

HELPS BY THE WAY:

A FORTNIGHTLY MAGAZINE.

DESIGNED FOR THE MINISTRY OF A FULL AND PRECIOUS
CHRIST, TO THOSE FOR WHOM HE DIED.

“Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you; for Him hath God the Father sealed.”—JOHN VI. 27.

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Vol. III.

THE NUMBER FOURTEEN IN SCRIPTURE.

The key to the giving of the genealogy in Matt. i. in such a form, with omissions which were necessarily intentional, (because of the existence of other records,) is to be found in the periods which are chosen as the divisions of the whole genealogy, viz: periods of fourteen generations.

This number, from the varied use of it in Scripture, points to the existence of adequate witness of a spiritual kind expressed in a spiritual way, (*i. e.* not directly in words but in the character of the actions) to man, or to earth, or to the universe—in fact to any one's spiritual perception of it. It is not witness intended merely for the senses, sight and hearing, but for the spirit or understanding of whoever is addressed.

In Gen. xxxi, 41, and 1 Kings viii, 65, the number is shown to be composed of two sevens, so that we are right so to regard it. The instances of its use are:

Gen. xxxi, 41.—Showing testimony given to Laban of Jacob's earnestness and faithfulness.

Gen. xlvi. 19-22.—Showing testimony of Rachel's worth,—the children reckoned to her.

Numb. xxix. 12, 13, 15.—Showing testimony of the value of the sacrifice of Jesus. This being the feast of Tabernacles the witness is to the universe, because this feast testifies the time of blessing universal through that sacrifice. The fourteen lambs were repeated on the seven days of the feast, (vv. 17, 20, 23, 26, 29, 32) but of

the eighth day (vv. 35, 36,) seven lambs only were offered, as this is in type the resurrection or heaven's day—so the witness is God-ward, not man-ward.

1 Kings viii. 65.—Adequate spiritual testimony of God's goodness to His people.

1 Chron. xxv. 5.—Adequate spiritual testimony of God's faithfulness to His Word, "in the words of God to lift up the horn."

Lev. xxiii. 5; }
Exod. xii. 2-6. } The passover. God's delaying the
Ezek. xlv. 21. } execution of the (typical) judgment on sin until the 14th day of the month, undoubtedly gives spiritual witness of the solemn and deliberate character of that judgment. The occurrence of the passover fixed the commencement of the year for the Jews, but it is striking that it does not happen on the 1st day of what became to them the first month of the year.

2 Kings xviii; xx. 6. }
2 Chron. xxxi. 20-21; } Showing testimony given to
xxxii. 1. } Hezekiah's faithfulness.

Ezek. xl. 1.—The testimony given to God's righteous judgment on Jerusalem, and yet His mercy in giving the revelation of its restoration: ("the fourteenth year after that the city was smitten.")

Acts xxvii. 27.—The testimony given to God's vindication of His word by Paul and of his care of him and those with him.

2 Cor. xii. 2. }
Gal. ii. 1. } Adequate spiritual testimony to the reality of those things which Paul taught and those which were called in question.

Matt. i. 17.—The whole course of the descent is

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divided into three parts or sections. From Abraham to David, God personally was known as the one who directly and manifestly interfered in the care and government of His people. From David until the Captivity a man—the king—was made His representative among and over His people, and He then “gave the king his judgments” and reached the people through him. From the beginning of the Captivity until Christ, God was caring for his own providentially, but He was hidden from them (as in Esther); it was only “His Spirit remained among them,” as He says in Haggai.

Even at the best all these were but partial revelations of God, but each continued for a time, which, at any rate, was sufficient to give expression to a complete testimony to the revelation. However much longer the duration of each may have been, there were in each division at least two periods of seven or fourteen generations. There were in some instances more generations than the fourteen, but nothing that is said excludes these. We have not a human account of the “book of generations,” but God has selected that number of them to express how that He has given time for a complete two-fold testimony to each manifestation of Himself and of His ways with His people. Man’s failure and sin have invariably come in and eventually closed all up by making judgment necessary. After them all Christ came, the full revelation, and the manifestation of God.

F. J. R.

FROM MS. NOTES ON MATTHEW.

A FEW THOUGHTS ABOUT REPENTANCE.

THAT the Cross of Christ is for *sinners*, is a fundamental truth of the Gospel which can never be insisted on too strongly nor proclaimed too widely. That the salvation of God is thus brought to all men freely to be accepted, as what Another's toil has wrought for entirely apart from any work of man's, can not be made too simple, or adhered to too unqualifiedly. In the matter of justification, the work of Christ is the only ground of it, and faith without works the only condition. He who has convicted the whole world of unrighteousness, stopping the mouths of all with the assertion, that there is "no difference" Godward among men, "for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. iii., 23), and "all are *dead*" (2 Cor. 5), and in "death there can be no difference—has given One to "die for all," and through His work, taken righteously the place, not of judge, but of justifier; and, moreover, they whom He justifies are "the ungodly." The picture of a prodigal met in rags and ruin is just our picture. And the picture of One, who, with a father's heart, has but to have presented to Him the misery which touches it, in order to relieve it,—yea, has but to have our face turned toward Him, to run and fall upon our neck, and, without one upbraiding word, kiss us into peace and broken heartedness; this is a picture which may He forbid, should ever have thrown over it the shadows of legality.

No, God has *manifested himself*. In Christ he has

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done it. Put away the veil forever. And we are brought to him to learn a love, which, after all our experience of it, "passes knowledge." If it be unlike *us*, it is the more worthy of *Him*, and we love, because we *are* loved, and because in Christ we know the Father.

With this the true doctrine of repentance agrees fully: first, because it is a fruit of faith and of life, and not a condition to be fulfilled before these.

This ought to be simple. Faith is that wherein life begins in the soul. "The dead hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear live." "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me HATH everlasting life." (John v.) These are the Lord's own statements. Moreover "without faith it is impossible to please God." (Heb. xi.) The dead repent not, save as Judas did. Natural conscience, of course, they have, but no true, no "godly sorrow," which alone "worketh repentance" (2 Cor. vii. 10); nothing, in short, which can "please God;" nothing, therefore, which I can bring to Him, as what He can approve, and in order to be justified. No! for he "justifieth the *ungodly*" and "him that *worketh not* but *believeth*." (Rom. iv. 5.) Nor is there (as some dream) a certain degree of faith by which I repent, but which does not justify. There is a dead faith surely which does not, but neither can that work repentance, and there is no degree of true faith that is not justifying. It is simply, "he that *believeth* on the Son hath everlasting life," and "he that *believeth not* the Son shall not see life." (John iii. 36.)

Secondly, although repentance is in the most absolute way essential to salvation, it is in the very nature of it, a thing that I can not rest in. A repentant soul is just and only one who can find in himself no ground but for self-aborrence. I "abhor

myself, and *repent in dust and ashes*," (Job xlii., 6,) is not the expression of a self-complacency, which has picked up out of the dunghill even a few glittering grains of gold. If it be experience, it is the experience of utter worthlessness, such as can only find in "Him who justifieth the ungodly" the relief it seeks. It is the come down of self-righteousness, and self-sufficiency,—aye, of that specious form of it, which can find even in convictions and experience material whereon to feed. "I *abhor MYSELF*:"—ah, not past acts nor a past state, but *myself*, and all that comes of me; for a corrupt tree *cannot* bring forth good fruit.

Thus the suited order, so much misunderstood: "Repent ye, and *believe the Gospel*." What is *that*? Why, here is a blessed message of grace for sinners; stoop to the sinner's place, and drink it in. Is that limiting the freeness of the Gospel? God has pronounced of every man what he is. "There is no difference. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Bow to that. Repent. Then and there the gospel meets you with its full sweet assurance of justification. "Repent ye, and believe the *gospel*." There are many souls who have believed in Christ, and so have really life, who have not in the full sense believed the *gospel*. Otherwise they would have peace, for God preaches peace by Jesus Christ, and to believe that would bring it. They need a more hearty belief in the truth of what God declares them to be, "without strength," as well as "ungodly" and they need to see more clearly how, in the midst of that ruin, *as* "when we were yet without strength, Christ died for the ungodly," *so when* we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son." (Rom. v., 6, 10.) If any one doubts what that means, let him think of that Saul of Tarsus who

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wrote it, looking up into the face of that Jesus whom he was persecuting as the vivid illustration of it; and let him still further listen to that apostle's account of unbelieving Israel, who, "following after the law of righteousness, did not attain to the law of righteousness." And, "wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith." (Rom. ix. 31, 32.) So for any one who seeks repentance (the first step in practical righteousness for a sinner) in any other way than "by faith," he will not attain it, and will be found not to have "submitted to the righteousness of *God*." Let him believe God's testimony, and repent. Let him own the utter helplessness of his ruin, and trust the mercy which alone suits his case. He need not shut his eyes to God's grace until he have repented, for "repentance and remission of sins" are proclaimed "in the name" of Him whose death for all tells how truly all are dead. (Luke xxiv. 47.) The more he learns of grace in God, the deeper will be his repentance; nor will it cease but only acquire its fullest character, when, in the faith of God's good news, he awakes to the blessed certainty of a Father's arms about his neck, and the kiss of peace upon his forehead. More lowly than ever will be the confession of the heart, then, in the presence of a *Father*,—"Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight." But little does he, who so *repents*, value his repentance, or build on it. No; he builds upon the grace alone which has rescued a prodigal, and without reproach.

Beloved, this is not making light of repentance. No; we would again and again echo it: "Repent ye, and believe the gospel."

THE CHILD AND THE LAND.

There are two things specially before us in the 15th chapter of Genesis; and they come before us in the shape of a Divine answer to two questions from the heart of Abraham. The two questions moreover are drawn out of him by two assurances on God's part, each of which is of unspeakable moment to ourselves.

The two assurances are (1) "Fear not, Abram; I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward;" (2) "I am the Lord, that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it." As we would read these for ourselves now, "God is our portion," and "heaven is the place in which we are to enjoy our portion."

To the first assurance Abram replies, "Lord God, what wilt Thou give me, seeing I go childless?" To the second, "Lord God, whereby shall I *know* that I shall inherit it?" Strange questions, it may seem, in the face of God's absolute assurances; yet questions which do speak to us of a need in man's heart, which not merely God's work but God's act must meet; questions which thus He takes up in His grace seriously to answer, and that *we*, through all time, may have the blessedness of their being answered.

The answer to both, no Christian heart can doubt, is Christ: for Christ is God's answer to every question. Here, it may be, figuratively and enigmatically given, as was characteristic of a time in which God could not yet speak out fully. None the less should

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it be plain to us now what is intended, and unspeakably precious to find Christ unfolding to us, as it were, out of every rose-bud in this garden of the Lord.

(1.) “*After these things* the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision: Fear not, Abram; I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.”

Had Abram been fearing? The things that had just transpired, and to which the Lord evidently refers, were his victory over the combined power of four kings who had swept like a hurricane over the adjoining lands, none able to resist them; and secondly, his refusal to be enriched at the hands of the king of Sodom. Brave deeds and brave words! wrought with God, and spoken before God, who can doubt? Yet it is nothing uncommon, just when we have wrought something, for a sudden revulsion of feeling to surprise us,—for the ecstatic and high-strung emotion upon whose summit we were just now carried, to subside and leave us, like a stranded boat, consciously (if we may so say) above watermark. The necessity of action just now shut out all other thought. That over, it no longer sustains. We drop out of heroism, to find—what? Blessed be His Name! God Himself beneath us! We, who were shielding others, find, more than ever, the need of God our Shield. We, who were energetically refusing Sodom’s offers, need to be reminded, “*I am thy exceeding great reward.*” Thank God, when the boat strands there!

God our Defence! what shaft of the enemy can pierce through to us? God our recompensing Portion! what is all the world can give? In this place of eternal shelter, O to know more the still unsearchable riches!

“*Of Christ,*” adds the apostle. Did not Abram feel the lack of our revelation there,—unintelligent

as he might be, as to what was wanted, and utterly unable, of course, to forestall God's as yet but partially hinted purpose? Grasping, as it were, at infinity and unable to lay hold of it, he drops from heaven to earth, and cries with something like impatience, as the immensity of the blessing makes itself felt in his very inability to hold it: "Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus . . . Behold, to me Thou hast given no seed, and lo, one born in my house is mine heir."

How flat all God's assurances seem to have fallen with the pattern man of faith! And yet we may find very manifestly in this our pattern. It is all very well to say that Abram's faith was not up to the mark here. In truth it was not; but that is no explanation. Do *you* know what it is, apart from Christ as now revealed to us, to grasp after this immensity of God your Portion? If you do, you will know how the wings of faith flutter vainly in the void, and cannot rise to it. Thank God, if you cannot rise, *God can come down*; and so He does here to Abram. Serenely He descends to the low level of Abram's faith, and goes on to give him what it *can* grasp: "And behold, the word of the Lord came unto him, saying: This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars if thou be able to number them: so shall thy seed be. And he believed in the Lord; and He counted it to him for righteousness."

The many seeds and the one are here; and the many to be reached by means of the one. Abram's 'One seed' must be familiar to us all. Through and in Isaac we read Christ: "He saith not, Unto seeds,

as of many, but as of one; and to thy seed, which is Christ." To us at least, is it an obscure utterance of how this first assurance is made good to us, and possible to be realized? The Son of man, here amongst us, where faith shall need no impossible flights to lay hold of Him, and the infinity of Godhead shall be brought down to the apprehension of a little child. Himself "the child born," Himself the "Son given," the kingdom of peace is forestalled for those with whom all the faculties of their soul subdued and harmonized under His blessed hand, "the calf and the young lion and the fatling" dwell together, and "a little child" leads them.

God our Shield, and God our Reward: we know these, we appreciate them in Him who is God manifest, because God incarnate.

(2) The second question now comes up. "And He said unto him, I am the Lord, that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees to give thee this land to inherit it. And he said, Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?"

Here too the question is plain, and to be answered by deeds, not words. The land for us is the good land of our inheritance, the land upon which the eyes of the Lord are continually, not earth but heaven. A wonderful place to enjoy our portion, when we know what indeed our portion is. "Where I am," is the Lord's own description; and thus you will find it most apt and suited, that it is not until He stands before us upon earth, that the full, clear revelation of an inheritance in heaven is made to us. *He* uncloses heaven who ascending up there carries the hearts of His disciples within its gates. Did they open to admit us without this, would not our eyes turn back reluctantly to that earth only familiar to us? Did they *not* open now, would they not be an

eternal distance-putting between us and our Beloved? "That where I am, there ye may be also," explains all. The stars shining out of heaven are thus in this chapter the fitting symbol of the multitudinous seed.

