

THE

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C O N T E N T S.

Plain Words to Ritualists on their way to Rome.

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The Revelation of Jesus Christ. Notes of Lectures.

PLAIN WORDS

To Ritualists on their way to Rome.

No. 1.

THE CAMBRIDGE
CHAMBER OF DARKNESS.

By C. S.

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THE CAMBRIDGE CHAMBER OF DARKNESS.

“AND he brought me to the door of the court; and when I looked, behold a hole in the wall. And he said unto me, Go in, and behold the wicked abominations that they do here. He said also unto me, Turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations that they do. Then he brought me to the door of the gate of the Lord’s house which was toward the north; and behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz.” (Ezek. viii. 5–16.) Thus did the ancients of Israel do *in the dark*. And thus speaks the word of God of their wicked abominations, both of the image of jealousy, and of their pictures portrayed on the wall.

I would now ask you to go with me, not to Jerusalem, but to Cambridge, one of the great seats of learning in England.

One word of explanation. I had been with a friend to visit a sick person. The mother of this invalid had a room in the court or yard, which she desired to let to my friend. He asked me to look at it with him.

Now I want you to go in with me, and I will help you to look at it for yourself. At least I will describe exactly what I saw. We will follow the owner of this room. It is dark: she takes a candle in her hand up the dark passage. She has the

keys; but before we go in, I must tell you, so as to prepare you a little, that this room in the dark passage is let at present to some members of the University; and the owner is very wishful for them to give it up.

After some difficulty the door in the wall is opened. We have only one candle. Dear me, how dim and strange this place looks! What can that be opposite the entrance? Why look, it is actually a large image of a dead Christ lying down! And that? an image of a woman, leaning or weeping over the awful-looking dead body of Christ! And that? what can that large triangle of wood be, with candles stuck on it, burnt nearly down to the sockets? I should have been puzzled if I had not seen this same purgatorial triangle in the temples of idolatry on the continent. There you may see a distressed widow or orphan come and buy a candle, place it on the triangle, and then kneel before some image in prayer for a supposed soul in purgatory whilst the candle burns. And this is done by millions in what is called Christendom!

Do you see that penitential chair before the awful image? Just look at those sticks fastened to the back of the chair, to support, I suppose, the hands uplifted in idol worship! and did you ever see such horrid-looking cloaks, black and ugly? Well, you would almost think, the order of Beelzebub must worship here. Hush! some of the most gentlemanly members of the University meet here. You notice that large cross behind the prostrate body? And these articles, what are they? Incense vessels, and other utensils of idolatry.

Now step through this hole in the wall, and see other abominations. A strange feeling creeps over

you. The light is very dim. You see that image of an angel, meekly asking you to dip your finger in the holy water ; no, by the way, it is all dried up. Now look round. Yes, that is the image of the Virgin Mary queen of heaven ; and the little child. And there the altar with its great flaring cross ; there the desk ; here lie vestments *and books*. We will examine those books shortly. But this place looks so dismal ; where are the windows ? Oh, this is like the old worship of Tammuz ! The dark chambers of idolatry. Now look, those windows are carefully boarded up. Not a ray of God's light must enter this chamber of spiritual abominations. What ! not a chink between the boards ? The members of the Confraternity have carefully, most carefully, papered over those boards ; and where the light of day should be, there stands their altar. Oh England ! England ! these be the men, preparing to be thy parish antichrists !

The books ! I said above, we will examine these books. As surely as God has bid me sound this alarm, those books will come into my hands, though humanly speaking, it seems impossible, as they are only sold to the Confraternity. But one of them came into my hands a few days ago—I will tell you how.

Last Lord's day evening I felt as it were compelled to preach from two words : "The night." The verse reads, "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. xiii. 12.) Truly God moves in a mysterious way. There was a stranger in the audience from a distance, a member of this very Confraternity ; but I knew it not. I was led to inquire why the Holy Spirit speaks of the period of Christianity as

“the night.” And I was directed in the scriptures in a remarkable way.

In Paul’s farewell address, he distinctly foretold that after his departing grievous wolves should enter in amongst them ; and even as to themselves things should come to a bad state. But he does not give the slightest hint of any succession of men to whom he could commend the believers. He commends “them to God, and the word of his grace.” (See Acts xx. 28–31.)

Nay, in the very earliest epistles, *the night* was advancing. He tells the Thessalonians, that “the mystery of iniquity doth already work,” and goes on, until the days of the wicked one who “shall be destroyed by the brightness of the coming” of Christ. (2 Thess. ii. 5–11.)

The apostle John said, “Even now are there many antichrists.” (1 John ii. 18.) And read the description that Jude gives of the “certain men that had crept in unawares.” Is it not remarkable that during those days of apostasy, if God had intended to give a succession of priests, He should not, in at least one instance, have directed the believer to them? Peter devotes a whole chapter to these false teachers, but not a syllable about trusting his successors. (2 Peter ii.)

Paul shews them to be false apostles, ministers of Satan. (2 Cor. xi. 13–15.) And the Spirit describes expressly the Roman Catholic marks of the latter times ; denouncing them as the doctrines of devils. “Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats.” (1 Tim. iv. 1–3.)

And then, what a description of the condition of these very last days in 2 Timothy iii. ! And yet not one word either to trust the priest, or the church ; no, God Himself and His holy word. “The night ;”

what a night this has been ! but the morning breaketh.

There are two very striking numbers, often used in scripture : **FOUR** and **SEVEN**.

The Lord has used each of these to divide the night. " Watch ye therefore ; for ye know not when the Master of the house cometh ; at even or at midnight, or at cockcrowing, or in the morning." (Mark xiii. 34.)

1. The even. We see the church, as an outward testimony, fails even before the end of apostolic times. God had His own, and knew them ; but the church, as a light in the world, failed immediately, as all had done before it.

2. The midnight darkness of the papal ages.

3. The awakening of the Reformation.

4. The morning. The present moment ; so near the coming of our blessed Lord.

Now if you turn to Revelation ii., iii., the Lord divides " the night" (the prophetic history of Christendom and His judgment of it) into seven successive periods, the last four running on together to the end.

1. **EPHESUS**. Decline of first love.

2. **SMYRNA**. Persecution, and the introduction of Ritualism, and a priesthood ; the blasphemy of saying they are Jews ; that is, those who take the place of being so-called priests, &c., and are not.

3. **PERGAMOS**. Satan's old seat of Baal worship, amalgamation of that world-worship with the professing church. It gets darker.

4. **THYATIRA**. Dark long years of Jezebel—Rome.

5. **SARDIS**. Results of the Reformation. Few names.

6. **PHILADELPHIA**. Near the morning, souls

gathered outside, to the person of Christ, and Ritualism again to contend with; those who take the place of so-called priests, and are not.

7. LAODICEA. The sad final state and rejection of Christendom. After the close of this judgment of the seven stages of "the night." The church is no more seen on earth, but in heaven until she comes with the Lord. (Chap. xix.)

Such is a brief outline of the scriptures that were brought before us on Lord's day evening last.

On the Monday morning this stranger called upon me and owned the Lord had used the word in power to her soul. She wished to know however, if any one had informed me about her case. I assured her that I knew not a word. She then told me that she was a member of the Holy Confraternity; and that her eyes had been completely opened; and she felt she must give it all up utterly. She then took her little book out of her pocket, and gave it to me—a copy of one of the books used in the Cambridge chamber of darkness—the one from which I had taken extracts.

Before we look at this book, I would relate that this lady informed me, that there are thousands of members of this Confraternity throughout England. She named Ritualistic clergymen of this neighbourhood, as members.

The book is called "THE MANUAL of the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ. Sixth ed." The chief professed object of this Confraternity is "The honour due to the person of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament of His Body and Blood." (Page 7.) Its form of government is very similar to, if not the same as, the order of the Jesuits—a

Superior General, and a council, also Superiors of various wards, in short, a most perfect organisation. The Superior General must be a bishop or a priest. The greatest care is to be observed in admitting a member. Each is to be fully instructed, name and full address kept, &c.

The candidate is admitted kneeling, and the priest standing. Then follow prayers, on the idolatrous principle that the bread and the wine are turned into God. A medal of membership is given.

Nothing in Rome can possibly exceed the idolatry of the prayers that follow. "O God, who dost wonderfully refresh Thy Church by Thy precious Body and Blood;" and again, "O my beloved Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, I firmly believe, because Thou hast said, 'This is my Body; this is my Blood,' that in this blessed sacrament Thou art truly present; THY DIVINITY and Thy humanity, with all the treasures of Thy merits and Thy grace; that Thou art Thyself mystically offered for us in this Holy Oblation." Again, "I ADORE Thee, O Lord my God, whom I now behold veiled beneath these earthly forms; prostrate I adore Thy Majesty." "Jesus, our wonderful God, who vouchsafest to be present upon the altar when the priest pronounces the words of consecration; have mercy upon us." Prayer after prayer of this kind follows. In fact, every prayer and act of devotion and adoration is to "our Lord present in the Holy Eucharist." The Eucharist is regarded as the *victim* offered on the altar: "O sacred victim, offered in satisfaction for the sins of the world." It is spoken of as the "pure offering," "the awful sacrifice," and "the victim consumed on the altar."

The lady referred to above informed me that this book was commonly used by all the members of this Confraternity in the churches of England during what they call "celebration." Here then is a vast confederation of idolaters. Thousands and thousands are worshipping the bread and wine as God, in the Church of England; and are either Romanists at heart, or fast becoming so. The process is simple but sure. They are told every fresh step is getting a little higher; but every step is a little nearer Rome. Thus the impression becomes universal, that Rome is right and they are wrong; and all is wrong but Rome. It is high time, however, to examine all this by the word of God; not by the fathers of even the second and third century. For as we have seen, "the night" of darkness had set in even by the close of apostolic times, so that what is called church history is the history of that darkness and wickedness, that began long before the close of the first century of this era.

Let us have a little inquiry then, with the thousands of these priest-associates. And to make the matter as simple as possible, let us introduce an inquirer into the doctrines and membership of this Confraternity; who, mark, must be a bishop, priest, deacon, brother or sister of a religious community, or communicant of the English Church. (Page 10.) And further we will suppose this inquirer to be an exercised soul, who believes the word of God. Let these priests answer these questions and scriptures in the presence of God if they can.

Inquirer. I have read in God's word, that I am not to make any graven images, or to bow down to them; and in the prophets, I am told that

the worship of idols is an abomination. If I join the Confraternity, shall I have to disregard all these scriptures? Ritualism tells me to bow down to the queen of heaven, or to an image of a dead Christ, or the cross, or to consecrated bread; but is not this to disregard what God says?

I have read these precious words of Jesus: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me hath everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but is passed from death unto life." (John v. 24.) As a lost sinner, I have been brought to Jesus in the confession of my sins to Him; and He has spoken to my soul in these words. And oh, the joy it has given to my soul, to know that I have, even now, everlasting life; and to think (to say nothing of purgatory), that I shall not come into judgment! Dead with Jesus, risen with Him, I shall not come into judgment, but I am passed from death unto life. Oh, the deep joy this gives! It so fills my heart with love to Jesus: shall I have to give up these precious words of Jesus, and joy, and light and everlasting life, all mine now? Does not Ritualism forbid me to enjoy such certainty from those words of Jesus? Must we not humbly pray that "we may all at length attain by a holy and peaceful death to the joy, and light of everlasting life?" (Page 40.)

I have read, and through grace believed, that the Lord Jesus, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; and also "by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." (Heb. x.) And I read distinctly that this is in direct contrast with the other order of continued and repeated sacrifices, that never can take away sins. These

are the very words; "And every priest standeth daily ministering, and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins." Now this is a most serious question, and I do trust you will give me a clear answer. Am I still to receive with joy the testimony of God's inspired word to the everlasting efficacy of this one offering of Christ; that all believers who are sanctified by this offering are for ever perfected; and that there need be, there can be, no repetition of this offering; that Jesus *sat* down at the right hand of God in proof that this infinite work is accomplished?

This may be thought to be the most dreadful heresy to believe what God the Holy Ghost says about this "*perfected for ever*," by the one offering of Christ once—never to be repeated. If this be true, where is the use of the priest-associate? Where the use of your offering the awful sacrifice of the altar, standing continually offering those sacrifices, that never can take away sins? Must we reject what Christ has done, and what God says about it? And must we most humbly, and devoutly, believe in your continued, and ever repeated offering of the victim on the altar that never can take away sins? Why, if Jesus Christ be the eternal Son, and if His blood cleanseth from all sin, and thus perfects the conscience for ever, what need can there be for purgatory? for holy water? for all the intercessors including even the blessed Mary as queen of heaven? But do not the inspired scriptures plainly declare this everlasting efficacy of the one offering of Christ? And does not God say, "And their sins and iniquities I will remember no more." Oh, may I not believe God, and so enter into rest? Rest of soul to the

weary is so sweet. Now does not the scripture say all this?

I cannot doubt that God says all this; am I not to read what God says? Or am I to get a little higher, and a little higher, that is, a little nearer holy church, whose priests a little while ago, would have incited and commanded the civil power to drag to the stake the Christian who dared to read and believe what God says in His word? If I turn from the word of God to your teaching, I see in the "Manual" that, so far from the believer being for ever perfected by the one offering of Christ, even after death he needs your intercessions for his soul. (See page 77.)

Remember you board up the windows, and, papering them over, carefully exclude God's light. There in the darkness, you place your altar, with your victim, and there you stand, offering your offerings which can never take away sins. One ray of gospel light would expose the darkness and idolatry. Do you think you could bow and swing and adore the bread and wine, and offer it a "*sacrifice for sins*," if you believed God that the ONE offering of the body of Christ (ONCE offered) for ever perfects? Impossible! Right well do you know, or ought to know, that, in the beginning when Christians believed God, there was no need of so-called priests or altar, or offering the victim. They met as disciples together to break bread in remembrance of His death, rejoicing in the eternal redemption they had through the blood of Christ. All that is quite different from what you do. They worshipped in the light; if I join you, must I worship in the dark?

I scarcely thought I should have to give up so much of Christianity, to become a holy confederate.

I read in God's word of having boldness to enter the holiest by the blood of Jesus. I also read, how before Jesus died the one sacrifice for sins, "that the Holy Ghost this signified that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest." (Heb. ix. 8.) That is, the Jew was shut out of the presence of God: the veil shut him out. When Jesus died, the veil was rent from top to bottom. And the blood of Jesus gives the Christian boldness to enter.

The beautiful parable of the prodigal just illustrates what I mean. It shews man once a miserable sinner, needing mercy, coming in repentance and confession straight to the Father. Curious, there is no priest here! Then the Father's joy in receiving and clothing him, and we find him where the Jew could never come, in the Father's presence. And oh, the joy of that Father! In short, the proper place of the Jew, before the death of Jesus, was to stand afar off, crying, "God be merciful to me a sinner." The proper place of the Christian now that Jesus has died, and risen again, is in the full joy of the Father's presence: "Giving thanks unto the Father which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his own Son, in whom we have redemption through his blood even the forgiveness of sins." (Col. i. 12.) There is a great difference, is there not? The Jew, miserable, crying for mercy. The Christian happy, so happy! rejoicing, and giving thanks. The one afar off, the other inside; the one crying for forgiveness; the other giving thanks for sins forgiven. If I join the Confraternity, shall I take the

place of the miserable Jew ; or that of the happy Christian? Oh, must I give up all this blessed certainty? Think of it! meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light. Which am I to be, Jew or Christian?

If I join the Confraternity, what am I to do with the scriptures, and with what God says? If I turn again to this "Manual," there it is as plain as plain can be, that I must give up all this bright Christianity. I must know nothing of the joy of sins forgiven, or meetness for heaven, or having redemption. I must take the place of a miserable Jew. (See pages 18, 29, 41-60.) But surely this is enough to convince anyone that the proper place of a member of the Holy Confraternity is to stand Jew-like, at a distance, crying for mercy. In your vain repetitions, do you not use everything in heaven and on earth to move God to have mercy upon you? Only, I observe, your God is the bread and wine, as you say, "O sacred victim, consumed on the altar by us and for us, *Have mercy upon us?*" You seem to know nothing of the risen person of Christ, at the right hand of God, having finished the work of our redemption. The only God you know is bread and wine, made God by you in consecration. Nothing could be farther from your religion, than the place the prodigal enjoyed in the Father's presence. How could he repeat page after page, asking for mercy, when the Father had received him with joy? Far better does it suit the unbelieving heart to keep crying for mercy—to say with the Jew before Christ died, "Forgive us our sins," than to say with the believer now; "God hath for Christ's sake forgiven our sins."

Excuse me a little : I had no idea that I should

have to give up so much, in reality to sink so low, in order to belong to "high church." I have a few more questions. You often quote those words of the Lord Jesus, as though they referred to the sacrament, "Whoso eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, hath eternal life." Now Jesus explains these words. He says, "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you they are spirit and they are life." (John vi. 54-63.) This explanation makes the meaning of the Lord very clear. It was not enough to receive Him as the bread from heaven, *the living Messiah*, but the word of God as to the shedding of His blood also, must be received. The actual accomplished work of His death must be received in the soul, through the spirit. Now where this is done, that soul has eternal life. May I ask, do you believe the Lord that HIS WORDS are spirit and they are life, and those who thus receive Him have eternal life? as He says, He that believeth on me HATH everlasting life. Do you believe Him? Do you know that you have eternal life?

It is plain from your teaching in the "Manual" that you do not believe that these words are to be thus understood spiritually, but literally. That in your ever repeated sacrifices of the altar, you literally eat His flesh, and drink His blood; yea, you eat your God, body, soul, and divinity. Do you not teach this over and over again in "the Manual?" Jesus says, Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood HATH ETERNAL LIFE. Now, suppose that you do believe that this eating is literal, and that it refers to the sacrament, then in your way even, do you believe that all who take holy communion *have eternal life?*

Further, do you not teach in the "Manual," by

your prayers at least, that you must pass through a holy death to get everlasting life? This is the idea of holy church. The, or rather *your*, sacrifices on your altars can never take away sins or give eternal life. Do they not really hide the true and only sacrifice of the Lord Jesus? When it suits your purpose, you can quote isolated scripture. This one serves you well, "This is my body, which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me," and "This cup is the new testament in my blood which is shed for you." (Luke xxii. 19, 20.) Is this enough to warrant you in taking a loaf or wafer, or wine, and trying to believe that it is, or any of them, Jesus Christ, very God?

You say, mark those words, "This is my body." Let me understand what you mean. Suppose I am passing through a conservatory, and a number of people are bowing in prayer and adoration to a vine. The head gardener declares it is Jesus Christ, body, soul, humanity, and divinity. He declares that these people are the Holy Confraternity of the blessed body and blood of Christ in this vine; nay more, that he and other head gardeners have power to turn vines into God. And they have a secret society to worship this vine. And suppose they used the very prayers of "the Manual" addressed to this vine as God. I ask the head gardener for his authority for this worship. And he replies, mark those words, "I am the true vine." (John xv.) I must inquire and examine. Tell me, would not all this, Manual and all, be simply blasphemy against God? And I want you to shew me why "this is my body" means Himself literally, body, soul, and divinity, any more than "I am the vine" means literally that a vine may thus be worshipped.

Or take another illustration. I am passing, say through a lunatic asylum. I am shewn into a room. The poor lunatics are bowing and swinging, dressed in the most odd old clothes. They have a little manual. Beautiful words of adoration, and page after page of prayers, cries for mercy. But what are they praying to? Just see. An old door that the head lunatic has brought in and reared up against that wall. He declares it is God. Sternly does he rebuke all who neglect to worship the old deal door. He maintains that he and other head lunatics have power to turn old doors continually into God. I ask the poor lunatic for his authority. He says, Mark those words, "I am the door." Another company of countrymen might worship an old shepherd, for Jesus said, "I am the Good Shepherd." Where is the difference in each of these cases? The priest in the dark hole of Cambridge takes a loaf; the gardener a vine, the lunatic a door, the countryman a shepherd. Now is there the least thought in God's holy word that any one of these should be blasphemously worshipped? Is there a trace that the apostles worshipped the bread and wine as God? Did Paul do so, or so understand it? "This do in remembrance of Me;" he understood and states by inspiration, to be simply this: "For as often as ye [the assembly, not so-called priests] eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death until He come." Evidently this is what the scriptures teach, and what all Christians understood and did then. Is it not still bread when eaten in remembrance of Jesus and shewing forth His death?

Do you take no notice of the scriptures, or what the early Church did? The church then was as different as possible from high church now. Since

then, you priests have had it very much your own way. Why, there was no separate priest then; and no altar; and no flowers (it would be like Cain bringing them with his fruits); and no gorgeous temples then; and no worship of the Virgin as queen of heaven; and no Ritualism then; except as your early friends tried to bring it in. Only think that Paul condemned the first attempt to bring in the feasts of the church, as going back to beggarly elements. What a church should we have in England, if we had only the church as God set it up in the beginning! There would be nothing but the worship of God in spirit and in truth.

Take up the New Testament and search it through; you would soon see it would never do to compare the Anglican church, as you want to have it, with the church you have in the word of God. You would find no priest over a parish, no such thought as children made members of Christ by baptism, no altar, no repeated sacrifices.

Really this perplexes me. If it will not do to go to the scriptures or to the church as set up of God, then where has the religion of holy mother church come from? Take a few particulars; for instance, the feasts of the church—this holy day and that holy day. I certainly do remember that our blessed Lord did not institute one holy day, except as His resurrection marked out the Lord's day, the first day of the week. Neither did the apostles observe a single holy day or festival of the church. Some did cling to Judaism with its beggarly shadows; but nowhere does the Holy Ghost in the Epistles teach the observing of days, and months, and times, and years. Nay, he severely condemns the attempt of the Galatian deceivers

to introduce them. (Gal. iv. 9, 10.) Then whence did you get them? Was it not partly from Judaism, but chiefly from paganism? The pagans sacrificed to demons. (1 Cor. xi.) Now the doctrine of Balaam was to mingle the old pagan worship with the worship of Christians. Swarms of pagans were nominally called Christians, and pagan festivals were altered to festivals of the church, and pagan temples were called churches: and pagan idols, consecrated to demons, were called by Christian names. Now nothing could have answered better to corrupt the church than this. Just take one. The twenty-fifth of December was about the worst pagan feast. Well, it was afterwards called Christmas; and the drunkenness and wickedness of that old festival continue to this day, only in the name of Christ. Take again this trick—for such it was. Millions of pagans worshipped the queen of heaven and her little child; but especially the queen, under different names. Her name was altered from Diana, &c., to Mary; and millions continue to bow down to her image to this day. How dreadful—all this from paganism! *And all this is the very cream of high church*—I mean highest church!

May I now ask, where do you get the authority for the separated order of priests? The Old Testament gives the history and appointment of an earthly priesthood. It failed, like all else, even in the very first priests; some offered strange fire, and were destroyed. And even Aaron made the golden calf. Thus it began; and it ended in chief priests and high priests putting to death the Son of God. Did God set it up again in the church? There is no such thought in scripture as to have a separated order of priesthood in the church; nay, God is dead against it, and gives a severe

description of it in Jude ; actually saying, "These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit." No, you have not a single text for it. That which is quoted in Hebrews v. 4, clearly refers to the old Jewish priesthood.

The fact is the scripture speaks of the whole redeemed church of God, as being worshipping priests. (1 Pet. ii. 9.) And so they must be, if the blood of Jesus gives them boldness to enter the holiest, the conscience for ever being perfected by the one offering of Christ. Do you not in "the Manual" do your utmost to neutralize all this, by setting aside the infinite value of that one sacrifice on the cross? and this you do by crying up your own sacrifices that never can take away sins.

Certainly Christ gave gifts to His church ; as evangelists, teachers, and pastors, to minister His truth. But the idea of an order of priests to offer up sacrifices for the sins of the people ; this is utterly repugnant to the New Testament, and destroys the very foundation of Christianity—the one only Infinite sacrifice of Christ. No, you must not go to scripture for your order, but again to paganism, and by returning as much as you can also to Judaism. And just as paganism became fused with the church, your order became established.

Nothing is more certain in history ; nay, if you want proof, you only need travel in India, or any pagan land. From the earliest days everywhere paganism has its order of priesthood. Why, take the pope himself, the holy head of all Christian priests of the West. Is there such a thought in the New Testament as a pope ? Not the faintest, nor shadow of a promise of one. Surely you know that the Roman emperors were the very ancient pagan pontiffs ; and when one of these was con-

verted to Christianity, he thought it wrong to retain this pontifex of paganism, but the bishop of Rome actually took his pagan title, and retains it to this day. Well, do you know, that paganism, not scripture, is the undoubted source of the pope's titles? Nay, in Thibet and China, you will see most of what you call high church, practised still in paganism, only honestly, without christian names. There you will find your monks and nuns practising far greater austerities than you do. Yes, you must go to paganism, not to scripture, for the origin of your religion.

Very highly you may think of the doctrines of forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, ancient Gnostic doctrines of paganism. But the scripture actually speaks of these very doctrines of demons. (1 Tim. iv. 1-4.) I was going to say, and well they may. Did not these doctrines corrupt not only the priesthood, but the very world? I have read history these last forty years, but I have read of nothing producing more universal depravity than the "forbidding to marry." Look back to those days of vaunted holy mother church—just before the trumpet demand for the Reformation; and after then too. The priests forbade to marry, but had power to compel every person to confess: and if any person crossed their will, they had only to point him or her out to a Dominican, and there is a rap at his door at midnight; he or she is hurried off to that awful prison, the holy inquisition, from which there is no voice or return. Oh, these chambers of torment and dungeons of untold horrors! This dreadful priestly power over the bodies and souls of men and women! Scripture then must be right, these are the doctrines of demons. Is it then a little

higher, or a little lower down? Is it not to the depths of Satan?

But I forget tradition. The tradition of the church is what you stand by. But if the tradition of men flatly contradicts the word of God, which will you take? I will give you an illustration, and I must say this is a point of vital importance to me. Suppose I am in great distress and need, deeply in debt beyond all power ever to redeem myself; in a word, I am ruined. A very kind friend undertakes my whole responsibilities. I have a creditor to whom I owe a great sum. This kind friend pays the whole for me, as my friend and substitute. The creditor settles the whole account, discharges me from it, on Her Majesty's stamp. But the priest of the place comes to me, and says, Yea, hath the creditor discharged your account? Tradition gives him a very bad word; do not trust him: do not believe him, nor his receipt. You will see after all that man will have you up for your debt, and he will cast you into prison. I reply, But he is an upright righteous tradesman, and he cannot first give me a receipt, and then afterwards have me summoned for that debt; it would not be righteous to my substitute, who paid the debt. Of course, if I had not the receipt, I might well doubt. What I mean is this: As a sinner, I am totally ruined. The law can only curse me; it cannot redeem me, and I cannot redeem myself. God sent His beloved Son for this very purpose. That Holy One became my substitute. He was wounded for my transgressions, bruised for my sins; He was delivered for my iniquities. The wrath deserved by me He bore to the utmost. In fact, He just stood in my place. He was condemned for me; and He was

raised from among the dead for my justification. Believing this, God, against whom I had sinned, is my justifier. He raised up Christ for this very purpose. See Christ, who once bore my sins, now at God's right hand; and all this accounted to me on the principle of faith; all my sins atoned for, and Christ raised from among the dead is my receipt, my full and everlasting discharge—everlastingly discharged because Christ, my representative, is above. As He is, so am I. "Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through Jesus Christ our Lord." And the best of all is, "It is God that justifieth." He says also, "and their sins and iniquities I will remember no more ever." (Heb. x.) Jesus says, I shall not come into judgment having passed from death unto life. (John v. 24.)

Now tradition, like the Jews of old, entirely denies the righteousness of God, and sets me working out a righteousness of my own; yes, by works of law. All depends on this one point—the righteousness of God. The word of God assures me that it is the righteousness of God that is revealed in the gospel; as to my very justification. Tradition leads me to doubt that God is my justifier: that after all He will be unfaithful to Christ who bore my sins; and that He will after all have me up in judgment for them: and I shall never know until then whether I shall be justified or condemned. Nay, this very "Manual," after all your sacrifices, leaves a poor soul in uncertainty after death, and needing your prayers. Christ hath glorified God in this very matter: and God hath straightway glorified Him as my representative. And God hath made me, as a believer, accepted in the beloved one; but then, if God is unrighteous, all

is lost. I must be judged after all. What is the creditor's receipt worth, if he is unrighteous to my friend who paid the debt, and after all arrests me, and casts me into prison? And what is God's justification worth, if after all He is not righteous? If He is not perfectly glorified by the death of the cross? And therefore His very righteousness is not my everlasting justification! I know tradition brands this faith in God as dreadful heresy.

Or take another illustration. The emperor declares peace is made—made on a righteous basis—peace is proclaimed. Tradition says, Ah, poor soldier, do not believe the emperor; keep on fighting and struggling. That emperor is an unrighteous man. He says one thing and means another. Now Jesus has made peace by His own blood: peace is made for me as a sinner on a righteous basis; and God proclaims peace to me. I believe Him; and I have peace with God—the very same peace that my dear Lord has in the unclouded presence of God for ever. But tradition says as it were, No, you must not believe God: He is not to be trusted; He says one thing, but means to do another. He says He justifies you from all things (Acts xiii. 38), but He means to judge you for all your sins; and such a terrible Judge will you find Him, that you will need, if ever you get safe through that judgment, all the saints in the calendar to help you. Now when tradition is not in harmony with, but in flat contradiction to, the word of God, which shall I take?

I think I hear many a priest with a deep sigh, speaking low to himself, "Righteousness of God! I never thought of it in that way. Oh, that that everlasting peace were mine!" Ah, for me there are prayers, fastings, masses, floggings, agony of

death, and perhaps millions of years of torments in purgatory, before I can enter into everlasting life, and enjoy peace with God. How different the Christianity of the Holy Scriptures! A dying thief believed in his heart, confessed Jesus the Lord with his lips, and that day was with Him in paradise. Think of those three sentences of Jesus to the woman of the city who was a sinner. "Thy sins are forgiven thee." "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." But tell me: Is it not shocking to doubt the righteousness of God? Did He not give His beloved Son to die for my sins? "Who was delivered for our offences." Did He not thus become my Substitute, "The Just for the unjust?" Now was not God glorified by that death on the cross? Did He fail? No! was He not raised again for our justification? (Rom. iv. 24, 26.) Did ever creditor give such a discharge as this? And mark, it is God who gives this discharge; God who raised Christ my Substitute from the dead, for the very purpose of being my living everlasting discharge from all sins. By the blood of Jesus I am thus justified from my sins. The resurrection of Jesus is God's assurance of that justification to my soul; BELIEVING GOD, righteousness is thus reckoned unto me. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom. v. 1.) Thus the righteousness of God is unto all, and upon all that believe. And not only are believers thus justified from their sins, but also justified from sin, the root of all sins, by being dead with Christ, and risen in Him. (Rom. v. 12-19; vi. 7; Col. ii. 12, 13.) And "it is God that justifieth." Is He just in doing it? Is He false, or is He true? Is He faithful to the claims of Christ once offered on the

cross? There can be no question; for God hath raised Jesus from the dead. Then there can be no question that "By him all that believed ARE justified from all things." (Acts xiii. 38.)

I must confess the word of God seems clear enough. You may point to the holy popes' councils, fathers, bishops, and holy saints that teach us humbly to doubt. I see the choice. Let God be *true*, and every man a liar.

The post has just arrived. I must close these questions of the inquirer for the present. Here is a book-parcel by post. My heart beats quickly as I open it. Here they are. I began to write this paper, assured they would come; and had written up to this point. And there they lie before me, *the very books* used in the dark hole of Cambridge. Not copies, but the identical books used in that dark chamber of idolatry, for the preparation of the parish priests of the church of England. This may seem strange to some. Often however our God is thus pleased, first to bid His feeble instrument do a certain thing for Him, then afterwards give confirmation to the work of dependent faith. Every line above was written, feeling the absolute need of these very books, and in faith that those very books would come into my hands; and here they are.

"The Manual of the Holy Confraternity" I have already noticed. This book reveals the fact of a vast confederacy in the church of England, determined to supplant Christianity by a system of mixed idolatry, the highest worship and adoration to a God of their own making, of bread or wine. Every form of prayer, praise, and loving adoration, that should be offered to the true God and the Lord Jesus Christ, is given to this idol,

utterly contrary to scripture. So that whilst it is located in the English church, it is no longer limited to an attack on that church, but must be regarded as a vast attack on our common Christianity.

We will now open this second book, "The Garden of the Soul."

This is a well-known Roman Catholic book, and therefore does not call for particular notice. A Roman Catholic prayer-book is thus found to be used by the Holy Confraternity. For those who may know nothing of it, a few words are needed. First, we have an engraving of the blessed mother of Jesus, as the queen of heaven in glory, surrounded with twelve stars, borrowed no doubt from the symbol of Israel in Revelation xii. Then follows a summary of the faith and practice of the Roman Catholic church, open, candid, and clear—much of which is common to all Christians.

But tradition is put on an equal footing with the scriptures. (Chap. xix.) These traditions, on examination, frequently contradict themselves; and are always contrary to scripture. For instance; it is said, "Extreme unction, which wipes away the remains of sins" (chap. xix.); but purgatory flatly contradicts this. Both as flatly contradict scripture, that the one offering for ever perfects—perfected for ever. And again, "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John i. 7.) And again, "Unto him that loveth us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood." (Rev. i. 5.)

