

# GOSPEL LIGHT.

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JAMES CARTER,

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# GOSPEL LIGHT.



**GOD IS LIGHT. GOD IS LOVE.**

"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him."

*1 John i. 5. 1 John iv. 8, 16. 1 John iv. 9.*

## **"A WORD UPON ITS WHEELS."**

**I**T is related of a certain lady, that after spending an evening at cards in the midst of gay company, on returning home she found her maid engaged in reading. She stealthily looked over the maid's shoulder, and, observing what the book was, exclaimed, "Poor, melancholy soul! What pleasure can you find in poring so long over that book?"

Not waiting for an answer, she retired to rest. But that night she rested not. And what was it, think you, that, in this particular night, disturbed her spirit, and drove sleep from her eyes? Was it the gaiety in which she had so recently been indulging; the excitement of the occasion, or the weariness that followed in its train?

No; it was nothing of this. It was merely *a word*.

How little do we think of what may be the effect of a word! It is so soon, so easily uttered,

and so often lightly escapes the lip. But at times how much hangs upon a word, what important unalterable issues! Holy Scripture says, "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver" (Prov. xxv. 11).

How beautiful is this imagery! But if you look in the margin of your Bible there is something more. You will see it reads thus: "A word *spoken upon its wheels* is like apples of gold in pictures of silver."

Now it was just *that*; a word upon wheels had run right into that pleasure-loving lady's heart, and the first effect of it was to give deep anguish of spirit. She found no rest. All night she lay under the hand of God, sighing and weeping with the smart of this one "word upon wheels."

Again and again her maid begged to know the cause of such deep and unabated distress.

At length the lady could restrain herself no longer. Bursting into a flood of tears, she exclaimed, "Oh! it is one word which I saw in your book that troubles me! There I saw the word 'ETERNITY.' Oh, how happy should I be if I were prepared for ETERNITY!"

And would not *you*, whom God has so long spared in His mercy from the fast-approaching judgment, would not you be happy, with a happiness you have never yet tasted, were *you* prepared for eternity? Face to face with that one word, with all its unproved but tremendous significance, what could the frivolities of this wretched world do for the guilty soul of this poor lady? She could only loathe them from the bottom of her heart, while she seemed to breathe the smoke of the pit from which they came.

But God had mercy upon her soul, as He ever

has upon such as truly turn to him; and her heart rested by faith upon the precious blood of Christ, which alone can cleanse a poor sinner from his sins, and give a troubled conscience peace with God. She believed unto salvation, and then, like her pious, faithful, and happy maid, she discovered the secret of the *real pleasure*, which God's Book, which speaks of eternity and eternal verities, conveys to the soul of the believer. The word spoken on its wheels began to bring forth its apples of gold (fruit unto holiness and unto God, Rom. vi. 22, viii. 4), in pictures of silver for every divinely opened eye to see and to admire.

Dear reader, may it be thus with you. "Give not sleep to thine eyes, nor slumber to thine eyelids," until by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ thou canst say that, through grace, ETERNITY, with all its solemn issues of eternal damnation, eternal judgment and eternal fire, has no title to disturb your rest, because it is only big with blessedness to you, that of eternal life, eternal redemption, eternal salvation and eternal glory (Mark iii. 29; Heb. vi. 2; Jude 7; Mark x. 30; Heb. ix. 12, v. 9; 1 Pet. v. 10.)

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## A CONVERSATION ON GETTING ETERNAL LIFE.

"**H**AVE you got eternal life?" said a servant of Christ to an aged woman.

"No, sir; but I hope I shall."

"How long before you expect to get it, for I suppose you are more than seventy years old?"

"Oh yes, sir; I am far beyond seventy."

“ Then when, may I ask, do you expect to get eternal life? ”

“ I do not know, sir; but my grandson says I must come and have it now; and though I tell him there is a great deal to be done first, he always says there is nothing to do for it, but I must come at once.”

“ That is quite right. The truth is, that Jesus the Son of God has come down from heaven, and done a finished work. Did you never hear that He said when He died upon the cross, ‘ It is finished ’? Well, how can there be anything for you to do, if He has finished the work of eternal redemption, and God now GIVES eternal life to all who believe in His name? God is now, then, giving people eternal life. He says, ‘ The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.’ (Rom. vi. 23.) Eternal life, then, is God’s gift; and you surely do not require to do anything to obtain a gift; for if you did anything for it, it would be what you had earned, and not a gift. But I repeat that Scripture says, ‘ The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.’ You have only, therefore, to come to Jesus the Son of God by faith, and you will receive eternal life as God’s free gift.”

“ So my grandson says, sir.”

“ Ah! but you must see that God says so in His blessed Word, and rest on what God says, because God says it; for that is faith. Therefore, take God at His word. Believe He means what He says, that ‘ the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.’ Rely upon His faithfulness to His own word, and you will be happy. You will then know that all your sins are forgiven, and that you have eternal life, and



## ON GETTING ETERNAL LIFE.

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will never perish. There is no time to be lost, for Jesus is quickly coming, and God says, 'Behold, now is the accepted time : behold, now is the day of salvation.' (2 Cor. vi. 2.) So refuse no longer this gift, but come to Jesus at once ; come just as you are ; come with all your sins and guilt ; and remember, if you do not receive Jesus the Son of God as your Saviour, you must go to hell, and be lost for ever."

" Oh ! sir, that would be terrible. But, sir, have you got eternal life ? "

" Yes, my dear woman, through the grace of God, I have had eternal life for more than thirty years. Think, then, again of these precious words, ' The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord ' ; and may God bless this conversation to the saving of your soul. "

Dear reader, have you thus come to Jesus, and received this marvellous gift of God, eternal life ? Do you not know that Jesus said, " My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me : and I GIVE UNTO THEM ETERNAL LIFE ; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand " ? (John x. 27, 28.) Have you heard the sweet voice of Jesus the Son of God in the word of His blessed gospel ? Did not He lovingly say, " Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest " ? (Matt. xi. 28.) Can you resist the claim upon your heart of such a voice of wondrous mercy ? To think of the Son of God coming down from heaven, and, unasked and unsought, in a world that only returned Him hatred for His love, that He should freely present eternal life and peace to every one that received Him, and heard His words. Again, He said, " Verily, verily, I say

unto you, He that HEARETH my WORD, and BELIEVETH on Him that sent me, HATH EVER-LASTING LIFE, and shall not come into condemnation [or judgment]; but is passed from death unto life." Oh! the preciousness of knowing, feeble and failing as we are, that we have eternal life in Christ as a present possession!

"The soul that to Jesus hath fled for repose,  
He will not, He cannot, desert to its foes;  
That soul, though all hell should endeavour to  
shake,  
He'll never, no, never, no, never forsake."

### **"NO FEAR."**

"**T**HERE is *no fear* in love; but perfect love casteth out fear; because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love" (1 John iv. 18).

The writer was once visiting a person who was living in what John Bunyan calls "Doubting Castle," and to meet her case he quoted the above text, adding the question, "Do you know what that means?"

She paused a moment, and then replied, "I suppose when I love God perfectly, I shall get rid of my doubts and fears."

"Yes, certainly you will; but as that will never be until you arrive in glory, you must make up your mind to doubt the remainder of your life here."

My reader may easily picture the blank look of astonishment upon her countenance.

"Now just look at it the other way for a moment. Think of God's love instead of your own. It is His love that is perfect, not yours."

Yours will never be, until you are in heaven. But think of His perfect love expressed in the gift of Christ to die for us, and now flowing from the glory where He is. Believe and enjoy that, and all your fear will be banished for ever."

It was quite a new thought for her, and it is to be hoped that she learned to look at it thus, and to enjoy it in forgetfulness of self.

If any reader is in such like case, may you do the same. You will never enjoy "full assurance of faith" as long as you look within. You might as well look into an ice-well to find warmth, as into your own poor heart to find love to God. But think of God's great love to you; believe it; take Him at His word about the finished work of His Son, and you will have peace with Him; the Holy Ghost will shed abroad God's love in your heart, and you will love Him spontaneously without effort in return. And "*there is no fear in love*" (Rom. v. 1-11).

## FALLEN MAN AND THE WOMAN'S SEED.

**I**T is not only Scripture which makes known to us that there are sin and misery in the world. There they are, even if Scripture or a Saviour did not exist. The world is a ruin. Man knows well that iniquity and defilement are in him; and everybody is dissatisfied with his portion here below, because his heart is ill at ease.

The Word of God explains, as nothing else can, how Satan entered the world; and it reveals also the consequence of sin in man's relations with God. (Genesis iii.)

The first thing the "old serpent" did was to put something between the creature and the Creator, to put himself between God and man. This was subtle, and ruinous if successful, as it was; for the only thing which makes us happy is that there is nothing between us, the assurance that God loves us.

Satan begins, then, by producing distrust in God, and so stirring man's will into activity in lust and disobedience. Never does the enemy lead one to think of the goodness of God nor of man's disobedience. The woman knew right well that she ought not to eat of the tree, and that mischief must be the result; yet she ate, and gave to her husband with her, and he did eat. (v. 1-6). Thus sin is the self-will that sprang from the unbelief which doubted God. By this means Satan made a breach; he persuaded Eve that God kept something for Himself, for fear that His creature should be too happy and too blessed. But Eve was wrong in listening to Satan; she ought not for a moment to have attended to the voice which insinuated distrust in God.

God has warned man of the consequences of sin, as to Adam, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (ii. 17). But Satan, who seeks always to deny the righteousness of God, says to the woman, "Ye shall not surely die; for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil" (vv. 4, 5).

Nor was this altogether untrue. The Fall has rendered man much more intelligent relatively to good and evil. But Satan hid from

man that he would be separated from God, and have a bad conscience. "And the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons" (v. 7). They acquired a knowledge that showed them their nakedness, which they strove to conceal from their own and each other's eyes.

All that is brought near us appears to us more important and greater than what is still far off. The forbidden tree being near Eve, and the judgment of God being distant, she took of the fruit, and ate. So the spirit of falsehood tells men at this day that they shall not die, and that the threats of God shall not come to pass. He conceals the warnings of God, and then men do what Satan and their own lusts urge them on to do. If a Christian even is not watchful, his conscience will lose its activity, and, in place of seeing God, he sees his nakedness.

Man, besides, takes leaves with which to cover his nakedness. He does his utmost to conceal from himself the evil which has happened to him; but when God is revealed, it is quite otherwise. God draws near as if nothing has occurred; then the nearness to God, which would have been a joy for man without sin, becomes on account of sin a source of immense terror, and insupportable. "Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of Jehovah Elohim amongst the trees of the garden." They had succeeded in veiling their nakedness from their own eyes; they were terrified at the voice of God, and strove to hide from Him. What a horrible thing for man to be in such a case as to wish concealment from God! (vv. 7, 8).

Adam "was afraid," as he confessed to Him who called him from his hiding-place. Conscience makes one tremble at the presence of God. Every hope of "enjoying life" is taken away when His voice is heard. Man is self-convicted of departure from God because of sin. God "drove out the man"; but man had himself fled from His presence first. His own conscience told him that he could not stand before God; and God made this evident by the words of His call to Adam: "Where art thou?" (*v.* 9). He was gone from God, banished by conscience, before God drove him out. Is he, then, the one to complain of unrighteousness, whose own heart condemned him similarly before God's sentence was pronounced? The relations of man with God were thenceforth broken, and in a manner irreparable as far as man is concerned. "I heard Thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself" (*v.* 10).

Self-justification is as vain as seeking to hide from God. "And He said, Who told thee thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? And the man said, The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat" (*vv.* 11, 12).

How is the mighty fallen! The head of creation stooping, in order to excuse himself of sin, to cast the fault on his wife; yea, on God Himself! How debasing is evil once allowed, and dominant! No slavery more degrading, none so immediate and all-corrupting in its effects. Was man, then, the weaker vessel? or is this the way of natural affection?

The hardest thing for a sinner to do is to con-

fess his sin truly and thoroughly; to judge oneself is only the fruit of grace through faith. A bad conscience dreads God and the consequences too much to confess, while it knows its sin too well to deny it.

But God will have sin out, and trace it to its source. "And Jehovah Elohim said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. And Jehovah Elohim said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: and I will put enmity between thee and the woman and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. Unto the woman He said, I will multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam He said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" (vv. 13-19).

If you had full confidence in God, and you were perfectly sure that God loved you, you would be very happy. But Satan is active, and his power consists in producing distrust; and

this where there is happiness and intimate relation with God ; to darken, and if possible to destroy all in the heart. He takes advantage of men who trust their own will and their own efforts for their happiness, distrusting God, and neither willing nor knowing how to confide the care of their happiness to Him, and to give themselves up to His mighty love in Christ.

And this he does now as ever. He persuades men that God is too good to condemn us because we are sinners ; and man, spite of his sins and his conscience, hopes and persuades himself that he will not be condemned. It is the voice of the " old serpent " (Rev. xx. 2).

But God has proved, even by the death of His Son, that He will not endure sin, and that its wages are death, as it will be judgment after death for all who believe not (Rom. vi. 23 ; viii. 32 ; Heb. ix. 27). The conscience being bad, all the effort of man is to hide from himself his nakedness before God. He would put out of the world gross and outward sin, drunkenness, murder, robbery. He seeks by laws and by philanthropic efforts to blot out the exterior effects of sin which shock the world. But these are but the aprons of fig leaves, which remove nothing whatever, but serve for the moment to conceal from ourselves our nakedness and misery, and help us to avoid thinking of the righteousness of the condemnation God has pronounced from that day on our sinful state (Rom. i. 17, 18).

Now that sins have come between our consciences and God, one wishes at least that there should be something to hide us before God ; and it is with this view that man employs what he calls " innocent " things. Thus the trees were



"innocent" enough; but what use did Adam make of them? To hide behind them from God. God had given to man all that is in the world; but man now perverts it all to escape from the presence of God, pretending the while to be "innocent" in such an application of what is good in itself. When the voice of God awakens the conscience one wishes still something to hide from Him. But this is impossible. "Where art thou?" said God to Adam, who had no means of concealment longer.

If God were to say so to each of your souls, would it be your joy to be in His presence? God is really the only resource and refuge when we have sinned. It is only God who, by imputing nothing to the believer, takes away all guile from the spirit (Ps. xxxii.) But if you hide away from God how do you then stand for your souls?

God has not yet driven Adam from His presence. Adam has fled away from Him. Conscience tells us that, if we have sinned, and He is a righteous God, there are no leaves or trees to hide us from His presence. Man is miserable in his conscience, and he cannot be happy in sin, except only in the thought that there is no God. All the hope of incredulity is that there is no God, or, what comes to the same thing, that He is not righteous or holy.

Adam wished to excuse himself, as if he had lusted after nothing himself, as if he had only followed the voice of his wife, instead of keeping to the prohibition of God. But if there was no lust in us, no sinful act would result. He had disobeyed God, for which he was responsible.

In the midst of all the goodness of God, who has given His Son to die for sinners, if you have

no confidence in God, there is the proof of your sin. No matter how it may be manifested, is not this ingratitude and distrust? Eve listened to and belived Satan, in place of listening to God and believing Him; and this is just what man is ever doing, while he hopes for salvation and eternal life, though he sins. All the efforts you make to be happy prove you are not so. The immediate effect of God's presence in your hearts and consciences, would be to stop your pleasures. If all your pleasures are thus incompatible with the presence of God, what will they be for you in eternity? Will they carry you to the foot of His throne who is holy and righteous, to show Him that you have passed many "innocent" hours far from Him? What is there but disobedience, distrust, falsehood, self-will, unless it be a still worse thing, the state of soul which wishes to divert its thoughts away from the presence of God?

Man may withdraw himself from the presence of God while grace lasts, but he cannot do so when God will judge him. Satan will help you to hide; your best friends, following the world, will help you also to keep away from the presence of God, to forget and deny it; but this will certainly not go beyond the time of grace which is granted you. Therefore, while it is called to-day if you hear His voice, harden not your hearts (Heb. iv. 7).

God knows that you are sinners; He knows that it is the subtle iniquity of Satan, which would make man his prey. But there is to that an answer, of which Satan knew not, any more than guilty, fallen man; namely, the revelation of the Seed of the woman (v. 15). The question is

really between the serpent and the Second Man, not the first. It is neither a promise to Adam and Eve from God, nor a hope of improvement in their children; but God pronounces judgment on the enemy, and in the midst of it the revelation is made of the Saviour, child of the woman who had ensnared the man to be ruined of the devil. The woman's Seed shall bruise the serpent's head, but He is bruised Himself first.

What grace, yet righteousness! What humiliation, yet victory! If Adam exalted himself as a robbery to be as God, He who was God emptied Himself to be a man, and became obedient unto death, as the other was disobedient unto death (Phil. ii. 8).

To lost Adam, the first man, there was, and could be, no promise. All the promises of God are yea and amen in the Second Man; but they become the portion of every believer (2 Cor. i. 19, 20). Faith finds and enjoys the promise, not sin and unbelief. To Eve and Adam God only speaks of the actual consequences of sin (*vv.* 16-19). It is in judging the serpent (*v.* 15) that He reveals the coming Seed of the woman, and the way of His victory. Thenceforward the only hope of lost man is in this revealed Saviour; and before he is driven out he hears of what JESUS was to suffer in destroying the power of the devil; yet not a single sign of repentance appears in Adam after his sin. He had shown terror of God, cowardly selfishness as to his wife; as much dishonesty in his own case as dishonour done to God. But God occupies Himself only with His counsels of grace in the woman's Seed, whose person and work and glory are developed in all the Scriptures (Luke xxiv. 27).

But victory over Satan in the cross of Christ is no longer in any sense a promise; it is accomplished. Had man let into his heart the thought that God did not love him; that He kept back what was good for him, through jealousy or envy of his happiness? It was Satan's lie; for the suffering Second Man, the woman's Seed, is Son of God, the true God, and eternal life, who became man to die for sinners and destroy the works of the devil (1 John iii. 8). Yet is the unbelieving heart so perverse as to refuse its confidence to the God who thus gave His Son. JESUS, instead of fleeing from God's judgment, went to meet it when the hour came, and took on Him the burden of our sins, instead of listening to the voice of man or Satan. "The cup which my Father giveth me, shall I not drink it?" said Jesus (John xviii. 11). By His death He annulled him that had the power of death, and He now gives the believer perfect confidence in God, all fear of death being gone (Heb. ii. 14). His love puts us in peace and relationship with God, unscared by difficulties, now that we are forgiven our sins, clothed with Himself instead of nakedness or fig leaves, with nothing but grace to stand in and God's glory to look forward to, since He bore the judgment for us (Rom. v. 1, 2).

Is your confidence then in the God who gave His Son to save the basest of sinners? This confidence inspires and strengthens obedience. Nothing to the believer is more precious than God's love in Christ, which makes us prefer His will to all Satan can offer.

May God touch your heart, and give you to magnify Him by receiving all that His love has done in Christ!

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**GOD IS LIGHT.      GOD IS LOVE.**

"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him."

*1 John i. 5.      1 John iv. 8, 16.      1 John iv. 9.*

## THE TEXT THAT TOLD THE SECRET.

**I** HAVE been asked to give a brief account of the dealings of God's grace as told to me on a death-bed, the touching story of God's wondrous love in delivering the devil's captive, turning him from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto Himself. In the day of the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ this delivered one, a trophy of redeeming love, will be there to swell the song of praise. "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain" (Rev. v).

I was never personally acquainted with W.W. until sent for during his last illness. I knew him only by sight, and had heard he was a most godless man, but much prospered in business. My brother, hearing he was ill, visited him, and spoke to him of Jesus, and left a little book of verses, called "The Old, Old Story," begging him to have it read to him.

This was the first thing that gave him a little

light, as he afterwards told me. Whenever he had a fresh attack of cold which kept him in the house he would ask for this to be read to him. Then, getting better, he would be again engrossed in business and pleasure, and forget all about it.

Some time after, I heard he was seriously ill, and my brother and I spoke together of the desirability of my going to visit him, both of us being anxious for his precious soul. We agreed that, considering the circumstances in which he was living, it would not be well for me to go into the house, but that I should leave at the door a plain gospel tract, and this text, which was in very large letters: "BEING JUSTIFIED BY FAITH, WE HAVE PEACE WITH GOD THROUGH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST" (Rom. v. 1).

Little indeed, did we venture to hope for the blessed results which God graciously brought by this little act, and which will be told hereafter in his own words. In looking back I remember it was done with a yearning desire for his salvation.

The next thing I heard was that he was pronounced to be in rapid consumption, and that the doctors gave no hope for his life. I was deeply concerned, and wondered whether the time was come for me to visit him. I prayed the Lord that if He had a message for me to take I might be sent for.

I shall not forget the trembling between hope and fear that I felt when a messenger arrived summoning me to the sick man.

This was to be our first meeting.

The beaming, joyful face; the glassy-bright eye; the thin hand stretched out to grasp mine; the panting breath; the eagerness to tell, though only in broken accents, of the precious Saviour he

had found; the insatiable desire to use the few hours that might be left him in speaking of the way Jesus was known to him, I could never adequately describe. Tears of joy were flowing down his cheeks and mine; yes, and there was joy in the presence of the angels of God over that one sinner brought to repentance.

So impressive was the scene, and with such labouring breath were the words uttered, that it was an easy matter on reaching home to put them down; and I now transcribe them in the earnest hope that they may be used of God to enlighten some who are perhaps as dark as the subject of this little history once was.

“Everybody knows what a wicked man I’ve been. There is not a sin I have not done; but I want to tell what Jesus has shown me. This is how I have sorted it out, for you know I can’t read. God made man for His own pleasure, to enjoy Him, and to delight in Him. He gave him only one thing not to do, but man transgressed. Now, it was as if God said: ‘What must be done? I cannot have any pleasure in men now. My word is holy; I can’t go back from it. I have given away My power to forgive because of My *Word*. I will prepare a body for My Son. He shall go into the world and stand for them. He is One that cannot be tampered with, and I will give to Him the power to forgive sins, so that everyone who trusts in Him I shall be able to have back again to My love.’

“God has not only been satisfied about sin, but glorified; sin has been put out of God’s sight for *every believer*, so that it is not now a question of sin, for Jesus has ‘borne our sins’

in His own body on the tree,' and He being raised from the dead is the Father's acknowledgement that sin is for ever put away for us. Oh! it's so simple! so simple!! How I grieve I did not see it long ago. I have lived in sin thirty-three years, and Jesus toiled for my salvation thirty-three years down here. All my life He has been so kind to me, prospering me in business, and helping me to lay up money, and I never once thought of Him who was doing it all. And when I was first taken bad, I murmured, and thought it hard that I could not go on with my money-getting business—for having had nothing to begin with, I thought I had made it myself, and naturally valued it very much, for latterly I was making £300 a month profit. But then the Lord said to me, 'I've been letting you get all this, and now I'm going to show you *Myself*, and what a home I've been preparing for you.' Oh! bless His Name! I will praise Him as long as I live, and with my dying breath I will praise Him. I have given Him my soul, body, spirit, confidence, doubts, fears, and He has taken all, and He's going to take this poor frame presently. I want nothing now but this bed to rest on, and I have given away all that He gave me, as He has directed. I have given £1,000 to my poor dear mother."

Here he sobbed, and said, "Oh! how different it is crying for yourself, or crying for others. I have no one to cry for me. If my poor dear old mother will only follow me where I'm going."

On leaving that sick room, where I had expected to have to tell faithfully the gospel message, I knelt, and praised with a full heart that blessed



Saviour-God whose power and love had been so richly manifested in saving grace.

The next time it was my privilege to see him he greeted me by saying, "I'm as happy as a bird on the wing."

I could scarcely ascertain from him any particulars as to how he had passed the night, his health being the last subject he was willing to take up the time in speaking of.

He was most anxious that I should be able to bear a clear testimony as to the blessed change that had taken place in him. He said, "I was like a man groping in the dark. I could not get clear, but one Saturday you brought me a tract about the gospel, and this text: 'Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,' *then I could see it all.* That word 'THROUGH' let me into the secret. IT'S ALL THROUGH JESUS CHRIST. *He has done it all.*"

He had ordered a large quantity of the little book, entitled "The Old, Old Story." Handing a number of copies to me, he said, "Please give these away, with my love, and tell them it was the first thing that gave me a little light. Tell them all, Jesus is the only Gateway, and there is no other; they must have His Ticket. And then the Father won't say 'No,' when He sees they have His Ticket."

There was a knock at the door, and hearing who it was he said, "It is a man I sent for to forgive him. He robbed me of six hundred pounds, and I want to shake hands with him. I want to die quite free."

He told me that the doctor had said, "Don't you trouble to speak to anyone," but he replied, "I must tell them what Jesus has done for me.

Your profession could not keep my soul from going the wrong way; my body is of no consequence; you can't cure it; but the *soul*, that's what is of consequence."

During this interview he said to me, "I want you to go and see a Mr. S——. His poor wife has been praying for him for twenty-two years, and he has been a cruel husband to her. I sent for him, and told him what the Lord had shown me, and I do think he sees it, too. He sat and cried like a child, and his dear wife is so happy, and now he wants talking nicely to and mellowing."

Knowing so little of Scripture, he was anxious to hear what God's Word said on many points, and asked me simply as a child, "Shall I be with Christ *directly*, or shall I have to wait?"

I read to him 2 Cor. v. 8: "Absent from the body, present with the Lord."

This gave him great joy.

Again he asked, "Tell me about the judgment-day. Does it not say, 'The dead in Christ shall rise first?'"

I replied that believers will not be judged as to their sins, for it is written, "He that heareth My Word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation [or judgment] but is passed from death unto life," and that the dead in Christ will rise when "the Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout," and we "shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air" (1 Thess. iv. 16, 17). In speaking of the Book of Life, he said, "We have life in Jesus, so our names are in 'the book of life.'" (Rev. xx. 12).

To his mother he said, "Mother, the world is just as unbelieving now as when Jesus was here. If He were down here to-day, they would not receive Him."

When he saw his mother and others weeping he said, "Don't cry for me; cry for yourselves; Jesus is mine, and I am His."

I saw him only once more. The laboured breathing and great difficulty in speaking told the tale: the end was near; but Jesus was precious; not one cloud to dim his sight; he was like a bird longing to take flight. The last sentences were very striking. "The Lord keeps me here as a sample of what His grace can do for others. I never could have had salvation if it had not been for my precious Christ. If I did not know Jesus I should be cursing now. This poor frame belongs to Jesus, and He is going to take it home. I shall have plenty of breath to praise Him *there*, for ever," pointing upwards.

There was never a murmur, and often he gasped out, "I shall be better presently," meaning when he was with the Lord; then added, "Let me say good-bye now. If I don't have breath enough again, we're sure to meet where we shall be much happier. I feel so light."

A few more hours of suffering, and he had entered into the joy of His Lord.

I would mention that the poor man alluded to as Mr. S——. received the gospel, believed it, and a few months after died, leaving behind the blessed testimony that he was eternally saved.

M. C.

## HOW SHALL WE ESCAPE ?

**I**F we examine the parable of the Great Supper in Luke xiv., we find that it was not those who were living in open sin who refused the final call of grace.

I say "final," because you will note that the Gospel Feast is set forth as the final meal of the day of God's dealings with men. The Lord was at dinner in the house of this Pharisee at the time. The *supper* is the last meal of the day before *midnight* comes.

This is very significant and striking. The gospel comes after all God's previous ways of testing and trial have passed.

The *morning* of innocence, with its lovely moments of freshness, when God came down to visit His creatures, and when His creation was unsoiled with sin, soon passed away, and man fell, never to return to this state of creation blessedness.