But *how* is man to reach a land like this? A place with Christ, reader! Look at what you are, and answer me: what is to raise a fallen child of earth up to the height of God's own heaven?

No work of man, at least; no human invention of any kind. How could we think of a place with Christ as the fruit of anything except God's infinite grace? He who came down from the glory of God to put His hand upon us, alone can raise us up thither. No human obedience merely, even were it perfect, could have value of this kind, because it would still be merely what was our duty to do. He to whom obedience was a voluntary stooping, not a debt, alone could give it value. And He, raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, and gone in as man into the presence of God; brings us for whom His work was done into the self-same place which as man He takes.

Thus God answers Abram by putting before him Christ as the pledge of inheritance: "Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she-goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtle-dove, and a young pigeon." God delights to accumulate the types of what Christ is, and press their various significance upon us. These all are types which are brought out more distinctly by their use in the offerings, after this. The three beasts all tame animals, not wild, nor needing to be captured for use, but the willing servants of man's need; each three years old, time in its maturity unfolding in them a Divine mystery. The first two, females, the type of fruitfulness: the heifer, of the patient workman; the

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she-goat, of the victim for our sins; the ram, in whom the meek surrender of the sheep becomes more positive energy; afterwards, therefore, the ram of consecration, and of the trespass-offering (Lev. v. 15; viii. 22). The birds speak of One from heaven, One whom love made a man of sorrow (the turtle-dove), and One come down to a life of faith on earth (the rock-pigeon, like the coney making its nest in the place of security and strength).

To unfold these things and apply them would require volumes. No wonder, for we have here our occupation for eternity begun. These, the five-fold type expressed in one perfect Man, Abram "divided in the midst, and laid each piece one against another, but the birds divided he not; and when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away." Thus upon all these types of moral beauty, and that they may be fit types of Him whom they represent, death passes; and they lie exposed under the open heaven, faith in Abram guarding the sacrifice from profanation, until "when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram, and he slept; and lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him." Faith's watchfulness is over, darkness succeeds light; but this only brings out the supreme value of the sacrifice itself which not faith gives efficacy to, but which sustains faith. God himself under the symbols of "a smoking furnace and a burning lamp," passes between the pieces, pledging Himself by covenant* to perform His promise of inheritance. Purifier and Enlightener, He pledges Himself by the sacrifice to give the needed discipline in faith's failure, and the needed light in the darkness it involves, and

*See Jer. xxxiv. 18, where God announces the doom of those who had not performed the covenant they made with Him "when they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof."

thus the inheritance, not apart from the suited state to enjoy it with God, but *along with* the conditions which His holiness (and so His love) necessitates.

How complete and beautiful is this, then, as the answer to Abram's second question! If, with his eyes upon himself, he asks, "how shall I know that I shall inherit it?" he is answered by the revelation of the infinite value of that which puts a holy God and a righteous one, as this—righteousness and holiness both—upon his side: underpropping faith in all its frailty, and securing holiness as fully as it secures the inheritance itself. These types and shadows belong assuredly to us to whom Christ has become the revelation of all, the substance of the shadows. Ours is indeed a wider and a wondrous inheritance. But so ours is a sacrifice of infinite value, and which alone gave all they had to these symbols themselves. How precious to see God's eye resting in delight upon that which for Him had such significance, ages before its import could be revealed. How responsible we whom grace has favoured with so great a revelation!

Paul had Christ in the power of the eternal life so ruling every desire and thought, that with a chain on his foot and hand, all he thinks of is that Christ should be magnified by it. It was Christ for whom he was suffering; he knew that he was borne on the heart of Christ, he felt His love, he had *tasted* it; he could say, "Did not He come and tell me that He would go with me to Rome? Did not He give me a word, when all were in despair, to make the people in the ship know that my God was everything to me?"

is, is with me. Power cannot be lacking to accomplish what is His own purpose. Alas, that it should be so easy to mistake my desire to be something for Christ, for this, the only rightful object of the soul!

"I've been thinking how *rich* we are, getting things so much more direct from the hands of the Father; and the best of it is, He sends it in such unlooked-for ways—almost always just as we don't expect it: so there is no possibility of forgetting it's from *Him*. I think a child brought up from babyhood under such influences must have a heart full of thoughts of the all-loving One. It does not seem that such a child ever could be tempted to atheism or infidelity.

"At my next door neighbor's there's a chamber window-blind, that always stands wide open. Spring after spring the sparrows flutter in and out. There's always a nest in that snug retreat, between the house and blind. There's hardly the thickness of my hand between them and the busy life beyond; but they're not *in* it, and they're *safe*. So for your birdlings, dear parents, and yourselves, there'll always be a nest *near* the busy world, but not *of* it. I wonder if my neighbor *knows* the company she has! The world knows *you* not, but *God* knows, just as He knows these sparrows. Isn't it pleasant to think we need have no more care than the birds, because He careth for us? The nest that no boy would think of finding has talked of the Lord's dear ones; or, rather, the birds *in* it, have talked since last Lord's day.

"Not a sparrow falleth to the ground without our Father. Fear ye not, therefore, *ye are of more value than many sparrows.*"

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

(46.) Do the two parables in Matthew xiii.—The treasure hid in the field, and the pearl of great price, both refer to the church, or does the former speak of the Jews?

Ans. I do not doubt, myself, that the last three parables of the chapter refer respectively to the Jew, the Church, and the Gentiles, giving a connected view of the kingdom during the whole period of the Lord's absence till He comes in the clouds of heaven, to which the interpretation of the parables of the tares and net plainly carries it on. My reasons are briefly these:—

1st. As to the treasure hid in the field, it seems exactly to point out the condition of Israel at the time of the Lord's first coming. Plainly declared to be God's treasure of old, as Psalms cxxxv. 4, They were now hidden as that, Lo-Ammi written on them, and scattered among the nations of the world, (the field.) The Lord, coming to them took them up as that, but being rejected, went to the Cross instead, where He bought the world in order to possess Himself of them, and bring them out as His at last. Meantime they are again hidden as a treasure, and the Church is taken up instead.

2nd. The pearl speaks of the Church plainly. It is *one* pearl, obtained by means of the death of the being in which it was, and drawn out of the waters, which typify the Gentile nations, (Rev. xvii. 15.) The field (the world) does not here come into view, for the Church is heavenly.

3rd. The net seen in the waters, (by whom cast in is not noticed,) remains there till full, and is then drawn at once, thus differing from the present gospel work in which it is being cast continually and continually drawn, and the contents examined. Here no sorting takes place until the net is once for all removed from the waters, and then the interpretation seems clearly to define it to be a separation by angel hands, in which the wicked are "severed from among the just," words which admittedly refer to the final separation when just ones are left and the wicked taken; not as in that of the wheat-field, where the wheat is gathered first into the barn. If this severing be different from that spoken of in the body of the net-parable, then the interpretation does not apply to the parable at all. Applying it to the going forth of the everlasting gospel after the church has been removed, seems to harmonize all, and present a fitting conclusion.

(47.) In 2 Tim. ii. 20, is this what the house of God has come to? and what do the different vessels represent?

Ans. It is what the church has become like, being enlarged unduly by man's bad building. As a consequence, as the vessels of a great house were of various materials and different uses, so now with people in the external church. The point is, that the vessels are to honour or dishonour. Wood could not abide the fiery trial, nor earthenware be cleansed from defilement, but must be broken. (Lev. xi. 33; 1 Cor. iii. 13.)

“ THE LOVE OF CHRIST.

I.

Jesus our Lord and Saviour,
Whose death upon the tree
Has brought divine compassion
To sinners like to me.

II.

Thy power it was that woke us,
When fast asleep in sin;
Thy grace and truth that taught us
The great redemption scheme.

III.

How charming was the moment
When first Thy love we knew;
All else around, within us,
Had vanished from our view.

IV.

The one absorbing treasure
That filled our heart and eye
Was love that came to suffer,
For enemies to die.

V.

O Love beyond all telling,
Beyond all ken or thought!
Of Thee the very mention
Has deepest comfort brought.

THE LOVE OF CHRIST.

VI.

We love to sing Thy praises;
We love to sound Thy fame;
It is our new-born gladness
Thy sweetness to proclaim.

VII.

What love is thine, Lord Jesus !
The "Sinners Friend" art Thou ;
Exalted high in glory,
Tis at Thy feet we bow.

VIII.

In Thee we see united
Both God and man in one ;
Hence power and love unmeasured
Combined in Thee are shown.

IX.

The power of earth's Creator
Gives glory to Thy Name ;
The love of earth's Redeemer
Enhances still Thy fame.

X.

Creator and Redeemer,
Almighty Saviour, Lord—
The power and grace that saved us
For ever be adored.

J. W. S.

LETTERS ON SOME PRACTICAL POINTS
CONNECTED WITH THE ASSEMBLY.

—
IV.

My dear Brother—The grand point then surely in the Lord's Supper is the remembrance of Him, while doing it nevertheless in the apprehension of His presence with us always, according to His promise. "In the midst of the church will I sing praise unto Thee." We shall best enter into His praise as we most simply have our eyes fixed upon Himself,—as *our* sayings and doings cease to occupy us, and we become receptive of His glory, and of His joy. Thus the pipes will be filled and the stream of praise flow out. The scene in the upper chamber at Jerusalem will be repeated; only upon His dear face will be no shadow of the darkness so soon to come, but the brightness of a morning without clouds, the morning of resurrection. His own hands will distribute the bread to us, the melody of His own praise will fill our hearts, the nearness in which He stands to God will make our meeting to be indeed in the holiest of all, as He presents us to His Father and our Father. O that He Himself were thus ever before us as the great Actor in the Presence-Chamber of God, anticipating His future Melchizedec work, as He brings forth the bread and wine, and blesses God in our behalf, and blesses us from God.

Only let me guard this from any mistake. We must not so conceive His acting for and by us here, as to

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suppose it needful to exclude His being the object of praise as well as the Giver. We must not think it an interruption if *our* voice break in too with "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain:" for here the Spirit of God is only putting us "in communion with the *Father*," as well as "with His Son Jesus Christ." Surely we may say, this is needed, in order that "fulness of joy," which the apostle connects with this, may be manifested in our assembly. Would there be no lack of harmony in the Father's ear, if the note of praise to the Beloved Son were absent from our worship? Does not the Father claim our communion with Himself, as also the Son with Himself? Do we worship the Father aright, when we refuse or omit the worship of the Son? When every knee shall bow in subjection to the Son, it will be 'to the glory of *God the Father*;' and now as our hearts bow in homage to the Son, the Father too is glorified.

If it be asked, "when the Lord gave thanks in the upper chamber at Jerusalem did He give thanks unto Himself?" it may be fully conceded that He did not and could not; but this by no means implies that we are in such sense either to imitate Him, or to be His mouth-pieces, as to be excluded from His praise. Pipes we may be through which His joy and praise flow forth; but yet not *mere* pipes: the figure would fail, if thus pressed, as all figures somewhere fail. We are not mere pipes or machines, but beings with hearts which if God fills and uses, He uses according to their nature, not arbitrarily repressing the emotions stirred by Himself. Our praise would not be even the echo of His praise, if He who leads it has not His own place in it.

"Communion with the Father" necessitates it, as I have said; and without communion with the Father, the whole character of worship, which is the fruit of communion, is fatally lowered.

I return to what we were just now considering, that occupation with Christ is what is to give character to gathering at His table. From this worship will follow, not as legal requirement, and not as an official performance but as the overflow of hearts filled up with Him.

The tendency to degenerate into officialism has to be watched and guarded against. So many, alas, are not just in the requisite state of soul,— so many who are occupied all the week with other things, and on the Lord's Day are disposed to hand over to others the activities of a priestly calling which belongs to all. Hence certain individuals come to be looked upon as the *quasi*-official priesthood; and especially those who are known as publicly engaged in the Lord's work—preachers and teachers, for example,—are apt to be put into this place. A long step towards clericalism is thus taken, and an actual, if not formal barrier is set up to any saint beside, especially if illiterate, infringing upon that which comes to be looked upon as the place of a special few.

This is a great evil, and which is budding out extensively into a real quenching of the Spirit, and destruction of the power of worship, while those engaged in secular employments (so called) shelter their unspirituality under these. Let brethren look to it how they acquiesce in this, whether by putting or being put into any such distinctive place. Worship is not official; and all God's saints are worshippers: women alone being (because of what is suited to their creation-place) enjoined to be silent in the assembly. All other restriction is unscriptural and injurious; and terribly so the thought of any lawful calling (lawful to the Christian, of course I mean) being opposed, or derogatory to spirituality. If we cannot 'abide with God' in it, we have no business with it at all. No real duty

is a *weight*. If it seem to be so to us, either it is not a duty, or we are not taking it up in reality as such.

But in fact there are few places like the Lord's Table for revealing to oneself the true state of one's soul. If with the precious memorials of His death before us, and Himself present in our midst, the Holy Ghost, who is come to occupy us with Him, is only able to occupy us with ourselves; or worse still, if our thoughts wander without rebuke from Him who should have power to engage them with Himself, what does it reveal but a state in which Christ shares but the lesser portion of a divided heart? Whatever our burdens, whatever filled our hands or took up our time,—were our *hearts* free, what a holiday time that would be in which they could escape to the object of their desire! and the blessed Spirit of God, could He lack power or will to fulfil the work which He has taken upon Himself? The rabble of disorderly thoughts, could they press in to take possession of a soul in the presence of its Lord?

May He possess us so with Himself that all else shall fall into its place in the great anthem which our lives should raise to Him, and which never should find more complete and harmonious expression, than when, with Himself before us, we (anticipating the song of eternity) “shew forth the Lord's death until He come.”

If you knew practically the blessed free giving of Christ (there is no end of the stream of grace flowing from Him), nothing down here would affect you unduly; you could not say this or that looks very black; it would not be black, looked at on Christ's side. There is a Christ's side of everything down here.

WHEN IS THE BELIEVER SEALED?

There are some views current which seem to be the reverse of helpful to quite a few to-day, and that upon a question of the greatest moment to the peace and comfort of the Christian and the glory of God by him. Though unity of mind and judgment upon points of doctrine is important, yet the knowledge that others may differ from us should not deter one, when truth is in question from calling in question statements which seem calculated to hinder souls from apprehending their privileges as the redeemed of the Lord.