Take another tradition. We must believe that Jesus Christ will come from heaven at the last day to judge us all; that all the dead, both good and bad, shall rise from their graves at the sound of the last trumpet, and shall be judged by

Him, &c. (Chap. xx. 13.) This is in flat contradiction to the tradition respecting vast numbers of saints now in glory, so holy that they can intercede for us poor sinners here on earth. These two traditions flatly contradict each other. What! have all the departed saints to be raised and judged? and is their eternal state still uncertain after being so long in glory? Have they yet to be judged? The Lord Jesus in holy scripture, when speaking on this very subject assures all believers that they shall not come into judgment. (John v. 24.) Nay, scripture is most explicit in direct contradiction to the tradition of a general judgment; that "as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment, so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin unto salvation." (Heb. ix. 27.) Search the scriptures, and you will not find one single text to support the tradition of a general judgment. When speaking on quite another blessed subject—the personal rewards of the children of God—then indeed, in that sense, it is most blessed to know we shall all stand before the judgment seat, or Beema, of Christ. Oh, how many then, who have been cursed and burned by man, will receive the martyr's crown of glory! But when Jesus comes to take His redeemed, there can be no question of sin to them, otherwise Christ would have died in vain. He comes as Saviour. (Phil. iii. 20.) "When we shall see him, we shall be like him." (1 John iii. 2.) Will He judge those who are like Himself? No: He says, "The glory that thou hast given me, I have given them." Brighter than light is the hope of His coming. The sons of darkness have turned it to midnight gloom, and

dread of judgment. All true, sad, and everlasting, to the rejecters of God's great salvation.

But to return, from page 20: we have a vast number of what may be called christian laws, precepts, and duties; many most excellent, others utterly unscriptural; but all on false ground—built on a false foundation. “*Every Christian* in order to attain life everlasting, must” do all the things that follow. Therefore the principle on which all is built is, *Do this and live*. Thus, as a legal system, the bondage of all these rules must become greater than that from which the death of Christ delivered the believing Jews. If therefore the law entered that the offence might abound (Rom. v. 20), the effect of all this mistaken and unscriptural system must be to provoke the transgression of these rules. If the tree be bad, the fruit must be bad also. A mistake in the first line of a school-boy's sum must produce mistakes all through, and at the end. The Lord Jesus says, “He that believeth on me HATH everlasting life.” (John vi.) The Holy Ghost saith, “He that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record that God *hath given* to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God: THAT YE MAY KNOW THAT YE HAVE ETERNAL LIFE.” (1 John v. 10.)

Thus, as to foundation truth, no two books could be more opposed than the word of God, and the “Garden of the Soul.” The one is God declaring that eternal life is a gift, and that he that believeth hath it, and that from this new life flows out the fruit

of a holy life. The other says, No, you must keep this most elaborate law, "in order to everlasting life." Thus the whole system denies the record of God, and makes Him a liar. I cannot both have everlasting life, and at the same time be keeping all these laws in order to get it. Thus whilst the word of God gives divine certainty, the "Garden of the Soul" leaves us in darkness and uncertainty; yes, even for ages after death.

One cannot wonder then at all the confusion and contradiction of scripture that follows. There is no holy boldness to enter the holiest; no assurance of sins forgiven: but a sense of distance from God, and consequent gloomy misery, beseeching the blessed Mary, apostles, and a host of saints, to pray to God for them. I do not like to copy these dismal prayers of unbelief. The greater part of this book is prayer to the queen of heaven. Then follows the mass, with full instructions and candid explanations. It is regarded as a sacrifice—"A most powerful means to move God to shew mercy to us in the forgiveness of our sins." (Page 39.) They believe the bread to be truly God, and as such worship it. Still no relief. There is confession, kneeling to the priest, and praying to him, "Pray, father, give me your blessing for I have sinned." There is confession to God, to Mary, Michael, apostles, &c., and repeated prayers to all these. Nay, it would be difficult to invent any book more contrary to the scripture than this "Garden." There are prayers for the departed faithful; prayers for the miserable souls in purgatory: "Have mercy on the souls of the faithful departed." No one, except he saw and read, could conceive it possible for the human mind to sink into such depths of unbelief. There are also prayers for the pope,

prayers for England, page after page. And then the "Garden" ends with the Ordinary of the Mass in English.

We now turn to the larger book used in the chamber of darkness at Cambridge.

THE DAY OFFICE OF THE CHURCH

According to the calendar of

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

The preface very ably explains how the Roman Breviary has been translated, and adapted to the church of England. All is Romanism: there are services for almost every hour and day in the year; lauds, prime, terce, sext, nones, and vespers; feasts of my Lord, and feasts of my Lady, feasts of the angels, and feasts of the saints. Sometimes you pray for them, then again you beg they will pray for you. What would the apostle Paul say to such a book for the observance of hours and days, and months and years? This is what he *did* say: "How turn you again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain." (Gal. iv. 9.)

Now what is the real root of all this bondage; this perfect labyrinth of observances? Can it be anything else but unbelief, and the rejection of the record of God? The believer with his eye fixed on the risen Christ at God's right hand can say, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." (Eph. i. 7.) His sins are forgiven for Christ's sake. In direct opposition to all this the priest says, "God Almighty have mercy upon thee, and forgive thee thy sins." And again, "The

merit of the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, the prayers of our Holy Mother, the Church, whatsoever good thou hast done, or by God's grace shall do, be unto thee remission of thy sins."

Such is the unbelief of the chambers of Cambridge. Christianity and these sons of darkness, are as far apart as the poles. It would be impossible in a small tract to follow the vain repetitions and gross unscriptural statements of this book. I cannot but think that every sincere Romanist must be ashamed of these men. If they believe Romanism to be right, why do they not honestly avow themselves?

But I must let you see further what these books contain. No words can sufficiently describe the dreadful idolatry of this Day Office of the Church, used by these so-called priests of the Church of England. Could Christ be more deeply dishonoured than by the following collect? (Page 117 for Dec. 6.) "O God, who by numberless miracles hast honoured Blessed Nicolas, Thy Bishop: grant, we beseech Thee, that by his merits and intercession we may be delivered from the flames of hell, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen?" Can any man utter this prayer without entirely rejecting the testimony of God to the sacrifice of the cross of Christ and to His intercession? Or again, on the same page, is not the supreme worship to the blessed Virgin Mary exactly like the old worship of Diana or Tammuz? Is it not perfectly dreadful?

"What mortal tongue may dare to raise,
O Mother of our God, thy praise?
Ye angels come, and lift your song:
To you the office should belong."

Can any creature, however blessed, be raised to this place of supreme worship? Was she the

eternal mother of God? or the creature mother of the humanity of our adorable Lord? As to His humanity, she was the mother of the Lord. But does the word of God ever present her either as an object of highest worship, or as an intercessor of the saints? These priests who shut out the light say, "With delight let us celebrate the conception of Blessed Mary; *so may she intercede for us to Jesus Christ our Lord.*" (Page 178.)

And do not suppose that Ritualists limit their idolatry to Blessed Mary. This book is full of curious antiphons. Take one to Lucy (on Dec. 13), than which nothing could be more contrary to scripture: "In thy patience thou hast possessed thy soul, O Lucy, spouse of Christ; thou hast hated the things which are in the world, and thou shinest among angels; thou hast overcome the enemy *with thine own blood.*" "O virgin Lucy, why dost thou seek of me, what thou thyself canst continually give to thy mother?" I might give a vast number of quotations of prayers to various saints, as "That we who know that we are guilty of our iniquities, may be delivered therefrom by the prayers of thy Blessed Martyr Vincent." (Page 182.) Yes, in this book the atoning death of Jesus is simply robbed of all its glory. There is evidently the design of a master spirit, through the whole, to set aside the person and death of Christ, as the sole salvation of God to lost sinners.

Just as the types of the Old Testament set forth every aspect of that precious Holy One, so this book finds a saint to deny every aspect of the cross of Christ. Is it not through the death and resurrection of Christ that the believer passes to eternal glory? Ritualism has a Richard for this. (April 3.) "O God, who hast made thy church to shine

by the deeds and glorious miracles of Blessed Richard, Thy confessor and bishop : grant, that we Thy servants, through his intercession, may attain to the blessedness of eternal glory." (Page 194.)

I ask, Can men who use these abominable prayers, have any honest pretensions to acknowledge the authority of the word of God? I might multiply extracts of a similar character. We have seen in the word of God that the Father runs to meet the penitent sinner. Thus Jesus reveals the Father ; and thus He speaks to the weeping sinner : "Woman, thy sins are forgiven thee . . . thy faith hath saved thee . . . go in peace." (Luke vii., xv.) With Ritualism, the mother of God, angelic choirs, patriarchal sires, prophets, saints, the Baptist, and all apostles. "Strive to win from God remission of our sin." (Page 231.) "And with their suffrages the clergy join."

In many parts of this Day Office there is either the most gross ignorance, or designed confusion of scripture with superstition. Take this collect : "O God, who didst give the law of Moses on the top of Mount Sinai, and by Thy holy angels didst wonderfully convey the body of Blessed Katharine, Thy virgin and martyr, to the same place ; grant we beseech Thee, that for her sake, and at her intercessions, we may be enabled to reach that mount, which is Christ." (Page 236.) Can this be anything but wilful perversion? Is Mount Sinai Christ? The very symbol of bondage, and the curse to all under it. (Gal. iii. 10 ; iv. 24, 25.) We are thus taught by High Church to pray to God that St. Katharine may by her intercessions lead us to the place of the curse. Can human folly go beyond this? It is written, "Their folly shall be manifest unto all." (2 Tim. iii. 9.)

Many of my readers no doubt will be in happy ignorance that Ritualism would lead us thus to address all the apostles :

“ We praise you all with hearts sincere,
As suppliant now we worship here ;
To your prevailing word 'twas given
To close and ope the doors of heaven.”

How blessed is prayer in the word of God ! The apostle Paul says, “ For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, . . . that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man : that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith ; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height ; and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.” (Eph. iii. 14–19.) Compare this with the following *written* instructions found in the Office of the Church.

“ In censing the altar there are twenty-five swings.

DIRECTIONS FOR OFFICIANT.

“ Bow to the crucifix. Salute same with three double swings. Turn toward Epistle side, salute back of altar slab, three swings, one swing lower corner of Epistle side, one swing upper corner ; proceed towards centre of altar, salute forepart three swings. Repeat on Gospel side, and return toward Epistle corner, salute forepart of altar six swings. Salute, three swings.” This may be a very fine imitation of pagan worship, but what has it to do with Christianity ? Is it not the very opposite of New Testament prayer, and worship in spirit and in truth ?

It would swell this tract far beyond my present intention to notice, "Extreme unction; communion of the sick with the reserved Eucharist;" or the priest carrying God in a little box to the dying; confession; prayers before mass, and prayers after mass; all of which are in this Office of the Church. Call it no longer Ritualism. It is a vast Romish conspiracy of more than two thousand six hundred clergymen in the Church of England. "The union consists of more than sixteen thousand five hundred, of whom two thousand six hundred are clergymen."* We now know by these books that it is Romanism. If the Garden of the Soul, and the Roman Breviary be not full-blown Romanism, what is? Let us then go to the fountain-head and examine the authoritative teaching of Rome. This I hope to do candidly in tracts to follow—comparing with scripture the Council of Trent. If you, my reader, are in this dark Confraternity, may the Lord use this paper to the full deliverance of your soul!

Thus is England, after all the fiery sufferings of her martyrs, returning to her vomit. This Holy Confraternity, or dark confederacy, is taking possession of her parishes. Ministers of Christ must be displaced by the priests of the hole in the wall. Nay, Christ must be displaced by the priest, shall I not say, by an antichrist? In how many things does this man in black and broad brim, take the place of Christ, and is against Christ!

I will notice a few. A sinner is burthened with his sins, weary and heavy laden. Jesus who died for his sins says, "come unto me, and I will give

* See list of most of their names and addresses in a pamphlet published at the office of "The Rock," London: "The Ritualistic Conspiracy."

you rest." And "He that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." Mark the presumption of this antichrist. "The priest, wearing a surplice, and a violet stole, shall be seated in the confessional seat (which ought always to be in the church); the penitent kneeling at his side shall ask his blessing." (Litany iv.) Nay, his very name, and office is strictly antichristian. In the Epistle to the Hebrews, Christ is shewn to be the long foretold priest, after the order of Melchisedec, an order one and exclusively in contrast with the many priests of the Aaronic order. As the fulfilment of all Aaronic priesthood, He is gone into heaven, and soon He is to come out, in the full display of His Melchisedec priesthood, King of righteousness, and King of peace. But the first order, the Aaronic, is taken away, with all its many priests, and many sacrifices, which could never take away sins. God hath established the second—the one only and exclusive sacrifice and priesthood of Christ. In Christ then we have one sacrifice, one High Priest. With those who say they are Jews (separated priests) and are not many sacrifices, many priests. The one for ever perfects; the other never perfects. The one is eternal redemption, and gives the purged worshipper boldness to enter the holiest; the other is the system of many priests and many sacrifices, and leaves man shut out of the presence of God: "The Holy Ghost this signifying that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest." (Heb. ix. 8.) For believers now, except in the sense that *all* Christians are priests (Rev. i. 6), Christ is the one exclusive priest. This must be so, for every high priest must have gifts and sacrifices, to offer. He is ordained for that very

purpose. (Heb. viii. 3, 4.) But the one sacrifice of Christ is of infinite value ; so that if He were on earth He could not be a priest, seeing the apostle said, "There are priests that offer gifts according to the law, He could not go back to that which was imperfect, He was not of that order, "who needeth daily as those high priests to offer up sacrifice for this he did once when he offered up himself." (Heb. vii. 27.) "Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with the blood of others. For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world." (Heb. ix. 25.)

He could not add to that which is infinite. He does not even *stand* as a priest in heaven. This would imply the work of sacrifice was not finished once. No, "we have such an high priest who has *sat down* on the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens." "This man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God." Is not all this most clearly taught in Hebrews vii., viii., ix., x. ?

But now the many priests must deny all this. The many priests must have many sacrifices. But if Christ could not possibly add to His own once offered sacrifice, what shall we say of the pretensions of these men, who practically say, if Christ could not, we can? And if He could have no more that He could offer, we have. We can turn bread or wine into Christ, and offering Him again and again, we can set aside the one offering, and the one high priest who sat down in heaven ; we can establish the order of many priests, and many offerings on earth. I ask every christian reader, is not this dreadful? Is not every sacrifice the pretended priest offers on the altar, a distinct denial

that the sacrifice of Christ is infinite, and that it perfects in perpetuity the believer sanctified by it?

Do not say that I have written strongly ; every word is warranted by these books before me. They are full of idolatry. The worship of the queen of heaven ; the god made of bread, and carried in a little gold or silver box, and offered to God as a sacrifice for sins ; prayers for the faithful dead ; the priest taking the place of Christ ; the grace of God obscured, yea, practically denied.

Many will say, what are we to do ? Here we are in a country parish. We know that Christ gave gifts to His church, evangelists, pastors, teachers, and we see in the scriptures how these were used to edification by the Holy Ghost in the church. (Eph. iv. ; 1 Cor. xii., xiv.) But here is the priest, who says, as it were, Christ has no right to give or use anyone but me. Well, it is just this ; and there is no middle place betwixt. Christ or Antichrist.

Oh, precious words ; oh, blessed refuge in these days of darkness. Jesus says, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst." Which is best, to gather with two or three to the Lord Jesus (it may be in your own house), searching the scriptures, and trusting the Lord.

Oh, my fellow Christians, it is not only the Church of England that is attacked by this Confraternity ; it is the most precious truth as it is in Christ. Awake, thou that sleepest, search the scriptures ; and test everything by the word of God. If an army invaded this country, would it not be aroused ? Here is a secret army of priests, invading our most sacred and eternal interests, and few raise the voice of warning and alarm. To whom can you turn but to God and His word ?

PLAIN WORDS

To Ritualists on their way to Rome.

No. 2.

BAPTISMAL REGENERATION :

THE COUNCIL OF TRENT TESTED BY
THE WORD OF GOD.

By C. S.

LONDON :

G. MORRISH, 20, PATERNOSTER SQUARE.

BAPTISMAL REGENERATION.

IN our last tract, No. 1, we described our visit to the dark hole of "The Holy Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament" in Cambridge with its images of idolatry, and the books used by the priests-associates. Its windows were carefully boarded up, and papered over. Just as we found where the light of heaven should have come in, there stood the altar of Rome; so by the books used by this Confraternity we found, where the testimony of God to the one sacrifice of Christ should have been, there stood the many sacrifices of the Mass which never can take away sins.

These books used by some two thousand six hundred priests, or would-be priests, of Rome, under the disguise of being clergymen of the Church of England—these books are simply and wholly Romish. It is no use then treating this confederacy as merely ritualistic, but as a secret compact organization, to establish Romanism in this land. We propose then to go to the fountain-head, from which flows this stream of Ritualism, and the place to which every advancing step leads.

It is then a matter of the very utmost importance that we should understand what Romanism is. If it be of God, would it not be well, if not only these thousands of clergymen were leading the people back to it, but if we all were at once to

go back to it? But if it *be* of God, it will be assuredly according to God's word. With an ever increasing reverence for that word, and a sincere desire to test the Roman Church by that word, we feel it will only be just to examine the doctrines and practices of Rome, as found in her own authoritative books. And as all Roman Catholics acknowledge the authority of the Council of Trent, let us test the decrees of that Council by the word of God.* The Garden of the Soul, and other authentic Roman Catholic books may be referred to. Let it be however distinctly understood, that we do not propose to combat Romanism by any other religious system of doctrine, but our business is solely to examine it by the word of God.

I had thought of going at once to the all-important subject of JUSTIFICATION, but there is so much said in these decrees, about the sacrament of Baptism, as the instrumental cause of justification, that it will be well for us to examine first:—

THE DECREE CONCERNING ORIGINAL SIN. (P. 21.)

Notice the first line of this decree—"That our Catholic faith, *without which it is impossible to please God,*" &c. This would close at a stroke all inquiry and examination. If we have not the faith set forth by these men, be it according or contrary to the word of God, no matter; for without their Catholic faith it is impossible to please God! But if you turn to Hebrews xi., the passage quoted says nothing about their Catholic faith. They have thus added to the word of God. And it is written, "if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues written in this book."

* The Edition used is the literal translation by T. A. Buckley, B.A. George Routledge and Co.; London, 1851.

(Rev. xxii. 18.) The Fathers of the Council made this mistake; Paul was not speaking of faith in *them*, but faith in God. It is not nice to pervert the scripture at starting. There is not such a thought in Hebrews xi. as "*our Catholic faith.*"

We are perfectly agreed as to the utter ruin and sin, in which the whole race of Adam is born. "By one man sin entered into the world, and by sin death, and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned." Every man on the face of the earth is a sad proof of this. By nature he is a child of wrath. He is born with a sinful nature. We are also agreed that the scriptures nowhere teach that the powers of human nature can deliver man from this evil nature of sin. But the remedy! that is the question. The Council, speaking of infants newly born, says that original sin from Adam has need to be expiated by the laver of regeneration for the obtaining life everlasting: or perhaps more distinctly, "For by reason of this rule of faith, from a tradition of the apostles, even infants, who could not as yet in themselves commit any sins, are for this cause truly baptized for the remission of sins, that in them that which they have contracted by generation, may be cleansed away by regeneration. For unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Then follows a little cursing which we will notice soon.

We never heard of this rule of faith in the scripture, no, it is from tradition. Baptismal regeneration is "from tradition." Infants are baptized for the remission of sins. What sins? "They cannot as yet commit any." Future sins? Does this Church teach that? No. Does she teach transmigration? are they sins committed be-

fore they were born? No ; then here is a pretty sample of tradition ! It is too bad to charge the apostles with it.

But you say the decree points to scripture. "For unless a man be born again of water," &c. (John iii. 5.) Did the Fathers ever examine the context of this verse? Is there a thought in the passage of the baptism of infants for remission of sins? Certainly not one. Examine it carefully. Is there one word even about christian baptism? A ruler of the Jews came to Jesus by night, mark, before christian baptism was known or instituted. The blessed Lord speaks to him as a Jew, about the earthly things of the kingdom of God ; but does not speak to him about the heavenly things of the kingdom of God. He tells him what he ought to have known that man must be born again, or wholly anew. Nicodemus is greatly perplexed. He then says, "Amen, Amen, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Nicodemus still says, How can these things be? Jesus reminds him that he ought to know these things. He said, "Art thou a master in Israel, and knowest not these things?" And again He says, "I have told you earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things."

These Fathers of Trent seem to have been very ignorant of scripture. They do not seem in the least to distinguish between the earthly kingdom of God, promised to the people of Israel by Jehovah—that which the blessed Lord talked about to Nicodemus—and the heavenly truth and glory of the church. If Jesus had meant baptism, either of infants just born, or of believers in Christ's death and resurrection, or forgiveness of sins through

His blood, and baptism in His name, crucified, dead, and risen, how could this ruler of Israel have known a word about it?

But now read the word of Jehovah to Israel in Ezekiel xxxvi. 22-36. All is, as the Lord said, the kingdom. They shall dwell in their own land. The waste cities shall be builded. This land that is desolate shall be like the garden of Eden. "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you and ye shall be clean from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you," &c. Therefore this ruler of the Jews ought to have understood these earthly promises, especially as so many types of the law shewed this absolute need of cleansing and holiness.

Another scripture, speaking of the same thing, says, "In that day there shall be a fountain opened TO THE HOUSE OF DAVID, and to the INHABITANTS OF JERUSALEM, for sin and for uncleanness." (Zech. xiii. 1.) And as Nicodemus ought to have understood these earthly things of the kingdom, it is proved Jesus did not speak of christian baptism in this text, "Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit," &c.

Now examine His own explanation, how this new life is communicated, in this very chapter. Docs He say, "As Moses commanded the laver to be placed at the door of the tabernacle, that the priests might wash when they entered; even so every person must be washed in water, that whosoever is baptized by a priest shall not perish, but have everlasting life?" Is there such a thought in this chapter? but if baptismal regeneration were true, and the Lord meant it to Nicodemus, He would then have so put it.

Mark the contrast of all this. Indeed, we may

say the law even taught the contrary: before a person could reach the laver, there was the brazen altar of burnt-offering. The blood must be shed first, the atonement first. So here the Lord teaches us, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up. That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."

Whom shall I trust? The Fathers set before me baptism, as the medium by which I am to receive the new life. Jesus sets before me His own death on the cross, and faith as the medium, if I may so express it. His words are, "Whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have eternal life." The Council will not allow water here as a figure of speech; it simply refers to that which a ruler of the Jews ought to have known of the typical meaning of water in the law, and the prophets of Israel. You can say, "he that is born of the Spirit is spirit;" that is, the new nature is of the Spirit. But you could not say, "He that is born of water is water." Could these doctors have said we are no longer flesh and bone, but water?

We must conclude then, that the Council made a grave mistake of ignorance in quoting this text on which they so much rely. It could not possibly refer to baptism of new born infants for the remission of sins they had never committed. Neither could it refer to the baptism of the church at all, but to the earthly kingdom of Israel, and therefore ought to have been understood by Nicodemus. The Fathers evidently wrested it from its proper connection and meaning.

That baptism points to the same thing may be very certain. Whether of the individual, or of the

future nation of Israel, there must be holiness—cleansing from all uncleanness; and by the Spirit a new, wholly new, nature. And that water is used as a figure of the word none can deny. “Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water *by the word*,” &c. (Eph. v. 25.) The Fathers say by the priestly washing of water in baptism; Paul says, “*the washing of water by the word.*” Did Peter understand that christian believers are born again by the sacrament of baptism? Hear what he says on this subject, “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, **BY THE WORD OF GOD** which liveth and abideth for ever. And this is the word which is preached unto you.” (1 Pet. i. 23–25.)

Is not this remarkable that the Council should so flatly contradict scripture on this very foundation-doctrine of their whole system? For it follows if this foundation is true, there needs no other. If an infant by baptism is regenerated—made a child of God, an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven, or member of the one body of Christ—then there is no need to preach the gospel to such, and no need to be born again by the word of God. If it be true, it thus entirely sets aside scripture: and if it be false, it proclaims a soul-destroying delusion to millions of the human race.

Let us carefully examine a little further. Not only does this canon teach baptism for the remission of sins, but also “that in them that which they have contracted by generation may be cleansed away by regeneration.” And if any one asserts that all that which has the true and proper nature of sin is not taken away, but says it is only erased, or not imputed, let him be cursed. And after a number

of texts which we shall find misapplied to baptism, the baptized are spoken of as "made innocent, immaculate, pure, harmless, and beloved of God." I ask, if this were true, if baptism did all this, could Paul possibly say, "For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel?" What gospel could be better than baptism, if there were a shadow of truth in these Fathers' doctrines? They represent sin taken away; the person innocent, immaculate, pure, all that we contracted by generation gone. And all who assert to the contrary to this are to be accursed. The beloved John, inspired of God, denies this. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." (1 John i. 8.) These Fathers ought to have known scripture better before they cursed so freely. Their curse would rest on the beloved John himself. But John tells them they deceive themselves. I will be cursed with John, rather than be deceived with the Council of Trent.

I said we would notice the misquotations of scripture. They say, "There is therefore no condemnation to those who are truly buried together with Christ by baptism into death," &c. Is this ignorance, or wilfulness? Could these Fathers be so ignorant of this glorious truth, of no condemnation now to them that are in Christ Jesus—so ignorant of the Epistle to the Romans where it is found—as to apply this to water baptism? We will not pursue it at this moment, as we shall examine the scripture when on "Justification."

The synod then goes on, and fully admits that concupiscence still remains, but it is not sin, unless we consent to it: and further, "this concupiscence which the apostle sometimes calls sin, the holy synod declares that the Catholic Church has never

understood to be called sin, as being truly and properly sin, in those *born again*, but because it is of sin, and inclines to sin. And if any one is of a contrary opinion, let him be Anathema." (Page 24.) Is not this dreadful? The Catholic Church sets itself confessedly against the inspired apostle, nay, against God. Their curses would rest on the apostle for having a different opinion from themselves. God says lust is sin. They do not call it so. If any one is of a contrary opinion, let him be accursed. Christ declares the contrary. He says to lust is to commit sin in the heart. (Matt. v. 28.) Paul says, "But sin taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence;" and after full deliverance in Christ he says, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." (Rom. vii. 8, 25.) The flesh in regenerate Paul is thus called sin. The apostle John, speaking of the regenerate surely, says, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." (1 John i. 8.) Well, says the Holy Synod, we do not call it sin; and if any one does, let him be accursed. Yes, God, and Christ, and Paul, and John all come under the curse by this dreadful decree. And this is called "Holy Synod!" And does not every true Christian mourn over his inward corruptions, his evil nature so prone to commit sins—the root from which all the sins grow? And does he not confess it to God as sin, and abhor it? Holy Church says, we curse him if he does. How low had Rome sunk, when she could issue such a decree! Oh, Lord, deliver Thy people from her.

They teach there is no harm in this inbred lust

if we consent not. (Page 23.) Now take a case. Suppose a priest knows a decided Christian who loves the Lord and studies His word. His corrupt heart hates this man, and he lusts to take his life. For many reasons he strives hard against this dreadful desire. Of course at one time he would have had him off to the Inquisition and dispatched him quickly, and thus have been a murderer. But suppose there is no outward action, what says the scripture? "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer." (1 John iii. 15.) Does not even common sense, or at least natural conscience, tell us that to desire to sin is sin? Is not the tree known by its fruit? There remains all this, they tell us, in the baptized, and yet all that has the true proper nature of sin is taken away—nature, guilt, and all. The baptized are innocent, immaculate, pure, and harmless. Could there be greater confusion, or more daring denial of the word of God?

Let us not however judge them too harshly: the word of God was little studied in those days. Many, no doubt, were seeking truth, in the midst of this awful darkness. These Fathers entirely overlooked, in their quotation of scripture, the all-important distinction betwixt sin and sins. Many serious mistakes arose through this oversight. I will notice one. I would state that the authorised Douay translation lies before me. I will quote from it. "Behold the Lamb of God: behold him who taketh away the SIN of the world." (John i. 29.) Now this professedly infallible Council scarcely ever quotes this scripture correctly; instead of "sin," they say "sins," which completely destroys the meaning: and is utterly opposed to all scripture. A work has been accomplished by the Lamb of God, by which sin shall be finally taken away,

and the new heavens and new earth appear, where sin shall be no more. But to quote it as if the death of the Sin-bearer had taken away personally the sins of the whole world is to teach universal salvation. Where Jesus is spoken of as the propitiation, there it is for the world. The blood is on the mercy-seat: and thus mercy and forgiveness are proclaimed to all. But where Jesus is spoken of as the Substitute, actually bearing and taking away sins, it is always limited to believers. We see Him, the Sin-bearer, exhausting all judgment due to *sins* in Hebrews ix. 27, 28. But there it is, "the sins of many." These Fathers do not seem to have had the least idea of this, neither had they ever noticed that in the Epistle to the Romans the very verse they quote begins the question of *sin*. The other question of *sins* had been fully discussed up to that very verse, or end of Romans v. 11. Now there is no thought there of being justified from sins by baptism. It is by faith, without works of law. But more of this in our next. I say baptism is not once put before these believers as the means of their justification from their *sins*, but the blood of Jesus. But when we are thus justified from our sins, what about *sin*? The root of them all, that which came by Adam? This is the main question from verse 12 to the end of chapter vii.

As to *sin* then, Holy Synod puts baptism before us. The Spirit puts Christ before us—Christ in contrast to Adam. By Adam came *sin* and death and condemnation to all his race. By Christ came righteousness, and life, and justification, abounding over all both sin and offence—to all in Him. We are thus justified from *sins* by His blood, His precious death for us. We are justified from *sin*

by being dead with Him, and raised again. Only this is not yet accomplished, in fact, in us as to the body. But faith does so account it to be, or reckon it: "So do you also reckon that you are dead to sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom. vi. 11, Douay.) If you read these chapters in Romans, noticing the important distinction betwixt sin and sins, it is very clear and divinely complete. Without this distinction you cannot wonder at the Fathers' mistakes.

Should baptism then be set aside? Surely not. What is it then? If it is not regeneration, what is it? Let us shew a photograph to a child. I ask the child, What is this? Is it Mr. Johnstone? No. "Yes," says the child. It is a most striking, most correct, likeness—a picture drawn by the sun. But is it the living real person? Oh, no; but it is a good likeness. Or take another. Here is a map of an estate. How very correct: every field and tree and fence, oh, how exact! But is it the estate? Now baptism is like one of these. What a type of doctrine! what an exact picture of the passing from death to life of a believer, dead with Christ, and risen in Him. Nothing can shew more clearly how sin is gone for ever, as a thing to be charged against the believer, than being reckoned of God to be dead with Christ, and risen in Him.

You only need to read Romans vi. prayerfully in dependence on the Holy Spirit, to see the full force of this. But though you may use the photograph to describe the man, or the map to describe the estate, and baptism to describe this death and new creation in Christ Jesus, yet the photograph is not the man? The map is not the estate; and water washeth not from sin. "Without shedding of blood there is no remission." A map is very

useful in describing an estate ; and in the beginning baptism was evidently most expressive of the passing from death unto life. To this day a baptized Jew is looked upon by his kindred as dead. It is just the same too with a Hindoo. It was the solemn taking the place of death with Christ, in His name, for forgiveness of sins.

The prophets did not bear witness to the baptism, but "To HIM give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." (Acts x. 43.) Thus on the church's birthday, the three thousand who had rejected and murdered the Lord Jesus first heard of His death, fore-ordained of God, and His resurrection foretold by David; and that He, whom they had crucified, was the exalted prince and Saviour. They were told to change their minds. This involved the deepest moral self-judgment, and owning their dreadful guilt; and be baptized in His name for forgiveness of sins, and the gift of the Holy Ghost.

The Fathers, reading all this, have mistaken the portrait for the man, the map for the estate, the water of baptism for faith in the mighty work of redemption accomplished on the cross. They received *the word* and were baptized. And in answer to the jailor's cry, "What must I do to be saved," did the apostle say, Be baptized, and this will regenerate you? No; but, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved and thy house." (Acts xvii. 31.) He believed, was saved, and that very night was baptized.

Let us listen to the words of Jesus as he explains so simply how this mighty change takes place, this passing from death to life. "Amen, amen, I say unto you, that he who heareth my

word, and believeth him that sent me, hath life everlasting; and cometh not into judgment, BUT IS PASSED FROM DEATH TO LIFE." (John v. 24, Douay.) Oh, let those words of Jesus sink deep into your soul. What profound certainty they give! Have you heard *His* word, does it come, because His word, with divine authority to you? God who gave Him to die for our sins, and raised Him from among the dead for our justification? Do you believe God who sent Jesus? Oh, infinite love! Now those words, "*hath* life everlasting;" do you believe that sweet word "*hath*," and "*cometh* not into judgment?" all your judgment borne by Jesus? And as surely as God gives you this precious faith, so surely you have passed from death unto life.

All this divine certainty Jesus gives the believer: can the Fathers in Council give the like certainty by baptism? No, never, never, never. And yet baptism very distinctly illustrates this. Dead with Christ, risen with Christ; one with Him for ever; passed from death unto life; once in Adam, now in Christ. Oh, read those precious words of Jesus over again. They speak life to your soul. Look at His hands and His side: can you doubt Him?

But you may say, If I believe these words of Jesus, and thus know with certainty that I have life everlasting, the Council will curse me. If Jesus bless, let them curse. Oh, how sad to think that so many have been cursed, and burned, and, if it had been possible, sent to perdition by these Fathers of High Church. And for what? For believing the words of Jesus! And 2,600 clergymen of the Church of England are doing their utmost to bring these days again!

Oh, my soul, they would rob thee of the sweet-

est deepest joy these precious words of Jesus give. The absolute certainty that thou hast life everlasting, and shalt not come into judgment ; passed from death unto life. In place of this, they would thrust thee into darkness and uncertainty, crying even like a Jew before Jesus died, God be merciful to me a sinner.

But to return : not only do we find the Council of Trent in utter confusion about baptism, but they seem at utter variance with the word of God as to regeneration itself, however effected. The doctrine of Trent is that whatever has been contracted by generation is cleansed away by regeneration. And if any one asserts that all that which has the true and proper nature of sin is not taken away, &c., let him be anathema. The idea is clearly the restoration of the original Adam-state before the fall, they "are made innocent, pure, harmless." (Page 23.) Now apart from the means by which this is effected, where is this the doctrine of scripture? Nay, they themselves contradict it over and over again. They say, "They are renewed, as the apostle says, day by day, that is, by mortifying the members of their own flesh." (Page 36.) Had Adam to mortify his members? How would you mortify innocent, immaculate, pure, harmless members? The apostle does indeed say to the faithful brethren in Christ, who have this certainty, "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth ; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection ; evil concupiscence, and covetousness which is idolatry." (Col. iii. 4.) Can the Fathers apply all this and much more to Adam, innocent, pure, and harmless? And if any man says this evil in him is not sin, he de-

ceives himself and the truth is not in him. (1 John i. 8.) The Council says this is not, properly speaking, sin: but all that is truly sin is taken away. Therefore the Council of Trent deceives itself, and the truth is not in it. Is this the infallibility of Rome?

