

THE
PRESENT TESTIMONY,
AND
Original Christian Witness Revived.
IN WHICH
THE CHURCH'S PORTION
AND
THE HOPE OF THE KINGDOM,
ETC.
ARE SOUGHT TO BE DEVELOPED FROM SCRIPTURE.

כל בחיל ולא בנח כִּי אִם־בְּרוּחִי

Zechariah iv. 6.

VOL. VI.

LONDON:
R. GROOMBRIDGE & SONS,
PATERNOSTER ROW.
MD.CCC.LIV.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY G. LITTLEWOOD,
93, LONDON WALL.

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THE PRESENT TESTIMONY,
ETC., ETC.

Nº I.

THE MINOR PROPHETS.

INTRODUCTION.

BEFORE entering on the study of the minor prophets, I will avail myself of the opportunity they afford to make a few remarks on the prophetic writings in general, pointing out the subjects of which they treat. We may divide these books into four principal classes, according to the subjects on which they speak—subjects often connected with their dates.

1st. Those which speak of the great crisis of the capture of Jerusalem, and its consequences. These are Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel—all the chief prophets excepting Isaiah. I place the book of Daniel in this class because, in fact, that event changed the government of the world, setting aside (in judgment) the elect people; and, while speaking of the Gentiles, he does so in connection with the substitution of the Gentile monarchy for that of God in Israel, and in view of that people's destiny.

2nd. Those which speak of the judgment of the Gentiles as such. These are Jonah, Nahum, Obadiah.

3rd. Those which speak of the entire fall of Israel, and of the destiny that already threatened Judah; such as Isaiah, Hosea, Amos, Micah. They pronounce a penal judgment on the people, while unfolding with more or less extent the dealings of God in grace at the end. With the exception of Amos, who prophesied in the

and taking part in the destruction of that city; but it appears that their confederates deceive them (verse 7); and Edom, thus ill-treated by former allies, becomes "small among the heathen" (verses 1, 2). The nations are the first instruments of the Lord's vengeance. But another, and yet more terrible event, is linked with the name of Edom, or Idumea, and is the occasion of the Lord's judgment falling upon that people. It is in Edom that the armies of the nations will be assembled in the last day. We have the account of this in Isaiah xxxiv. and lxiii. (See Isaiah xxxiv. 5, 6), the rest of the chapters displaying the judgment of desolation in the strongest possible language. Isaiah lxiii. shows us the Lord Himself, returning from the judgment, having trodden the wine-press alone, of the people there were none with Him.

Finally, Israel itself shall be an instrument in the hand of the Lord, for the judgment of Esau (Ob. 18). The destruction in Isaiah relates especially to the armies of the nations, who, in their movements, find themselves assembled in Edom. The part which Israel takes in the judgment, is on the people in general; and, I suppose, afterwards, when Christ is at their head as the Messiah (comp. verses 17, 18, and Isaiah xi. 14), appears to confirm this view of the passage. At all events, it takes place after Israel's blessing.

That none shall be left of Edom, is also declared in Ob. 5, 6, 9, 18; Jer. xlix. 9, 10—22; and it will be observed, that there is no restoration of a remnant, as in the case of Elam and others. A part of the latter prophecy, establishes the same facts as that of Obadiah, in nearly the same words. The same judgment is pronounced in Ezekiel xxxv., and in Isaiah xxxiv., already quoted. We see in these chapters, as well as in Isaiah lxiii., that it is the controversy of Jerusalem, that the Lord pleads with Edom (Ezekiel xxxiv. 11, Isaiah xxxiv. 8.; lxiii. 4). In these passages, the Lord does not forget His thoughts of love towards Zion, and His people.

He closes the prophecy of Obadiah with the testimony of the effect of His call to repentance, of His unchangeable faithfulness to his promises and unwearying love.

Power and might against those formidable enemies, should be given to Israel, who should in peace possess the territory which their enemies had invaded. Deliverance should be on Mount Zion, from thence Mount Esau should be judged, and the kingdom should be the Lord's.

As corrupt power had been judged in Babylon, so in Edom hatred to the people of God.

FRAGMENTS.

GRACE, free, full, generous, large-hearted mercy and forgiveness, "the kindness of God," is the leading idea in Christianity. And there is no spring of virtue or of service like this.

If an aggrieved one were to come to the man that had injured and insulted him, and stretch out his hand, and declare his full and hearty forgiveness, and desire for reconciliation, what would so bind the man to him as this? What would establish pure, happy, abiding friendship between them like this? Yea, and what would honour and gratify the offerer of all this like its ready acceptance by him who had offended?

And *this* is found in Christianity. Nay, this is its first great element: the salvation of God, published on the atonement, He Himself has perfected.

"To every proselyte, at first admission,
Full innocence it lends; whate'er his crimes
Before have been, he's white and free and just,
And equal'd with the veterans of virtue;
First wears the laurels, then begins the fight."

Gambold's Martyrdom of Ignatius.

We may oft learn by the failure of others. Among the reformers, Calvin was remarkable. Of sufficient integrity of heart, through grace, to honor profoundly the word of God, and of energy sufficient to give origin to a system,—in theory, he recognized in many respects the truth of the ministry. In practice, *he formed for himself* a system adapted to circumstances and to his own peculiar character. More light entered—the word was searched. The energy of the Holy Spirit was in action; and that which Calvin had created as a system, no longer answers either to the creative energy of its author, or to the wants produced by the Holy Spirit. Those who, urged on by the Holy Spirit, have searched the Word, have found themselves, while following the Word and the principles and truths which Calvin himself had found therein, outside of His system in many respects. They followed the Word and not the system.

Of course, thenceforth they became objects of attack. They were innovators, etc., etc.

May Grace keep us free from all systems of our own, and diligent in the study of the Word.

N^o. II.

MATTHEW XVI.

“Every plant that my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up” (Matt. xv. 13).

A BETTER understanding of this profound principle would keep many souls within the bounds of humble caution in all the differences and debates that occur concerning the Church and her truth, and all that relates to the name of Christ.

Christ watches the Father's action, to guide Himself by it, and sees all salvation rest on it. “None can come to me unless the Father draw him.”—“I came not to do my own will, but my Father's.”—“Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out;” “I will raise him up at the last day.”—“Of those that THOU hast given me I have lost none.”

This plain truth of the FATHER's planting unto salvation, will be found to be the secret of the largely-debated place in this chapter. Nor have I seen the explanation of its difficulties cast upon this truth. I pray God that the suggestion of it may prove a safeguard and enlivener to some. I am sure that some most fully taught of God must have seen it. I have never seen it in common use.

It will be serviceable to trace the place from its plain points. “The gates of hell shall not prevail.” Hell is here HADES, the same word as Grave in the sentence, “O Grave, where is thy victory?”—a parallel passage! Now, therefore, figuratively, the judgment of death, or, in a natural sense, the gates of the grave, shall not prevail against the Church, *i.e.*, it shall rise! Glorious and blessed truth—truth of comfort and glory! We may now trace from this expression an elucidation of the rest of the place. Shortly, then, Simon, thou son of Jonah—thou natural man, and son of a natural man—blessed art thou, for my Father has revealed to you that I am the Christ, the ever-living Son of the Father, for it is

tantamount to this. Flesh and blood have not, and could not have, communicated this in the knowledge you have of it. I recognise my Father's act, and I say unto thee, **THOU ART PETER**, and on this rock I will build **MY** Church. It is not, observe, God founding *His* Church on Christ, making Christ the **ROCK**, but the Son founding His Church on the Father's action. The Son discovers the Father's hand in revealing Him as Christ to Simon; and in obedience, He takes the Father's act as the foundation (as was needful) of a Church which He was to lead to the Father.

“As my Father knows me, so know I the Father.” The confession of the Son revealed of the Father founding a Church, against which the gates of the grave, or the judgment of death, shall not prevail. **IT SHALL RISE.** It is a plant planted in life eternal by the Father, through faith of the Son of God. The expression here changes. “I will give *thee* the keys of the kingdom of heaven,” was on a new ground. It was not the keys of heaven that he had, but of the *kingdom of heaven*. This is entering entirely on a new line of declaration. Simon was now Peter, by the direction of the Father's act, and by the Son's appointment; the first to receive the truth as it is in resurrection and eternal life—the first in ready devotion to the person of the Son. For in the confession of His person he failed not, but through the disappointment of secondary hopes. To him, therefore, was given to open the door to Jew and Gentile, to confession of Christ's name. The keys were not given to the twelve, except as the general term of sending may imply it in John xx., but the power of binding and loosing was, and in a yet more extended point of view in John xx. The order of this gift to Peter is, in kind, still manifest. To whom would you say is entrusted the breaking of new ground, and introducing confession, but to those to whom the Lord is specially dear, and have received remarkable apprehension of the truth of Christ from God.