Then came His *noonday* dealings with man, now with a conscience, acquired when he fell. During the continuance of these dealings came the frightful wickedness of men and angels; the earth was filled with corruption and violence; and God had to wash the polluted earth with the mighty baptism of the Flood! Men then set up the devil for god in the renewed earth, and the whole world was worshipping him in the passions and corruptions of their evil hearts.

The *afternoon* testing of the Law followed. It told man what his duty was, both positively and negatively. It's "Thou shalt," and "Thou shalt not," taught him what he ought to be. But it never disclosed what *he was*, that is, utterly and hopelessly ruined. Nor did it tell him what

*God was*, with a heart full of perfect love and tender pity. Here again man failed, and prophets were sent to recall him to the observance of the broken law, lest judgment should overtake him; and they were stoned.

It was in the *evening* that at last God revealed Himself in His Son. Would man now be won?

Alas, no! Not one single heart was attracted to Christ of itself. Men saw no beauty in Him that they should desire Him. It was as a lovely evening after a day of storm and evil which the morning had ushered in so brightly; but how soon to close in around the darkness of the Cross, where men quenched (as far as they could) the light of heaven!

God had yet another moment of mercy. The *supper-time* of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, with the message, "All things are now ready." "Come," for the *midnight* of judgment was about to fall. But "all with one consent began to make excuse." Men who were not living in sin, but who were doing lawful and right things (attending to the farm, the merchandise, or their family affairs), even they also refused the gift of God.

I know nothing more solemn than the fact that when the Lord Jesus lifts the veil, and points to the awful judgment of a future day, in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke xvi.) we see there the *compelled remembrance* (the deathless sting of remorse) of times gone by, and advantages lost for ever, in this present day of grace.

How dreadful at that day for the mere professor, the procrastinator, the careless man! "Son, remember!" tells its own tale more truly than the many words which might be used to

paint the scene. But it is not my present task to dwell on this side of the picture. I desire rather to unfold in some measure the certain way of escape from the judgment to come. The one is as certain as the other.

God had a serious question with Israel on the night of the first Passover. They were sinners, and sin had constituted Him a Judge. He had come down to deliver them, and to bring them to the land of His choice. He appoints a way in which He can righteously pass over them when judging the world (Egypt). The blood of a spotless lamb was to be taken, and placed upon the lintels and two side-posts of the doors of their houses, which were to be closed, and none of the people were to leave their houses till the morning.

In the evening the lamb was to be slain, and its blood sprinkled by the believing Israelite in the "obedience of faith." This was done by means of a "bunch of hyssop" (Exodus xii.)

Now, this points to a significant and important thought in connection with the Gospel. Many know the "plan of salvation," as it is termed; they are as clear as possible on the truth that salvation is by faith alone, and that the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, and it only, is that by which security from "judgment to come" depends. They know well those words, that "without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. ix. 22). Yet they never have had, so to speak, the "bunch of hyssop" in their hands; that is to say, there is no real link between their souls and Christ by faith.

"Hyssop" is used in Scripture to signify *humiliation*. The Psalmist refers to it in this way in Psalm li. 7, where he prays, "Purge me with

hyssop, and I shall be clean." This was the moral cleansing of his soul by complete humiliation before God.

An Israelite who believed Moses concerning the plan of deliverance on that "night to be observed," did not fold his arms quietly and do nothing. Now he was up and doing in "the obedience of faith" (Romans i. 5; xvi. 26). "Believing in his heart" the glad tidings of Moses, he was seen outside the door of his house, before the world, "confessing with his mouth" the acceptance of this message, and thus appropriating his personal share in the efficacy of the blood of the lamb (Rom. x. 9).

It was truly humiliating for him to go outside before a world of idolaters, into whose sins he had sunk (Ezekiel xv. 6-8), and confess that, although he was one of God's chosen people, he could claim no immunity from judgment but through the shelter of the blood of the lamb. It was humiliating; but right to do so. "Let God be true, but every man a liar" (Rom. iii. 4). By so doing he justified God, and judged himself.

Here is the link between the soul and Christ which so many need. The "bunch of hyssop" has never been grasped. The soul has never exercised "the obedience of faith," in the sense of its lost state, never believed the gospel in the heart, nor confessed with the mouth Jesus as Lord to salvation.

The sprinkled blood was to meet and satisfy the claims of the God of truth. It was to present a righteous ground to Him when in judgment for passing over a man whose sins deserved that the blow should descend on him, even more righteously than on his Egyptian neighbour next door.

The midnight of judgment came, but all was settled beforehand, as it must be for us in these gospel days. Our sins cannot be worse in the day of judgment than they are now. God's way of escape from judgment will not then *have changed*. It is as certain now as then. His love has anticipated that day in not sparing His Son, but delivering Him up for us (Rom. viii. 32). His Son has come, and has presented His blood before God (Heb. ix. 12). God has pronounced on our state as sinners already; and the day of judgment cannot speak more plainly than, "There is none righteous, no, not one!" (Rom. iii. 10). Christ has "once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God" (1 Pet. iii. 18) and God has sent the news of His having done so. "He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (John iii. 18).

But you may say, I know it all.

I ask then, Are you forgiven? Are you safe under the shelter of the blood of Christ? I do not ask, Do you hope to be so? I ask, Are you safe? If you believe God, you are. If you believe your own heart, you are deceived. "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool" (Prov. xxviii. 26).

May you know what it is to have had, as it were, the "bunch of hyssop" in your hand, your heart confessing that your only security is that God, against whom you have sinned, has looked upon that precious blood of Christ, that He has accepted it already, and the day of judgment will not change its value, or make it less precious in His sight. In virtue of that blood, He has declared, "I will pass over you."



Do you dare to doubt that He has accepted it? You could not, for you know He has. I do not ask, Have you accepted it? but, Do you believe that He has done so?

The proof that He has done so is that Jesus is at God's right hand. "When He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Heb. i. 3). He has by Himself purged the sins, and every one who believes has his conscience purged of them. Suppose some one has paid a debt which I owed, and could not discharge. Well, I cannot be sued for it, but if I did not know that it was paid I should be afraid to meet my creditor. To be happy in his presence, I must know that someone has been kind enough to do it. So God declares that it is done; then my conscience is free, and I can now afford to look into my heart, which I dared not do before.

The question of all the sins of believers has thus been settled before the day of judgment, and according to God's mind. If not, we never can put them away. Christ cannot die again; "death hath no more dominion over Him" (Rom. vi. 9). He "was once offered to bear the sins of many" (Heb. ix. 28). I say "all the sins"; for all were future when that precious blood was shed, when Jesus bore them in His own body on the tree. If all were not there, if all were not then borne and put away, they will most surely come up again at the Day of Judgment, and that would be eternal ruin for the sinner.

Thank God, Christ has borne ours who believe. Others may reject it and perish, but there the love is, and there is the work of Christ to save all who will believe in Him.

“ God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us ” (Rom. v. 8).

The gospel “ is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth ; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith : as it is written, The just shall live by faith. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness ” (Romans i. 16-18).

“ And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of His goodness and forbearance and long-suffering ; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God ” (Romans ii. 3-5).

With the message of the fullest and richest grace of the gospel comes the most solemn and final revelation of a Judgment to come. As final as it is solemn and searching to the soul. No threat ; no language of denunciation or declamation ; but the terribly calm, clear statement of the utter ruin, after every trial and test, of man's estate ; of the sure and certain perdition and eternal ruin of every man with whom God will enter into judgment according to his works.

The truth has come and disclosed all. It has shown what God is ; and what man is ; what Satan is ; what the world is ; what judgment is.

## A LOSS THAT WAS A GAIN.

A CHRISTIAN gentleman was hurrying to catch a train, but through his watch being *two* minutes slow, he lost it.

The thought came into his mind, "I'll walk on to the next station."

As he went he saw a young man walking from the rectory. He went up to him, and asked him the question, "Where is your rector?"

"He is dead," said the young man.

"And did he preach Christ?"

"Yes," he replied.

"Well, my friend, have you accepted Him?"

The young man seemed indignant, and there was doubtless a struggle going on in his mind.

"Now, my friend," said the Christian, "don't reason. 'Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above); or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring Christ up again from the dead). But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved' (Rom. x. 6-9). Now," added the gentleman, "do you believe in Him? It is just as simple as that. Do you accept Jesus for your Saviour?"

A strange light broke upon the young man's countenance. With his whole heart he replied, "Yes, sir, I do."

And, like the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts viii., "he went on his way rejoicing."

One minute a lost sinner, the next saved, safe for ever, as the Lord Jesus said: "He that

heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation ; but is passed from death into life" (John v. 24). And again, " 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 " (John iii. 16).

So may it be with you, dear reader : "Heareth" ; " Believeth " ; " Hath " ; " Shall not come into condemnation (Judgment) " ; shall " not perish."

Hear, then, His voice to-day, and harden not your heart (Heb. iii. 7, 8).

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Let all who know the joyful sound,  
With gladness send the tidings round,  
And tell that " GOD IS LOVE " ;  
That God so loved the world He gave  
His own dear Son the world to save ;  
God's message from above.

That all who in the Son believe  
Shall never perish, but receive  
Life endless and divine ;  
No condemnation e'er shall know,  
From death to life they pass below,  
And then in glory shine.

'Tis not of works ; let no man boast,  
Save in His name who saves the lost,  
" THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS " ;  
Poor sinner, now from working cease,  
And claim from God a blood-bought peace,  
And Jesus LORD confess.

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# GOSPEL LIGHT.



**GOD IS LIGHT. GOD IS LOVE.**

"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him."

1 John i. 5. 1 John iv. 8, 16. 1 John iv. 9.

## HOW THE DOCTOR'S COACHMAN WAS SAVED.

ONE winter evening I was asked to visit a poor man who was dying of consumption. He was rapidly approaching his end, and the Christian who was interested in his case, found that he was unsaved. He had been a gentleman's coachman, and, through the kindness of his master, was allowed to remain in the cottage he had for some time occupied.

I knocked at the door, and found his poor wife with three little children in deep trouble. She at once directed me to his room.

The sight that presented itself was most distressing. His sunken eyes and hollow cheeks showed too plainly what the disease was doing, and that he could not possibly live many weeks longer.

I had been praying for him as I walked along, and asking the Lord to give me a word from

Himself that would meet the poor man's need; and when I saw him my heart was deeply moved with pity, and I again looked to the Lord for guidance as to what I should say.

I talked some time of his sufferings and trials here. He told me his anxiety for his wife and children.

"Well," I said, "you cannot expect to remain here long; where will you go to when you die?"

"Oh," he said, "I have prayed the Lord to take care of my wife and children, and to prepare a place for me."

"But," I said, "are your sins forgiven?"

"I don't know anything about that; I have prayed!" was his answer.

I said, "Do you know that there is no sin in heaven, and except your sins are all forgiven here you will never go there?"

"I don't know much about religion," he replied, "for I have never had an opportunity of going to church. I have been a doctor's coachman for many years, until I came here, and I always drove the doctor out on Sundays, and for a long time I have been too ill to go anywhere."

I then told him that God loved him, and desired to save him, and that by God's grace he might be saved from his sins before I left the room; and opening my Bible I read to him John iii. and Isaiah liii., impressing upon him the truth of the great love of God in the gift of Jesus, and how God was satisfied with the finished work of His Christ.

He was much affected by the thought of the love of God; it all seemed a new tale to him. But he was very weak, and could say little, so I repeated to him again that precious verse, "God

## HOW THE DOCTOR'S COACHMAN WAS SAVED. 35

so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever BELIEVETH on Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John iii. 16). Then praying God to bless the words to his soul, I left him, having first seen that he had all he needed in temporal things.

The same evening some Christians met at my house, and we together laid the whole matter before that gracious God who always hears the petitions of His children. We were not long without an answer to our prayer. Two days after this a message came that H—— would like to see me again. In the morning I went round to the house. As I entered I saw that a change had come over the poor wife and aged mother, who were waiting for me. They seemed so much happier than before, and asked me to go up stairs at once, saying, I should find him much happier now.

And indeed I did find it so. It was a sight I shall never forget. His face was full of joy, and, stretching both his withered hands out to me, he cried, "Oh! sir, you have saved me."

"Oh! no," I said, "the Lord has done that, bless His name." And we wept together, our hearts overflowing with love and praise to God for His great mercy.

I knelt at the bedside, and thanked God for revealing His free gift to this poor sinner.

How gracious God is, and how wondrous is His love! Here was a poor man who three days ago was a perfect stranger to divine grace, who had never known God, or cared for his own soul, brought at once into liberty, peace, and joy.

I inquired all about the Lord's work in his soul, and he told me that in the evening after I

left him he found peace with God; he believed the love of God toward him, a wretched sinner, and he had peace in believing (Rom. v. 1; xv. 13).

I saw him several times after this. He was always happy, and though suffering much from exhaustion he seemed to think little of it. The love of Christ, and the joy he had in the knowledge of his Saviour, kept him above his present trial; and until he put off the earthly tabernacle his confidence in the love of God never seemed to lose its brightness. He was always glad to see me, and to hear more of Him whom he was so soon going to be with for ever. To those who visited him he spoke of the sinner's need, and of God's provisions for that need; prayed continually for his wife and children, but always with confidence in God about them.

On one occasion, shortly before his death, he told me that his sufferings were very great, and that his body was so wasted away that the bones seemed to press through the skin, and the sores stuck to the sheet; but he said, "I don't mind it, for I shall soon be with the Lord."

Within three weeks of my first visit he fell asleep in Jesus, his last breath commending his dear ones to the Father's love and care.

Thus William H—— departed to be with Christ, having counted the sufferings of this little while not worthy to be compared with the glory about to be revealed (Rom. viii. 18). God grant, dear reader, that your faith may be like his, and that you may have the same joy and confidence as the Philippian jailer and this dear man had, and that you may rest entirely on the finished work of Christ for your salvation, and live to His praise and glory (Acts xvi. 31). E.C.



## **“GOD COMMENDETH HIS LOVE.”**

“God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” (Rom. v. 8).

**T**HIS is the gospel of the grace of God, this is God's new principle in dealing with man, who now stands before Him as entirely lost. All His past ways with man, dispensational and personal, down to the cross of Christ, only demonstrated man to be utterly estranged in nature, and hopelessly bad in condition; consequently, the love that was henceforth displayed must be absolutely free and perfect. Nothing was ever found in man to induce, but everything to hinder, the manifestation of divine love. But now all is changed. God retires into the rights of His own sovereignty. Grace reigns. But not on the ruins of law and justice; not in setting aside the claims of God, nor in lightly passing over the guilt of man; but through accomplished righteousness toward God, and eternal life to the lost sinner by Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. “Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound” (Romans v. 20, 21).

This, we affirm, is the gospel on the divine side. The *effects* on the human side will be manifested in genuine faith, godly repentance, and a life of holiness. Would to God this were better understood; for when received in simplicity every question is settled. If I know that He loves me with a perfect love, after He has estimated all my sin and guilt, then I know that no evil can ever spring up in my heart that He knew not beforehand, and that He has not fully judged in

the cross of Christ, and put out of His sight for ever.

But here it may be asked, Did God not love the sinner before the death of Christ?

Most assuredly He did. Perfect love always dwelt in the heart of God toward man. To speak of the death of Christ as exciting or procuring the love of God toward the sinner is a pernicious doctrine, and without the shadow of foundation in Scripture. On the contrary the death of the Lord Jesus is there represented as the expression of God's love toward us, and the character or greatness of that love is revealed by the condition of those for whom Christ died.

Love, full, perfect, and active, always dwelt in God's heart; and its grand object ever was the reconciliation of man to Himself. God never was the enemy of man, therefore He needed not to be reconciled; nay, rather, He "was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them" (2 Cor. v. 19). Other texts might be quoted in proof of this rest-giving truth; such as, "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him." "And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world" (1 John iv. 9, 14).

Yes, what a mercy for us that this love was always there; and although rejected, it was not weakened. But the death of Jesus opened the way for its full revelation, and for the accomplishing of all the purposes of God's grace.

There was no link between God and man in the flesh. For all His love He had only received

hatred. No response was ever found in the human heart to His most tender appeals.

But Christ in His death glorified God about sin; accomplished all righteousness; met the highest claims of heaven, and the deepest necessities of man. The law was magnified, and the promise established in His Person; and He laid a righteous foundation for the perfect display of the divine nature and character, and that in respect of sin. Now God takes His own place, and in Christ Jesus manifests what He is toward the sinner.

The apostle Paul directs attention to what we may call the *first-fruits* of perfect love, namely, the death of Christ as an object for faith outside ourselves. “ For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly ” (Rom. v. 6).

No more difficult truth for man to believe was ever revealed than this. It is so opposed to all human thoughts, feelings, affections and ways, that he cannot understand it. Whoever heard of love lavishing its choicest gifts on unrelenting but powerless enemies? “ Thou shalt do this,” and “ Thou shalt not do that,” or abide the consequences, man can understand. It is consistent with his reason. But for love (after it has proved that there is nothing in its object but hatred, and hatred too, unchangeable, and cruel as death) to say, “ I have opened the flood-gates of heaven that my love may flow forth in unmeasured, unhindered fulness for your eternal happiness,” far transcends the loftiest thoughts of the human mind. That God should love the righteous, the good and the holy, excites no surprise; but that He should love the unholy, the unrighteous and

the evil, and give His own beloved Son to die the death they deserved, must ever shine forth throughout the countless ages of eternity as the wonder of all wonders.

But who could believe it? Even with this oracle of love, man has fastened on something to find fault with and complain of. He cannot bear the idea of being proclaimed powerless. He would far sooner believe that he is ungodly than that he is "without strength." By trying, he hopes to cease being ungodly, and to become better, and he refuses to bow to the humiliating truth, that he is wholly impotent.

But this is where the gospel begins, and where man must be brought to if his soul is to be saved. He may struggle long against the truth, as many do, thinking they can do something, or at least *feel* that they are growing better by their own doings, such as prayer, reading the Bible, and attending to the means of grace. But no! God will wait till the awakened sinner bows to the result of his own history as written by God Himself, and owns himself powerless for good; morally and spiritually dead; condemned already, and lying under the guilt of the death of Christ.

This then, we repeat, is the gospel; not what man is, not what God requires of man, but what God is, after He has proved man to be both powerless and godless. This believed, the light of heaven fills the soul. The believer may joyfully say, "God loves me with a perfect love, notwithstanding all I am and have done; Christ died for me, and all the benefits of His death are mine; now my salvation depends, not on my own consistency (though I ought to be consistent) but on the unchangeable love of God, and the eternal

efficacy of the blood of Christ. I have simply to rest in His love, and to rejoice in the effects of the work of Christ, which fits me for His holy presence.”

But what must be the guilt of those who reject the Lord Jesus, full as He is of all grace and goodness; who reject God Himself in reconciling love? Everything in which blessing can be found is thus rejected, and the soul must eternally perish by its own suicidal hand. The very remembrance of such love, and so slighted; of such opportunities, and so neglected; must give vehemence to the flames that shall never be quenched, and vitality to the worm that shall never die.

May the Lord have mercy on my unconverted reader, and lead him to take his true place at the feet of Jesus, and to believe what is so plainly revealed, “When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly” (Rom. v. 6).

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REAL goodness, worth, or merit,  
Not one of us can claim;  
From birth we all inherit  
Sin, folly, guilt, and shame.  
We have a sinful nature,  
And, like a fruitless tree,  
Though fair in form and feature,  
No fruit for God have we.

For us who have offended,  
The precious Saviour died,  
And then on high ascended,  
And there is glorified;  
That we, no worth possessing,  
Might, through His precious blood,  
Obtain the wondrous blessing  
Of perfect peace with God.

## **“ DOES YOUR BOOK TELL OF THE BLOOD ? ”**

A CITY missionary was one day climbing the broken staircase which led to some wretched garrets, in one of the worst parts of London, when his attention was arrested by a man of a peculiarly ferocious and repulsive countenance, who stood upon the small landing-place, leaning with folded arms against the wall.

Accustomed as the missionary was to see bad characters, there was something about this man's appearance that made the missionary almost shudder, and his first impulse was to make his escape.

A reflection that this man's soul was as precious as any other in God's sight overcame his reluctance. He went up to him, laid a friendly hand upon his shoulder, and told him how he wished to do him good, and see him happy, and that the book he held in his hand contained the secret of all happiness.

The ruffian shook him off as if he had been a viper, and bade him begone with his nonsense, or he would kick him downstairs.

Undeterred by his violence, the missionary patiently and gently urged his point, when he was startled by a feeble voice from behind a broken door opening upon the landing-place, “ Does your book tell of the blood which cleanseth from all sin? ”

He was too much absorbed in the case of the hardened sinner before him to answer the inquiry ; he continued the conversation he had begun, again alluding to the Bible, when the question from within was repeated in yet more urgent and thril-

ling tones, “ Tell me, oh ! tell me, *does* your book tell of the blood which cleanseth from all sin? ”

The appeal was not to be resisted a second time, and the missionary pushed open a fragment of a door, and entered a wretched room, wholly destitute of furniture, except a three-legged stool, and a bundle of straw in one corner, upon which was stretched the wasted frame of an aged woman, the tattered garments which had been her covering in health serving for bed clothes now.

When the missionary entered, she partly raised herself upon one elbow, fixed her eyes eagerly upon him, and repeated her former question.

He drew the stool beside her, asking, as he seated himself, “ My poor friend, what do you want to know of the blood which cleanseth from all sin? ”

There was something fearful in the energy of her voice and manner as she replied : “ What do I want to know of it? Man, I am dying; I am going to stand naked before God. I have been a wicked woman, a very wicked woman, all my life. I shall have to answer for everything I have done.” And she groaned bitterly as the thought of the iniquity of a life-time seemed to cross her mind.

“ But once,” she continued, “ once, years ago now, I passed the door of a church, and I went in; I don’t know what for. I was very soon out again; but one word I heard there I have never forgot. It was something about blood which cleanseth from all sin. Oh ! if I could hear of it now. Tell me, tell me, is there anything about that blood in your book? ”

The missionary answered by opening his Bible at 1 John i., and reading the chapter as follows :

1. "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life;

2 (For the life was manifested, and we have seen *it*, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;)

3 That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship *is* with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.

4 And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.

5 This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

6 If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:

7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."

It is impossible to describe the eagerness with which the poor creature seemed to devour the words; and when he paused she exclaimed, "More, more, read more."

He read the second chapter, when a slight noise



“ DOES YOUR BOOK TELL OF THE BLOOD? ” 45

in the room made him look round. He saw that the savage ruffian on the landing-place had followed him, and was standing against the wall opposite his mother's bed (for it was her son), and though his face was partly turned away from the missionary, the latter could see great tears rolling down his cheeks.

The missionary read the third, fourth, and fifth chapters before he could get his poor listener to consent that he should stop; and then she would not let him go until he promised to come again the next day.

He never missed a day, from that time until she died, six weeks afterwards, seeing and reading to her; and very blessed it was to witness how almost from the first, she found peace in believing on Jesus (Rom. xv. 13). In spite of the sufferings consequent upon severe poverty, the missionary thought he had never watched so joyful, so triumphant, a death-bed.

Every day, while the mother lived, her son followed the missionary into her room, and listened in silence, but not in indifference, as the sequel will show.

On the day of her funeral he beckoned the missionary on one side, as they were filling up the grave, and said to him, “ Sir, I have been thinking that there is nothing I should like so much as to spend the rest of my life in telling others of the blood which cleanseth from all sin. I would thank you kindly if you could put me in the way of doing so.”

The missionary found, upon inquiry, that the man was indeed sincere. He placed him under a course of Christian instruction, and after due training this once hardened ruffian was permitted

to enter upon the work of the gospel to which he longed to devote himself. For many years subsequently he was one of the most devoted and successful city missionaries in London.

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## JUSTIFIED BY THE BLOOD OF CHRIST.

“Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him” (Rom. v. 9).

**T**HE expression in this text, “justified by His blood,” proves, as nothing else could, not only the evil of sin, but the perfect love of God toward the sinner. He spared not His own Son. “While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. v. 8). Faith in that precious blood is complete justification and eternal life to the once guilty and condemned soul. It is now made “whiter than snow.” What a mercy to know and be able to say in view of the awful judgment of God against sin, “It is God [yes, God Himself by virtue of the blood of Christ] 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” (Rom. viii. 34). And faith, standing in the midst of these eternal realities, can raise the shout of victory, and send out its challenge in the face of every foe, “If God be for us, who can be against us?” He gave His Son to die. That is God’s love to the guilty. He accepted the work

of His Son, and set the Workman at His own right hand. That is God's righteousness. It was righteousness on God's part to accept the perfect righteousness presented to Him by the righteous One; and we, being accepted in Christ, are made the righteousness of God in Him (2 Cor. v. 21).

Here we have a full gospel: justified by the blood of Christ, complete deliverance through Him. Not merely that our sins are all forgiven; that would only be a negative blessing. But we who believe have positive divine righteousness in Christ, which is our title to glory. Thus the instructed believer can say, Now I stand in the presence of God, not only without my sins, but in the absolute righteousness of God. Divine righteousness has taken the place of human sin. This is perfect love, perfect righteousness, perfect rest, perfect blessedness, and God perfectly glorified.

But wrath, not love, awaits the unbelieving soul, yea, abides on him that submits not to the power of that justifying blood. Only those who believe in Jesus, and trust in His precious blood to cleanse from all sin, are delivered from the wrath to come (John iii. 36).

"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life" (Rom. v. 10). Here the apostle pursues his subject with deepening interest and energy. The Spirit of God is leading him in this verse to yet more definite reasoning, and more powerful conclusions. Had God discovered any symptoms of love in us to serve Him, or any willingness to

obey Him, His love would not have been absolutely perfect; He would have found a motive in us for His love.

But how did matters stand? We were ungodly, without strength, sinners, enemies; so that the positive enmity of man, as shown in these four features, only furnished the deepest occasion for the display of His all-perfect love.

From the garden of Eden to the cross of Calvary, in place of man showing any symptoms of love or of obedience, he took no pleasure in the things of God, saw no beauty, no loveliness in His holiness, no glory in His righteousness, and dared to insult His majesty. His judgments, though a law-breaker, he disregards; His mercies, though he would perish were they to be withdrawn, he despises; His temporal favours he uses, or may be, abuses, to His dishonour; His love, in the coming of His Christ, he rejects; the testimony of the Holy Spirit to the work of Christ and the salvation which is in Him unto eternal glory, he refuses, as less worthy of his thought than the fleeting vanities of a day.

Can any reason, then, be found in man why God should love him? Rather is there not every reason why God should be against him? To love such, must be free, perfect, sovereign love. The reason, the motive, the power, is in God Himself. It is God's own love: He can only love like this; and with loving-kindness has He drawn us to Himself, blessed be His name.

Is the reader one of those who can sincerely say, "We have known and believed the love that God hath to us"? (1 John iv. 16).

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# GOSPEL LIGHT.



**GOD IS LIGHT.      GOD IS LOVE**

"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him."

*1 John i. 5.      1 John iv. 8, 16.      1 John iv. 9.*

## A SOLDIER'S CONVERSION.

**I**T is now some years since my brother gave up the post he held, in which he was doing exceedingly well, and went out and enlisted as a soldier.

From the time he took this step, he left off writing home.

You may well imagine the terrible agony of suspense and grief this caused to my mother and to us all, and how constantly he was the subject of earnest prayer and supplication.

Latterly my mother felt increasingly anxious about him. He was continually on her heart in a very special manner, and she entreated the Lord to let her know if he still lived; and more, she besought Him, if A—, were yet alive, not to take him away until she had some assurance as to his soul's salvation.