I grant this is a difficult question, and no amount of human wisdom can explain it. But the scriptures of truth explain it very simply, and shew Rome to be doubly mistaken on regeneration. That which is born of God is not Adam restored to innocence; but a wholly new nature. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." (John iii. 6.) And it is not that evil Adam nature—call it sin or flesh, that is taken away. But in the believer "the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other." (Gal. v. 17.)

That this refers to the true Christian is evident, for no other person has the Spirit. "For if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Thus, although the believer is a new creature, or new creation in Christ (2 Cor. v. 17), and not restored to mere Adam-nature, but made a partaker of the divine nature (2 Pet. i. 4), yet the scriptures distinctly recognise the fact that the old sinful nature is still in him, though having been crucified, and judged in the person of the Holy One, his substitute, who was made SIN for us. It is thus our privilege, and by the Spirit dwelling in us we have the power, to reckon it dead, and to overcome it. But the epistles distinctly recognise the members of this evil nature which need to be mortified and overcome. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

But strange to say, these learned Fathers were profoundly ignorant of this scriptural doctrine of two natures in the believer. And hence their gross errors in seeking to restore human nature, the flesh, by sacramental infusion. They only know man in the flesh made innocent, pure, and harmless. They have lost all knowledge of men judged in Christ, and *risen in Christ*, in direct contrast with the apostle. He says, "Wherefore, henceforth know we no man after the flesh; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more; and if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; and, behold, all things are become new." (2 Cor. v. 16.)

The Lord had taught this Himself. He says, "Amen, amen, I say to you, Unless the grain of wheat falling into the ground die; itself remaineth alone. But if it die it bringeth forth much fruit." (John xii. 24.) Thus His holy incarnation, and spotless life in the flesh, could have been of no use whatever, unless He had died. The idea of His incarnation saving or improving man is utterly false and unscriptural. The apostle knew not Christ for any such purpose. It is just as false as baptism restoring man in the flesh—innocent, pure, and harmless. These are mere dreams of men, who had lost the truth of the new creation in Christ risen from the dead. With all the doctrine of Incarnation and sacraments the priests can give you, and all their assurance that these take away sins, it still remains true "that if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain: ye are yet in your sins." (1 Cor. xv. 17.) But this is more directly connected with our next tract, "Justification," as taught by the Council of Trent.

Tell me, is not the experience of every Christian born of God, in keeping with the scriptural doctrine of the two natures? Have you been truly awakened to a sense of your lost guilty condition? Have you been brought to Jesus to hear His word? do you believe God who sent Him? The forgiveness preached to you in His name? Being justified by faith, have you peace with God? You say perhaps, Well, I thought I had all that; but the priest has told me that in regeneration all that can be truly called sin is taken away; and that I am so renewed that I am innocent, pure, and harmless. But I do not find it so. Do what I will, I do not find it so. I find a constant conflict with the flesh. And it is no better. I hate it, my old very self more and more. If I go into a monastery it is still there. If I fast, and flog my back until the blood runs down, I have still an evil nature. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." If I keep all the fasts and feasts of the church, my old self is still the same. I lose all confidence. How can any man be sure he is saved, and has eternal life? Ah, how many are thus plunged into despair!

Now does not the scripture distinctly recognise that, as surely as you are born of God, and have the Spirit, so surely the flesh will lust against the Spirit? Knowing the truth of all this, you also know the source of power, yea, have it, even the Holy Ghost dwelling in you; and thus you have the victory. "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Every believer finds the sinful flesh still in him, but "sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under law, but grace." Truly soul-sustaining truth of God!

According to holy scripture then, a man passes from death unto life by the Holy Ghost applying the word! according to High Church and Rome, by a priest applying water in baptism. But then if this very foundation of baptismal regeneration be false and unscriptural; what becomes of confirmation? What does the bishop confirm? Well, if it is a falsehood, a lie, he can only confirm a lie. Oh, sad truth—deceiving and being deceived! Think of the millions of people thus deceived. And shall we make no effort to reach them?

Oh, ye High Church parents, will you thus deceive your children? Dare you say your baptized children are innocent, pure, and harmless; all sin taken away by baptism? Thus, no need for them to hear the word and live. You know they have the same sinful nature that other children have; how soon it is manifested! You know your own nature was not made pure in baptism. Say no longer, I will give all honour to the priest that hath washed me from my sins in the water of baptism. Oh, that you could say, "Unto him that loveth us and hath washed us from our sins in his own blood." (Rev. i. 5.) Can you say that—the language of every child of God on earth? Christ or the priest, light or darkness. Joy in God, or gloomy despair! Oh, escape for your life; search the scriptures; study the scriptures. God speaks to you in His word. Need you, will you, doubt it? Think of His love in giving His Son to die for our sins. Oh, cease from man and come to Jesus. He says, "Come unto me and I will give you rest." Satan may whisper, "It is enough; you have been baptized. You are pure, your sins are washed away by the priest in water; you are a child of God; you are a member of Christ; and

the bishop has confirmed all this, just as I would have it. You do not need to be born again by the word of God ; you do not need to come to Jesus, you do not need to hear His word ; you do not need to believe God ; or care to read what He says ; you do not need to pass from death to life that way. It is enough for you to believe the priest, and do as he bids you. But the word of God you must not trust ; it killeth."

Reader, will you thus listen to and believe the devil ? You must either distrust God, and believe the devil, or, believing God, flee from all the lies of Satan. There can be no mistake about this, it is either the priest, with his sacrament of baptism, or the blood of Jesus, God's own Son, that cleanseth from sins. The Council of Trent teaches the one ; the word of God declares the other.

In my inmost soul, with deepest reverence, I receive the testimony of the word of God. On this I trust for eternity. And as surely as Jesus is the Son of God, so surely all those who believe Him have passed from death unto life. It came to pass that whosoever looked at the brazen serpent lived. And Jesus says, "He that believeth on me HATH EVERLASTING LIFE." (John vi. 47.)

One thing more and I close. It is most important to notice that this new life is not intended to be given to us, and still leave us the slaves of lust and iniquities. The blessed Saviour Jesus Christ "gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." (Titus ii. 14.) We were once the slaves of lust, living in all evil ; but "after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according

to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour." Mark, this is entirely of God by the Holy Ghost, not of ourselves. The Holy Ghost not only gives us a new life, but we are brought into a new generation, a regeneration. This word only occurs once besides this place, in the New Testament, and it is there used in this sense of an entirely new state. (Matt. xix. 28.) But then this new nature is holy. And thus the cleansing of a laver, or bath, is most expressive. Not only does the Holy Ghost communicate this divine life in regeneration, but He is shed abroad abundantly. Thus by the Holy Ghost, the man who was a slave to sin becomes not only possessed of a new nature, but in the development of that new holy nature, a new creature in holiness. And being justified by His grace—God's own free grace and goodness through Jesus Christ—he is to be careful to maintain good works. And though the flesh is still there, yet by the power of the Spirit, and ever occupied with Christ, he becomes practically a changed man in thoughts, affections, and in all his ways. It is not the old nature changed, but the Spirit giving power to the new to overcome and walk in holiness of life; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord.

We who were enemies by wicked works "hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh THROUGH DEATH [not the water of baptism the type of it] to present you holy and unblameable, and unreprouable in his sight." (Col. i. 22.)

Let not the Ritualist lay aside this tract, and say, what have we to do with the false doctrine of

baptismal regeneration, as taught by the church of Rome? Well, do you know that you hold this soul-destroying error? Are you not teaching thousands of children in this land, to believe this falsehood? It is not found in scripture; it is found in Rome. Yes, Rome is its source; and therefore we test it as found there by the word of God. In view of all this apostasy, the apostle says, "I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." (Acts xx. 32.)

In our next we hope to examine justification as taught in the scriptures compared with the Council of Trent.

C. S.



PLAIN WORDS

To Ritualists on their way to Rome.

No. 3.

JUSTIFICATION:

THE COUNCIL OF TRENT TESTED BY
THE WORD OF GOD.

By C. S.

LONDON:

G. MORRISH, 20, PATERNOSTER SQUARE.

JUSTIFICATION:

THE COUNCIL OF TRENT TESTED BY THE WORD OF GOD.

WE have in tract No. 1, described our visit to the Dark Chamber of Idolatry in Cambridge of the "Holy Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament," and the popish books used there by its members. It is remarkable we found no Bible there, but only books of the full Romish stamp. In tract, No. 2, we went at once to the fountain-head of Ritualism, the doctrines of Rome as taught in the decrees of the Council of Trent. In that tract we examined the doctrine of "Baptismal Regeneration," this being declared by Rome to be the instrumental cause of "justification." (Page 34.) We found the decrees of the Council on Baptismal Regeneration utter confusion, and in direct contradiction of the word of God. And to every Ritualist we say, Remember, these are the doctrines of that church to which you are doing your utmost to lead all you can influence.

We will now examine the decree of the Council of Trent on Justification, and test it by the word of God. (Chap. vii. page 33.) It admits indeed that the meritorious cause of justification is "His most beloved only-begotten, our Lord Jesus Christ, who, when we were enemies, for the great charity where-

with He loved us, merited justification for us, by His most holy passion on the wood of the cross, and for us made satisfaction unto God the Father." But then it goes on to say, that the "instrumental cause, moreover, is the Sacrament of Baptism;" and that, "Lastly, the sole formal cause is the justice of God; not that by which He Himself is just, but that by which He maketh us just, that to wit, with which we, being endowed by Him, are renewed in the spirit of our mind, and we are not only reputed but are truly called, and are just, receiving justice within us, each one according to his own measure, which the Holy Ghost divides to every man severally as He will, and according to each one's proper disposition and co-operation."

We suppose the Council allows us to turn to the scriptures to examine these statements; otherwise, why do they give us so many scriptures as footnotes for proof? Here we would notice that these references to scripture are most deceptive. In this way, passages or texts are constantly quoted, that have no connection with the subject whatever: so much so, that these Fathers must have been in the greatest ignorance of the purpose and scope of scripture. For instance, in this very quotation above, they refer to Ephesians iv. 23, only they also misquote it as usual. It is "and be renewed in the spirit of your mind." (Douay.) They say "are renewed in the spirit of our mind." The text is the aim of a Christian in his life (one who has been justified). The other makes it a state because of which if you have it God can justify you. But the fact is, this text refers to the Ephesians who were justified and had redemption through the blood of Christ, the forgiveness of sins (as in chapter ii. "BY GRACE YE ARE SAVED");

so that to quote chapter iv. 23 for justification is a perversion of scripture.

It is a mistake something like this: A nobleman takes a poor boy, gives him a large estate, and places him in full possession. Then he informs him that he must conduct himself in a manner becoming his position, and wear clothes &c., according to his new rank. "Ah," says a third party, "your new manners and clothes are the sole formal cause of the nobleman's gift of the estate. What a blunder! This is the exact mistake of the Fathers.

Will you read this epistle to the Ephesian Christians? God had taken them from the lowest depths of sin, and given them the highest estate in the heavens, Jesus Christ the Lord taking possession as their head, and they blest with Him in the heavenlies. "Now," says the Holy Ghost, "let your manners and clothing become your high calling." What a blunder to say this is the sole cause of their justification!

Now let us take the very next scripture:—1 Corinthians xii. 11 is misquoted as scripture to prove that justice, or righteousness, is within us, each one according to his own measure, which the Holy Ghost divides to every man severally as He will, &c.

Now let us turn and examine this passage. The scripture, thus wrested, is on a totally different subject—the gifts of Christ as used by the Spirit for the edification of the body of Christ. But this consists of all Christians. "The church of God that is at Corinth, to them that* ARE sanctified in Christ

* I understand that, as the article is wanting here, the sentence should rather run, "to men sanctified," &c. in opposition to the church or assembly in Corinth just spoken of; but this does not affect the argument.

Jesus.” “But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and justice, and sanctification, and redemption.” (Chap. i. 2, 30.) What then has the manifestation of the Spirit, or the distribution of the gifts in the church, to do with the question of justification? Clearly nothing whatever. It is simply a blind quotation, leading the poor Romanists into uncertainty and perplexity. This very chapter shews the constitution of the church of God; whilst chapter xiv. also describes those gifts in exercise. Chapter xiii. shews that, whatever gifts or knowledge, if there be not love or charity, all is vain. But they are for the edification of the body of Christ.

And mark the meaning of the apostle in that often misquoted text, the last verse. “And now there remain, faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greater of these is charity.” Charity is the greatest: but for what? The apostle is speaking of ministry and edification; not a thought in these three chapters about justification or salvation. He begins that as a new subject in chapter xv.

The Fathers on the contrary, wrest this text from its plain meaning, and quote it as their great text for justification. They tell us faith without hope and charity cannot bestow life everlasting. Of course it cannot, if for that purpose charity is greater than faith. What does this blunder involve? Why this—that my love or charity is greater than Christ’s work. I stand before God for justification. Faith is one hand, that rests on the person and work of Christ. Charity is the other hand, that rests on myself—my love, my charity! And in this sense the Council tells me, greater is my love than Christ’s work for me on the cross. Soul-destroying delusion! Quite true in the scriptural sense, that I might have all faith and knowledge to

remove mountains of difficulty in this tract; but if there is not charity, real love to these deluded Ritualists, the tract will not be worth a straw. Oh, for more of the love of God shed abroad in our hearts, and the love of Christ flowing out in all our preachings and writings! But, remember, this has nothing to do with the question of justification. I am not aware of a single instance where a Romanist has quoted this text intelligently, according to its context.

One would have thought that every person who ever read the word of God must know that faith is the gift of God. (Eph. ii. 8.) The Fathers however treat this as a mistake. The anxious soul or catechumen begs this faith of the church. "Whence also do they straightway hear that word of Christ:—If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." (Page 34.) This is surely one of two things, using the word of God either ignorantly or craftily. Little children had been brought unto Christ, and He had announced that new and startling fact, that "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein." A little child receives a gift and does nothing for it. This was the very opposite of the ministry of the law, yet most true, as explained by the Holy Ghost after redemption was accomplished, and Christ was risen from the dead. Eternal life is now the gift of God to those who, like a little child, do nothing for it: otherwise it would not be a gift. After the announcement of this new fact, a certain ruler puts a question, which lies at the root of this announcement. He asks, "What good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?" And the Lord at once tests him on his own ground, as under law. And mark He does not apply the law as to his duty to God, but the lowest test-duty to his

neighbour. He says, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." "Which?" says the ruler. "Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder; thou shalt not commit adultery; thou shalt not steal; thou shalt not bear false witness; honour thy father and mother; and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Well, the young man declares he has kept all these; and evidently he thinks so. But if so, where is grace? Where the Christ-announced doctrine of the little child? Oh, mark the divine wisdom of Christ! He takes the very last—"Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," and only applies this to the heart of a sincere Jew, under the administration of the law. Just, and holy, and good in itself, but the ministration of it to this young man is found to be death. He says, as it were, "You have property; the poor, whom you say you love as yourself, need that property; sell it and give to the poor." Ah, he failed at once, not only to his neighbour, but in departing from God speaking to him in love. And thus was the truth not overthrown, but established; that the kingdom of God must be received as by a little child, and not a commandment-doing man. Was it not very crafty of the Fathers to misapply such a text as this? Surely they ought to have known that "if righteousness came by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." (Gal. ii. 21.) And "if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law." (Gal. iii. 21.)

This is a long digression; but as these are texts most relied on for the doctrine of Rome, it is of all importance fairly to examine their contexts. After this is done, you will find it difficult to believe that the Council were so ignorant of the just meaning and use of scriptures. One can only compare

them to a number of men blindfolded, seeking a certain place, but uncertain as to whether they are on the right road, and therefore catching at anything in the dark. I ask every Ritualist or Romanist, Is it not so? Are you not utterly uncertain whether you have eternal life or not? and whether you are on the road that will *surely* end in glory, or not? Or whether you are, after all, in your sins, or justified from them? My fellow-believer, if thou hast got into the wrong road, if thou art blindfolded, following the blind guides, let me lead thee to the scriptures that were written "that ye may know that ye have eternal life."

Let us then look at the subject of "justification," not as a matter of controversy, but one of eternal importance. If there are only two roads, one leading to endless perdition, the other to endless bliss, in the unclouded presence of God, is it of no importance on which of the roads you are found? There are only two principles of justification, or righteousness—that of faith, or that of works—of God or of man. Is it a matter of indifference which? The one is what man is to God, and what he can do for God, righteousness in man before God—perfect consistency before God, meeting all the claims of God. This had been fairly tested in the Jews for fifteen centuries. And, as we have seen in that amiable ruler, he could not bear the test of a single commandment.

Let it be distinctly understood the Council of Trent takes one of these roads, and defends one of these principles—the one we have been describing—that which has to do with what man is to God. Man by baptism makes his fellow man pure, immaculate, and harmless! This is his best robe, and this must be kept spotless by keeping the commandments. The whole principle is what man is,

and what he must do. The Jew was brought into that position by circumcision; the Romanist and Ritualist by baptism: but the principle is precisely the same; it is what man is to God. And whilst the Council quotes texts which have no reference to the subject, they almost entirely overlook the scriptures which speak explicitly on the subject.

Is it not remarkable that the Epistle sent to Rome should be occupied, say eight chapters at least, with this very subject—the justification of the sinner—and yet the Council do not seem to have known this? If they had read this Epistle, they certainly took great pains to contradict it. How is this? God gives the church at Rome a full inspired explanation of justification, and the Council of Trent takes no notice of it, but invents a doctrine of justification, the very opposite to that of the gospel, as set forth in Romans i.–viii.

With the scripture it is what God is to man in the death and resurrection of Christ. With the Council it is what man is to God, made righteous by baptism. If of faith, it is what God is; if of works, it is what man is—the righteousness of God, or the righteousness of man, that is the question. The Council first, in baptism, forgives the sins of an infant, never committed. But if the baptized man should commit sins after baptism, he does not know what to do with them. They see God cannot possibly justify sins; and yet the baptized, who, as they pretend, are by that sacrament made innocent, pure, immaculate, and harmless, how are *they* then to be justified if they sin? Clearly Rome cannot say. And they do sin. And thus there is no justification for them worth a straw. Having been justified, have they peace with God? Nay, instead of this, ages of untold torments in purgatory. Purgatory declares Rome's doctrine of justification utterly

worthless. It were all well, if baptism did make them pure and innocent, and every thing truly sin washed away, and then the baptized kept the commandments without spot. If we were thus righteous, then certainly God must justify righteousness.

Is there such a thought in scripture, or in facts? Millions of us were baptized when infants. We bear the name of Christians. Is there one amongst these millions innocent and pure? Is there one that has not a sinful nature—a nature ever prone to sin against God? Do you not mourn over that sinful nature? And how terrible its fruits! Let us not then trust in a false justification. Oh, where shall we turn, to know with certainty that our sins are forgiven, and that we are justified from all things? Let us turn to the scriptures; there alone shall we find certainty for our souls.

Let us read the Epistle to the Romans, as God speaking to us on this very subject. Here then we have the two principles of righteousness fully revealed. The righteousness of God is the principal subject of the glad tidings: "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith or on the principle of faith to faith." (Chap. i. 17.) The propitiation of Christ is set forth of God "To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness, that he might be just, and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." (Chap. iii. 26.)

The Council denies this point blank: "The sole formal cause is the justice of God; not that by which He Himself is just, but that by which He maketh us just." (Page 34.) Thus the Council distinctly denies that which is specially revealed in the gospel—the righteousness of God—that by which He Himself is just in justifying the believer. Nothing could be more opposed than the

Council of Trent and the word of God. The Council maintains the righteousness of man : what he is, and what he does. The scripture reveals the righteousness of God : how He is righteous in justifying the sinner who believes on Him.

First, however, scripture fully examines the question of the righteousness of man. This was needed, as the Jew then (like the Romanist now) went about to establish his own righteousness, refusing to submit to the righteousness of God. (Rom. x.) In chapter i. then God examines the heathen world, and, instead of righteousness, He finds all unrighteousness and wickedness—the most debasing wickedness. The very judges who condemned the fearful iniquity were no better, but did the same things. We know history everywhere corroborates the statement of this scripture. But what of the chosen nation, with all its privileges, circumcision, and the oracles of God? Are not they found righteous? No, not one! all are proved under sin. Every mouth is stopped, and all the world guilty before God. Read the description God gives of them. (Chap. iii. 9–19.) On the principle then of what man is to God, when even tested for centuries, no righteousness is to be found : all are guilty, all have sinned. Considering their privileges, the Jews were worse than the Gentiles, and shewed more intense hatred to God, when Christ came on earth.

And may we not ask, What is the judgment of God on baptized Christendom? Let anyone read the history, say of Baronius, the Romanist. Could there be worse wickedness than this? And could man shew more intense hatred against God, than has been shewn, by Rome, in the murder of the saints of God? If, then, considering their privileges, the Jews, were worse than the heathen; may

we not say that baptized Christendom, whilst maintaining the righteousness of man on the principle of works, has been more wicked than both put together? and more, let the reader, or the writer of this paper be brought into the all-searching presence of God: ah, it is not then how bad the heathen were, or how bad the Jews, or how bad the professing church has been; but how bad, how vile, am I? What a world of iniquity is in my own heart! If I look back, oh, what cause for self-abhorrence! Tell me, reader, is it not so? Where then is righteousness of man? Is it not, as God says, There is none on the principle of what man is to God? "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." Baptism or circumcision, law of Moses or law of church so called, on this principle of law of what man is, or can do for God, all are sinners and righteousness there is none. It is quite true, that on this ground, no man can know that he is justified. All are guilty, under condemnation and death.

BUT NOW THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD (the very thing denied by the Council; the very thing manifested in the scripture, witnessed by law, and prophets), "Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all, and upon all them that believe." *Yes, that by which He Himself is just, and the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.* What is that by which God is righteous in justifying us? Do the scriptures, like the Council, say it is righteousness in us, each one according to his measure? No such thing. No, it is exclusively what He has done, "Whom God hath set forth a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission

of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God." And not only is it so with believers in the past, before He died, but that same propitiation on the cross is "To declare, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." (Chap. iii. 20-26.)

Thus the scripture points us to the death of Jesus, the propitiation for our sins, as that by which God is just in justifying us. So it was the bitten Israelite, owning his sins, looked upon the brazen serpent lifted up. "Even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have everlasting life." They were not told to look within for healing from the dreadful bite, but to look without, even at the brazen serpent lifted up, and all that looked lived. Do the bidding of Rome, look for righteousness within, and death is your certain portion. God give you faith to look at Jesus on the cross, for all that look shall live. Now what do I see there? By faith I see the Son of God bruised for my iniquities; taking my place; the Just for the unjust, to bring me to God; bearing my sins in His own body on the tree. Oh precious, infinite sacrifice, that for ever puts away sins! Oh precious Substitute bearing Thy people's sins! Jehovah laid on Thee the iniquities of us all. In our stead it pleased Jehovah to bruise Thee. Thy love to me! thy death for me. Deep was the hatred of man, and dreadful Thy sufferings from his hands, smitten, buffeted, spit upon, mocked, scourged, nailed, pierced. But ah, my Lord, what was all this to that deeper *suffering*—the horror, the darkness, when Thy soul was made an offering for sin; forsaken of God and all *for me, for me?* Oh, watch Him there, and now hear that last cry, "It is

finished ; and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost." Oh, my soul, God sets this before thee, as that by which He is just in justifying thee. That holy body cold in death was taken from the cross, and buried according to the scriptures. He came to bear my sins, to glorify God on that cross. Did He fail ? Is He still in the grave ? " If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him."

Let us look carefully at two facts, the two facts overlooked by Rome ; but the very facts of our justification. They are very clearly stated thus. Yea, righteousness is reckoned to us believing God about these two facts, " If we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from among the dead, who was delivered for our offences and was raised again for our justification." (Rom. iv. 24.) Here is a justification suited to lost, helpless, guilty sinners. All is of God, who delivered Him to bear our sins on the cross. And there He glorified God ; there God's love to the sinner and hatred to sin was proved to the utmost. But if my Substitute glorified God in His atoning death for my sins, then must not God in righteousness raise my Substitute from among the dead, and give Him glory ? This is exactly what God did : He raised Jesus our Substitute from the dead for the very purpose of our justification.

At present it is the question of justification from sins, not sin ; that we will look at afterwards. How is God righteous in justifying us from our sins ? He sets before us the atoning death of Jesus our Substitute, and He says we are justified by His blood. (Chap. v. 9.) But how are we to know that we are justified from our sins which Jesus our Substitute bore on the cross ? How ? why Jesus was raised from the dead for this very purpose.

Who raised Him? God the Justifier. Thus God reveals to my soul how He Himself is righteous in justifying me. How can I doubt Him? But then believing Him I am accounted righteous, that is to say, I am justified, and "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Would it be righteous to reckon the person guilty when the Substitute has put away that guilt? Would it be just to charge a debt when a bondsman has paid it? The resurrection of Jesus our bondsman is the believer's everlasting discharge from sins. The scripture asks, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."

All this is indeed opposed to Rome, which directs the soul to innocence and purity by baptism, to receiving justice within us, and keeping the commandments of God and the church; which sees nothing beyond what man is and can do for God. On the other hand, the scriptures reveal what God is to us in perfect righteousness; what He has done in the gift of His Son, in the atoning death of Jesus for us, raised from the dead for our justification; we justified by His blood, He our Justifier. Are you, my reader, with the Jews, the Ritualist and the Romanist, going about to establish thus a righteousness of your own, or have you submitted to the righteousness of God?

If it be a question of looking within, could any person say there is now nothing to condemn? But since God laid all our sins on Jesus, it is most true that "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus."

First then God is righteous, He Himself is just as revealed in the propitiation, or mercy-seat. Rome only leads you unto hope, trusting that God will be propitious for Christ's sake. This is to deny that Christ has come in the flesh. The type of the great day of atonement has surely been fulfilled. The blood is sprinkled on the mercy-seat. Through that blood God now freely forgives and is just in justifying. And this free forgiveness is presented to all. God is righteous, consistent with all His attributes. We cannot hope He will be propitious. Freely He meets the sinner at that mercy-seat, and there without money and without price freely forgives. Guilty sinner, God has set forth that mercy-seat; His righteousness is there declared. Sin has been punished, and judged to the utmost. Therefore the sinner that meets God at that mercy-seat, in righteousness is freely forgiven.

Secondly, what is the fact as to those who do receive the free mercy of God? They are those who believe God, who in self-aborrence before God own they are lost guilty sinners, who believe (not that God will be propitious, but) that He has sent His Son, that He has been offered on the cross, the propitiation for sins. They believe the proclamation of God from that mercy-seat. "Be it known therefore to you, men and brethren, that through him forgiveness of sins is preached to you, from all the things from the which you could not be justified by the law of Moses. In him every one that believeth IS JUSTIFIED." (Acts xiii. 38, Rhemish.) I say what is the fact as to those who believe God? May we conclude that such a man is justified, or may he only hope to be? The scripture says, "For we account a man *to be justified* by faith without the works of the law." (Rom.

iii. 28, Rhemish.) Oh, what a blessed fact, "BEING JUSTIFIED freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." (Chap. iii. 24.)

Pursue this fact a little farther, that all who believe ARE justified. You will find in chapter iv. Abraham and David believed God, and faith was accounted unto them for righteousness. Believing God they were accounted righteous. If this was true of them, before Christ died, is it not also true of the believer now since the death of Jesus? Yes, but mark, now I have faith, believing God, it is not merely propitiation but actual substitution. Thus righteousness is reckoned to us, we are as believers accounted righteous, "If we believe in him who raised up Jesus Christ OUR Lord from the dead, who was delivered up for OUR sins, and rose again for our justification." (Chap. iv. 24, Rhemish.) Therefore being—not hoping to be, but—"Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through OUR Lord Jesus Christ."

The righteousness of God, and the sinner's need, are both met on the cross. If you will compare the two goats in Leviticus xvi., you will find the one to be Jehovah's, and sets forth propitiation, the blood sprinkled on the mercy-seat. Thus the judgment throne becomes the mercy-seat. But the other goat, the people's, shews in type substitution—all the sins of the people actually laid on, or transferred to, the head of the goat. So this scripture presents Jesus as the believer's Substitute delivered for our offences. What a fact all my sins transferred to Jesus on the cross! My blessed loving Substitute taking the whole guilt of my sins, bearing their full penalty! Deep reality! Oh, believer, our Substitute raised from the dead for OUR justification! And He, our representative,

so justified from our sins, that He is seated in the unclouded glory of God. Yes, the glory of God shines in the face of the very One who once bore our sins and curse on the cross. Ah, such is the eternal efficacy of His death, that God says of all believers "And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." Now souls believing God, see the end of their sins in the death of their Substitute. The certainty of this is seen by the resurrection of that Substitute from among the dead. If God has raised Him from the dead for our justification, then the risen Christ is the full everlasting discharge from all our sins. "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins." (1 Cor. xv. 17.)

It is very striking that in all the ramblings of unbelief, the Fathers never once name this all-important cardinal fact that God has raised up, from among the dead, the Lord Jesus *for* our justification. Just like some learned person trying to shew how a man is discharged from his debts when paid by another, but forgets the receipts; or like the case of two manufacturers, reckoning the cost of a piece of cloth, but forgetting the wool, the principal thing. So these Fathers forgot, or never knew, the principal evidence of the believer's justification.

This is not the worst. Does not God in His word, in the passages above, distinctly tell the believer that he is justified—that he has peace with Him? Does He not point to the risen Christ as *the proof of it*? These ignorant Fathers have the daring wickedness to brand as vain confidence the faith that believes God. (Page 35.) Jesus declares that he that heareth His word, and believeth God that sent Him, **HATH** life everlasting, and shall not come into judgment, but is passed from death unto

life. God declares that through Jesus is preached the forgiveness of sins, and all that believe ARE justified from all things. I believe Jesus ; I believe God. God is true; and as surely as God speaks truth, I believing have eternal life ; I am justified ; and he that does not believe God is judged already. And yet the Council tells us this confidence is remote from all piety ! Instead of this “joy in God,” they would give us to “have fear and apprehension concerning *His own grace* ; inasmuch as no one can know with a certainty of faith, which cannot be subject to mistake, that he has obtained the grace of God.”

The scriptures point me to the cross, the expression of the grace of God to me. The Fathers point me to my own grace, and tell me to have fear and apprehension. Here we have the result of the two systems clearly brought out. The Holy Ghost by the scriptures gives the certainty of faith. Every believer, in the church of God as found in scripture, had this certainty. No member of the church of Rome dare enjoy this certainty on pain of anathema. God sets before the believer the Lord Jesus Christ as his Substitute, delivered for his offences and raised again for his justification. By *this*, God is righteous in Himself in accounting the believer righteous before Him in his Substitute. So that confessing our sins God is, yea must be, faithful to His Son—must be just in forgiving us our sins, and in cleansing us from all unrighteousness. This is the simple question. Once my sins were charged against my Substitute, God entered into judgment on Him, Jesus bearing them on the cross. All my sins were transferred to Him. In divine love He took the entire responsibility. Is there one sin yet to be charged against Him ? Who shall lay that charge ? On one side I have God the

Justifier ; who is on the other side to charge or to condemn ? And mark, it is not concerning *my own grace*. It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again. All Fathers, popes, and Councils cannot rob my soul of this divine certainty of faith. If it be myself, God entering into judgment with me for my sins, there is not a shadow of a hope. I must be condemned ; but the full wrath and judgment of God passed over the soul of Jesus, my Substitute, on the cross. That work is accomplished. "It is finished," never to be repeated. You say, How do you know ? Because God, who laid my sins on Jesus, has raised Him from the dead without them. Is it vain confidence then, to say with the beloved John, "Unto him that loveth us, and hath washed us from our sins in his own blood ?" Oh, begone, dark unbelief of Rome ! It is pleasing to God that we rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

If any man could have stood on the ground of what he was to God, the young Jew of Tarsus was the man. He says, "Touching the righteousness which is in the law blameless." Does he trust in this, and the merits of Christ as a make-weight ? No, he utterly rejects the whole ground and principle of what he was to God. He says he "counted them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." (Phil. iii. 8, 2.) Thus he gives up as dung the whole basis that the Council seeks to establish, and accepts that which the Council repudiates—the righteousness of God—that by which He Himself is righteous in justifying us from all sins.

There is much more in this scripture ; but we must now turn to the second part of the subject of

justification—the question not of sins but of sin. We have already seen how God has justified the believer from sins, and that by which He is righteous in thus justifying, and how the believer is brought into the enjoyment of peace with God as to his sins. All this forms the subject of Romans to chapter v. 11. From chapter v. 12, the apostle treats of sin. We pointed out in tract number 2, that the Council teaches that all that which has the true and proper nature of sin is taken away by baptism. Surely this is too monstrous for any man to entertain with the history of baptized Christendom before him. But what saith the scripture on this question of sin—the root? Romans v. 12 to the end of chapter viii. is the answer, Sin entered by Adam, and death by sin, and so passed upon all men. The whole race is involved—not only transgression in the case of Adam and the Jews to whom God gave the law, but, for so long a period when there was no formal law, death proved that sin was there. But far and wide as the stream of sin abounded flowing from its fountain head, Adam, another stream much more abounds in grace and justification of life flowing from the obedient One, the other head, Christ. And where by the presence of the law, the offence did abound, grace did still much more abound: “That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.”

This is not our Adam nature improved or restored, but an entirely new head, Christ; not old life in Adam, but new resurrection life in Christ. True, we have lost all in Adam, but in Christ we have infinitely more than we lost. But you say, Is not that old sinful Adam nature still in the believer? Yes, indeed it is. Then how can he be justified as to that? Can God justify an evil nature? Cer-

tainly not; but He has judged it, as we read, "God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin [or by a sacrifice for sin], condemned sin in the flesh." (Rom. viii. 3.) Not only was He delivered as our Substitute to bear our sins, the Just for the unjust; but sin, the root of all sins, was also for ever judged by His sacrifice for sin. As surely as He bare our iniquities, so also He was made sin. Thus sin was judged to the utmost that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. Read carefully 2 Corinthians v. 21.