All, however, is presently reversed. Peter was yet resting, not on resurrection, but on present hopes. The hopes of man, as he might have had them, had he received Christ instead of slaying Him. Peter would dissuade

the Lord from the higher and suffering sphere, and savoured of man's thoughts and not God's. He loses the name of Peter, and is now called Satan. Succession is broken before it is founded. I have heard it said, that Peter at this time had not received the Holy Ghost. It would have been enough had he seen Him risen to prevent this speech. But I would ask, Does he that savours of the things of men partake of the Holy Ghost at least in doing so? He that savours of the things of men has no just commission in the things of God. We observe, also, the Lord calls Peter *Simon* after he had denied Him — "Simon, lovest thou me?" Faith of the Lord's person, and love, and savouring of the things of God, are necessary to the character of Peter. The revelation of the SON OF GOD by the Father to the foundation of LIFE.

FRAGMENTS.

In Lev. vi. The trespass committed against the Lord, has its immediate expression in a man's own want of righteousness and grace towards his neighbour. His act was, shewing what he himself was: though against the Lord, still it was unto his neighbour: the immediate question was between him and his neighbour, yet against the Lord, but mercy for him, as in Psalm li. 4: so with Paul, the blasphemer, persecutor and injurious, it was ignorantly in unbelief: it assumed not in his conscience the direct rejection of the grace of God.

In Num. xv. the presumptuous sin is not in ignorance, nor to a neighbour, but *reproaching the Lord, despising the word of the Lord*. In the beginning of the chapter, the Lord revealed what was a sweet savour unto Him, in an offering made by fire: this could not be deviated from: there was *one* ordinance for them of the congregation, and ALSO for the stranger: and this an ordinance *for ever*. *One* law and *one* manner shall be for *you and* for the stranger that sojourneth with you (verses 15, 16).

It is a solemn thing to offer a sweet savour unto God: the savour of Christ is sweet unto him: God can have no delight in anything where the savour of Christ's name is not: be it what it may, it is *sin either ignorantly done, and remedy in mercy opened up, or, with high hand, the Lord reproached and His word despised.*

N^o. III.

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON A PECULIAR EXHIBITION OF TRUTH IN THE GOSPEL OF ST. LUKE.

GOD is always true to Himself; and therefore (and that in the perfectness of divine wisdom) if any line of His dealings be given in the word, misdirection is guarded against, and His dealing put in such contrast to the peculiar range of truth exhibited, as that there shall be no mistake. If God, in the wisdom of His teaching, gave the Messianic character to the gospel of St. Matthew, do I not find rejection of the Lord in that character peculiarly exhibited, and His future dealing with Israel in the same gospel, so that we are left to seek the truth fitted to us in contradistinction to it, and which is made prominent, but not at all, or but little, developed there? So peculiarly is this also true of the gospel of St. Luke, where the general interest of the world in Christ, as Son of Adam, and not Son of Abraham, and David, as in Matthew, is set forth, for we get there every thought that would seem of the world specially contradicted, and that which is not of it adopted.

The very introduction of our Lord's birth has its peculiarities in each. The visit of the wise men of the East is at the house of His parents, such as it was, some time after His birth, though mentioned immediately after; but Luke gives the lying in the manger, the expression of His having no place at all in the habitations of this world. Again, the revelation of His birth is to shepherds; not to kings or wise men. His introduction into the world is most lowly, though to be set over that world which the type had forfeited. He came as the least on earth. Mary sung how God had regarded the low estate of His handmaiden, and had exalted the humble and meek. But she understood not where this

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was to conduct Him, born of her, and had to feel the keen sword of disappointment. How far too soon do we think to reap the fruits of God's dealings with us. Eve did, when she said, "I have got *the* man from the Lord" who had been promised to bruise the serpent's head. Mary miscalculated the present harvest of honour from her being the mother of Him who was, in truth, the expected man, the deliverer of His people, and the Saviour of the world.

The commencement of His ministry bears the same mark of lowly view. After having returned from the place of temptation, His first sermon declares that He comes to preach the gospel to the *poor*. The sermon, which answers in so many particulars to the sermon on the mount, is marked by contradiction, plainer in form, to what the world seeks after. In Matthew we find the law spiritualised; in Luke the objects themselves are aimed at. Blessed are ye poor; not ye poor in spirit: but this shews that it is the spirit of poverty that is meant, having its hope future in the real absence of the goods, the things which the world values. This form in Luke is distinctly evident in the counterpart to it:—"Woe unto you rich, for ye have received your consolation." What must the world and its ways be before God, that to take its consolation in the spirit of enjoyment entails loss hereafter? Let us look then at all that with which the world would deck itself. How vain are the arts of Cain's children. The schools of art—the refinements of ease—the pleasant pictures—the increase of the world's wealth. When the soul, at a distance from Jesus, is not armed with the same mind as He in the same world—not planted in the likeness of His death—how little will be found in resurrection. The world's general advancement is its actual distance from God; and what a rule of life do we gain if with Jesus we do not what the world doeth. It is a rule of itself; we pass through, and we do not participate. That which is of the world is not of the Father. The children of the Father being forgiven their sins, are redeemed at the same time out of it to God, and out of all it values.

Whenever in Luke this point is touched upon, it is

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more extended than in the other gospels. We have an instance of this in chap. xii. The young man desires the Lord to interfere in the dividing of the inheritance with his brother. We may say that the Lord takes this application to Him as the theme of His discourse for the lowering of the value of all earthly things, and continues the subject from the 15th to the 34th verse. It begins with the rich man building new barns for his increased goods, and ends with the words,—“Where your treasure is there will your hearts be also.” It is also an occasion of instruction to those out on service that they need no care. Surely it will be a little flock that will *possess* the kingdom, and it is the meek who shall inherit the earth, who are now daily thrust from their place in it. But, surely, the knowledge of times even far beyond those when He “returns from the wedding,” may be in our thoughts. Enoch had, by revelation, the knowledge of a dispensation far beyond that in which he stood, and of its righteousness. He walked with God in it, and was removed from present things, and from the judgment of the world, which Noah was saved through. Surely it may be given to look beyond the confidence of our hope, to the time when Christ shall have given up all things to God even the Father, and that God shall be all in all, preceded by the reward and reign of the saints.

We all feel distinctly, however, that those who hold the truth of the heavenly portion of the Church, are helped with a Spirit which is beyond that which was given to maintain that which Christ came to establish, or shall establish when He returns from the wedding with those who have had part in it; and who will receive their vindication in the glory with their Head, before the world in which they did not take part, and which was against them, and despised their hope. How fitting then is the denial of present things by such. Yet God loved the *world*, and we do testify that He sent His Son to be the Saviour of the world, *but there is but one character of faith now, and that is a redemption that brings us out of its order and its desires.*

The 16th chapter is almost wholly given to the end of shewing the better worth of heavenly over earthly

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things; and, in so doing, puts the abundance of the earthly in the position of actual evil. *Riches are the mammon of unrighteousness.* It may be, that the commencement of the chapter is typical of a state of things in which the return that would have been duly made to the fulness of grace is hindered by the advice of the “steward of unrighteousness” (perhaps he is the elder son in a new character), the steward of the things of this world, and the beggarly elements of it, seeking a place in the houses of the debtors to grace. It passes on, however, to direct instruction, with these words,—“And I say unto you.” There is a promise to those that are faithful in their disposal of that which the Lord considers as the “least,” viz., that He would commit to them the true riches, spiritual things, of which the stewardship has a much better reward. The former are considered as another man’s, the last as our own. There would be no faith if we saw the link between our actings and what God gives in return. Faith rests on God, and God is faithful; but the step that faith trusts to is a void to sight. If we in faith have valued the true riches above what the world calls riches, he gives us the full exchange, and a fund therein to trade with, whereby to increase our store.

The Pharisees were covetous; and they were told that they could not serve God and mammon: and this word follows, at which the world, if it listened, would stare:—“Whatsoever is highly esteemed [high *υψηλον*] among men is an abomination to God.” Surely every thought that lags in us that would commend itself to the world is here upset. It is well that we can be completed in the school of Christ. To be condemned in that in which our way was to receive its finishing strokes of beauty, would not be consistent with the beauty that God produces to flourish for ever in His presence. The judgment of all that is highly esteemed among men is pronounced by these words of our Lord. It is declared what that which is esteemed among men is before God. That its *heights* are an abomination to Him. What must the world be?

There is an order in the three parables of Luke xv. and xvi. The prodigal son is to shew the grace that is

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in God (to the Gentile). The second, the mischief the unfaithful and discarded steward does among the Lord's debtors, and the superiority of heavenly over earthly things. The third applies not only the comparison of wealth and poverty in extremes to persons, but must have some spiritual intention in it, though it be in perfect keeping with "Woe be to you rich"; but we see the Church abiding in the truth in its deepest condition of distress; its members full of mortal suffering—the dogs licking their sores—disregarded by the world and Christianity in their splendour—yet carried to Abraham's bosom and receiving consolation there. So then we have grace—debtors to grace—return hindered, and then, at the close—faithfulness in distress, and its home of comfort set before it—and the torment, too, of selfish ease.