The views to which I refer are as follows. It is held by some that, after a person is quickened, there is an interval, long or short as the case may be, between faith in Christ, and their being sealed by the Holy Spirit. That this sealing of the Spirit is connected with deliverance from law—the experience of Rom. vii.—and being brought into liberty: “where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty.” In the minds of some a still further stretching of this is introduced, and a few most unintelligently make three stages over which the poor soul has to travel before it gets into true Christian position, namely: quickened, born, and sealed. The unscriptural character of the last, few, I trust, will doubt. I merely name it to shew the tendency to prolong the distance between the first true faith in Christ and full Christian position.

Some Scriptures which are made the foundation of the above I now turn to, and first the well known

and oft quoted passage in Eph. i. 13. "In whom *after* that ye believed ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise." The passage rightly rendered removes the seeming difficulty, the word 'after' having become stretched to mean 'long after.' "In whom having believed, ye were sealed," is the true force of the original, as all will admit. Necessarily sealing *must* be subsequent to faith. The Holy Spirit could not dwell in an uncleaned vessel; and there must be, of course, the new birth and cleansing by the blood of Christ before He could make our bodies His temple. But new birth and cleansing by the blood are simultaneous, and inseparable from faith in Christ. The passage before us then does not teach a long time between faith and sealing, but that, consequent on their faith in Christ, God put His seal upon them for the day of redemption.

The other passages which seem to furnish evidence of this lengthy interval I now turn to, assured that they present no more proof of it than the one I have just referred to. Acts x., which gives the conversion of Cornelius, is of course one of the most important of these, and will be appealed to as conclusive evidence of this lengthened interval. Let us look at the case. Peter was appointed of the Lord to open the Kingdom to the Jew and Gentile. The first he did at Pentecost; and there he told the Jews, when pricked in their hearts by hearing of their sin in rejecting Messiah, to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins, and they should receive the gift of the Holy Ghost: which was fulfilled to the letter, of course. In this chapter (x.) Peter is sent to open the door of the kingdom to the Gentiles, as already the one chosen to be the "Apostle of the Gentiles" has been converted and commissioned (chap. ix.) and Peter has to do his work as the Lord had told him.

A pious and God-fearing centurion is chosen to fill this privileged place as the first publicly admitted into the kingdom. His piety is no doubt evidence enough that he has life, such fruits do not grow on any child of Adam naturally, and yet he had to hear words whereby he and his house were to be *saved*. Peter preaching to them declares that they knew how by Jesus, God had sent to Israel, "preaching peace." He tells them of the resurrection of Christ, and His appointment to be the judge of living and dead, and, whilst speaking thus, the Holy Ghost falls upon them, and they are then baptized. What we have here then is, a man who knew only of the blessed life and testimony of the Lord Jesus in his acts towards Israel, ignorant of the dispensation that had just now begun, and of the truth that gave character to it. Not knowing, as neither did the Jews that "to the Gentiles God had granted repentance unto life." But what proof can be found in this *exceptional case* of an interval *now* between faith and sealing. The moment they heard the gospel, believing it no doubt, the Spirit of God sealed them. They were coming into the kingdom, the first of a class, who, saved through grace, had no title to it at all.

The next passage I turn to is Acts xix., Paul finds certain disciples who knew only the baptism of John. Whether the Holy Ghost had come or not they did not know, and from verse 4 it is evident that faith in Christ was to them a new doctrine, for when Paul tells them that John baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on him which should come after, that is, on* Jesus and immediately they are baptized. Paul lays his hands upon them and they receive the Holy Spirit

* Editors omit 'Christ.'

and speak with tongues and prophesy. Evidently the gospel they had not heard. John's testimony alone had been heard and received, and of Jesus they knew little or nothing; and the case is simply one of bringing persons from the one dispensation into another.

It may be urged that in the case of Philip preaching to the Samaritans, in Acts viii., we have an instance of persons hearing the true gospel for the first time and believing it, and being baptised, they yet had to wait until the Apostles came down from Jerusalem before they received the Holy Spirit. But here again it is needful to remember that this was the *first work* in Samaria (perhaps linked on to John iv.) and that there being *apostles*, God kept in their hands the administration of this gift in a large measure. That this was not intended to be the order when things were established, is very clear, or else when apostles ceased to be, the gift of the Holy Ghost must also have ceased. No one of any intelligence claims to be able to give the Spirit now. It is simply a divine gift without human means of bestowal; but it is God's act, putting His seal on those who believe in Christ, and to quote these passages as proving an interval is quite beside the mark.

But there is another aspect of the question which some will think presents more difficulty, and which has already been referred to, and that is the question whether "liberty" is not always attendant upon the indwelling of the Spirit—freedom from law and bondage. One might answer that, in a normal state of things, it is; but we are not in such a condition and the state of souls is dependent largely upon the teaching received; and that that is immensely faulty all who search the word attentively will admit. To take the ignorance which is the fruit of bad teaching as an evidence of a person not being sealed, seems to

be a serious mistake, as it directs attention to the wrong point, and begets often a desire and expectation for a sudden experience like some one else's, which shall set the soul free from its clouds and bondage, thus occupying with experience, and not with truth, which is what God uses to deliver His people from bondage, and bring them into liberty. It is the want of the truth which keeps in bondage, which may be ministered to by an indifferent and unexercised state of soul, which necessarily limits all spiritual growth, as *practical identification* with the truth strengthens assurance. "*Hereby we do know* that we know Him if we keep His commandments;" and so again, "Little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth and hereby we shall know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him."

I turn now to look at a few of the principal passages which are cited as proving what I find it hard to accept.

First as to 2 Cor. iii. 17,: "Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty." Under the Law which is the ministration of death and judgment, there was bondage. Even the glory seen in Moses' face Israel were unable to contemplate—could not behold the end of that which is abolished, because under a law of requirement. Christianity is God revealed, and the work done by which the sinner is fitted for His presence. Christ written upon the fleshy tables of the heart by the Spirit is the ministry of life and righteousness. This gives liberty to behold the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and the Spirit of God having been bestowed there is liberty to look up to that unveiled glory in the face of Jesus Christ. This is a statement of Christian *privilege* and is true for all God's people irrespective of their practical condition,

upon which turns of course their ability to avail themselves of it. But who can say that this means that those who have the Spirit may not yet be in much practical bondage, if the state of their souls is looked at? and what help is it to a soul already burdened to teach that it has not the Spirit of God? Is it not adding to the bondage of one, whom the Lord would have delivered by the truth?

Next let us look at Rom. viii. 9: "Now if any one have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." The subject of deliverance and the way therefore of practical righteousness which commences with chapter v. 12 is completed with viii. 4. First the two heads, Adam and Christ, and the results of their doings contrasted in v.; then in vi. we are to reckon ourselves dead to sin and alive to God and therefore to yield ourselves up to God. But God has given a law which prescribed man's duty and the flesh would use that to produce righteousness, but, as it is "the strength of sin," must be set aside as a means to sanctify, as in iii. it was proved incompetent to justify. Therefore we are also dead to the law. But it has helped us to analyse what passes within and to learn that there are two principles at work, the flesh and the new life, and to identify ourselves with the latter before God and not the flesh. Christ is introduced as the one through whom God has delivered us, and in viii. 1, we are in Christ where there is no condemnation. The intelligence of our place in Christ and Christ in us being ministered by the Spirit, we, walking after the Spirit, fulfil the righteousness of the law, the *law* of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus setting us free from the law of sin and death. So that there is both the position in Christ which is invariably the same, and walking in the Spirit we bring forth its fruits, against which there is no law. God uniting thus the position,

and the practical deliverance. What follows is in part defining by their practical state the position of those who may profess. Those after the flesh mind the things of the flesh those after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. The unbeliever and the Christian contrasted. The doctrine of the chapter is guarded from abuse thus. Similar to this is evidently the expression: "They that are in the flesh cannot please God," and the one in question: "If any one have not the Spirit of Christ he (*outos* this one, emphatic) is none of His." He is not Christ's at all. So also "If ye *live* after the flesh ye shall die." The apostle is clearly defining two classes which are opposites; and it is no question at all of one merely who is unsealed though a believer. Could Christ say of such 'He is none of mine?'

Taking the connection of the passage how plain its meaning is. So then they that are in the flesh *cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh* but in the Spirit, *if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.* Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ *he* is none of His. So also further on, in v. 13: "For if ye live after the flesh ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body ye shall live."

So far from this passage proving an interval, it rather shews the reverse, and that where life is through faith there is the double truth that we are in Christ and the Spirit of Christ in us.

But it will be said perhaps that the person passing through Rom. vii. has not the Spirit of Christ. But I ask does the absence of mention of that prove any thing to the point? Is not the epistle a systematic and orderly treatise as much so as any other book, and its order perhaps more easily discoverable than that of many others? Rom. v. where the soul has learned justification through the death of Christ and the doctrine has been carried one stage, tells of the

love of God being shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost that is given to us. Why have we here the *first* mention of the love of God and the *Holy Ghost*, save in the brief introductory part of chap. i. but because the subject is, justification. In the discussion of that question the one point, to give it intensity and force, is kept before us. And when that is completed we have a glance at the blessings justification lets us into. The second question, the way of practical righteousness, is taken up from v. 12, and from there to chapter viii. is again no mention of the Spirit. Could one justly say because of this that one in Rom. vi. had not the Spirit? Then why is it any more a reason for saying so in Rom. vii? Chapter vii. is clearly (the last half) an experience that is no one's in particular but an extreme case, with every other element left out save that which is needed to complete the picture, and any one passing through exercise under law, may find there the key to his experiences, as well as the way of deliverance. Nor have I a doubt that what is presented there is a far reaching principle which many who are clear doctrinally from any thought of law may be affected by, and that we are really clear from it only as we walk in the Spirit and produce those fruits which are of the Spirit and against which there is and can be no law. Thus the *law* of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus frees us from the law of sin and death and takes us out of the realm where law applies. But if we sink down to the flesh we are living in the region where law has something to say, for all we may know we are not under it. That one who knows the truth of Rom. v. may yet be passing through Rom. vii. I do not doubt, and though assured of salvation may yet be learning under the law the weakness and incompetency of the flesh, and therefore in the groaning condition depicted there,

Let us now look at another side of this question. The passage in Eph. i. before quoted teaches the reverse of what is often sought to be proved from it. "In whom having believed ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise." In other words when they had believed in Christ they were sealed, not when they had a certain experience, but upon their faith in Christ, God sealed them for the day of redemption, and I fail to find anything else as the teaching of the Word on this point, nor does a single epistle addressed to Christians treat of this save as affirming that they had the Spirit. There are no exhortations as to any way to get the Spirit, and none can shew that it is a question of responsibility on the part of believers to receive the Spirit, and there is nothing left if much of what is current is true, but for souls to go on looking for some sudden illumination, such as some one else may have had, and till then groan on in almost hopelessness. Clearly if it is only when I have the Spirit I am clear of Rom. vii., all depends upon the act of God setting me free, and till then I must continue in bondage. What sadder state can one be in as a Christian? But is it true that God has so left His people? I believe, not; and that, when one has believed in Christ, dimly as the results of that faith may be perceived because of defective teaching, yet, irrespective of all that, where there is true faith, God puts His seal. The work of the Holy Spirit being in as little danger of being left undone, as the work of Christ which was finished on the cross. Is not our part then rather to instruct souls in what are the privileges of the Christian's place, and instead of raising doubts on so serious a point to shew them that, if believers in truth they *have* the Spirit? It is to the *little children* in 1 John ii. that the apostle when warning against Anti-christs, says "ye have an *unction*

from the Holy One: Paul asks the Corinthians ‘*en masse*,’ “Know ye not that your bodies are the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you which ye have of God and ye are not your own?” And in 1 John iv. I read, that “the Father sent the Son to be the *Saviour* of the world. – *Whosoever* shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, *God dwelling in him* and he in God.” Can I say that there are those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, but their experience is defective, and therefore this is not true of them? We read in verse 13: “Hereby know that we dwell in Him and He in us, by His Spirit which He hath given us.” When I have a statement such as that, I do not fear to use it, assured that the Word of God cannot guide me wrong, and therefore I believe that faith in Christ irrespective of the condition or intelligence of the one believing, is the one essential, and *the only one*, to being sealed by the Holy Ghost, and that other doctrine tends to keep souls in darkness and bondage and do them harm, however little such a result may be intended.

R. T. G.

Is there in us that singleness of eye, that earnest desire to live Christ, saying, “Till He comes I want Him to be shining out from me”? Some say it moer than others. The Lord will some day have to put many into the furnace to destroy what is of the world in them. How blessed if any were so walking that persons could say, “In looking at the walk of that individual I see more of Christ than I ever before knew.” But if conscious of being under the eye of Christ, we know that He is taking notice of everything, Paul knew the eye of One to be upon him whose love would not let a single circumstance pass unnoticed. If I realize that, it becomes the moulding process of His love on me.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

(48) What is the full interpretation of Matt. xxviii. 20: "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world?" Is Jesus Himself with us? Does He mean this in the verse mentioned? And how is this consistent with such a statement as that one of "three things which give character to the Christian's path on earth" is that "the Lord Jesus is not here?"

Ans. I should think it evident that the text speaks of spiritual, and the last statement of bodily presence. Many texts can surely be brought forward, for both these things which are in nowise contradictory.

(49) In Matt. xiii. 30, the *tares* are first gathered; in ver. 48, the good are gathered *from the bad*; in ver. 49 the angels sever the wicked first from among the just. The parable of the tares is especially held to set forth, the present corrupt state of the professing church. If so, in the Rapture the saints are taken and the wicked are left. How do these verses agree together and with this?

Ans. In the parable of the tares, these are not removed from the field before the wheat, but only bound in bundles in this. The interpretation carries it further; but in it the righteous are not gathered but shine forth, when the tares are burned. Verse 48 again does not speak of saints being taken to heaven, but only gathered in vessels (on earth); and this parable speaks, as I believe, of what takes place after the Church is removed, when those left are left for blessing as in Matt. xxiv. 39-41.

of Pharaoh under which they groaned. In order to that there was more, and much more, needed than simply the display of power, even Divine. There was needed the Passover night as well as the Red Sea deliverance. They had to learn in the blood on the lintel, that grace alone through atonement could take them up and rescue them from the enemy's power. But the rescue was not complete when they were sheltered by blood from divine judgment; and the song of salvation was not sung until the other side of the sea was reached. Then it was, when horse and rider had been cast into the sea, and their proud and insulting tyrants were carcasses upon the shore, that they sang how the Lord had triumphed gloriously.