This is very precious to a soul, knowing that not only his sins are forgiven for Christ's sake, but that he, the sinner, is reckoned dead, crucified, judged with Christ. As we have seen, baptism is a wonderful type of this—dead and buried with Christ (Rom. vi.), and also risen with Him. (Col. ii.) Now the scripture assures me of this completeness—justified from SINS by the blood of Jesus, justified in the sense of complete deliverance from SIN, by being dead and risen with Christ. Thus the scripture says, "Ye are complete in him." (Col. ii.)

"No," says the Council, "NO such thing. Your justification in Christ is not complete, is not perfect." Rome can never admit that the one sacrifice of Christ for ever perfects. Stoutly does she deny this in face of these scriptures of truth. She says, (chap. x. page 36), "Having, therefore, been thus justified, &c., they, through the observance of the commandments of God and of the church, faith co-operating with good works, increase in the justice [or righteousness], received through the grace of Christ, and are still more justified." Then scriptures are mis-quoted in proof; such as Revelation xxii. 11, James ii. 24: "And this *increase* of justification the holy church begs when she prays,

Give us, O Lord, increase of faith, hope, and charity." Thus our observance of the commandments of God and the church, and an increase of faith, hope, and charity add something to the justification of the believer by the death and resurrection of Christ. Our works are of more value than His death. According to the Fathers we are not in a completely justified state as dead and risen with Christ. Our good works increase this state of justification. Universal has been the influence of this lie of Satan. "Yea," hath God said "you are completely justified by Christ. Just as he insinuated a doubt in the garden, so has he insinuated doubts, until at last this Council plainly declares against complete justification in Christ, and looks at the works of man to complete the work of Christ. Had they ever read these words? "Christ is become of no effect unto you; whosoever of you are justified by the law, ye are fallen from grace." (Gal. v. 4.)

Now if God's righteousness is revealed and set forth in the one infinite sacrifice or propitiation of Christ, that very thing by which He is righteous in Himself in justifying us; and if the Fathers deny that it is infinite, by teaching that our works and observing the commandments can increase it, or add to it, inasmuch as this infinite propitiation is the very foundation of the whole gospel to man, it follows that the Council denies the foundation of the gospel of God to lost sinners.

But then I grant this is not limited to Rome. Let me test every reader of these lines. How is it with your soul and God in this matter? We will look at keeping the commandments in its place shortly; but to keep close to the subject of justification before God, Do you accept the testimony of God simply and truly as to your own utterly lost guilty condition? Secondly, do you be-

lieve God laid your *sins* on Jesus, that He bore them on the cross? Surely our works have nothing to say to this. And do you believe the testimony of God in raising Jesus from among the dead for your very justification; just as you would believe a person giving you a receipt for a paid bill? Do you believe that your very nature as a child of Adam is *sin*; but that this and all that you are, as a child of Adam, has been judged in Jesus on the cross? That He died for your sins, that they are gone from the sight of God, to be remembered no more? And more, that you are reckoned dead with Christ, crucified with Him, risen with Him, and thus completely justified from sin? (Rom. vi.)

How works could add to this is hard to say. But do you really believe the wondrous fact, that by faith in God, through Jesus Christ you are complete in Him without works at all, as justified even now, as complete as to your position in that risen Christ, as you will be when in the glory? Justified from sins and sin, and possessed of a justified life—the life of the risen Christ? And yet all this is simply the faith once delivered to the saints, alas! long since almost lost. There can be no difference between the justification of the head and the members. “As he is, so are we in this world.” Being thus justified, we have the same peace in the unclouded presence of God, and with God according to all that He is, as our Substitute, Jesus Christ the Lord. But oh, how few enjoy this completeness in Christ! Do you, my reader? How common and how sad, to say as it were, We are barely saved by Christ, now we must increase our justification by good works! This is the inward feeling of thousands, who do not speak out their unbelief honestly like the Council of Trent. My judgment

of the Council is that they were in complete ignorance of the true doctrine of justification—of that by which God is just, righteous in Himself, in justifying us. Had they known it, they never could have thus set it aside and groped in darkness after baptism, commandments, faith, hope, charity, anything but what it is—the accomplished work of Christ, God's righteousness submitted to by faith, to which nothing can be added, and from which nothing can be taken away.

I would ask every Ritualist and Romanist, Is not this a most serious error, to teach that our good works can add to the value of the atoning work of Christ for an increase of our justification? Was it not the very heresy deceivers sought to introduce into the assemblies of Galatia? Nay, was it not the very error for which Paul had to withstand Peter? There were Gentile believers justified by Christ alone through faith. There were Jewish believers not only justified by Christ, but also they observed the law. Peter dissembled, as though the latter were more justified than the former. This could not be without making Christ the minister of sin, and Paul withstood him to the face. Read Galatians i., ii., and see if this is not so. Now the Council teaches the very same thing. You may be justified by faith in Christ, but still more justified by works of law. This is that different gospel which is not another, for there is really none other gospel or good news to a lost sinner, but the righteousness of God as revealed in the accomplished work of Christ; the believer in which is justified freely, for Christ's sake. But be it marked, the Council teaches that other gospel, in direct contrast to the gospel of Paul, concerning which he says, "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than

that ye have received, let him be accursed." (Gal. i. 8.)

The true gospel is the death and resurrection of Christ, that by which God is righteous in justifying us from all things. The false gospel is that by which we pretend that God has made us just in ourselves by baptism, and our keeping the commandments of God and the church. This other false gospel is the distinct teaching of the Council of Trent. The true gospel is what God is to us in Christ; the false is what we are to God by sacraments and works.

The two men in the temple exactly illustrate these two principles. The one thanked God that He had made him righteous by good works in himself. The other had nothing but sin to bring and confess to God; and he needed God to be propitious to him a sinner. The Council takes the exact ground of the Pharisee. The believer in the word of God takes the ground of the publican; only he has not now to pray thus afar off, but to believe that God has met all his need in the propitiation of Christ. And it is the Son of God that says, "I tell you this man went down to his house justified rather than the other." (Luke xviii. 13.)

As surely then as God has spoken the truth to us in His word, so surely has the Council of Trent brought to one hundred and eighty millions of people the most false soul-destroying error. And equally certain is it, that more than two thousand six hundred clergymen are leading giddy thoughtless England to the darkness of Rome.

Some unacquainted with scripture might be misled by the scriptures quoted by the Council in defence of justification by works; by which, and the grace of Christ in them, as they say, "we must needs believe that to be justified nothing farther is

wanting, but that they be accounted to have, by those very works which have been done in God, fully satisfied the divine law according to the state of this life, and truly to have merited eternal life to be obtained also in its due time" (page 41), with very, very much of the same sad sort. Now let a person be placed on such ground as this. He must keep the holy precepts of the word of God, so as to fully satisfy the divine law, truly thus to merit eternal life.

In contrast with all this, the Lord Jesus assures our hearts, the moment we believe that we have eternal life. "Amen, amen I say to you, he that believeth in me HATH life everlasting." (John vi. 47, Rhemish.) The Council tells us to keep all these commandments diligently, in order that we may be justified, and still more justified. On the contrary, all the precepts of the inspired Epistles are addressed to those who are justified. "That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs, according to hope of life everlasting;" and to those who do believe God and are justified, "That they which believe in God be careful to excel in good works." (Tit. iii. 7, 8, Douay.)

And let it be distinctly understood, that the gospel, applied by the power of God to such as even never heard it before, gives, when believed, the immediate certainty of justification, without one question as to works first. See the apostle's first proclamation of the gospel at Antioch in Pisidia. "Be it known therefore to you, men brethren, that through him forgiveness of sins is preached to you, from all the things from the which you could not be justified by the law of Moses. In him every one that believeth IS JUSTIFIED." (Acts xiii. 38, 39, Rhemish.) Let me beg of every sincere Romanist to ponder this well. Oh, return to the word of God.

Do not put that justification at the end which God puts at the beginning. Nay, instead of this immediate justification from all things on the certainty of the very word of God, do you not make justification utterly impossible? Oh, where is the man that has satisfied the claims of the divine law? Where but that Blessed One at God's right hand? And if you could satisfy the demands of a holy God, where would be the need of the death and resurrection of Christ?

Test these teachings of vain men by the word of God, and you will find them utterly false. Can anything be more certain than the above statements of the word of God that he that believeth is justified? God says it. I believe God, and God says I am justified. The Council says, If I assuredly believe for certain and without any hesitation that I am justified and my sins forgiven, I am accursed. (See Canons xii. xiii. xiv.) Shall I believe God, or man? Which is it with you, my reader? Certainly the scriptures teach us that good works are the fruits and signs before the world of justification before God by faith. But if I believe this, the Council will again curse me. (Canon xxix.)

Here are thirty-three canons and curses: dreadful work would it be to go through these. Truth there is mixed up with it; but as a system of doctrine, nothing could be more opposed to the glad tidings of God. As Satan once led the world, its priests and Pharisees, to reject and kill the Prince of life; so now behold him leading that vast gathering of priests, bishops, and Ritualists, to reject the gospel and openly set aside the authority of the word of God. "They being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted

themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth." (Rom. x. 3.) The sole object of the Council was to establish their own righteousness, so that by their own righteousness God might be just in justifying them. This is the plain principle; be it by baptism, sacraments, or keeping of commandments, they entirely set aside the great truth of the RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD. Christ in the glory of His person, and the everlasting value of His work, His death, and resurrection, is that by which God is righteous, just in Himself in justifying us. Can anything please Satan more than thus to set aside Christ, and thus to exalt poor sinful man?

And now, my reader, will you, with the Bible in your hands, join the ranks of these Confraternities? Will you deliberately and wickedly refuse to hear God speaking in the Son? Will you sin against the Holy Ghost, and refuse to hear Him in the inspired epistles speaking of Christ as the end of the law for righteousness? Will you reject the free pardon of sins proclaimed to you through Jesus Christ? Dare you deny the truth of God that all who believe ARE justified from all things? True, you might not believe if all the waters of the Atlantic had been rolled over you in baptism; but "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth from all sin." Oh, will you turn from that precious blood? from the very testimony of God? From God Himself, the Justifier, to vain presumptuous man? Can God who freely gave His beloved Son possibly deceive you? Will you say, I will not believe Him, I will not read what He says to me in the word; unless the priest says it is so? Would a child treat His father thus? would he say I will not believe what my father says, unless

the servants say it is true? Will you exalt the Council, or the priest above God? Do you honestly say I will not hear God, I will only hear man?

Oh turn to the scriptures and hear God speaking to your soul. You must either know Him now as Justifier; or a day is fast approaching when you must know Him as Judge. Then every sin must be brought to light. Oh, what will sacraments and idolatry do for you in that day? Will you say in that day I preferred my own way, my own righteousness to the great and free salvation of God? How blest every child of God! "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." The Romanist, or Ritualist can never say so. The most he can have is, not *peace*, but an *armistice*. With Him the great question of peace will not be settled until the assembled congress, before the great white throne of judgment. Then it will be for ever too late. If we stand before the Judge to be judged for our sins, then shall no flesh living be justified. One thing is clear, God cannot be both my Justifier and my Judge. He was both to my holy Substitute, in whom I have been judged, and now can only be justified. The infinite claims of my holy Substitute demand my everlasting justification. Oh, blessed God, Thy righteousness denies the possibility of judging me for the sins, which have been laid on Jesus; on Him, once judged, never can they be judged again. I bow my head, and worship in the unclouded peace with Thee, my holy, holy, holy God. Thy majesty, righteousness, and grace, Thine every attribute, in perfect harmony. And I have peace, peace with Thee. Thou, my precious Jesus hast made peace by Thy blood, Thou art that peace to me. Gone, gone every barrier to

Thine everlasting love : now to serve Thee be my only delight.

Oh, fellow believer, wide open is the way into the holiest ! The fatted calf is killed ; all things are ready. The Father says, "let us eat, and be merry." The veil is rent in twain. The precious blood gives boldness. Satan is leading men to stitch up that vail, to shut man outside again in beggarly ritualism, in gloomy misery, afar off from God, with priests between.

What a moment, a nation going back from the profession of Christianity to papal idolatry ! And shall we look on with supine indifference ? How is it that Christians can remain silent, yea, even linked and thus identified with all this grievous insult to God, and denial of His truth ? "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Ritualism is a vast effort of Satan to extinguish the light of the gospel. But "Christ shall give thee light." Let us have faith in God. Greater is He that is for us than all they that be against us. And if God be for us, who are they that are against us ?

C. S.

The prayers of all Christians are asked for the blessing of God on these tracts.



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RAHAB :

OR

THE SIEGE OF JERICHO.

“Now Jericho was straitly shut up.”—JOSHUA VI.

THE iniquity of the Amorite was now full. The time of righteous judgment had arrived. As this was the first of the doomed cities to be destroyed, God has been pleased to give us most interesting details, in which we shall find Himself revealed, both in grace and in judgment. The natural mind may in all this see only wrath and destruction; but the Spirit can reveal God in the richest display of grace. Yea, even in this scene of judgment.

If we turn to chapter ii. we find Joshua sending two men to spy out the land. He may have had only thoughts of judgment; but God had thoughts of mercy, and the two spies are turned into evangelists. And now to shew out the riches of the grace of God, and that no person can be found beyond the reach of mercy, a harlot is selected as the object of that grace. “They went, and come into an harlot’s house and lodged there.” There may have been no better place in that wicked city in which they could lodge. Who can tell the moral condition of that city, and of all the cities of Canaan? For four hundred years had God borne with the ever-increasing iniquity of the Amorites.

This woman’s full character by nature comes

this a striking figure of man's present condition? What has been the state of this world for eighteen hundred years? Is it not guilty of the greatest possible sin—the rejection, and murder of the Son of God? What a vast Jericho this is, shut up in unbelief, and under judgment! “Every mouth stopped and all the world guilty before God” (Rom. iii. 19), or “subject to the judgment of God.”

Has God ever opened your eyes, as He opened the eyes of Rahab? Has your heart ever melted at the thought of the certain judgment that is hastening? Let us return to Jericho shut up. There was no escape but through the house of faith. Every gate was closed, none went out, and none came in. It is so now, every gate is closed, law-gate, ritual-gate, works-gate, merit-gate—all are closed. Man is a sinner without strength. There is only one way of escape. What is it? For the king and all the mighty men of valour were given up to Joshua.

But what is the meaning of this compassing the city with trumpets of rams' horns? “And ye shall compass the city, all ye men of war, and go round about the city once. Thus shalt thou do six days. And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of rams' horns; and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets. And it shall come to pass, that when they make a long blast with the rams' horn, and when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the people shall ascend up before him. And Joshua the son of Nun called the priests, and said unto them, Take up the ark of

the covenant, and let seven priests bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the Lord. And he said unto the people, Pass on, and compass the city, and let him that is armed pass on before the ark of the Lord. And it came to pass, when Joshua had spoken unto the people, that the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns passed on before the Lord, and blew with the trumpets: and the ark of the covenant of the Lord followed them. And the armed men went before the priests that blew with the trumpets, and the rereward came after the ark, the priests going on, and blowing with the trumpets. And Joshua had commanded the people, saying, Ye shall not shout, nor make any noise with your voice, neither shall any word proceed out of your mouth, until the day I bid you shout: then shall ye shout. So the ark of the Lord compassed the city, going about it once: and they came into the camp, and lodged in the camp. And Joshua rose early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of the Lord. And seven priests bearing seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the Lord went on continually, and blew with the trumpets: and the armed men went before them; but the rereward came after the ark of the Lord, the priests going on, and blowing with the trumpets. And the second day they compassed the city once, and returned into the camp: so they did six days. And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they rose early about the dawning of the day, and compassed the city after the same manner seven times: only on that day they compassed the city seven times. And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout; for the Lord hath given you

out: not only is she a harlot, but it seems natural for her to lie. She deceived the king of Jericho, who sent to inquire after these men. Such is the sinner whom God in His grace delights to take up. Divine faith is communicated to her soul and repentance is wrought in her heart. She has self-judgment, and faith in God. She said to the men, "I know that the Lord hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you. For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom he utterly destroyed. And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you; for the Lord your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath." (Joshua ii. 9-11.)

This was very striking, for at that moment Jericho abode in its strength. But faith knew, and the heart did utterly melt. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." "For the Lord your God," said she, "he is God in heaven above, and in the earth beneath." Now is not this beautiful, such faith given to a lost sinner, in a city doomed to destruction?

And now her faith rises higher; she regards the two men as the servants of Jehovah, who cannot lie. Faith claims the kindness of Jehovah, "That ye will also shew kindness unto my father's house, and give me a true token: and that ye will save alive my father, and my mother, and my brethren, and my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death." Faith seems to say, there

is nothing too much to claim from God. Father, mother, brethren, sisters, and all that they have. Do you not think that that ancient faith of Rahab puts many of us to shame? Think of the grasp of that faith—there too in the city of destruction.

Well, God is equal to the utmost demand. He now responds to this noble faith, through His two evangelists, “And the men answered her, Our life for yours, if ye utter not this our business. And it shall be, when the Lord hath given us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with thee.” She then let them down by a cord through the window. And they said, Behold, when we come into the land, thou shalt bind this line of scarlet thread in the window which thou didst let us down by: and thou shalt bring thy father, and thy mother, and thy brethren, and all thy father’s household, home unto thee.” (Ver. 18.) Not only so, but pray mark the two whosoever. “And it shall be, that **WHOSOEVER** shall go out of the doors of thy house into the street, his blood shall be upon his head, and we will be guiltless; and **WHOSOEVER** shall be with thee in the house, his blood shall be on our head, if any hand be upon him.” “And she said, According unto your words, so be it.”

Is not this a wondrous display of grace which God pledges to *whosoever* takes refuge in the house of faith, in this doomed city of wickedness? Not a soul shall perish that takes refuge beneath the shelter of the scarlet line. This is very simple. Judgment is the certain doom of *whosoever* is found in the street of Jericho. Life and salvation, the assured portion of *whosoever* shall be found in the house of faith.

We will now pass on to the siege of Jericho. “Now Jericho was straitly shut up.” Is not

this a striking figure of man's present condition? What has been the state of this world for eighteen hundred years? Is it not guilty of the greatest possible sin—the rejection, and murder of the Son of God? What a vast Jericho this is, shut up in unbelief, and under judgment! “Every mouth stopped and all the world guilty before God” (Rom. iii. 19), or “subject to the judgment of God.”

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the covenant, and let seven priests bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the Lord. And he said unto the people, Pass on, and compass the city, and let him that is armed pass on before the ark of the Lord. And it came to pass, when Joshua had spoken unto the people, that the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns passed on before the Lord, and blew with the trumpets: and the ark of the covenant of the Lord followed them. And the armed men went before the priests that blew with the trumpets, and the rereward came after the ark, the priests going on, and blowing with the trumpets. And Joshua had commanded the people, saying, Ye shall not shout, nor make any noise with your voice, neither shall any word proceed out of your mouth, until the day I bid you shout: then shall ye shout. So the ark of the Lord compassed the city, going about it once: and they came into the camp, and lodged in the camp. And Joshua rose early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of the Lord. And seven priests bearing seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the Lord went on continually, and blew with the trumpets: and the armed men went before them; but the rereward came after the ark of the Lord, the priests going on, and blowing with the trumpets. And the second day they compassed the city once, and returned into the camp: so they did six days. And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they rose early about the dawning of the day, and compassed the city after the same manner seven times: only on that day they compassed the city seven times. And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout; for the Lord hath given you

the city. And the city shall be accursed, even it and all that are therein, to the Lord: only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all that are with her in the house, because she hid the messengers that we sent." (Joshua vi. 3-17.)

Is not this the long-suffering of our God, not willing that any should perish. Long had He borne with the wickedness of this city whilst Israel was in Egypt; and now the *whosoever* principle of divine grace must be fully tested. Rahab sees the destroying host approach the city. But what a strange sight—what can that object wholly of blue be? If we turn to Numbers iv. 5 we shall learn: "And when the camp setteth forward, Aaron shall come, and his sons, and they shall take down the covering vail, and cover the ark of testimony with it: and shall put thereon the covering of badgers' skins, and shall spread over it a cloth wholly of blue." It is the ark of the Lord with its blood-sprinkled mercy-seat covered with a cloth wholly of blue. Blue is the heavenly colour. And was it not wholly of God that mercy should compass the city of destruction? Does not this seem to speak to us? "For God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Now Rahab hears the sound of seven trumpets of rams' horns: from seven priests walking before the ark, as they pass on before the ark of the Lord. To her faith these would be the soft sweet sounds of mercy.

See her there persuading her old father to take shelter beneath the scarlet line. No sooner is he in, than that sweet word "*whosoever*" cheers her on; a mother—ah, it is not always the work of a moment to persuade a mother and a father to

believe the bare word of God ! and now, brothers and sisters.

The trumpets still sound ; and the city is compassed the first day. I do not know how many are housed the first day ; but not one of that household must be lost. Another day that ark of the Lord, with its covering of blue, and those seven trumpets sweetly sounding, must surround the doomed city. Oh, how our God delights in mercy ! Now brother, now sister, now “ whosoever ; ” oh, hasten to the house of safety ! Blow, ye priests, blow softly and sweetly ; it is our God that welcomes the sinner in. Do not shout or make a noise yet, these are days of mercy ; count them one to seven ; oh, how perfectly welcome all ye whosoever, welcome every one. Blow, ye priests, for God is glorious in His mercy, heavenly and righteous all the city round.

Oh, how cheered is believing Rahab ! See her gathering in the crowd. All are welcome, whosoever, everyone. Early in the dawn of the morning, they take the ark, and sound the trumpets, wakening notes of threatening judgments to the ears of unbelief. Continually they blow the trumpets ; God would have it so. Oh, the heart of God ! not a child of faith should perish, not one be left behind. Six days did they thus compass the devoted city—not one day, but seven days, did the ark, emblem of God’s throne of mercy, compass the city.

But this is not enough. The mercy of God must be manifested to the utmost. On that seventh day, that last day of long-suffering, forbearance, and mercy, those trumpets must sound the blasts of judgment, and strains of mercy, seven times around the city.

And now the last trumpet must sound. The last soul is gathered to the place of safety. The great shout is heard, and then the sudden crash of judgment comes, and not one found in the streets of Jericho escaped. Where now is Rahab, and all that took shelter beneath the shadow of the scarlet line? Will God fail to fulfil the word of His servants, that they would deal kindly and truly with her?

In God's dealing with her kindly and truly, two things must be observed. She was brought out; and she was brought in. *Out* from the city of destruction—*in* to the privileges of Israel. "And the young men went in, and brought out Rahab, and her father, and her mother, and her brethren, and all that she had, and they brought out all her kindred, and left them without the camp of Israel. And they burnt the city with fire, and all that was therein."

Kindly and truly as God did thus deal with this child of faith, and all with her, yet if this had been all, it would come far short as a picture of the exceeding grace of God to us. "And Joshua saved Rahab the harlot alive, and her father's household, and all that she had; and she dwelleth in Israel even unto this day; because she hid the messengers which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho."

Thus was she brought out, and thus was she brought in. Saved out of, and from the doom of Jericho; brought into all the royal privileges of Israel. Grace translated the harlot of Jericho into the most honoured mother in Israel—a mother in that royal line from whom David, and David's greater son was born. She became the wife of Salmon, the father of Booz. (Matt. i. 5.) Kindly

and truly did God deal with her, and, to all in that city of wickedness who believed the word of Jehovah.

I would now ask my reader to notice in this beautiful history, four things, which strikingly illustrate the sinner shut up under judgments; the sinner brought into the place of safety; the saint brought out of the place of judgment; the saint brought into the privileges of the church of God.

We have seen Jericho straitly shut up. And though the trumpet of warning and mercy blew long, yet the terrible crash of judgment came at last. It was similar in the days of Noah, when the long-suffering of God waited one hundred and twenty years. But at last the flood came and destroyed them all. Again in the days of Lot, what a night of wickedness; and though the sun arose once more in all its eastern splendour on the doomed city; yet when Lot was out of Sodom, God rained fire and brimstone and destroyed them all.

Is there not equally distinct testimony in the word of God as to the end of this age? Men may no more believe it than they did in the days of Noah, but Jesus has said, "Now is the judgment of this world." The Holy Ghost sent down consequent on the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ convicts the world of the awful sin of the murder of Christ. Yea, that all have sinned, and are under the judgment of God.

Nothing can be more clear and certain than the teaching of Christ, that the end of the age will be as it was in the days of Noah, and of Lot. Read Matthew xxiv.; and Luke xvii. 24-32: "Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of

man is revealed." In Luke xxi. you may trace from the past destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, to the coming again of the Lord Jesus, with power and glory, and you will find that just as the destruction of Jericho came like a snare, so shall the judgment of this world come, "For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth."

I know Satan has persuaded men, there is no truth in these scriptures; that they need not fear—a good time is coming. But the apostle says, "For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety: then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape." Will not this be as it was in Jericho? There was no escape. Though long delayed, the crash of judgment came at last. And "the Lord Jesus Christ shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power." (2 Thess. i. 7.)

Now read 2 Peter iii. Are we not assured by this scripture of truth, that though scoffers shall come, questioning and denying all these things; yet the heavens and the earth are kept in store, reserved unto fire, against the day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men? But just as the Lord was long-suffering in the days of Jericho, so again, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should

perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up," &c. No doubt this takes in the day of the Lord in its fullest sense; but I ask, God having thus spoken, is it reasonable to doubt His word, or explain it away? Surely not.

Now have you ever been really awakened, like Rahab, to believe the word of God? What a grave position this really is! A sinner in a world under judgment—a judgment from which there will be no escape. You may say, but will there not be a millennium of blessing to this earth? Certainly! But did the millennium hinder the destruction of Jericho? Neither will it hinder the judgments coming on this world. It will come in its place. But judgment is the end, and doom, of the present age.

Such then is the condition of every soul in the world that has not passed from death unto life. Shut up, waiting the judgment of Christ. Oh, think of everlasting destruction from His presence. What would you feel if the dearest friend you have on earth, had committed some crime against the law of the land; and was at this moment in the condemned cell, waiting execution? But what is this compared to everlasting punishment? And how terrible, when the longsuffering of God only hardens the heart! It is an undeniable fact, God hath said it, "The whole world lieth in wickedness." Rahab was deeply convinced of the condition and doom of Jericho; are you as deeply convinced of your own condition and ever-

lasting doom, unless saved in pure undeserved love?

We will now look at the second point illustrated, the sinner brought into the place of safety. There was faith in Rahab: "I know that the Lord hath given you the land." There was repentance, self-judgment: "As soon as we heard these things our hearts did melt." And there was prayer: "I pray you swear unto me by the Lord." Blessed marks of the work of the Holy Spirit in the sinner! And is it not to be noted that every desire the spirit prompteth, is answered to the utmost? Did not God give her a true token? Did He not deal kindly and truly with her? Did He not save alive her father and mother, brethren and sisters, and all that they had? Did He not fulfil to the utmost bounds of "whosoever?" Ah, will not this once-lost harlot rise up in judgment against thousands who have rejected the kindness of God?

And is there not something very beautiful in the way in which the priests compassed the city of destruction? I am struck with the position of the ark. Before they had crossed the Jordan they were to go after the ark, even in the very last march into Jordan. "When ye see the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, and the priests the Levites bearing it, then ye shall remove from your place, and go after it." (Josh. iii. 3, 4.) And there was to be a space between it and them of two thousand cubits. But now they are in the land, blowing the rams' horns, the ark must be behind them. They must be in the land to surround Jericho, and sound the trumpet. No person can sound the true gospel of God to a lost world until he knows his standing through the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and sees

himself dead with Him, and risen in Him. Redemption is not a thing before him now ; once it was, when a seeking soul ; now it is behind him accomplished once, and for ever. It is important to be quite clear about this before sounding the trumpet to others. Is the passage of the Jordan before you, or behind you ? And more, is the ark before you, or behind you ? Is the propitiatory, the mercy seat before you, or behind you ? Truly *with* us, but not before us. The propitiatory sacrifice once offered, finished, accomplished. When that work was before the soul, and Jesus had not been offered up, the true expression of the heart was prayer : "Forgive us our trespasses." Now that work has been accomplished, and we have passed with the true ark through Jordan, as it is written, "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins, and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, *having forgiven you all trespasses.*" Our joy now is to give thanks and to rejoice in Christ "in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins." Thus now the true expression of the heart is praise and thanksgiving.

Let then the servants of the Lord who know that they have crossed the Jordan ; who know that they are dead and risen with Christ ; who know that God for Christ's sake hath forgiven their sins ; let such compass this whole world of sin and judgment, and sound aloud the trumpet of salvation.

God is pledged to deal kindly and truly. He hath given a sure token. He hath given His only-begotten Son. What the scarlet line was as a figure

to "whosoever" believed the word of God in the city of Jericho, such and much more so, is the precious blood of the Lamb. It was fastened in the window—He was nailed to the cross. He died for our sins according to the scriptures. "The just for the unjust to bring us to God." God was pledged in that wicked city to whosoever. God is pledged to this wicked world, that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life. If the heart of God lingered then for four hundred years, it has now waited in long-suffering grace for eighteen hundred years.

Oh, let us compass this wide world with sounds of mercy ; blow continually ; blow softly, the household of faith is being gathered in. Have you a father, a mother, brothers, sisters, yet under judgments? for he that believeth not, is condemned already.

Oh, call them in.

The poor and wretched.

God is waiting,

Call them in.

When that believing company was gathered into the house on the wall, they were safe beneath the scarlet line. It was not a question how vile they had been, but giving up all other hope of escape, they were brought in faith to take refuge beneath the scarlet line. There and there alone they were safe. The trumpet blast of alarm to all beside, was the soft strain of mercy and safety to them.

Now, I ask, is this not a stupendous fact, that God is pledged to deal kindly and truly with whosoever, amongst the lost and guilty, shall take refuge beneath the blood-stained cross of Christ? But those evangelists preach a very defective gospel

who would only bring the sinner to the cross and leave him there. This is not deliverance. All this—the scarlet line, the true token, the gathering them to the house of Rahab—all this was but preparatory to two things. The purpose of God was to bring them out, and to bring them in. It is all important to notice this. The same thing may be seen in Israel's redemption from Egypt; Israel, in the house sheltered by the blood sprinkled on the doorpost, was just like the elect company in the house of Rahab, sheltered by the scarlet line; both pointing to the sinner brought to take shelter beneath the cross of Christ. But the judgment on Egypt, the death of the paschal lamb, the blood that shut out the avenger—all this was preparatory to two things, as Moses says, "He brought us out from thence, that he might bring us in, to give us the land that he swore to our fathers." (Deut. vi. 23.) In like manner the work of the Lord Jesus on the cross, and the work of the Spirit in bringing the sinner by repentance and faith, to take shelter beneath the precious blood of Christ, all this is preparatory to these same two things; to bring us out, that He may bring us in. The passage of the Red Sea was the bringing them out, the passage of the Jordan was the bringing them in. Just so, according to the word of Joshua. The young men "brought out Rahab, and her father, and her mother, and her brethren, and all that she had, and they brought out all her kindred, and left them without the camp of Israel." Thus the deliverance from the scene of judgment was complete. They were now saved alive; not a stroke of judgment fell on them. See them there outside the camp in perfect safety. The crash of destruction falls upon the doomed city, upon whosoever believeth not, but not one of the

whosoever perished who believed the glad tidings of shelter in the house of Rahab. So far, then, God dealt kindly and truly with her ; and all that believed. But God's kindness went far beyond this ; as we have seen, she was brought INTO all the privileges and heirship of the house of Israel.

Have you ever thought of what the believer is not only brought out of, but brought into? He is indeed sheltered by the blood : "When I see the blood I will pass over." Oh, depth of mercy ! the blood of Jesus shelters my soul from every stroke of deserved wrath. And more, we are not left in Egypt beneath the sprinkled blood, blessed as that blood is ; but He "hath delivered us from the power of darkness." (Col. i. 13.) Sheltered and delivered. Read on : "And hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son."

Now, what are we brought into? We have seen Rahab the harlot brought into joint heirship with Israel ; a joint partaker of their hopes and inheritance. Can you take in this marvellous translation? From the depths of sin, in that city of iniquity, to joint heirship in the future throne of the Israel of Jehovah? And the word says there she dwelleth to this day. Such grace must be permanent and everlasting. What a figure or type of the riches of the glory of His grace ! Surpassingly strange as this is, it is no less strange than true. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God ; and if children then heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ ; if so be that we suffer with him that we may be glorified together." We must not for a moment judge of our destiny by our present condition ; it may be suffering and deep sorrows here. If Rahab became a joint-heir in Israel's earthly in-

heritance, all God's "whosoever" now are made joint-heirs with Christ; one with Him in all that awaits him, as heir of all things. Do not forget that it is His own work that fits us for this; we can only bow the heart, "Giving thanks unto the Father, which *hath* made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." When Israel were buried unto Moses in the Red Sea, they were out of Egypt; when they came out of Jordan with Joshua, they were in the land. We are not only buried with Christ, but risen with Him, through the faith of the operation of God, who raised Him from the dead. (Col. ii. 12.) Thus God reckons us dead with Christ, and risen with Christ. "He who knew no sin, was made sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in him." Through His death we have passed *out* of the place of judgment. With Him in resurrection we have entered into joint-heirship with Himself. Everlasting life our portion, joint-heirship our everlasting destiny. Was not this what the Lord meant in His commission to Paul, "To open their eyes, and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me?" (Acts xxvi. 18.)

Oh yes, not only deliverance from Satan, but the bright inheritance of the sanctified, by faith in Him. And is not this what the Father hath begotten us unto, according to His abundant mercy by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead? "To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you." (1 Pet. i. 4.) Calm and certain hope, amidst the trials of the wilderness! And was not this very dear to the heart of Paul, in that parting scene

with the elders from Ephesus, knowing as he did how every thing in the professing church was coming to the bad? "And now, brethren I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified." (Acts xx. 32.)