Surely this chapter is a prominent instance of this character in St. Luke's gospel. God's interest in the world by Jesus is to bring men out of it. Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, look to the Apostle and High Priest of your profession—Christ Jesus—and be as men that wait for your Lord.

There is a passage in the xviiith chapter which bears on this aspect of things, which is not generally apprehended in its true bearings. When the disciples say,—“Lord increase our faith” (v. 5). He answers in a form that shews that that faith was intended that had the performance of miracles in view. The answer is to receive its elucidation from this result of faith. They wanted in their then state the honour of the powers he was exercising. His parable begins,—Wait till your Master is served before you think of sitting down yourselves. Look to nothing but duty. “This is my reward,” says Paul, “that I preach the gospel without charge to any.” Seek no honour even from Christ while in the execution of your duty; no wonders worked; no powers that will honour *you*. Laban could admire such. If the spirits are subject to you, rejoice rather that your names are written in heaven. As My servants, seek no honour. Your duty is enough. Be thankful that you are allowed to do it. It is not that we are unprofitable to the Lord or ourselves in the sense in which it is commonly used.

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It is not necessary to mention many instances that are common to the other evangelists; the object is to shew that the instances, with the view I have pointed out, abound in, and are put at more length by, St. Luke. But let us note the Lord's exhortation in xxii. 23, 24. Suppose it is more than being *called* benefactors. Suppose they *are* benefactors. We see how happy in a common view are the effects wrought by authority exercised in kindness. Interests looked to—mischiefs warded off—consciences hindered from sinking—social dishonour saved—wants relieved—intelligence needful to the increasing calls of the world imparted—all these things that are the fair side of the world's good—social blessing—moral sense—religious guidance. Well, all disappears at this word of the Lord's.

It is too late for the world to be saved *as* the world by Christ. Born of the Virgin Mary into the world, He was so offered to and through Israel to the world, and so preached by John the Baptist: but having died and risen, is known no longer after the flesh, holy as He was in it, but in resurrection to them that believe; and known, too, to the believer by the power to him-ward wrought of God in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and gave Him glory. Can we wonder, then, that all that is here is always to be the "least"? Men have been doubly guilty. On this account we see the world judged finally on the cross. We see its mind; but we see Christ's mind too; and it is for this with thanksgiving for the wonders of its grace, the foot of the cross is our place; while by the Spirit—by communion with Him risen, aye, and glorified too—the victory is ours in joy over the flesh and the world, and all that it can find its ease and delight in. How sad and how evil a sign, when any stop to debate about the person of the Son of God! Surely, if it is the Father that has taught us that Christ is the Son of the living God, we shall do no such thing.

N^o. IV.

STEPHEN'S SIGHT OF THE GLORY.

Acts vii.

WE may observe, to the comfort of our souls, how fully as at home both Paul and Stephen found themselves to be when brought into the presence of the glory; though, as we may remember, that glory had always been proving itself too powerful and overwhelming for the stoutest of saints in the flesh.

When the vision of the glory appeared to Isaiah, he was like a man that had taken the sentence of death into himself. He cried out that he was undone; and a coal from the altar was needed to touch his lips and restore his soul (Is. vi.).

So, as we may also recollect, Ezekiel and Daniel. The sight of the glory which each of them had (in different forms it is true, but that is no matter), overpowered them. They could not stand it. They fell on their face, and the Lord had to speak to them in words of restoring confidence and grace (Ezek. i., Dan. x.).

Jacob, in still earlier days, in his way and measure, experienced this likewise. At Bethel, he had a vision of the glory in a certain form, though not so dazzling, and he is conscious that he is in the house of God, and at the gate of heaven. But still, there is something in the scene too weighty for his spirit; and he says, "How dreadful is this place." It is not, I know, that he was altogether like Isaiah or Daniel; but still, he is not fully at ease in the place of the vision (Gen. xxviii.).

And this was like Peter, James, and John on the holy hill. Like Jacob at Bethel, they tasted the sweetness of the place. They said, "It is good for us to be here;" but still, like Jacob again, their spirits are not fully prepared for the glory; and "they feared" as Moses and Elias

enter the cloud with Jesus—yea, they fall on their face, and are sore afraid (Mat. xvii.).

All these cases tell us, that the stoutest saints, so to call them, the most favoured *in the flesh*, find something in the presence of the glory more or less too much for them. Yea, John in Patmos found this, though, as we remember, he had lain on the bosom of his divine Lord (Rev. i.).

But, in beautiful and happy contrast with all this, neither Stephen in Acts vii., nor Paul in 2 Cor. xii., find the glory in any wise too much for them. And why is this? The answer is full of comfort to us, beloved. Stephen at that moment was, in principle or spirit, *a child of resurrection*. His face was then shining like that of an angel; so that when he looked up, and saw heaven opened and the glory of God there, there was in his spirit no mixture of fear or amazement, but all was delightful to him, and he could gaze at the open heaven and the glory with desire, though such ones as Isaiah or John, as Ezekiel or Jacob, *when in the flesh*, must own it to be too much for them.

So St. Paul. He was taken up to the “third heavens.” But he was there, seeing and hearing, with powers and affections of soul all deeply, calmly, satisfied. He so speaks of that moment, as to give us reason to know, that it was unmixed enjoyment to him. It was only too much for him *to communicate to others*, and not at all too much for him *to enjoy himself*. But all this was so, because on that wondrous occasion Paul was *out of the body*—or, which is the same thing, whether in it or out of it he knew not. He was *as one that was out of it*; for, at the least, it was neither any use to him or hindrance to him.

What comfort there is in all this! It entitles us and enables us to know, that as soon as the body is laid aside, as soon as we are delivered from the flesh, there will be in us a capacity to converse with the glory in all calm satisfaction, as those who are at home in the presence of it—a capacity in the feeblest beyond all that Jacob, or Isaiah, or Ezekiel, or Daniel, or Peter, or

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John, or the most favoured of the saints, *while in the flesh*, are equal to.

May we have hearts to long for that moment! It may come to us in the way of death, or by the translation or resurrection of "them that are Christ's." We ought to have a welcome for it in either way. "To depart and be with Christ, which is far better." The Lord lead our foolish sluggish hearts along that path of desire; for it is little some of us know of it. To be with Him, to be like Him, to lose the heart in wonder and love, to be satisfied, and all this in unmixed enjoyment and conscious capacity!

"Death shall unveil that world above,
Where the dear children of Thy love,
Attemper'd all to heavenly day,
Bear and reflect the immediate ray."

We should *think* of heaven, and seek to walk more *personally* near the Lord in spirit, so that heaven may be more *a reality* to us. Did we but draw nearer to Himself in the exercise of our souls, so that His presence now were more true and real to us, the desire to be with Him would be enlarged in us. Be it so, Lord, for thy name's sake! Amen.

FRAGMENTS.

SACRED and common biography are not the same. In the holy volume, the faults even of the best of men are impartially set down, and there we are informed how even such faults were graciously overruled to bring about good. But memoirs written by uninspired men, are apt to dwell chiefly upon the good qualities and actions of *their* worthies; notwithstanding there are times when the whole character of both the one and the other looks very critical.

Scripture places the origin of evil just where our own sad experience finds it; namely, in the appetency to "know good and evil"; to know what pleasure is to be found by one thing and another, and how it relishes. The secret of our monstrous lust of knowledge is *unbelief*, or distrust of God; as if he had omitted to give us *every* good, because he grudged us something; as if he had some design to withhold or forbid what might yield us further enjoyment.

N^o. V.

PRAYING IN THE HOLY GHOST.

Jude, 20.

THE great practical security of the believer against the evil working of the enemy is, that he is himself *indwelt* of God. As it is the fearful, but also the *universal* character of the natural man to obey the influence of him who is the prince of the power of the air, so, on the other hand, it is they who are led by the Spirit of God who are effectively the children of God. They yield themselves, in the sweet enjoyment of the liberty of redemption, to the self-same guidance as that to which Jesus willingly submitted, when, in gracious humiliation, He *obeyed* for our sakes (Eph. ii. 2; Rom. viii. 14; Luke iv. 1).

The house has now changed masters. He who once ruled it undisturbed, and kept secure possession of his goods, has been dislodged by rightful conquest; and the victorious Redeemer has become the everlasting owner of the spoil. "*Ye are Christ's*" is now the assuring testimony of the Holy Ghost to those, who, from the once hopeless bondage of sin and darkness, have been called by the voice of Jesus into the new and marvellous light of the Divine glory. They are become sons of God, through the grace of Him who made Himself the Son of Man, that in their stead He might strive lawfully and win the crown of their redemption. As their triumphant Captain of salvation, He has made them free from that first bondage, that they might become the fellows of His own rich blessedness as the Beloved of the Father.