The Lord, in His tender love and pity, answered her cry. A short time only elapsed when a letter

came from A.'s most intimate friend in the regiment, written at his request, in order to tell us where he was, and also of his bad state of health. He had then been lying for nearly two months in the Barrack Hospital, suffering from rapid consumption.

My mother was confined to her bed at the time we received the letter, so I went at once to him, and she followed me as soon as she was able to leave her room.

How heart-breaking it was thus to meet the long lost son and brother, I need not tell you. He was so changed I should scarcely have recognised him. The terrible disease had made such ravages on the face and form of the one we loved that it was evident to us, from the very first, that his days on earth were reckoned, and that the number of them could be but few indeed. Our hearts went up in prayer to the living God, to give eternal life to the one whom death was fast claiming as its prey; and truly His own Light, the Light of Life, lighted up the darkness.

Not long after my arrival, when we were alone together, my brother told me that he knew he was dying, and that he was not ready to die.

I asked him if he had long thought about his soul.

"Not very long," he answered, adding that he was ashamed to say it.

I spoke to him of our blessed Saviour; of His love for the sinner; of how He had done everything that was needed for his salvation, when He hung on Calvary's Cross. I told him how the three words, "It is *finished*," from the lips of the dying Saviour, were the full proof that the work was accomplished that secured the eternal

salvation of every one who trusts in Jesus, that he had only to believe in Him, and he would be saved.

He seemed astonished, and said, " Oh ! I think there *must be something to do.*"

Once more I told him how Jesus had done it all ; borne all the heavy penalty due to us ; drunk to its last dregs the bitter cup of wrath that was ours, and left us nothing but the cup of salvation. I told him that it was not needed that we should do *anything* for our soul's salvation, and that if it *were* needed, we could not do it ; and I took the Bible that was by his side, and read to him several passages from the third chapter of John's Gospel, and from the first Epistle of John.

But he found no peace there, for he was looking for it in himself instead of in Christ, who is " our peace " (Eph. ii. 14).

When he would fain have been quiet, to think of the eternity before him, and of the concerns of his soul, he was greatly disturbed by the men around him swearing and telling worldly stories ; so the day after my arrival we removed him to comfortable lodgings quite near to the hospital.

All the love and care we could give him did not prevent his becoming rapidly weaker. So weak was he that just one verse from the Bible at a time was sometimes almost more than he could bear to hear, and this was often interrupted by a terrible fit of coughing. Thus I could only trust to the Lord, and cry to Him to speak to him Himself ; for I felt how helpless we were, and that He alone could reach his case, and must do it in His own way.

After I had been some days with him, I said to him, " A— dear, are you trusting in Jesus? "

"Oh! yes," he replied.

"Then are you saved?" I asked.

"That is what I cannot say," he answered.

I told him that if he were really believing God's word, he would know that he was saved, and that if he did not believe the record God gave of His Son, he was making God a liar (1 John v. 10).

Still all seemed dark in his soul.

Just after this I called on a Christian lady who had shown great kindness to A—, to thank her for her kind attention to him, and while there I noticed in her sitting-room several texts hanging up against the wall, one of which particularly struck me. It was this: "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" (1 John v. 11, 12).

I asked Miss S—, if she thought I could buy one similar in the town, as I felt I should so much like to hang it up in my brother's room.

She very kindly said she would gladly give me this one, for the Lord might use it to the salvation of his soul; and together we knelt and asked the Lord to bless His own word, and to accomplish by it that for which we so earnestly longed, dear A—'s conversion.

On my return to my lodgings with my treasure I told A— I had got such a beautiful text, and that I was going to hang it up on the wall, where he could easily read it from his bed.

When I had done so, to my surprise he was quite angry, and said he did not like texts on the walls; it always put him in mind of the race-course.

In my heart I felt that God intended to bless



that word of His, and I turned round, and said to my mother, "The Lord says His word shall not return to Him void; *some one will receive blessing from that text*" (Isa. lv. 11).

The next day was the Lord's Day, and as I was by A—'s bed, attending to him, he suddenly said, "M—, I am saved."

"When did you know it?" I asked, joyfully and wonderingly.

"Through the night," rejoined he.

"And what was it showed you you are saved?"

"*The text on the wall*," he answered.

What a moment of thankfulness and rejoicing that was! Now our hearts could sing praises to our God for His great salvation!

From that Lord's Day morning until the following one, when he went to be for ever with the One who had saved him, dear A. never had a doubt or fear, and he told of his conversion to his great friend and fellow soldier, beseeching him to accept Christ too.

The last time he ever saw his friend on earth, he pleaded with him to come to Jesus. He told him it was so *easy* to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and so *happy* a thing to rest in Him.

He said it was good for him that he had been afflicted, or he might not have thought about his soul. He owned the Lord's goodness to him in laying him on a bed of pain and sickness there, to show him his *need* of a Saviour, and the Saviour who had met the need. Sweetly and pleasantly he seemed to rest in Him for those eight short days that remained.

The day before he died, we sang together for the last time on earth, "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds!" At that time he appeared un-

conscious of everything passing round him save the mention of that precious name.

We knew now the end of the journey must be near. And so it was. A few more hours passed away; then at a quarter past three on the Lord's Day morning, it seemed to us as though our beloved A—, literally fell asleep in the very arms of Jesus, for there was neither sigh nor struggle. It was like an infant falling asleep on its mother's breast.

In all our sorrow we still could thank and praise Him who had dealt so tenderly with my brother and with us; who had answered the mother's yearning cry for her lost and wandering one, and had enabled her to say from the depths of a full heart, "This my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found"; knowing too that she was but faintly re-echoing on earth the shout of rejoicing that had rung through the Father's house above, as the wanderer was welcomed home.

M.A.

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Sin can no more be admitted into heaven, nor the sinner in his sins, than the least bit of sin can possibly be found in connection with the character of God. Then how absolutely necessary that you should be pardoned and saved, *even now*! Remember that thy works, thy tears, thy prayers, can in no wise save thee. It is faith, simple faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, that gets all the present and eternal results of the cross applied to the soul, which is instant and everlasting salvation, and association with Jesus in the glory of God FOR EVER.

## THE CAPTIVE FREED.

**S**OON after the Lord Jesus commenced His public ministry in this world, He went to Nazareth where He had been brought up; in the synagogue on the Sabbath day He read out of the book of the prophet Isaiah these words: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor: He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And He closed the book" (Luke iv. 18, 19).

At another time He was going from Judea into Galilee, and His road led through Samaria. He knew that a little off the way, in a certain city called Sychar, there was a poor woman, one of Satan's many captives, whom he by his wiles had caught, and bound, and she was groaning beneath his heavy chains.

The Lord also knew that she would come to Jacob's well at a certain hour to draw water, not at the time when women usually did this. They mostly did so in the cool of the morning or the evening: but she came in the middle of the day in the heat of the sun, when others were keeping themselves in the shade. This was no doubt because she was feeling her unhappy position, and did not wish that her neighbours even should hear her groans or see her tears; therefore she would perform this laborious task at this unfavourable hour, rather than be in their presence.

The Lord Jesus knew all this. He had heard her sighs; He had seen her grief; and He was conscious also that the great object for which He

came into the world was "to bind up the broken-hearted," and to set such miserable captives free. Therefore, being wearied with His journey, He sat thus on the well; and it was ordered that His disciples were gone into the city to buy meat, so that He might speak to her alone.

It was not long before she made her appearance with her water-pot on her shoulder. I almost think I can see her as she comes, with a listless, heavy step, her eyes looking on the ground, and feeling afraid to come near, because someone was there.

But the Lord Jesus soon made her feel at home in His presence, by requesting of her a drink of water. He knew that the surest way to gain her confidence, and remove her fears, was to ask of her a favour.

How beautiful and lovely was this! It was just like Himself. And was there a more lovely sight than this ever witnessed, either in heaven or on earth; the Lord of glory making Himself a debtor to a sinful woman for a drink of water, so that He might speak to her words of eternal life; seeking in the tenderest way possible to bring this poor wanderer back to God?

But she does not enter into His thoughts, and therefore is surprised at His asking drink of her; for as yet she can only see Him to be a Jew, though such a One as she had never seen before, so kind and gentle; and she wonders at His lowliness, and asks Him how it is He can so act, she being a woman of Samaria, one of a people whom the Jews despised.

Jesus knew that beneath that careworn brow there was a longing for deliverance and blessing, and that if she only knew where it was to be

obtained, she would apply for it at once. Therefore He said to her, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water."

But as yet she does not ask, and therefore cannot see beyond the water of the well, and thinks it is impossible for Him to get at it. She says, "Sir, Thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep; from whence then hast Thou that living water?" And she asked Him if He was greater than their father Jacob, who gave them the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children and his cattle.

Jesus replied, "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again. But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life."

These wonderful words are true to-day; and how blessed is the portion of those who drink of this life-giving stream. The waters of earth fail to satisfy. Those who drink of them are continually thirsting again. But those who drink of the water which Christ giveth, will never thirst. It satisfies the soul now, and it will do so for evermore (John vi. 35).

This is what that poor woman of Samaria was longing for, though as yet she does not know what He means. But little by little the light breaks in upon her soul, and she does not doubt His word, but believes what He tells her, though she does not understand, and in her simplicity she asked Him to give her this water, that she might never thirst, neither come there to draw.

Thus the Lord led her on, quietly and patiently, step by step, to the knowledge of Himself. But He knew there was a very great barrier standing in the way of blessing, and it must be removed. It was a very tender point, but it must be touched in order that it might be put away. She was in a wrong position; and God cannot have fellowship with iniquity, and though she was aware of this, yet the chains by which she was bound were too strong for her, so that she could not deliver herself. Therefore the Lord Jesus said, "Go, call thy husband, and come hither."

Then the whole truth came out, and she finds herself in the presence of One who knows her thoroughly, and is able to lay open her whole life before her. She then gets a little uneasy, for she sees that He cannot be any ordinary person that she is speaking with, and thinks He must be a prophet; and she begins to ask Him about worship.

This is no uncommon thing to-day. Souls burdened with sin, and not seeing the way of escape, often think they will get deliverance and blessing through worship: hence they become very zealous, and try this, and try that; they go here and go there. But it is all no good; they do not get what they want; still they go on labouring and toiling, till they come to the end of themselves, by seeing that they can do nothing, but are lost and undone. And then they find their present and eternal salvation in Christ, by believing in His name (John xx. 31).

No doubt she had been trying again and again, as far as she could, but it was all to no purpose, as the Lord showed her by telling her that "God

is a Spirit, and they that worship Him, must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

But while they are away from Christ, and their sins unforgiven, they cannot worship God. And the woman seems to have understood a little of this, for she owned that there was something she wanted, which was quite out of her reach. She could not tell what it was, but her hope was in One that was coming, and she said, "I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ; when *He is come, He will tell us all things.*"

She did not say, We know, in a vague, careless way. To her it was a real, personal thing, and therefore she said, "I KNOW THAT MESSIAS COMETH." There was One coming in whom her hopes were centred, and when He was come, all would be well, for He would make everything clear and plain, and thereby meet every desire she had.

Upon her saying this, the Lord Jesus said to her, "*I that speak unto thee am He.*"

This was enough! She had no other question to ask. She believed His word, and her soul was saved in a moment. The One was before her for whom she had been looking; and her chains were snapped in an instant. The bands of sin were broken, and the poor captive was set free, clean delivered out of the power of Satan for ever. This was what she wanted. She drank of that living water, and her thirst was quenched, her soul was satisfied, and she passed from death into life by simply believing. According to the Lord's own later word, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life" (John vi. 47).

Having got deliverance herself, she now longed

that others might have it also, and she ran into the city, and said to the men, "Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?"

Then they went out of the city, and came to Him.

This is how it always is, more or less, with every new-born soul. Having received blessing themselves, their one desire is that others might have it also. This is how it was with her. She had now the gift of everlasting life, and so great was her joy that she lost sight of everything beside. She forgot her water-pot and her past circumstances too, bad as they had been. The past was over and gone, and everything was new to her, and the whole desire of her soul was that her neighbours might know the same precious Saviour, and enjoy the same deliverance with herself. And she had what she wanted, for in the warmth of her love she told it out, and her words were with power.

In the meantime His disciples prayed Him, saying, "Master, eat."

But He said unto them, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." He had the delight of knowing that this woman was saved, not only from the wrath to come, but also from a life of sin down here. This gave Him a joy which nothing else could give. He had held out to her that living water, and she had drunk, and her soul was satisfied.

This was more to Him than all besides. His meat and His drink was thus to do the will of Him that sent Him, and to finish His work. This He had been doing by opening the prison to this once bound one, and binding up her broken heart.



This gave real refreshment and joy to His own soul, it was more than His necessary food.

The disciples saw this, and said one to another, "Hath any man brought Him ought to eat?" They could not enter into what He was doing. Though He was surrounded by them, yet in His labours for God, He was quite alone, for no one understood Him. But with joy and delight, He could point them to what was going on, and add, "Say not ye there are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? Behold I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest: and he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal, that both he that soweth, and he that reapeth may rejoice together."

And this delivered woman was gone to try and gather some sheaves, and she went in the constraining power of love. And therefore she truly succeeded. And not only so, but the Lord Jesus saw in her a sample of that glorious harvest which is coming, when he that reapeth will receive his wages, and the sower and the reaper will indeed rejoice together for evermore. That is the day of ingathering, when the Lord Jesus will come in the clouds, to call His loved ones up to meet Him in the air, to spend an eternity with Himself in the unsullied light of His Father's presence, washed from their sins in His own blood (John xiv. 1-3; Rev. i. 5).

And this woman of Samaria will be there, one of the happiest of that happy throng. She will not only have the joy of her own blessed portion in Christ, but she will also have the unspeakable delight of knowing that she had been the means of bringing others to Him; and there they will

be as her joy and crown of rejoicing, in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming (1 Thess. ii. 19, 20).

And how it must have added to her happiness at the time, too, in seeing others saved, and made partakers of the same joy and blessing with herself! For we read that the "Samaritans went unto Him, and besought Him to tarry with them. And He abode there two days; and many more believed because of His own word: and said to the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard Him ourselves, and *know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.*"

How very simple and beautiful was the faith given to these poor Samaritans, though the Lord Jesus did no miracle before them: neither was there anything outwardly that they could see: only the testimony of this delivered soul. They saw she was a new creature: and this gave power to her words; and like her they saw in Him the One that was to come, the One who was led as a Lamb to the slaughter, the Saviour of the world.

And when the Lord Jesus had passed through death and resurrection, then Philip went down to Samaria, and preached Christ glorified, and the blessing was very abundant (Acts vii.), thus carrying on the work which the Lord Jesus began when He was down here.

And what a glorious company from Samaria will awake and leave their graves to meet Him in the air when that happy morning comes, the morning of the glorious resurrection, when all who believe on Him now, during His absence, will be with Him, and like Him for ever. These bodies of humiliation He will change, and fashion

them like unto His glorious body (Phil. iii). Thus we shall spend an eternity with Him, "who loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father: to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen" (Rev. i. 5, 6).

H. T.

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SWEET was the hour, O Lord, to Thee,  
 At Sychar's lonely well,  
 When a poor outcast heard Thee there  
 Thy great salvation tell.

Thither she came; but oh! her heart,  
 All filled with earthly care,  
 Dreamed not of Thee, nor thought to find  
 The Hope of Israel there.

Lord! 'twas Thy power unseen that drew  
 The stray one to that place,  
 In solitude to learn from Thee  
 The secrets of Thy grace.

There Jacob's erring daughter found  
 Those streams unknown before,  
 The waterbrooks of life, that make  
 The weary thirst no more.

And, Lord, to us, as vile as she,  
 Thy gracious lips have told  
 That mystery of love revealed  
 At Jacob's well of old.

## THE MARCHERS: A CONTRAST.

### THE UNCONVERTED.

“ There is a way which seemeth right unto a man ; but the end thereof are the ways of death ”  
(Prov. xiv. 12, xvi. 2-5.)

“ MARCH ! march ! march !

Earth groans as they tread,

Each carries a skull, going down to the dead ;

Every stride, every stamp, every footfall is  
bolder,

'Tis a skeleton's tramp, with a skull on its  
shoulder ;

And, oh ! how it treads, with high tossing head,

That clay-covered bone going down to the  
dead.”

E. COX.

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### THE CONVERTED.

“ The way of life is above to the wise, that he  
may depart from hell beneath.” (Prov. xv. 24).

“ March ! march ! march !

How lightly they tread,

Looking up to that One who rose from the  
dead ;

Every stride, every step, every footfall is bolder,

'Tis the sinner draws nigh, with a load off his  
shoulder ;

And, oh ! how he treads, looking up to his Head,

Who triumphantly rose from the midst of the  
dead.”

J. WILLANS.

“ As in ADAM all die, even so in CHRIST shall all  
be made alive.” (1 Cor. xv. 22).

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# GOSPEL LIGHT.



**GOD IS LIGHT. GOD IS LOVE.**

"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him."

*1 John i. 5. 1 John iv. 8, 16. 1 John iv. 9.*

## **CHRIST JESUS ONLY.**

"There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts iv. 12.)

**B** EING born in sin, I lived for years,  
As many thousands do,  
Unconscious of my lost estate,  
Of Christ I nothing knew. (Psalm li. 5.)

But blinded by God's enemy,  
I lived as I was born;  
My soul scarce cost me once a thought  
Till light began to dawn. (2 Cor. iv. 4.)

I knew I sinned; but what of that?  
My neighbours did the same.  
I thought I was as good as they;  
I had as good a name. (Isaiah lv. 8.)

I injured no one wilfully,  
I tried to do my best;

But still I felt a dread at times :  
 I was not quite at rest. (Titus iii. 5.)

I should have gone on longer still,  
 And never could have known  
 The blessed truth I now enjoy,  
 But for His grace alone. (Eph. ii. 1-5.)

So hearken now ; turn not away ;  
 But hear what God has done ;  
 For one who was an enemy  
 Is now, by grace, a son.  
 (1 John iii. 1, 2.)

His Spirit first began the work,  
 Convincing me of sin ;  
 Works then, thought I, my peace will  
 make  
 With God, and heaven win.  
 (John xvi. 8.)

I tried, I strove, I tried again,  
 By works to pay the debt ;  
 But still within I had no joy,  
 And peace I could not get. (Eph. ii. 9.)

At last I read the word of God,  
 And found 'twas not the way ;  
 That such a debt as that of sin  
 No works could ever pay. (John xiv. 6.)

It told me all my righteousness  
 Could ne'er for sin atone ;  
 For Scripture says, " There is none good,  
 None righteous, no, not one."  
 (Rom. iii. 10-12.)

'Twas then my fearful, ruined state  
 Flashed full before my sight;  
 With terror-stricken voice I cried,  
 "I'm lost!" But, oh delight!  
 (Luke xv. 4, 6, 9, 32.)

No sooner had I said, "I'm lost,"  
 Methought that from above  
 I seemed to hear a voice repeat,  
 "Poor sinner, God is love;  
 (1 John iv. 16.)

"And though by sin you've wandered far,  
 Far, far away from Him,  
 He sent His own beloved Son  
 To bring you back again."  
 (Luke xix. 10.)

Yes, Jesus, long, long while ago,  
 For sinners came to die;  
 Through weakness He was crucified,  
 By God's power raised on high.  
 (2 Cor. xiii. 4.)

As Lord and Christ He's seated now  
 At God's right hand in heaven.  
 By faith in Him I know I'm saved,  
 And all my sins forgiven. (Acts ii. 36.)

I do not think, or hope, but *know*;  
 For all there was to do,  
 God's Word declares was done by Him;  
 I rest there. Will not you?  
 (1 Jno. v. 10-13.)

For whoe'er on His name believes,  
 And doth to Jesus bow,  
 To condemnation ne'er shall come;  
 Hath life eternal now. (John v. 24.)

But if you strive from morn till nigh  
 To pay the debt you owe,  
 'Tis no avail; you'll strive in vain;  
 To Jesus you *must* go. (Acts iv. 12).

There was no need for Him to come  
 And suffer on the tree,  
 If our own works in heaven could win  
 A place for you and me. (Gal ii. 21.)

Then cast your doings all aside,  
 And rest by faith in Him;  
 For nought but His most precious blood  
 Can wash away your sin. (Heb. ix. 22.)

With me you then will share the joy  
 Of pardon full and free;  
 For God's salvation is like God;  
 'Tis life, 'tis liberty. (John viii. 36.)

And knowing this, how can we now  
 Continue still in sin?  
 Nay, God forbid, far be the thought,  
 'Tis now good works begin.  
 (Rom. vi. 1, 2.)

For without works our faith is dead;  
 So, if there be no fruit,  
 No good works wrought to prove our  
 faith,  
 Take heed lest there's no root.  
 (Jas. ii. 26.)

For Jesu's love begetteth love,  
 And he that loveth Him  
 His love will prove by deeds of love,  
 And not by deeds of sin. (1 John iv. 10.)



## HOW I FOUND REAL HAPPINESS.

69

And so, dear friend, be not deceived,  
 We're justified by faith,  
 And not by our poor wretched works :  
 'Tis so, the Bible saith.  
 (Rom. iv. 5; v. 1.)

And soon the Lord Himself shall come ;  
 God's trump shall sound aloud !  
 Archangel's voice shall summon saints  
 To meet upon the cloud.  
 (1 Thess. iv. 15-18.)

In glory bright we then shall see  
 Our Saviour face to face :  
 Be like Him, share eternity ;  
 Through works? no, all through grace.  
 (1 John iii. 2.)

“ For by grace are ye saved through faith ; and  
 that not of yourselves ; it is the gift of God ; not of  
 works, lest any man should boast.” (Eph. ii. 8, 9.)

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## HOW I FOUND REAL HAPPINESS.

“ I DON'T want to be a Christian,” I said,  
 “ to be obliged to give up everything that  
 makes life pleasant, and go about with a long face  
 all the rest of my days. No, thank you! I am  
 very happy as I am.”

So saying, I turned away from the earnest,  
 pleading face of my sister, and banished the dis-  
 agreeable thought from my mind.

Alas ! how little I then knew, how little I  
 realized what an awful sin I was guilty of in delib-  
 erately refusing to listen to God's message of  
 salvation.

No ! I was perfectly content to go on with the  
 life I had hitherto led. Why should I give up the

world at nineteen? I had all that any girl could desire; a happy home, plenty of friends, and balls and parties without number. If I became a Christian, I should have to relinquish the latter, so of course it was absurd to think of it.

Just about this time some gospel meetings were being held at the Assembly Rooms, and were crowded to excess each day. I heard of one or two "conversions" among the young girls whom I was in the habit of meeting in society; but when told of the wonderful change that had come over these gay worldlings, I laughed at the idea, prophesying that "it would soon wear off."

"Won't you come and hear for yourself?" entreated my sister. "It can do you no harm to go for once."

But I steadily refused, and plunged more deeply than ever into a whirl of gaiety.

One day, however, my mother begged me to leave a note at the house of a lady who lived close by. "I think you may have to wait for an answer," she said, as she sealed and handed it to me.

At first I rebelled. I knew the lady to whom the letter was addressed was one of those whom I dreaded to encounter. But at length I consented to go, determining in my own mind to let her see that I had no intention of being spoken to about my soul, should she attempt to broach the subject.

So I set off, feeling, no doubt, very grand and superior.

"Mrs. C—— was at home. Would I please walk upstairs?" was the answer to my inquiry.

I followed the servant, inwardly resolving to "hold my own," whatever happened.

To my horror, when we reached the drawing

room, I found myself in the midst of one of the dreaded "meetings" I had heard so much about.

As I entered there was a look of surprise on the faces of all the occupants of that room, which brought the hot blood with a rush to my cheeks.

Mrs. C—— rose to meet me, and, in her gentle way, motioned me to a seat near the door; and the reading continued as before.

I shall never forget my feelings as I sat there. Fear and indignation strove for the mastery. I saw it all. I had fallen unsuspectingly into the trap that had been laid for me by my mother and Mrs. C——. Now there was no escape.

Gradually the words that were being spoken forced themselves on my hearing. Curiously, and critically I listened, wondering what there could be in that dry and uninteresting Book to light up the faces of one and all. Then, somewhat wearied with listening to what was like so much Greek to me, I set to planning how best I could slip out of the door, and run downstairs without being noticed.

During the prayers that followed the reading, a lady who had been sitting close beside me pleaded with God for "the one outside the fold," entreating that the Lord would not let me leave the room without a blessing.

Oh! how wonderfully He answered that prayer! Deeper and deeper those words sank into my wretched, sinful heart. I felt, as I knelt there, that a holy God was searching me through and through; and all my sins like a great wave came sweeping over me, carrying all else before it! What had I been doing? How had I dared to turn away from God who was at this moment reading my very soul?

Terrified, I rose from my knees, and stood as though in a dream, whilst all the others, with the exception of the one who had prayed for me, left the room.

She came across to me, and asked me that question I had always dreaded: "Are you saved?"

"No," I answered abruptly.

"Do you want to be?"

For a moment I hesitated. "I am too wicked," I said, falteringly. "Oh! you don't know what I am, and all the dreadful things I have done," I continued, battling with the great choking sobs that would come, in spite of my efforts to keep them back.

"Never mind what you have been, or what you have done, child," was the quiet rejoinder. "If you know yourself to be a sinner, just listen to what God says to you." And opening her Bible she read, "When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly" (Rom. v. 6); and, "I came not to call the righteous, but SINNERS to repentance" (Mark ii. 17).

"But," I said, doubtfully, "how do I know that was meant for me? How can I know God wants ME?"

My companion did not answer, but turned again to her Bible, and from the last chapter of Revelation read this verse, "WHOSOEVER will, let him take of the water of life freely" (Rev. xxii. 17).

"Now," she said, "do you suppose God has left you out in that 'whatsoever'?"

"No," I answered slowly, while the wonderful truth began to dawn across my mind.

"Then if you believe it was for you, as well as for the rest of the world, that Christ died, you ARE saved. '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 condemnation, but is passed from death unto life.' " (John v. 24).

I needed no more! I saw it all as clearly as possible, and a joy I had never experienced before, even when I had imagined my happiness complete, flooded my whole being. Oh! the wonderful grace of God to a wretched sinner!

I had entered that room proud, rebellious, stiff-necked; I left it humbled and broken down by the sight I had had of the love of Christ which led Him to lay down His life for me.

From that moment I believe the current of my life was changed. Old things passed away, and all things became new (2 Cor. v. 17.)

With a sort of horror, I turned from that which I once imagined was "happiness." Nothing but the grace of God could have made me do this. Good resolutions and "turning over new leaves" are worse than futile. Oh! how often we make good resolutions! I wonder who has NOT.

But when temptations come, ARE we able to resist them? Never, in our own strength. We can only be conquerors through Him that loved us (Rom. viii. 37).

Ah! dear young ones (to whom I am especially writing), have you never felt, in the midst of the giddy whirl, a sensation of dissatisfaction and discontent, as if everything was not QUITE as it should be? Oh! the heart-aches, jealousies and bitter feelings that exist in this great weary world! Christ alone can satisfy and fill the aching voids. Will you not come to Him?

There is no question of "giving up" this thing or the other. When Christ enters the heart, all

else sinks into utter insignificance, so that one gladly and willingly turns from what fails to satisfy, to rest in that great love, the length, breadth, depth and height, of which no mortal can fathom.

Z.