I beg of you then, do not for a moment suppose that deliverance from wrath by the precious blood of Christ, is the whole gospel of God, blessed as that is; neither allow the thought, that the inheritance was an after-thought, or attainable by a few of the children of God, by some work or effort of their own. No, joint-heirship with the risen Christ, is the predestined inheritance of every member of the body of Christ, of every child of God, from the descent of the Holy Ghost (Acts ii.) to the taking of the church to be with Christ. (1 Thess. iv.)

To the glory of His grace be it known, that during this unexampled period of wickedness, God has no less, no other favour to bestow, than the predestined inheritance of the saints. What then is the believer's inheritance? This can only be answered as you would answer the question what is the believer's justification, in its completest sense? He stood in the believer's stead, bare his sins in His body on the tree, as his Substitute bare the wrath due to him. (Isa. liii.) In His resurrection the believer is justified from sin, and sins once charged to and borne by Him, as He says, "He is near that justifieth me; who shall condemn me?" (Isa. l. 8, 9.) All this is reckoned to the believer. "He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." What could not be done by me as a sinner, is done by Him for me, and reck-

oned to me. So that if you ask, What and where is my justifying righteousness? I point to the risen Christ, my representative in the glory. Who can condemn Him, therefore, who can condemn me? What is my justification then? It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again. Look not at self; look off to Christ. What He is, is the completeness of our justification. Just as truly as what He was on the cross was our complete condemnation. In like manner whatever is the inheritance of Christ is the inheritance of every child of God now, co-heir, joint-heir with Christ. To use a legal term, we are tenants in common with Christ over the universe (His own essential glory as God of course excepted). Immense and glorious as it is, yet how fully and how simply this is revealed in scripture! What could be more simple in the case of Rahab? What was the inheritance of this poor sinner? Whatever was the inheritance and destiny of Israel? What is the inheritance of every sinner saved by grace now? Whatever is the inheritance of Christ.

Now do not misunderstand, let us not be occupied with a mere doctrine, however true: but with the fact that this inheritance is predestined. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." (Rom. viii. 29.) There is no break in the golden links from predestination to glory. There can be no separation betwixt Christ and the co-heirs. Precious Jesus! Has he not said it? "And the glory that thou hast given me, I have given them." (John xvii. 22.)

Now turn to Ephesians i. 11. Do you see this tracing of the plan drawn in eternity? God hath dealt kindly and truly with us. We are not viewed here as still in Egypt, beneath the shelter of the blood : or in the house of Rahab, sheltered with the scarlet line ; all important in their place. Here we have entered into our heavenly land. "Blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." Here all is of God ; like the ark behind us, all covered with blue. It is God that hath chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world, "having predestinated us unto the adoption of children." Here we are accepted in the beloved ; "in whom we have redemption, through his blood the forgiveness of sins." Follow the tracing : "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."

We are also here sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, "which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession." Well might the apostle so earnestly pray that they might know the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints. Now Christ is revealed to the soul in the high heavenly places, "Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come ; and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." Think of being a joint-heir in all this ! What a tracing of the eternal plan ! At present we can scarcely bear the thought, destined to dwell one with Him, above all principality and power. All

things put under His feet. Thrones and crowns, and royal sceptres, around that throne in unclouded light await the redeemed of the Lord. Surely Moses and Elias speaking with Him in glory in the mount, was a bright figure of our co-heirship with Christ. What holy scenes of power, and love, and service, await us in the joint reign with Christ!

Satan may here suggest that though grace did bring the harlot Rahab, and whosoever believed the reports, into the blessing and privileges of Israel: yet surely, none but the most worthy of mankind can be thus associated with Christ, over all things. But as it was then, it is even so now, as grace compassed the city of iniquity ripe for judgment, and brought out every sinner that believed, so now grace has surrounded this world, ripe for judgment, ever since it rejected and murdered the Son of God. And this is the character of those grace now gathers to be the joint-heirs of Christ.

“And you who were dead in trespasses and sins, wherein in time passed ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the Prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. Among whom also we all had our conversation in time past, in the lust of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the mind: and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.” Oh, the greatness of that love of God, the riches of that mercy who takes up such lost sinners, and raises them up with Christ, even into joint-heirship with Him! and thus shall the exceeding riches of His grace and kindness to us be shewn in the ages to come. Surely He hath dealt kindly and truly with us, as well as with Rahab of old.

I have only a few words to add. Our adorable Lord is waiting there on the Father's throne, until

the last co-inheritor is gathered from this city of Jericho. It is not until the church is complete, that He takes His place in the midst of the throne. (Rev. v.). Until then He says, "Let not your heart be troubled, neither be afraid! ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions : if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again to receive you unto myself ; that where I am there ye may be also." (John xiv. 1-3.) My fellow believer, are not these words true? Do they not come from the very heart of Christ? Joshua sent the spies to take out Rahab ; Christ Himself will come and take us out of this doomed world. "The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God ; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air ; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (1 Thess. iv. 16, 17.) But if this is the blessed hope of the children of God—the Rahab household of faith ; all that are Christ's at His coming—the crash of judgments on the rejectors is not less certain. "For when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child : and they shall not escape." The coming of Joshua to Jericho had two very distinct characters : The salvation and entrance of Rahab into the joint privileges of Israel ; and the terrible fiery destruction of all that were found outside the household of faith. Just so, the coming of the Lord has two distinct characters : First, He comes to take His own without sin unto salvation. They enter into

rest and glory. They see Him as He is and are like Him; for ever with the Lord. Then after that when the now hated and persecuted saints are in rest, "the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." (2 Thess. 1, 7.)

The scriptures are largely occupied with these two aspects of the coming of the Lord. Which is before my reader? Have you been brought as a lost and ruined sinner like Rahab to take shelter beneath the blood of Jesus? Do you believe God in His kindness and love, nay more in His righteousness, has provided that place of shelter? Has He in pure grace delivered you from the wrath to come? Then can you not trust with child-like certainty His word? Are you waiting for Him from heaven, to come and introduce you into that home of love and holy delight, the unclouded presence and glory of God? A little more conflict. And those who walk before the ark do indeed need to be armed with the whole armour of God. The better we know our destined place in the heavens, the more will wicked spirits in the heavenlies dispute it.

Rise up, my brethren, and, fully armed, march on before the ark of the Lord. Sound the gospel trumpet loudly, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. It is our Master's voice who says, "Surely I come quickly." Do not grieve the Spirit by half-hearted doubts. Do not say, If I may but be just saved. No, no, none will be merely just saved. If saved at all, you will be brought into all

that Christ is; as surely as you have borne the image of the earthy, you shall bear the image of the heavenly. Without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. Unblamable in holiness, in His presence with exceeding glory. Thus our God and Father speaks to us, and shews us the riches of His grace in the history of Rahab and the siege of Jericho. And soon shall we say, One half hath not been told us, of His boundless love. To Him all praise. Amen.

C. S.



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WHY DO WE MEET IN HIS NAME ALONE?

THIS is a question often put to those who meet in the name of the Lord Jesus. Many have expressed a desire that a plain tract might be written on the subject. The following considerations are affectionately presented to all the beloved children of God.

First. THE WORTHINESS OF CHRIST! It is "God who hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow," "and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father:" Phil. ii. 9, 11. Thus hath our blessed God and Father delighted to honour Him, who "is the head of the body the Church; who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence:" Col. i. 18. In this name, so precious to every believer, did all *Christians* meet in the days of the apostles; and when the veil of the future was drawn aside, what did John the servant of Jesus Christ behold? When he saw Jesus Christ he says, "his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength. And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as

dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, fear not; I am the first and the last:" Rev. i. 16, 17.

"A door was opened in Heaven." What a sight! The vision of the future glory of the Lamb in the midst of the millions and millions of the redeemed. A Lamb as it had been slain.

"And they sung a new song." What will it be to be there; to hear that swell of joy unspeakable—to join that song? Not one redeemed to God by his blood will refuse to sing "Thou art worthy." Angelic hosts cry with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and honour, and glory, and blessing:" yea, all redeemed creation shall be heard saying, "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever:" Rev. v. 6, 14.

Thus shall our adorable Lord be adored, and owned in heaven and throughout all creation. This is God's estimate of the risen Christ; who once died for our sins,—the just for the unjust, to bring us to God. And thus shall God's will be done in heaven. Should an anxious, troubled soul read these lines, mark well that this is the *redemption-glory* of Christ. And who were those worshipping millions, redeemed by his blood? Dying thieves, Mary Magdalenes; sinners of the city. And is Jesus worthy of bringing such to glory? Yes, the Most Holy, Holy, Holy God says, He is worthy! and all creation shout Amen. Oh, do you, my reader, now give God credit? Such is the worthiness of this risen Jesus, that God says, "Be it known unto you that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses:" Acts xiii. 38. Thus Salvation is wholly through

Christ. Blessed are they who can say "*We have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.*"

I do not presume to be able to set forth by pen, or tongue, the glorious pre-eminence of Christ. I point to the Scriptures, that so clearly declare the worthiness of Christ. But many who read this paper will say, What true christian doubts for a moment the worthiness of Christ, or the greatness of his exalted name? True, true, there is a chord in every christian's heart that responds to the name of Jesus. But the question is how much, or how great, is that worthiness? There may be one thousand christians in a town; or ten thousand in a city—I mean such as really have redemption through the blood of Christ; whose sins are forgiven. Now if Jesus be worthy of the *united* praise and worship of all creation, if all the millions of the redeemed in heaven shall gather around his adorable person, then, is he not worthy of the united worship of one thousand in a town, and ten thousand in a city, on earth? Surely in heaven every name and sect must fall. And why not on earth? It is a great mistake to suppose, then, that we separate from every name and sect, because we think ourselves better than the dear children of God in those sects; far be the thought; no! it is because *Jesus is worthy*,—yes, worthy the sacrifice of at once giving up every name and sect, and of gathering to his blessed name and person alone. Yes, my fellow believer, He is worthy, that you, whoever you are, and to whatever sect you belong; He is worthy that you should own no other name but his. What must angels think, knowing and delighting, as they do, in the exalted name of Jesus, when they see our ways on earth? The divisions on earth must present a dark contrast to the unity of heaven. In many places, all God's redeemed people may be seen bearing various names:

and not two even, or three, meet in the whole town in the name of Jesus alone. And yet, most assuredly Jesus is worthy that every believer in the place should meet only in his name. Now, if God's will is so plainly done in heaven, by all gathering to the person of the Lamb, how can I pray "Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven," unless I am prepared to give up every name and sect on earth, as it is done in heaven? Would it not be more consistent to say—I have been in such a sect, and all my friends are there; excuse me therefore from doing thy will on earth, as I shall do it, and as it is done, in heaven. Is it narrowness to do the will of God on earth, as it is done in heaven? Is it too much to own the Lordship of Christ, to the glory of God the Father, and to own no other but Christ? God sets the highest value on the name of Jesus. Man says it is no matter what name you bear. Every Christian who owns the Lordship of Jesus, who has visited the Romish places of worship on the continent, must have been deeply pained at the reverence paid to the name of the Virgin. And is not human nature the same in England? Is there not the same idolatrous tendency where any name is owned as the head of a sect? As that name is exalted, the name of Jesus is disowned, until at length it is a small matter to be a Christian, but a great one to belong to the sect. Surely this is wood, hay, and stubble, that will not endure the coming day. In the days of the apostles, Jesus was the name exalted above every name. To exalt another, though it were a Paul, or a Cephas, was denounced by the Spirit of God as carnality and schism. *Even to tolerate* another name, or names, was virtually to lower the glorious Christ to the level of a mere man: 1 Cor. i. 12; iii. 4, 5.

Is it not the same now? Jesus is worthy of the united worship of the millions of the redeemed who

shall be gathered in heaven ; therefore he is worthy of the united worship and praise of all christians now on earth. Whatever others may do, whether they own that name alone, before the world or not ; fellow believer, if thou desirest to do the will of God, thy path is plain—give up every name and sect, and meet only in the name of Jesus, heaven's exalted Lord. A question may now arise in the mind as to what order of church government is really according to the mind of God. This leads us to the

2nd consideration :—The sovereignty of the Spirit of God, as the second reason why we meet in the name of the Lord Jesus alone. Before Jesus left this world, whilst in the midst of his sorrowing disciples, he said, “I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever ; even the Spirit of truth ; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him : but ye know him ; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you :” John xiv. 16, 17.

The Lord Jesus solemnly promised that this Comforter or guardian should teach us all things. Jesus says, “HE SHALL TESTIFY OF ME :” xv. 26. Observe, Jesus did not promise an influence ; but the real, divine person of the Holy Ghost ; as real a person as Jesus. And as really as Jesus had testified of the Father, so really should the Spirit testify of Jesus. And further, that HE, the Holy Spirit, should guide us into all truth. “HE shall glorify ME :” xvi. 13. This promise God hath fulfilled. Jesus being glorified on high, God hath sent the Holy Ghost : Acts ii. 4—38. Now from that moment, we search in vain in the New Testament for any church government except the sovereign guidance of the Holy Ghost. As really as the blessed Jesus had been present with the disciples in the Gospels, equally so is the Holy Ghost present with the church in the Acts. Pentecost was a

marvellous display of the presence and power fo the Holy Ghost. And again, "When they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness:" iv. 31. Yea, so real was the presence of the Holy Ghost, that Peter in the case of Ananias, said "Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost?" &c.: v. 3. And when the Gospel was preached to the Gentiles, the Holy Ghost fell on them, in like manner: xi. 15. Also at Antioch:—xiii. 52. And how marked the guidance of the Spirit, to the apostle Paul and his companions, when "forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia," and when they would have gone to Bithynia, "but the Spirit suffered them not:" xvi. 6, 7. See also xix. 2. If we now turn to 1 Cor. xii., the government of the Spirit in the church is stated with the utmost clearness: "Now there are diversities of gift, but the same Spirit." "But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal."

This passage is often applied to the world, in violent opposition to that scripture which saith, "the world cannot receive him, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him:" John xiv. 17. But whatever variety of gift in the church, "all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will:" 1 Cor. xii. 11.

Now tell me what denomination *thus* owns the Spirit of God in our day. Nay, the moment any assembly of christians do *thus* own the Spirit of God, that moment they cease to be a sect, or denomination; because the Holy Ghost would not honour any name, but the name of Jesus. Now let us compare an assembly 1,800 years ago, with a denominational assembly now; and this will be plain. All the Christians in a neighbourhood assembled together in

the name of Jesus ; the Spirit gave diversities of gifts ; some were gifted to preach, others to teach, others to exhort, and so on with all the various manifestations of the Spirit. And he, the Spirit, was really present in their midst, dividing to every man severally as he would. They speak two or three—if anything is revealed to another that sitteth by, the first holds his peace—and this is the order of God ; as we read (1 Cor. xiv. 29—33), “Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge. If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace. For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted. And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.” *When* the sovereign guidance of the Spirit of God *was* owned, this was plainly the order. Now let us enter an assembly belonging to any denomination of the present day. Tell me where is the Holy Spirit, either expected, or allowed, to divide to every man severally, as he will. This may not be intentional ; the presidency of the Holy Ghost is forgotten. A man fills his place ; and, whether led of, or happy in, the Spirit or not, he *must* occupy that time. This disowning of the personal presence, and sovereign guidance of God the Holy Ghost, is most sad every way. The diverse gifts are not exercised ; the work of the ministry becomes a burthen to the one man. But more than all, God is disowned in the assembly for guidance in worship ; and a human order, or rather, every kind of human disorder, takes the place. It may sound well to call it liberty of conscience ; but where is the liberty of the Spirit of God, to use whom he will, for the edification of the church of God ? Is this a light matter ? Was not the disowning the guidance and government of God,

by his people Israel, and the desire to have a man in God's place, the first sad step in the downward path of that people? And what is the history of the prophets but that of a few men (in the midst of general departure from God) still finding, and holding fast this blessed reality—the presence of God? How solemn the teaching in the book of Jeremiah: he sat alone, yet called by the name of the Lord God of Hosts—how sweet were the words of the Lord to him, “Let them return unto thee; but return not thou unto them:” See Jer. xv., 16—21.

Such is the solemn, yet blessed place of all, in these days, who have been led to own the real presence of the Holy Ghost in the assembly. The Lord's words have indeed been found to be sweeter than man's. Oh that all God's dear children, in every denomination, knew the blessedness of unfeigned subjection of heart to the sovereign guidance of the Holy Ghost. Where there is this, not in mere form but in reality, he does testify of Christ in such a manner, that no human wisdom can even imitate. Often the hymns by one, the prayers by others, and the reading of the word, as led by the Holy Ghost, so manifest the divine guidance, and give such a sense of the presence of God, as can only be enjoyed where the Spirit of God is thus owned. I cannot then go, where He is not owned whom the Father hath sent to guide us and guard us, and abide with us unto the end. It is no matter what may be substituted—whether the Pope, or the Emperor, or the Queen, or the Conference, or the minister—God is right, and man is wrong. It is not a question of opinion, but of owning or displacing the Holy Ghost, as the sovereign guide and ruler of the assembly. I have found the reality of His very presence; and for this I must be separate from every community—Greek, Romish, or Protestant, all alike—where he is not thus owned.

I now state the third reason why we meet in the name of Christ alone—THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH ; or more correctly, the unity of the one body. I am not aware, that there is such a passage of Scripture as, one church, but there is, "one body:" Eph. iv. 4. The word translated church, simply means assembly. It is so used to describe a crowd of heathen, in Acts xix. 32, 39. The church of God is the assembly of God: saved persons in every place, who assembled as such, to worship God; all their sins being put away for ever: Heb. x. Such an *assembly* they were not to forsake. No other assembly can possibly be called a church or assembly of God. Nor could even such an assembly be truly called the church of God, unless that assembly truly owned God the Holy Ghost, to *guide*, and *guard* them, in all things; as the assemblies of God did in the days of the apostles. Take the following illustration:—Suppose her Majesty the Queen sends out a commander-in-chief to the British army in India; and that for a time the army puts itself entirely under his command. It could then be properly called the army of her Majesty. But if that army were to set aside the commander-in-chief, and appoint another of their own; or if the army should divide into separate parts, each division appointing its own commander; each soldier might be still a British soldier, but could that divided army be correctly called the army of her Majesty? Having set aside the authority of her Majesty's appointed commander-in-chief, would not every division be in a state of mutiny? And would it not be disloyalty to join the ranks of any such mutinous division?

Now apply this to the church, or assembly of God. For a time the authority of the Holy Ghost, sent down from heaven, was owned, just as the British army for a time owned the authority of her Majesty's commander-in-chief. Then the Sovereign authority

of the Spirit of God was set aside, and the authority of the Pope of Rome was put in the place of God the Holy Ghost. Can the Church of Rome, then, be called the true church of God? Impossible! she has mutinied against God's Commander-in-chief, the Holy Ghost. To join her ranks is disloyalty to Christ. But if I must declare the whole counsel of God, am I not compelled to adopt the same conclusions respecting every division of the professing church? Take the Greek Church: has it not set aside the command of the Holy Ghost? And though it put so high a person as the Emperor of all the Russias in the place of the Holy Ghost, yet would it not be mutiny to join its ranks? Take again what is called the Church of England. Are we not compelled to acknowledge, that the sovereign command of the blessed Spirit is entirely set aside. As in Russia, so in England, the head of the world's government is made the head of the church; and instead of the Holy Ghost being allowed to divide, severally, as He will, a prime minister, whatever his principles may be, can appoint a minister over a given town or village, and according to this system, no other person ought dare to name the name of Christ, in that so-called parish. Only this post, I have a letter from a Christian lady in such a town. A young woman had just been to request her to see her dying husband. She went, and put Jesus before the dying man. He appeared very thankful, and wished to see her again. She left him three gospel tracts: as she came out the vicar met her, and in the most authoritative manner, bid her only attend to the bodily wants of the dying man; that his soul's affairs were his, (the vicar's,) business alone. When he left he took all the three tracts with him. Oh, when I think of the eternal interests of that poor man, dying this day; his young weeping, anxious wife by his side, and then think of the

delusion that I know that vicar will put before him, my heart turns sick at the fearful results in thousands of such instances; all springing from the solemn fact, that the Church of England disowns the sovereign guidance of the Spirit of God. Do you think it possible that the Spirit of God could appoint such a man: a man who will enter the cottages of the poor, and take their gospel tracts, and put them in the fire? Could Satan desire more sad departure from the Spirit's rule? Surely then, I cannot be loyal to Christ, and join, or sanction, such a mutinous system. No; so far from the Church of England, being the true Church of God, it is only a piece of the world governed by the world—in fact the very opposite of the church of God, which is gathered out of the world, and governed by the Spirit of God. I am compelled then to leave her communion, if I would own the personal guidance of the Holy Ghost, just as much as I am compelled to leave the Church of Rome. It cannot perhaps be said that she has set aside the Spirit. She never knew the Spirit's sovereign guidance. Henry VIII. certainly was not the Spirit of God; and yet, he was the first head and governor of the Church of England—sad dark contrast to the church of the Scriptures!

And as I have before proved, every other division of the professing church fails to recognise the personal government of the Holy Ghost, and sets up a government of its own; therefore, no division of the professing church can be called the true assembly or church of God, any more than a division of the British army which failed to recognise the commander-in-chief, and set up a commander of its own, could be called the true army of her Majesty the Queen.

I am fully aware that the personal guidance of the blessed Spirit of God has been so long forgotten, that it is most difficult to make even Christians understand

what is meant. Take another illustration:—A certain nobleman is announced to preside over a public meeting of the inhabitants of any given town. The meeting assembles, the nobleman comes, he stands on the platform, but no body recognises him; he speaks, but still no one knows him. Message after message is sent to his house, begging him to come; they then desire his influence, and not knowing his personal presence, they appoint some one else to preside. Such is a precise picture of the divisions of the present day. However we may have grieved and disowned the Spirit, still that precious promise is fulfilled, “And he (the Father) shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.” Yes, as the nobleman was present, though not known, when the letters were sent to his house, even so in the assembly of Christians the Holy Ghost has come, is present, at the very time prayer is being offered, in ignorance, for him to come from heaven. Yea, to hear many Christians pray, one would almost think that they were praying for an influence. Would it not be shocking to speak of God the Father as an influence? Would it not be most revolting to say the life of God the Son, on earth, was only an allegory or an influence? And is not God the Holy Ghost as real a person now on earth, as Jesus was when on earth, and now is in heaven? What a commander is to an army, or a president is to a meeting, such is the Holy Ghost to the assembly of God: commanding, directing, using whom He will. Where He is not thus owned, no assembly even of Christians can be called God’s assembly. And hence, from all such assemblies I must separate, if I would be loyal to God.

But it may be objected, Has there not been failure and division amongst those who *professed* to own the Spirit of God? Sadly true; but nothing could more

clearly prove the truth of these statements, respecting the Spirit's presence. What has been the cause of all the sorrow and division? The setting aside the sovereign guidance of the Holy Ghost. But to say that failure is a reason why any should not own the guidance of the Spirit in the assembly, or refer to it as an excuse for remaining where He is disowned; is like a person saying because he, or any other Christian, has failed in walk, that therefore he should, as an individual, cease to walk in the Spirit. Should not our past sins and failures make us the more watchful and earnest to walk in the Spirit? He alone is the safeguard of the Christian and the Church. Blessed guardian! The source of every failure the church has ever had, has been by disowning the guidance of the Spirit; no matter what comes, if she only trusts her blessed guardian, all is well. So with the Christian: if walking in the flesh, a straw may cause a fall, but if walking in the Spirit, no matter what temptation, all is well. Every past failure then in the church, or assembly, calls for unfeigned subjection to the Spirit of God. What would you think of a man saying, such a person, who professed to be a Christian, has failed, and has been found drunk in the streets; therefore, I may remain a drunkard with safety. Is it not the same in principle to say, such of the children of God have failed to keep the unity of the Spirit; therefore, I may now remain where the Spirit is not owned. I beg of you judge not this weighty question by the failures of men, but by the Word of God.

What then is the "one body?" Eph. iv. 4. The Church of Rome is not even the catholic church; much less, can she be the "one body." *Catholic*, means *universal*, so that the millions of the Greek, and Anglican, and other churches, are so many millions of living witnesses, against the catholicity of the Romish church. It cannot be either the one church,

or the one body, being but a division—and the same remarks apply to every other division.

“All mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.” “And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:” John xvii. These precious words of Jesus embrace every child of God, during this dispensation. What then is the glory that the Father hath given to Jesus? He hath “raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all *things* under his feet, and gave him *to be* the head over all *things* to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all:” Eph. i, 19—23. And again, “And he is the HEAD OF THE BODY, THE CHURCH; WHO IS THE BEGINNING, THE FIRST-BORN FROM THE DEAD, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence:” Col. i. 18.

The glory then given to Jesus is given to him as THE RISEN CHRIST—and as the risen Christ he is the beginning and head of the body. Every member then of the one body must be risen with Christ. And thus if any man be in Christ he is a new creature, or a new creation. Now does not Jesus say, “And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them?” And this is true of all that are his. Then every Christian is one with the risen Christ, in the highest glory; as it is written, “And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ:” Eph. ii. 6.

What a vast difference then there must be betwixt a heavenly risen body and an earthly society; the only earthly society that God ever had, was the nation of the Jews. Even during the life-time of

Christ, the little company or flock of disciples were of that nation. It was not until after his resurrection, *and ascension to glory*, that the Holy Ghost could be given to form "the Church, which is his body." This was the mystery kept hid from ages, that the earthly society, or nation of the Jews, should for a time be set aside; and that the Holy Ghost should gather out of all nations, Jews and Gentiles, a **HEAVENLY BODY**—and that this body should be joined to the head, in risen, highest glory; blest with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places **IN CHRIST**. And, mark, all this is true of every child of God during this dispensation; because, Christ says to the Father, "All mine are thine." Wherever the child of God is, as to his body on earth, in spirit he is as really one in the risen Christ, as a member of the human body is joined to the person whose it is. Yea, our oneness in Christ is not union, but perfect unity. As we could not say, the union of the members of the human body, for all those members constitute *one* person, so, also, is the heavenly risen Christ. "For, as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so, also, is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free," &c. "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular:" 1 Cor. xii. 12—28. Certainly, the Spirit uses the strongest possible words and the most striking figures to express this wondrous unity. Compare the above passage with the following: "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones:" Eph. v. 30. It does not say we *were* one with him, during his life in the flesh—that were impossible. . Had he not died, he must have remained alone: John xii. 25. Earthly oneness of sinful men with a sinless Christ could not be; no, he must die, and has died for the sins

of many; and having passed through death *for* them, as their substitute; having, through the shedding of his precious blood, paid their ransom, he has been raised from among the dead, and, *as their surety*, justified: Isaiah l. 8. And all this for us; "Raised again for our justification:" Rom. iv. 25. And thus we are reckoned dead with him, raised with him, justified with him, and one with him in that risen, justified, sinless state. So that we *are*, not *were*, *one with him*. As a man is one person, though having many members, so is the risen Christ; though having many members on earth, yet all joined to, and one *with*, and *in*, Christ, the head, in heaven. "We *are* members of his body." "There *is* one body:" Eph. iv. 4; v. 30. What a wondrous new creation, new existence this is; translated into the kingdom of his dear Son—we *are*, not we shall be when we die. "*Hath* delivered us from the power of darkness, and *hath* translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:" Col. i. 13. It is the forgetting of this present reality, the oneness of the whole church of God in the risen Christ in heavenly glory, that is one sad cause of the worldly systems and earthly divisions which men call churches. I often ask, "When you are in heaven, will you tolerate sects and divisions?" "Oh dear, no!" is the reply. Christ will then be all. But are we not now raised with him, and made to sit with him in heavenly places? Eph. ii. 6. And is not Christ all now?—Col. iii. 11. In the new creation there is neither Jew nor Greek; Romanist or Protestant, Independent or Methodist, oh no! *Christ* IS ALL. Old things ARE passed away, behold all things ARE become new, and all things of God. And this is true of every man *in Christ*: 2 Cor. v. 17, 18. He is, or let him be, a new creature.

The risen body of Christ, then, *is one*, composed of

all believers out of every nation ; a new creation from among the dead : raised together and joined together by God the Father : Eph. ii. Can never be separated : Rom. viii. 39. There are no divisions in that heavenly body, neither indeed can be. For the old things are passed away. Blessed Jesus, thy prayer is answered : "That all may be one : " John xvii. Yes, all who believe are one with Christ in the heavenly places.

What then is the will of God as to believers on earth? For, whilst one with Christ in heaven, we are still for a very little while absent from the Lord, whilst here in the body. I do not wish to state opinions ; but what is the mind of the Lord? Solemn question. May he give grace to do his precious will.

That God condemns division, none would wish to deny, who bow to his inspired word. At the very first appearance or bud of divisions, the apostle says, "Now, I beseech you, brethren, **BY THE NAME OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST**, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you. Every one of you saith, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Christ. Is Christ divided?" 1 Cor. i. 10. Surely I cannot mistake the mind of the Lord in this day, when every one saith, I am of Rome, I of the Greek, I of the Anglican, I of Wesley, &c., &c. God beseeches all believers by the glory and pre-eminence of the name of the Lord Jesus, *that there be no divisions*. Not one name or division can God tolerate. To allow any name but his, is to lower his blessed name to the same level ; I of Paul, and I of Christ. If it is thus God's will that there should be no divisions, how can I belong to any, or *in any way* countenance any sect, without positive disobedience to God's revealed mind? Do, my reader, answer that question in the presence of God, with his word before you.

Lest there should be any mistake, the Spirit of God again speaks on the same subject: "For ye are yet carnal; for whereas *there is* among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul, and another, I of Apollos, are ye not carnal?" If it thus grieved the Spirit to say, "I am of Paul, or Apollos," does it now please the Spirit to say, I am of Wesley, I of the Independents? Is this carnality? or is it spirituality? does God approve or disapprove? And again, when the apostle refers to having heard there were sects amongst them, he says, "I praise you not, that ye come together, not for the better but for the worse:" 1 Cor. xi. 17.

Yea, God could not speak more plainly, not only as to what he condemns, but also what his will is as to what is right: "That there should be no schism (or division) in the body, but that the members should have the same care one for another:" 1 Cor. xii. 25. Man says there should be sects, and would have me join one or help to increase it. God says there should be none, for the body is one; shall I obey God or man? Judge ye.

What a blessed unity, one with the head above, and one with every member here below. Yes, every member—every Christian on earth. How precious the will of God: "And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular:" 1 Cor., xii. 26, 27.

Surely, now, we have failed to own this wondrous unity. But let us not lower the standard. Let us not call evil good. Surely division is an evil, and a bitter thing in the sight of God. He even classes it with such sins as adultery, murder, and drunkenness: Gal. v. 17—21. The word translated heresies

means sects. Oh, let us then return unto the Lord, with deep humiliation. Let us confess the common sin and shame of the divided church.

We are called to heavenly oneness with the risen Christ. It is the will of God that "Ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with ALL lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, &c." Eph. iv. 1, 4. Would you, my fellow believer, do the will of God? Here then, is the blessed path; the unity of the Spirit. This must ever be to the head, Christ. The blessed Spirit gathers to the person of Christ; and where two or three are GATHERED IN HIS NAME, there he is in the midst of them. Man makes a *meeting* in what name he likes. It is division, or scattering. The Spirit alone *gathers* to Christ. The two things are as different as the unity of heaven and the scattering of earth.

All believers are one in the risen Christ; and the will of Christ is that that unity should be manifested to the whole world. How deeply and touchingly this is seen in the present intercommunings of the Son with the Father: "That they all may be one, as thou Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: THAT THE WORLD MAY BELIEVE;" and again, "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that THE WORLD MAY KNOW that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me:" John xvii. Thus instead of earthly divisions and discord, the blessed Lord would have us *manifest* to the *world* our oneness with himself in glory. We are dead with him, risen with him, and shall be glorified with him; but oh! to attain to this power of resurrection, to walk worthy of this oneness with the risen Christ, being made conformable to his death. How-

ever we may have failed, I am not thereby excused from faithfulness to this risen Christ ; and I cannot therefore be identified with anything that grieves him or is contrary to his mind. Sects and divisions have been shown to be utterly contrary to his will ; therefore, I must separate from them all, if I would walk according to God's word. I can own no church but the one body ; no principle of church government but that of the Holy Ghost ; no name, but that of the Lord Jesus Christ, alone head of the risen body, the Church of God.

The path may be difficult, but when was the path of faith easy ? These are perilous times. Evil is called good ; good, evil : indifference, neutrality. " Wherefore he saith, Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." " Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is." Eph. v. 14.

The Lord is at hand, and he hath said, " Surely I come quickly." How very soon the last sound of discord shall be heard. Oh, haste the day when the exalted Lord shall be for ever owned and adored. Oh, my fellow-believers, with such a prospect, shall we not, during this little while, seek to do his blessed will ? He would have us separate ourselves, and purge ourselves from every vessel of dishonour : 2 Tim. ii. 19—21. He would have us gathered in his name : Matt. xviii. 20. Surely we need no argument in addition to our Lord's revealed will.

I would add a few words, in conclusion, to those who are gathered in the name of the Lord Jesus ; desiring in everything to be subject to the guidance of the Holy Ghost.

Let us remember, beloved brethren, that God has *gathered* us together in the name of the Lord Jesus. That we have not *met* of our own will. That we have *only* to seek the glory of Christ ; and to win souls *to*

Him. Let us not be ashamed of his precious name, and the blessed place in which he has set us as witnesses of *Him*. Yea, let us rise as one man to make known the claims of Christ. But this can only be done in unshaken faith. There may be the name, and form, and not the power. When gathered in the name of the Lord Jesus, do we always *expect* the Spirit to *testify of him*. If men go to hear an eloquent preacher, they expect to *hear him*. Do we thus expect the teaching of the Spirit of God by the word. God is pleased to use gifts, but his own presence is more than all gifts. I am not speaking of a blind impulse; or of what some call man's inward light. No, I ask, do we really believe in the presence of the divine person of the Holy Ghost? Then let not one rise to deliver his own thought, ready prepared as it were; and let not the weakest say, I am not fit to be used of God. Let there be a real yielding of ourselves to God; to be kept silent, or used to speak the words he shall give—it may be but the reading of a verse of Scripture. Have we not often felt more of the real power of God's presence at such a time, than we can possibly describe? How blessed to feel you are in his very presence; to hear his words, as though he were speaking in an audible voice. Oh may there be much fervent prayer, that the manifest guidance of the Spirit of God may be seen, and felt, in every gathering. Have faith, my brethren, in God.