It is by the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Adoption, that all true Christian experience is regulated, and the whole tenor of it is determined. As sons we suffer, and as sons we rejoice. If we know our standing, we find it to be purely filial. Hence the Holy Ghost, who bears us witness of this blessed assurance, becomes the forming

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power of the Christian character. For He is not only the original communicator of life to our souls, but also the active power of its sustainment and its exercise. It is for this reason that all these varied sentiments and emotions which distinguish the believer from the natural man, are attributed in Scripture to the Spirit as their effective cause. Dwelling in our hearts, according to the purity and knowledge of the Divine nature, He sometimes brings heaviness into the soul, through the discovery of evil and infirmity, while His *end* is always the practical sanctification of the children, by leading them more and more fully into the knowledge and enjoyment *through the faith of Jesus*, of their own sure portion in the love of God.

The believer's condition, as a justified heir of salvation, is not only peace but also *light*. "Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye the light *in the Lord*" (Eph. v. 8). It is in Christ that they are beheld, in the view of the Spirit, in all the purity of the Divine righteousness. Such is the believer's standing. The *walk* of such is expected to agree with their vocation, whose calling is into living union with their risen and glorified Head. And so it is added: "Walk as children of the light . . . proving what is acceptable unto the Lord." The conscious enjoyment of this wonderful position, as well as that devotedness of heart which makes the pleasure of the Lord to be the chief desire of the really growing Christian, is effected by the gracious operation of the Spirit. Being Himself pure light as well as love, He morally transforms the subjects of the better ministration of life and righteousness into the likeness of that abiding glory, upon which, because it displays itself in the person of the SAVIOUR, they can now look steadfastly with unveiled face (2 Cor. iii. 8—18).

As praise is the just expression of that peace and joy which the knowledge of the God of hope excites in our hearts (Rom. xv. 13; Heb. xiii. 15), so the natural utterance of spiritual desire is *prayer*. But it is evident that the tone and quality of Christian supplication will vary according to the measure and present activity of the Spirit's operation in the soul. The God of patience,

who is in us by His Spirit, can go very low in search of what He desires to hear from us in prayer. The vague and sorrowful expression of inward conflict and distress is aided by the groaning sympathy of the Spirit of grace (Rom. viii. 26). On the other hand, the intelligent, and therefore fervent aspirations of a heart, whose knowledge both of present things and things to come is according to the full revelation of the word of truth, are dictated and directed by the same Spirit, as the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of God (Eph. i. 17). Whether, while reminding us of our personal necessities, or those of the suffering body of Christ at large, or while animating our hope and stirring within us more zealous desires for the glory of God, the Holy Ghost invariably leads the suppliant, whose heart He fills, to *Jesus*. It is He who is the Author and Finisher of faith.

True prayer in the Spirit must embrace, as its final object, the fulfilment of the purposes of God. Its scope, therefore, will vary with the progress of the children in the way of God. Displaying to the heart of faith the finished glory of the Saviour in the heavens, the Comforter not only feeds the Church with the last hope of future entrance into the enjoyment of that rest, but acts meanwhile within her as the monitor and guide of her obedience. By shewing us the things of Christ, He makes us know the hope of our heavenly calling as a present truth, while He enables us also to anticipate the future manifestation of the glory of Jesus, in fulfilment of the sure word of prophecy. The world to come—the liberation of the groaning creation—the abasement and effectual expression of the evil which afflicts, as yet, that earth which God has ordained to be a witness of His own power and goodness, when its dominion shall have been committed to the hands of its true Governor—such things, being comprehended in the promises of God, are a part of the natural aliment of the believing soul. They form, therefore, subjects for prayer in the Spirit; for all that pertains to Jesus must be the desire of the heart, in which the Spirit of adoption dwells. Moreover, by unfolding to us the divine instructions of the word, that Spirit enables us (because we have the

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mind of Christ) to think rightly, and judge safely of the progress of that evil world in the midst of which we walk, as strangers, through the love of Him who has redeemed us for Himself (John xvii. 14—16).

It is remarkable, that while the exhortation to continual prayer is addressed repeatedly in Scripture to the saints, it is in this passage only, that the full expression "Praying in the Holy Ghost" is found. If we observe the context in which it stands at the commencement of that striking valedictory exhortation with which Jude closes his stern prophetic warning of the Christian apostasy, we can hardly fail to see that there is a highly characteristic force in this expression. The faith in which we are there exhorted to build ourselves up, is called emphatically "*our most holy faith.*" The prayer by which we are to make known our requests to God, in the midst of the growing evil of the times, is to be "*in the Holy Ghost.*"

The reason of this emphasis it is not hard to see. For it is as truth grows less and less estimable in the eyes of man that its priceless value is more thoroughly felt and understood by those who find in it their life and hope. God sympathises perfectly with this feeling, in itself a gracious affection of the new nature, which clings with fresh tenacity to Jesus as His precious name becomes more vile and dishonoured in the world.* While contemplating a time when sound doctrine would no longer be endured, and Christian hope would have become a mere derision, His Spirit grows more earnest and emphatic in His commendation of the Gospel. "Most holy," is that precious faith affirmed to be, which purifies the heart of the believing sinner from the corruptions which are in the world through lust.

The distinctive truth of the Christian dispensation is the presence and power of the Holy Ghost in the church, as the divine Witness of the glory of the ascended Saviour. With the progress of spiritual corruption in that dispensation, there would naturally be a growing insensibility to the nature and value of this characteristic

* For a touching instance of this sympathy and its effects, an one of highly practical value, see Malachi iii. 16, 17.

doctrine. At its close, the spirit of error will, with a fearful though most just retributive effect, possess itself completely of the minds of those who could not be persuaded to the love of saving truth (2 Thess. ii. 11, 12). Men will then be scoffers, not carelessly but upon deliberation.^b They will give reasons for their disobedience to the faith (2 Peter iii. *passim*). They will be liars against God upon principle and conviction. In willing ignorance of his first *acts* of judgment, they will deride the Spirit's *warnings* as a weak and fabulous tradition.

Such will be, to speak generally, the temper and habit of mens' minds when those perilous times shall fairly have set in, which form the last days of the Church's patience here below. It is in the midst of the common prevalence of men's unbridled evil, that those who are beloved of God are so earnestly exhorted to prayer in the Holy Ghost. For it is only thus that they can be preserved in practical separateness from that which God will judge.

But prayer in the Holy Ghost implies a full subjection both of heart and conscience to *the word of God*. And so, because that word is, to the believer, evermore the word of *grace*, not only needed warning, but also a more abundant fulness of consolation, will be received by those who, instead of living in pleasure upon the earth (James v. 5), are awaiting in sure hope and long tried patience the coming of the Son of God from heaven (Heb. x. 36—39).

It is more especially with reference to this last effort, that the apostle Jude addresses us in the prospect of the dreary but inevitable fulfilment of the Spirit's testimonies concerning the closing hours of divine long-suffering. To keep ourselves in the love of God. Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life, is the trial of our faith and patience in these latter days. The

^b The awful extent to which this is already true in the case of those misguided men, who, in the false glare of the sparks of their own kindling, have forgotten the brightness of the Lord's glory, is but too well known to all who view with attention the religious tendencies of the present day.

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effective means of both these things is watchful prayer (1 Peter iv. 7).

To be holding truth doctrinally, and even founding right expectations on such views, is not enough. If faith is not active, edification is impossible. Thinking upon the name of Him who is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, reminds us of the faithful promises to which that gracious name is pledged. Those promises again, in their exceeding greatness and their preciousness, when pondered in simplicity of faith, prepare us for a riper communion with the God of *hope*, who has made himself to be in Christ the portion of our souls. The light of the divine glory shews itself in its undying brightness to the eye of faith. *Above* the heavens, whither Satan, as the accuser of the brethren, has his present access, we perceive the glory of Him who is in readiness to come forth suddenly and take us to Himself. While man^c, in his madness and folly here below, is the daily grief and bitterness of our souls, man *there*, the man Christ Jesus, is the sure witness of our complete deliverance from the wrath which is coming on the children of disobedience, as well as the bright token of the manner of that love which the Father hath already bestowed on us in Him.

Thus for the vigilant believer the visible existence which surrounds him is but as a curtain which conceals for a season from his expectant gaze the glory which is ready to be revealed. Divine truth is with him to assure him of his coming joy, and to expound to him, meanwhile, the nature and necessity of those moral phenomena which, without such explanation as the word of God alone affords, would prove too perplexing and disheartening to be consistent with our peace. For grievous indeed is the burden under which we groan while in the body. But in the sanctuary all is clear; and that sanctuary is the appointed station of the Christian all the long night of his patience here below (comp. for the principle, Psalm cxxxiv).

^c Man, whether, in the spirit of self-judgment, we view him in ourselves, or whether we look forth, in the desires of the new and inner man, upon the world, which still lies in the wicked one.