---

## **“NOTHING BUT HAPPINESS.”**

**I** HAD been asked to visit an elderly man, who, it was supposed, had not many weeks to live.

He was a stranger to me, and I was anxious to find out whether he was ready to be called away into the presence of God.

I found it very difficult to say anything to him, as he had himself so much to say about his various ailments, and the affairs of his farm.

When at last I spoke to him of his soul, and of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Saviour of sinners, he replied, with indifference, that he had no doubt that it was all very good when people understood those things, but he did not, and, though he had often heard them, he had never been able to take them in. “There are some that can, and some that can’t,” he said; and again he returned to the subject of the farm.

As I left the house, the dull leaden sky, the November trees half stripped of their yellow leaves, which lay trodden in the wet road, all looked far less dreary than the house within, where the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ could find no entrance.

The following visits were much the same; and I then left the neighbourhood, sorry to have found so little hearing for the message from God,

though I had always been received with great civility and kindness.

It must have been six months later, when in London, that I received a message from Mr. J. It was, that he was sure I should be glad to hear that he was saved.

I was surprised at so decided a way of expressing it, and, as I was just then returning to the place where he lived, I went immediately to see him.

I found him looking well and strong, and his face beamed with joy. "The Lord has taken me in hand," he said. "He has healed my body, and He has saved my soul."

*I asked him to tell me how it happened. I will relate what he then told me, as far as I can remember it, in his own words.*

"You remember," he said, "how stupid I used to be when you came to talk to me last autumn. I couldn't see what you meant, and it all seemed something far above me, that was out of the reach of my mind altogether. I went to bed one night just as stupid as ever, a poor, lost, dark sinner, as I was. Then I dreamt that I awoke; but, strange to say, I found that I was gone! I had no self left. There was the room; but I was not in it. Out of the window I saw nothing. All was gone! There was only a barren wilderness. The crops were gone; the cows were gone; and more strange than all that, I was gone too. Then, I thought, what is there left? Is there nothing that is *not* gone? And it came before my mind, as clear as the sun in the sky, that there is One who *could* not be gone, and He seemed to me to fill heaven and earth; only Himself and no other! It was the Lord Jesus Christ

that remained! 'Yes,' I said to myself, 'I am gone; there is only Christ!' And then I saw that was just what I needed; for the poor wretched sinner that was such a trouble to me was not there at all, and the One who *was* there was perfect, and God was looking at *Him*; not at me, but at Him. Yes, God put me out of sight, and Christ stood in my place before God, and God was satisfied. And my joy was so great, I awoke, and I called out aloud, 'The Lord has shown me that I am gone, and there is Christ instead of me!'"

"Now," he continued, "I see why I didn't understand you before. All the time you talked to me I kept thinking, 'Oh, yes, that's all very nice, but somehow I *must* do something myself; I must pray, or repent, or do something or other on my part.' And now the Lord had shown me that not only He didn't want my *doings*, but He didn't want *me*. He had put an end to me, and Christ was there instead. What more could He want? Christ stands before God for me, and God is satisfied with *Him*; perfectly satisfied; and I have nothing to do but to own that it is so, and to thank and praise Him. How simple it all is when you see it! But I might have gone on blundering till now in my own thoughts and ways if the Lord hadn't come to my help. There, now!" he said, correcting himself, "you see I can't even speak of it right; I said that wrong. He didn't come to my help at all, for He did it all Himself, and put me clean out of sight, for I was not to have *any* hand in it. It's a blessed, blessed thing, too, that I know not only I *am* nothing, but I *have* nothing. I used to think a deal about the farm, and say to myself, 'These



are my fields, and those are my cows, and so on.' Well, now, when I go about I think to myself, if the Lord were to take me this minute, there's not one of these things belongs to me; they would all be just nothing to me at all. But I have *Christ*, and nothing but Christ! What a thought! He is mine, and He is mine for ever."

It was indeed wonderful to hear these words from the lips of a man who had by power of mind learnt *nothing*; but now, by the teaching of the Holy Ghost, he knew the glorious truth we are so slow to learn (and perhaps the most intelligent are the slowest in learning it), that "I am gone, and Christ is there instead!"

From this time a year and a half ago, Christ indeed seemed to him to "fill heaven and earth."

A labourer remarked, not long afterwards, in speaking to his wife, "I've seen a wonderful thing to-day. There is a man I know well, and feel sure he's the same man that I've known so long, and yet I've never seen one man so different from another as he is from what he used to be. He saw me in the field, and he came all across to me, and you should have heard how he talked about things I'm sure he never gave a thought to formerly; but he seemed to have nothing else to say."

"You see," Mr. J. said to me one day, "the Lord only gave back my health, and left me down here to witness for Christ; and I don't see there's much else to be done but that, and I'm thankful some seem to receive the word; but some who used to like my company now keep out of the way altogether. They're like I was once, no heart for it."

"I hear people asking God to save them," he

said another time; "but if I were to say that, I should be asking Him to do what He *has* done already. I couldn't go on asking for what He *has* given me."

Another time, referring to a sermon in which crossing the Jordan had been mentioned, he said, "That sermon struck me at the time, but yet I never saw the truth for years after."

Wondering whether he would understand my question, I asked, "Do you know which side of the Jordan you are now?"

With a look of surprise that I could ask such a question, he answered, "Well, I can't help knowing that. How can I?" Don't I *know* that I'm in the land that flows with milk and honey?"

About four months since he told me he was going to visit some relations about a hundred miles distant. "It's greatly on my mind to go there," he said, "for I've no opportunity of speaking to them about the Lord, and I fear they're all in the dark, as I was."

Before he went he called to see a neighbour who was dying, having been lately converted. "Good-bye," he said, "we shall meet in the glory. You're going now, and I'm soon coming after."

He returned from his visit, and shortly afterwards we received a message that he was ill. I went to see him, and found that he was dying.

"Nothing but happiness," he said. "Just think what it is to be going to *Him*! Any moment now I may go, and be with Him for ever. There's only one thing about it I mind, and that is, that I cannot speak loud enough to tell them all what the Lord is, as I should like; but I can praise Him myself, and soon shall praise Him

much better. I've now no pain, and nothing but joy."

A few hours later he was absent from the body and present with the Lord.

Do *you* know what it is to see Christ instead of you? and to own that *God* sees Him instead of you? "I live, yet *not I*, but Christ liveth in me." "He that is *dead* is freed from sin." Not only the sin removed, but the sinner removed also. Sin put out of God's sight for ever, and the sinner who did it gone too: Christ, who took our place on the seat of judgment, now living *for us* in the glory; *His* acceptance the measure of *our* acceptance. God well pleased in us, because He sees us in Him, and in Him only. This alone brings perfect peace, because it shows us the *perfect* satisfaction of God. We see that the full, unclouded love of the Father rests on us, because we are in Him in whom He delights. The sinner not improved or mended, but *gone*, and Christ alone left, the perfect man in the glory of God, with whom we are one. As God, we adore Him; as man we are one with Him, if Christians at all; for there is *no* lower place. F.B.

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## REST FOR THE WEARY.

**Y**E weary ones, to Him now come  
 Who freely offers rest and home;  
 Rest from the servitude of sin,  
 A home the Father's house within.

He who invites demands no deeds;  
 Able He is to meet all needs;

Suited alike to age and youth  
His every word of grace and truth.

Coming to Him, all come to stay;  
No needy one turns He away;  
He sets them closely at His side,  
With Him for ever to abide.

Who is this One, of whom you say,  
"None coming will He turn away"?  
It is the LORD, from heaven who came,  
The Son of God, JESUS His name.

JESUS ! O name of highest worth,  
Of all in heaven, of all on earth !  
O sweetest name to sinners shown,  
To angels or to saints made known !

No other saving name is given  
In any nation under heaven;  
Come, then, to Him; in Him believe;  
From Him all gifts of grace receive.

So will He be your Guide through life;  
Your Guard in every storm and strife;  
Your Peace, your Hope, your Light, your Way  
From earth's dark shades to heaven's bright day.

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"Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matthew xi. 28.)

"Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out." (John vi. 37.)

"In My Father's house are many mansions [or, abiding places, R.V.]. . . I go to prepare a place for you." (John xiv. 2.)

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## THE WISE KING AND THE INQUIRING QUEEN.

**"T**HE queen of the South shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it; for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here" (Matt. xii. 42).

With this read 1 Kings x. 1-13: "And when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the LORD, she came to prove him with hard questions. And she came to Jerusalem with a very great train, with camels that bare spices and very much gold, and precious stones: and when she was come to Solomon, she communed with him of all that was in her heart. And Solomon told her all her questions: there was not anything hid from the king, which he told her not."

The queen of Sheba thought it worth her while

upon a mere rumour, a mere report that had reached her, to leave her kingdom for a time, and take a long and wearisome journey from a far-off land, with a large retinue, and come to Jerusalem to know whether what she had heard was true.

She had heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord. The name of JEHOVAH had attracted her, and she wondered, marvelled what this name of the Lord meant. She did not say, Oh! it is not worth listening to. She did not do as I fear some among us do, listen to the tale of Jesus, and then go away and forget it: but she pondered it in her heart, and she was determined at all sacrifices that she would find out the truth of this report about THE NAME OF THE LORD.

Thus she undertook this long journey, at great cost, and came to Solomon. And when she came to Solomon "she came to prove him with hard questions." She was resolved to have her heart satisfied, the whole of her heart turned out as it were, before the king, so that she might not go back to her country till her heart was satisfied. She was not contented with a little truth; but it is written, "She communed with him of all that was in her heart."

Have you ever taken the trouble to think five minutes about your souls? I ask you again, Have you ever devoted five minutes in your life to the consideration of the hard question, How is my soul to be saved? Or have you been going on contentedly taking what people tell you of religion, and saying, "Oh! it will be all very well by-and-by"?

Religion never saved a soul yet, and religion

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never will. *It is Christ* who saves. There is the mistake. The devil has taught you religion, but the devil has never taught you Christ. Satan is very ingenious; for he is "transformed into an angel of light" (2 Cor. xi. 14, 15). The devil is not a hateful monster. He is not an ugly demon, as men paint him. He is teaching men to ridicule himself, because he knows if he can only get them sceptical about his existence, he has got them firm in his clutches. Satan is "transformed into an angel of light," and wherever you hear of light from an unconverted person, Satan is there. If you listen to an unconverted preacher that is Satan's minister. He is a minister of righteousness. Now mark, these are the apostle's words; and if you listen to a lie, where does that come from? If you are cajoled by a lie, it is Satan's lie; *he* is the father of lies; it never comes from God.

Religion is not Christ; it is not salvation; it is people trying to get to heaven who will never get there. CHRIST is the way to heaven. CHRIST! Not a little about Christ; not a little of Christ mixed up with works; not a little of Christ and formality; not a little of Christ and devotion. It is Christ in the heart; it is Christ by faith; it is a living Saviour that must save from first to last.

You and I have nothing to do in order to be saved. We cannot attain to salvation; we cannot reach salvation; it must reach us. Jesus must save us; and nothing else will suffice. It is a great salvation. Beware, therefore, how you trust a lie. Has a lie no power? Has Satan no power? Why, we see him ensnaring souls by the thousand. By what? Not by grossness, not

by vice only, not by the abominations of the world but by the religion of the world. That is his great snare, his great attempt, his masterpiece.

Have you ever asked God to solve the difficult question about salvation? Have you followed the example of the queen of the South? She proved Solomon to the utmost with her hard questions. Have you ever asked Christ a question in your life?

Look at what God says, "Come now and let us reason together" (Isa. i. 18). God is delighted if He gets any one to reason with Him, to hold converse with Him. No matter how full of doubts. No matter how full of scepticism. God is delighted to hear any poor sinner come and ask Him a thousand questions. "Come now and let us reason together."

What is that reasoning? How does He reason?

His reasoning is all on His own side. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." The sinner who opens his lips to God, is stopped in his questions by, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow."

God closes the mouth of the reasoner by these most blessed words: "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isa. i. 18).

Have you ever come to God in this way?

God is the one *Giver*. God asks but one thing of men. He asks them to be saved. We beseech you, as though God did beseech you; we pray you in Christ's stead, Be ye reconciled to God (2 Cor. v. 30).



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Do not keep enmity in your heart to God. He has none to you. Do not think God in the gospel is a judge, or an exactor, or a condemner. We ask you to put aside your enmity, and be reconciled to God.

Now let us turn again to this wise woman. She proved Solomon with hard questions. What do you think is the hardest question you can ask God? What question would you put to the Lord Jesus, if He were here? He would invite you; He invites you now. This is the hard question; this is the enigma; this is that which none but God can solve: HOW CAN GOD BE JUST, AND JUSTIFY THE SINNER?

I will tell you what the answer is. It is in one word. This deep question, this solemn question, this all-important question, is answered in one word, the blessed word "JESUS."

Jesus is God's resource, to enable *Him* to save us. He is God's provision for salvation; He is God's wisdom to enable Him to accomplish His will in saving sinners; He is God's power to save. God cannot do anything apart from Christ. He has bound Himself up with His blessed Son; He is at liberty, by the death of Christ, to accomplish His most holy counsels of salvation.

How is it that Jesus is the answer to the question?

Because Jesus bore the whole penalty that sinners deserved at the hands of God. Jesus put Himself in the sinner's place, so that the whole of God's wrath, the whole of God's indignation, His fierce wrath, the waves of His wrath, the waterspouts of His wrath, were poured upon the head of His blessed Son.

Do you believe this? Do you believe Christ

on the cross was under the terrible, the dreadful wrath of God; that every drop was drained of the fearful cup of indignation? It is thus that God can now acquit the sinner on the ground that Jesus has borne the sinner's curse. The riddle is solved. God is just. He has not passed over sin; He by no means clears the guilty. He does not allow one sin to pass unnoticed or undetected; not a trivial thought, not an idle word, not an unholy feeling. And more than that, He has judged sin itself; He made Him sin for us, who knew no sin; He has judged the sinner's sin; He has judged the sinner's iniquities; He has judged the sinner's transgressions; the whole mass was laid on Christ, and Christ sunk under that heavy load, under the pressure of God's heavy hand in death. Oh! that cross is a solemn sight, a marvellous sight, and yet it is a joyful sight! Oh! may we bow, and worship, and wonder at that cross! May we look at Jesus on the tree, and see Him in His agonies, in His baptism of blood, and say, For *me* He suffered; for *me* He died: He bore *my* sins in His own body on the tree (1 Pet. ii. 24).

Thus Jesus, the sinner's Substitute, enables God to be just, and yet justify the sinner (Rom. iii. 26). Thus is the hard question solved. These were the kind of questions that this queen brought to Solomon. These are the kind of questions that God solved in His blessed Son. They are the wisdom of God.

We read, "When the queen of Sheba had seen all Solomon's wisdom." She *saw* it. Do you see God's wisdom? Is it visible to you? Can you behold it? Can you see and know Jesus, who is God's wisdom, a greater wisdom than that

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of Solomon? The queen of Sheba saw Solomon's wisdom. She did not merely *hear* it; but she so realized what he said, as to have it plainly before her eyes. So, if you hear of Jesus, do you believe in Jesus? Do you plainly see the wisdom of God in Him? Can you say you see Jesus as really to your mind's eye as if He were present to your sight?

Mark what she saw besides. His wisdom first, and then what a sight she got, what a wondrous sight of Solomon's glory! Look at God's wisdom, and then you will see His glory. Gaze on Christ, and then you will have the heavens opened to behold His glory. She saw the house that he had built. Solomon did not show her that first; Christ does not show you that first. Christ shows you how to be saved first, and then you see the house He has built. You see the Church of God! You see stones being prepared for that glorious house, the dwelling of God. You will see them arranged by God in proper order. You will see, by faith, that glorious building growing to the holy temple of the Lord.

She saw "the house that he had built." And then, what next? She saw "the meat of his table." The flesh of Christ is the true meat of God's table. It is the food of His saints. They get life by it. They have life sustained by it for ever. What dainties, what real dainties are here! The bread of God, heavenly food, the bread from heaven! Are you neglecting these things for worldly dainties? Are you esteeming the blood of Christ, and the flesh of Christ, inferior food to the table spread here by this world? (John vi. 53, 54).

She then saw "the sitting of his servants."

Ah! what a sight that will be, when Christ's servants sit down; when we who are His servants have done our day's work; when the Master says, "Sit down"; when we have our rest; when we find ourselves in the presence chamber of our Lord; and when He girds Himself to serve us (Luke xii. 37).

And then "the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel." "I saw thrones and they sat upon them"; and they were clothed in white robes, and they had crowns upon their heads, and palms in their hands. The Royal seat of Christ's retinue! the royal pageant of the King of kings! the attendance of His ministers, His counsellors, His elders, crowns of gold upon their heads! their white robes! What a glorious sight! (Rev. xx. 4).

And then it says, "his cup-bearers." There was plenty of wine; no lack of wine in the heavenly feast; the wine does not run short there. The draughts that gladden the heart, that make the soul happy, that make the soul joyful, that make the soul dance, the pleasures for evermore; the wine of God (Ps. xvi. 11; Matt. xxvi. 29).

"And his ascent by which he went up unto the house of the Lord."

"Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in" (Ps. xxiv.) Attended by His countless hosts of risen saints, what will the ascent of Christ be to His Father's house? What will be that triumph? What will be that joy? What will be that delight, when with Jesus in our midst, with Jesus to gaze on, with Jesus to delight ourselves, with Jesus to speak to us, to tell us of His love, to tell us how near we are to Him,

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how He has longed for us, how He served us, how He died for us; to say to us, "The hour is come; I am come again, to receive you unto Myself, that where I am there ye may be also" (John xiv). Oh! what a joyous hallelujah will burst from ten thousand times ten thousand of His risen saints! Oh! the glorious ascent of the blessed Lord, to present His church before God without spot, or blemish, or any such thing!

Are you running the risk of losing these unspeakable blessings? Are you selling your souls for a worthless toy, and losing the Christ of God? Are you selling your souls for nought, and losing heaven, with all its glories and all its charms?

The queen of Sheba had "no more spirit in her." It would be too much for our eyes to see that sight. We could not stand it; it would be death to us. But when we see HIM as He is, "we shall be like Him." We shall then be able to endure the sight of His exceeding glory, and we shall to the full enjoy the glory revealed in us (1 John iii. 2; Rom. viii. 18).

Dear reader, that glory may *then* be yours, if you believe in Jesus *now*.

"We shall behold Him, whom not seen we love;  
 We shall be with Him, whom we long to see;  
 We shall be like Him, fit for realms above;  
 With Him, and like Him, for eternity.  
 Is now to sit at Jesus' feet our choice?  
 How will fruition then our souls rejoice!"

---

## THE GREAT AND GOOD PHYSICIAN.

**T**HERE are few of us who have not, at some time or other in our lives, suffered from severe illness, or met with some serious accident, which has threatened even the loss of life itself. Then, cast upon the bed of pain, or left to experience the langour and tedium of long continued sickness, how welcome has been the aid of the intelligent medical man, and the attention of one's kind and sympathizing friends !

When we were in health, and in the cheerfulness of life and vigour, we may have slighted or despised the assistance which the physician could give ; but when really sick and afflicted we have been glad to avail ourselves of his help, upon the principle expressed in those words of divine truth " They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick " (Luke v. 31).

The occasion upon which the Lord uttered these words shows that men act in much the same way with respect to their souls ; that while they continue righteous in their own eyes, or unconscious and unconcerned as to their real state as sinners before God, they do not value the salvation which He provided, and which is presented by Him who came " not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." But when, by the working of the Spirit of God, they are in any degree awakened to their actual lost and ruined condition, then they are happy to have such a one as the great and good Physician of souls to whom they can go for pardon, life and healing.

We all know that one of the effects of illness is to make us see everything around us through a false medium. All appears to go wrong, while

we probably think that the cause lies, not in ourselves, but in others. And one of the worst consequences of sin is, that it blinds the minds of men to the knowledge of their actual condition as known to the all-seeing eye of God, and declared in His word. Man knows not "the plague of his own heart," and, therefore, he goes not to Him who alone can effect a cure.

The case of the leper in Israel, as presented to us in the thirteenth chapter of Leviticus, illustrates the truth that man cannot form, and is not expected by his own knowledge to form, an accurate estimate of his state as a sinner, but that he must have the judgment of the Good Physician Himself, who "searcheth the reins and heart," and knows what is in man as well as what proceeds from him. In that chapter it is said that "the priest shall look on him [the leper], and pronounce him *unclean*." And so God, who cannot err, has declared of man that "the *whole* head is sick, and the *whole* heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no *soundness in it*; but wounds and bruises, and putrifying sores" (Isaiah i. 5, 6).

As only God knows the deep necessity of man as a sinner, so none but He could have provided the remedy to meet it. But, blessed be His name, He has provided an all-sufficient and permanent remedy for sins in the death and resurrection of His own dear Son; for on the Cross the holy and just One "was wounded for our transgressions," and "bruised for our iniquities." There "the Lord laid on Him the iniquity of us all." There He made "His soul an offering for sin." There Christ "poured out His soul unto death, He was numbered with the transgressors, and He bare

the sin of many " (Isaiah liii). Thus, having suffered " the just for the unjust," and " by Himself purged our sins," He " was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father," and " sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high," there to be " a Prince and a Saviour."

In the twenty-first chapter of Numbers we read that the people of Israel sinned by speaking " against God," and that " the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died." Moses, however, at the command of the Lord, " made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived." *Even so* has the Son of Man, the Lord Jesus Christ, been lifted up on the cross, and exalted to the right hand of God; and now one look of faith to Him is present and everlasting salvation to the sinner. " 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 " (John iii. 14, 15).

So in the case of Naaman the Syrian, recorded in 2 Kings v. He was a leper, and as such, a type of the sinner, and he could do nothing to recover himself from his leprosy; but he was directed to go to Elisha, whose name is said to mean " The Salvation of God," and who thus beautifully typifies the Saviour, Christ.

And what did Elisha, in the name of the Lord, direct him to do? Simply to " go and wash in Jordan seven times."

Naaman at first resisted; but afterwards, upon entreaty, submitted to God's way of cleansing



him, and the issue was that "his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean."

And so the sinner who submits to God's way of cleansing him from his sins, and believes in his heart that Jesus was delivered for his offences and was raised again for his justification, becomes "clean every whit," through the purging of his conscience by the precious blood of Christ; and is thus made fit for the very presence of God Himself (Rom. iv. 24; 1 John i. 7).

But suppose the Israelite, instead of looking to the uplifted serpent, had tried remedies of his own, would he have lived? No; he would certainly have died. And if Naaman, in his anger, had gone back to the rivers of his own country, as he had at first proposed to do, would he have been clean? Nay; he would have remained a leper still.

And so the sinner who despises or neglects God's sole remedy for sin, and follows the devices of his own heart, remains a sinner still, subject to the righteous judgment of God for not having believed in the name of His only begotten Son. His own heart would, indeed, tell him that human nature is not so bad after all, that it has some good left still, debased as he may admit it to be; but that by leaving off this and that sin, and attending to the ordinances of religion, all will be right at last. If, however, he follow the counsels of his heart, which "is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked," he must continue in his uncleanness, and so remain unfit for the presence of God; and if he persist in this course he must in the end perish in his sins.

Many assent to the great truths of the gospel,

by allowing that man is a sinner, that he cannot save himself, that Christ died for sinners, and that He is able and willing to save them. But the mere assent of the understanding is not faith in the Son of God; for "with *the heart* man believeth unto righteousness" (Rom. x. 9). A sick man may be told of a physician who could cure his complaint, and may admit that he could successfully treat his case, but if he will not submit to the prescribed treatment, of what avail will his knowledge of the skill of the physician be to him? None whatever. And so the sinner, who, with his mere natural understanding has received "the knowledge of the truth," but who has not living faith in Christ, has only aggravated his guilt by not obeying the gospel of the grace of God, which has been proclaimed in his hearing.

But the word of the Lord is still, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John vi. 37). "There is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else" (Isaiah xlv. 21, 22). "I am the Lord that healeth thee" (Exodus xv. 26).

"Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John i. 29).

"A dying, risen Jesus,  
Seen by the eye of faith,  
At once from anguish frees us,  
And saves the soul from death.

Come, then, to this Physician,  
Who loves to bless and give,  
He asks no hard conditions,  
'Tis only, Look and live."

## **“GOD WAS IN CHRIST.”**

**T**HE Scriptures declare that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them (2 Cor. v. 19).

The reader may ask, How do I get the blessing of reconciliation and the forgiveness of my sins, and how am I to know that it is mine?

Weighty as these questions are, you need be in no doubt about the answers. God has answered them. He says that **THROUGH THIS MAN** (Jesus) is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by **HIM ALL THAT BELIEVE** are justified from all things (Acts xiii. 38, 39).

It is not true that all will be justified. It is certain that “all that believe” are justified from all things.

How do they know it?

God has spoken in His word (Eph. ii. 8-10). It is of faith that it might be by grace (Rom. iv. 16). Faith listens to God. It receives what He says and nothing else. It sets to its seal that God is true. Abraham thus got his blessing: so all that are of faith. And they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham (Gal. iii. 9).

God says that we are lost, that we cannot save ourselves; but He points us to **JESUS**, for the Son of man is come to **SAVE THE LOST**. What can a man do for God, if he is really dead in trespasses and sins? God points us to **HIS SON**, and says, When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly (Rom. v. 6).

He says, This is the record, that God hath given to us (that is, all **WHO BELIEVE**) 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 (1 John v. 11). Verily, verily I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when THE DEAD shall hear the voice of the Son of GOD; and THEY THAT HEAR shall live (John v. 25).

Receive the record that GOD gave of His Son. Thus, and thus only, can you have eternal life. You must have life from GOD, before you can live FOR GOD. And He will not give life except through His Son.

But is it not presumptuous to say that believers are sons of God, and have everlasting life?

Presumptuous it would be, if GOD had not said that they are His children, and that they have eternal life (John i. 12; v. 24). It is true humility to believe GOD's word. And God says, by His servant, 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. 13).

Oh! then, look to the Son of God. In no other way can you overcome the world than by looking to Him: for who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? (1 John v. 5). There are no good works, there is no real love, there is no Christian holiness apart from faith (Heb. xi. 6).

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved (Acts xvi. 31).

Affirm constantly that they which have BELIEVED in God might be careful to maintain good works (Titus iii. 8).

“Sin we abhor, since Christ our Surety died;  
His grace now rules our souls in liberty;  
The grace that has the wondrous work begun  
Shall crown with glory when its work is done.”

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# GOSPEL LIGHT.



**GOD IS LIGHT. GOD IS LOVE.**

"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him."

1 John i. 5. 1 John iv. 8, 16. 1 John iv. 9.

## "HAST THOU THOUGHT OF THIS?"

ONLY as Judge to see His face;  
Never to share His wondrous place,  
Seated with Him upon His throne;  
His Bride; His loved one; yes, His  
own;  
Never to taste of endless bliss!  
O sinner! hast thou thought of this?

Rev. xx. 12.  
John xiv. 3.  
Rev. iii. 21.

Never His likeness sweet to bear;  
None of His glory bright to share;  
Never His joyous voice to hear;  
Nor know His hand wipe off the tear;  
Never to feel the Father's kiss!  
O sinner! hast thou thought of this?

Rev. xxi. 2.  
Ps. xxxvi. 8.

Never to hear how His praises ring  
Through heaven, as saints rejoice and  
sing;  
Never to thank Him for all His love;  
Never to dwell in the home above;  
Pleasures at His right hand to miss!  
O sinner! hast thou thought of this?

Ps. xvii. 15.  
John xvii. 24.  
Rev. xiv. 2.  
Rev. xxi. 4.  
Luke xv. 20.

