picturing the course of world history as it approaches the second advent. The picture is after the amillennial view of things rather than the postmillennial. Although a verdict can by no means yet be entered, those preliminary steps have now been taken which were necessary to prepare for the exegesis of the conclusive passages of Scripture which are to be studied in detail in the articles which shall follow in the course of the coming weeks.

With the New Books

Original Sin

ARE INFANTS GUILTY BEFORE GOD?, by R. B. Kuiper. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1942. 25c per copy, five for \$1.

A BRITISH theologian of note has recently written, "It cannot be stated too emphatically that 'Original Sin' neither implies nor means 'Original Guilt'. The latter expression carries with it forensic and penal implications which outrage the moral sense. No man may be judged guilty because of the misdeeds of his ancestor. Such a judgment would destroy the very meaning of morality". Here is an open disavowal. This is surely a question that concerns all of us most vitally. It is precisely with this question that Professor Kuiper deals in the booklet, *Are Infants Guilty Before God?* He answers the question emphatically in the affirmative and he supports his answer with the necessary evidence.

The particular occasion for Professor Kuiper's booklet is the express denial of the guilt of infants by Dr. E. F.

Romig, president of the 1940 General Synod of the Reformed Church in America, in an address delivered at the 1941 General Synod of the same denomination. Dr. Romig explained his position more fully in several issues of the denominational weekly, *The Intelligencer-Leader*, in which he denied that infants are guilty either by the imputation of the guilt of Adam's first sin or because of their own sinfulness. Dr. Winfield Burggraaff, a minister of the Reformed Church in America, came to the support of Dr. Romig's position in articles contributed later to *The Intelligencer-Leader*. Professor Kuiper devotes the greater part of his booklet to a refutation of positions taken by Dr. Burggraaff in these articles. Professor Kuiper shows, first, that Scripture teaches the guilt of infants and, second, that this doctrine is embodied in the Reformed confessions and taught by representative Reformed theologians. He also shows how serious for so cardinal a doctrine as vicarious atonement through Christ is the denial of the imputation of the

guilt of Adam's first sin. With simple and pointed cogency he does all this admirably.

Professor Kuiper has done great service to the cause of truth; he has done service to all churches; he has done particular service to the Reformed Church in America within which this truth has been so openly denied. We may well reiterate Professor Kuiper's closing words, "May the Reformed Church in America hew straight to the line of its doctrinal standards, and, above all else, of God's own Word. And if the brethren concerned should retrace their steps and return all the way to the historic Reformed faith, that would be cause for great rejoicing among all who love that faith, not only within the Reformed Church in America, but far beyond".

—JOHN MURRAY

Prophecy and the War

WAR IN THE LIGHT OF PROPHECY, Was It Foretold? A Reply to Modern Chiliasm, by Theodore Graebner. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo., 1941. \$1.00.

WHAT does the Bible say about the present war? Is there to be found in the Bible some indication of the outcome of the conflict? Can we keep one step ahead of events by reading our Bibles instead of our newspapers? These are questions which are being asked by many thoughtful people who are perplexed by the chaos which appears upon all sides. Anyone who can discuss these and many similar questions in a sane and Scriptural manner is performing a genuine service.

Graebner does just this. In 1918 he wrote a treatise entitled *Prophecy and the War*, in which he discussed the efforts of the time to "connect World War I with Old and New Testament prophecy". His present book is a new and revised edition of this earlier work, and in it he endeavors to show (successfully, we think) "that World War II as little as its predecessor of twenty-five years ago has any specific relation to the prophecies whose fulfilment is so confidently asserted by most Fundamentalists of today".

The book makes refreshing reading. When the author compares the

assertions that were made during the period of the first World War with those which are being made today, we are amazed that such things can be. This book also discusses, in an interesting and competent manner, such themes as Gog and Magog, the Visions of Daniel, How to Read Prophecy?

Graebner writes as a devout Lutheran and, although we are Presbyterian, we admire him for his devotion to Lutheranism. Because he is a Lutheran, however, there are some statements and attitudes in the book with which we cannot agree. How-

ever, the total impact of the work is wholesome. The author is to be commended for his desire to be faithful to what he conceives to be the teaching of Scripture. We particularly like the following sentence, "Scripture demands assent to all her teachings, not only to the so-called fundamentals" (p. 129).

We wish this book success. If it can be used to win even one person from the many vagaries which are being proclaimed today under the heading of "prophecy", it will have proven to be well worthwhile.

—EDWARD J. YOUNG

Henry Martyn

Missionary Heroes of the Past: V

By the REV. ROBERT S. MARSDEN

THERE are a few great Christian saints whose greatness depends not so much upon what they did as upon what they were. Such was David Brainerd, missionary to the American Indians; such was Robert Murray McCheyne, Scottish divine and missionary; and such was Henry Martyn, East India Company chaplain and missionary. His *Journal and Letters* is one of the greatest spiritual biographies of catholic literature, and compares not unfavorably with McCheyne's *Life and Letters*. He was deeply influenced by Brainerd who lived in the preceding century. All three of these great saints died very young—Martyn lived the longest, dying in his thirty-second year. All manifested a rather unhealthy introspection and an unbiblical pietism, but all were great "saints" in the highest sense of the word. All three have had a tremendous influence on successive generations of ministers and missionaries, and he who reads the lives and work of these young men will be well repaid.

Henry Martyn was born on February 18, 1781, in Truro in Cornwall, in the extreme southwest of England, a region which was semi-barbarous until the coming of John Wesley and George Whitefield during the eighteenth century. His mother died, while he was an infant, of tuberculosis which Henry inherited and which invalidated him most of his brief life. Henry was a fine student, serious and introspective, but not lacking in humor. His career at Cambridge was

marked by scholarly achievement, and in 1805 he was ready to sail for India as a chaplain appointed by the East India Company. Anyone knowing Martyn would have known that he would not confine himself to ministering to the nominally Christian soldiers in his care, and the great William Carey is said to have remarked that where Martyn was there was no need for a missionary.

His sailing to India was during the Napoleonic wars, and he was eight and a half months en route; the convoy consisted of sixty-three vessels which first visited Brazil, then conquered the Cape of Good Hope for the British, before arriving at Calcutta. During the military engagement at the Cape, Martyn was under fire with the men to whom he ministered.

The situation which Martyn found among the British inhabitants of India was appalling. There were at that time over 600,000 Europeans in British India and but a handful gave any heed to the gospel. Martyn, arriving at Calcutta, immediately called upon Carey who was even then working at Serampore, near Calcutta. He associated himself with Carey and his party in the translation work in which they were engaged, and he formed an attachment with Joshua Marshman, a great missionary to whom too little recognition has been given.

"Now let me burn out for God", was Martyn's expression on arriving in India, and for the remaining six years of his life, during all of which he was