When engaged in the contemplation of that which is above us and yet for us, we are spiritually minded in a practical sense. Jesus is filling our thoughts and keeping them in happy exercise about Himself. Desire grows together with that love which, being of the Spirit, looks towards the Spirit's things. Hence, prayer will abound, and will be mingled with thanksgiving, while the exercise of this divine communion will tend, by its own sweet necessity, to the furtherance of spiritual fellowship among the saints. For faith in the Lord Jesus must produce, as its shadow and effect, love unto *all* the saints (Ephes. i. 15).

The desires of the Spirit in the church can never willingly contract themselves within narrower limits than the perfect truth. What Christ loves, we love who are His. And because this love is absolute, and is the very life of those who are "of God," it is not extinguished, though it may be sorely tried by the abundance of still accumulating evil. The "*comfort* of love" may oftentimes be easily sighed for in a day of multiplied division and much spiritual feebleness, but, as a living principle, it continues to be the token of our personal interest in the things of Christ. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren" (1 John iii. 14).

But at a time when Satan's work is nearly at its height, and the corruption of the general mass of Christian profession is complete, the Spirit's operation, in the true remnant, of the divine mercy, will naturally have reference to the special circumstances of the times. It has been always so. Sighing and crying for the daily outrage and systematic desecration to which the truth of God is subjected, the few whom God preserves by grace are presented to us in the scriptures of the prophets, as speaking *often* to one another in the fear of the Lord. *They* clave in hope to the sure promises of Jehovah, who, in His covenanted faithfulness, shone on them from afar with reassuring hope and comfort, through the dark and heavy cloud of His impending judgments (Micah vii). *We* also have our ministry of comfort. To us the written testimonies of

the apostles of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, are in the place of the prophet who spake audibly to the remnant of Jehovah's earthly people; while the indwelling Spirit of adoption, is as an unction of sure knowledge to the Father's little ones, to make them see and know the living truth, that by means of this they may continue to abide in Him (1 John ii). That Spirit is given to us as the Spirit, not of faint-heartedness and indecision, but of power and of love and of a sound mind (2 Tim. i. 7).

Prayer is not always an impulsive thing. It is more usually regarded in scripture as a deliberate action of the spiritual understanding. Thus it is often found associated with ideas of labour, of perseverance, striving, etc. Like every other genuine spiritual exercise, it has its origin in the *heart*, in which the Spirit dwells. Faith in God is its producing cause. The known will of God must, therefore, be its regulating principle. While, therefore, it is shaped and coloured by the particular exigencies which call forth from time to time the sympathies of the believer, whether as a member of the one body of Christ, or as an isolated man of God in the midst of a mixed world, prayer in the Spirit must be a *habit* of the really spiritual man. In point of earnestness and fervour, its flow will be languid or abundant, as the Christian is himself accustomed to be much or little in conscious fellowship with God.

It is, perhaps, on the whole, less needful to admonish one another to a diligent culture of personal communion with the Saviour, in a wise appreciation of our daily and incessant need of Him, than that we should be kept in continual remembrance that the rule of our life as Christians is the *will of God*. We serve the Lord Christ. To serve the living and true God is our present occupation, while awaiting in sure hope the revelation of His son from heaven. The same spirit who attests our perfect freedom from all legal bondage and all guilty blame, through the effectual purging of our conscience by the blood of Christ, is our instructor in the way which God has chosen for our walk.

Hence the notion of inactive contemplation is excluded

from the picture which the gospel spreads before us of true spiritual blessedness. "For we are not our own." But to recognise this truth is to accept a permanent responsibility to Him to whom we now belong. His mind, then, must be studied, or His will can neither be apprehended nor obeyed. His sayings, therefore, are His people's guides. But the sayings of Jesus are not limited to sentences of consolation and assurance to our guilty souls. While sustaining us in never-failing mercy as our great High priest, He admits us (because we are His *brethren*) into fellowship with His own thoughts. He confers with us, as friends, upon the general interests of God. The Father's things are His; and what He has received from Him He has communicated freely to His own. It is this that gives to true Christian service its lovely and ennobling character, dating its commencement as it does from the consciousness of that new and wondrous relationship between the Sanctifier and the sanctified, from which also its entire competency is derived. The natural effect of this must always be, that in the mind of a growing saint his own personal interests will be less habitually in his thoughts than the general interests of the body of Christ. Cheered and led on by the clear shining of the Saviour's glory, he will feel that to run in the race on which grace has set him, is to increase his distance daily from the former things. He will look on the things of others rather than on his own; because prayer (Col. iv. 2; Phil. iv. 6)—seeing that the very basis on which prayer proceeds is the covenanted grace in which we stand—is doubtless an intelligent exposition of our wants to God. Now these wants will vary, as has been already said, according to the spiritual growth and practical condition of the suppliant. When the Spirit is not hindered, He will surely produce in us an enlargement of divine knowledge and desire which will find its meet expression in our prayers. True, however, as this is, it must not be forgotten that all such intelligence is limited, and falls short in its measure both of the extent of our need, and of the perfect grace which meets it. "We know not what to pray for *as we ought*." But if so, we are comforted by the knowledge that we have to do with

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“one who is able to do for us exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think;” and that, too, *according* to the power that worketh in us. The mind of the Spirit in His groaning intercession for us is always in advance of our own consciousness (Eph. iii. 20; Rom. viii. 26, 27).

In proportion to the measure of existing evil, and spiritual danger, is the effective energy of the Holy Ghost displayed as the faithful watcher and guardian of the Church of Christ. God ever rises higher than the adversary as the defence and keeper of His own. His songs of deliverance are round about the righteous (made such and so *preserved* in Christ alone) all the long and dreary day of that “much tribulation” through which, as the companions of Christ’s patience, they are called to enter into the kingdom which is ready to be revealed. He is, in Christ, His children’s hiding-place and joy (Ps. xxxii. 7; Rev. i. 9; Acts xiv. 22).

Hence prayer in the Holy Ghost will never savour of *despondency*. For, while the fearful nature of the evil in the midst of which our lot is cast is clearly apprehended, and a searching consciousness of that corporate as well as individual responsibility is acknowledged, the neglect of which has led, practically, to such results, the expectation of the children will not cease to be according to the *grace* in which they stand. They will continue, therefore, to rejoice in hope of *the glory of God*, amid the sorrowful confessions which the Spirit of truth must needs bring from their lips. They will be happily conscious, that while all that is sorrowful and humiliating is but momentary, the things which they desire by the Spirit are eternal. Already more than conquerors through Him who loves them, they will desire earnestly the day of manifested triumph. Pressing on with weary but still eager steps, they will look hopefully toward the goal. In their weakness they will find the grace of Christ a still sufficient strength. The world around them will be busy and in earnest in its wickedness; and they will be no less decided in their purpose to wait patiently for Christ. They will willingly occupy until He shall return. As God is more and more forgotten in the world, the riches

of His glory according to the mystery of His heavenly calling will be more fervently admired and delighted in by those who are kept in their steadfastness by His unwearied grace. Their faith and hope will be *in God* (1 Peter i. 21).

At the present moment, there is nothing to which Christians have more need to turn their thoughts than the inquiry, how far the daily habit of their lives really tallies with the expressed mind of the Spirit respecting these latter times. The question is not what we *think*, but how we *act*: for faith is an active principle, and loves the labour unto which it leads. Doctrinal *notions*, on the other hand, are powerless for good, and only tend to blind the theorist to his responsibilities as a holder of the truth of God; because mere notion does not touch the conscience, though it may fill and interest the mind. No one will exert himself to pull another from the fire who is not thoroughly alive to the reality of the danger, as well as heartily interested in the sufferer. Now spiritual interests are analogous, in their activity, to natural ones. To attempt the rescue of a fellow creature from a perilous position, is to obey a natural impulse. To be unconscious of such a feeling, or to disregard its promptings, would argue an unnatural insensibility, or a selfishness beyond the ordinary measure. So also in spiritual things. If we really are awake to the evil of the day, and mindful of the snares by which the souls which Christ has purchased with His blood are often taken at the fowler's will, we shall not be indifferent. While warily attending to our own concerns, and endeavouring to bear without staggering the burden which belongs to each (Gal. vi. 5), we shall be desirous of helping one another. Remembering that the battle is of God, we shall not cease to fight the good fight that we may *keep the faith*. While others work a lie we shall be doers of the truth.

Knowledge of every kind but one is cheap and easily attainable in our day. True knowledge of God remains indeed a secret still, except to the unworthy vessels of His mercy who receive it from Himself through faith. But *religious* knowledge is abundant. Nothing is more

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common than to find a considerable fund of doctrinal information accompanied by much accuracy of general religious idea, in the minds of men who are, nevertheless, completely in the world. Evangelical theories may indeed be justly classed, in the present day, among the rudiments of the world, so easily are they embraced by those who, in ignorance of the true meaning of the cross and the power of the resurrection, find Christian profession an honour rather than a reproach. Yet nothing is more certain than that the truth of the gospel is abidingly the abhorrence of the natural man. "If I please *man*," says the apostle; "I am not the servant of Christ." Christian opinions confer no life; divine grace does: and where it acts, it brings forth faith in Jesus as its echo from the living Christian's heart.