Never to be invited more  
To enter by the open door;

Rev. xiv. 3.  
Rev. v. 9.  
Luke xvii. 16.  
John xiv. 2.  
Ps. xvi. 11.

Rev. xxii. 17.  
Rev. iii. 8

Never to hear the Saviour say,  
 "Come unto Me," "I am the Way,"  
 The only way to realms of bliss!  
 O sinner! hast thou thought of this?

Matt. xi. 28.  
 John xiv. 6.  
 Heb. x. 20.

Hast thought how time is fleeting fast?  
 Never canst thou recall the past.  
 To-day is thine; this hour alone  
 Canst claim salvation as thine own.  
 To-morrow many a home may miss  
 The sinner who ne'er thought of this!

James iv. 14.  
 Luke xvi. 25, 26.  
 2 Cor. vi. 2.  
 Luke xii. 20.  
 Prov. xxvii. 1.

A Christless soul in that lone throng  
 Who to the realms of woe belong!  
 Forbid the thought that you who read,  
 Should longer tread the paths that lead  
 To wretchedness untold; should miss  
 Salvation. Jesus offers this;

Matt. vii. 13.  
 Mark ix. 44.  
 Luke xvi. 31.  
 Prov. xiv. 12.  
 Heb. ii. 3.  
 Luke xix. 10.

Offers it freely. Come to-day;  
 No longer, wanderer, delay.  
 Think how great was the price it cost  
 To save thy soul from being lost;  
 To win for thee that home of bliss.  
 Say, sinner, hast thou thought of this?

Rev. xxii. 17.  
 Luke xiii. 25.  
 Luke xxiii. 33.  
 Acts iv. 12.  
 Heb. ii. 9, 10.

Think how it cost Christ's precious  
 blood;  
 God's wrath poured on Him like a  
 flood;  
 Death and the grave endured to save  
 Poor lost ones. Yes, His life He gave.  
 Yet Jesus had done nought amiss.  
 Say, sinner! hast thou thought of this?

John xix. 34.  
 Ps. lxix. 2.  
 Heb. xii. 2.  
 1 Pet. ii. 24.  
 Luke xxiii. 41.

H.

## "THE INEVITABLE EFFECT OF ONE SIN."

"**H**AVE you been to hear the gentleman who  
 is preaching at the Shaftesbury Hall?"  
 asked the shopkeeper.

"No," answered the customer, "I haven't  
 even heard about it."

"He preaches after church hours, at eight

o'clock on Sunday,” said the shopkeeper; “ and if I were you I would go.”

“ Well, I think I'll go next Sunday, on my way home from church,” replied the other, and left the shop.

Accordingly, next Sunday found her in the hall; indifferent, perhaps, at first; curious later on; and before the speaker closed his address, listening as if her life depended on his words.

The subject was the inevitable effect of one sin. One sin shut Adam out of Paradise; one sin shut Moses out of Canaan; and one sin must shut the sinner out for ever from the Paradise of God and the heavenly Jerusalem; for “ there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth ” (Rev. xxi. 27). Thus one sin of necessity involved eternal separation from the holy, sin-hating God.

“ One sin ”; and she had committed thousands !  
 “ One sin ”; and she was conscious that that very day, nay, that very hour, she had sinned !  
 “ One sin ”; then the gates of heaven were shut upon her; and an agony of dread shook her frame.

And now the preacher was about to close. He had told the consequences of “ one sin ”; he had told, too, of a Saviour's love, a love which led Him to seek and save those who were lost; a love which led Him right on to Calvary, to take the sinner's place, and to suffer in his stead. And now, as he closed his discourse, he called the very walls to witness that he was guiltless of his hearers' blood; that he had set before them the way of death and the way of life; had told them of their lost condition as sinners; had warned them to “ flee from the wrath to come,” and

pointed them to the Saviour. Henceforth the responsibility was theirs, not his.

And our friend, what of her? She sat as one transfixed, as indeed she was; for is not the Word of God "living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit"? Heb. iv. 12). And "the sword of the Spirit" had been driven home by divine power that night (Eph. vi. 17).

~ But what shall she do? How her heart throbbed! Surely, she thought, the people on the other chairs must hear it beat! She felt as if she must choke. But listen! The preacher is giving out a hymn. But what use could that be to her? Sing? Yes, those who were shut in by that "wall great and high" might sing; but she was shut out; there could be no mercy for a sinner like her! Listen! the first verse of the hymn is being read:—

"Come, thou weary; Jesus calls thee  
To His wounded side;  
Come to Me, saith He, and ever  
Safe abide."

Yes, she was weary and heavy laden, and hopeless too. But why hopeless? Was this not an invitation to every one? Was it not the voice of Jesus speaking? Was it, could it be, to *her*? How everything seemed in a whirl, and hope alternated with fear, till she was scarce able to collect her thoughts! And now they have reached the concluding verse:—

"Dost thou feel thy life is weary?  
Is thy soul distress?  
Take His offer; wait no longer;  
Be at rest."



“ THE INEVITABLE EFFECT OF ONE SIN.” 101

She feels that the crisis of her life has come. She feels that it must be NOW, or it may be NEVER; and how pleadingly the lines of the hymn break on her ear:—

“ Take His offer; wait no longer;  
Be at rest.”

Yes, she will take it, and take it *now*; she will come to Jesus with all her load of guilt. Did He not bid her come? Does He not receive sinners? And in an instant, as she came, the load dropped off, the weariness was gone, and joy unutterable and full of glory took its place.

The preacher had left the town, and was carrying the gospel message elsewhere, when one day, just before preaching, he received a letter from our friend.

“ I have heard you were preaching at B——,” she wrote, “ and I want to ask you a favour, and it is this. Tell the people of my conversion, and tell them that ‘one sin’ will for ever shut them out from God; and then give out my hymn (I always call it my hymn now):—

‘ Dost thou feel thy life is weary?

Is thy soul distressed?

Take His offer; wait no longer;

Be at rest.’ ”

So the preacher took it as a message from God, and told the story as it has been told to you to-day.

May you, if unsaved, find in it His message: that “ *one sin* ” *unatoned for* must for ever close the gates of heaven to you.

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## **WARNED; PREPARED; SAVED.**

“ By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith ” (Heb. xi. 7).

**G**OD had said to Noah, “ The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them. Make thee an ark of gopher wood . . . And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh . . . And thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons’ wives with thee ” (Gen. vi. 13-18).

God tells Noah of the character of the judgment that was coming, and points out to him the only means of escape. He will overwhelm the world with a flood, but says to Noah, “ Make thee an ark.”

Noah believed God, and without a question obeyed His word. He set to work to build the ark. “ Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he ” (Gen. vi. 22).

The world’s cup of wickedness was full; it was ripe for judgment; but the long-suffering of God waited “ while the ark was a preparing ” (1 Pet. iii. 20). Noah meanwhile, in the power of the spirit of Christ, became “ a preacher of righteousness ” to the ungodly (2 Pet. ii. 5).

Year after year rolled by, and the work of building went steadily on. The Lord had said, “ My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years ” (Gen. vi. 3). No

sign whatever of the judgment appeared during all that long period. "The world of the ungodly" went upon its way, wandering further still from God. Noah built the ark, and condemned the world; preached righteousness, and condemned unrighteousness. He saw no sign, but he believed the word of God. The world saw no sign, and they disbelieved His word at the lips of Noah.

Doubtless they deemed Noah a fool or a madman. Who else would build the largest ship that the world had ever seen, without any water to float it in? If he had built it on the sea shore, and divulged to them some new scheme of trade whereby he would enrich himself and others, maybe he would have been reckoned a wise man. But to indulge in such fancies as the world being drowned, and build a ship in the midst of dry land; and, worse than all, to come forcing his views and preaching his rubbish to them—whoever heard of such folly and impertinence? It is easy to picture the curled lip, the undisguised sneer, the bitter gibe of the ungodly men and women of Noah's day.

But "by faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house" (Heb. xi. 7). He had the word of God for what he said and for what he did; and that was enough for him. Faith went on amidst all the mockery of the wicked, and the ark was prepared.

And God was prepared. Judgment, too, was prepared; sure, swift, unmitigated judgment. But, alas! the world of the ungodly, what of them? They had heard the preaching, but their hearts and ears were closed. Unprepared? Yes,

unprepared, and willingly so. They had heard the warning of righteousness, temperance, and "judgment to come," but their consciences were seared. Deluded, duped, deceived by Satan, they loved the world, wallowed in sin, and carelessly passed on to a common doom.

"And the Lord said unto Noah, Come thou, and all thy house, into the ark: for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation" (Gen. vii. 1). And then, after further details about the beasts and fowls, He added, "For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth. And Noah did according unto all that the Lord commanded him" (Gen. vii. 4, 5).

Having entered the ark, the seven days run on. One can fancy men saying, "We shall see what will become of the shipbuilder's dreams now. Poor fellow! we are glad we are clear of such delusions; what fun we shall have at his expense in about a week's time."

The days roll slowly by. One, two, three, four, five, six are gone. The seventh is entered. Twelve hours are passed, fifteen, twenty, twenty-three—oh! what is that? What a sudden gust of wind! Another! How dark and lowering that cloud looks on the horizon! Why, it is getting darker and darker every minute. The sun has disappeared; we are going to have rain. The heavens grow blacker, and blacker still. The twenty-fourth hour of the seventh day is all but past. A few minutes more. A few seconds only now. **THE TIME IS UP.** The hundred and twenty years are past. The seven days are gone;

the day of long-suffering is over. The hour of judgment is come.

*What's that?* A drop of water falls from the clouds. Another. Many. Ah! and what is that strange noise? what that rushing sound?

"Don't be alarmed," says one to another; "it's all right; it's only a heavy passing storm."

But the heavens grow darker yet, and as they gather blackness, pallor is depicted on every countenance. The busy hum of life ceases. A strange and unwonted stillness for the moment pervades the scene. Voices are hushed, and men's hearts fail them for fear, and for those things that *are* come upon the earth. The drops become showers, the showers a downpour, the downpour a deluge. The windows of heaven are opened.

It is the judgment of God.

And that strange rushing sound that caused the strongest to tremble, the weak to blanch with fear—what is it? Nearer and nearer it comes. Louder and louder is the roaring sound. It is as the sound of mighty waters overflowing. It is the fountains of the great deep broken up. The sea is overwhelming the land; the angry billows of the wrath of God are rolling onward. Up every valley and nook they come. Waters above, waters beneath, waters around, waters everywhere.

What! can it be true after all? Are the words of Noah indeed coming to pass? Is this the deluge that he foretold? Is this the judgment that we ridiculed? Are we the fools and madmen, and he the wise man after all?

Ah! yes, poor ungodly world! your time of grace is past; and now, where will you seek a

refuge in your dire distress, in the hour of your calamity and fear?

“ Well, let us not despair; while there is life there is hope.”

Recovering from the first panic, each seeks a refuge on the highest point to be found. Methinks I see the frightened mass rushing hither and thither, as sheep from a destroying wolf. One flies to his housetop; another climbs the highest tree; a thirds runs to the hill-top; a fourth clambers the mountain side. Husbands and wives; fathers, mothers, children; rich and poor; high and low; *all* are exposed to one common doom; though each has a lingering hope that the waters will yet assuage, and that the rain will soon cease.

But still the fountains of the great deep poured forth the dark and resistless waters. Still the heavens, clothed with thickest clouds, discharge their ever-increasing torrents. On all hands fields, vineyards, houses, trees disappear, and with them the despairing thousands of people, “ the world of the ungodly.” Cries for mercy, groans of anguish, screams of terror, shrieks of fear, rend the air, but all in vain. The day of long-suffering is past. It is too late for mercy now. Yet still the waters flow; yet it still rains. See yon terror-stricken mass collected on the highest hill around. Is there no hope? Is there no escape? Where is the ark? Where is Noah? Is it too late to enter in? Ah! yes, ye rejecters and neglecters of the preaching of righteousness, ye live “ without God ” (Eph. ii. 12). When mercy entreated, ye would not; and now ye would, no mercy can be found. “ The wages of sin is death ” (Rom. vi. 23).

Soon the mighty billows engulph the struggling mass; and still it rains. Higher and higher yet the waters climb. Forty days and forty nights the deluge falls. Hill after hill disappears beneath the mighty deep, till all in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, *died*. Fifteen cubits and upwards did the waters prevail, and the mountains were covered.

God *said it*, and it came to pass.

But where is Noah? Safe in the ark with all his house. The Lord had shut him in (Gen. vii. 16). The billows of judgment for the world are the billows of mercy for him. As the waters increased they bore up the ark, and it was lifted up above the earth. Noah believed God, and, instead of perishing with the world of the ungodly, passed unscathed through the most awful judgment the world ever saw; and when the waters of the deluge assuaged, was safe in the ark on the top of the mighty mountains of Ararat, to come forth again upon the earth, through the mercy of God.

And, dear reader, have these awful scenes, and God's signal mercy to Noah, no voice to you? Listen to the word of the Lord at a later day. Listen to the warning of Him who was "God manifest in the flesh," concerning wrath to come; wrath that is nigh, even at our very doors; and before it be too late, flee, flee at once for refuge to the only ark of safety from the coming woe. "As the days of Noe were," said Jesus, the faithful and true Witness, "so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew

not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Then shall two be the field; the one shall be taken and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken and the other left. Watch therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come" (Matt. xxiv. 37-42).

Face the dread reality, poor Christless soul, and flee at once to the everlasting arms of a loving Saviour-God. He bids you come. He forewarned of the coming Deluge. It came. Again He forewarns of judgment, unparalleled in the history of this poor world, ending in the sudden manifestation in glory and judgment of the Son of Man (Luke xxi 27; 2 Thess. i. 7-9). Are you delivered from it? The day of grace runs rapidly by. God is long-suffering to us-ward (as in the days of Noah), not willing that any should perish ((2 Pet. iii. 9). But take care you do not trifle too long. Grace will cease, and judgment will flow, swift, sure, and irrevocable. There is but one means of safety from the impending doom. The world's death-knell has long since sounded. Grace alone holds back God's vengeance-sword. Christ, and Christ alone, is the Ark of safety now. "I, even I, am He, and beside me there is no saviour." To Christ, to Christ, poor sinner, flee. "I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved," He says. Oh! enter now (Isa. xliii. 11; John x. 9.)

In Noah's day men "knew not." Think of that. "Knew not until the Flood came, and took them all away." As it was, so it shall be. As in Noah's day, so in the days of the Son of Man. "He that shall come, will come" (Heb. x. 27). "Behold, He cometh with clouds, and



every eye shall see him" (Rev. i. 7). "Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him" (Jude 14, 15). One shall be taken away in judgment, as the Flood took all away in Noah's day, and another left in mercy for His glorious reign. But where will *you* be? Enter now into the Ark of God's providing, and judgment shall never overtake you. All that are Christ's now shall be caught up to meet Him on that day (1 Thess. iv. 15-18). Yes, Noah was safe in the ark on Mount Ararat; but all who know Christ and are in Him now shall be safe *with* Him at that day in the Father's house in the glory of God.

Again we appeal to you, dear reader, and beseech you, by the mercies of God, enter the Ark while you may. You have not to build like Noah. No, the Ark is prepared. "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" (John iii. 16). And Jesus died; yes, died for the glory of God, and to deliver sinners from the wrath to come. Upon the Holy Lamb of God the stroke of divine justice fell (2 Cor. v. 21). The waves and billows of the judgment of God passed over the soul of His own Beloved One. He drank the bitter, bitter cup; He bowed His head; He died. His blood was shed. Buried in the sepulchre, God raised Him from the dead. "Hear this, all ye people; give ear, all ye inhabitants of the world: both low and high, rich and poor together" (Ps.

xlix. 1, 2). God raised Him; raised Him from the dead, and gave Him glory at His own right hand. There now is found the only Ark of safety from the coming storm. Flee to Him; flee to Him now. With heart of love, with look of pity, with words of mercy, with arms outstretched in grace, He bids you come. Daily, hourly, momentarily, the day of judgment draws nigh. Still the voice of mercy pleads with you, sinner, "Come unto Me" (Matt. xi. 28). Deep, deep indeed, is your need, whoever you may be; but He can meet it. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isa. i. 18). "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin (1 John i. 7). Come to Jesus and your sins will be all forgiven (1 John ii. 12). Come to Jesus and you will have everlasting life (John vi. 47). Come to Jesus and you will be saved. All are invited. Will *you* come?

Dear reader, do not think the world is one whit better to-day. It is far, far worse. Violence and corruption fill it now. But there is more. In Noah's day man had not yet received the Lamb of God. He had a conscience, knowing good and evil; but he refused the one and clave to the other. Since then he has broken the law, slain the prophets, murdered the Son of God, resisted the Spirit of God, trespassed on grace; and already the cry has commenced, and daily increases, "Where is the promise of His coming?" (2 Pet. iii. 4).

Smooth-tongued prophets who cry "Peace, peace, when there is no peace," arrest the ears of thousands (Jer. vi. 14; viii. 11). Masses heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears, and

turn away their ears from the truth, and are turned unto fables (2 Tim. iv. 4). Scarcely a doctrine of Christianity but what is undermined in some quarter. Men boast of the advance of civilization, and the spread of education and the sciences. International congresses and exhibitions draw nations together in closer bonds. But yet *the heart* of man is unchanged, and every now and then the world is startled by some fearful exhibition of human wickedness, some dreadful display of violence or corruption.

The day of grace is all but past. Soon the heavens again shall gather blackness, and divine judgment will fall. But then, instead of a flood, seal upon seal shall be broken, trumpet upon trumpet sound, and bowl upon bowl of the wrath of God will be poured out upon "the world of the ungodly," closing with the manifestation of the Son of Man Himself, to judge His foes (Rev. vi., xix).

Despisers, rejecters, scoffers, mockers, neglecters, professors, *beware!* "The Flood came, and took them all away." So shall it be in the days of the Son of Man. Not a soul of man escaped outside the ark. How shall *you*? CHRIST IS THE ARK. In Him alone is salvation to be found. "They shall not escape," God says to all outside. Once more, then, poor perishing sinner, we would plead with you, will you enter *now*?

Oh! the blank despair, the awful remorse, the utter woe, the endless misery, of the Christless soul when once the door of mercy shall be closed! Listen to the voice of wisdom before it cease to cry, or surely that voice shall say unto you, "I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh

as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me" (Prov. i. 26-28). Wisdom pleads with you, "Be reconciled to God" (2 Cor. v. 20, 21). Oh! the wondrous love, the boundless grace, that await the repentant sinner's return. Will you come? The justice of the living God is arrayed on your behalf. It is not against you, but for you. God is just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. Come, oh! come to Him *now!*

Noah, being "warned of God" of things not seen as yet, *prepared and entered the ark*. You too are warned. There was no sign then; there is no sign now. But the Word of God tells again of coming woe; of things, terrible things, "not seen as yet." The door of the ark is open wide. CHRIST IS THAT DOOR. All who believe are safe within. It is everlasting security, for they are shut in by the Lord Himself. All who are outside will surely reap the fruit of their folly and sin in endless woe (Rev. xxi. 7, 8). You may lull yourself to sleep in carnal security, but the awful hour of judgment will arouse you. Alas! alas! it will then be too late to flee. But now, by faith in Him, the salvation of God, present and eternal, full and free, may be yours.

Finally, we appeal to you, sinners all, for the Judge is at the door, and the judgment slumbereth not. Be prudent, be wise, hide yourselves in this day of abounding grace. Come now to the blessed Lord Himself, who never casts out. *Be warned of God.*

E. H. C.

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# GOSPEL LIGHT.



**GOD IS LIGHT. GOD IS LOVE.**

"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him."

*1 John i. 5. 1 John iv. 8, 16. 1 John iv. 9.*

## THE SINNER'S SUBSTITUTE.

"**W**ELL! I find that you have walked over three miles to see me, and that you wish to have some talk to me about your soul."

"Yes, I heard that you would be willing to speak to me, and I thought you might be able to tell me something that would do me good."

"How long is it that you have been thinking about your state?"

"Why, these twenty years I have been more or less troubled about myself; but I cannot get any satisfaction."

"How old are you?"

"I am in my eightieth year, and, as you see, I am quite crippled. I took more than two hours to walk over these three miles."

"You have, indeed, much reason to be troubled, as you have a heavy load of sin to answer for. Nearly eighty years of sin, in thought, word, and deed! Much of your past

life, doubtless, you cannot now recollect. Many a scene of your early days, when, I daresay, you rioted in iniquity, you have forgotten. But all stands recorded in the book of God's remembrance. And even *you* can recall enough to your mind to make you tremble."

"Ah, yes. I am, indeed, a sinner. I was a soldier when young, and a soldier's life is not likely to make one good."

"And what hope have you about getting rid of all this great weight of guilt? How do you expect to be saved from hell?"

"Why, I do not know exactly. But I do what I can. I pray to the Almighty to forgive me, and say over 'The Belief' and the 'Ten Commandments' every day. But I cannot get any satisfaction. I do not know what to do."

"Did you ever hear or think of Jesus Christ, and of His having died on the cross?"

"Oh, yes; I think of Him and about His death; but I cannot get any rest to my mind."

"You are, then, I trust, really in earnest about your soul; and, indeed, it is high time. You cannot expect to remain long in this world, and dreadful would it be for you to have all the sins of your long life brought up against you when you stand before the throne of God. But God has provided a refuge, even for such a sinner as yourself, and I will try to explain to you the meaning and use of the death of Christ; for through faith in His death alone can you be saved? Do you know the meaning of one person being a *substitute* for another?"

"To be sure I do, well enough; for I was a substitute in the army for another man."

"Were you, indeed! Then you can truly

understand the meaning of the word. You served in the army as the substitute for another man; that is, you wore his regimentals, you shouldered his musket, you took his place in the ranks, you went through his exercise or drill, and you exposed yourself to the enemy's fire instead of him, risking your life for him, and received his wages."

"Yes, all that is quite true."

"Now, Jesus Christ, God's blessed and only begotten Son, came down from the glory and joy of heaven on purpose to be this, and far more, for the sinner. God sent Him to be the sinner's substitute; so He came to serve in the sinner's stead. Jesus 'took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men,' in order that He might go through all the service and obedience that God required; and at the end of His life on earth, He took the sinner's place in judgment; He exposed Himself to all the fierce wrath of God, and bore it instead of the sinner. The 'arrows' of God stuck fast in Him, and God's hand pressed Him sore; for out of His love for poor lost men, He of His own accord bore the punishment which they deserved. 'For Christ hath once suffered for sins, the just *instead* of the unjust, that He might bring us to God.' (1 Pet. iii. 18.) He received the wages which sinners have earned; that is, death. God smote Him in order that He might not smite them. God made Him to be a curse, in order that those for whom He died might not be cursed. 'He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him' (2 Cor. v. 21). 'Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree' (1 Pet. ii. 24).

“ And now God sends the blessed message that all this has been done; that the Substitute whom God provided has finished His work; that judgment for sin has been borne by another, so that the poor lost sinner may look at Christ's death, and be at peace. Anyone, therefore, that knows and feels himself to be a ruined, defiled creature need not think he has to do anything in order to get rid of his sins, need not look forward with a kind of vain hope that perhaps he will be better by-and-by, and may perchance find mercy; but let him look back at Christ on the cross, and there behold God's blessed Son bearing all the wrath due to himself, and let him believe that, in His death, God has finished the whole work of putting away sins for ever. God does not bid you to hope to be saved; but He points you back to a salvation finished in the death and resurrection of Christ.

“ Look at your past life ! There you find fearful depths of sin and evil, as you well know; and such as you cannot alter or get rid of, even if you were to live to another eighty years of innocence; for no future change of conduct can blot out the past.

“ Supposing I were in debt a large sum of money at a shop, and that I went to my creditor, and told him that I would solemnly promise not to run in debt for the future; would that pay the debt I already owed? Would it be any, even the least, cancelling of the debt? Surely not; surely no one would be so foolish as to expect to pay his debts in this world after this fashion.

“ Do not you, then, be so foolish as to suppose that God will be satisfied with this kind of settlement for sin. But look back again, and far, far



behind; yea, farther back than your sins reach; and you will see *the cross of Christ*; you will see the *Substitute* bearing the sins of many. There, even upon His own Son, God judged sin. There God thought beforehand, and settled beforehand, in the blood of Christ, for the wicked lives and sins of thousands of sinners. If, therefore, you were a believer in Christ, you would be able to say, whenever you hear or read of His death on the cross, 'It was for *me* that He was thus slain. It was for *me* God's blessed Son was crucified. My sins weighed heavily on His head. The wrath due to *me* was borne by Him. I have been judged and executed there, for I see my Substitute suffering in my stead.'

"Do not, therefore, look forward to, or ask for, mercy, as if it were something yet to come; but believe that God has already provided, and manifested His mercy in delivering up His own dear Son to death, for the sake of sinners. If I want proof of God's love to me a sinner, I look back at the death of Christ; and God commends His love to me, in that, while I was yet a sinner, Christ died for me. (Rom. v. 8.) God's love to the world is proved by His giving His only begotten Son in order that 'whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life' (John iii. 16).

"And what, I may ask you, is the use of daily repeating, as you say you have been accustomed to do, the Belief and the Ten Commandments? Repeating a creed will not save a soul. And as to saying the Ten Commandments, I will tell you what it is like: it is as if a poor criminal, sentenced to death, and shut up in the condemned cell waiting for execution, were to read over and

over again the judge's warrant for his being hanged, and were to think that by this means he could escape the sentence. But would this in anywise avail him? Would his doing this make the prison doors open, or give him a prospect of escape? Surely not; the effect that would be produced by thus reading over the sentence of death would be the fastening upon his soul the certainty of his being executed.

' Now, this is exactly your case, and the case of those who read over and over again the Ten Commandments with the vain hope of getting better thereby. For these Commandments are the ministration of death (2 Cor. iii. 7)) They are, as it were, God's warrant for the sinner's condemnation; and they can never help the guilty sinner the least, either to escape from the punishment due to his sins, or to get the mastery over his lusts or evil passions. Instead of this, God has sent Christ, and ' He is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth ' (Rom. x. 4). He is the way of salvation, the way of righteousness, the way to heaven. If you believe in Him, you have everything: wisdom, righteousness, holiness, redemption. In the death of Christ, God has judged and avenged every broken commandment of which the sinner may be guilty.

" When you were serving in the army as a *substitute* for another man, he for whom you thus enlisted was free. The Government could not again call on him to enter the ranks, because he could point to you, and say, ' Here is a man in my stead; my place is filled up by another, and you have accepted him for me.' So if you believe in Christ, you may safely point to Christ and say,

*'He has served, and I am free. Since He has suffered in my stead, no condemnation can reach me: since He has been judged for me, I cannot be brought into judgment, for it would not be just to punish me and my Substitute also.'* Fix, then, your eye on Him; let Him be your strong tower; His death your ground of safety; His precious blood your boast. Then

*'I hear the accuser roar  
Of ills that I have done;  
I know them well, and thousands more:  
Jehovah findeth none.'* " S.

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Christ is the Saviour of sinners;  
Christ is the Saviour for me;  
Long I was chained in sin's darkness;  
Now by His grace I am free.

Now I can say I am pardoned,  
Happy and justified, free;  
Saved by my blessed Redeemer:  
This is the Saviour for me.

Just as I was He received me,  
Seeking from judgment to flee;  
Now there is no condemnation:  
This is the Saviour for me.

Loved with a love that's unchanging,  
Blessed with all blessings so free,  
How shall I tell out His praises?  
This is the Saviour for me.