And so the apostle does not stop with justification by Christ's blood, but rests not till in His cross we know "that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin may be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve (or be slaves to) sin." This is our bondage; this our deliverance, and we must keep it steadily before us if we are to penetrate these shadows of divine realities.

“THE SON OF MAN CAME TO MINISTER
AND TO GIVE.”

Mark x. 45.

’Twas thus He came!
Bearing in hands untiring, and by feet
That never wearied of the errand-path of love,
And guided by a heart that could not stint
Nor e’er withhold from earth’s unworthiest one
The blessing that He carried—brought He grace
And truth, and power divine, and love unsearchable!
The minister of the high God was He, and of His love
The servant; e’en of our need He stooped to be the
servant
In his love; yea, of that love itself that did thus serve
The form was He. “He came to minister!”
And to the Blessed One—on every side—
Our need did clamour with a selfish claim,
Which yet He chided not. The faint low call
Of sickness—from a heart but half persuaded of His love
E’en brought Him nigh; the groping hands
Of nature’s cruel darkness ever found Him; and the sigh
The weary sigh of nature’s impotence,
He heard and heeded; nor sought He to fly
From sin’s foul spot of leprosy; ne’er did
Defilement make Him shrink, or stay the hand—
The loving hand, that held the power of God,
And gently smoothed the meanest of our ills.
Death stayed him not, but at the call
Of sorrow—with its wistful longing of desire,
Grieving because ungratified—He came
Put forth his power in love and stamped with joy
The scene erst dismal with the gloom of death,
Of black corruption, and the heavy cloud of grief.
“He came to minister!” and to a look of faith
His tender heart replied—His loving glance
Already lightened the full load of woe

Which pressed upon His heart, whose lips were locked
 And, pent up, burned in His fervent gaze
 With silent eloquence—and soon those tender hands
 Took all the pain and rolled it far away.
 Not only did He by His truth discern
 The ills that, faithless, we told not to Him;
 Nor only did He by His power remove
 The painful shackles forged by human sin;
 But e'en with grace and love His heart o'erflowed,
 In these He stooped to reach our deepest need;
 The language of His heart to *hearts* was borne
 Unceasingly. And into them He breathed
 His peace and joy.

Thus did He "minister!"

Our carnal eyes sought nought but power displayed
 And carnal hearts but looked for selfish benefit,
 None valued *Him* whose bounty all would grasp,
 None would believe the love these gifts did manifest.
 Ah! how could we, with thoughts thus grovelling low,
 Reach to the height of that surpassing love,
 And span the boundless mysteries of grace
 In which "He took unto Himself infirmities
 And bare our sicknesses" within His heart!

It could not be, for long our hearts had grovelled
 On the earth,—intent on earth, from things of heaven
 afar,
 Engaged with all the thoughts and fancies of these
 hearts
 That but corrupted were and far from God—
 Until, a dull insensate blindness for our part
 And sins of crimson dye, we heeded not
 The gracious shining of heaven's fairest light,
 We scorned the matchless beauty of that grace,
 The tender solace of a love that infinite was
 Of God most High. Ah! lost were we, by sin enchained,
 Bound with the manacles of nature dead
 And ground by all the hateful slavery of hell
 And Satan's terrors—who could us redeem,
 Who break the thrall of sin and death and hell,
 Breathe forth new life and bring us back to God?
 Alas for earth! there was no eye of pity

Bent on the dark scene—no heart that throbbed
 The hurried eager step of wistful love
 To guide a hand—Alas! no hand to save!
 Chill death, all grim and dismal, froze each heart,
 And the dull clank of chains rose up to God
 And told its tale of helpless wretchedness!
 O God! if in Thy joy the sound comes not,
 And if in heart divine the love is not,
 And if in hand divine the power is not,
 Lost! lost! black night of death and hell eternal rules.

But ah! not e'en one heart is lifted up,
 Nor voice that cries to Him that dwells on high;
 Nought but His own compassion can take heed
 Of all the misery His eye can see.
 For could we, sinful men, to Him appeal,
 How could we hope when He rose up to act?
 Righteous is He, the holy, just, sin-hating God
 Who in His high decree hath thus ordained
 "The soul that sinneth even it *must die*."
 And is not Love His name, His nature? Will not He
 Cause mercy flow to us, that flooding o'er
 Will cover up our sins in its vast deep
 Of kindness, blessing even us unjudged?
 Ah no! for then were He not God, for God
 Is perfect. Never in *His* ways find we
 Truth sacrificed or righteousness debased
 That weak affection may unhindered flow.
 Not so with Him, if in our ken He moves
 The perfect balance of His perfect attributes
 Must claim the worship due to One Divine.
 Lost then our state, alas! Before our eyes,
 Before *His* eyes stands forth in awful characters
 The record of our sins of crimson dye,
 And as for sin the penalty is death,
 Death then *must* be, and we must surely die!
 How but in righteousness can He now act,
 How show His love to guilty, rebel man!
 Is not our doom complete and black despair
 Th' eternal portion of each sinful soul?

But love He cannot hide, and love of God
 Is sovereign. Objects worthy cause it not,

Nor does it flow because of aught in man
 To call it forth; But in *His* counsel deep,
 And in His mercy great, it shineth forth,
 An infinite heart its source, an infinite tide,
 On whose broad bosom He delights to send
 To far and near His righteousness divine,
 That e'en the mingling glory all may see
 And give Him praise.

And it was thus He came,
 That love shone forth in Him, that infinite tide
 Which spread to far and near in its broad sweep,
 And in its constant flow no barrier knew—
 Yea, as 'tis oft unto the swelling tide,
 What seems to hold it back but makes it rise
 And heap its living waters wave on wave,
 Until high over all the torrent breaks
 And dashing down it bows beneath its power
 The barrier which served e'en but to call it forth—
 So was it with His love. To sinful man
 It shone, to win his heart to God that He
 Most fully might him bless. Opposed by sin,
 High in majestic power that love stood forth;
 By unbelief, by hate, by death opposed,
 Higher it rose until it overflowed,
 It burst o'er all and with its torrent power
 It bore down death and hate, that life and love
 Might ever flow. Thus did it spread on high
 Reaching to God, whose every claim it owned
 And glorified in yielding all they sought;
 And down to man whose deepest need and death
 It fully knew; and pouring forth its tide
 Filled the vast gulf that intervened and bore
 Safe on its bosom o'er that frightful chasm
 The precious freight of righteousness divine.
 'Twas *thus* He *gave*, and in His boundless grace
 That knew no measure that *our* hearts could reach
 So emptied He Himself; so the full breadth,
 The length, the depth, the height of infinite love
 Rolled unto men.

“He came to give!”
 And *we*—we scorned His gift and basely thought

Him but as one of us that always asked;
 Demanding from us that which we had not
 Nor could obtain. Nought did we know or think
 Of the free-giving God—the shining of that light—
 The Light—marked but the dread obscurity
 Which understood it not.

But now O God!

We who were sinful men have learned to know,
 To see that One in all His loveliness,
 With eyes illumed with light of faith—'Tis Thou
 Who in Thy love, hast wrought a work so great,
 Hast overcome the evil of our hearts,
 And turned both heart and voice to seek from Thee
 Blessings, that once, altho' we died for want
 We would not ask. All praise to Thee, O God!
 In righteousness Thy love has flowed to us
 Because of Him who gave Himself for us
 His life a ransom—bearing e'en that death
 We should have died hadst Thou not wrought in love
 To give us life—and brought thus unto Thee
 With joy we learn the love that came to serve,
 Thine infinite grace in Him who came to earth
 That we might saved be.

F. J. R.

How often has my own heart deceived me! How often my dreams that have run on man, have deceived me! Have I ever been deceived when my thoughts have run on the things of God? Has it been a delusion when in distress I called upon God, and He answered me?

If I am looking for the coming of Christ, I do not stop to look at my shadow behind, but up to the Lord's appearing. My only object is to reach the goal, and, receiving a glorified body, to be with Him for ever.

Things in the unseen world brought by God to the soul, are found to have a strength in them that nothing can withstand.

CASTING ANCHOR.

“Then, fearing lest they should have fallen upon rocks, they cast four anchors out of the stern, and wished for the day.”—Acts xxvii. 29.

The inspired account of shipwreck, from which the above words are taken, must have peculiar interest to every child of God, in that it has connection with the carrying as prisoner to Rome one of the most honoured of God's servants, the apostle Paul.

But the object of these lines is not to give comment upon this narrative and its striking parallel of events, with what has also been solemnly true in the history of God's people as a whole, the shipwreck of that which bears the name of Christ below, and that actually carried the steward of God's testimony in fetters to Rome. My wish is rather to give a word of exhortation and encouragement, believing that in the life of each dear child of God there are days of special trial and temptation—times when, in the language of this narrative, after running, using helps and undergirding, fearing quicksands, striking sail, and being driven, they are exceedingly tossed as with a tempest, and, as days go over, seek relief (so to speak) by lightening the ship; then, last of all, by casting out with their own hands the tackling of the the ship. And thus with the last thing to hope in thrown out as vain, and when neither sun nor stars in many days appear (day nor night, no light to cheer them), and no small tempest lays upon them, all hope of being saved seems taken away. As each one

of us knows our own path, we can discern whether for us this has a voice.

It may be, too, we can look back to some haven left, not far distant, when, because of circumstances unsuited to a restless will (which ever seeks to do or go, instead of waiting upon God)—when because it was not “commodious to winter” there, and the thought of being “shut in” was unbearable, and then withal, having the “more part” in us or around advising to depart, if by any means to attain a place of abiding that lieth better; and, further, with circumstances so favouring our steps, the soft south wind of expediency so inviting us, thinking our purpose gained, and that our will had indeed become God’s, instead of His learned and ours bowed in subjection to it, we loosed then, and sailed out. Ah, beloved, each of us can tell a tale, I am assured, with respect to all this.

But in it all, where is the blessed word to which God our Father claims obedience, that thus the place of seeking His glory may be the place of His pledged blessing to the seekers of it? Where, I enquire, is the voice that we are to hear behind us, saying, “This is the way; walk ye in it”? Where the ordering of our steps aright by that Word, the entrance of which giveth light, yea, and understanding to the simple? Has it failed and become untrustworthy, and this particular part of our lives without any thing in it that applies thereto? Not this; for even as with Paul in the ship of Alexandria, He knows the thing unsuited to us, because it is the traversing of His will. He knows, as for the saints of old, when for us the sailing has become dangerous (as here the time spent, and the fast now already past); and then does He speak to warn us? He does. “Paul admonished them, and said, I perceive that

this voyage will be with hurt and damage," etc. Even thus does He abide faithful, for He cannot deny Himself; and my brethren, (is it not so?) we have the Word often, when we have not the heart to yield obedience to it. The All-wise speaks, and ever plainly, to us; but our ears need bowing, and our hearts applying to His knowledge. Then it is that the keeping of His words within us becomes a pleasant thing. But we "confer with flesh and blood;" we take "counsel with the flesh;" we hold in honor and believe those it suits us to believe, more than those things spoken from the Lord.

Then little wonder if all this comes upon us, veriest mercy of the God who will go after us, even when we fail to go with Him; it is that our soft wind of "pleasing things below" should change into a tempestuous wind, that thus at least He may bring us to search and try our ways, and turn again to Him.

And so if this be our story that is told, what lessons it speaks of God as well as of ourselves! He warns of dangers on before in the path of our self-will; He follows when we take it, to teach us, even by our folly, that "His will is ever best;" and more than this He does (as also our narrative records), for He comforts them that mourn, lifts up those that are cast down, healeth the broken in heart and bindeth up their wounds. Yes "soon as sorrow's work is done, 'tis He who gives relief." "After long abstinence, Paul stood forth and said, "Ye should have hearkened . . . now I exhort you, be of good cheer etc." Even thus it is in the ways of the Lord continually. "He brings down with labour those who rebel against His words and condemn His counsel. Then doth He save them out of their distresses when they fall down and there is none to help. Fools (it is) that because of their transgression are afflicted. But

He sends His word and heals them and delivers them from their destructions. (Read Ps. 107 entire.)

Little wonder that the Psalmist's heart yearned to find praises for a God like this—not a creature of His hand that He is regardless of—opening His hand for our blessing and in our follies teaching us to profit. Verily, “the God of all grace” does your history and mine dear reader, and all beside, witness Him to be.

Well, with all this upon our minds as to our own ways and the ways of our gracious God—with this the story of an ill timed troublous voyage, preaching what is but too often our own, and in it with “grace Divine” gleaming out at every step, shall we need to enquire what the verse heading this, will speak? Methinks 'tis plain, already the answer is supplied. We have God to trust in, to hang upon and His deliverance to hope for when we cannot trust ourselves, and have had in bitter ways to learn it. “Glorying in the Lord” is left us when none can be *before* Him, no flesh can glory in His presence. His sufficiency can be realized, when none have we as of ourselves. We can stay our souls upon Him, have our hearts fixed trusting in Him, when all hope beside is gone. Thus can we learn in the very place of His dealing with us, what it is to “both hope and quietly wait for the salvation (deliverance) of the Lord.” And here too can we seek to witness to others of a better way than that which we have come, and declare “the good of a man bearing the yoke in his youth.” Beloved Reader, is it even now that you are in this spot, “anchors cast and wishing for the day?” Then hear the words of thy God and Father to thee, Call upon Me in the day of trouble. Place of heaven's blessing thou art in. All are blessed that put their trust in Him, and to the upright there ariseth light in the darkness.” “Weeping endureth for a night, joy cometh in the morning.”

Is thy heart reproaching thee, art thou like Ephraim bemoaning himself (Jer. xxxi. 18-20)? He doth earnestly remember thee still. He is a stronghold in the day of trouble, and He knoweth them that trust in Him. "Take some meat": not an hair shall fall from thy head, are in very truth the Father's words to thee. "Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thy heart; wait, I say, on the Lord." Without determining just what may be illustrated by the four anchors from the stern, it will surely suggest being firmly held by faith. Confiding trust in God and looking out for daybreak of His succour and help, awaiting the morning of His deliverance.