We love God if we are Christ's; but the friendship of the world is enmity with God. If, therefore, we are praying in the Holy Ghost, we shall not be desiring the things of the world. With respect to this, the Spirit's limitation is, that all that is *not of the Father* is of the world. Now nothing is *of the Father* which is not *in the Son*. In Him all fulness dwells. Essentially, the fulness of Godhead is in the man Christ Jesus. By appointment, also, He is heir of all. The treasures, therefore, of wisdom and knowledge are in Him not less than (rather comprising a part of) the riches of Divine salvation. Christ, then, will be the object of His search who seeks the Father's things. But if we are seeking Him and His, our eye and our heart will be for heaven not for earth: for Christ is not here but there. If in us by His Spirit, it is as the hope of glory, and the earnest of a life which is our own indeed but hid for us with Christ in God. The mists of death have gathered for us over earthly things, since the day we knew that we were crucified with Christ. To be *mindful*, therefore, earthly things, is to be unthankfully forgetful of the grace in which we stand. For it is through death that we have come to life in Him who is gone into heaven for our sakes. But the eyes of the dead are closed to sublunary things. The world is crucified to the believer whose faith perceives, in the ascended Jesus, the substance

of that blessedness of which he speaks. Christ is in heaven, and our interests are where He is. Our expectations also are from thence alone. Our *work*, meanwhile, is here, in the confession of a hope which makes the world uneasy wherever it is faithfully expressed; for we expect Him as the Saviour whom the world knows only as the Judge.

The world will not be persuaded that the end of all things is at hand, so long as it is able to taunt those who say that they are crucified with Christ with a manifest relish for, and an eager interest in, *earthly things*: for the world is not dull in its appreciation of the claims of Christ upon the conscience of His people, though it be (as alas! it must, or it would cease to be the world) incapable of rightly estimating that pure and living spring of genuine Christian conduct which lies hidden in the heart that knows the love of God. Assuredly, a lively dread of furthering in any way the devices of the enemy in his great work of deception, will not fail to stimulate to personal watchfulness and soberness of mind, the Christian who is habitually praying in the Holy Ghost.

It is well for us to remember, that if we are not walking in the Spirit, we are surely grieving Him: but we are not walking in the Spirit unless we are sanctifying the Lord Christ in our hearts, and so living in a conscious readiness to give to every inquirer a reason of our hope. Meekness and fear are the never-failing witnesses of spiritual walk (1 Pet. iii. 15), while joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ is the inward habit of the spiritual mind (Rom. v. 11). Strife and fretfulness of spirit are the natural though sad effects of the pressure of an evil day upon the weak and earthen vessel (Ps. lxxiii. *passim*). The sole security against these things is to be found in the secret of the Divine Presence. We willingly are still while conscious that *God* speaks and acts. The battle is His own; and our constancy and courage must oftener be shown in the patient endurance of an evil report, than in the victorious assertion of triumphant truth. Yet truth will surely triumph in the end. God will send it forth to victory in the manifested glory of

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His Christ. Till then we wait as men who know the manner of their patience, as well as the certainty of its expected end. It is, no doubt, a trying thing to see the house of Him who is the Author of peace and order turned into a spiritual chaos. To see evil clearly while conscious of disability to work deliverance, is a deeply mournful spiritual experience. The possession of light is not *here* an unmixed enjoyment; for it shines in a darkness which it shews indeed but cannot dissipate. But if truth brings with it its own peculiar trials, it is, on the other hand, the means by which we may walk safely and watch hopefully until the darkness of the night be passed. It is a holy sorrow which finds its pang in that which makes the world rejoice: but the morning light is even now at hand to turn that sorrow into everlasting joy.

A.

FRAGMENTS.

THAT which is hidden in *darkness* is not so effectually hidden as that which is hidden in *light*: for "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." What HE hides in His own light, no creature can find. The creature can grope in darkness and hope to find, or can accustom the eye to see where darkness is not perfect; but light closes, through its feebleness, the eye. Our guilt—where is it? The Lamb that died in our stead is alive again, in the midst of the throne, and that which proclaims what we were in *ourselves*, proclaims what God is in Himself, and what we are in *Christ*.

The principle of democracy is, that man has the right to choose his own rulers, the people being the source of power; though he may choose them according to certain qualities of which he is judge. The principle of ministry is the same amongst Presbyterians and Dissenters. They add, in one way or another, a certain investiture for its performance. The *will of man* is the principle common to democracy and radicalism, in things civil; and to Presbyterianism and dissent in things religious.

He who insists upon the gifts of God, is evidently upon an altogether different ground. Gifts that come from heaven have nothing to do with human expediency.

The more crooked the mind, the oftener will the straightforwardness of Christ our Saviour have to cross it.

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God has prepared in each time circumstances suited to the impulse which his Spirit would give. All the circumstances were prepared for the reformation. Just so were they all also prepared for Christianity. The blindness of philosophy can only see the circumstances, and cannot see the power of God which acts in them.

Incredulity is always the same ; but those who act from faith know well enough that they are guided by quite another thing than circumstances ; often, indeed, in their simplicity, they know not that circumstances do favour them, save in the sense of the promise that all things work together for good to them that love God and are called according to his purpose ; and such are not among the feeblest. If one must speak as a man, I should say that the man who has but one idea ordinarily does more than he who knows how to philosophise upon everything. The energy of the one and the abstraction of the other (who judges everything) are rarely united.

That Christians in general yield more or less (alas !) to the influences which surround them, is commonly true. Yet, often, the contrary is the case ; and where wealth and worldliness reign, those who seek to leave all for Christ's sake, may, perchance, be accused, not of radicalism, but of being aristocrats, who were discontented with what was national, and may, by the philosophers, be considered as a reaction to the extreme of democracy.

No matter, if the Spirit acts, God produces the fruits of His grace, and the world judges them, passes on and perishes in its own wisdom. Christians may fall also under the influence of the philosophy and systematization of the age. May they that are *ours* avoid that as they avoid politics. Scientific reasonings upon passing events neither save souls nor raise the fallen Christian. We are the servants of God ; God will prepare and direct every circumstance, we need not concern ourselves therewith save to admire the good hand of our God. Our part is to follow the impulse of the Holy Spirit and to guide ourselves by the word of God.

The Holy Spirit, when he acts, knows how to touch all the chords of the human heart and to adapt himself to them in grace, reserving to God all His rights and all His sovereignty ; but it is God alone who knows how to do this. Power is needed.

The power and the grace of the Holy Spirit it is which we have to seek, and not to be either democrats or aristocrats or despots : we must however, be divine, and walk according to the principle of the grace of Christ in whom the sovereignty of God and the heart of man unite in one and are at peace. God wills that matters should not prosper without that ; for they would, then, prosper without *Himself*.

N^o VII.

J O N A H.

THE prophet Jonah gives us the opportunity of applying his history to many sentiments that arise in the human heart in all ages. His personal history—the history of a man who was upright in the main, but who had not courage to follow out the will of God boldly—is so intermingled with his prophecy, as to make this individual application easy and natural. Nevertheless, the history of Jonah is that of one who bears testimony on the part of God, rather than that of a believer in his ordinary life. It is the history of the human heart, when the testimony of God towards the world has been committed to it, and that of the sovereign and governmental dealings of God, in connection with the workings of that heart. It is on this account that we find in the history of Jonah, a picture of the history of the Jews in this respect, and even in some respects of that of the Messiah, only that the latter entered into it in grace, and was always perfect in it. We shall point out the leading features which the spirit of God has been pleased to develop in this narrative; deeply interesting as it is in this aspect.

It is evident that the prophetic events are but the occasion, and, as it were, the frame of the great principles that flow from them; or rather the prophetic event, for the prophecy is confined to the threat of the destruction of Nineveh in forty days: a threat whose accomplishment was averted by the repentance of that city. Jonah's history forms the chief portion of the book.

Nineveh, which represents the world in its natural greatness, full of pride and iniquity, regardless of God and of His authority, had deserved the righteous judgment of God. This is the occasion of all the development of God's dealings that we find in this book. Jonah is called to announce this judgment. The wretched

plish his mission, before the great and terrible day of the Lord; in order that the curse of God may not fall upon the land of His delight, in that day when He will definitely execute His judgments. It is on this account that John the Baptist is spoken of as being Elias, if Israel could receive it; for he answered to the 1st ver. of chap. iii., and, at the same time, that he said he was not Elias; for, in fact, he did not at all fulfil the 5th and 6th ver. of chap. iv. (compare Luke i. 17, 76).