To my brethren who are still in the sects of men, whether Roman, Greek, or English—of whatever name, let me earnestly entreat you to seek divine guidance in the Scriptures of truth. My confidence is in God, that he will, by this feeble paper, lead many of you to own the name of the Lord Jesus, in unfeigned subjection to the Spirit of God. We may never know each other here, but when we meet around the throne, then we shall not regret having left

every sect, and every name ; and having been gathered only in the name of the Lord Jesus. Do not suppose I imply that the name of Jesus is not dear to all the children of God in the various divisions of the professing church. No ; for to you who believe he is precious. But you are not gathered in his name *alone* ; as the one body of Christ. Each sect has some other name, or some other principle which hinders all the children of God being gathered with them ; in contrast to the true ground of being gathered by the Spirit of God to the name and *person* of Christ. In thus gathering, *there is no barrier* to any or all the children of God walking in subjection to the Holy Ghost.

Nor can such a gathering or assembly of God be truly called a sect, any more than the assembly of God in the days of the apostles could.

Nor would I for a moment imply, that my brethren in the various divisions deny the existence of the Holy Ghost. What I say is, that when you meet for worship, or teaching, you do not submit to the Holy Ghost, and allow him to preside over the meeting ; using whom he will ; as in 1 Cor. xii. 14. You have departed from the Spirit's rule, and have set up human order. And thus one member is burthened, and the others become mere listeners. There is work for every member, according to the measure of grace. All cannot speak in public ; but cannot God use the feeblest attempts—a word by the way ? Yea, often the prayer of a poor man, filled with the Spirit, is more blest to the saints of God than the eloquence of an Apollos.

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The Revelation of Jesus Christ.

INTRODUCTION.

It should not be forgotten, that when God gave this "Revelation of Jesus Christ" to His servant John, the substance of this book was new; supplementary to all the revelations of Jesus which had gone before. It will be found of the first importance to bear this in mind in all our meditations on this blessed book: and, whilst the study of this book requires acquaintance with the whole word of God, yet we must not confound this with the revelations which had gone before. Even the introduction is new, and different from any other book. This blessed revelation of Jesus is given of God to *the servants* of Jesus Christ. How marked this is! It is not to the saints in Christ Jesus, as in some of the precious epistles, but "unto his servants."

As the Holy Ghost has made this distinction, let us meditate a little upon it. A person may be saved, and if saved certainly a saint, for ever perfected in Christ Jesus: "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." (Heb. x. 14.) To be thus *saved* is the portion of every true believer in Christ. But how few can say with Paul, "a servant of Jesus Christ;" "separated unto the gospel of God." Very few walked in this path with the devoted Paul. With

sorrow he had to say, when speaking of many saints, "For all seek their own, and not the things which are Jesus Christ's." What a searching word for both the writer and the reader! How far are we separated to the service of Jesus Christ?

I was going to ask you a question as to this, but before I do so, let us read Revelation i. 5. You will observe this text tests you. If this is the language of your heart; if you can say to Jesus, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood," then surely you are saved. This is the language of none but the saved; and it is the language of *all* the saved. It is not Unto Him and unto me. Now can you look up into heaven, and say, There is the blessed One, who loved me and washed me from my sins in His own blood? O how simple and how certain! I do not say, I hope He will, but it is done. If you are thus saved, then I will ask you this question, Are you a servant of Jesus Christ, apart from everything, and every human interest, and every human sect and party? What have you ever done for Jesus Christ alone? This is the question.

I was struck with a remark from a Christian lately. Speaking of a gentleman—I trust a Christian too—who gives large sums of money for sectarian uses, my friend, who knows him well, said, I never knew him give one shilling to Christ; or, strictly speaking, for the service of Jesus Christ alone. You may build a church, or a chapel; give largely to this interest or that; and you may never have given a cup of cold water to a disciple solely *because he belongs to Christ*. Is there any wonder then, since this book is a revelation of Jesus Christ to His servants—and we are all seeking our own instead of the things of Jesus

Christ—I say, can there be any wonder that this blessed book should be so little understood?

Then there is another thing of very great moment. In looking at a picture is it not important to get the right standpoint? Now what was the standpoint of the beloved John, when God gave this revelation of Jesus Christ to him? Are we companions of this servant John, “who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ?” This servant “in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.” Just in proportion as we are companions with this servant John, for *the word of God*—not for the theories of men, but the testimony of Jesus Christ—in that same proportion we must be shut out with him at Patmos. Is this our standpoint? Is our platform the Patmos platform? Do you say, I do not understand the Revelation a bit? The reason may be simply this—you live too far from Patmos. It can only be understood by the servants of Jesus Christ who live at Patmos. Are you living in that Babel world, from which the testimony of Jesus Christ must separate? Then is there any wonder that your eyesight is too dim to see the revelation of Jesus Christ?

It must follow that since the great bulk of Christians in our day live in the world, and are one with it in spirit, this book must remain to them, as they say, a sealed book. Oh how sad! A young Oxford man said to me a few days ago, I always lay aside the book of Revelation as a book not to be understood. Think of this, always laying aside the Revelation of Jesus Christ!

Then, this servant John was *not* *only* shut out

of man's world, at Patmos, for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ; but he was "in the Spirit on the Lord's day." Now this again is all important. The human mind, however cultivated, is utterly incapable of seeing or understanding the person of Jesus Christ. The light shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehendeth it not. Without the Holy Spirit man never could, or can, see Jesus, and thus know the Father. My reader, let us ponder this well: it is only as you, and I, are in the Spirit, that we shall understand this blessed Revelation. Now may the Holy Ghost open your ears to hear, and give you eyes to see, this revelation of Jesus Christ.

The Lord's command to His servant John in chapter i. 19, is of great value, as it enables us to understand the proper division of this book. "Write the things which thou hast seen." This is the first part: the things which he had seen—Jesus as Judge in the midst of the seven candlesticks, which are the seven churches.

"And the things that are." This we shall find will occupy chapters ii. and iii. The things that are during the whole history of the present period of the Church.

"And the things which shall be after, or after these." The things that shall take place after the close of Christianity, or the period of the Church, "the things that are." This will occupy us from chapter iv. to the end of the book. The things that are about to take place in heaven, and on earth, after the close of Christianity.

Do not hasten over this verse 19, for a clear understanding of these three divisions of the book will greatly help you in the study of all that follows. It is the Lord that thus divides the book.

THE THINGS WHICH JOHN SAW.

“Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth.” What wondrous titles! “Faithful witness:” witness of God for us; yet witness of the wrath of God against all sin: witness of God justifying us, in perfect righteousness: as the risen Son of God He takes His place, and title, “the first begotten from among the dead.”

“Behold, he cometh with clouds:” the “Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending.” What themes for holy contemplation! Long might we linger; and often may we, with adoring worship, thus contemplate this revelation of Jesus Christ.

Hearken! John first hears a voice, and that not a whisper, but a great voice as of a trumpet. It is the Lord announcing Himself as “the first and last.” Do we thus own Jesus the eternal God? He commands him to write what he sees, and send it to the seven churches of Asia. When John turned to see the voice that spoke, he saw a remarkable sight—“Seven golden candlesticks,” and one like unto the Son of man in the midst of them. Have you ever seen Jesus, the true centre of the Church of God in its completeness? What is your centre? is it Jesus?

If we look awhile at the Lord as thus revealed, we shall observe He is not now before us so much as a Saviour, but as a Judge. But how can we look at Him in this character if we have not first known Him as the one who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood? And if washed from our sins, are we able to bear the eyes as a flame of fire, from which nothing can be hid? The servant John said, “When I saw him, I fell at

his feet as dead." Yes, he needed to hear those words of comfort—words which took him back to the day of His resurrection—"Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead."

Look at this revelation of Jesus; look at Him as "the Ancient of days" of Daniel, clothed with judicial robes: girt with divine righteousness: nothing hid from His eyes: His own walk brightest holiness: a voice that shall be heard: the right of administration in His own hands: power to execute judgment: His countenance of majesty, supremacy, and strength. This is the one to whom I now introduce you, my reader. Look at Him, and remember it is not of prophecy I now write, but to see, and hear, the revelation of Jesus Christ.

THE THINGS THAT ARE.

Before we go on to the addresses to the seven assemblies of Asia, it will be profitable to consider verse 20: "The mystery of the seven stars, which thou sawest, in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest, are the seven churches." We must go to the scriptures of truth for the Holy Spirit's meaning of these symbols; not to the opinions or practices of men. Is not the scriptural meaning of the symbol, a star, or stars, very plain in Daniel xii. 3? "They that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever." In this period then the seven stars would be all such as the Lord thus used in turning many to righteousness. John in his time saw these in their completeness, in the right hand of Christ the Lord. Have you thought of this? have you seen *the administration*

of all the gifts, at the commencement of the history of the Church, in the right hand of Christ? Concerning these gifts or stars, we read that "no man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost." "And there are differences of administrations [or ministries], but the same Lord."

This subject is fully stated in 1 Corinthians xii., xiii., xiv. We have the same primitive fact clearly stated in Ephesians iv. : "But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men." "He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers." These are the stars: and when we think of what has taken place since as to ministry, we may say truly, What a mystery! Do you now see this revelation of Jesus Christ, holding in His right hand the seven stars: the risen and glorified Lord exercising the complete administration of the Church?

Well, now there is another term used: the seven stars are the *angels* of the seven assemblies. What does this term "angel" mean? I know there is a common thought that this means a clergyman. But then at that time there were no clergymen. In the New Testament there is no person that answers in the least degree to a modern clergyman. There were apostles, evangelists, teachers, pastors, and elders; but no such person as a clergyman. There is not the most distant reference to a district of the world being called a parish; and a person ordained over that parish. Perhaps you say, the term angel of the Church may mean a dissenting minister, or a minister ordained over a congregation or church. But the same objection meets us

as before. We find no such character in the New Testament times. Not in one single instance was there such a minister ordained over a church. Elders were ordained by apostles or their delegates; these were the recognized gifts of Christ; and those whom the Holy Ghost had made overseers, to feed the flock, the Church of God. Surely departure from this would be sin. I do not discuss the practices of men; I only state well known facts, seen and proved in the holy scriptures; as it is only from scripture we can understand these symbols or words.

The scriptures use the word "angel" in the sense of a representative. It was so used when Peter stood knocking at the gate; they said, "It is his angel." So the Lord uses it when speaking of little ones: He says, "their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." In this sense we shall find the Lord addressing that, or those, who represent the Church during its entire history; and we shall find it a term of great force and meaning.

And now as to the symbol of "the seven golden candlesticks." If we turn to the pattern of heavenly things, we find the beautiful golden candlestick, with its centre shaft, and six branches, and its seven lamps, "was one beaten work of pure gold"—made from one talent of pure gold. Now was not this very fine, as a figure of Christ and the Church, all of one; both He that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified? The veil was on the face of Moses; and that candlestick which was in the tabernacle was still hid from the sight of men: its light never shone into the world. But now the glory of God is revealed in the face of Jesus Christ. O what ought the Church to be! "For God, who

commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." As each branch was of the same piece of pure gold—as each lamp was supplied with the same pure oil—so is the Church one with Christ, and the one Spirit dwells in each member of His body. What a witness for God should the Church as a candlestick be! All this is about to be judged, tested, by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

ADDRESSES TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES.

Chapter ii. No doubt these seven churches then existed, and the revelation of Jesus Christ was literally to each of them. But as God gave this revelation to shew unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass; and as these seven addresses take up the whole period of the things that are; we shall find them to contain a distinct revelation of Jesus Christ to the seven successive stages of the Church's history as a whole, from its beginning to its end. For, as the states of these churches are so entirely different, they could not as a whole be applicable to the whole state of the Church at one time. With one it is a time of fierce persecution; with another a time of luxury and self-indulgence; so that both these could not be true of the whole Church at one time.

I will give you a very simple illustration, which has been helpful to many in understanding the purpose of these seven addresses. I was looking down the deep shaft of a coal mine, and noticing the rapid motion of the rope, but I could not tell whether the motion was upwards, or downwards. The proprietor of the mine invited me up into the

engine-room. There I found two immense engines with a huge drum, around which was coiled the rope hundreds of yards in length. Attached to this drum was a clock-work contrivance, with a dial like a clock face. The fingers marked the exact depth the cage had descended by the rope: so that the moment the cage reached the bottom, the steam was turned off by the man in charge. I also noticed that when one cage reached the bottom, at that very moment another cage came out into the full light of day at the top. I was remarkably struck with this arrangement: it was so different from straining my eyes in the dark shaft. Now whilst reading the revelation of Jesus Christ in Paris, I saw how strikingly the pit dial-plate illustrates these seven addresses. If we look at Christendom, human reason may fail to see whether it is going down or up. One may think he sees progress and improvement; another may say he sees declension and apostasy: motion there is, anyhow. But when I look at these addresses, I find they contain as it were God's dial-plate, divided into seven periods or stages of the history of Christendom: and here we have not to strain our short-sighted reason, but we have the very judgments of Christ on all that has and will take place.

EPHESUS

is the first hour or stage of the Church's history. It is the Lord that holdeth the seven stars in His right hand. We see Him walking in the midst of the churches, clothed in His judicial robes, as we have seen before. As a king holdeth the sceptre in his right hand, so the Lord exercised His divine title of administration in the first stage of the Church's history. For a pope, a conference, the

world's parliament, or a majority, to be exercising their authority, in those days, was simply impossible. The Lord of glory ascended up on high; He held the stars in His right hand; and He must be set aside before any of these could take the administration of the stars, or servants of Christ. I love to dwell on that scene; and from my inmost soul I say, Thou, thou art worthy, holy Lord, and thou alone! Concerning spiritual gifts, I own thee, Jesus, Lord.

Alas, as we follow the history of Christendom, never again do we find the stars in the hands of Christ. Never again does the Church as a whole own the administration of her Lord as at the beginning. This is sad.

Now will you hear what Jesus says to the Church in its first stage of decline? He judges: we hear. "I know thy works." This is not a question of salvation, but the judgment of the Lord as to works and ways. "And thy labour and thy patience." If you compare this with 1 Thessalonians i. 3 you will find that a good deal of freshness was gone. There it was "*work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope* in our Lord Jesus Christ." But still, what the Lord finds He commends. Is not that just like Him? And He commends all He can first. They could not bear them which were evil: they tried, and resisted, the beginning of that false apostolic succession. They found them liars—no doubt this gave them much sorrow and trial. But they bore up with patience; as He says, "for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted." All this was very dear to the Lord. What a revelation this is! for we thus get to know what is pleasing to our dear Lord.

Then follows the first mark of declension: "Nevertheless I have against thee, because thou hast left thy first love." Then warnings and threatenings; but mingled with what He could approve: hatred to the deeds of the Nicolaitanes—practisers of sin.

And then, "He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." Men would alter or add to this; they would say, You must hear what the Church says. The question is, Shall we hear God, or man?

SMYRNA.

We now come to the second period of the Church's history.

The Lord again addresses that which represents the Church: "Unto the angel of the church at Smyrna." This period is marked as a time of persecution. We know that such was the case. The blood of the saints was spilt like water—a time of sore tribulation for the true servant of Jesus Christ. He therefore is in this revelation "the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive." In each case the revelation of Jesus is most suited to the state of the Church at that period. The blessed link with Him that was dead and is alive takes away the fear of death. At this period there was a desperate effort of Satan to introduce ritualism: a return to beggarly ordinances. We have the thoughts of Christ as to such efforts: "I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but the synagogue of Satan." Surely it is important that the servant of Jesus Christ should mark this. And there is an important word from Him here: the persecuted Church, or that which represented it,

was in deep poverty; "but thou art rich," says the Lord. There was peculiar honour in being thus near and like Himself, who had not where to lay His head. I have learnt this, Jesus is specially the partner of His poor servants. And then the promise is so sweetly adapted to this time of suffering and death: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." "He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death."

PERGAMOS.

We now arrive at the third period of the Church's history. What a change! The Lord is now revealed as "he which hath the sharp sword with two edges." Does not this imply marked need of judgment? Let the servants know what their Lord condemns, and what He approves. We find Satan's seat here, in this third period of the Church's history. One thing is very much approved by the Lord Jesus: He says to the representative of the Church of this period, "Thou holdest fast my name." Is it nothing to us to see what the Lord thus approves of? Are we holding fast His name? I know this is nothing in the sight of men: as they say, What's in a name? "And hast not denied my faith." Thus the Lord again approves what He can first.

"But I have a few things against thee: thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam." The Church is still regarded in its outward unity. There were two parties in it most hateful to Christ: those who held the doctrine of Balaam, and those who held the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes—the doctrine of the Balaamites, and the doctrine that those who professed faith in Christ might practise

sin. Now surely it was in this third period of the history of Christendom—say from about the period of Constantine—that the clergy began to imitate the practices of Balaam. Not merely preaching for hire; but, just as he advised the mingling of the Jews with idolatry, so the clergy advised the mingling of the Church with the idolatrous temple worship of the world. I have read how great divines approved of this: I hear how solemnly the Lord condemns it. Idol temples were now called churches; shameful idol feasts were turned into shameful christian festivals: the gods of the heathen were turned into saints; and these old demons were still worshipped under new names! Tell me of one so-called christian festival that was not thus linked with the worship of demons. Can you find one of these saints' days in the New Testament? which of them did the apostles observe? Was not the attempt denounced by the Holy Ghost? See Galatians iv. 10, 11.

And then as to practising sin: this became most sad. The clergy lived in open sin, kept concubines. The world was called the Church, but remained the world still.

“Repent; or else I will come unto *thee* quickly.” And then notice the change in the persons: “and will fight against *them* with the sword of my mouth.” In the midst of the dreadful corruption that had now come in there was still the angel of the Church; that which represented it. And very precious is the promise to the overcomer at that time: “To eat of the *hidden* manna, and will give him a *white* stone, and on the stone a new name which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it:” sweet communion; enduring purity.

THYATIRA.

We now come to the fourth period of the Church's history. That this marks the dark middle ages of Popery we cannot mistake. There *was* that which represented the Church, and to it the Lord speaks. Here He is revealed—mark it well—as “the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet like unto fine brass.” Before one reproof, even as to wicked Jezebel, He again approves of all He can. In those dark days there was not a heart true to Him, or an act done to Him, that His eye did not behold. “I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first.” Now is not this very touching? so encouraging to any obscure servant of Christ at such a time!

“Notwithstanding I have against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel,” &c. The words “*a few things*” should be omitted. Surely it is the strongest possible disapproval of the allowance of the pretences and the wickedness of this woman. Now did not the church of Rome become this woman? Read carefully the history of Jezebel, the upholder of idolatry; the murderess of the servants of the Lord; the wicked counsellor. Could there have been a more striking picture of Rome than that woman? She carried out to the full the wicked principles of Balaam. It is written of Ahab that he sinned so that “there was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up.” Whilst professing to be the bride of Christ, she, the Church so called, has been married to the world; and has stirred up more

wickedness than can be found in any other history. Such is Rome—the wicked Jezebel—as condemned by the Lord Jesus Christ.

“And I gave her space to repent.” Oh which is most marvellous, this huge system of wickedness, or the grace that has borne with it for a thousand years? “And she will not repent.” I believe this is the correct rendering. Solemn word of the Lord! He says Rome will not repent. Jezebel’s pretension to infallibility makes it, so to speak, impossible for her to repent. “She will not repent.” And since she will not repent, it follows that all her guilt—her murders and iniquities—are upon her, and remain upon her until the day of her terrific destruction. Suppose a person commits a sin, and refuses to repent of that sin, is he not as guilty forty years hence as the day when he sinned? So is it with Rome. Like Jezebel of old, she has stirred up the civil powers to deeds of wickedness, of robbery, of murder, such as have no parallel. And before the Son of God, she stands, as wicked, as guilty, as if she had committed all this iniquity this very day. Oh! think of this, you who are converts to Rome; converts of Jezebel; you deliberately accept her deep-stained guilt. And she will not repent; she will not acknowledge her sins; she will not abhor herself. She is drunk with her intoxicating wickedness. And who cannot see that England is returning to her horrible vomit again? The moment you join Jezebel—Rome—that moment you are guilty, with her, of all her unrepented murders. If I ask, Lord, what is thy judgment of Rome? He answers, *She is Jezebel*; and Jezebel’s doom awaits her.

We must distinguish between the “*angel*” and “*her*.” The threatenings are to *her*. The Lord

deeply censures the angel for suffering her; but the threatening is to her, and to her children. And then, for the first time, a distinct remnant is recognized by the Lord. The words "and unto" in verse 24 should be omitted. It is another party, a remnant. "And unto you I say, the rest [or remnant] in Thyatira." And how truly this was fulfilled! In the dark days of Jezebel, the Lord had His remnant—often persecuted to death by Rome. These might not have had much truth; but Jesus says, "that which ye have, hold fast till I come." And now this remnant is recognized, there is a marked change. Before the Lord names this remnant, from wicked Jezebel, Rome whilst the Church was regarded in its outward unity, the whole Church was addressed: "He that hath an ear let him hear:" but in the last four stages of the Church's history, after the remnant is seen and owned of the Lord, it is first "he that overcometh," and then, as it were, out of these overcomers, "he that hath an ear."

Before I leave this fourth stage or condition of the Church's history, I would recall the revelation of Jesus to this state, as "the Son of God." Every false doctrine of Rome is a masked attack on the Son of God. If we own Jesus to be the Son of God—God manifest in the flesh, the infinite God—then His sacrifice must be infinite also: and if infinite, it must cover the finite sinner. As taught by the Holy Ghost in Hebrews x., such a sacrifice must for ever perfect. That one infinite sacrifice, once offered, needs no other sacrifice, or it is not infinite. And to add another sacrifice is surely to deny that it is infinite. I have often given this illustration: suppose I speak of an infinite line, passing through space, and some one

says, You must add one inch to that line, would not this be a denial that the line was infinite? Then it follows that every time a pretended sacrifice in the Mass is offered, it is a masked but distinct denial that the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ is infinite in value. And if the sacrifice is not infinite, then the person offered is not infinite. And thus the Mass is a denial that Jesus is the Son of God: neither can that sacrifice be continued, or prolonged, in the Mass; for after He had offered one sacrifice for ever *He sat down*. To prolong the sacrifice is to deny that the Son of God finished the work which the Father gave Him to do.

And again; the exaltation of a creature, say Mary the blessed mother of Jesus after the flesh, to the place of equal worship with the Son of God, is only another way of reducing the infinite God to the level of a creature, or the denial that Jesus is the Son of God. I forbear to say more; but Jesus as the Son of God tests everything of Thyatira, or the fourth stage of the Church on earth. May it test our hearts! What think ye of Christ? Is He the Son of God? "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." Has His one sacrifice, like Himself infinite, for ever perfected you before God? What a test! Do you want anything in addition to Christ?

SARDIS.

We now pass on to the fifth state of the Church, and we enter upon a very solemn revelation of Jesus Christ: the very revelation of Jesus to those protestant times which succeeded the dark days of Romanism, or Thyatira. In other words, we come to the judgment of the Lord Jesus on the things

around us: still addressing that which represents the Church, the angel. At this stage the Lord presents Himself as "he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars." What a depth of meaning in this! Oh that Christians in the protestant period had known and owned this! In the primitive Church, the Lord held the stars *in His own right hand*, as we have seen: He exercised the administration. The Church owned His authority; the Spirit using the gifts, or stars, as He would.

In the Church, or assembly, there was divine liberty in the Spirit for ministry. (1 Cor. xii., xiv.) The servants of the Lord might speak, two or three; the rest judge. One man ordained over a church was then a thing unknown. During the days of popery, the so-called church took the stars, or the administration of spiritual gifts, out of the hands of Christ, and assumed to rule, or administer authority over the world. Its princes were expected to do obedience to the pope; and they were cursed if they refused.

And what have we in protestantism? Though the Lord presents Himself as having the authority, and all fulness of the Spirit's power, "he that hath," did the protestant churches recognize His all-sufficiency? Sad, oh sad, to have to confess it! they have placed the stars in the hands of the world; and have not only linked themselves with the world, but have requested the princes or governments of the world to exercise the administration of the Church. Yes, they have done this, until the very world is saying, We have had enough of it.

Thus in the primitive Church we see Christ governing the Church. In popery we see the

Church assuming to govern the world. In protestantism we see the world governing the Church. These are the three principles of Ephesus, Thyatira, and Sardis. And the revelation of the Lord Jesus to each is adapted to their respective states.

It is true we find in protestantism other forms of church government, separate from the state. It may be a synod, or a conference, or the worldly principle of a majority; but all these agree in one thing; they utterly ignore the Ephesian state—the owning the authority of Christ as Lord in the administration of the gifts. None of these regard the commands of Christ, as to church government and ministry in 1 Corinthians xii.—xiv. And if any Christian were to obey Christ as Lord in those portions of the word, it would be to them the greatest disorder. Oh let us own with shame how we have failed to recognize the seven stars in the hands of Christ. There is the same fulness in Him, to meet the need of His saints, that there was during the first days of the Church. But we have failed to own and trust Him. Failure to do this has been the great mistake of protestantism, and the greatest loss the Church has sustained in these days. What is the best religiously educated man you can have over a church, compared to those whom the Lord would find, and the Holy Ghost would use? But the loss is scarcely felt, because not known.

Can there be any doubt that the protestant state has succeeded the fourth or Romish state of the Church? I suppose none can question it. Then let us in this address to Sardis, the fourth state, hear the very words of Christ about protestant churches. We look at protestantism, with its unspeakable privileges—the scriptures of truth in

its hands, and the great truth of justification by faith having been proclaimed—and what saith the Lord? “I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.” Oh what a sentence on the churches and chapels of our days! Lord, thou sayest it: it is true; and we own it in the dust.

“I have not found thy works perfect before God.” How much will be found to be wood, hay, and stubble! No one can deny there are works in abundance done by protestants; but are they done to or before God? Whatever men may think, and however they may applaud one another, Jesus says, “I have not found thy works perfect *before God.*” We may do a good work for ourselves, or to men, or to be seen of men; but we ought to yield ourselves *to God.* The sentence is just: He says it. Let us accept it with unfeigned humiliation.

The Lord, do you hear, commends the works done by His people in popery, Thyatira, more than the works done by His people amongst protestants, Sardis: but this difference I note; whilst He says wicked Jezebel will not repent, He *commands* the protestants to repent. This is encouraging—yet, if not, the same threatening is used against the protestant churches here as is uttered against the world in 1 Thessalonians v. 1—4: “If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief.” And is this the terrible doom of the world, the doom of the protestant churches? What is the Lord’s reply? “Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white; for they are worthy.” Oh think of this, *a few names* in protestantism. Is not this enough to wake the sleeping multitude of

professors? Will you notice, it is not the professor, but the overcomer, who shall be clothed in white raiment, and whose name shall not be blotted out: which are you, my reader? Oh will it not be terrible for the multitude, who have a name to live, but are dead, and who will shortly be blotted out? Now is it not wonderful that we have the very judgment of our Lord on protestantism, so solemn; and yet many shut up this book as not to be understood? Perhaps its searching truths are not liked. Let us not suppose this is the Lord's judgment on His honoured servants the Reformers: but it is on protestantism, as a result in the world.

PHILADELPHIA.

This is the sixth stage of the Church's history. Again that which represents the Church is addressed: "Unto the angel of the church in Philadelphia write." It is now not what the Lord *does*, but what He *is*: "He that is holy, he that is true." Then what he hath: "the key of David." Then what he doeth: "he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth." Let us thus see our blessed Lord, revealed for this period of the Church's history. And let us remember, that God has given us the special revelation of Jesus expressly adapted to each successive stage of "the things that are."

It will at once be seen how deeply important this revelation to the Philadelphian state is, when we remember that it is only within the last fifty years the Holy Ghost has been gathering believers *to the Lord Jesus* because of what HE IS: the holy and the true. After the general corruption of the outward body of Christendom in Jezebel, popery,

we have seen a state of protestantism exactly answering to Sardis. And since then the Spirit of God has certainly gathered a feeble remnant of believers from all the dead protestant bodies, and out of corrupt Rome too. And nothing could be more striking than the answer of this last work of the Spirit, to the features of this sixth state of the present period of the Church.

Well do I remember the exceeding goodness of God in leading me, many years ago, to know the blessed reality of what I now write. I had in some measure felt the sinfulness of sectarianism. I knew a great deal about what was wrong, but really had no knowledge of what was right. In this state I was led to witness a few Christians met together in the name of the Lord Jesus, to break bread, on the first day of the week; and against whom I had, in my ignorance, felt bitterly opposed. I entered the room where they had just assembled, and were in solemn silence, waiting on God in worship. Naturally I looked for the pulpit, and the man of the pulpit. There was no pulpit, and no pulpit man. I then looked for the president. There was no president to be seen. Never shall I forget the deep solemnity that fell on my soul, when I felt these people were gathered in reality to meet the Lord Himself. Never before had I thus felt the presence of God. The Holy Ghost had not gathered them to peculiar doctrines, or to some man; but to Jesus, the holy and the true; realizing the all-sufficiency of the Spirit to take of the things of Christ and to shew them to them. It is impossible to express in words the unspeakable reality of this rest of the soul in the presence of God. Let not my reader suppose that those whom the Lord has thus blessed think them-

selves better than others. Where all is known to be of grace, the thought of betterness is an absurdity.

Ah, since then, what grace to me, and what cause for self-aborrence! Yes, depths of mercy only known to God. But never once has there a doubt crossed my mind that this is the present most sure work of God. Never have I heard a sentence or read a line that has shaken my confidence. False brethren have crept in, and have gone out: they have said and written bitter things; for which my heart has grieved. This work has been hated and attacked by the whole of professing Christendom; it has only the more convinced me that the work is of God. Yes, as Jesus said to the Jews of old, "How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, AND YE WOULD NOT;" so these words may now be surely applied to many who are even saved by His precious blood.

But I must go on. To the feeble flock, thus gathered to Jesus because of what He is, the holy and the true, the Spirit has also led them to look for Him, and to know that the government shall be laid upon His shoulder. In the midst of this world's gross darkness, wars, and tumult, the coming reign of Christ is a bright fact. The Holy Ghost has unlocked the scriptures to their souls.

And is it not a fact, that in the former history of the suffering servants of Christ, the door has soon been shut, and the devoted servant of the Lord persecuted to the bitter death; but now "he openeth, and no man shutteth." From the palace to the cottage, the Lord has opened a wide door; and though the truth was never more hated, yet no man can shut the door. At this moment I

have letters before me from devoted servants of the Lord Jesus Christ, labouring in many nations, in much poverty and trial, unknown to the world—but what a wide door is open everywhere! He openeth, and *no man* shutteth, not even the pope; for some of these letters are from Italy. Go on, beloved brethren, in the name of the holy One and the true. He says, “I know thy works,” however unknown and despised: “behold I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it.”

O, it is so sweet and real to get back in spirit to the person of the Lord, and to His administration! I cannot help dwelling a little on this. How often have I proved this: as a dear departed brother once said to me, “One direct answer to prayer has settled my soul, as to the Lord, even as to His existence, more than all the reasoning and reading of my whole life.” I do want us, my reader, to have more of this direct dealing with Jesus as Lord. I will give you one or two instances, out of many, during the Lord’s dealings for thirty years.

I was at a meeting for prayer in Hull, one Saturday forenoon. The Lord said to me in the Spirit, “You must go to Scarborough to preach the gospel to-morrow.” I knew His voice: but, lest I should be mistaken, I went to my room, and looked to Him in prayer; and then I became assured it was the Lord. I immediately left for Scarborough. I had never been there before, and I knew the name of only one person there, but had not seen him. I travelled with a young man going home to die. The Lord blessed His word to this young man, and his mother pressed me to make her house my home during my stay. I said I could not accept her kind offer, as I had just made

a request to the Lord—it was this: I had been telling the Lord I knew no one in Scarborough, and the name of only one christian man. And I had said, “Lord, bring him on the platform and shew me him.” The train stopped, a man looked into my carriage and straight at me; and the Lord said to me “That is the man.” I hesitated; he walked to one gate, and I to the other. I thought, How foolish this is: the Lord assuredly answers prayer. He came toward me, and I met him. I said, “May I ask, is your name Mr. L.?” He replied, “Yes, it is; is your name C. S., of S.?” I said, “Yes, it is; but how do you know my name?” “Well,” he said, I came to meet Mr. Y., of Hereford, who is expected to preach Christ here to-morrow; and there will be a large company to hear him. This is the last train. [There was no train on Lord’s-day morning then.] I was on the platform, and Mr. Y. has not come, and it was just as though a voice had said, ‘That is C. S., of S., I have sent him,’ and that caused me to look so earnestly at you.” On the following day I found the truth of those words, “I have set before thee an open door.”

One more instance: some years ago the Lord brought before me a town between Derby and Stone. I think this was on a Monday; and He told me I was to go and preach the gospel there. I did not know the name of the town, but had passed it once on the rail. I waited on the Lord in prayer. I named the matter to a christian brother, from Staffordshire; he knew the town, and told me it was Uttoxeter. I still waited on the Lord for the time to go; a letter arrived on *Friday* I think, it was from a lady in Tenbigh, South Wales, enclosing another from a Christian

in Uttoxeter, asking this lady, if she knew the address of C. S., to forward the enclosed, begging that I would go at once and preach the gospel at Uttoxeter. And the Lord, who had prepared hearts, proved again that He openeth and no man shutteth. From that day a few have met to own the Lord Jesus, the holy and the true.

I could fill a volume with such instances, and so could many a servant of the Lord Jesus. But I merely give these to illustrate what I mean by having to do directly with the Lord Himself.

Another mark of this sixth stage of the Church's history is this: "For thou hast a little strength." This so marks the present work of God as to all outward appearance, that compared with human boasting it is only a subject of ridicule. Nothing in the eyes of men at this day is so feeble as that which is really of God. Boasting marks that which is of man; feebleness and utter absence of reputation marks that which is of God. And did not this mark the path of the holy One? What do you think of this revelation of Jesus Christ? In the light of His presence look abroad, and then can you say, I now see what is of God, and I now know what is of men. Lord, grant that the reader from this day may be satisfied with nothing but that which is of thyself.

