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expounded all things.' For 'expounded' the Gk. has ἐπέλεν (imperfect active)—'He was expounding all things.' What does this mean? That in private Jesus merely 'explained' what He had previously said? Does it not mean that 'in private He was *disclosing* (releasing) all things to them'? The idea is more that of *revelation* than of exegesis.

Hence it would seem that Peter is urging that the readers give heed to the prophetic word (v. 19) because of its *divine origin* (vv. 20–21): 'No prophecy of Scripture is of private release (disclosure)'—that is, the impulse does not come from the individual, but from God, as he shows in v. 21.

It is well known that Roman Catholics have made much use of the usual translation of v. 20 as an argument against the popular use of the Scriptures, because 'private interpretation' brings great peril to the individual, who needs 'official' and 'correct' interpretation. All this is quite beside the mark if ἐπίλυσις here means 'release' or 'disclosure' instead of 'interpretation'.

—*The Baptist Times*

NOTES ON HEBREWS

By W. E. VINE, M.A. (Lond.)

Chapter 11 (continued)

. Verse 5. *By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death*; Enoch's life was a life of faith, a life in which he pleased God. The Septuagint has this statement twice. The Hebrew has 'Enoch walked with God'; to please God and to walk with God are indissociable. The believer leads a life entirely different from his former life in which he pleased himself; he has a new motive, made possible by the gift of the Holy Spirit. Christ 'pleased not himself' (Rom. 15:3), and He is our example. This walking with God involves the enjoyment of communion with God as the habit of the life, delighted submission to His authority, dependence on His guidance, the consciousness of His approval.

In his translation he is a standing testimony to the fact that for the believer the domination and rights of death are destroyed. It is gain to the life of faith. Prophetically, Enoch foreshadows the Church. He testified of coming judgment upon the world (Jude 14, 15) but did not go through it.

and he was not found, because God translated him: for before his translation he hath had witness borne to him that he had been wellpleasing unto God: The perfect tense, expressed in the one word rendered 'he hath had witness borne to him', indicates that the witness is that given in the Scripture record which precedes the statement of his translation and remains an abiding witness, which includes a witness borne to him by God during his lifetime.

Verse 6. and without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto Him: All that is God-pleasing in the life is a matter of faith. Cain sought to do it without faith, setting an example of religion in the flesh which is nothing but sin. The aorist, or point, tense marks a single act, and thus indicates the absolute impossibility.

for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that seek after Him.—Coming to God here signifies coming as a worshipper (cf. ch. 7:19). The verb rendered 'believe' is in the aorist tense, here indicating a decisive act, once for all. To believe that God 'is' means that faith grasps the fact that He is the one true and self-existing Jehovah in contrast with all false gods, of whom this could never be said. Enoch rested in this though God was invisible to him.

Further, faith accepts the fact that God becomes (not now the verb to be, but *ginomai*, to become) the Rewarder *misthapodotēs*, the Dispenser of rewards, lit., one who gives back wages. Cf. Gen. 15:1. The verb rendered 'seek after' is a strengthened form of the simple verb to seek; hence the 'after' in the R.V.; it means a diligent seeking ('seek early', Prov. 8:17). It implies a keen desire for God, such as Enoch had.

Verse 7. By faith Noah, being warned of God concerning things not seen as yet. The same word as in ch. 8:5; no signs of an impending flood were visible.

moved with godly fear,—Not the fear of dread, but reverential fear, guiding him to carry out God's instructions. (See on ch. 5:7).

prepared an ark to the saving of his house:—'By faith' he prepared an ark, (1 Peter 3:20). For 'saving', or rather 'salvation', see on ch. 1:14.

through which he condemned the world,—Through which refers to his faith; both the faith and its practical effect in his obedience stood in direct contrast to the mocking unbelief, violence and corruption of the world, and all this and his warnings condemned it.

and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.—For *klēronomos*, heir, see ch. 1:2, 4; 6:17 and notes. He became an actual possessor of the righteousness according to faith. In Romans the frequent phrase is 'of' or 'from' faith (*ek*), indicating faith as the source of righteousness, e.g., ch. 1:17; 9:30; 10:6, and *by (dis) faith*, signifying the instrument. Here it is *kata*, 'according to' faith, that is, in agreement with, or consistent with, faith.

Verse 8. By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed to go out unto a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out not knowing whither he went. His call to go out was by way of a command and a promise. Faith prompted obedience to the command. The promise of an inheritance was not fulfilled, and still awaits fulfilment. But faith was in exercise throughout his life and never waned through the non-fulfilment. The writer does not here mention the other details of the promise, relative to his seed, for the stress is upon the obedience of his faith. By faith he maintained his stranger character, and delighted himself in sharing God's thoughts about the present and the future. He was not aware when he left his country that Canaan was to be his eventual inheritance: that was made known to him after he arrived (Gen. 12:7). He was content to walk only by the light God gave him.