May we each, as need may be, learn how near at hand ever is our gracious God—ready to hear our cry, ready to espouse our cause—ready to undertake all our matters! and may we know Him by the faith that looks up out of the tempest that even our own folly brings us into, that thus He may have the glory that is due to Him. The above thoughts have been suggested by the remark of a dear Christian in comparing her own trials and difficulties with those of her husband, a waterman. The daily, hourly worry to be found by a mother in the care of a family, as spoken of by her as needing much grace, and on being reminded of her husband's need of grace and patience too, in view of opposing winds and tide and weather, her remark was, "Oh, when he cannot get through, he has only to cast anchor and wait for a little while." And this we learned together was the lesson for us also and in some sort of way our daily, hourly need. Yes, beloved Christian, we too may learn the lessons of those that do business in great waters. Our eyes may see the works of the Lord and His wonders in the deep. "Whoso is wise and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving kindness of the Lord." Ps, 107. B. C. G.

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THOU!

Phil. iii. 8.

Oh Jesus Christ my Lord!
I've found all things in Thee!
The perfect treasury of grace
Thou art to me!

All things as nought I count
That here would catch the eye;
I'd leave them with intense delight
To dwell on high.

This world's most wild applause
Is only empty breath;
The things men prize the most now wear
The hue of death.

'Tis Thou hast made it thus
Since Thou hast shown to me
Thyself! And now I only wait
Thyself to see!

All here is stained with blood
Thy blood, Oh glorious Christ!
And man and Satan do to-day
Whate'er they list.

How could I bear to stay
Now in this dreary scene,
But, by Thy foot prints I may trace
Where Thou hast been?

And it is e'er enough
What place I'm in, or how,
Or in what time, that Thou'rt with me
Just Thyself, Thou!

I am not lonely then
I cannot be cast down;
Above, the light! within, the joy!
Though all here frown.

'Tis nothing, I have Thee!
More than I ever thought;
Beyond all gains; then what is loss?
I've Thee! 'Tis nought?

M. T.

NEW BIRTH, SALVATION, SEALING.

[The editor prints the following paper, (upon the same subject as a previous one) not as implying agreement on this point with the beloved brother who writes it, but as feeling that the temperate expression of individual belief, upon points where fundamental truth is not in question, will only aid those desirous of knowing for themselves what is truth. A spirit of controversy is to be dreaded; but a comparison of what those taught in the Word have gathered (as they believe) from it, is never unprofitable to one for whom there is no *authority* but the word itself. The editor would take this opportunity of stating that, for the same reason the writers whose initials are attached to different articles are alone to be considered responsible for all the *details* of them, he himself only fully for those *without* signature, and for the *general* purport of the rest, where his dissent is not expressly intimated. The subject of this paper he hopes to take up to express his own view at another time.]

MR. EDITOR.—I believe Scripture plainly teaches not only a distinction between new birth and sealing with the Spirit, but also an interval of time between the two things. It may be long or short; but the interval of time is there, in the same way as when a man first builds his house, and afterwards dwells in it.

Before a man is born again he is looked at by God as dead in trespasses and sins. He has no more movement towards Him than a corpse has. You may speak to him about God; but he neither hears, responds nor sees. He has neither faith nor repentance, nor anything else, till by the Spirit's action he is quickened or born again. That he is a responsible creature I have no doubt, and that the Spirit strives with man also I have no doubt; and that man has the power of resisting these strivings, also is true. If he goes to hell he will go there by his own will, not by the will of God. But the quickening action of the Spirit is another thing, and produced through the Word of God. A man is born of water. Compare John xv. 3; Ephes. v. 26; 1 Peter i. 23; James i. 18; and of the Spirit, John iii. 5. The Word acts on the faculties of the man, *i.e.*, his mind, conscience and heart, like

water; they are cleansed morally; besides new life from the Son of God is communicated, so that there is a new beginning in the man, just as really as when a new babe is born. There was never before in the world such a being. His natural life counts for nothing up to that time, it is all moral death before God.

I believe a heathen man who had never heard of Christ might be quickened, by the light of creation, the Spirit of God using the light of it to convince him of the reality of God as Creator, so that, forsaking idolatry and working righteousness up to the light of his conscience, he would be accepted, though only saved by the work of Christ, as a child is saved. A Jew was quickened by the reality of Jehovah being brought before him, and the promises of Messiah, etc. A professing Christian, by the Person of the Son being brought before him by the Word, as we see in John i. 1-13. John v. 25 says: 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! So also Ephes. i. 13: "In whom, ye [Gentiles] also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation." Mark, there is neither prayer, faith, repentance, or any other fruit of the Spirit's work mentioned. The man is morally dead, at one moment. The Son of God through the medium of the Word, speaks to him; *he hears*, he lives. Faith comes by *hearing*, and hearing by the Word of God. Rom. x. 17.

The first fruit is a truth, a hope, as we see in Ephes. i. 13; but at the same time repentance. The mind is now turned to God. In the light of God's presence the man sees himself, and the sins he has committed. His conscience is aroused, and by the light of the law, and much more by the cross, and glory of Christ it may be, he finds himself a condemned criminal under sentence of death. Perhaps, if the full light of a glori-

fied Christ has been brought to bear upon him, he sees himself an enemy of God, and born in sin. The struggle of Rom. vii. begins. This may go on more or less after he is saved, where the full truth has not been set forth, but at all events it begins when he is born again; he finds himself carnal, a slave of sin when measuring himself by the law; for the good he would he does not, but the evil he would not that he does. Then he argues that, the will being right, it is no more he that does it, but sin that dwells in him. He sees sin as a distinct evil principle in him, but he born of God distinct from it. Then a third discovery comes out, that he has no power over sin, though longing to do right, for the good he would he does not, but the evil he would not that he does. The struggle goes on, till he gives up his state as thoroughly wretched! Oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

But what press upon him most perhaps are his sins, and his rejection of Christ. He is a criminal under sentence of death for the one, an enemy of God for the other. I am supposing all this time that the truth of what he is has been pressed upon him in the light of the full truth of Christ.

Now, I come to the second stage of my subject. The gospel is now preached so that the soul receives it. Eph. i. 13, says, In whom ye also trusted after ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, in whom also *having believed*, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise. The soul though conscious of a change wrought in it, is sensible that this will not meet the question of sin. The righteousness of God requires death from the sinner, and new birth is not death but life! How sweetly then the Gospel comes in: Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and was buried, and rose again the

third day according to the Scriptures (1 Cor. xv. 1-4). This good news meets, on the one side, God's righteous claims, and on the other side the sinner's need. The original question of sin is once and forever settled. Besides the Man who stood as my substitute and representative is buried; I see my sepulchre; Christ rises the third day cleared from all my guilt, a risen accepted man, raised again for my justification. This is the Gospel of my salvation; salvation is brought to me in the good news of the Son of God. I receive it, have peace, am reconciled, and delivered.

The blood of Christ is now applied to the conscience. The heart is sprinkled from an evil conscience, besides the body washed with pure water, and immediately God puts his seal on the reception of the Gospel with the Spirit. The love of God is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost, Rev. v. 5. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus sets the soul free from the law of sin and death, Rom. viii. 2. In the present ruined condition of things. the knowledge of deliverance may be delayed for some time in souls, but the actual thing is there in every soul that is sealed by the Holy Ghost. The Gospel of my salvation has brought salvation and the knowledge of it at the same time.

This to me, seems the only clear explanation of the doctrine of new birth, salvation, and sealing, as the Word of God teaches it; and answering to the true experiences of a soul coming to the Lord Jesus Christ for the first time.

We have seen that before the new birth takes place the man is morally dead. The voice of the Son of God speaks, as to dead Lazarus; the soul hears and lives; faith is now produced in the form of trust and hope, without certainty. The mind is turned to God; there is a repentance, issuing in judging self, realizing

its criminal state and lost condition ; there is also prayer for salvation and the Spirit, which is not yet received. The Gospel is preached to such a soul, it believes unto salvation ; the finished work of Christ is now rested on, and Christ risen again for our justification, and in glory. The blood of Christ is applied to the conscience, and the immediate sealing of the Spirit follows !

I now give instances from Scripture. First, in the type of the consecration of the priests, Aaron and his sons are first washed with water, Lev. viii. 6, answering to the water of the word of regeneration. Then Aaron is robed and anointed alone, before he is sprinkled with blood, as the Lord was anointed with the Holy Ghost before he died. His sons are anointed not till after the sacrifice has been killed and the blood has been sprinkled upon them. But the sprinkling of blood and the anointing with oil go together with the sons of Aaron. Thus the application of the blood and consequent sealing of the Spirit come consequent on the Gospel being preached and the finished work of Christ rested on. John i. agrees with this. New birth, v. 13, is connected with the Person of the Son, specially his divinity, the baptism of the Holy Ghost, v. 33, with his work, v. 9.

In John iii., new birth was a thing a Jew ought to have known about. Ezekiel xxxvi. 24-26, prophesied of Jehovah causing Israel in the latter day to be born of water and of the Spirit in order to enter the kingdom of God. The Lord said to Nicodemus, Art thou a master in Israel and knowest not these things? . . . But what follows, John iii. 12, is the introduction of the heavenly revelation of Christianity in contrast to this, and the Gospel is introduced. The Son of man must be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life ! This is sal-

vation! and connected with it is the knowledge of it brought to the soul, in v. 18, He that believeth on Him is not condemned.

In John iv, The gift of the Holy Ghost follows in beautiful order. He is the living water, the power of communion and worship, who comes consequent on the soul knowing God in the character of Giver, and Jesus in the character of the Son of God His gift. V. 10, He gives the Holy Ghost, consequent on redemption and His glorification. But I must hasten on.

Acts ii gives us the wonderful work that took place consequent on the descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost. Peter preached that God had made Jesus, whom the Jews had crucified, Lord and Christ. He was God's Anointed owned by heaven, raised up to sit on David's throne, but in the meantime as Lord sitting at the right hand of God till His enemies are made His footstool. Convicted that Jesus was the Anointed, they were born of God. Compare 1 John v. i. Immediately they said, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Peter said, *Repent*, and be baptised, every one of you, unto *the remission of sins*, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Thus, here again, comes the new birth first through hearing, then repentance and remission of sins, and the immediate consequent sealing of the Holy Ghost. It was a short interval between their new birth and sealing, but still an interval, in the middle of which they repented and were baptised.

In Acts viii, we have in the account of the conversion of the Samaritans, a decided interval between their new-birth and sealing. Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached the Anointed unto them. They believed, and were baptised, yet v. 16 tells us that the Holy Ghost had as yet fallen on none of them. No doubt there was a longer interval,

on account of there being a need that manifested unity should be maintained through the apostles Peter and John coming down from Jerusalem to lay their hands on them, so that Jerusalem should own the work of God at Samaria. Still the fact remains that first they were born again through believing that Jesus was the Anointed, and after an interval were sealed.

Acts x. gives the account of the conversion of the first Gentile; v. 2, 3 give clearly the godly character of the man; there was every mark of his being born of God, yet Peter had to tell him words whereby he and all his house should be saved, chap. xi, 14. Accordingly he went down, preached the gospel to him, which he received, and was immediately sealed with the Holy Ghost.

In Paul's own case there seems to have been three days interval between his being born again through meeting the Lord on his way to Damascus, and his sealing by the Spirit. Could it be said that he was saved and sealed, when he was three days without sight and neither ate nor drank? Born again he was, and Ananias was given a sign whereby he should know it. "Behold he prayeth." Acts ix, 11, 17, 18.

In Lydia's case, Acts xvi, she was evidently a godly proselyte before Paul met her. Her heart the Lord opened that she attended to the things spoken by Paul, and she consequently embraced Christianity.

The Philippian jailor's case was more sudden. But even here the earthquake first sent the terrors of God through his soul, before the peace, giving message came: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house."

In the Epistle to the Romans, conviction as to the guilt of sin is argued out in chapter i-iii. 20, and there repentance and circumcision of heart are alluded to.

In Romans vii, conviction as to the flesh being all bad is argued out, and there the new mind and will is clearly formed. Rom. iii. 20, to iv, end, shows God as Justifier meeting the state of guilt, and Romans viii, God the Deliverer meeting the state of man as a slave of sin and born in it. They are two parts of the same salvation, the first part of which is generally apprehended in the soul first, in the present ruined condition of things, but where the truth is fully preached the latter would be learned at the same time, with deeper conviction preceding it. The explanation of so many souls who have been apparently sealed by the Spirit, and yet remain in or get back to the experience of the 7th of Romans, is in the many law teachers of the day bringing the people of God into bondage like the case of the Galatians, the type of which we have in the children of Israel in the wilderness, accepting the law to walk by, instead of abiding in the faith of the God of Abraham.

The teaching of no interval between new birth and sealing, would seem to me to lead to very fatal doctrine. Repentance and prayer, etc., must either then come in before a man is born again and sealed by the Spirit, which would be the denial that man is dead in trespasses and sins, or else they must come in after the sealing of the Spirit, which would be a denial of sinner-repentance, which no one who knows Scripture could hold for one moment in the case of a sinner coming to Christ. Besides it is contrary to the experience of all true hearted Christians. I would appeal to every one of my readers, whether the truth of the reality of God and of the Person of His Son did not come to their souls, first; then repentance and prayer for salvation as a consequence, then the reception of the gospel and immediate sealing of the Spirit; yet it was not repentance or prayer that saved them, but faith in the gospel. A. P. C.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

(48). A correspondent writes:—

“In ‘Helps by the Way’ on the ‘Judaizing of the Church,’ vol. 1, p. 205, you have surely gravely misused Heb. xii. 4, in applying it to the Lord, who knowing no sin, was not tempted thereby, as I know you fully maintain.”

Ans. The quotation is, “He had been so [faithful unto death], had ‘resisted unto blood, striving against sin.’” Our correspondent takes this evidently as *inward* sin, or an evil nature, and such a strife it would be heresy to impute to the Lord. I think if the passage in Hebrews be examined, however, it will lead to another conclusion; for the apostle has, in the previous verse, and speaking unquestionably of the Lord, been urging to “consider Him who endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds,” and then adds, surely as applying His example to their own case, “Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.” Here it is not inward conflict, nor do I see what force ‘resisted unto blood’ would have in connection with an internal struggle; but conflict with sin around, the passions of evil men aroused against those who stood for righteousness. This conflict is surely what is intended, and I cannot but believe the quotation is perfectly correct. It is at the next verse in Hebrews, where the apostle goes on to speak of *chastening*, that application to the blessed Lord is out of question.