The prophecy speaks to the conscience of those who lived at the time it was delivered, chap. iii. 10; and passes on—showing that at the end of those times, Israel would be put on trial by the mission of grace—to the last days, in which God would display His unchangeable love for His people, and His righteous judgment against evil, by separating a remnant unto Himself for blessing, and by executing judgment on the rebellious.

The Gentiles are not mentioned, nor even the connection of His people with Christ, coming down as Man to the earth.

AMOS iii. 7, 8.

Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.

The lion hath roared, who will not fear? the Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesy?

2 PET. i. 19, 21.

We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts.

For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

N^o VIII.

REMARKS AND NOTES ON JOHN'S WRITINGS.

The Gospel.

THERE is a connection between the Gospel, and the Epistles, and the Apocalypse—books which God has given to us by means of His servant John—which is of no little interest in these latter days.

It is one and the same truth which is ever prominent in each of these three books; and the peculiarity distinctive to each of them depends upon the point of view in which the said truth is looked at respectively in each.

John was not the one chosen for the communication to us of the heavenly calling, nor of the mystery, nor of the organization of the churches in the wilderness. Such subjects flowed rather from the pen of a Paul. Neither does John present us with the effects of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus upon believers from among Israel, etc., etc., as do Peter and James. John's subject is Eternal Life, or at least something flowing thence. Yea, that eternal life which was in Jesus is the subject which predominates, and is found everywhere in John's writings; but each class of his works has something by which it is distinguished from the rest; the Gospel as such from both the Epistles and the Apocalypse; and the Epistles as such from both Gospel and Apocalypse; and the Apocalypse as such from the other two. Yet in all of them there is as the governing truth, the eternal life which was in Christ.

In the Gospel, it is the eternal life which was in Christ Jesus, together with the history of the acts and sufferings which were necessarily His, in the time of His humiliation, if He would take the blessed position of being the communicator of eternal life to poor sinners dead in trespasses and sins; but the moment that all this is finished, and that He, raised from the dead, had accomplished that which was to become His liberty and power to bless withal, He departs. He left the earth to take His seat as Son of Man at the right hand of God in the Majesty of the Highest. The curtain drops upon the scenes of His earthly career, and He is lost to the sight of those who are but men upon the earth.

There is something very fine in this; and for us something significant and seasonable. For I may surely say of the present time through which we are passing, there is the poor Canaan and the wealthy and important Egypt. That which, like Canaan to the Patriarchs, connects itself with God in the thoughts of faith is in a small and enfeebled state, while the world around is growing in its proper greatness and strength and dignity every hour.

It may be hard to learn this lesson which Jacob practised. We may see it on the page of his history, without finding it on any corresponding one of our own.

Joseph, however, after Jacob, illustrates this same power of faith. Egypt had received him, when Canaan had cast him out. Out of the one land he had been sold as a bond-slave; in the other he had been seated on the second seat in the kingdom. But withal (for faith is "the victory that overcometh the world"), Egypt never became Canaan to Joseph. The promise of God lived in Joseph's heart, as it had lived in Jacob's. Disappointments and sorrows in Canaan, flatteries and successes and honours in Egypt wrought not their natural results in that heart, because it was thus the seat of the promise of God. This was in the vigorous words of the Apostle, (in the patriarchal form which such energy would take), "a laying hold upon eternal life"—which some of us know so little of.

But, I must observe something further. It is felt by us to be a serious and hazardous thing at times, to let the world know that we have learnt this lesson—that poor Canaan is better than wealthy Egypt. We fully understand that men cannot lightly have the good thing they are nourishing and improving thus slighted. It is a reproach on themselves, when the world is undervalued.

There was a moment in Joseph's history, as I judge, when he felt this, when he had this experience of which I speak.

Jacob, his father, when dying, had made him swear, that he would bury him in the land of Canaan. When Joseph comes to act upon his oath, he seems to me to feel this, that he was now about to venture on a serious

and hazardous matter. He evidently sets himself as before a business which had its special difficulties. He was high at court, as we may say; for, as we read, the physicians, the state physicians, were his servants. (Chap. 1. ver. 2.) And we know the resources of the kingdom, the strength and wealth of the realm of Egypt, were at that moment under his hand. But still, he hesitates about the matter of burying his father in Canaan, and gets the help and intercession of Pharaoh's near kindred.

Why all this? Was it not a small thing for so great a man to do? Yes; but a request to be buried in Canaan was, in some sense putting a reproach upon Egypt. It seemed to say, after all, the Canaan of degradation and poverty was better than the Egypt of honour and wealth; that the gleanings of such an Ephraim were better than the vintage of such an Abi-ezer.

This was the language of Jacob's request; and Joseph felt it to be a serious thing to convey such language to the ear of Pharaoh. But he did. Faith again triumphed—and after this manner, is he a witness to us, that we should let the world distinctly learn from us, that with all its advance and promise, it is nothing to us, while Christ's thing though in weakness, is our object.

THE history of Christ's humiliation was looked at by Paul through the Holy Ghost—not in the touching detail of Christ's individual life, but as one immense fact, and a cardinal one, in the vast scheme of God. This was exactly in its place, and in keeping with the service for which he was employed. John gives us the Divine nature—Paul the Divine counsels—Peter the walk of him who has a lively hope through the resurrection of One whose walk he had known and followed in its bright display on earth, towards the heaven into which resurrection is meant to introduce us; all founding the accomplishment of blessing on the redemption which He has wrought out for us.

N^o X.

THE SABBATICAL YEAR, AND THE JUBILEE.

Translated from "Etude sur Lévitique xxv.," par C. F. Recordon.

"The time of rest, the promised Sabbath comes."—COWPER.

I.—*The Sabbatical Year.*

WHO is there that could continue to doubt the divine origin of the Scriptures, if he read without prejudice and with simplicity of heart, a chapter such as this? Who else than God, the Creator, could speak in such sort, could give to a people similar ordinances? Imagine the most mighty of the kings of the earth, Nebuchadnezzar or Alexander, Cæsar Augustus or Charlemagne, prescribing to their subjects that the land should be left fallow every seventh year, that all agricultural toil should be suspended; and yet promising them abundance. . . . Would not every one be justified in crying out against the barbarous absurdity of such a law? Would it not be a decree of perpetual famine, and exposing, four times in every human generation, of a whole people to die by famine?

Ah! no: God alone, the Creator of all things, He who opens his hand and satisfies all created things, could say: "Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof; but in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the Lord: thou shalt neither sow thy field nor prune thy vineyard. That which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest thou shalt not reap, neither gather the grapes of thy vine^a undressed: for it is a year of rest unto the land."

^a Literally, "grapes of thy *separation*," or of "thy vine in its state of *Nazariteship*;" [an allusion to the long hair of the Nazarite]; or again, "the grapes in their state of *consecration*" to God.

In truth, God alone can resolve the doubts, calm the fears, dissipate the anxieties of those who flinch before such an edict, and who say: "What shall we eat the seventh year? Behold, we shall not sow, nor gather in our increase:" God alone could say to them: "Then I will command my blessing upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years. And ye shall sow the eighth year, and eat yet of old fruit until the ninth year."

God alone can prepare a table for his people in the wilderness; He did so during forty years in the great desert, sending down every morning from heaven the manna for the nourishment of Israel; He did it again in satisfying, twice, in the desert place, thousands of persons with a few barley loaves and a few small fishes; He will do it, once more again, nourishing, in the wilderness, the woman through twelve hundred and sixty days (Rev. xii. 6).

Without a doubt, He ordained and appointed toil to man, as one of the consequences of sin; He said to the man "in the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread." But God who can, when it seems good to him, suspend the laws of nature, can also, when he wills it, suspend a law such as that of which we speak.

Although the wisdom and the goodness of God have united, as to man, the right to eat with toil (2 Thes. iii. 10), it is not therefore the less true that it is not the toil of man that secures him his bread. Man might in vain cultivate the earth, sow, plant, water, if the Creator did not send him the rain, the dew, and the fruitful season. If He gave not the increase, all the labour of man would be utterly useless. It is quite as certain, on the other hand, that here also, as in every other respect, God, if He will, can do without the labour of man. He has no need of the co-operation of His creature, in order to nourish it; and this is, I suppose, one of the first lessons which the Lord desired to give to His people when He imposed on them the year of rest for the land.

By this alone, the children of Israel ought to have learnt to confide in God, to live in dependance upon

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Him, to count upon his faithfulness, and to repose for every thing upon His promises, on His power, and not upon their own resources. What an admirable sight must this people have presented, if there had been faith enough to obey this law of their God (and often more faith is required for patient expectation of deliverance, without doing anything, than for action). How was their faith rewarded. How blessed was it to see the promise of God made good every sixth year, in such sort that the earth then brought forth for three years: for that sixth year itself, for the seventh, in which there was neither sowing nor harvesting, for the eighth, in which there was no ingathering, but in which preparation was made of sowing, in order to harvest only, however, in the ninth year. How blessed to see a whole nation, having sufficient confidence in its God to leave its soil thus without culture, and yet finding itself abundantly nourished. Oh! faith is admirable; blessed is it to see it in action; how it glorifies the Lord!

