

HIDDEN TREASURES

By J. A. Huffman, D.D.

BUYING UP THE TIME

It is interesting to open a dictionary, and note the variety of definitions which one finds for "time." Here is a home-made definition which we would share with all of our readers:

Time is a parenthesis in eternity, marked off by centuries, decades, years, months, weeks, days, hours, minutes, and seconds, for human convenience.

A period of time, larger or smaller, when once passed, is gone forever. There is no turning back of time "in its flight."

A peculiar aspect of time, as it relates to the span of a life, is its acceleration. In the early teen age time appears, snail-like, to crawl. A little later, it begins to walk; then to trot. About midlife, it begins to run, and as one grows older, to fly with increasing speed.

Time is like a handful of flowers, each day a flower. One by one, a flower is taken from the hand and cast into the stream which empties into eternity. Soon, surprisingly soon, the handful of day flowers will be empty, with no possible refills. So precious is a day, and so serious is the aspect of time, that none, not even youth, can afford to squander a moment of it.

The above concerning time has been written so that the exhortation on the subject, from Paul, recorded in Ephesians 5:15-17, may be approached with a perspective on the subject of time more nearly adequate.

The King James Version of the exhortation reads as follows: "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is."

In these verses there are several very interesting Greek words. The first of these is the one in verse 15, which is translated in the King James Version "circumspectly" and in the American Standard "carefully." The Greek is akribos, which is the adverb, from the Greek verb akribo, which means "to know accurately, or to do exactly," Thayer. The adverb akribos then means, exactly, accurately, diligently. The King James' translators made a wise choice of a word with which to translate akribos. "Circumspectly" means "cautious, prudent, watchful on all sides." The exhortation then means: "Be vigilantly alert, how ye walk."

The King James' translators have, however, missed the point somewhat in making akribos modify the verb "walk." By position this Greek word is emphatic, and modifies the verb "look." Alertness, vigilance, or exactness relates primarily to the looking. Of course consistent walking is expected to be in keeping with alert and vigilant looking.

In the same verse are found two other words very much alike, but meaning exactly the opposite. They are asophoi and sophoi. In the English they are translated "fools" and "wise," respectively. When you examine them, the only difference between these two Greek words is the "a" which prefixes the former. This little letter, the Greek Alpha, in this position is called Alpha privative. This is the way by which the Greek language negatives sharply an idea. Sophoi means "wise ones," while asophoi means "unwise ones." The construction here is very emphatic, both negatively and positively put, with the negative first.

But the still more intriguing Greek word of

the exhortation is the one translated in both the King James and the American Standard versions as "redeeming." "Redeeming" is a beautiful and rather classic word, but fails of the real picture. The Greek word here is exagoradzomenoi, one of the seven-syllabled, "high-priced" Greek words. It is the nominative plural, noun form of the Greek word exagoradzo, which is compounded of the verb agoradzo, which means "to frequent the market place," and "to buy," and the little preposition ek, which means "out of." Literally, this interesting Greek word means "to buy up, out of the market place," as one does a necessary commodity. The picture is really that of a shrewd merchant man, frequenting the market places, wide awake and alert in quest of especially valuable bargains. Boice comments on this exhortation as follows: "Favorable times are rare, and the market needs to be carefully watched to secure them."

Successful Christians are those who recognize spiritual values, and, at all costs, secure them. They are the Rockefellers of the oil industry, the Carnegies of the steel market, the Astors of real estate, the Harrimans of the railways, and the Morgans of banking. These "shrewd bargainers," however, are dealing not in timely, but in eternal, values!

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THE OLD AND THE NEW . . .

By Annie Johnson Flint

Do you want something old, something settled and sure,

That has stood through the ages, and still shall endure—

Reliable records of all that is past,

Incredibly graven, forever to last?

Then come to God's Word and the message it brings:

The Book of Beginnings, first cause and first things—

Creator—Creation—a story sublime,

The darkness of chaos, the dawning of time,

The word that once was, and the world that now is,

Man, made by God's hand, in His image—all His.

Do you want something modern and startling and new,

As fresh as the morning, as clear as the dew;

Today's current topics brought down quite to date,

Forecast of tomorrow that's never too late?

Then come to God's Word, for its prophecies hold

The symbols of all that the years shall unfold—

A wonderful outline of history's course

From a truly authentic and trustworthy source;

Naught else is so ancient, naught else is so new,

And nothing so wise is, and nothing so true.

While the vivid events of the past it can tell,

And the future's great drama is pictured, as well;

Satisfying and full is the message it brings—

The Book of Completions, the end of all things!

The presence of Christ is the joy of my life.

The service of Christ is the business of my life.

The will of Christ is the law of my life.

The glory of Christ is the crown of my life.

—Sel.

THE CREED OF THE THEOCRAT

By J. B. Chapman, D. D.

With the entrance of sin into the world, man lost his sovereignty over the world, and Satan, the great usurper came into power. But to spare the society of men from complete chaos, God in mercy gave civil government to the world. Civil government has existed in different forms down through the ages of human history, and although many instances of tyranny, cruelty and injustice may properly be laid to its charge, it still was better than chaos, and God's people have always been taught "that the powers that be are ordained of God." This has called for obedience to the laws, and for the best form of patriotism.

In the earliest days of which we have knowledge human government was autocratic. That is, it was government by one man who was lawmaker, judge, commander and protector. The earliest forms were followed by the aristocracy in which there was government by the few. Then came the constitutional monarchy, and finally the democracy. Strict democracy is not possible in the instance of large populations and huge geographical divisions, and this makes way for the republic, which is the representative democracy. Thus human government has gone the cycle and in the modern day there is a tendency to start all over again. We call them dictators now, instead of calling them kings and emperors, but nevertheless the tendency is to return to the one man form, which means but starting where we were in the days of Nimrod who was the founder of the first empire and the political forebear of Babylon.

As a mere expediency human government has done good service, for it has saved the world from complete collapse and chaos, but it is not permanent in any of its forms, and crowns and thrones shall perish and kingdoms rise and wane—the best as well as the worst. And what shall we say? Is there no king who is both wise and good? Is there no hope for the government of the world? Answering from the purely human point of approach, we have to admit that the prospect is forbidding. No, there is no permanent hope in autocracy, aristocracy, monarchy, democracy or in any other humanly devised system. The history of the world is the record of decay, and the end will be failure and chaos.

But there is a government which is not included in the list above. It is the theocracy—the God-rule. That was the system under which man started out in Eden, and it is the system that will return and succeed. This order will be set up when Jesus comes in the glory of His second advent, and that is why troubled men who care can say so devoutly, even in the midst of war and bloodshed and tyranny, "Amen. Even so come, Lord Jesus."

OBITUARY

Mrs. Harriet Mildred Smith passed away at her home in Washington, D. C., on Sept. 27th. Mrs. Smith was formerly Miss Harriet Parent of Fredericton, N. B. She leaves to mourn her passing, besides her husband and father, Sterling Parent, three brothers, Earl, Jesse and Sterling; and two sisters, Mrs. O'Neil, of Oregon, and Gertrude at home.

Funeral services were conducted by Rev. Gleason on Sept. 30th, and burial took place at Washington National Cemetery.

The sorrowing ones have the prayers and sympathy of their friends in their bereavement.