The word of God is what must try us all, and I take this opportunity afresh to say that our readers

cannot please us better than by the closest testing of what is presented to them in this way. Only so are we safe from substituting man's authority for God's. The pages of *Helps* will, as far as space allows, be ever open to that honest-hearted criticism which shows that truth is sought for as such, and that nothing else will satisfy the soul.

(49). Was Abel's offering a sin-offering? If so, why was not the blood offered? Does the word translated 'sin' in Gen. iv. 7 mean 'sin-offering?'

Ans. There is no apparent mention of a sin-offering before the law. In Job i. 5 we find that he offered *burnt-offerings* for his sons in view of their having possibly sinned in their festivity. The word in Gen. iv. 7 might mean sin-offering, which in Hebrew is the same as 'sin;' but for this reason I rather conclude it does not. Everything was rudimentary in Abel's day, and the particular offerings seem not to have been defined. The burnt-offering is mentioned first in Gen. viii. 20, and the altar also. When the law imputed sin, the sin-offering came in with it.

(50). In answer to a correspondent, I would state that Satan's "medical missionaries" in vol. ii. p. 5, is simply meant to apply to spiritualistic doctors, &c, as the context will show. No attack upon medical missionaries as a class was ever dreamed of.

Another strange misconception seems to have arisen in some minds as to a passage in the Lecture on "Establishments," vol. i. p. 237: "Children of God, no doubt, they might be by Baptism," &c. This refers only to the views, which, it is well known, early obtained in the professing church. The whole paragraph read together, should make this clear.

CHRIST'S APPEAL.

“Behold I stand at the door and knock: if any man, hear My voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him and he with Me.”—Rev. iii. 20.

I am standing outside thy door to-night,
Seeking thine heart to win;
The world, for a while, has withdrawn its light—
Wilt thou open and let Me in ?
I have travelled far on a lonely road,
In sorrow and agony;
I have borne sin's heavy, crushing load,
All for the sake of thee!

I am standing to plead with thee to-night,
While the dews of evening fall;
O'er the moaning and surging waves of life,
Dost thou hear my yearning call ?
I would free thy soul from the chains of earth,
From its care, its sorrow, its sin,
I would give thee joy, for its hollow mirth—
Wilt thou open and let me in ?

From the glorious heights of Heaven I came,
To seek thee, and to save;
But the world, it gave Me a cross of shame,
And a lonely, borrowed grave.
I left My radiant home above,
All for the sake of thee,
I have died, to prove My deep, deep love,
Wilt thou open the door to Me?

Thou hast wandered far in the paths of sin,
Thou art weary and sad and lone;
But my blood can cleanse, and My love can win,
May I make thine heart My own?
The world, it has given thee care and pain,
Often famine and misery,
I offer thee treasures of priceless gain,
Wilt thou open the door to Me?

A. S. O.

LOOKING BACK AND LOOKING FORWARD.

Luke xii. 19-20 and 1 John iii. 2.

You have perhaps noticed that God deals with us to form us in two ways. 1. He continually reminds us of the judgment of *sin* at the cross, (Rom. viii. 3), the place, too, where our *sins* were put away. Every Lord's day it is before us in the breaking of bread, "This do in remembrance of me." Here we learn its cost—the cost of our redemption, while the heart is called to listen once more to His cry, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" No soul but must judge that in himself now for which *He* was forsaken, aye, must, when he is consciously in the presence of that grace, and while he is afresh listening to that cry. And what is it we have to condemn? "all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, which are not of the Father, but of the world," things whose principle I find working in *me*. 1 *John* ii. 16.

But that is looking back, and it is this looking back that is to have its formative power on our souls. It is before us, as I have said, every first day of the week. But there is "till He come," and this brings before us another way in which He works with us, though both are for the same end. This second way is, that I am going to be perfectly like Christ. "We know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." 1 *John* iii. 2.

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This appearing may be at any moment: is *any* practice right that excludes it? These are the two ways by means of which He seeks to make us all He would have us practically to be. On the Christian, as on a central point, God would concentrate all the weight of these two truths. 1st. You must judge all that is of the old man whose image as the earthy you have borne. 2nd. We are going each to bear the image of the heavenly. Have they both their full weight and meaning upon our ways day by day? I have done with *that* materially, I am reaching out after *this*. I know no other Christianity than this growing likeness to Christ, only complete when He appears, and as to the flesh, it has been truly said, "How inconsistent to be lading myself with clay on my way to a place where there is no clay."

H. C. A.

What should I do if I had to carry the burden of last week's failure! What, if only looking at yesterday's failure! It would be like phosphorous eating into the tenderest part of one's body; but I have got One who is able to restore my soul, One who does continually and *entirely*. You are finding how different you are from Christ, but He is the propitiation all the way till you see Him and are like Him. Love in you is very different from love in God, acting in His own eternity, showing love by giving His Son to give you life, and power, and love. Love in God comes out with this thought of separating us from all that we are, into His own blessedness.

‘LOSS.’

I think many fail to see just what the apostle means, when he says in Philippians iii. that he counts all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ. ‘Counting’ is faith; and faith is the God-opened eye which simply realizes things as they are. It does not colour them. A good eye imparts nothing to the object it takes in, but only realizes it as it is, adding nothing, subtracting nothing.

The apostle was not magnanimously giving up what had real value in it. It was not even a generous self-abandonment which does not count the cost of what it does. He *had* counted, and his quiet, calm, deliberate estimate is here recorded. Pursuing what he saw alone to have value, he says, “Yea, doubtless, and I do count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in Him.”

This not ‘sacrifice,’ as people speak; for to make that, there must be worth (at least, in our eyes) in the thing we sacrifice. The apostle’s deliberate conviction was that in his pursuit—entire, absorbing pursuit as it was—of Christ there was none. And this is the estimate which eternity will confirm, as the apostle’s abundant experience—for *he* was no mere theorist,—had already confirmed. To occupy himself with it would be loss, indeed.

A F R A G M E N T.

(1 *John* iii. 1-3).

I am going to be like Christ in Glory ; then I must be as like Him now as ever I can be. Of course we shall all fail, but we are to have our hearts full of it.

Remember this, that the place you are in is that of an epistle of Christ. We are set for this, that the life of Christ should be manifested in us. Christ has settled the question with God : He appears in the presence of God for us, and we are in the presence of the world for Him. "In that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you." If I know He is in me, I am to manifest the life of Christ in every thing. If He has loved me with unutterable love which passes knowledge, I feel bound in heart to Him ; my *business* is to glorify Him in everything I do. "Bought with a price"—that is settled : if bought, I am *His*. But, beloved friends, I press upon you that earnestness of heart which cleaves to *Him*, especially in these last evil days, when we wait for the Son from heaven. Oh ! if Christians were more thoroughly *Christians*, the world would understand what it was all about. There is a great deal of profession and talk ; and the activity of the Spirit of God—thank God—there is ; but do you think if a heathen came here to learn what Christianity meant, he would find it out ?

The Lord give you to have such a sense of the love of Christ, that, as bought with a price, the only object of your souls may be to live by Christ and to live for Christ ; and for those who do not know Him, that they may learn how He came down in love to seek us, and, because righteousness could not pass over sin, died to put it away.

J. N. D.

which God cannot own instead of the fruit He has promised!

Thus the firstling of an ass speaks to us. Blessed be God, for us because of what we were, the lamb has already yielded up its life. We have but, as we are seeking to do now, in peace to apprehend the blessedness into which we have entered under the shelter of the atoning blood.

When I say, "God is love," what do I mean by it? Why this, that God sent His only-begotten Son that we might have life in Him. We still carry about the old nature; but, blessed be God, many a time as Satan has caught me, he has never destroyed me; there is the propitiation,—I am inside, sheltered by the blood, and forgiven.

What wealth have you, if you have not got Christ? If Christ is the object before you, will all the things that fret you take Christ from you? All the things you long for, will they give you more of Christ?

Where are our hearts, oh! where are they? Are they occupied with this world, or are we quietly passing on to heaven, taken up with that which love cannot lose sight of—a living Christ in Heaven?

G. V. W.

AN EXTRACT.

There is more life and freshness and desire for the truth, in those who are led into the path in the face of difficulties that bring out reality, and help to keep them real. For thus it is the Lord turns the opposition to the truth, met with on all sides (and that is so sad for those who oppose), into real gain for His own, who are given by grace the privilege of suffering in any measure for His name.

I think there is an increasing conviction everywhere that the Lord is very near. What joy to have such a hope! And He declares the *blessedness* of those who are watching for Him, whether He comes in their lifetime or not (Luke xii. 38)—if He shall come in the second watch or in the *third*; so that none have been disappointed that have had the hope, and are fallen asleep. They have their special blessing. The Lord does not forget those who had heart thus to go out in longing and in looking for Himself.

I believe (apart from this) that it is the greatest help He gives as to sitting loose to everything here. May the truth as to all that He has now given to us, detach us in heart and spirit from all that He comes to take us actually out of at any moment! How sad it would be, to be holding on to anything that His coming would wrest from our grasp, till we could hold it no longer.

Now is the time for surrendering all, as Mary in spirit in John xii., for the One who was passing out of the whole scene by death as rejected by this world,

and as Paul in Phil. iii., who knew Him in all that He is in glory.

But the thought often presses on me, "Me ye have not always." How incalculable would have been Mary's loss, if she had failed to sieze that last night for yielding to Him that precious service! She never could have re-called it in eternity. Not that I doubt that love will find new ways of expressing itself to Him then. But it will not be in what He looks for from us now. There will be no self to be denied, no cross to be borne, no world to be surrendered, no reproach to be encountered then, no more anything to test us. Now everything is just a test as to what place Christ Himself has in our hearts. May we answer to the test like Mary, learning how to suit ourselves to Him by sitting at His feet as she did!

Dear — has learned "how to be abased;" "how to abound" is often more testing. But I have confidence in the Lord, that the same grace that has kept in need will still keep in the (I believe) comparative abounding. Only by His grace are we kept a moment. But it is not the strong man that learns what strength is, but the weak one, that has to be dependent upon the strength of *Another*. Thus we have the treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and that we may prove it.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

(53). Will you please explain 1 Tim. iii. 16: "Great is the *mystery* of godliness?"

Ans. A 'mystery' is in Scripture a thing once secret now revealed, and into which disciples are initiated. Christ, now revealed in the gospel in the full value of His life and death is the secret of true piety to the Christian disciple, but even yet hidden from the unbelieving world.

(54). Is any distinction to be made between being gathered to Christ, and gathered to His name? Is the former only future, at His coming, and the latter only for the present time of His absence?

Ans. The former expression is found in 2 Thess. i. 1, and there plainly connected with the Lord's coming. The latter can only be applied to the present time, and expresses the *mode* in which we find the fulfilment of His promise, "there am I in the midst." There is thus far a real distinction, although since the gathering to His name is inseparably connected with His presence, it would not seem wrong to use the expression, 'gathered to Christ,' as essentially the same thing *now*.

(55). As "we are not under the law," why are children exhorted in Eph. vi. 1-3 by an appeal to it, as if it were the rule, and the promise of temporal good appended, as if it applied to the Church?

Ans. The law is very frequently quoted similarly in the New Testament, because the Christian while delivered from the law, if walking after the Spirit,

fulfils the *righteousness* of it (Rom. viii. 4): that is, all that is *intrinsically* moral in it. Positive precepts, as that of the Sabbath, may change with the dispensation, but not so, for instance, as here, that of filial duty. The apostle quotes it to show how invariably God insisted on it, and the special promise attached as showing the value it had with Him. He does not say, "Honour thy father and mother, *that* thou mayst live long on the earth," or 'land,' but simply states that that was the promise. Yet in God's governmental ways with men at large I do not doubt that the promise is still fulfilled; but if the Christian's is a greater and a heavenly blessing, it is no loss to him to be transferred to heaven to enjoy it. The apostle quotes it here, however, as the promise of old attaching to it, to show how God emphasized the precept itself.

(56). Do the Scriptures teach that, when Christ begins his reign over the earth, all will be born again? And do Ps. xxii. 27 and Zeph. iii. 9, etc. prove this?

Ans. Ps. xxii. 27 scarcely goes as far as that. It shows that there is a general turning to the Lord, which does not decide how far this may be real in every individual. The passage in Zephaniah also speaks of a pure 'lip,' literally, and not altogether of a pure *heart*. The Lord's word in John iii. 3, 5 are more decisive, but to a Jewish teacher, and referring as they undoubtedly do, to Ezek. xxxvi. 24-28, it is doubtful whether (in relation to the future 'kingdom of God' on earth) they apply to more than Israel, who will enter it according to the terms of the 'new covenant,' as the apostle quotes them (Heb. viii. 8-12) from Jeremiah. Of Israel in that day the Lord says that the "people shall be *all* righteous" (Isa. lx. 21); but of some others it is said, "the strangers shall lie unto me" (Ps. xviii. 44, *marg.*)

(57). Is not the yoke the symbol of *service* rather than of restraint? And is not Christ's yoke (for He says, *my yoke*) His service for His Father? Is not taking His yoke being yoked up with Him—co-workers?

Ans. The yoke undoubtedly implies service, but it implies none the less restraint, as a concordance will show conclusively. Why was it "good for a man to bear the yoke in his youth," Lam. iii. 27? What mean "the bands of your yoke," "a yoke of iron," a "yoke of bondage," the "yoke of Egypt," the "yoke of the king of Babylon"? Again, in Isa. lviii. 6, "Is not this the fast that I have chosen . . . to let the oppressed go free, and that ye *break every yoke*"? Again, does not "let as many servants as are under the yoke," imply a distinction between service merely and service under a yoke?

Now the Lord's type in the red heifer is certainly one "upon which *never came yoke*." This is surely absolute, and prohibits, I believe, the application of such a thing to Him. "*My yoke*" suits at least as well the idea of a yoke He *gives*, a meaning which harmonizes with ver. 27; all things being delivered to Him, *from Him* we must accept the yoke.

Again, there are single yokes, and no one who examines the Scripture usage will say that even the general thought there, is of yoking *with* another; yet even so, it does not prove that other here to be the Lord. But the general use in fact is otherwise.

“ FAR BETTER.”