Soon shall the glory be dawning;  
Then, too, His face I shall see;  
Sing, O my soul, in thy gladness:  
This is the Saviour for me.

## THE WIDOW'S SON RAISED.

**O**UT of the city of Nain a dead young man was carried, the only son of his widowed mother. In this touching scene of human grief which the Holy Ghost has brought before us, the most cherished ties are broken; helplessness and sorrow are mingled together. The widow's tears fail to deliver her only child from death; the respect of all the city avails not to heal her wounded spirit; and thus the mournful company follows the bier to the ledge hewn in the rocky hillside.

While that sorrowing band is wending its way to the grave, the Son of God draws near. A few disciples, and some wondering strangers attend Him. The weeping widow is following her only son to the grave. "When the Lord saw her," who had twice suffered the pangs of separation, "He had compassion on her."

He came from heaven to bless us. He grieved over our death. In His words, "Weep not," there was divine consolation; and if Jesus says, "Weep not," our tears must cease.

But the widow needed more than divine compassion; if her cup should run over, she needed the living in her bosom; and almighty power was exercised, as well as almighty compassion, to give the poor widow joy; death was to become life; it was not to go further; the lifeless body was not permitted to reach the grave.

The Lord "came and touched the bier: and they that bare stood still. And He said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise"; and, quickened by His almighty voice, "he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And He delivered him to his mother."

He came to Nain to give life to the widow's son; He came to this earth that we, dead in sins, might have everlasting life. "He that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live," are His words. Believe, then, in the Lord Jesus, and receive God's gift.

When the dead man heard the voice of the Lord, he sat up in the vigour of life. Thus when the sinner, dead in sins, hears the voice of the Son of God, he receives life. Are you living in the energy of divine life? The young man was in himself a living witness to the work of Jesus; and so should we be who have heard His voice. Thus He speaks: "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 condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (John v. 24).

Nain means beauty, pleasantness. This world was once beautiful; no sorrow, no sigh, no tear clouded it; its inhabitants dreaded no departure; for then there was no gateway out of it. But sin entered the world and all became changed. Death entered. Through this gateway men are now carried: "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb. ix. 27.)

While you are still in the world, still where you may find mercy, think of your state. Are you prepared to die? Are you ready to be carried out, to leave the world, remembering, "after death the judgment"?

Utterly helpless and hopeless in himself, man could not save himself from death; for he could not live without sin. But God saw his bitterness. The Father and the Son agreed in holy counsel for man's salvation, and the Son said, "Lo, I

come to do thy will, O God." Gracious purpose !  
Mighty plan ! All conceived, all accomplished  
by God ! Man the object of it ; but man no  
worker in it ; all of God, and all love to man.  
The will of God is our salvation ; the means  
whereby we are saved is the blood of God's Lamb.

Through that blood, by faith, you may have re-  
demption, the forgiveness of sins. Embrace this  
offer now.

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Life through the death of Jesus,  
Gift of eternal love ;  
Sweetly the gospel message  
Sounds from the throne above.

Life for the guilty sinner ;  
Freedom for slaves of sin ;  
God's blessed " whatsoever "  
Takes every lost one in.

Washed in the blood of Jesus ;  
Clean in God's holy sight ;  
Jesus can make the vilest  
Whiter than snow to-night.

Only the work of Jesus ;  
Nothing that man can do ;  
God brings His great salvation  
Just where you are to you..

Peace through the cross of Jesus,  
Doubtings and fears are gone ;  
Over the Red Sea's waters  
Floats the triumphant song.

Death through His death is vanquished ;  
All the great work is done :  
Peace through the cross of Jesus,  
Peace through the victory won.

## DEATH AND JUDGMENT PAST.

“ And 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, 28).

**T**HREE different appearings of the Lord Jesus are spoken of at the end of this chapter. He appeared at the end of the world, the end of the ages, to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself (v. 26). It was not simply to make a way for the sinner that Christ died, but to do what nothing else ever did or could do ; that is, *put away sin*.

Then Christ is spoken of as appearing somewhere *now*. Where? In heaven. He is gone back again to the Father ; He has gone into heaven after having accomplished eternal redemption. He entered there by His own blood. He is there as a great High Priest for all who believe in Him. He is only a High Priest for such : the unbeliever is far from God. Jesus is now appearing in the presence of God for us. He is our righteousness, life, redemption, so that we appear before God as He is ; we are perfect in Christ Jesus.

Then we have another appearing mentioned in the closing words of the chapter, which is yet future, though we know not how very near it may be ; but I shall hope to refer to that soon. Meanwhile, I would call attention to the very solemn truth recorded in verses 27, 28. “ 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."

The *as* and *so* here are very strong. Death and judgment are God's appointments for men, because they are sinners. The divine verdict is not only that "all have sinned," but that all are "under-sin," "servants of sin"; so that sin to the natural man is something agreeable to his nature. Death is the result of sin, and so is judgment; and what can God's condemnation of sin be but eternal? Death is God's just sentence on men because of sin, "The wages of sin is death." There was one Man on whom death had no claim, because in Him was no sin. This was the spotless, holy Jesus, the Saviour of sinners.

Men know they must die, and therefore try to make it, by comfortable circumstances, as agreeable as they can; but they cannot bear to think of "judgment." Nevertheless, it is God's appointment, and cannot be altered. *Men* are exposed to *death* and *judgment*; for they are under the dominion of sin as well as the guilt of sin; they are, therefore, "servants of sin," and "the wages of sin is death."

This is very plain. It is not simply the death of the body; but if a man die in his sins, he will be raised again, and be judged for those sins before the great white throne, and then cast into the lake of fire, "the second death" of everlasting darkness and misery. (Rev. xx. 11-15.) Those, therefore, who are still in their sins are going on to death and judgment. How can you bear the thought of being judged by the light of God's infinite holiness and unchanging hatred to sin?

In this scripture we have, as it were, two



parallel columns. The one headed "men," and having written under it "death" and "judgment"; the other headed "believers," and under that is written, "Christ put away their sins, and consequently delivered them from death and judgment."

How wide the contrast! The one clouded with darkness and misery, the other bright with light and glory. "As" the one "so" the other. As death and judgment were the doom of *men* because of sin, so Christ bore the sin, and death and judgment. He bore "the sin of many" (Isa. iv. 12). How blessed is the portion of those who have Christ for their Saviour!

Have you received Jesus the Son of God as your Saviour? I do not ask if you have good intentions; for I believe multitudes *intend* to go to heaven who are still treading the broad road to destruction. Neither do I ask if you have some knowledge of the doctrines of Christ; but I do ask if you have received Him.

You may say, I pray more, give more, deny myself more, and the like; but that is not the question. To know Christ, and take Him as your very own Saviour, because there is no other, knowing you must perish in eternal misery without Him because of your sins, that is the simple question. For it is not knowing doctrines, or giving alms, or saying prayers than can deliver you from death and judgment, but Jesus the Son of God, and Jesus only. "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God." (John i. 12.) "Whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish." (John iii. 16.) Or, as the blessed Lord said in another place, "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 condemnation " (or judgment). (John v. 24.)

Happy indeed are those who, having simply received Christ as their Saviour, can rest in sweetest confidence and peace, knowing that their sins were purged by the sacrifice of Christ, and that they will not come into judgment. Such are already on the other side of death. " They have passed from death unto life." (John v. 24.)

The *believer*, then, is delivered from what every *unbeliever* is exposed to; namely, death and judgment. How is it that he is delivered from death? For do not we see that Christians die just the same as sinners? They may appear to; but "the wages of sin " is not simply the separation of soul and body, for there is a " sting " and " terror " connected with the sinner's death that allows no rest or solace. The believer is so completely delivered from these things that he can say, "O death, where is thy sting? ". The sting of death being " sin," it is removed by the precious blood of Christ, which cleanseth from all sin. The " terror," too, is gone, because he knows that to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. (2 Cor. v. 8.) The believer's death, therefore, in the New Testament, is spoken of as falling asleep in Jesus. Hence, too, the Lord Jesus said, " If a man keep my saying, he shall never *see* death," " he shall never *taste* of death." The one who has received Christ for his Saviour is so completely delivered from death that, if alive when Jesus comes, he will at once, in a moment, be changed, and caught up into the air to meet Him. (1 Thess. iv. 13-18.)

Nothing can be more contrary to the teaching

of Scripture than to suppose that believers are going to be judged as to whether they shall have eternal life or not. I refer to the wrong use made of the Lord's teaching in Matt. xxv. 31-46. There is no idea of resurrection there, not one dead person raised, but quite the reverse. It is the King coming here, and judging the nations as to how they dealt with His brethren, who are a remnant of Jews who will go forth with "the gospel of the kingdom" after Christians have been "caught up" at the Lord's coming. It is Christ assembling and judging living people.

Nothing can be more opposed to the precious truth that every believer now has everlasting life, is a child of God, and is passed from death unto life, than the false idea of God's children going to be judged.

Every believer will, it is true, appear before the judgment seat of Christ; but there will be no question of salvation then. It will be a matter of reward for service; and believers will appear there like Christ, in glorified bodies.

It is most blessed, then to see that God teaches us that death and judgment have been already met for us by Jesus on the cross, and that which is before us is not, as some say, a day of judgment, a great assize, to decide who shall be saved and who not. Scripture nowhere teaches *us* to expect that, but to expect Christ. "To them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation." There will be no question with Christ and believers about sin, and, therefore, not of its consequences; namely, death and judgment. Christ will then put forth His redemption power on the bodies of His people, and thus not only give them full and ever-

lasting deliverance from sorrow and all the consequences of sin, but, in a moment, change their earthly bodies, and fashion them like unto His glorious body, so that they may have full capacity for ceaseless and untiring enjoyment of Himself.

The believer is accordingly instructed to look back on the cross, and see that Christ there *put away* his sins and delivered him from death and judgment; to look up to the throne, and see Jesus now appearing in God's presence for him, his righteousness and great High Priest; and to look for His coming to bring him into eternal enjoyment with Himself.

This may be the reader's portion by faith in Jesus now.

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Where will you spend eternity?  
 This question comes to you and me,  
 Tell me, what shall your answer be :  
 Where will you spend eternity?

Many are choosing Christ to-day,  
 Turning from all their sins away ;  
 Heaven shall their blessed portion be :  
 Where will you spend eternity?

Leaving the straight and narrow way,  
 Going the downward road to-day,  
 What shall the final ending be?  
 Where will you spend eternity?

Turn and believe this very hour ;  
 Trust in the Saviour's grace and power,  
 Then shall your joyous answer be :  
 Saved through a long eternity !

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# GOSPEL LIGHT.



**GOD IS LIGHT. GOD IS LOVE.**

"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him."

1 John i. 5. 1 John iv. 8, 16. 1 John iv. 9.

## **WARNED IN TIME AND SAVED BY GRACE.**

**A** LITTLE time back I was spending the afternoon of the Lord's Day in distributing gospel books and tracts among a number of miners.

It was a lovely summer's day, and the men were gathered in groups here and there, either sauntering slowly along, or sitting under the trees talking together, and enjoying the pure air and the sunlight. The sunlight seemed a joy in itself to them, and the fresh air, after working all the week through in the darkness and unwholesome atmosphere of the mine, and most welcome.

I was well known among them, and received many a hearty "Good day" or "God bless you," as I passed in and out among them, now sitting down to read for a time with some, now speaking a few words with others as to their souls' salvation, as I gave them the little silent messengers

which all told the same tale, though by different pens and in different ways, of the Saviour's love; the old, old story, so wonderful, yet so divinely true, the story of that Saviour's cross of shame, His death to win life for guilty ruined man.

I had given away nearly all the large package of books I had brought out with me, and was returning slowly to my home. I had almost reached it, indeed I was crossing the last field that separated me from my own garden gate, when I met two young miners coming slowly towards me. I stopped as we were about to pass each other, and, selecting two little books from the few that remained in my hand, I held out one to each and said, "Will you accept and read this?"

Each took the book I held out, and thanked me; and one, a fine, strong, healthy, and handsome young man of about twenty-five or twenty-six, stood still and read out the title-page of his—"Just in time."

A deep feeling of solemnity, amounting even to awe, crept over my soul; and looking up into his frank, open countenance, I said: "Yes, my friend; and God grant that you may be 'just in time' for salvation, 'just in time' for heaven." Again I repeated it, "God grant that you may be 'just in time.'"

He was a stranger to me, and I could not account for my sudden and deep interest in him. We had met for the first time that afternoon, and to look at him you would have said he had long years of life and health before him.

He did not sneer or scoff at my words, though he seemed surprised at a stranger thus so solemnly accosting him. "Thank you," he said, quite earnestly; and we each passed on our way; I

going home to ask the Lord of the harvest for His own blessing on the seed sown by the wayside, that He would not allow it to be devoured by the fowls of the air, so ready to snatch it away. Even as I prayed this young man's face came before me again and again, till I cried, " Bless him, Lord ; save him."

Little I thought how soon, and under what circumstances, we should meet again.

On the following Tuesday night, only two days later, I had just retired to my room for the night, and was about to extinguish my light, when a loud knocking at the street door made me throw up my window to see what was the matter.

" Who is there? " I asked, seeing a young man standing at the door.

" Are you Mr. ——? " was the answer.

" Yes. "

" Will you come at once and see a young man in E—— Street. He is dying, and wants you. "

" Have you not made a mistake? I know no one in E—— Street. "

" No, sir ; are you not the gentleman who gave a young man a book on Sunday afternoon, called ' Just in time ' ? "

" Yes, I am ; what of it? "

" Please come at once," he said, " and I will tell you going along. "

Hastily I dressed, and went out into the summer's night, guided by my companion.

On our way towards E—— Street he told me that his mate had gone down the shaft that afternoon as usual, and had jumped out of the bucket before it reached the bottom. He had done it dozens of times before, and feared no danger ; but this time, as he jumped, his foot slipped.

The descent of the bucket closed an iron trap door, thus making a firm foundation for the vessel to rest upon. Owing to his foot slipping he was a moment too late to get clear of the iron door, and was caught by its closing, and crushed between it and the side of the shaft.

His breast bones were broken in, and he was lying there, his friend said, in terrible agony, unable to speak, only making a gurgling sound if he attempted it, and just gasping for breath, while life seemed ebbing fast away.

By the time the young man had finished his story, adding many details which I need not relate, we reached the cottage, and I entered.

What a scene met my gaze ! There lay the fine strong man, whom I had seen only two days before in the full vigour of health and youth, now absolutely helpless. The pallor of his face was ghastly, his eyes were almost starting in their sockets. Feebly he gasped for breath, and over him hung his young wife, the wife of but one short week, with lips and cheeks almost as colourless as his own, in speechless, tearless agony.

He looked fixedly at me as I entered, and tried to speak. It was useless, no word would come.

“ Shall I read with you, and pray for you ? ” I said.

He made a low hissing sound, the only approach to “ Yes ” he could make.

I read to him that “ God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life ” ; and I spoke to him of the love of God in desiring his salvation ; of the efficacy of the blood of Christ to save him.

I told him he was lost and ruined by nature, but



that Jesus came to seek and to save the lost ; that Jesus had been seeking him, wanted him ; that, having done the work by which sin could be put away out of God's sight, He could now bring the sinner right into God's presence.

As simply as I could, I besought him to take his place as a sinner, and trust Jesus as a Saviour ; and then I knelt down, and besought the God of all grace to give him faith now to lay hold of Christ before it were too late ; to give him the knowledge of the forgiveness of all his sins through that precious blood which cleanseth from all sin (1 John i. 7).

Even as I prayed, one after another of his mates came crowding into the little room, all full of rough sympathy ; and many a coat sleeve was brushed across the eyes of brave men to hide the tears that would rise unbidden at the sight of the strong man's agony, and the young wife's speechless woe.

The scene was too much for me, and for a few moments I went outside into the open air, lest I should break down entirely ; for rarely, if ever, had I seen a sight so pitiful.

I had been but a few minutes out of the room when my name was called hurriedly, and I returned to the sick man's side.

As I entered the room his eyes rested on me entreatingly, with a look at once despairing and beseeching.

Again I said, " Shall I read and pray ? " And again came the painful effort on his part to speak, and then the low hissing sound of assent.

I read to him this time the story of the father and the prodigal (Luke xv.), and then I also read to him the prayers of the Pharisee and the publi-

can, and repeated this one verse: "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." And while strong men bowed and wept, I cried to God once more, to "the living God," to save his soul now at the eleventh hour, and to give him the knowledge of pardon and peace and salvation through the blood of the Lamb.

As I finished, his face changed. The damp of death and the pallor of the grave were upon it, but hope lighted it up, despair had fled. He signed for a drink; and his wife held the glass of water to his lips while she raised his head gently to enable him to take it.

He drank a little, and then, to the amazement of all, he who had been unable to utter a sound beyond the low hissing noise so painful to listen to, said out, in a clear painless voice, and with eyes lifted up as though he saw the One to whom he was speaking, "Just in time! God be merciful to *me* a sinner, for *Jesus Christ's* sake, Amen!"

He had scarcely uttered the last word when his head fell back on the pillow, a little shivering sigh escaped him, and we were in the presence of the dead.

Never shall I forget the scene; to many a one present it was a warning word from the very gates of death, the brink of eternity, and God used it for blessing.

"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" (Titus iii. 4, 5).

"God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins" (Eph. ii. 4, 5).

## “ HOW SHOULD MAN BE JUST WITH GOD ? ”

**T**HIS question was proposed by the Patriarch Job thousands of years ago (Job ix. 2). But he was slow to arrive at a right answer. Sincere, but full of reasoning, his active mind suggested many plans, but his awakened conscience told him that these were all in vain.

How many to-day are like him ! Thousands of souls, troubled about this momentous matter, seek to be “ just with God ” after their own fashion, instead of bowing to His faithful word. All the efforts and plans of Job ended in his *abhorring himself* in the presence of God. Then God met his case, and accepted him (Job xlii. 6, 9).

God will do the same now for any reader of these lines who comes to the same point, and says with Job, “ I abhor myself, and repent.” It is there God meets us in His grace ; and the answer to Job’s question is, “ God is just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus ” (Rom. iii. 26).

In the ninth and tenth chapters of the Book of Job we may see four roads which suggested themselves to his mind in his difficulties, but which he soon discovered to be of no avail. They strikingly set forth the experiences of many a troubled soul at the present day.

1. First he said : “ If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me : if I say, I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse. Though I were perfect, yet would I not know my soul : I would despise my life ” (Job ix. 20, 21).

This is the road of *self-justification*. The thought had arisen in his mind. “ If I justify myself before God, what then ? ” And the conscious-

ness of his own condition brought the reply, " Mine own mouth shall condemn me. If I say, I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse."

" Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh " (Matt. xii. 34). The mouth lets out what is in the heart. Job might seek to justify himself; he might say, " I am perfect "; but a sinful heart, " deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked," would soon betray him (Jer. xvii. 9). The lips would be sure to utter what was there, and very soon give the lie to his own boasted righteousness. " Though I were perfect, yet would I not know my soul; I would despise my life."

Ah! it is " no good " for that old incorrigible " I " to talk about perfection. The man who talks like that clearly does not know himself; he does " not know " his soul. He deceives himself. Job is sensible of this, he adds, " I would despise my life." And well he might. Think of talking of *perfection* in a sinner in the presence of a holy God! Perfection in the flesh would be a total setting aside of " the redemption that is in Christ Jesus " (Rom. iii. 24).

" If I *justify myself*." Well, God will judge me, that is certain. " But if I judge myself," what then? Why, God will justify me. The *self-justified* are judged; the *self-judged* are justified. There is the difference. Say not, then, as Job at one time did, " My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go " (Job xxvii. 6), even after he had confessed its worthlessness; but let your righteousness go at once, and submit yourself to God's (Rom. x. 3). None other will do before Him.

Troubled in spirit, Job thinks of his short span

of life, saying, “Now my days are swifter than a post: they flee away, they see no good. They are passed away as the swift ships; as the eagle that hasteth to the prey” (Job ix. 25, 26). He considers the three swiftest things that his eye had ever beheld: the post, the ship, and the eagle. Swifter than the camel with the post speeding across the wide expanse of land; swifter than the ships disappearing beneath the horizon of the mighty sea; swifter than the king of birds descending on its prey, Job’s days were passing away, and he saw “no good.” Death was rapidly approaching, and his soul was daily distressed with the momentous question, “How should man be just with God?”

2. A second thought suggests itself to Job. Suffering in body and in circumstances, and with the consciousness of God’s hand upon him, he says, “If I say, I will forget my complaint, I will leave off my heaviness, and comfort myself,” what then? How shall I get on if I travel this road? Supposing I ignore the thing, take it as a matter of course, leave God out altogether, and just look at it as if it were a mere accidental circumstance. But it is all “no good.” Conscience pricks him. He might say it, but what would be the result? First, he adds, “I will be afraid of all my sorrows.” And, secondly, “I know that *Thou* wilt not hold me *innocent*.”

Ah! yes, Job, it is “no good.” There is no getting out of it in that way; and *you know it*. And you too, sinner, may think to try the same road, but it is all in vain. There is no road back to innocence. Innocence was known in Eden only, and it is lost for ever. You have a conscience, knowing good and evil, and naturally you have the evil.

Troubled in soul, you might try and forget it, and say so; but *fear* will still reign in your heart, and *God* will not hold you innocent. It is *righteousness* you need, not innocence. Your own is worse than useless. God's is now revealed; to it you must submit (Rom. i. 17, iii. 22). God alone can justify you.

3. But there is another road: I see it is "no good" justifying myself, and ignoring facts. I am in the difficulty, and it must be faced. Just with God I must be. I am not right now, anyway. I know I am not fit for His holy presence. Sin has defiled me, and He cannot look upon me thus, I know. I will cleanse myself. What could be more reasonable? I am black with sin; I will make myself white. Surely all will be right then. Surely I can be just with God thus. Hope for the moment springs up within the heart. But what can I wash myself with?

Ah! Job, that is the question, a question as yet far beyond Job, intelligent as he evidently was. And that is the all-important question for you, dear reader. Washed, cleansed, you must be, but with what?

Hear Job's conclusion, as he weighs the matter seriously in his deep distress: "If I wash myself with snow water, and make my hands never so clean, yet shalt Thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me" (ix. 30, 31).

Of nothing purer or more cleansing than snow water can he think; yet so deeply ingrained is sin, so hopeless his condition, that cleanse himself as he may, he would still be before God as a man plunged in a black ditch, his own clothes abhorring his filthiness. O sinner, sin is far deeper and blacker than you think. Snow water cannot

cleanse you. Yea, “ though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord God ” (Jer. ii. 22).

Washed you must be ; but it is only God who can do it. All your moral and religious efforts to cleanse yourself are in vain. The road of mere reformation in the flesh leads straight to hell. The one thing you need is *the blood of Christ*.

“ *Nothing* but His precious blood  
Can do fallen sinners good.”

“ The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin ” (1 John i. 7).

Job, almost at his wits' end, complains, “ My soul is weary of my life ” (Job x. 1). Sinner, have you ever come to that? Have you ever found sin to be such a terrible plague, as to complain thus? Never was a soul brought to God without having some such experience. It is when we get quite to our wits' end, when we despair utterly of ourselves we learn God's thoughts about us, and that He meets us in grace, and shows us what He is, a Saviour-God.

4. But stay, Job has a fourth road. One more thought suggests itself. He sees that self-justification, ignoring of his real state, and reformation are all alike “ no good.” No, those three roads lead straight to the lake of fire. Now, thinks Job, supposing that I were to throw conscience overboard altogether, and live in sin. I was conceived in it ; do what I will it clings to me, and I cannot get rid of it ; why should my life be one long groan? How will it be if I let slip the rein, and go on in it? I am not the only one to do so. Ah ! it is all in vain. I cannot get away from God. If I sin, what then? Perhaps He will be merciful, and take

no notice of it! No, that is impossible. God is holy, He cannot pass it by thus. "If I sin, then *Thou* markest me." I may treat it lightly, ignore it, justify it; but *God* never. "And *Thou* wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity. If I be wicked, woe is me" (x. 14, 15).

Job is getting to his wits' end. His misery is so great that as he thinks of the day when he was born into the world, he exclaims, "Oh that I had given up the ghost, and no eye had seen me! I should have been as though I had not been" (Job x. 18, 19). But he had to go yet deeper still, and when he had learnt to abhor himself, God accepted him (Job xlii. 6-9).

Ah! sinner, sin is *sin*, and God marks it. Live in it, and He will damn you. Every sin that you have committed, in thought, word, or deed, has been "marked" by Him, and the smallest unpardoned would sink you into hell. To go on in it is folly, madness. Death, its wage, is at your door, and judgment after, judgment eternal (Heb. ix. 27). Sin is a foul blot before God. A sinner you are, and if you die in your sins, your case is hopeless.

Try which you will of these four roads, they all lead to one goal.

1. If you justify yourself, you will be judged.
2. If you ignore your state, you will be judged.
3. If you cleanse yourself, you will be judged.
4. If you live in sin, you will be judged.

But if you abhor and judge yourself, God will justify and accept you. How?

God is "just, and the justifier of him which *believeth in Jesus*" (Rom. iii. 26). "Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. iii. 24). "Now



being justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him " (Rom. v. 9). " To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness " (Rom. iv. 5). " By Him all that believe are justified from all things " (Acts xiii. 39). " Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification; therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ " (Rom. iv. 25, v. 1). " Being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life " (Titus iii. 7). " It is *God that justifieth*, who is he that condemneth? " (Rom. viii. 33, 34).

The question is plain, and the answer is no less plain. Will you believe it? The moment a guilty but self-judged sinner *believes in Jesus*, he is justified by God's grace, *through Christ's blood, in Christ Jesus, on the principle of faith, from all things, to walk henceforth in Christ's footsteps, till He come abounding in good works, and so practically justified in the sight of all.*

Reader, you now know how you may be " just with God."

E. H. C.

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## SIX SERIOUS QUESTIONS AND THEIR SCRIPTURAL ANSWERS.

*Question 1* : " DOES GOD LOVE US WHETHER WE BELIEVE OR NOT? OR, IS IT ONLY WHEN WE BELIEVE THAT HE LOVES US? "

*Answer* : " Herein is love, *not that we loved God*, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins " (1 John iv. 10).

" God commendeth His love toward us, in that,

*while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us "* (Rom. v. 8).

" But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even *when we were dead in sins "* (Eph. ii. 4, 5).

*Question 2 :* " CAN I HAVE FAITH IN THE BLOOD OF JESUS UNTIL I CAN SAY I HAVE BEEN WASHED IN IT FROM ALL MY SIN? "

*Answer:* Had not the dying malefactor faith in Jesus, and in His blood, which was then being shed, when he said, " Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom? " But could he have said at that time, " I am washed in the blood of Christ? " Does not nature itself teach us that we have confidence in a physician, which leads us to apply to him, and to take his medicines, before we can say, " He has healed us of our maladies " ? To say truly, " The blood of Christ has washed me from my sins " is *assurance*. To trust in that blood, as God's gracious and efficacious provision for the taking of them away, is *faith*. The connection between the two is this, that God says if we have the one we are entitled to the other. If I really do believe in Jesus as my only hope and refuge, and trust His blood as of sufficient efficacy to take away my sins, *God says that the blood has taken it away*, and surely it is my blessed privilege to say so too.