"And hast kept my word." Oh, blessed be the Lord! He has fulfilled this also. The remnant^t which He has gathered, have been drawn from theology and human teaching, to the word; to the very testimony of the Lord Jesus. Those who hate this remnant, and this work of God, as I once did, must own how precious the scriptures are to this feeble remnant.

"And hast not denied my name." Is not this

also a distinct mark of God's remnant in this day? The moment you own the name of Jesus alone, you are at once reproached with a term that implies you belong to that despised feeble remnant. Do you say, Oh what is there in a name? Do not you forget who it is that says "And hast not denied MY NAME?" Oh, is there any name given among men so sweet as the name of Jesus? If you bear the name of any man, or sect, He regards it as "denying my name." Do you ask, Why will you not bear any other name, or belong to some sect? I reply, It is not of faith, it is not of God. I should grieve my Lord if I denied His name. Can you say, By the grace of God, from this hour I desire to have done with everything that is not of Himself? Then I will say, Amen.

What is this that the Lord Jesus now so strongly condemns? "Them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews and are not, but do lie." If you know the scriptures well you will remember that *the* great effort of Satan was, by his ministers, to introduce ritualism into the primitive Church. Paul and Barnabas went up to the Church at Jerusalem about this matter. See Acts xv. And though Peter on that occasion strongly rebuked these false teachers, yet he himself was, on another occasion, greatly to blame about this very matter, as the apostle Paul tells us in Galatians ii. 11: He says, "I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed." Peter was afraid of the Ritualists. The point was this, and which had been settled at Jerusalem: That there was no difference between the believing Jews who observed the ritual of the law, and the Gentiles who did not. Both were alike saved by Christ. Satan's ministers, and perhaps Christians, said, No;

those Gentiles who do not observe the ritual are, though saved by Christ, still unholy, and not fit to eat with us. When these teachers came to Antioch Peter also refused to eat with believers of the Gentiles. And many were led astray by his dissimulation. Now this, as the apostle shews, made Christ a minister of sin: "If, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is Christ the minister of sin? God forbid." If those who are justified by Christ are still sinners, unfit for the ritualist Jew to eat with, then this would make Christ a minister of sin, and would plainly exalt the ritual of the law above Christ, and the ritual would make a man more holy than Christ makes him. This is true of the law morally as of the ritual. Now do you not see why Paul, or rather the Spirit of God through Paul, so sternly rebukes the Galatians on the folly of going back to the law? The whole subject is fully discussed. To go back to such beggarly elements, to observe days and months, &c., was to make the apostle afraid of them. This dreadful leaven was also being introduced at Colosse; and the apostle asks, How can we, being dead with Christ, be subject to ritualism? See Colossians ii. 10—23. Ritualism exalts man in the flesh: to be dead with Christ, or to be a Christian, condemns man in the flesh. If you are justified from your sins by the blood of Jesus, and justified from sin by being dead with Him; and completely justified in Christ risen—"He was raised again for our justification"—I say, if after all this, you are a sinner, and must needs go to the law, or to its ritual, or to any other ritual, then plainly Christ died in vain. Now do you wonder that the Lord Jesus should treat this as a very solemn question?

And how remarkable that during this sixth stage of the Church's history these two things should have run on together: namely, the Holy Spirit gathering souls to Jesus, the holy and the true, leading them to value more and more His word, and opening that word with divine power; and, at the same time, Satan has made the most determined effort to leaven Protestant Christendom with ritualism. Is it a light matter that he is fast turning the protestant establishments into "the synagogue of Satan?" The truth and testimony of the gospel of God has been proclaimed as it never was before since the days of the apostles; and men hate the truth, and the free pure grace of God, and say they are Jews, and are not. Sabbaths and saints' days; the blasphemy of that Mass, which is the direct denial that the one offering of Jesus on the cross for ever perfects; and the putting of souls under the bondage of the law; this is the boasted restoration of the ministers of Satan. Lord Jesus, I believe thy word; they are the synagogue of Satan. It is not a little remarkable that the Lord's people, who have been deceived by Satan amongst the ritualists, are beginning to read the tracts written by the servants of the Lord, and to own it is the voice of the Lord. How valuable is the revelation of Jesus Christ on the ritualism of this sixth stage of church history! And this is what He calls it, The synagogue of Satan.

And now He gives a peculiar promise, "Because thou hast kept the words of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." Have you thought of the patience of Christ, waiting in heaven for that mo-

ment when He shall arise, and, with the assembling shout, call up His redeemed saints from the earth to meet Him in the air? The joy set before Him! If you keep this word of His patience, bearing as He does with this wicked rejecting world, it will also separate you from the world; how can you mix with the politics of a world which rejects your coming Lord?

Now one of the first throes of this poor world's trouble, during the Philadelphian stage, has come in a very significant manner. When they were saying Peace and safety, sudden destruction came. May not this be a warning of that coming day of this poor world's sudden destruction? The wars of the first French empire were before the Philadelphian state of Christendom, or the present work of the Holy Ghost: but that terrible scene which came so suddenly on France in 1870, 1871 was a sort of sample or first fruit of that coming storm of woe and hour of temptation which shall come on all the world. And from which the Church shall be taken and kept above. England may have been spared a little while, because the Lord has many of His redeemed ones in it. The world prepares for its own mutual destruction; but before it comes we shall be with the Lord. Will you notice what the Lord reveals in close connection with this promise? He gives another promise, and for the first time with the adverb *quickly*. Now if this terrible scene of human trouble and destruction be a drop of that coming storm, then how marked the promise "BEHOLD, I COME QUICKLY." And this is what the Lord Jesus says at this time. May we hear His voice! Can you say, Lord Jesus, come?

If you have the present testimony of your Lord, then "hold that fast which thou hast, that no man

take thy crown." Do you understand the Lord here?

Now I want you to notice one sweet little word to the overcomer in verse 12. It is the Lord's little word "my." Nothing could be more precious. It is as though He had said, I know what is mine will be dear to you. "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of *my* God; and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of *my* God, and the name of the city of *my* God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from *my* God; and I will write upon him *my* new name." I was told the other day of a dear old saint: just as she departed she said, "He is mine and I am His." She had learnt the sweetness of the Lord's little word "*my*."

LAODICEA.

And now we come to the last closing scene, the seventh stage of the history of Christendom. The Lord again addresses that which represents the Church, even in its last state: "Unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans." You will notice that the last four states run on to the end, that is, to the coming of the Lord. And as Thyatira, or Romanism, goes on in her unrepentant state, this state, described in the address to the angel at Laodicea, shews the final result of what takes place in protestant countries. Those who know what the special teaching of the Holy Ghost has been during the last fifteen years must be struck with the revelation of Jesus Christ to this last state of the Church. "These things, saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God." It is in these characters

that He has been specially made known by the Holy Ghost; together with a deep sense of the utter failure of the creature, of man in the flesh, however tried; and an enlarged apprehension of Jesus, raised from the dead by the glory of the Father—the believer's subsisting righteousness before God; yea, the righteousness of God established by Jesus, **THE AMEN**, the faithful witness of God. The minds of these saints have been directed to the risen Jesus, the beginning of the creation of God, and have learnt, through the Spirit's teaching, that all is secured in Him, alive from among the dead. And yet, with this great increase of light and knowledge, and clearness of gospel truth—lost since the very first age of the Church—there has also set in a most serious time of luke-warmness and indifference.

It is true though that there never was such a time of outward religiousness, and such boasting of the protestant sects. If money, ministers, and buildings, and societies, were signs of true christian prosperity, what more is there to be desired? But what says the Lord? "Neither cold nor hot; I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to *buy of me*." All this is most true: it is the revelation of Jesus Christ—all around us judged by Him who cannot make a mistake. Oh is not this very solemn? This boasting Christendom about to be utterly rejected as a witness on earth? At this moment the Lord is outside it, knocking at the door. And even here in the very last state how peculiar the promise! It is not where two or three are gathered

in His name only; but "If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." There are many towns and villages, even in England, where two or three could not be found gathered in the name of Jesus. How sweet then this promise, "If any man."

This then is the close of the things that are—the complete history of Christendom—the seven successive stages of God's dial-plate. First, declension—Ephesus. Second, period of persecution—Smyrna. Third, mingling of the Church with the idolatrous world—Pergamos. Fourth, popery, or Jezebel, in Thyatira. Fifth, protestantism—Sardis. Sixth, a remnant gathered to the person of Jesus—Philadelphia. Seventh, protestantism in its final deceived boasting state—Laodicea. It is the revelation of Jesus Christ in the midst of the seven states of the Church, and His judgment upon the whole seven. To use the figure of the pit, the cage of Christendom has thus gone lower and lower, until it has in Laodicea reached the bottom. The Spirit of God in these seven stages marks the downward course, as distinctly as the dial-finger marked the descent of the cage down the shaft of the pit. But, as I said, there were two cages, and as one descended the other ascended; and as the one touched the bottom, at that moment the other came right out at the top, in the full blaze of day. It is exactly so here—Christendom, as a witness for God on earth, reaches the bottom in Laodicea, and is then cut off as loathsome to Christ. At that moment a door is opened in heaven, and the redeemed are there.

We now pass from the study of the things that are, the whole history of the Church on earth.

THE THINGS WHICH SHALL BE.

Chapter iv. I wish to go up to heaven with you, through that opened door. But before we go let us remember that this revelation was a *revelation*, and not a comment on what had been revealed before. It was, it is, supplementary to what had been revealed to Paul, Peter, &c.; but it is *quite new*. And being the last revelation given, it supposes the reader well acquainted with all that had been revealed before. And unless you are so, you cannot enter into the blessedness of reading *this* revelation of Jesus Christ.

Do you notice that there is not one word about the taking of the Church, at the close of the complete history of Christendom, to heaven. This could not be; it would not have been revelation. Do you say, Indeed, how is that? Simply because that rapturous event had been revealed to the apostle Paul. You must understand this, or you cannot go one step farther without all being confusion and mistake. The apostle Paul states that revelation of the Lord to him in 1 Thessalonians iv. 13—18. This is the grand key that unlocks every ward of prophetic scripture: and without it all is confusion in the minds of men. You observe, and do observe closely, that this is not the coming of the Lord Jesus in judgment; but in love to receive his living and sleeping saints, to meet Him in the air. The Lord had revealed this to Paul. But there the revelation stops; and just where it ceases to Paul, there it begins to John. This rapture of the saints takes place betwixt chapters iii. and iv. of the Revelation: and now the Lord reveals to John what will take place when He has thus taken us away from this earth. And thus you

see the importance of being well acquainted with the revelations that had been given before—and O, are we thus waiting for the Lord Jesus from heaven, to come and take us to the place prepared? Do we know that Christendom has well-nigh run its course; that at any moment He may come; and surely will come soon? How gracious then of the Lord to give us a still further revelation of what will take place in heaven, and on earth, after we are taken up to be with the Lord.

Now look up. The voice which John had heard at Patmos, as it were of a trumpet talking with him, now says, “Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter,” or after these. Do not forget how the Lord divides this book in chapter i. 19: “The things which thou hast seen;” the Lord Himself in the midst of the churches clothed in judicial robes. “And the things that are:” the history of Christendom in chapters ii. and iii. “And the things that shall be after these;” the things that shall be after Christendom ceases to be a witness, or candlestick on earth. We now enter upon the last of these divisions of the book. “I will shew thee things which must be after these.” From this point then we never find the Church on earth again.*

* That is, the scriptural idea of the Church. That which began on the day of Pentecost. All believers are not as formerly, merely individual saints, influenced by the Spirit of God; but they are now baptized by the Holy Ghost into one body: the very opposite of a national body. All believers, who have passed from death unto life, now compose the Church of God, according to scripture. All saints from the descent of the Holy Ghost, to the coming of Christ to call them up to meet Him in the air. And that is what I mean when I use the word Church. See Acts ii. 47; 1 Cor. x. 32; xii. 12, 13; Eph. i. 22, 23; iv. 4; v. 24—33.

May we now, as John, be immediately in the Spirit; for, whether we look at the things on earth, or in heaven, we can only understand them in the Spirit. This is of great moment; mere human learning is sure to err. Now is it not very gracious of the Lord to give us two chapters in heaven, before He reveals the dreadful things that will take place on earth, after the saints are taken up?

Now we arrive. "And behold, a throne was set in heaven, and . . . sat on the throne." Why is the name of the one sitting on the throne omitted? Every word the Spirit omits, as well as every word He uses, is of meaning. This omission is very blessed, especially at the moment of our entrance to those scenes of unclouded joy. If you enter the house of a dear and long intimate friend, you need no introduction. If it be the house of a stranger, his name is announced to you, and your name to him. O, does not this omission say, "no stranger God shall meet us?" There shall be no need of an introduction to our Father's home. The just One died for the unjust, to bring us to God: and we are there in all the welcome of a Father's love: welcome as He is welcome, who died to bring us there. There is no mention of that redemption which had brought us there; that had been fully declared in other epistles. But we are seen there according to the infinite value of that one sacrifice that brought us there.

He had said "And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them." And we see the one sitting upon the throne, to look upon like a jasper stone: symbol of that glory in which the Church is seen in millennial days; "having the glory of God: and her light like unto a stone, most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as

crystal." Chapter xxi. 11. And what a thought of rest is this revelation of God! "Sat on the throne." Rest of God; as well as rest of the saints above. God rests in the gathered firstfruits of redeeming love. Do not suppose that this is the end of all things here below; or looking down, as we should say, of all things *there* below. No, for "there was a rainbow round about the throne," reminding us that God's covenant with the earth will still be kept—blessed token, as we look down on the judgments coming on the world below.

"And round about the throne four and twenty seats (or thrones), and upon the thrones I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment, and they had on their heads crowns of gold." What a scene of unclouded rest and peace! This is the throne of judgments; for out of it proceed lightnings and thunderings. But the redeemed are not represented as standing before it to be judged for their sins; but seated in heaven's calm of holy rest. O, happy, happy prospect; brought so near to God! What a blessed revelation, thus to see our happy place when He comes to take us to the place prepared!

Let us dwell a little on this scene of holy rest. We see crowned worshippers. If you turn to 1 Chronicles xxiv., you find that there were four and twenty courses of priests, as there were twice one hundred and forty-four, or two hundred and twenty-eight Levites of praise in the next chapter. This is used by the Spirit to shew the character and relative position of these twenty-four crowned worshippers; and the one hundred and forty-four thousand of chapters vii. and xiv. The priesthood had the nearest place to God—and such is the place of the twenty-four crowned

worshippers. I doubt not that these four and twenty, being a complete number, or doubly complete, represent, not only the Church, but "all that are his" taken up at His coming. It should be observed, that the Church is not yet seen in heaven in its separateness as the bride of the Lamb. The marriage of the Lamb takes place in a subsequent chapter. Surely the Holy Ghost has a purpose in this. O, what a contrast is this revelation to the dark doctrines of Romish purgatory, and the deep gloom of uncertainty that torments the minds of many out of Rome. Believer, this is the holy scene that awaits us. Look up with joy. The nearest possible place to the throne of God is yours. Holy and intelligent worship is your happy employment. "Not a cloud above, nor a spot within." When the priests of old entered the sanctuary of the Lord, there was a molten sea, containing water to wash their feet; but in this scene of glory we find a sea of glass before the throne, like unto crystal: solid and transparent. No more defilement to wash away. O, the joy this gives even now—an eternity of purity itself. And, blessed Lord, until we arrive there, never wilt thou fail to wash our feet, to restore our souls.

Now I must ask your closest attention to a revelation that will throw great light on all that follows. "In the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, four beasts [or, as it should be, living creatures] full of eyes before and behind." Here we find the need of knowing the scriptures. In Isaiah vi. 1—7, you will find a description of the seraphim, or burners. These have six wings, and they cry, Holy, holy, holy, as the four living creatures do in and around the throne. This cry of Holy,

holy, holy, gave such a sense of his own vileness to Isaiah as to make him cry out, "*Woe is me.*" Then flew one of the seraphims, having a live coal in his hand from off the altar: "and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips, and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged." Thus we see in the seraphim, burning, and purifying—and the sinner purified by fire from the altar; purified by the burning judgment that consumed the holy One on that altar: or, will you understand this a little better?—purified according to and by the judgment of God fully executed against sin on the cross.

Now turn to Ezekiel. Read chapters i. and x. In this vision of the four living creatures you notice that there are the same symbolic heads of creation as in the four living creatures of Revelation. These four living creatures are the cherubim. And mark the action of the cherubim. It was not to take a handful of fire now for purification, but for judgment; that he, now clothed in linen, might scatter it over the city. The cross is the measure of both purification and judgment. Now in the description given of the four living creatures, in our revelation of Jesus Christ, we have the combination of seraphim and cherubim. The Holy, holy, holy, cry of the six-winged seraphim, and the symbol of the four heads of creation as in the cherubim. Verse 7 is cherubim, and verse 8 is seraphim. Surely this sets clearly before us the two great principles of the throne of God in government. Burning purification and consuming judgments. And yet, when we shall thus behold the righteousness of God in unclouded light, the effect will be, not dread, but profound worship.

In this combined action then of the throne of

God will take place the judgments that are about to be executed on the earth. God will act according to the cross of Christ, both in purifying and in judgment. Indeed these two principles have marked the action of God. And in tracing scripture, the seraphim is found to precede the cherubim. Even in Eden, before the cherubims and flaming sword are seen, the Lord God made coats of skins, and clothed them. Surely this was seraphim: it told out the counsel of God in cleansing and clothing the guilty. In Hebrews x. these two principles are very clear. First, the seraphim: perfect and everlasting purification by the one offering of the body of Jesus on the altar, never to fail, never to be repeated; and therefore boldness to enter the holiest, by the blood of Jesus. (vers. 1—23.) Then the cherubim: judgment that must fall on all who despise the seraphim purification: as in chapter xii. 29, "For our God is a consuming fire." The cross exalts the righteousness of God above the very heavens, whether in seraphim burning purification, or in cherubim consuming judgment. Blessed for us to know the cherubim looking inwards, on the blood-sprinkled mercy seat. It is not mercy that makes a compromise with sin; but the righteousness of God revealed in the very mercy shewn, through the atoning blood of the Lamb. O, how gladly could I linger on this deeply interesting theme of seraphim and cherubim! One more thought—very sweet to me—the seraphim had six wings; the cherubim had four. God is more swift and ready to purge away our sin than to judge. Long has His long-suffering delayed the judgments! But cherubim judgment must come. You say, Well, I only see this dimly at present. True; but O when we arrive in

the brightness of His presence ; when we know as we are known ; when seraphim and cherubim combined give glory and honour and thanks to Him that sits on the throne ; then shall we worship Him that liveth for ever and ever ; casting our crowns before the throne, saying, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power ; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."

Chapter v. We here still linger in heaven before we see the judgments commence on the earth. A book, or roll of sealed judgments, is seen in the hands of Him who sits on the throne. And a strong angel gives the challenge with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the book and to loose the seals thereof?" No man was found worthy to open the book of judgments and take inheritance. In that scene of unclouded light not one amongst the myriads of the saved will feel worthy to judge another. Do not you think it would be well if we felt a little more of this now?

In a sense we do feel something of this. In cases of discipline, when evil in another has to be judged, there is deep and proper feeling of unworthiness to judge and act. O, who am I, to judge my brother? Now, without care, this feeling of unworthiness to judge another may weaken, if not destroy, proper and holy discipline. There is only one who is worthy ; and surpassingly beautiful is the way in which even Paul takes shelter beneath the worthiness of his Lord. He does not say, I am more holy ; or, You are worthy to judge a fallen brother ; but with such holy delicacy he says, "In the name of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, when ye are gathered together, and

my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan." See 1 Corinthians v. 4.

This is the only true principle of holy discipline: the name, the person, the worthiness, and the power, of our Lord Jesus Christ. This produces brokenness of spirit in all, whilst discipline in our own name, or fancied worthiness, would be the very worst form of phariseeism. I believe there is much failure in discipline, for want of seeing this all-important principle.

John seems surprised, and weeps much because no one was found worthy. But now the Lord assumes a new character. Worthy to open the seals of judgment surely He is, the holy one: but He is now the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David. You will observe this indicates a change: now that the Church has been taken from the earth, all that follows will have a Jewish bearing. God will not forget one promise to His ancient people.

But if He is now to be the Lion of the tribe of Judah, it is because He is "the Lamb as it had been slain." John beheld, "And lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures [seraphim and cherubim combined], and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain." What a key this is—the slain Lamb in the centre of the judgment throne of God. As witnesses of this we see seraphim and cherubim, and the assembled myriads of the redeemed. This is the key note of the judgments and counsels of God: all must be according to the wrath that was endured by the Lamb of God. He is the centre and the exact expression of the righteous requirements of God. Rejected and hated here below,

but the centre there above. You, my reader, have a centre. Is it self, or the Lamb of God?

Yes, when the Lamb as it had been slain takes the book, then seraphim and cherubim bear witness that He is the worthy One; and the four and twenty, or the redeemed, fall down in worship; "having every one of them harps, and golden bowls full of odours, which are the prayers of saints." Mark, this is before the Lamb. He is the object of heaven's worship. And the prayers of the saints come up before Him. Who are *these saints*, if the Church is now completed and seated in glory? If you will look closely, you will find that the new song which the Church sings is not about themselves, but about those saints whose prayers ascend. The best scholars are agreed that this is so; and that verse 10 should read, "and hast made *them* unto our God kings and priests: and *they* shall reign on the earth." It is the new song, not only of redemption, but the worthiness of the slain Lamb to take the book. Surely not one amongst the myriads of the redeemed but will own, with untold joy, the worthiness of the Lamb. Yes, this shall be our everlasting theme. But the least attention to this revelation of Jesus will shew you that in this song we shall be intensely interested in the saints then on the earth, whose prayers have been presented: that our blessed Jesus is not only worthy of presenting all the redeemed, then gathered around the throne; but also worthy of all that shall be saved out of that scene of the tribulation about to commence: and far beyond that, as we shall know, as this wondrous revelation opens up to us.

Yea, and as we see, the myriads of myriads of angels also become intensely interested in this

same wondrous theme. The future opens ; and all heaven shouts, " Worthy is the Lamb : " all creation sings His praise : seraphim and cherubim bear witness, and say " Amen ; " and the crowned worshippers " fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever. "

Before we enter on the things that are about to take place on the earth, after the close of the history of Christendom, it would be well to take a glance over again, to see clearly the point at which we have arrived.

In chapter i. we saw the revelation of Jesus Christ, clothed in His judicial robes, walking in the midst of the churches. Then in chapter ii. and iii. we saw the judgment of the Lord Jesus, as to the seven stages of the history of Christendom. That being completed, then we have had the things that will take place in heaven immediately after the Church is taken there. Now we come to the things that will take place on earth after the close of Christendom, and the redeemed are taken to heaven. How very important it is rightly to divide this precious book. If you are washed in the blood of Christ, then be assured that you will be seated in glory around the throne of God, before these judgments, of which this book now speaks, can possibly take place. As the voice said, " Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be after these ; " that is, after the close of the Church's history on earth, as fully described in the addresses to the seven churches. Therefore, before we go on, let us lift up our hearts to the Lord, to keep us in the Spirit in heaven, whilst we look at the things that are about to take place on the earth. This will really be soon. We shall be there, and then shall take place on earth what is now before us.

Chapter vi. the Lamb opens one of the seals. He who, during this long gospel day, has been the expression of the grace of God, is now in the very centre of the throne, the unfolders of the judgments; and, as it were, with the voice of thunder, not now the soft sweet whisper of mercy. The four living creatures command the judgments to commence. One says, "Come:" the words "and see" should be omitted. It is not an invitation to John to see; but a command, with thunder, "Come." Now we shall find that the unfolding of these seals simply reveals to us the exact order of the providential judgments that will take place after the Church is removed.

First. "A white horse; and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering and to conquer." A crowned warrior makes rapid conquests and distant ones, as the "bow" implies. And being seated on a white horse seems to imply that he makes great pretensions to righteousness.

Second. "And there went out another horse—red; and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword." Thus, after the time of rapid conquest, a dreadful state of mutual slaughter. If we have seen lately the horror produced by only two nations at war, what will it be when peace is taken from the earth? And think how all nations are preparing for this!

Third. And now we see "a black horse." A time of deep mourning and gloom and famine succeeds the time of dreadful slaughter; "a measure of wheat for a penny." The measure, or choenix, contained about a pint and a half; and the denarius,

rendered penny, was a little under our eight pence. But, as it is used by the Lord to express the value of a day's labour, the famine will be such that it will require a day's labour, or say three shillings, to buy a pint and a half of wheat; or, in other words, the common necessaries of life will be about sixteen times their ordinary value.

Fourth. When the fourth seal is opened, the four sore judgments—the sword, hunger, death, and wild beasts of the earth—fall specially on a fourth part of the earth; that is, the earth as held by the Gentile monarchies. All this will simply take place in the order given by these symbols: providential judgments in an extraordinary degree. But bear in mind that all this is after the close of the history of the Church on earth.

Fifth. When this seal is opened, an entirely new scene is presented. This is not the crowned elders, in glorified bodies; but the *souls* of them that had been slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held. This slain remnant cry for vengeance, as the remnant of the Jews cry in the latter-day Psalms. And in this disembodied state they must wait until many shall be killed, as they had been. I grant this was all new to John. It is revelation.

Sixth. At the opening of this seal the whole fabric of society is shaken to pieces. What a picture these symbols present, sudden and unexpected! the sun implying supreme government, and the moon that which should reflect it; stars high and eminent persons. What a scene of darkness and shaking! So terrible that all classes of men become intensely alarmed, and think that the day of the wrath of the Lamb is come. If we compare the opening of this seal with Matthew

xxiv. 29, the events symbolized are very similar; only we must note, that this hour of temptation, described in the sixth seal, is before the great tribulation; and in Matthew it is immediately after the tribulation. Thus we see at every step that this book is the revelation of that which had not been made known before. Thus chapter vi. describes the order of events that will take place on earth immediately after the Church is taken up to heaven: a time of rapid conquest, by one pretending to great righteousness. Then a time of general and terrible slaughter. Then blackness of mourning and famine. Then the four sore judgments of God let loose on a fourth part of the earth. Then great persecution, and the killing of the saints of that day. Then the most awful convulsion of society, so that men say, The day of wrath is come.

Before the opening of the seventh seal there are two things which demand the closest attention. The wonderful parenthesis of chapter vii., and silence in heaven. I would make one remark here as to the time occupied during the judgments of the seals. This is not revealed. It may be short or it may be long. The disciples did not seem to have had any idea that this period of the Church, in which we live, would have lasted eighteen hundred years: our thoughts also may be far too contracted as to the vast events of this wonderful book, and the period of judgment.

In chapter vii. then an entirely new purpose or work of God is made known. And as the Church is no longer on earth, it is again the Jews, and the Gentiles, or nations. I take for granted my reader knows that in the Church of God there is neither Jew nor Gentile. (Gal. iii. 28.) Before

the Church there was the Jew and the Gentile. And again, after the Church is taken to heaven, the tribes of Israel are first sealed, and then an innumerable company, or great multitude, of all nations are saved. The omission of Dan may be to remind us that this is all sovereign grace. We must not suppose that all these are saved between the opening of the sixth and seventh seals. It is a break in the dark clouds of judgment—a bright revelation of the *purpose* of God. And O, is not the Lamb worthy of the sealed thousands of Israel, and the vast multitude of the nations. Does it not fill your heart with joy—the thought that when the world is seething in the last days of iniquity, even then such a vast harvest of souls shall be saved? You notice, this vast company do not sit with the Church on thrones *around* the throne; but they stand before it. This vast company arrest the attention of all heaven; but, beginning with the outer circle of the angels, then the elders, then seraphim and cherubim, the living creatures. What joy, worship, and praise this glorious work of God produces in heaven! And just think that this seventh chapter of the Revelation of Jesus was entirely new then to John, and is little known now. O yes, seraphim and cherubim can rejoice, or rather, I take it, bear full witness to the glory of Christ the Lamb, in the salvation of this vast multitude.

And now a question is raised in heaven by one of the elders: “Who are these?” That they are not the Church is evident, or that question could not be raised. Even John has to refer to the elder for an answer: but that answer is very distinct: “These are they that come out of great [or, *the great*] tribulation.” Thus do we learn that

this happy multitude shall be gathered from the nations during the time of tribulation, after the Church is completed and taken to be with the Lord. O, gladly could I linger on this glorious revelation of my Lord! Can we not say, Worthy the Lamb to receive this honour and glory?

Do I hear a rejecter of the gospel of God say, "Oh, then I may refuse the grace and truth of God now, and yet when the time of tribulation comes on this earth I may then be saved." Let not Satan thus deceive you. The Holy Ghost has spoken plainly as to this matter. These are His solemn words: "Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved; and for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie, that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." 2 Thess. ii. 10—12.

These are solemn words; and they are the words of God. They shut out every ray of hope to the present rejecters of Christ. But think what millions and millions are ignorant of the gospel, and no doubt from such this innumerable company will be gathered. Our God is righteous in all His ways, and holy in all His thoughts.

Now is it not blessed to read this book, to believe this revelation, to know that God will thus be glorified in the salvation of this vast multitude, though they do not form part of the Church? As the two hundred and eighty-eight singing Levites stood to the twenty-four courses of priesthood, so do these one hundred and forty-four thousand sealed ones, and the one hundred and forty-four thousand of chapter xiv., and this multitude, stand to the twenty-four crowned seated worshipping elders. O how perfect are the ways of God!

Chapter viii. If chapter vii. has revealed the seraphim action of God—the purification of this vast multitude from sins, by the blood of the Lamb, the live coal from the altar again; sin put away by the one offering on God's altar—then also in chapter viii. we shall find the cherubim action of God in consuming judgment.

It is of all importance to notice, that the ways of God in this book are on the combined principle of seraphim and cherubim, as His throne is revealed to us in chapter iv. But before the cherubim action, there is silence in heaven. This is very solemn. And now the seven angels prepare to announce the judgments direct from God: and to them were given seven trumpets. Still, before the judgment, another bright gleam of seraphim glory. The prayers of all saints are offered upon the golden altar, the altar of incense. Now is not that a wondrous scene? The prayers of every saint, down there in that world of violence and iniquity, coming up before God, with all the sweet perfume and all the acceptance of the value of Christ, once offered on the altar? How deeply all this will interest us seated in the heavenly vision! Let us think of it now.

And now the most solemn action is brought before us: "The angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth." We must compare this with the cherubim action of Ezekiel x., as the fire was there cast on the city.

Now the fire, mark, *of the altar* is cast to the earth. And what is fire of the altar? Is it not that wrath of God which consumed the holy One made sin for us? The throne of God is, so to speak, composed of seraphim and cherubim. God must purify by the burning seraphim, by the fire

of the altar, or consume by the cherubim judgments of the fire of the altar. In other words, they who have refused the mercy of God, through the atoning death of Jesus on the altar, must endure the same wrath against sin that consumed that holy sacrifice for sin on the altar. My reader, you and I must be either purified by that fire, or for ever judged by that fire.

Providential judgments there have been, and will be again more terrible, as in chapter vi. But this is now altogether another thing—fire from the altar—the very wrath that made Jesus cry out on the cross, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”—that same wrath will then be cast on the earth. Well might heaven pause in silence.

If you examine the first four trumpets you will find that they symbolize the blighting of all that supplies the needs, or pleasures, of man—at least on a third part of the earth, where these judgments fall—the trees, the sea, the rivers, the sun, the moon, and the stars. The judgments thus fall on the circumstances of men during the four terrible blasts of these trumpets. Does not this shew out the marvellous long-suffering of God? There is warning after warning; and even now, though the judgments of God through angelic agency begin, still the mildest are first. But at last the fifth angel sounds; and men are now tormented in their own persons. The bottomless abyss is opened; hell, as it were, let loose on earth. Gross darkness now covers men’s minds. And out of this darkness come terrible locusts. These seem to me to figure wicked spirits, which shall sting men with horrible doctrines; for the angel of the bottomless abyss is their king—and thus are men tormented five months.

“The sixth angel sounded.” And the four angels, bound in the great river Euphrates, are loosed. And a vast army of horsemen, a terrible show of human power and strength, pours into the prophetic earth from the east. These seem to me to be possessed by the wicked spirits of the previous woe. Though Satan is the god of this age, yet his power is only permitted so far; but who can conceive the state of the earth when Satan, and the hosts of demons, are thus let loose? And, my reader, if you are not caught up to meet Christ, and be for ever with the Lord, you may see all this, and feel it in your own terrified soul!

I do not dwell further on these six trumpets; as my object is only to help the enquirer in reading this wondrous book.

Chapter x. As there was a parenthesis between the sixth and seventh seal, so is there also between the sixth and seventh trumpet.

A mighty one cried with a loud voice, and seven thunders uttered their voices. We are not permitted to know the things uttered by these thunder voices: but if we compare a trumpet with thunder, we may expect those last scenes of ripened human iniquity to be indescribable. But time shall be no longer delayed; and in the days when the seventh angel shall begin to sound, the mystery of God shall be finished. This is dispensationally a point of great value. The period of the mystery, or the interval, thus comes to a close: the break in the dealings of God with Israel here closes: and those dealings commence by measure and time in the next chapter. It is sweet to the mind at first thought to enter on such history; “but it shall make thy belly bitter.”

How sad it is to think of the ignorance that prevails in Christendom as to all these things, which are surely coming on the earth. Even many Christians are deceived, and under the delusion that this wicked world will be converted by the gospel. They cannot have read and understood this revelation.

Chapter xi. It is of the greatest importance now to notice the division of the book at this point. We are now on Jewish ground. The temple is rebuilt, with its altar, and worshippers. The court and the city shall the Gentiles tread under foot forty-two months. This is the marked change in the book, and here dates commence. There are also two witnesses prophesying twelve hundred and sixty days, like the prophets of old in Israel. At the end of this period of testimony, the beast, who then comes on the scene, makes war with them. These prophets will be a great plague to the men of the earth, who try hard to say, There is no God. And when the prophets are slain, the world rejoices. Oh what a picture this is of man! They are raised to life, and received up into heaven. And then a great earthquake takes place. Surely these things will come to pass.