There should be always that which is far better to a Christian than remaining longer in this world, and that is “to depart and be with Christ.” If difficulties and sorrows beset your path you will assent to this, it is happy to you perhaps to look forward and you sing joyfully, “What will it be to dwell above,” but if you are in happy occupation of heart as a servant of the Lord on earth, is it then also your feeling, that to depart and to be with Christ is “far better”?

To the Apostle Paul it was the expectation, not of the coming of the Lord but of death, and that not the common quiet death of all men, but the terrible one of martyrdom, that was before him when he penned these words,—Phil. i. 19, 20. It was a common thing in Rome to throw a Christian to the lions. Yet to him the prospect of going even thus to the Lord was “far better” than remaining on the earth any longer. It was *not* the Lord coming for him, but his going to the Lord that was before him. Many a saint is delighting to speak of the coming of the Lord (it is our hope) who, though travelling many years in the wilderness in service, when death has (as with Paul) stared him in the face, he has not said with the Apostle well, to me it would be “*far better.*” It has taken us by surprise. Do we not all know something of this?

Did Paul enjoy communion with the Lord on earth in his service? 2 Cor. ii. 15, 16. Did he grasp and rejoice in God’s wondrous salvation, and the grace that had rescued him a high handed sinner in the

midst of his course? 1 Tim. i. 13-16. Was he a *happy* man in service to Christ, one who for Him would gladly "spend and be spent" for His upon earth, the saints who were dear to Him? 2 Cor. vi. 10; Phil. ii. 2. Yes, such a man was the blessed apostle Paul, for is not such a man "blessed," one who knew and entered into all these things as perhaps no man since has ever done, Col. i. 24, 25; yet for him there was something in reserve better to him than all of these united, he sums them all up—*everything to him worth living for*,—in that one remarkable expression "For me to live is Christ," and then adds, "To die is gain." Notwithstanding all he knew of Christ on earth, and it was the only one thing he lived for, Phil. iii. 8-15, he can say that "To depart and be *with* Christ, would be to him, "far better."

We want to ponder more the meaning of the *first* part of verse 21, ch. i., before we can say anything as to the second. We want to live it ere we can speak it, for it is the language of the heart that God values, not that of the lip. If you can say, if I can say, from the depth of our hearts in the presence of Him who searches and tries the reins of the heart, "For me to live is Christ," then it will not be difficult to add, "And to die is gain" it is the natural cor-relative to it, for "where you treasure is there will your heart be also." Ah, where is *our* treasure? Paul's was not here.

Oh blessed servant of our one common Lord and Master, we ponder thy words, "Brethren, be followers together of *me*, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample." Phil. iii. 17. May we all as servants, doing every man his work, Mark xiii. 34, desire to follow thee!
H. C. A.

BELOVED OF GOD.

Rom. i. 7.

I.

Thou lovest me! And yet Thy child
Is wayward, foolish, oft defiled;
Is slow to learn and dull to hold,
Quick to forget what Thou hast told;
In service feeble, seeking ease
Ofttimes, instead of Thee to please;
Thus poor my record e'er will be,
And yet, O God, Thou lovest me!

II.

Thou lovest me, because that love
Is in Thee, of Thee, yea, above
All acts, love's self is all Thine own!
Thou, God, art love; Thou, love alone!
Hadst Thou but waited for my call,
Or love in me, then not at all
Had I this purest ecstasy
Known ever, that Thou lovest me!

III.

Thou lovest me with that rich heart
That sought its objects far apart
From all that's winning, all that's good,
Thou lovest, just because Thou'rt God!
Thus Thou and I the story tell,
Spanning all distance possible;
I, nothing; Thou, infinity;
I, hateful; but Thou lovest me!

IV.

Thou lovest me! yes, Thou, God! Thou!
Thyself told out completely now—
Thy holiness, Thy majesty;
Yet this Thou add'st, 'Thou lovest me!
Me! me, the bad, without one claim,
Whose fellowship and touch were shame;
In this prevail'st Thou mightily,
Thou tak'st no taint by loving me!

BELÖVED OF GOD.

V.

Nor is it shame to love me so!
None but Thou, God, durst stoop so low;
Because Thou'rt Thou! Thy glory this,
The high prerogative of bliss
Like thine—Thyself the bliss—to love
With grand imperial love, to move
With sovereign will, and so to be
All things to me by loving me.

VI.

Thou lovest me, shall be my boast,
Whene'er the foe annoys me most;
Parades each circumstance of ill,
And magnifies the griefs I feel;
Intensifies the bitterness
Of trials, talks of my distress;
As though I could forsaken be!
I know, I know Thou lovest me!

VII.

Yes, he will speak of wrath, of rod
Blaspheme Thee to my fears, my God!
Make light my gains, enlarge on loss,
My soul makes answer, "There's the cross!"
Beyond that wrath can never come;
Upon it Christ met all my doom;
I shout the pean, "I am free!"
For there I find Thou lovest me.

VIII.

Thou lovest me! And that shall stand
Deeper than sea, firmer than land,
'Gainst all that Satan can evoke,
'Gainst destitution, sorrow, stroke,
Scorn, tribulation, hate of man,
And ways of Thine I cannot scan;
I see, above all mystery,
This one clear fact, Thou lovest me!

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IX.

This settles every doubt and fear;
 Makes me a happy worshipper;
 Gives to the weary feet a spring;
 Makes the face shine, the tongue to sing;
 Gives conscience, too, a clear release,
 The heart a confidence and peace;
 Fills every day and hour with glee—
 The joy of heaven—Thou lovest me!

X.

That I am so belov'd of God,
 Must form my manners on the road
 I journey, till I meet Thy Son,
 My Lord, who all Thy love has shown;
 Must separate from world and sin,
 From every path that He's not in;
 Incite to toil, bring victory;
 The only power, Thou lovest me!

XI.

And how Thy love invites my love!
 Draws my whole soul toward Thee to move!
 Makes possible to faith Thy facts
 And all assurances! Thy acts,
 The most astounding, no more strange
 Can be, since I'm within their range
 By knowing Thee, through love so free,
 By knowing how Thou lovest me!

XII.

It is enough; no element
 I want, to give my heart content,
 I sit within this love's pure glow
 With great delight, and waiting so,
 The certain coming of my Lord,
 So clearly told in love's pure word;
 Then the full flow of life shall be
 In heaven as here, Thou lovest me!

M. T.

JOB.

Job did not trust in his self-righteousness—that is, in his own doings—for acceptance with God, nor can he justly be placed in the same class with the Pharisee of Luke xviii. 11, 12. He was no hypocrite; the record concerning him is, that “he was perfect and upright, and one that feared God and eschewed evil.” Let us ponder this record, thrice written concerning him, and written too to describe him to us before God commenced His dealings with him. “Perfect and upright” could never be said of one who was working out *his own* righteousness for His acceptance with God. Such an one has no knowledge of God nor of himself either. But it is added also, that Job “feared God.” This fear, wisdom declares, is the “beginning of knowledge.” (Prov. i. 7.) Furthermore, Job “eschewed (lit., departed from) evil.” We thus see that he acted on the Lord’s word to man, “Behold the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding,” a word that could only come from Him when evil had come into the world, but a word that has ever since been acted on by the faithful in every age, “A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil.” (Prov. xiv. 16.)

Having said thus much to those who “have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil (Heb. v.) in order to remove (if it may be) from the minds of some hastily formed opinions concerning the good and evil seen in this early servant of the Lord, “*my* servant Job” (opinions often as hastily expressed), we may ponder with profit to our souls (if the Lord bless it) the book of Job, which recounts God’s ways with this His beloved servant. Remembering as we do so, that He who reads the heart, and does not

judge after the outward appearance, says of him, when addressing the enemy, the father of all evil, "*There is none like him in the earth*, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil." (Job i. 8.) A blessed testimony that reminds us of a similar testimony to Enoch before his translation in Heb. xi. As a man upon earth, he too "pleased God."

The foundation of Job's approach as a sinner to God, was God's provision and acceptance of the death of another. No other way has been accepted or acceptable, since sin came into the world. God provided what God could accept. And Job knew it, and presented to God that which typically met sin; that which only could meet it, in God's sight.

How *much* he knew we are not told. But *what* he knew is not doubtful, since he presented for his children the same. "It may be," said he, "that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts." And for this "he offered burnt-offerings, according to the number of them all." (Job i. 5.) Here we learn that, as Abel did, so Job also knew and valued what God could alone accept, that which (whether Job understood it or not) ever spoke to Him of the death of Christ, which has now effected that which was not possible by "the blood of bulls and goats." (Heb. x. 4.) But it is the same word "gohlah" in Job i. 5, the value of which for the sinner we have fully explained ages afterwards, and prescribed for Israel in Lev. i. 3, 4, &c., as "that which shall be accepted for him, to make atonement for him." And we note too that it is a similar word in Job xlii. 8, in the presence and value of which burnt-offerings Job prayed for his three friends. Job also knew somewhat of the necessity of redemption, the putting forth of that power which, when fully accomplished in all its details, will place its objects in the company of the Redeemer,

beyond the power of sin, and outside its sphere. "I know," he says, "that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand in the latter day upon the earth, and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another, though my reins be consumed within me." (Job xix. 25, 26.) "I know," and this is always the blessed language of *faith*.

But there was another lesson for this eminent servant of the Lord to learn, a lesson for us to learn also, because for us, and for *our* admonition, was this Scripture written.

Although then there was an understanding between Job and God, God would deepen it, and in what occurred between Job and his three friends Satan had no part; God was working, not Satan now, and only working for Job's ultimate blessing. And although Job knew infinitely more of God and His ways than the three friends did who came to comfort him, and explain them to him (see Job xlii. 7), though he did *not* trust in his own good works, or in his knowledge of God for acceptance, it comes out that he prided *himself*, took credit to Job on account of them, and they had gained such a place in his heart that he could and did recount them with complacency. None could gainsay them, none deny them, he knew it, and Job had grown satisfied with them; and here is *our* danger, as it was his. It hinders us from double blessing; God sees it, if we do not, and would remove it.

For a righteous man, one "perfect and upright" before God, to do all that Job did, all that is righteous, and to be practically on earth such as Job was, and to act as a righteous man, as each believer is in God's sight, is all right, and *nothing else is*: who will condemn Job then for this? It is given in Scripture to us now by the Apostle John, as a mark to guide us

as to discerning when one is born of God, "If ye know that He is righteous, "ye know that every one that doeth (or practiseth) righteousness is born of Him. 1 John, ii. 29. A faith which, according to another apostle (James) proves its existence by *works* (see James ii. 26,) is the right kind of faith. Job insists that this righteous action had marked all that he had done and been, as a man upon earth (Job xxxi.) and this is the righteousness of which he speaks when he says, "I put on righteousness, and it clothed me," (Job xxix.) He is speaking of practical righteousness in his ways on earth. Again it is so when he says, "*My* righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go, my heart shall not reproach me so long as I live." (Job xxvii. 6.) Perhaps none have been more condemned than Job for using such language as this, but it is a heart conscious of its own integrity before God. It is the language of a heart deeply wounded by the false insinuations of men, while knowing at the same time how unjust their charges are, that in his ways there has been wickedness, for which God is now punishing him. (See the charges in chapter xxii. 5-26, &c.) Paul spoke in a similar strain, when he said—"I know nothing by (or against) myself," in 1 Cor. iii. 4. Such a righteousness as Job's and Paul's ought to be seen in the ways of every saint of God, but to glory in it is pride, to clothe *myself* and boast in it, is self satisfaction, grace alone has produced anything and everything in me that has been acceptable to God. "What hast thou, that thou didst not receive"? and how are we any better than others?

Nay, "by the grace of God I am what I am" (1 Cor. xv. 10) said the apostle Paul, and as to what he had *done*, "Not I," he says, "but the grace of God which was with me." (1 Cor. xv. 10). All is of grace, and "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." (1 Cor. i. 31.)

Nor is the danger an uncommon one, for when God's people had gone out of Egypt and entered the promised land, they are *all* warned lest they fall into this especial evil of pride of heart. In Deut. ix. we read, "Speak not thou *in thine heart*, after that the Lord thy God hath cast them out from before thee, saying, For *my* righteousness the Lord hath brought me in to possess this land," yet are they continually exhorted to a life of practical righteousness on earth (see Deut. xix-xxv) while warned thus. None would deny that the "fine linen is the righteousness of the saints" (see Rev. xix. 8.) We are as believers working out this robe of practical righteousness day by day, and when God clothes us in it we may glory in what he has done, but when we clothe ourselves in it and boast of it as accrediting us it is all wrong. To boast in this way is according to the apostle Paul to "become a fool" (2 Cor. xii. 11.) yet ought this practical righteousness all to be there, a life which He can accept and which His grace has produced in each of us. Our desire is and the end wherefore we labour that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of (or agreeable to) Him. (2 Cor. v. 9.)

It is a terrible snare and hindrance, this pride of heart coming in, coming in too after we have been perhaps for many years walking like Job, and serving the Lord and owned of Him *as His servants*, as Job was. But we are all in danger of it, and the older we are the more are we exposed to its suggestions, and the more there is to look back upon. May the heart be kept lowly and always in the presence of grace; God wants us to know what is in *our* hearts or why have we the 42 chapters of the book of Job?

Grace has done much for us, *everything*, but it is of immense value to know what *we* are still, and what the natural heart, even in an old saint, is capable of. In Job it ended at last in his condemning God. "Wilt

thou condemn *me* that thou mayest be righteous?" (Job xl. 8.) And this man who would thus condemn God, God speaks well of. "Hast thou considered my servant Job, (mark the tenderness of the expression *my servant*,) that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil." What a God of grace is our everlasting portion!

And how did God answer his beloved though erring servant? How did God set him right? Job's pride of heart was based upon what he had done and been. God takes him up upon this ground when Job had pretty fully told out all his heart, and brings him into His presence. His opening sentence is full of majesty, "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? Declare if thou hast understanding." As to Job's righteous life, he owed his very existence to God, who tenderly continues to unfold to him His ways, and to show to Job his nothingness in the presence even of God's visible creation, and how much more so in the presence of God Himself, who is able to humble ALL the sons of pride, of whom Satan is chief! But Job has now learnt what he is, and wherein he has erred, and God's rich and double blessing upon him is the result. And now the lesson is for us, "Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord" (James v. 2). The "patience of Job" has become a proverb, do *we* profit by Scripture? and do we know so much as we ought to know of "the end of the Lord" gained by the Lord in his dealings with him? if not, this early servant of the Lord is many steps in advance of some of us. Our practice proves whether the end of the Lord in giving us Job's history has been attained in us or not, whether we are only blessed (as Job i. 10,) or know something of a *double* blessing (Job xlii. 10, 12.)