*Question 3 :* " BUT IT IS NOT BELIEVING THAT SAVES US, IS IT? IT IS JESUS, AND ALL THAT WE HAVE TO DO IS TO ACCEPT HIM. "

*Answer:* To be sure. Believing has in itself no efficacy. *If that were not true* which is believed, where would be the good of believing? And it is in that which is believed, in Him on whom we believe, in Jesus, that all the sav-

ing virtue resides. Believing is but having faith in Him; and does it not seem strange that we should need so much to induce us to have faith in Him? "This is a faithful saying, and *worthy of all acceptance*, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim. i. 15).

*Question 4*: "IS NOT JESUS ALWAYS BEFORE THE THRONE OF GOD?"

*Answer*: He has sat down there. "*When He had by Himself purged our sins*, He sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high" (Heb. i. 2).

*Question 5*: "IS NOT HIS BLOOD AN OFFERING FOR SIN?"

*Answer*: "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, *but by His own blood*, He entered in once into the holy place, *having obtained eternal redemption*" (Heb. ix. 12).

"Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation [literally "*a mercy-seat*"] through faith in His blood" (Rom. iii. 25).

*Question 6*: "IF, AS AN UNWORTHY SINNER, I COME TO HIM, THROUGH THAT OFFERING, WILL GOD NOT ACCEPT ME?"

*Answer*: He is able also to save them to the uttermost *that come unto God by Him*, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb. vii. 25).

"Will God not accept me?" you ask. It is God who has been, and still is, by His messengers in the gospel, beseeching you to believe His love, and trust Jesus as your Saviour, and be at perfect rest and peace. "Now, then, we are ambassadors for Christ, *as though God did beseech you by us*: we pray you in Christ's stead, *be ye reconciled to God*" (2 Cor. v. 20). Can there be a doubt as to

His willingness when He sends thus an embassy of peace urging you to be reconciled to Him?

You say further, "I cannot plead a single merit of my own, for the more I see of self the worst it seems."

Surely, then, my friend, if you have not a single merit of your own, you will be glad of the infinite merit there is in Jesus and in His atoning blood; *to all which God makes you as freely welcome as to Jesus Himself*, that best and richest gift and proof of His love. Do cease from yourself altogether. Let good self and bad self be alike lost sight of in dwelling on the excellency of Jesus, in whom God is so well pleased that He receives into His favour all to come to Him in that Name.

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God in mercy sent His Son  
To a world by sin undone;  
Jesus Christ was crucified;  
'Twas for sinners Jesus died.

Sin and death no more shall reign;  
Jesus died, and lives again.  
In the glory's highest height  
See Him, God's supreme delight.

All who in His name believe  
Everlasting life receive;  
Lord of all is Jesus now;  
Every knee to Him must bow.

Christ the Lord will come again;  
He who suffered once will reign,  
Every tongue at last shall own  
"Worthy is the Lamb" alone.

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# GOSPEL LIGHT.



**GOD IS LIGHT. GOD IS LOVE.**

"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him."

*1 John i. 5. 1 John iv. 8, 16. 1 John iv. 9.*

## **SAVED AT ONE HUNDRED.**

**T**HE power of the Lord Jesus Christ in healing natural disease reached many miles (John iv. 50); and His power to save from a worse disease, sin, now reaches not only to great extremities of guilt, but through many years.

I have met with a striking example of this, where the preaching of the gospel was rendered effectual eighty-five years after it was heard.

Here is the true story.

A very excellent minister of the gospel, John Flavel, whose writings are known and valued, resided at Dartmouth in the middle of the seventeenth century. There he was very useful. His manner of preaching was affectionate and serious, and often awakened very strong emotions in the minds of his hearers.

On one occasion he preached from the words, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let

him be anathema, maranatha." That sermon was more solemn than usual, particularly the part where he showed the meaning of "anathema, maranatha," dwelling upon it in a very sorrowful way, as he said it meant "cursed with a curse, cursed of God with a bitter and grievous curse."

At the end of the service, when Mr. Flavel rose to pronounce the benediction, he paused, and looked around with tears in his eyes. Then he said, in a low, sad tone, "How shall I bless this whole assembly, when every person in it who loveth not the Lord Jesus Christ is 'anathema, maranatha'?"

This solemn way of speaking took such an effect upon the congregation that almost everyone was in tears. A nobleman who was there was so overcome by his feelings as to fall fainting on the floor.

There was a boy present who did not faint away nor seem much impressed. He, however, listened very attentively, but he soon forgot all about that solemn sermon. His name was Luke Short, and he was then fifteen years of age. He was a native of the town. Soon after this time he became a sailor, and, after some years had passed, went to America. There he settled as a farmer, and there spent the rest of his life.

He lived longer than men usually do. When he was a hundred years old he was still strong enough to work on his farm, and the powers of his mind were very little weakened. But up to this time he had lived without loving and serving Christ. He had never as a sinner felt his need of Him, and therefore knew nothing of His preciousness as a Saviour. The preaching which he heard so many years before had not converted his soul. If it was like seed cast into the ground, the seed had not sprung up.

But God's ways are not as our ways. One day as old Luke Short sat in his field he busied himself in *thinking over the past*. His thoughts went back, as the thoughts of the aged frequently do, to the days of his youth. Many old scenes and old companions rose up before his memory, and among these early recollections there came the thought of a certain Sunday evening, and of a certain preacher who spoke in tender yet solemn tones to people who listened as if life and death hung upon his words. As it were but yesterday, he seemed to see that eventful scene; the preacher leaning forward; the awe-struck people; the rich man carried out in a swoon. He seemed yet to have in his ears the ringing sound of those terrible words, "*Anathema, maranatha.*" How strange that he should now recollect all this! And how still more strange it seemed to him that he should have forgotten that solemn sermon during so many, many years. Now it was fresh in his memory, not only the text and the speaker's impressive delivery, but even the substance of his discourse. Passage after passage flashed across his mind, as if the preacher were still pronouncing the words.

Very striking and very blessed was the old farmer's recollection. He felt that he had not loved the Lord Jesus Christ; he feared the dreadful *anathema*. Conviction led to repentance; and, by God's blessing, this aged sinner obtained peace through faith in the blood of atonement, and was found in the way of righteousness. Mr. Flavel's sermon had brought him to Jesus, eighty-five years after it was preached. He lived sixteen years longer, giving every assurance of real and humble piety.

It was a long distance of time for the Saviour's mercy to reach. There was a long interval between the sowing and the reaping; but to hear of this miracle of grace should much encourage any who speak in the name of the Lord Jesus.

## ASSURANCE OF SALVATION.

**A**T the close of his address in the Gospel Tent, the preacher, having pressed upon his hearers the solemn issues of eternity, of eternity with Christ, or eternity in the lake of fire, of joy and blessing, or weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth, gave out the hymn commencing :

“Oh, do not let the Word depart,

Nor close thine eyes against the light ;

Poor sinner, harden not thine heart ;

Thou would'st be saved : why not to-night? ” and concluded with earnest prayer that God would keep the question, “ Why not to-night? ” ringing in the souls of those who, as yet unsaved, had heard the gospel preached that day.

And now the Tent Services were over ; the tent itself had been taken down and stored away for the winter ; months had passed ; and the preacher had left the neighbourhood, while the prayer he had put up to God had been forgotten by him who uttered it.

But One had heard and not forgotten, as the sequel to our story will show : for returning after a considerable absence to the neighbourhood, the preacher happened to call in at a cottage, and found the tenant in deep concern about her soul, a concern which, as she informed him, had commenced by her going to the Tent Service, and



hearing the words of the hymn, "Thou would'st be saved: why not to-night?" which ever since had been ringing in her ears; and she told him how she had knelt down night after night, and prayed to God that she might be saved, but, as it seemed, in vain.

Surely the ploughing and the harrowing had been done: it only needed now to cast in the good seed of the Word for it to bring forth fruit unto life eternal. So the preacher took the old lady's Bible, and opening it at the fifth chapter of John and the twenty-fourth verse, read the words, "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."

"Now," said he, "you believe you are a sinner and in need of a Saviour?"

"Indeed I do."

"Then listen: 'He that heareth My Word.' Have you heard His Word?"

"Yes."

"'And believeth on Him that sent Me.' Do you believe that God sent Jesus to die for *your* sins?"

"Yes."

"For yours, if there wasn't another sinner in the wide world beside yourself?"

"Yes, for mine."

"'Hath everlasting life.' Do you believe that?"

"Well, sir, I do hope I shall get it."

"What, hope? Surely you are not going to alter God's Word, are you?"

"No, sir, I don't want to do that."

"Then why do you say that 'hath' spells 'hope'? Why, at the Board School they would

put a child who read that way at the bottom of the class ! Now listen : God says ‘ *hath* everlasting life.’ You have fulfilled the two first conditions ; you have heard His Word, and believed on Him that sent Jesus, and God says (and mark, it is not what you say, or think, or feel, but what God, by the lips of His Son, says) ‘ You *have* everlasting life, and *shall not* come into judgment, but *are passed* from death unto life.’ Judgment for you is impossible : you have believed on Jesus, whom God has appointed to be the Judge (John v. 22) ; and the very Judge Himself has borne the judgment that was your due, so that you go righteously free. If God has exacted the penalty from Jesus for your sins at the cross, do you think Jesus will exact the penalty from you for them when He sits upon the judgment-seat ? Never ! Everlasting life is yours : you will *not* come into judgment, but *are passed* from death unto life, not, again let me say, because you feel it, or think it, or realize it, but because God says it, and He cannot lie.”

And the old lady said, “ Well, if God says it, I *will* believe it.”

And she did.

A few more weeks passed, and the preacher was speaking to a Christian in a neighbouring town, who said, “ Do you know old Mrs. —— ? Well, the other day she came in and asked me to write a letter for her, as she is a poor scholar ; and, when I had written the letter, I said, just as a sort of a random shot, ‘ Shall I tell your friend that you know that your sins are forgiven ? ’

“ ‘ Yes,’ she replied, ‘ you can put that in, too.’

“ ‘ Oh,’ I said, ‘ and how long have you known that ? ’ ”

And then she related to my informant her story, just as I have told it to you.

And, to you also, my reader, I would put the question, "Do you know that your sins are forgiven?" You may; for Scripture says, "Through this man [the risen Saviour] is preached unto *you* the forgiveness of sins" (Acts xiii. 38); "In whom *we have* redemption through His blood, *the forgiveness of sins*" (Eph. i. 7); "I write unto you, children, because *your sins are forgiven you* for His Name's sake" (1 John ii. 12); but it can only be by treading in the footsteps of Paul and John, the preacher and Mrs. —, and thousands more, who, convicted by God's Word, and realizing their lost condition before Him, have taken Jesus as their Saviour, and have accepted God's testimony as to their eternal salvation as believers on His Son.

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## THE SYROPHENICIAN ; OR, TRUTH AND GRACE.

**W**HEN anyone has been led, by the illuminating and convicting power of the Holy Spirit, to take a true view of his own heart, he is in just the position to delight in the unfoldings of the heart of God.

This comes out in the touching and instructive story of the Syrophenician woman in the fifteenth of Matthew.

"Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts,

and cried unto Him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, Thou Son of David ! My daughter is grievously vexed with a devil."

Our blessed Lord had turned His back upon all the religiousness of man seen in the previous portions of this chapter : upon his ordinances, his traditions, his washings, his hypocrisy ; and He betakes Himself to a region where there is no religious pretension at all, a region where real human need and wretchedness are felt. This was the suitable place for Christ.

This poor woman of Canaan knew and cared little about the traditions of the Jewish elders. Of what use could they be to her? She was feeling the pressure of Satan's power. Could man's ordinances remove that? Surely not? None but Jesus could avail her. Others might occupy themselves in washing dishes and tables, but she wanted something truer, something more real than that. She wanted Christ, and to Him she made her way.

Would that thousands in this our day felt as this woman of Canaan. Verily the present is a day of ordinances, a day of traditionary religion, a day in the which the commandments and doctrines of men bear sway. Fleshly pietism is putting on its ten thousand imposing forms, and exerting a potent influence over the legal and religious mind. But, with all this, the man's heart is not satisfied ; his need is not met ; the pressure not removed. Oh ! *that thousands would only just come to Jesus, and find in Him all they want for time and eternity.*

In the passage of Scripture now before us, the heart of Jesus, so far as the Syrophenician was concerned, was concealed behind very high dispensational enclosures. A woman of Canaan had no claims on " the Son of David," and yet she

addressed Him by that title. True, there was love in the heart of Jesus for any poor creature that came to Him in simple faith. But as "Son of David" He stood behind those lofty Jewish barriers which hid Him from a Gentile's view. He was "a Minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers" (Rom. xv. 8). Not one jot or tittle of those promises could ever fail in the hands of such a faithful and august Minister; and unless the Syrophenician, therefore, could view Him in a higher character than as "a Minister of the circumcision," He must maintain a total silence. "He answered her not a word." The "Son of David" had no answer for a "Canaanite." He must stand for "the truth of God," and "confirm the promises made unto the fathers." With these promises she had nothing whatever to do. He could not help a Canaanite at the expense of the seed of Abraham.

The disciples, wholly unable to fathom the deep mysteries which were then filling the mind and being told out in the ministry of their divine Master, "came and besought Him, saying, Send her away."

Alas! how little they knew Him! How could He ever send away a poor oppressed creature who appealed to Him? What! the Son of God send away from His presence one who was suffering under the crushing, grinding hand of Satan! Impossible! Though, as "Son of David," He could not answer, yet, as "Son of God," He could not possibly dismiss her. If, as the Minister of the circumcision, He had no reply, certainly, as the Minister of the grace of God, He had no rebuff. Though, as the vindicator of the *truth* of God, He

had to be silent, yet as the expression of divine love, He could not be severe. He had blessing for her, but she must take her proper place, and view Him, not merely as Son of David, but as Lord of all. "I am not sent," said He, "but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel"; and she did not belong to the sheep of Israel, but to the race of Canaan.

But faith cannot be foiled. It knows there is a full blessing in the heart of Jesus, and it will have it. Thus it was with the Syrophenician. She had set out to reach the loving, tender heart of Christ, and she was not to be put off. The dispensational barriers might be lofty; but that made no difference. They might be immovable; but it was all the same. She felt that though He could not remove them, He could rise above them. Though the glories of the "Son of David" could only shine within Jewish boundaries, the glories of the Son of God could shed their brilliant lustre over all the earth. She felt it was utterly impossible for that blessed One to dismiss a case of need from His presence. "Then came she, and worshipped Him, saying, Lord, help me."

Here, we reach the grand point in this intensely interesting narrative. The Syrophenician now places herself in the divine presence as one simply needing help; and no one ever did, or ever can do, this in vain. Oh! the depth, power and fulness of these three words, "*Lord, help me*"! They form a chain with three links. We have "Lord" at one end, "me" at the other, and "help" the link between. Nothing can be simpler. The moment faith forms this precious chain all is settled. The little word "help" may contain everything that the soul can possibly require here or hereafter.

Reader, here let me pause, and ask you pointedly, Have you ever really formed this precious chain with three links? Have you, by simple faith, put Jesus at one end, yourself at the other, and "help" between? If so, all is settled for your soul's blessing, divinely and eternally settled. You have put Him in His right place as Supplier, and you have taken your right place as the supplied, and all you want is infallibly insured. The word "help" contains not only all you desire or need, but all that Christ is able and willing to give. Remember this. The very moment the sinner takes his true place before God, there is nothing but salvation for him. Nor is it merely such a salvation as suits him to get, but, better far, such a one as suits God to give. This is a great and marvellous fact, illustrating most forcibly the moral grandeur of "the gospel of the grace of God" (Acts xx. 24). Let a sinner only take his true place before God as a sinner, and the whole matter is settled. God is his Saviour, and he is saved; saved according to the measure of the perfectness of the Person and work of Christ.

But we must be in our right place. And what is that? *Lost!* The moment this is seen, the question passes entirely out of our hands into the hands of God, and there is settled in such a way as to illustrate, as nothing else ever could, the glory of God. God is glorified in being linked, by the word "help" to the poor, helpless, guilty sinner. Eternal praise be to His holy name! Who would not trust Him? Who would not accept salvation at His hand? Who would not look to Him for all needed help, when to minister that help not only glorifies His name, but also gratifies His heart? May the Holy Spirit unfold to our souls more and

more of the living depths of those three words, "Lord, help me"! They do so put God in His proper place, as the *Helper*, and man in his proper place as the *helped*.

There is no limit to the word "help"; it is as deep and boundless as the source from which it flows, and must therefore fully meet the most pressing exigencies of the sinner's case. The fountain of help is God Himself, and the streams thereof come gushing forth, in ten thousand channels, to answer the varied forms of human need. Is the conscience oppressed with the heavy burden of guilt? There is help for me in Jesus, the very help I need. His precious blood cleanseth from all sin, and gives perfect ease to the conscience (1 John i. 7; Heb. x. 2, 22). Do I feel the burden of indwelling sin, and sigh for victory over the habits and tendencies of nature? I have only to cast myself upon Christ in the spirit of these words, "Lord, help me." This it is in everything. Faith links the soul with Christ, and all His fulness becomes mine, to be used as occasion demands.

All this is strikingly unfolded in the narrative of the Syrophenician. Faith put her in her true place, and the moment she dropped into that place, Christ rose before the vision of her soul in all the moral glory of His Person and the all-sufficiency of His grace. Her faith was of the right stamp. It stood the most severe testing. She showed herself prepared, not only to give up all claim upon Jesus as the "Son of David," but to take her place as a dog under the table.

"It is not meet," said Christ, "to take the children's bread, and cast it to dogs."

This was putting faith into a most searching



crucible. But, ah ! my reader, it was really putting honour upon it. True faith can bear to be tried. A genuine wedge of gold can stand the furnace. The Lord Jesus knew what He had to deal with, and He was only leading this woman to a standpoint from the which she could get a view of Him who would satisfy every longing of her soul. She had no claim on the " Son of David " ; she had no right to " the children's bread " ; she was a dog of the Gentiles. Was she prepared to own all this? Yes, she was : " Truth, Lord ; yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table."

Reader, this is divine. Surely this was a refreshing draught for the Master's thirsty spirit. It was something very different from the traditions of the elders, the " corban " of the ancients, the washings of the Pharisees. There was nothing for the heart of Jesus like the faith of a poor sinner who cared not what place she occupied, provided it was near Him. She knew full well that even a dog under His table must be well cared for. True, she could not lay claim to any dispensational relationship. She would not touch a morsel of the children's bread ; but was there not a crumb for a dog? Yes, blessed be God. It was impossible that Christ would refuse a crumb for a needy creature. Faith triumphed, and the treasury of heaven is flung open to a poor woman of Canaan, in these glowing words, " O woman, great is thy faith : be it unto thee even as thou wilt."

This surely is enough. Faith has here reached the heart of God, and finds it to be the fountain of goodness ; a fountain ever fresh, ever flowing ; a fountain whence the soul may drink to its full satisfaction. " Be it unto thee even as thou wilt." Precious word ! Faith is the key to heaven's trea-

sury. The Syrophenician held and used that mysterious key, and gained access thereby to luxuries richer far than even "the children's bread."

Nothing can be more lovely than to mark the way in which this highly favoured woman reaches the heart of Christ, hidden as it was behind those enclosures within which the "Son of David," the "Minister of the circumcision," found His proper range. It is truly delightful to note how she seizes the great fact that there was something in Him which could not be circumscribed by any dispensational boundary. Her faith enabled her to soar into regions far beyond Judaism and all its belongings. She did not for a moment want to touch that system; she only wanted to touch the heart of Christ, that large, that boundless heart, which could not be confined by any system under the sun. As to herself, she was prepared to take any place, even the place of a dog beneath the Master's table. It mattered not in the least where she was, provided she was near Him. It would have been no gain to her to be set upon Jewish ground. The aspirations of her faith carried her far beyond the ministration of the "Minister of the circumcision." It was Himself she reached; and in Him she found all she wanted. She bowed to the testimony as to her proper place, in that emphatic word, "*Truth*"; but she opened the very flood-gates of the heart of Jesus by her significant "yet." What treasures of grace might she not expect to flow in through the opening made by her "yet"!

How suggestive are those two little words! "*Truth*" is the utterance of a convicted conscience; "yet," the breathing of a converted heart. The former puts the sinner into his right place; the latter leaves room for God to come in,

in all the riches of His saving grace (Tit. ii. 11, 12). That abandons all claim, on the ground of personal merit; this bases all expectation on the ground of the sovereign grace of God. Nothing can be simpler. It is only just one of a thousand striking illustrations of the same grand truth which shine like sunbeams on every page of inspiration, from Genesis to Revelation.

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## GOD CAN SAVE THE WILDEST AND THE WORST.

ONE of the most extraordinary examples of the power of God's grace in the salvation of sinners is that of the notorious Africaner. For many years he was chief among the Namacquas, a tribe in South Africa. White people spoke of him as "the Buonaparte of South Africa." His name carried terror with it for hundreds of miles around his own district. He was long engaged in plundering other tribes. He even destroyed two missionary settlements. His fierce character is shown by a remark which was made at the time by a missionary: "Soldiers are sent who, it is hoped, will succeed in ridding the country of such a monster, whom neither religion nor government can restrain or subdue."

When the missionary Campbell visited Africa in 1812, he wrote a kind letter to this man, asking him to allow the missionaries to return to one of the stations from which they had been driven in terror by his violence.

After some delay, Africaner granted the request.

The conversation and preaching of a missionary at this station had such an effect on Africaner that one day he said to him, "I have long enough been engaged in the service of the devil, but now I am free from this bondage. Jesus has delivered me. Him will I serve. With Him will I abide."

This was not mere talking; the tiger was changed into a lamb. Africaner's cruel heart was purified by faith. He really was *born again*.

I can only now relate one proof.

There was Berend, a Griqua chief of a different tribe, with whom Africaner used often to fight. Both these men became not only Christians but Christian friends. Africaner, as an act of kindness, travelled with his people a journey of six days across Africa to carry the missionary's books and furniture to the station at Lattakoo. Formerly he had gone as far to attack Berend; but on this occasion the two chiefs, once enemies, now brothers in Christ, met in the missionary's tent, and united in singing praises to the God of peace.

When the missionary recollected their former enmity, and contrasted it with their present friendship, tears of joy flowed from his eyes. He said to himself, "After the conversion of such men as these, I will never despair of any man's conversion, however wicked he may be; for the grace of God is infinite."

Africaner, to the day of his death, maintained the character of a consistent and useful Christian.

"The grace of God that bringeth salvation to all men hath appeared, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly" (Tit. ii. 12).

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# GOSPEL LIGHT.



**GOD IS LIGHT. GOD IS LOVE.**

"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him."

*1 John i. 5. 1 John iv. 8, 16. 1 John iv. 9.*

## **SAVED, SOUL AND BODY.**

**I**T was early morning at the pretty watering place of E——, a bright summer's morning.

The blue sea rippled and sparkled underneath the blue sky, and the sun shone cheerily down, but as yet there were but few people astir.

The beach was almost deserted, save by here and there a straggler who thought the fresh cool morning hours too precious to be missed.

Had there been any watchers, they might have seen a swimmer strike out boldly to sea, through those rippling waves. A strong swimmer he was, and every stroke told, and put the shore at a greater distance from him. He was alone, and a stranger to the place, having only arrived there the evening before.

Had he asked the fishermen, they would have told him of strong and dangerous currents; they would have warned him of risk, and counselled him

to take care. But the swimmer was in the very prime of manhood's strength, and never thought of danger; so on he went, and turned not his head to see how far he had left the shore behind, till at last, a little wearied, he rested a moment, and thought of returning. Then he found he had been carried out by the strength of the current far beyond his thoughts or intentions, and that there was a long distance between him and the shore. "It is time, indeed, to return," he said to himself, and struck out at once for land.

But the eye of God was on him, and He had something to say to him alone on the face of the deep before he touched the land again.

I have said that he was a strong man, and a bold swimmer, but now he found he had wind and current both against him, and his utmost efforts made no appreciable headway against them. For a long while he battled on, but the shore was still far off, too far off for any cry of distress to reach it. He raised himself and shouted, but no answering voice, no friendly shout replied.

Still he struggled on, till, worn out by his exertions, and feeling utterly exhausted, he felt that nothing but a watery grave was before him. His strokes got feebler and more unsteady each time, and he knew he was losing the little way he had made, and was being drifted seaward. Then he ceased struggling, turned on his back, and gave himself up for lost.

There and then God spoke to his soul. He had been religiously brought up, nay more, Lord's day after Lord's day, from the pulpit of a fashionable church, he had preached to a large congregation Bible truths as to the way of salva-

tion. He had made Scripture his text, and discoursed ably from it. He had read prayers in public and in private. He had visited in his parish, and administered the sacrament to the dying. He had lived a careful life, and attended to every rite, and till this moment had been on very good terms with himself, fully persuaded that a life such as his was fit to bring to God.

Now, with death and eternity before him, his soul awoke to find he had no hope for eternity; he had never met God; he was not ready to die; he had one thing lacking; he had no link with Christ.

Horror and agony seized him. The noise of the waves seemed to be roaring this verse into his ears again and again, "Lest . . . when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away." (1 Cor. ix. 27.)

He felt he had preached a Christ whom he did not know; had told others of a salvation he himself had not got. His whole life came before him, with its outward ceremonies and its inward hollowness. The life he had so prided himself in, he loathed now as only mockery of the God who had said, "My son, give me thine *heart*." (Prov. xxiii. 26.)

He felt he had given Him his time and his money, but never his "heart"; and had thought to merit heaven by these poor gifts. Now he saw them at their true value, "dead works." (Heb. ix. 14.) Now he saw that "without faith it is impossible to please Him" (Heb. xi. 6), that the work that could save his soul must be done for him, and done by another; that the righteousness which he had prided himself in, God looked on as "filthy rags," and his offerings to God had

been like Cain's, bloodless offerings; and "without shedding of blood there is *no remission*."

It was not concerning his body, but his soul, that he cried there on the mighty deep, there alone with God on the waves, a great cry, "*Lord, save me, or I perish; God be merciful to me a sinner, a vile sinner, a hypocrite; save me.*"

Even as he cried the answer came: "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from *all sin*." "Whosoever believeth on Him shall *not perish*, but have everlasting life."

Faint and weary, with the natural life almost gone, the once strong man murmured, "Lord, I believe that precious blood was shed for me"; and with that murmur, life, and peace, and rest, came to his soul, and then utter unconsciousness.

"Father, father, look ahead! What is that on the waters? Surely it's a man," said the young son of the skipper of a fishing smack, which was putting in towards shore.

One moment the father looked in the direction his son indicated, the next he sprang to an oar, calling out to the little crew, "Row for very life, men, there's a fellow-creature perishing."

The men rowed with a will, not waiting even to ask a question, rowed in silence, bending all their energies to the task.

The skipper looked ahead, saw the body of a man sink once, rise again, rise farther from the shore and nearer to the boat, sink a second time, and this time he concluded it would rise almost close to them if they made a desperate effort: "Bend to your oars, men," he cried, "for one last pull, and then stop. It is now or never."

They did so. When next the body rose, it was within arm's length of the boat. Strong arms



were stretched out to grasp it, and more than one was prepared for a plunge.

They saw that the man was apparently lifeless, he could not help himself. If he were to be rescued, it must be entirely through the work of those in the boat.

It was no easy task. Had there been more sea on, it would have been an impossibility to bring that apparently lifeless body into the boat. But they managed it, and then took every means in their power to restore animation; making all possible haste towards the shore, to get more efficient help. By the time they reached the land they had the satisfaction of seeing the man they had rescued show some signs of life.

Plenty of willing hands were found to carry him ashore, for it was a living, breathing man they carried, and not a corpse, a living man in two ways, possessing now not merely natural life, but eternal life too. (Rom. vi. 23.)