Verse 9. By faith he became a sojourner in the land of promise, as in a land not his own, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: 'He became a sojourner' translates the aorist tense of *paroikeō*, to dwell as a *paroikos*, a sojourner. The R.V. rendering gives the force of the tense, expressing the definite act. The 'in' is 'into', according to the Greek, and this confirms the way the verb expresses the act. Isaac and Jacob are mentioned somewhat parenthetically. They all had moveable habitations. God made the promise to them likewise so that they were co-heirs; but Abraham is the leading person in this record.

Verse 10. for he looked for the city which hath the foundations, whose builder and maker is God.—The verb *ekdechomai* signifies to await, to expect eagerly; see ch. 10:13. The definite article 'the' (-city) sets it in marked contrast to all human constructions. Cain's son Enoch was the first to build a city here. The tents of the patriarchs had no foundations. The Heavenly Jerusalem, the abode of the redeemed, has God as its Designer (*technitēs*, rendered 'builder'); the building, is indicated in the word *dēmiourgos*,

behalf, as the next statement shows.

for He hath prepared for them a city.—The verb is in the aorist tense, and signifies 'He prepared', that is to say, in His unalterable counsels in the past eternity. It implies His unoriginated prescience. The city has constitutions, regulated policy, the fellowship of citizenship.

Verse 17. By faith Abraham, being tried, offered up Isaac:—This presents a third and more astonishing victory of his faith. By faith he had triumphed over the discomforts of pilgrimage; by faith he had triumphed over the impossibility of natural conditions; and now his faith triumphed over its direst testings, enabling him to rise superior to natural disappointment with the dealings of God, un baffled at His apparent undoing of His own work. The word rendered 'being tried' signifies at the very time of the testing, with no hesitation or delay. The perfect tense of the verb rendered 'offered up', literally gives the rendering 'hath offered up', and this expresses both the completeness of the act and the permanency of the Scripture record.

yea, he that had gladly received the promise was offering up his only begotten son; The verb *anadechomai*, rendered 'had gladly received', means to welcome, to give a cheerful reception to. It is illustrated by its use in Acts 28:7, the only other place where it is used in the N.T.—'who received us'. The verb rightly rendered 'was offering up' is in the imperfect tense, expressing the process, and thus including all the preliminary steps taken to fulfil God's command.

This additional statement purposely enhances the previous statement in the beginning of the verse. The argument of that fact is threefold: (1) it now says 'he that had gladly received the promise'; (2) it includes the whole course of the procedure, 'was offering', not simply 'offered'; and (3) 'his only begotten son', expressing the preciousness of Isaac.

Verse 18. even he to whom it was said, In Isaac shall thy seed be called:—The 'he to whom' is Abraham: more literally, 'In Isaac shall be called a seed to thee', i.e., 'a seed to be called thine', stressing the force of the promise. For the significance of the word 'shall be called' see note on ch. 3:13.

Verse 19. accounting that God is able to raise up, even from the dead: from whence he did also in a parable receive him back.—

The verb *logizomai* to reckon means to account, and the aorist tense expresses a decisive mental act; he made up his mind after thinking the matter over, that God could actually raise the dead; that was a general principle in his mind. Abraham's faith anticipated the death and the resurrection of the child of promise. *Dunatos*, 'able', signifies powerful; this is more than possibility, it here ascribes power to God.

'In a parable' meant not a parable of speech but of the details of the event. *Parabolē* means a laying alongside, and signifies, not a figure, but something that resembles or corresponds to another. Thus the giving back of the offering to the offerer without the slaying, was in parabolic act a resurrection.

Verse 20. By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau, even concerning things to come.—This introduces three instances of faith exercised at the time of death. The 'even' suggests the natural difficulty of grasping as facts things of the future and therefore unseen. The blessing Isaac gave was an act of assurance that God would fulfil what the blessing involved.

(*To be continued*)

THE NEGLECTED PARABLE

By F. W. BOREHAM, D.D.

'I Am the ALPHA and the OMEGA saith the Lord God, which is and which was and which is to come, the ALMIGHTY' (Rev. 1: 18)

Here is the Neglected Parable—the 'least' of the Parables! A million sermons have been preached on the parable of the Ten Virgins, the parable of the Prodigal Son, and all the rest. But here is Christ's crowning parable, a masterpiece of imagery that He left to the last, and only unfolded from the throne of His glory.

'*I am Alpha and Omega,*' He said, and said repeatedly.

And, since *Alpha* is simply the first letter in the Greek alphabet, and *Omega* the last, it is as if He said: 'I am the A and the Z:

'I am the Alphabet!'

It is an arresting simile, and worthy of the closest scrutiny; yet strange to say, we seldom pay it the slightest attention. It is pleasant to reflect that He, Who loved all common and familiar