H. C. A.

HOW THE CUP RUNS OVER.

I have been thinking much lately of that word in Ps. xvi. in which we see the Lord going before us in "the path of life" and setting us the perfect expression of it—"the Lord is the portion of my cup." It is easy to say He is, "the portion of my inheritance"—that in Himself is summed up all the blessedness that is before us for ever. But the "cup" is what I am experiencing on the way to the inheritance, not exactly the circumstances of the way, but what I am tasting in them. Now in that path of His of unparalleled trial, He could say, "Jehovah is the portion of my cup." He was tasting in the circumstances only what the Lord Himself is, hence He can say, "the lines are fallen unto me in *pleasant* places"! Now in Ps. xxiii. He, who when He putteth forth His own sheep goeth before them, leads us into His own path, and we can say, "my cup runneth over;" for what has come between these two Psalms, giving us first the cup in His path, and then the same and overflowing in ours. Ah! He has had to drink of another character of cup altogether (Ps. xxii.); the cup He prayed might pass from Him, but that, in the perfection of love and obedience we hear Him say, "the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" Again you see, "the cup" is not the circumstances but what he was tasting in them, and what was it? what our hearts can never enter into, what He entered into that we might never; there is that forsaking of God, when too, in His very perfectness, He was cast upon Him in absolute confidence, "MY God, *my* God" the only one that ever perfectly trusted in Him, to be perfectly abandoned by Him; oh, think of what it was in the measure in

which He only knew what it was to say, "the Lord is the portion of my cup," to have Him as His one perfect joy, in all He had previously gone through, the only but perfect light of His heart, and this to be gone from Him now, and in losing this to have lost everything, to be shut up to utter, utter, darkness, without one ray of light left, when God had abandoned Him. That was the cup He was drinking, and there in the drinking of it, we get the only estimate of our sins and sin, but in a work which has put them away for ever, hence the beautiful *title* of the Psalm, *Aijeleth Shahar*, "the dawn of the morning." That darkest night that ever was, was the dawn of endless day for us, heard from the transpiercing horn of the divine judgment due to sin (v. 4), that infinite love had led Him into for us. His first thought is those whom He has been given out of the world to declare *the name* to us, in which is contained all our blessing. Alone in the darkness for us, He can now associate us with Himself, no longer alone, in the light into which He has entered, alone in the sorrow, He has us with Him in the joy, and "sings" out of the fulness of it; but it is "in the midst of the assembly" now associated with Him in the joy.

This is what leads us into His path, and makes Ps. xxiii. for us. But, now dear sister comes a needed process to be passed through in all our souls, in order to be able to say "My cup runneth over." This is not the experience of the first part of the Psalm. There, in being able to say "the Lord is my Shepherd," it is easy to add, "I shall not want," and we have the Shepherd's *care* expressed in green pastures, still waters, that the soul thus *invigorated*, (this is the meaning of "restored," as food or rest restores), may walk in paths of righteousness for His name. But now comes a change, it is no longer, the green pastures and waters of rest, but the *valley* of the *shadow* of *death*. Practically, I admit it is often

only reached as to the experience of the soul on a death-bed. But it ought not so to be. There is a greater death than our own, to hearts that know *Him*. Surely it is the shadow of the *death of Ps. xxii.* lying upon the whole scene of this world. Oh! has the whole scene closed for us, wrapped up in the shadow of His death? What then? "THOU art with me." It is the *Shepherd Himself* proved more to the heart than all His precious care, "*my cup runneth over.*" And thus shut up to Himself in the growth of the soul, He has brought us into what was His own cup in Ps. xvi. How little many souls know that the things on which their hearts are leaning as though they were necessary to their joy, are only enfeebling it for them; and that it is when all else is gone and Christ alone remains before the heart, that the cup runs over, this is the secret of many a happy death-bed. But the Lord have us entering into it *now*, finding deep, blessed, heart satisfaction where only it can be found in the Lord Himself. See the Epistle to the Phillipians. May we know what it is to have this death, thus closing everything here for our hearts, that with Himself over all, and the deep abounding portion of our cup, whatever our circumstances, our path may be bright for His praise, till we see His face and are with Him for ever. But His ways with us here, are just to educate our souls, for this, weaning us from all beside *now*, into finding in Him, and with Him, the joy of eternity begun now; in His presence is the fulness of it.

JOY THAT FAILETH NOT.

HABAKKUK.

Although the *fig tree* shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the *vines*; the labor of the *olive* shall fail, and the *fields* shall yield no meat; the *flock* shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no *herd* in the stalls

YET

I will rejoice in the Lord.

I WILL JOY IN THE GOD OF MY SALVATION.

The Lord God is my strength,

and

He will make my feet like hind's feet

and

He will make to walk upon mine high places.

PAUL.

Some preach Christ, even of envy and strife—of contention, not sincerely supposing to add affliction to my bonds. Phil. i.

All seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's.

Many walk of whom I have told you often, and now tell you, even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ. . . . who mind earthly things.

I do *rejoice*, yea, and will *rejoice*. I have LEARNED in whatsoever state I am therewith to be *content*.

I KNOW both how to be abased, and I KNOW how to abound,

Everywhere and in all things

I AM INSTRUCTED both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

I CAN DO all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

Now unto God and our Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

THOU ART FAIRER THAN THE
CHILDREN OF MEN.

Psalm xlv. 2.

Nothing but Him we see—
The Christ on whom we gaze;
And beautiful, O God, are we
In Him through whom we praise.

Our hearts they must outflow
As Thee, our God, we bless;
Th gift unspeakable we know,
The Lord our righteousness.

Our vessel here is small
To take the fulness in;
But soon our hearts shall know it all
Without one cloud between.

'Tis sweet to sing on earth—
To know Himself our all;
As pilgrims in a land of dearth,
Who heard a heavenly call.

Jerusalem above
Shall hear our song more sweet;
When glorified with Him we move
Along its golden street.

'Tis there in spirit we
Are now with Him we praise;
And we are lost as there we see
The Christ on whom we gaze.

S. O. M. C.

PETER'S CONVERSION.

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nevertheless, and it shall be patent to every eye at last as surely as omniscience could read it in him now. Blessed Lord! He knows hows to take forth the precious from the vile, and will lose not even the fragments that remain of what is true and of Himself, out of the shipwreck which may seem to have shattered hopelessly all we had. May these last words linger in our ears to whom as much as to this beloved disciple He says, "Follow Me." Yea, Lord, we follow: who would not follow? "Draw us; we will run after Thee," sustained by that grace, as sufficient for us as for Simon Peter. The path will soon end in glory, and *Himself*.

Not all who are Christ's may have come to know heaven as the present revealed scene, where Christ has given us our home, interests, objects, and joys, now therefore to form and give its character to our Christian walk in the world. But what about those who have in any measure? May not heavenly things lose their power over our hearts? Are we not conscious of the tendency of everything around us to drag us down to the level of the world in which we walk? What need of diligent, watchful keeping of the heart against the first enfeebling of joy! For this indicates that decline has begun, and the descent is easy and rapid when once the heart begins to go. Two things, then, mark the state: heaven, lost in present power, is put off to the future; and the Christian, become worldly, instead of knowing the fellowship of His sufferings, he is accredited by the world.

A FAITHFUL BROTHER—AS I SUPPOSE.

1 Pet. v. 12.

Blessed supposition this, my fellow Christian! Has it ever presented itself to your mind, that a man divinely inspired and at that moment penning Scripture, SUPPOSES a brother, with whom evidently he has little acquaintance, to be a *faithful* man? Again, I repeat, this is a happy aspect in which he regards him; would God it abounded more!

In company with this, I would call attention to another word of similar character from the same divine writer (withal a man of like passions with ourselves)—Simon Peter.

In the 2nd Epistle, 3 ch. 15 v., he makes mention of his “beloved brother Paul and the wisdom given unto him”—one who had in former time been forced, in holding fast the liberty of the gospel, to withstand him to the face. How happily was grace at work when he thus commits his brethren over to the man whose rebuke doubtless had been enough for “flesh and blood” to bear. Whence this precious grace to one who boasted of himself above all his brethren as loving His Lord more than all beside? Ah! well we know it was from Him who was meeker than all beside, and very lowliness itself. He has been hear-

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ing the Shepherd's voice bidding him "follow Him" and is now bending his neck to His yoke of sweet constraint, and is learning to obey Him.

'Blessedness, my reader, this was, which may be yours and mine to share.

But let us note more carefully the circumstances of this word of appeal as to grace that should be working in our hearts in this day as well as that. At the time of Paul and Barnabas parting company on account of the unfaithfulness of John Mark, we read "that Paul chose Silas and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God." (Read Acts xv. 36-41). Thus Silas (seen by comparison of this and the two chapters that follow with 1 and 2 Thess. to be identical with Silvanus) was travelling companion of Paul. And he, as we have seen, was at one time called to give witness against his brother Peter, even withstanding him to the face. How beautiful, then, to have such words as these from him in the face of circumstances like the ones recorded. There are precious and divine beauties in this little word from one rightly esteemed as chief among the apostles; and yet, beloved, they are through grace within the range that is both yours and mine. On the one hand, Peter does not record *more* of the brother in question than he personally knows—he does not say as Paul does of another (Timotheus) that he *knows* him to be faithful, for this he evidently does not. But blessed, touching grace (of Peter's Master it surely was) that if he cannot speak of *knowing* him to be faithful, yet he will *suppose* from the connection in which he does know him that it is so. My reader, this is passing beautiful—Peter supposes all on heaven's side. Deeply was it freighted with the love that *thinketh no evil, but hopeth all things*.

Doubtless the circumstance of Silas being with Paul in the prison of Phillippi was not unknown to him, at least their companying together, and this was enough, where Divine love was at work, to set him down, in the hope of his heart, at least a faithful brother. He will *suppose* him at least to be so as the fellow-laborer of his beloved brother Paul—not as alas! alas! so often now, supposing him to be anything and everything but this because of the unhappy occasion of his brother's rebuke borne in mind. May God make us rich in grace and thoughts like these. May we "increase and abound in love yet more and more." May it be true not only that "our *faith* may grow exceedingly, but that the *love* of every one of us all toward each other may abound also." May we learn of Him who has bidden us take His yoke as "*meek and lowly* in heart." May we list His gracious voice as, looking upon His poor and feeble followers, unable to "watch with him one hour," He says "ye are they which have *continued* with me in my temptations." Blessed, peerless, Lord and Master! He will say at least what is in *His* heart if even amid the rebuke and exposure of theirs. Let us learn His ways, beloved brethren, be taught of Him to walk in wisdom's paths of pleasantness and peace. Let us, like Him, say of each other the *very best* we can, and as to all the rest bear it on our hearts in intercession before our Father.

Do not say, let me beseech you, that it lies upon a level too high for you to reach. True, the grace is *another's* to draw upon, but it is plenteous and free flowing, and only needs our emptiness, to realize His fulness. And that one has proved it so we have already seen. And now in closing let me note still yet another. Paul has a request (of no small strain, the context readily shows) to make of his

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brother Philemon, and in doing so he mentions the refreshing that not only he but others had found in him. Ere making further claims he will, as he says, "Acknowledge every good thing that is in him in Christ Jesus." (Read Philemon.) Happy, happy employ! The true and only way of winning other hearts, not to ourselves alone, but for *Him* whose interest in it we should seek to serve. How much loving service might we beseech each other to engage in for His sake were this more the practice of our lives.

Now I would say, to my beloved brethren, fare you well, and with this word, "Let us not, therefore, judge one another any more; but *judge this rather*, that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way." Rom. xiv. 14. "Let us therefore follow after the things that make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another." Rom. xiv. 19.

Yours, in the love of Him who has said to us, "If ye know these things, *happy* are ye if ye do them."

B. C. G.

OLD TESTAMENT SHADOWS.

We have mentioned it as an apparent contradiction to our view of the limited range of the old Testament future, that the belief of the people plainly went beyond it. Not only does the epistle to the Hebrews tell us that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob confessed themselves pilgrims upon earth, and looked for a "heavenly country;" but also the very word used by our Lord for hell—Gehenna—seems to have been in use among the people before our Lord's time in that very way.*

Any one need only read carefully the first half of the book of Genesis, to be quite clear at least as to Abraham that there is no promise at all of heaven to him recorded there. How then did he obtain the assurance of there being in store for him "a heavenly country?"

One of two things, could alone be supposed. There was either an unrecorded promise or else he must have been given to see very plainly the typical character of things which we know *were* types of the very truths which the New Testament shows us he had received. Abraham's call to Canaan was the perfect symbol of our "heavenly calling," but how he could have understood it so, we may be at a loss to comprehend. Yet some things there were that might have aided greatly in this.

Man had been shut out of Paradise two thousand

* It is used in the Targum of Jonathan, and in the Mishna, as well as commonly by the Jewish doctors since it is not used in the Septuagint, save once *gatenna* in Josh. xviii: 16, for the literal "valley of Hinnom."

years before, and Revelation ends with the picture of another Paradise, heavenly, not earthly; into which those that have "washed their robes" in the blood of the Lamb shall be admitted. No one doubts, save an infidel, that here again the first garden of God was a type of the other. Had the secret then been shut up those two thousand years,—absolutely shut up—that there was in it some such meaning?

Our suppositions in such a matter may not possess much value; but we are seeking to account in this way for a fact at least not to be denied, of Abraham's having a knowledge of that which certainly does not appear upon the face of the inspired record. And, our attention being turned to this, we cannot but notice how much the divine way was in those early days to teach by type and figure. Did Abel know nothing of the significance of that "more excellent sacrifice" which by faith he offered? And if the "seed of the woman" spoke, as we know it did speak, of a deliverer to come, it spoke still in the language of type of the bruising of the serpent's head. In Abraham's vision it was a figure spoke, though with some interpretation (Gen. xv.) So Jacob's ladder; and still more the mysterious night-wrestling, with its consequence of a halting thigh. Joseph's dreams still exemplify this way of the divine teaching: and so the dreams which he interprets. In these and similar instances we find not merely the use of type and figure, but of these as things whose significance was known to the people in whose time they happened. They show us that these were the language of the day, certainly not wholly unintelligible when first uttered, however much the full mystery waited for revelation, when the appointed time should be come. —From *Facts and Theories*, p. 246.