A week later, in that same fishing smack, the one who had been lifted into it from the waves, in utter helplessness, was sitting, in the calm of a summer's evening, telling the skipper and his crew, with some others of the fishermen who had gathered round, the story of what God had done for his soul only a week before, when death and judgment to follow had threatened him. (Heb. ix. 27.)

The men listened intently. The speaker was an object of special interest to them; for had they not saved him from a watery grave?

He spoke to them of Jesus the Saviour, of the impossibility of our doing anything to save ourselves; the work must all be done by Him, or we must be lost; and he read to them these

verses from God's words: "But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ. . . . For by grace ye are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." (Eph. ii. 4-8.)

He illustrated his meaning by referring to his own condition.

"When you saw me in the water that morning was I in need of salvation, skipper?"

"Ay, ay, sir, indeed you were, as much in need of it as ever I saw any one yet."

"Could I help myself?"

"No, sir, you were o'er far gone for that; you were like dead."

"Did I feel my need even?"

"No, sir, no, you were past feeling."

"Then I owe everything to you and your brave men?"

"Well, sir, if we had not been by it would have gone badly with you."

"Exactly; did I pray and beseech you to help me or save me, or take me into the boat?"

"Why, no, sir, you couldn't have done it; and we didn't need it; we should have been worse than brutes to see a fellow-creature perishing, and not put out a hand to save him."

"Just so. I did not pray you to save me; I did not help you to save me; *you* did all the work, and *I* got all the good, I never even lifted a finger for myself. Now, my friends, do you not see how it is with the Lord and us. He does all the work and we get all the good. We, dead in sins, could do nothing for ourselves. We did not even ask Him to come and save us. He

came unasked; took our sins on Himself. The sinless One suffered in our stead, and now offers salvation as His free gift; that is, *He took our place, and offers us His place*. You risked getting into my place in order to bring me into your place that morning."

"Oh, sir," said the men in concert, "don't you say any more about that; you make too much of what we did; but we see what you mean, sir; its very plain; we think God has taught us all a lesson by this."

"One word more, my friends, let me say about your act. Do you think, however long I live, I shall ever forget that morning, ever cease to be thankful to the brave men who rescued me from a watery grave? Do you not think I shall always carry about with me feelings of gratitude and love for the men who did so much for me? Nay, do not mind my saying it," he continued, as the men disclaimed having done anything but what any one would do; "I must feel and express my gratitude to you. And this is how it is with us to the Lord. When I know He has saved me at such a cost, I cannot go on just as I did before, as though it were all nothing. I want my life to show out my gratitude and love and praise, I want to be the friend of Christ, as I am your friend to-day."

The men were silent. There was a reality about the whole thing which deeply touched them, and every head was bowed and reverently uncovered during the few words of prayer that followed; earnest supplication for their souls. In more than one case there was complete surrender to Christ at the time, and the whole of the fruit unto life

eternal of that morning's incident will perhaps never be known till "the day" declares it.

"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." (Rom. v. 6.)

"But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. v. 8.)

## WHAT IS A "PURGED" CONSCIENCE?

"Purge your conscience from dead works," and "Once purged . . . no more conscience of sins." (Hebrews ix. 14., x. 2.)

**T**HERE are two ways in which the grace of God is presented to us in the New Testament.

One is brought out in the Epistle to the Ephesians, where all the tide of blessing attaching to the believer, because he partakes of the Spirit of Christ, is shown. When so looked on by God, as one spirit with the Lord Jesus, that which is said of Christ is said of the believer in Him: he is crucified, dead, buried, raised up, and seated with Christ in the heavenly places. (Eph. ii.)

The other way in which divine grace is taken up is, not beginning with "the new man" (Eph. iv. 24) planted in the heart, but arguing out the case with the conscience of the sinner; and very gracious it is for the sinner that thus it should be. This is most largely brought out in the Epistle to the Romans.

In the Epistle to the Hebrews the question of conscience is introduced, and whether the con-

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science has been so purged that there is no more sense of sins. As it is said: "That the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins." (Heb. x. 2.)

Now what is this "conscience" which the apostle speaks of here?

It is very plain if we look at Scripture, and take the simple meaning of the word itself: *con* and *science*, or knowledge. That is, it is the certain knowledge that a man has within himself about moral things. Scripture declares this to have been in man since he listened to Satan, and partook of the fruit of the forbidden tree. Man from that time onwards has had a knowledge within himself down at the bottom, notwithstanding all his unbelief. Sometimes he puts his thoughts out, as infidels do, and says, "I do not believe in eternity or in the Scriptures"; but afterwards he will say, as has been said to me before now: "I said that to keep you away from reaching me. You have got the advantage over me; for you, by the light you have got, see into eternity, whereas death is to me a dark, black curtain."

The way in which this works is presented differently in Scripture, and people make a great many mistakes about it. If you turn to Gen. iii. you will see it is said: "The eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked." This was the first effect of their taking of the tree that God prohibited. God had said, Do not touch it. They took it, and then came the deep inward feeling, I am unfit for God's presence; so they had recourse to something that lay in their own circumstances; they put their hands on the thing nearest them to cover them,

and they were apparently quite comfortable, having thus smoothed over the surface by something within their own range.

But when the voice of the Lord is heard saying, "Where art thou?" this smoothed inward feeling could not abide. And that has stuck in man's mind to the present time. He knows he is not fit for God's presence, and God is a heart-searching God.

Thus I get, in the father and mother of the human family, conscience brought in. And have not you got it? Have you not got the same feeling that Adam and Eve had in the garden? As I said just now, you *have*.

In Romans ii. the apostle, speaking of the heathen, says: "Which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another."

There have been many instances of this inward persuasion in the mind of the heathen. One man, an old philosopher, came to the conclusion that there was but one God, and his arguments are as good as those of Paley in his "Natural Theology." He even argued from His works that this God was a beneficent being. But when he was going to be put to death for saying so, he said to his disciples: "I have vowed a cock to Esculapius, and I have not offered it."

Just going to be put to death for maintaining the unity of the Deity, he speaks of offering a sacrifice to a false god! So there was no power among the heathen, though they had conscience. We see what a stupid thing conscience is.

And if we go abroad to the individual, we shall see what an equally stupid thing, what a senseless

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thing, is conscience. Let me put the senselessness of it before you as it was seen in myself.

When as a young man, about twenty years of age, I felt that I was a sinner, I looked at Scripture, and saw that I was descended from sinful parents. I said: "There Satan brought sin in"; and conscience added: "You are not fit for God's presence." So I began to do something to better myself. And what was the sense of that? It came to just this: Satan had overcome my parents in the garden, and I thought that I had more power as fallen than Adam had as unfallen.

You see how senseless conscience was in me. And if ever there were a Pharisee who sought to get a good conscience, I was that one, by starvation and fasting till I was at death's door. What did that do for me? I found I had got into a state of departure from God, and I was just telling God to stand back till I got to Him; thus quietly assuming that I could do God's work for Him. My trying to do it was only the expression of my senseless conscience. A conscience that can do that is blind and cannot see afar off.

Remark that when the apostle speaks of a "purged" conscience, that is, of a soul that has the sense of sin removed from it, he begins by showing how far the sacrifices appointed of God could give it. It was clear they could not. God had set up a system of sacrifices, and yet He never stopped talking of sin and sacrifices. They began at the passover; then came the feast of unleavened bread, and so on, till they came round to the great day of atonement (Lev. xxiii.)

If we had been on earth then with the light we have now, we should have said: I will gladly offer a lamb, and a kid, and a bullock too; but,

dear me, I am a great deal more important than fifty thousand bullocks ! And if the sacrifice did not come up in value to the one who offered it, it could not remove the sense of sin. All the bullocks that King Solomon offered did not come up in value to Solomon himself, and so could not remove his sense of guilt.

And then the thought would come up : It is all very well for me to do these things, but even if I lay down my life itself, how can that make any compensation to God who has been insulted by my sin? I say, No ; I have a feeling in my breast that God has not got His place here in my heart, and when I meet Him we shall have things to settle. He can say to me : You have got being from me, and yet you have not loved me. When young there may have been passions, blasphemy, and the like ; and since I have cut off these external bad fruits, inside my heart what a want of trust in Him ! I must feel that if I, as a creature, meet Him as a Creator, I have something to settle. The very feeling of this shows a conscience that is not "purged." It has still blots and spots ; it is not fit for His presence.

I want to draw your attention to what it is that gives a "purged" conscience, for it is very important at a time when knowledge is so much on the increase ; when there is so much instruction as to the superstructure ; and when the hour of trial comes it is found there is no answer within as to this settlement of God about things.

In the Epistle to the Hebrews we find that the platform is drawn above. I am down here, but God has spread the heavens above, and pitched a tabernacle there ; He has arranged the heavens



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after an entirely new order. Jesus Christ has sat down there in the true tabernacle, and God, in taking His Son into the heavens, has taken Him there as the One who was "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners," and has set Him at His own right hand according to His plan and counsel before the world was. (Heb. vii. 26.)

But what has that do to with my conscience? Directly I get into the light of it, it has everything to do with it; because when there is trouble within me about the things I have to settle with God, I lift my eyes there, and I say: "He has been there before me, making the throne of the Highest a throne of mercy, and letting the only question now be whether mercy suits me. I am a sinner, and God has a right to show mercy."

I cannot say He is bound not to let out mercy because man has rebelled; He had not shown it out in creation or providence, but He thought He had a perfect right to show it out when His Son was in the heavens at His own right hand. And what mercy and compassion this is! God looks down and says: How will you be when you stand before me, and plead guilty as one who has had to do with the God of mercy?

"Oh!" I say, "I will not settle then; I say for myself now, that if He look over the whole of England He will not find a specimen better fitted to show what mercy is to, than myself."

That is the feeling in one's own conscience, and then one gets rest.

But He here shows me how He makes His throne the throne of mercy; He explains the ground on which He feels justified in His holiness to speak to a sinner. He would have felt that

His honour was tarnished if He had spoken to a sinner about mercy except through the death of Christ. But now He has used sin itself as an occasion to show out His mercy. On the cross He showed out the horrid character of the world and the horrid character of Satan; and then He took Christ up to a new place as man at His own right hand, and so He says, I am free to speak of mercy to the sinner.

I would press the fact of the death of Christ in connection with the character of God. People look for something to satisfy themselves; and we need to have this. But *God* needs to be satisfied, for there had been an impediment in the way. How could He be just, and yet the justifier? His own Son bore the wrath; and, if so, God can now speak of mercy; nay, God can come out and look for the sinner, because Christ has died.

Now, heaven is arranged at present in a way to throw out in the light the accepted sacrifice of Christ; and if I come to that, can I have a spot remaining on my conscience? Can I have conscience of sins? I do not say, the consciousness of sin. I have got that, or I could not have forgiveness; but I have not conscience of sins.

Conscience and consciousness are two different things. Saul had no consciousness of sins when his conscience was so hard that he was putting God's saints to death. If any one had said to him, What a dreadful sinner you are! he would have answered, No, I am a righteous man. When he saw the sacrifice of Christ he had "no more conscience of sins," but he became perfectly conscious that the law of sin and death was in his members, and that he could not have it taken out until he was glorified.

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Am not I a happy creature to have "no conscience of sins" at all? Do I go into His presence and say: I have been trying to rub out this score and that score; sometimes I think I have succeeded, and then again not?

No! I go and say, This is astonishing! I have learned in Jesus, alive at Thy right hand, the full volume of Thy mercy and of my sin, such as it defies a finite mind to grasp.

I can remember, when trying to get the consciousness of rest, and I have seen it over and over again in others, trying to get a measure for sin, something to measure sin by, as perhaps by looking at it in its aggravations. For instance, that it was much more awful in a Christian land, and with the Bible in one's hand. All this supposes that the person does not admit that sin is infinite because it is against God. But directly I saw sin finished on the cross, I got rest, because I had got a measure by which I saw sin infinite; and until you, a human being, can get into a state to, in a measure, understand what passed in the soul of the Son of man, you will never know what passed between Him and God. Sin was indefinitely great, but sin was indefinitely put away, and sin too that was against God.

And who was the person who bore it? The Son of God, who is also the Son of man.

Now, I could not say that I am better than He. Thousands of bullocks are not so much worth as one man; but put the whole human race together, and can they be compared to the worth of the Son of God as Son of man? No! Well, He went in, and bore what was due to me, and the whole thing was settled then and there, and settled to my faith directly I knew it.

Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance 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." (Romans iii. 24-26.)

In the tenth chapter of Hebrews, then, I find that this tablet written in me, called "conscience," directly it gets into the light of heaven (unless I am prepared to judge God, and Christ, and the Holy Ghost), must say that the whole question is settled (*vv.* 12-22). If God feels perfectly free to speak to the sinner; and not only so but looks out for the chief of sinners to show His mercy to; what if I should say, I am more punctilious than Thou, and do not feel that I am free to go? If He say, You are free to come right clean into the presence of the Majesty in the heavens, and if you say, I cannot come, then all that it proves is that your eye is not upon CHRIST.

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CHRIST took *my place* in death and judgment on the cross; and now I get *Christ's place* before God, by faith in His blood. Is this right? Clearly so. It is due to Christ that, if He took my portion to extricate me from it, I should share His portion, if, in grace, He is willing to share it with me. God, therefore, against whom I have sinned, is "just" in now "justifying" me, because Jesus has been delivered and condemned for my sins, and then raised by God in proof of His satisfaction and delight in Him and in His work of redemption for me. (Romans iv. 25.)

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# GOSPEL LIGHT.



**GOD IS LIGHT. GOD IS LOVE.**

"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him."

1 John i. 5. 1 John iv. 8, 16. 1 John iv. 9.

## HOW OLD PEGGIE SPURNED SALVATION.

**A**T the top of a steep hill, where two roads met, and where the wild wintry blasts from the mountain beyond swept right round the corner upon it, stood the poorhouse of the village of B——.

Poor it certainly was; a wretched abode. The authorities, whose business it was to care for the poor, had chosen it as a suitable dwelling for those who could not afford to have a roof of their own, under which to find shelter, while the remnant of their weary days was ebbing out.

Nothing but the utmost distress of circumstances, or the iron hand of starvation staring them in the face, would force any to seek a home in such a place. Consequently, it at times stood quite empty; and, when any had the misfortune to be sent there "to live rent free," as they were

politely told, no provision was made for their daily need, except an occasional scanty supply of coals, and a very small weekly allowance from the parish funds, by no means adequate to sustain life.

I never liked to pass this melancholy abode. It was a two-storey house, with the roof in very bad repair, the chimney-tops broken, and the small windows patched with paper or stuffed with rags. It had two cheerless chambers below, and two above; the access from the lower to the upper storey being by an almost perpendicular staircase.

One day, as I was passing this wretched abode, I observed a feeble curl of grey smoke coming from one of the broken chimney-tops. I stopped to wonder who could be living there. A woman stood a short way from the door, so I went up to her, and said, "Can you tell me who is in the poorhouse just now?"

"Auld Peggie," she answered. "She's been sold out o' house an' hame; and she's there noo livin' her lane."

"Old Peggie," I said. "Is that the old woman who for years has gone about in rags, with a basket on her arm, and a clay pipe in her mouth?"

"The same," said the woman, laughingly. "Onybody kens her, I'll warrant."

Peggie was an old village celebrity, the terror of my childish dreams; and for years past I had wondered where she lived. "Poor Peggie," I said. "And is she living all alone there?"

"Yes," said the woman. "it's a puir place, and she has nane to care for either her soul or body."

I would fain have passed the door of that dirty, dreary house, but I could not: there was a soul there "living alone," and "without Christ." I

knocked, and was answered by a hoarse "Come in."

The crazy door creaked upon its hinges as I passed into one of the lower apartments. Its mud floor was wet and dirty; its furniture consisted of a closed-in wall bed (admirably constructed to exclude all light and air), a small wooden table, a chair, a low stool, and a wooden plate, a rack on the wall, in which stood two or three plates, a basin, a mug, and a broken tea-pot. On the fire was a small iron pot on three legs.

The inmate of this room sat on the low stool by the fire, smoking a much blackened, short clay pipe. Her cotton gown and cap were dirty and ragged, and her boots almost worn out. Her face was sallow, wrinkled and ill-tempered, and her wandering eye told its own tale; no rest, no peace within.

I sat down without invitation, and, while Peggie continued smoking, I looked to the Lord to show me in what manner I could best present Christ to a soul in such a state of moral degradation. "Peggie," I said by way of introduction, "you don't know me?"

"Hoot," she growled, "I've kent ye from a bairn. You're one o' the leddies from the G—."

"You are right," I answered, "though I never spoke to you in my life; but I heard you were living alone here, and I came to speak to you about a Friend and Comforter for such lonely ones as you."

"Whar does he bide?"

"At the right hand of God now, Peggie; but once He was down here, and suffered and died for you and me, that He might have us with Him for ever?"

“Gae wa, gae wa,” she said, waving her wrinkled hand and arm. “If it’s Christ ye mean, I’d rather be without Him. I’ve lived without Him mair than seventy years, and I’ll live on without Him.”

“But you are very old, Peggie, and death must come in at your door some day, and that before long, and how can you meet God as you are; a sinner, laden with sins? You’ve served Satan long enough; won’t you turn to Christ now?”

I pressed upon her the nearness of death, and judgment if she continued to reject Christ.

She seemed a little frightened, took the clay pipe from her mouth, and laid it at the side of the fire, and gazing at me, said, “Will He save me noo, jist as I am?”

“Yes, just as you are, for He came to seek and to save lost sinners like you; and He has given His word that He will save you this moment if you believe upon Him; ‘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.’ ‘He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him’ (John iii. 16, 36).

For a few moments she rested her aged head on her hands, as if weighing in a balance eternal life in Christ, and life without Him!

I silently prayed. When I looked at her she had resumed her pipe. Her face was callous and unmoved. I rose, for I had stayed to the utmost limit of my time, and said, “Well, Peggie, are you to have Christ now?”

Slowly she answered, “Na, na; I’ve lived without Him seventy years, and I can live without Him for the rest o’ my days.”



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“Peggie,” I said, “if you are determined to live without Christ, you must die without Him, and spend eternity without Him!”

It was a week before I could again be in the village; for we lived some miles from it, and only came in once a week. I eagerly longed for the day when I could again speak of Christ to this aged sinner, living without Him. Quickly I ran up the hill, knocked at the door, and, getting no answer, went in.

Peggie’s low stool was empty; the fire was out; her pipe was broken on the floor; the bed looked tumbled and disturbed. I drew aside the sliding panel of the bed, and stood horror-stricken.

There lay Peggie, her withered arms thrown above her head, as if in conflict with some unseen foe. I listened, but there was no sound; her breathing had for ever ceased. I touched her hand; it was cold. She was dead!

On going to the woman who had told me about her first, she would scarcely believe that she was dead. She had seen her as she passed the window a few hours before, smoking her pipe by the fire as usual, so that she was taken completely by surprise at this sudden announcement of her death.

I have written this account of Peggie specially for the aged who are still unsaved. Oh! may it be a word of warning to you. You may be very old, but you are not too old to be saved. Your time here cannot be long, it may be very short. Delay not a moment; put not longer off what you have put off too long already; receive Christ now, lest you perish like those who, refusing to have Christ to live with, must die without Him.

Doubtless Poor Peggie little thought, as she

smoked her pipe for the last time, that in a few minutes she would be in eternity. If you are old and grey-headed in sin, there is all the more need for you to be in earnest about your soul's salvation. The young may live many years; the middle-aged may live some years; but the old must die soon!

"Come now, and let us reason together," saith the Lord, "though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson they shall be like wool" (Isa. i. 18.) "The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John i. 7.) K.

## WHO HAVE PEACE WITH GOD?

**P**EACE with God is an inestimable blessing, of which many millions of the human race still know nothing.

Perhaps you are one of those; and possibly you think that peace with God cannot be had while we are in this world, and that we must wait till we go to the next world before we can know or have this peace.

But what does God Himself say about it? Which is the wise thing to do: to trust the thoughts of men, or to believe the Word of God? "Let God be true, but every man a liar," says the apostle, when arguing on this very point (Rom. iii. 4). Let us, then, see what the Word of God says.

"There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." "The wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up

mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked " (Isa. lvii. 20, 21).

The state of the world, which lies in wickedness (or, in the wicked one, 1 John v. 19), clearly proves the truth of the above word of God. Where do you see the wicked enjoying peace? Men and women in their sins are total strangers to peace. Have you ever stood watching the sea? Did you see the water still? Never. Sometimes it is less disturbed, less restless, than at others, but it is never wholly at rest. And " the wicked are like *the troubled sea* when it *cannot rest*."

But may be you reply, " Yes, yes, but those are the wicked who are going on in all kinds of sin and rebellion against God. I am not one of them. I hate all that sort of thing, and would not follow such a course on any account. I quite see how such people as that have no peace. But I am not like that; I'm peaceful enough. I always go to a place of worship, and seek to do my duty in this life. No one can lay anything particularly wrong to my charge. I don't believe in making myself miserable, pulling a long face, and making a great show of one's religion. There are some people so mopish, they won't go here, they won't go there, they won't do this, they won't do that; I've no patience with them. I believe God meant us to enjoy ourselves a bit here as well as hereafter. I'm very happy and peaceful. I don't think God is quite so hard as some of you folk seem to make out."

My dear friend, we do not want to make out anything but what is true; all we desire is that you should bow to God's Word. What we have supposed you have just said shows plainly the condition you are in. " Out of the abundance of

the heart the mouth speaketh " (Matt. xii. 34). It is all I, I, I; your righteousness, your thoughts from beginning to end. You are joining in the wide-spread cry of "Peace, peace; when there is no peace" (Jer. viii. 11). Your foundation is false from beginning to end, and therefore your peace is A FALSE PEACE too. You are propping yourself up in your own righteousness, clothing yourself in your own filthy rags (Isaiah lxiv. 6), and crying with the Pharisee, "I am not as other men are" (Luke xviii. 11). Vain delusion. Satan will not disturb you as long as you rest there; you may be at peace with him, but surely not with God. Oh! sinner, hast thou not read that when men "shall cry, Peace and safety: then sudden destruction cometh upon them"? (I Thess. v. 3). Human morality and religion never did and never will put away sin. "Without shedding of blood is no remission" of sins (Heb. ix. 22). It is Cain's religion over again: your doings, your works, your goodness. God sweeps away the whole refuge of deceit and lies, this terrible stronghold of the devil, "*self-righteousness*," with three words: "*Not of works*." May He write them indelibly upon the table of your heart as it were "with a pen of iron, and the point of a diamond" (Jer. xvii. 1).

Cease, then, sinner, from your own righteousness; own you are guilty and lost. "Acquaint now thyself with God, and be at peace, thereby good shall come unto thee." (Job xxii. 21).

If you desire true peace, you *must* have it in *God's* way, or you cannot have it at all. God never told the sinner to make peace by his own efforts. It is utterly impossible to obtain it by anything you are, or ever will be, anything you

have done, are doing, or ever can do. But if you acquaint yourself with God (and *now*, not to-morrow, is God's time), you will find the peace you need, but lack; for Christ has *made peace* by the blood of His cross, and God now *preaches peace* by Jesus Christ to all (Col. i. 20; Acts x. 36). "Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near" (Isaiah lvii. 19). Peace to the Jew; peace to the Gentile; peace to those who were under law; peace to those who are without law; peace, peace to all.

What you cannot possibly do, Christ has already done: *made peace*. God Himself was the author of the wondrous plan. By His Son, God began, went on with, and completed perfectly the whole work of making peace. God said, "Without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. ix. 22), and Himself provided a Lamb, without blemish, "without spot" (1 Pet. i. 19). The one perfect offering of Jesus met all His claims, settled every question God-ward. "He hath made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin" (2 Cor. v. 21). Peace was made by the blood, the precious blood, the blood of Christ (1 Pet. i. 19). God raised the sin-bearer to the throne of glory. Do you believe on Him? "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John i. 7).

*He "was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification; therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ"* (Rom. iv. 25: v. 1).

The death and resurrection of Christ settled everything. God is satisfied; yea, glorified (John xvii. 4). What question then will you raise? What further do you need? Is it your offences that trouble you? He was

delivered to death for the offences of all who believe. Is it how you are to be justified? He was raised again for the justification of every one that believeth. Again I ask you, Do you believe? Doubtless you believe about it, but do you believe it? Do you believe on Him who did it all once and for ever by Himself? Do you? If you do, then peace is yours; present peace, permanent peace, everlasting peace, *with God, through Jesus*. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, *through our Lord Jesus Christ*." (Rom. v. i.) Not, We shall have it; not, We hope to have it; no "if;" no "*perhaps*," no terms, no conditions; but a plain, positive, unchanging, unalterable, unconditional, absolute statement made by God, who cannot lie, written by God in His Word which cannot be broken (Titus i. 2; John x. 35). "WE HAVE PEACE." True of you, me, every and anybody that believes.

We have NOW peace with God. It must be now if we have it at all. And God says we have it. We believe God, and therefore we know we have it. HAVE YOU IT? "I believe," you reply. Then you must have peace. "Being justified by faith we *have peace*," says the apostle. The two things go together. If you have not peace, you have not got faith, you do not believe. If you do believe, then you have peace. Believing is having: so always. It is all in believing; forgiveness, justification, eternal life, peace with God: all are ours the moment we believe. Christ is the only Saviour; Christ is offered to all. Faith appropriates Him; and having Christ, we possess all things in Him.

"HE IS OUR PEACE, who hath made both one [that is, Jews and Gentiles who now believe]

and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in Himself of twain, one new man; *so making peace* " (Eph. ii. 14-15).

What a thought for a poor, burdened, anxious soul, who has been trying year after year to find peace, vainly expecting to discover it in some form or shape in himself, *to have perfect peace with God now* through the finished work of Christ! One simple look of faith at Jesus on the throne of God, and outside of self altogether, and the whole question is for ever settled, and peace with God the present blessed result. Praise God for His wondrous plan.

Reader, let me ask you once again, Have *you* peace with God? If not, why not?

We not only read of peace *with*, but also of the peace *of* God. This, too, is the proper portion of the believer. "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. And the *peace of God*, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Phil. iv. 6).

Follow the exhortation of His Word, fellow-believer, and you shall be thus kept. "And, finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Those things, which ye have both learned and received, and heard, and seen in me (Paul) *do*; and *the God of peace* shall be with you" (Phil. iv.

8-9). Satan will seek to hinder and obstruct, but resist him, and "he will flee from you" (Jas. iv. 7); "and *the God of peace* shall bruise him under your feet shortly" (Rom. xvi. 20).

E. H. C.

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"Can you tell me what becomes of the fishes during a storm?" asked an old Christian man of some children one day.

It seemed that they had never thought of fishes in such a time, and though rather struck by the question, they were unable to find an answer.

He told them that, however wild the storm at sea, there was always an under-current of peaceful water (as it was only the surface which got troubled), and that the fishes went down into the depths and hid there in the rocks.

He drew from this little story an interesting illustration of Christians, who, however great their trials and difficulties, could always be at peace, even amid the "storms" of this life, while trusting in the Lord Jesus, the "Rock of Ages."

How comparatively few, though, do *rest in Him*, but, on the contrary, go with the tide of their difficulties, and so get overwhelmed beneath the storm! Would that every one knew the sweetness of casting all their burdens upon Him who cares for us, and who would have His people without carefulness; and having committed their way unto the Lord, in things small as well as great, find what it is to be *still*, and know that He is *God* (Isa. xxvi. 4; 1 Pet. v. 7; Ps. xlv. 10.)

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