The seventh angel sounds. And this brings before us the end of all these judgments: "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ: and he shall reign for ever and ever." The Church, and all the redeemed, represented by the four and twenty elders, are still seated before God. Nothing shall ever disturb their unclouded rest. They worship also, and give thanks.

Chapter xii. should begin with the last verse of chapter xi. The temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in it the ark of His testament. This shews that we are now occupied with the revelation of God as to Israel. His counsels as to them shall stand. I must remind my reader again, that all this becomes simple, and easy to be understood, just in proportion as we are acquainted with the scriptures. Who is this woman clothed with these emblems of supremacy? If we turn to Micah iv. 8, there can be no doubt who she is. "And thou, O tower of the flock, the stronghold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, *even the first dominion*; the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem." Do you think God can break this promise? Read the first eight verses carefully. To a person ignorant of scripture, chapter xii. must present serious difficulties. In verse 2 there is the pain and travailing in birth of Israel; and an objecter might say, there was no commotion, or travail, of the Jews at the birth of Christ, the man-child. Jerusalem was asleep, and a few peaceful shepherds only were awake. Quite true. If we turn again to the prophets, you will see that the revelation rightly presumes that we should know that this must be so; and that the travail of Israel is not at the birth of Christ at all. Turn to Micah iv. again. The travail of Israel is described in verse 10, when she has gone out of the city, even to Babylon. "There shalt thou be delivered." Does not the Lord also speak of this sore travail in Matthew xxiv. 15—22? Now let us read carefully Micah v. 2, 3. In verse 2, the man child is born: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come

forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." Thus we have the place of His birth, Bethlehem, not Babylon; and though He is to be ruler in Israel, yet is He caught up to God; "shall he come forth unto me." And though He thus went to God, yet was He equal to God: "whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."

But what of Zion and the time of her travail? In verse 3 the prophet says they shall be given up "UNTIL THE TIME that she which travaileth hath brought forth; THEN the remnant of his brethren shall return unto the children of Israel." Is not this very striking? Jesus, the future Judge of Israel, was smitten on the cheek: He was rejected: He did go unto God. Israel has been given up, and will be until the time of travail, the great tribulation.

Some may have thought, in reading Revelation xii. that the time of travail was at the birth of the man child; but scripture is very clear as to this. Turn to Isaiah lxvi. 7: "Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child." Then, it may be asked, what is brought forth at the time of travail? See the very next verse. Verse 8; "as soon as she travailed, she brought forth her children." Ah, we may have confused thoughts; but how clear is scripture!

With these scriptures before us, we now turn to Revelation xii. Israel, who is to have the first dominion, is in travail and pain: and now mark, the very symbol used in chapter xiii. to describe the power of the Roman empire, is used here to describe the power of Satan, the great dragon:

“having seven heads and ten horns.” This is an awful fact, that the source of the power of the Roman empire is Satan. Christians who meddle with this world’s politics would do well to ponder this. Can Satan be reformed? Then can his kingdom be improved? But here all this is connected with the Jews. When the man child was born, we see Satan was the mover of Herod, the representative of the Roman power, in seeking to destroy the infant Lord: and again at the cross. But He is to rule all nations, and He was raised up from the dead and caught up to God.

If you look carefully at verses 5 and 6, you place, as it were, one point of the compass at the time of Satan’s hatred of Christ on earth to His ascension, and the other point reaches to the time of Israel’s tribulation. Thus the whole of the period of the Church is entirely omitted between these two verses: as is the case in the well-known passage of Isaiah lxi. 2.

And now the time of sorrow is marked, twelve hundred and sixty days; but, as always, these dates refer to the Jews—the time of tribulation so fully described in Matthew xxiv. At that time will take place what is called the war in heaven; and then Satan is cast out of heaven to the earth. This gives great joy to the heavens, and terrible woe to the inhabitants of the earth. Satan will then direct his special wrath against the Jews, but they flee into the wilderness, and are nourished there during the three years and a half.

Thus has our God been pleased to reveal to us the hatred of Satan against His Son as Messiah, and against His chosen earthly people. All this we have seen in heaven, as indeed we shall be there when these things take place. We now get

the development of Satan's power amongst men on earth.

Chapter xiii. A beast is seen to rise up out of the sea; and the description of this beast shews distinctly that it is the same beast that is described in Daniel—the fourth empire of Gentile power, or the Roman empire. But this revelation is not of what had taken place; it was seen to “rise up.” It is the seven headed and ten horned beast which suddenly appears on the scene again, in a new and most dreadful state.

It may be asked, How can John see this rising up, when the Roman empire did exist in his time? We shall get the answer to this question when we come to chapter xvii. This terrible beast has the characteristics of the leopard, the bear, and the lion. And the dragon, or Satan, shall give him his power, and throne, and authority. One of the heads of this dreadful empire is wounded as it were unto death: this wound is healed: and now all the world wonder after this beast. They worship Satan, and they worship this terrible beast. Such is the future of Europe. What a revelation to the servants of Jesus! and shall they mingle with that world which will surely come to this? Are you surprised at this? I should be more surprised if it came to anything better. Having rejected Christ for so many centuries, is there anything wonderful that God should at last give men up to their own folly and choice? Yet, how dreadful the thought, that the worship of Satan, and the beast, or head of the Roman empire, will assuredly be the worship of all that dwell upon the earth, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb! and power is given during this

time of tribulation to overcome the saints of that period.

And now, when the peoples become, as it were, ordered, or formed, under Satan, *another beast* comes up out of the earth. He assumes the look of the Lamb, but his voice betrays him: "he spake as a dragon." He has immense influence and power. This is the wicked one. He had two horns as a lamb. Now though we must not confound this wicked one with the woman, the great whore, yet I judge, from Daniel xi. 36—38 and 2 Thessalonians ii. 8—12, that the final apostasy of both the Jews and Christendom will find its centre and head in this wicked one. There is a trinity of wicked ones, and in fearful imitation of God. The head of the restored empire takes the place of God. This lamb-like dragon-speaking Antichrist exerciseth all the power of this first beast, and is co-equal with him, and doeth great wonders. And Satan takes the place of the Holy Ghost on earth. Idolatry is set up and enforced by death. Then they that dwell upon the earth shall be deceived. God in righteous judgment sends them strong delusion, that they all may be damned.

I ask, Can any man, having the Spirit of God, fail to discern that everything around is tending to this frightful end? And what a climax of human progress! All this will surely come to pass: it is impossible for God to lie. Satan is already beginning to whirl his vortex: are you in it, my reader?

Chapter xiv. We have now another higher scene before us. Not the reign of the king in Zion, but a kind of joyful anticipation of that ap-

proaching event. He who shall be king is still seen as a Lamb, and identified with the remnant, the hundred and forty-four thousand. Is not this anticipation most cheering? I judge it marks the near approach of the reign of Christ: and this gives great joy in heaven. They are connected with heaven, but are not the Church, or the redeemed as seen in heaven in chapter iv. "They sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four living creatures, and the elders."

These are kept pure from the fearful apostasy. They follow the Lamb. The opening of the seals of judgments by the Lamb as it had been slain, caused the new song to be sung in chapter v. Now the sight of the Lamb on mount Sion raises the joyful anticipation of that reign in righteousness, borne witness to by cherubim and seraphim upholding the throne, and witnessed by all the redeemed, symbolized by the four and twenty elders. There is something most fitting in this burst of joy, remembering that this is the revelation of Jesus Christ. To turn from the dreadful state of the earth during the reign of the beast, and to anticipate the reign of Christ—can anything give more intense joy?

Yesterday I met an old preacher who reminded me of scenes he had been with me in thirty years ago. I remarked, that when I was led to see the coming of the Lord in scripture, and to wait for Him from heaven, *that* separated me entirely from those things. And I went on to speak of the blessedness of that coming event, when we shall be for ever with the Lord. He pointed to his breast, and said, "He has come: He is here; He is in me now." And he said it in a manner which shewed he desired no other coming. I do not

know which is the more deplorable—the ignorance, or selfishness, of so many, who, like this old preacher, get a little comfort to their own souls, and Satan may go on reigning over this poor dark world; Christ may still be rejected. Now what can this blessed revelation of Jesus be to them? I suppose they never care to read it. Ah, my soul, the coming reign of Jesus: this is the theme of deepest joy!

I do not doubt but that this very remnant will have a peculiar place when the Lamb shall reign. Seraphim and cherubim shall support and be the witness of his throne. What a reign of righteousness! The cross, on which He endured wrath, will be the expression, and the principle, of the throne. What a theme for meditation!

It is important to notice the historical order of this chapter, in its seven distinct announcements. The joyful anticipation of the reign of Christ. Then the announcement of the everlasting gospel to all nations. It seems rather difficult to us, who are so accustomed to the present gospel of grace, to understand the good news of “Fear God, and give glory to him; FOR THE HOUR OF HIS JUDGMENT IS COME; and worship him,” &c. Surely this has been the eternal purpose of God, and “for this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.” (1 John iii. 8.) It is good news that the present reign of Satan will shortly close.

The everlasting gospel is evidently linked with the reign, and though the hour or time of judgment is limited, yet its blessed effects are everlasting. This was always foretold by the prophets; and the gospel preached by the Lord was “The reign of God is at hand;” and again will be

proclaimed to all nations. Blessed prospect when all shall be subject to Him!

The next messenger announces the fall of Babylon. Details of this we have further on: but one thing is made known by the order of these announcements—the destruction of apostate Christendom before the crisis of the beast's iniquity: as in the next announcement the wrath of God is poured out without mixture on those who worship the beast. All this we shall have in chapter xvii. I only notice the order. False apostate Christendom will be destroyed to make way for a still worse thing, the worship of the beast. Dreadful will be that time, and the final end of all who thus give themselves up to Satan is described. And what a time for the patience of the remnant, who keep the commandments of God!

And next in order, a voice is heard from heaven, saying, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth." In God's past dealings with Israel, long life was a mark of His blessing. But in this time of dreadful iniquity, to die is the mark of favour. Oh, how little the world knows or expects such a state of things!

Then comes the time of the harvest, and next the vintage. The Lord's parable, and its explanation of the harvest of the earth, in Matthew xiii., must be remembered; and now the time is come. The harvest would thus refer more to the world at large, whilst the vintage describes the last terrible judgments on the Jews, the vine of the earth—most dreadful will be the slaughter around THE CITY. This is the time of trouble such as never was, and never shall be again. We must never forget that the first thought, yea, God's thought, running through this prophetic future, is the

coming reign of the Lamb, on mount Sion. But before we arrive at the actual coming of the King of kings, we have further revelation.

Chapters xv. and xvi. must be read together, as the revelation of the closing scenes of the wrath of God. This must be the very close; as John saw "them that had gotten the victory over the beast," they stand on the emblem of solid purity, yet mingled with fire, shewing the tribulation out of which they had come. The theme of their song also is the coming reign.

Special attention is called to the fact, that "the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened;" and also that the seven executors of the wrath of God come out of the temple; and more, that one of the living creatures gave unto these seven angels the seven bowls, full of the wrath of God. Thus, as seraphim and cherubim combined bear witness to the worthiness of the Lamb, they also bear witness that the same wrath must be poured out. We have seen this in chapter viii. in the third part of the earth in the sounding of the trumpets. Now it is on the earth. This is evidently the prophetic Roman earth: upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them that worshipped his name. The second angel poured out his vial or bowl upon the sea: those nations that surround the Roman earth, and are in a state of confusion. Then the third poured out his bowl of wrath on the rivers, or streams of distinct peoples.

In the midst of these judgments the angel of the waters, the one watching over the peoples, ascribes righteousness to the Lord, which art, and wast, the Holy One. And the altar responds, "Even so,

Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments." O, what a light the altar throws on the judgments that are about to be executed on an impenitent earth! Look at the pouring out of the wrath of God on the nations, and then pause, and gaze on the Son of God, once bearing the wrath of God on the cross. God is everlastingly the same. He will surely act according to the cross of Christ; whether in the purification of His saints, or in the pouring out of His wrath. What a key this is to understand this blessed book!

How often the burning victim on the altar of sacrifice had pointed forward to the consuming wrath of God, as seen on the cross! And now the fourth angel shall pour out his bowl of wrath upon the sun, and men are scorched with fire; and they will blaspheme the name of God. The supreme power becomes the source of scorching judgment; and there will be no repentance. How little men know what is coming on the earth!

The fifth angel will pour out his bowl on Rome, the *seat* of the beast. "And his kingdom was full of darkness." What a blank to all human hopes and delusions! It will be a foretaste of hell! the outer darkness, where there is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth. "They gnawed their tongue for pain." Filled with blasphemy, they will not repent. Surely the time is at hand! These things are at the very door; and men heed them not.

"The sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared." The Euphrates is the eastern boundary of the Roman empire. The boundary will be broken up, and a way opened for the kings of

the east to come. This must bring Palestine into great prominence; and the western empire is moved by this to go forth to the great battle. The trinity of iniquity puts forth all its unclean power: unclean spirits like frogs go out of the mouth of the beast (the head of the empire), but the dragon is named first, and last the man of sin, the false prophet. Satan, the emperor, and the man of sin: what a trinity! Men will have these: but they reject the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. And they will receive and be led by the odious spirits that proceed from this terrible trinity of iniquity! And when the hosts of the east come against this apostate empire, they come as the bowl of the wrath of God. These things cannot have been yet fulfilled. The empire is not yet restored, and the man of sin has not yet appeared. Let not then the fancies of men take away your attention from the awfully solemn fact, that these things will surely soon come to pass!

The seventh angel poured out his vial or bowl of wrath into the air. A voice is heard out of the temple in heaven FROM THE THRONE, saying, "It is done," and very terrible is the convulsion of the empire at this closing scene of the pouring out of divine wrath. The cities of the nations fell: and can we not see a vast preparation going on? The world, though it rejects the testimony of God, yet seems to expect some such terrible convulsion, of which a mighty earthquake is a striking symbol.

Then Babylon comes into remembrance. Ah, you may join her, ye rejecters of the gospel, but remember, in doing so, you voluntarily take upon yourselves her murders, and her guilt; and you must drink, with her, of the cup of the wine of the fierceness of the wrath of God. Dream not.

that these things have been fulfilled. Each of my readers will soon be either called up to meet the Lord, and be with Him, in unclouded rest, or be left, a rejecter of God, in these terrible and unparalleled judgments that are at the very doors.

Chapter xvii. gives a very special revelation of the judgment of apostate Babylon, and her position as to the restored Roman empire.

Who is this woman? I beg my reader to ponder this question. She sits upon many waters; and the waters are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. She assumes the purple and scarlet. Who is this Mystery, Babylon the Great—mother of abominations—this drunken murderess? John marvelled greatly at her; and so may we. Well, the angel gives the explanation: "I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns." And first the angel explains as to the beast. Let us attend carefully. "The beast that thou sawest was, and is not, and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit." That this is the fourth empire, as described by the prophet Daniel, there can be no doubt; and we know that the fourth empire was the Roman. Its seat of power the seven-hilled city. And as this woman is seen sitting on the beast, she must be where it is. The centre then of this dreadfully corrupt system is Rome.

There are several solemn facts made known to us in this chapter. The Roman empire *was*: it no longer exists. It shall be again—shall ascend out of the bottomless abyss. Its whole future character shall be satanic. The rising up again of this fearful empire shall astonish the world. Five

forms of government had passed away: the imperial then was the sixth. The other form of government is not yet come. The seventh will continue only for a very short space; as the eighth, who shall be of the seventh, is the terrible beast.

In this last form of the Roman empire it will be composed of ten kingdoms. These give their power and strength unto the beast. This is certainly all future. The Roman empire was, is not, and thus shall be again. Can it be denied that many centuries after this revelation was given, a false apostate church has had its centre at Rome? that this church has become the woman of the world, whilst professing to be the bride of Christ? Has she not so entirely ignored the heavenly calling of the Church, as to become one with the nations? Is there one mark of this woman that does not literally describe the apostate church? In verse 16 we are told of her terrible destruction by the ten kingdoms of the empire. All this, my reader, is surely true.

Chapter xviii. Passing now from the empire, we have the character and fall of apostate Christendom brought before us in terrible detail. Now whilst Rome is the mother and centre of all these abominations, yet it is impossible to avoid observing, that this description takes in all that is false in Christendom. As the daughters grow up, there is more family likeness. This must be so wherever the church becomes one with or marries the world. The true principle of the Church is a people taken out of the world; one with the risen Christ; joint members of His body; baptized by one Spirit into one body. The essential principle of a worldly

religious establishment is the opposite of the Church of God. It is the world, called Christian, and the Christians in it are thus in Babylon, in the confusion and captivity of the world.

But, as my object is not so much to comment, as to lead souls to solemn meditation on this book, I will only ask you seriously to read this chapter, and tell me if it does not describe protestant nations as well as Romish. Is there greater commercial prosperity and greater iniquity anywhere than in the church-and-world nation of England? From the study of these chapters it seems probable that as the kings agree with the beast, so the daughters may agree with the mother; at all events the whole is spoken of as Babylon the Great: and can any one fail to see that everything in Christendom is becoming more like Rome? And what will it be when the true Church of God is taken up to be with the Lord, and Christendom is given up to strong delusion, to believe a lie? What think you of that call, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partaker of her sins?"

Chapter xix. It is remarkable what deep interest is taken in heaven in the fall and judgment of Christendom, or the apostate church. A great voice is heard in heaven. This loud Alleluia and shout of praise is about the righteous judgment of God on this great whore. The glorified Church also worship God, saying, "Amen, Alleluia." The four living creatures, seen for the last time, also say, "Amen, Alleluia." Seraphim and cherubim bear witness to the righteous judgment of God on apostate Babylon. One day with the Lord is as a thousand years; but this terrible overthrow in judgment must come. The Lord use this search-

ing truth in separating us more to Himself! What an end of all human boasting! the end of the period we live in, and so near! If we believe all this, it must separate us from all around to God Himself.

It is remarkable that the marriage of the Lamb does not take place until after the judgment of apostate Christendom. How terribly dishonouring to Christ is that which calls itself the Church!

A voice came out of *the throne*. Let us still keep in mind the coming reign of Christ. The great multitude, with a voice like thunder, say, "Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." But one thing above all others shall give joy and gladness to this vast multitude—the marriage of the Lamb. The bride, the Lamb's wife, now takes her true separate place in the glory. As the four and twenty elders had represented all the redeemed, now the bride is seen, distinct and separate from the vast multitude, who are called to the marriage, and rejoice; the four and twenty elders are seen no more. The Church is never found in scripture until Christ the Head had been raised from the dead, and ascended on high. But it may be asked, Were none saved then before the Church was formed at Pentecost? and are none saved after the Church has been taken up (as in 1 Thessalonians iv., and represented in heaven, in Revelation iv.); that is, during these days of iniquity and judgments of which we have thus spoken? Oh, doubtless; and these no doubt are portions of this vast multitude, who are evidently distinct from the bride, and who rejoice because *her* marriage is come. Was not Rebekah distinct from her maids who attended her? was not Ruth distinct from the women who rejoiced in Bethlehem's gate? Is not

the bride distinct from the guests at the marriage feast? Even so do we find the wife of the Lamb distinct from even the rejoicing heavenly hosts. "Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

When God looked at Adam in the garden—figure of Him that was to come—He said, "It is not good that the man should be alone: I will make him an help meet for him." And the Lord God laid the man in the typical place of death—"a deep sleep"—and out of that dead Adam, so to speak, He builded the living woman. Not one member of Eve was built, or formed, until Adam was thus laid in the type of the death of Him that was to come. Even so, out of the death of Jesus God has not only raised Him from among the dead, but the Church is raised up in Him. The life of the Christian is the risen life of Christ, the Head of the body the Church. He must suffer the death of the cross, the atonement for sin, and be raised from the dead, before the second Eve could be formed. O blessed theme! God, in past eternity, looking forward, and seeing the risen glorified Son, was saying, It is not good for Him to be alone: I will build a help meet for Him. God thought it; God said it; and God has done it. All, all is of God. O think of the predestined glory of the Church. Whatever Adam was, such was every particle of Eve. Whatever Christ is, as the risen man from among the dead, such shall be, such is, His bride. We shall see Him as He is, and be like Him.

There is one thought more sweet than all the rest—the marriage of the Lamb is the beginning of the *manifested* glory of Christ. The marriage having taken place, heaven is immediately opened, and He comes forth with all the armies of heaven, King of kings, and Lord of lords.

O glorious event! The wicked are now to be destroyed: evil is no more to lift up its head. Where is now the power of the beast, the satanic head of the Roman empire? where the kings of the earth, and their armies? Read their dreadful doom. We are told the beast the head of the empire, and the man of sin the false prophet, will not die, but will both be cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.

The personal coming of the Lord Jesus occupies a large place, both in the prophecies of the Old and New Testament; but what we have in this chapter is new, and most solemn, and true.

Chapter xx. The next act of judgment falls on Satan. The time is come that he should be bound, and cast into the bottomless pit. This is absolutely necessary during the thousand years blessed reign of Christ! Could Christ and Satan reign at the same time? Impossible. Now Satan is the god of this world. We have seen in chapter xii. that he is, as the dragon, the very source of the power of the Roman empire, both past and to come. But you ask, Are not the “powers that be” ordained of God? Most surely. But have not those “powers that be” rejected and murdered the Son of God, the rightful King? And does not the whole world lie in the hands of the wicked one? This is a solemn question to be quite clear about. Is Satan the god of this world? and does he con-

tinue to be so until the event foretold in this chapter?

Perhaps my reader asks, If the world has rebelled against Christ, murdered Him, and is now led on and ruled over by Satan, how can a Christian take part in the politics of the world, instead of taking his place with Christ in rejection? I do not see how he can, without being unfaithful to Christ. No doubt many do so, through ignorance; but not without great loss to their souls. God in His providence does overrule; but the present reign of Satan in this world is a fearful fact. A little while then, and the apostate church, or Christendom, shall be fully judged; and then the apostate empire; and then Satan, the prime mover in all this iniquity. Who can conceive the blessed contrast, when the old serpent, the devil, Satan, shall be cast out. Men have no idea how he leads them on.

And then the first resurrection will be completed. Could there be a more certain proof that many will be saved who do not form part of the Church, the bride of the Lamb? Surely the bride was completed when the marriage took place in heaven, chapter xix. And yet all these are raised from the dead, and form the completion of the first resurrection. All who had been slain, refusing to worship the beast, will live and reign with Christ a thousand years. This is all a new revelation, and embraces a company not included in the extent of this resurrection, as made known to Paul: but it is clearly revealed here. The rest of the dead will not live again until the thousand years are finished. The first resurrection is very blessed. How surely the Church has lost all this precious teaching, and gone back to the old Jewish idea of a general resurrec

tion of the righteous and the wicked together. Scripture never contradicts itself, and nowhere does it teach a general resurrection.

There is then most certainly, not only a first resurrection, but a thousand years—the glorious millennial reign of Christ—before the second resurrection. That this first resurrection refers to the persons of the redeemed is most clear, for “they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.”

Unspeakably blessed as will be this period of the reign of Christ, and no enemy to tempt and deceive; yet from verse 7 to verse 10 we have the fact made known that even after all this happy season of millennial rest—when Satan is let loose for a little, and the last time, on earth—the nations immediately fall into the snare of Satan: the final proof that the creature, if left to himself in any circumstance, cannot stand.

We have no information that the nations will all be born again. During the millennium, righteousness shall *reign*; in the eternal state righteousness shall *dwell*. Judgment from God falls on the rebellious host, and Satan is cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet have been during the thousand years.

Then takes place the judgment of the great white throne; and the dead stand before God. At this point the reader may remember the judgment in Matthew xxv.: the sheep and the goats. Perhaps you ask “Is not that the general judgment? Are not the wicked dead and the righteous both raised up together, and then separated by the Judge?” How strange that such an error should have become so common! If you read that parable again, you will find there is no thought

either of the righteous or wicked *dead*; no thought of the resurrection at all; but simply the judgment of the *living* nations, at the coming of Christ. That is quite a different scene from this judgment of the dead, and evidently will take place a thousand years before this. This is not at the coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven; but the heavens and the earth fled away. Woe be to you, my reader, if you are one of those who stand before this white throne. Judgment there must be, either on the cross, or on the throne. If you can look back in faith to the cross, then sins are put away, to be remembered no more. If your sins shall be judged at the great white throne, then your place must be in the lake of fire for ever and ever. O, ponder this revelation of the great white throne! Deepen, O my God, in my soul, the sense of thy mercy to me!

Chapter xxi. The new heaven and the new earth now appear, and up to verse 8 the prophecy views the eternal state. The Church is seen now coming down from God, out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. Everything earthly has passed away: it is now pure as from the hands of God; entirely heavenly. Not only pure, but incapable of impurity. We shall have a fuller description of this further on; but there is the new earth, and God dwells with men. In the eternal state we do not find the word "reign;" but "dwell:" God dwells with men. Still the Church has a distinct place, as the tabernacle of God. "The tabernacle of God is with men." O, my soul, meditate on this supreme blessedness. There is nothing now to subdue. The eternal Son has subdued everything, and now gives up the

reign; for in the new heaven and the new earth dwells righteousness. And as the Son is ever the revelation of the Father, He now, not as man, but as God, wipes away all tears, and banishes from the new creation all sorrow and pain. As God He makes it impossible for this to be again; for the former things are passed away. I can only give an outline; but every sentence in these verses is an ocean of blessedness. And He who thus makes all things new says "These words are true and faithful."

It may now fairly be asked, But what of the wicked through the unending ages of eternity? It is remarkable that before their eternal doom is declared we have the most solemn assurance that none are *now* excluded from the life everlasting: "I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all [or these] things." Yes, it will be a dreadful thing for the lost one to remember in eternity that the word of God had thus been pledged. As Jesus says, "He that cometh unto me shall in no wise be cast out." O, thirsty one, God is pledged to give the water of life freely.

"But"—yes, the eternal doom of the rejecter is thus described, when the tabernacle of God is with men, when He throughout eternity shall dwell with them—"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." Thus the state of torment is as eternal as the eternal state of the blessed: in that lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever. Chapter xx. 10.

Nothing can be more certain than the awful fact of the eternity of punishment ; and here at verse 8, with this solemn fact the prophecy as it were comes to a close. And it is also remarkable, the denial of this solemn truth is the last great effort of Satan to overthrow the truth of God. From thousands of pens and tongues Satan is saying " Yea, hath God said, for ever and ever? Oh, He does not mean it. Do not believe it." Children of God, beware. This denial of God's truth often reveals a minister of Satan, though men may regard him as an angel of light.

From chapter xxi. 9, to xxii. 6, we return as it were ; and one of the seven angels describes the bride the Lamb's wife. This does not go on prophetically, but evidently is a revelation of the Church during the millennial reign ; just as one of the same seven angels described the character of the false Babylon after her fall. After the Church has been seen in eternal glory, then we return and see her fully described during millennial rest. Many features are eternal : blessed be God ! but we shall see the bride of the Lamb in relation to the earth.

She is the *holy* Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God. O how precious this character is ! It is not merely absence from evil, but essentially, inherently holy : holiness from God, pure as heaven itself : all heavenly, " from God : " all of Adam, all of sin, for ever gone !

" Oh how I thirst
The chains to burst."

I cannot write ; I long to be there. O let us awake, and wait for our Lord.

" Having the glory of God ; and her light like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper

stone, clear as crystal." The very revealed glory in which God appeared the moment the Church was caught up and was in heaven in chapter iv. Jesus said, "And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one." "Pure as crystal." Not one unholy thought: accepted in the Beloved. But it is the glory of God, and "having" it! Hath not God blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus? More could not be given. And all so certain, and so near!

We must bear in mind that this is the revelation of the Church, as it is to be seen when the world shall know that God hath loved us even as He hath loved Christ. The Church shall be seen having the glory of God, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. Precious stones are used to express earthly glory; but who can tell what is the brightness of that glory, set forth by these heavenly stones? The city is described and measured by the golden reed. All is perfect in divine righteousness. From the north or south, the east or west, the nations shall see the same divine perfection. In Solomon's temple the altar was four square, the exact size of the holiest. The death of the cross must be, and was, equal to all the claims of God. There is now no longer need of the altar. The city lieth four square: all is divinely equal; divinely perfect. The holiest was twenty cubits every way. The city is twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.

"And the building of the wall of it was of jasper; and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass." As the apostle Paul heard things impossible to utter, so it seems to me these

divine symbols of glory cannot be expressed in words.

We know that we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. "And he that sat [upon the throne] was to look upon like a jasper." (Chap. iv. 3.) Oh what then shall be the glory of that city, the bride of the Lamb, when the building of the wall of it is of jasper! All that can express glory is used in the foundations and building of this city. It is essential purity; inherent holiness; "pure gold;" "clear glass;" "transparent glass."

It should be noticed that in themselves all these stones are dark: the light is all *reflected*. Sweet it is to own that when made like Him, still all the glorious perfections will be Christ Himself reflected in the Church. The Holy Ghost may enable you to learn much of this our future glory, by comparing it with Ezekiel xxviii. 13—15; and also the four-square ephod, with its precious stones, covering the heart of the high priest. The eternal purpose of God shall be fulfilled—are not our names now on the heart of our great High Priest? Then shall we most certainly be in that place of glory prepared for us, of which this wondrous building is the symbol. It is the pearl of great price, to redeem which to Himself Jesus came down from the highest glory. No more possibility of defilement: the streets of the city are of pure gold. That is, we shall find nothing but divine purity. No going into the temple, and out; no change from worship to carelessness: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. No need of created helps—of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God will lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

If you read carefully Isaiah lx., lxii., lxxv. 18, 19, and many other prophecies of the future glory of Jerusalem, you will be struck with the similarity there is betwixt the earthly and the heavenly cities, in many points. Zephaniah iii. 17 may also help us to understand the relative position of both during the millennium. "The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice OVER thee with joy; he will rest in his love; he will joy OVER thee with singing." A comparison of these scriptures will shew that the heavenly city, the bride of the Lamb, will be over the earthly city of the great King. And thus "the nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it;" God resting in His love over it. It will be joy and singing. O sweet the sound will be, when Jerusalem the earthly shall re-echo the songs of Jerusalem the golden. Nothing shall interrupt heaven's harmony; for nothing that defileth can enter there.

There are also points of contrast surely between the earthly city and the heavenly. I only notice one, to prove that they are not the same. Where the future earthly Jerusalem is described as the metropolis of all nations in Isaiah ii. 1—4, it is said, "And they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks." &c. This could not for a moment be applied to the heavenly city. No need for either swords or ploughshares there. Oh how clear and distinct is the word of God! Sad that man should confound what God has so made to differ.

"He that believeth hath everlasting life." And that life is now shewn to the servant John under two figures; the "pure river of the water of life,"

and "the tree of life." The source of the river is the throne of God and of the Lamb. "Grace reigns through righteousness." According to the established throne in righteousness, flows forth, in its river-like abundance, the water of life, clear as crystal. That which proceeds from God must be pure as He is pure. These are the words of God; "but what will it be to be there?"

And now the tree of life, no longer forbidden or guarded, but yielding her fruit every month. Thus life and healing flows forth, and is for the life and healing of the nations. There shall be no more curse; for sin has been put away according to the righteousness of God, for "the THRONE of God and of the Lamb shall be in it."

What a blessed scene this is! "and his servants shall serve him: and they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads." The activities of the Church the bride shall all be according to God; shall bear the mark of God. They shall dwell in the light of God; "and they shall reign for ever and ever." And all this is sure, on the very faithfulness of God. For He thus "sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done."

This verse 6 finishes the description of the heavenly city. Then follows the closing remarks. And first, the Lord would have us remember this, that there is nothing between this moment and His coming. "Behold, I come quickly; blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book." His coming is to be before the soul as the very next event. You may fall asleep and depart: "absent from the body, present with the Lord." Have you just now written a letter to a

friend, saying you hope, if the Lord will, to come and see him at such a place? Well, you may perhaps go—many things *may* take place—but the one event really to expect next is the coming of the Lord: “Behold, I come quickly.”

I do not see how any one can thus expect the Lord as the next event, unless he believes the taking up of the Church, as made known to the apostle Paul in 1 Thessalonians iv. If we are falsely building on dates, which do not belong to this period of the Church; and if we are only looking for the Lord when He shall come in judgment on the nations, and to reign; then we have seen in this book that many events have to take place before He thus comes. The Roman empire is not even reconstructed; the beast has not yet taken his place. The second beast, the man of sin, the false prophet, has not yet been manifested. Babylon, so far from being judged, is coming more into favour and fashion every day, even in England. We have seen that the Lord comes to take His Church before all these events; and therefore faith can take hold of these words, “Behold, I come quickly,” and can hope for the coming of the Lord as the next event. And to deny the coming of the Lord to take the Church is to falsify these words, and practically to say, The Lord cannot come quickly.

Another closing remark of great importance is the instruction, “Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book; for the time is at hand.” Daniel was commanded to seal his prophecy, two thousand four hundred years ago, until the time of the end. That time is therefore now come, or near; for this prophecy is not to be closed, for the time is at hand. And this surely is a time for

individual faithfulness and holiness. The final state of Christendom is described in verse 11. I believe this is being developed all around. Nor can the true saints of God reform the masses; but in the end it will be "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still." Keep the coming of the Lord before the soul, in the midst of all that discourages; for again He says, "Behold, I come quickly." And He will reward every man according to his works. And He reminds us that it is indeed Himself: "I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star." O, is this the living Jesus, the same Jesus? is He the bright and morning star? Yes; it is *our* Lord, the one for whom we wait.

No doubt the Spirit is acting powerfully where owned, and not grieved: and one word is heard by Jesus from the Spirit and the bride—"Come." And if the ear of my reader should be opened, "let him that heareth say, Come." And where the hope of the Lord's coming is fresh in the soul there will be gospel testimony. "And let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

Then follows solemn warnings against any who shall add to, or take away from, the words of this book. And the last parting word to us from the Lord is again, "Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

C. S.