Canaan was in an especial sense the land of Jehovah, the country which pertained to Immanuel. The Israelites were as His husbandmen. He desired to show them that the right to the land was His, by recalling to them that He alone was its Owner and Lord. "The land is mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with me."^b

If Canaan was the land of God, Israel were the people of God: produce of one and the same stock, of one father, who had been the friend of God, and for whose sake the Hebrews were and still are beloved. The children of Abraham were then, in the purpose of God, a great family, and apart from all others; they had to consider one another, and to act one toward another as brethren. Many of their institutions tended to recall to them this fact, and to clothe them with fraternal affections one toward the other. Such evidently was, if not the essential and primary object, at least, one of the objects proposed by their solemn feasts, as that of the Passover, for instance. Such also was one of the ends

^b See also 2 Chron. vii. 20; Ps. xxxix. 12; Is. viii. 8, xiv. 2, 25; Joel ii. 18.

of the ordinance of the sabbatical year. Then the land of God, and its produce, belonged equally to all the inhabitants of the country. No one could harvest his field, or gather in his vineyard; but their produce served for nourishment for all;—to the Israelites, the strangers dwelling with them, to their cattle, and to the animals of the land; all the produce of the sabbath of the land was for immediate consumption. Thus, each seventh year, was to be seen realized without difficulty, by a vast people, that which has for so long a while constituted, and which preeminently, in our days, constitutes the subject of the chimerical dreams of so many a poor worldling. Community of goods cannot exist, save in the family of God. In order to it, there needs, as here, that God should enjoin it and manage it; or indeed, as in Acts iv. 32—37, that *great* grace should be upon all those who carry it into practice. Furthermore, it does exist, *as a fact* (and that in a manner even yet more blessed, inasmuch as it does not exclude the exercise of faith on the part of the poor), with every child of God for whom the heavenly calling of the church is an experimental truth, and the waiting for the Lord Jesus, a subject of daily hope. When we know that we have in heaven better and more abiding possessions, and that, in yet a very little time, He that shall come will have come, we can accept with joy the loss, by violence, of our possessions upon earth, and yet more willingly be ready to communicate of those goods of which we are but stewards.

Lastly, and above all, this appointment connected itself with all the sabbatical ordinances of which it was the filling up. It formed part of *the sabbaths*, concerning which God said, in the reproaches which he addressed to the children of Israel: “Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them” (Ezek. xx. 12). There were indeed several sabbaths. Every seventh day brought with it the rest of the fathers and children, the masters and servants, the strangers and the cattle. From the morrow of the sabbath after the Passover, *seven* weeks or *seven* sabbaths were

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counted, at the end of which was celebrated the feast of weeks or of Pentecost. The *seventh* month was quite distinctively the month of sabbaths and of feasts. On the first day there was rest and the memorial of blowing of trumpets, which was the feast of trumpets; the tenth day was the great day of atonement, a sabbath peculiarly solemn. On the fifteenth day commenced the feast of Tabernacles, which lasted eight days, the first and eighth of which were days of rest. More than any other did this last feast prefigure the final rest of the people of God. After these sabbaths of days and months, came the sabbath of years, in which God enjoined the rest of *the land*. This is not the place in which to develop the subject of the sabbath. I confine myself to the remark that it contained the idea, so precious for us also, of the participation of the rest of God. For Israel, it was a sign of the Divine covenant; in truth, it was an earnest of that promise, "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee *rest*." We may remark also, that every time that God communicates any new principle, or any modification of the relationship between Him and His earthly people, the sabbath is introduced.^c

Let us now see, in the word, what are the details of the appointment of the sabbatical year, called also the year of release. Its first mention occurs in Ex. xxiii. 10, 11, where we see, clearly enough, one of the objects we have pointed out—*that the poor of the people might eat of it*.

In Deut. xv. 1—15, the year of release is again spoken of. "And this is the manner of the release: Every creditor that lendeth ought unto his neighbour shall release it; he shall not exact it of his neighbour, or of his brother. . . . Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him nought; and he cry unto the Lord against thee, and it be sin unto thee. Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart

^c See, for a development of these thoughts, a note, "Present Testimony" Vol. II. p. 122.

shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him: because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto."

The sabbatical year brought with it then this additional blessing to the poor of Israel. It was for them, as the clearing off of all their debts, and put an end to all claims, to which any of them could be subject on the part of their brethren.

Next, we have in the same chapter, the liberation of the slaves, which also was one of the benefits of the ordinance of the jubilee. "And if thy brother, an Hebrew man, or an Hebrew woman, be sold unto thee, and serve thee six years; then in the seventh year thou shalt let him go free from thee." (Compare Exodus xxi. 2). "And when thou sendest him out free from thee, thou shalt not let him go away empty: thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy floor, and out of thy winepress: of that wherewith the Lord thy God hath blessed thee thou shalt give unto him." The slaves were then sent away free, and with a present.

Finally we see in Deut. xxxi. 10, etc., an important act which was to be renewed every seventh year. "And Moses commanded them, saying, At the end of every seven years, in the solemnity of the year of release, in the feast of tabernacles, when all Israel is come to appear before the Lord thy God in the place that He shall choose, thou shall read this law before all Israel in His hearing." It was probably in order to conform to this ordinance, that Joshua, Josiah, and Ezra read or caused to be read, the book of the law to all the people assembled.

Such in brief was the institution of the sabbatical year, to the observance of which, as we have just seen, precious blessings were attached. The people of a stiff-neck did not attach much value, at least not for any length of time, to these blessings. They were not slow to transgress this as well as the other ordinances of their God; they soon despised and profaned the sabbaths of Jehovah, the sabbaths of years as much as those of days, and thus drew upon them-

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selves the judgments of God. There is no question but that the contempt of the sabbath of the seventh year was one of the iniquities of the Jews, which brought upon them *the seventy years* of captivity in Babylon. It was a fulfilment of this threat of the Lord to His people under the law: "But if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments; and if ye shall despise my statutes . . . I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste. Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lies desolate, and ye shall be in your enemies' land; even then shall the land rest and enjoy her sabbaths. As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest; because *it did not rest in your sabbaths when ye dwelt upon it*" (Lev. xxvi. 14, 15, 33—35). In the second Book of Chronicles we see this threat fulfilled. It is said in chap. xxxvi., 20, 21. "And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon, where they were servants to him and his sons, until the reign of the kingdom of Persia. To fulfil the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, *until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths*: for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath to fulfil threescore and ten years."

See again what God said to the people, by the mouth of Jeremiah (chap. xxxiv. 8—17) concerning the non-observance of one of the ordinances which, as we have seen, formed part of the sabbatical institution: "Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, I made a covenant with your fathers in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, saying, At the end of every seven years let ye go every man his brother an Hebrew, which hath been sold unto thee, and when he hath served thee six years, thou shalt let him go free from thee; but your fathers hearkened not unto me neither inclined their ear, and ye were now turned and had done right in my sight, in proclaiming liberty every man to his neighbour . . . But ye turned and polluted my name, and caused every man his servant, and every man his handmaid whom he had set at liberty at their pleasure to return, and brought them into sub-

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jection, to be unto you for servants and for handmaids. Therefore thus saith the Lord; ye have not hearkened unto me, in proclaiming liberty every one to his brother and every man to his neighbour: behold, I proclaim liberty for you, saith the Lord, to the sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine; and I will make you to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth."

Some outward results were caused by the Babylonish captivity which must not be mis-construed. It inspired the Jews with a horror of strange gods, to whom their fathers had so often sacrificed. This was the drift of what the Lord Jesus said in the parable of the unclean spirit gone out of a man. The man evidently signified "the evil generation" in whose midst Jesus was living. And when the evil spirit returns to the house from whence he went out, he finds it empty and swept out as to the defilements of idolatry (Matth. xii. 43—45).

To judge by a fact which the Jewish Historian Josephus relates, it would appear that the Jewish people, at their return from the captivity, had likewise returned to the faithful observance of this ordinance relative to the sabbatic year. The fact is the following:—Alexander the Great, the conqueror having made his entrance into Jerusalem as a friend, asked the High Priest Jaddua (to whom he shewed the greatest respect) what favours the Jews would wish to receive at his hand. Jaddua answered him that they besought him to grant them the liberty of living according to the laws of their fathers, and in the seventh year to exempt them from the tribute which they paid to him in the others. Alexander granted it to him (Flavius Josephus, Jewish Antiquities, lib. xi. chap. 8). And nothing could be more just, for as the Jews did not gather in the harvest that year, it would have been unreasonable to exact from them the ordinary contributions.

II.—*The Year of Jubilee.*

"AND thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years.

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Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land. And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family. A jubilee shall that fiftieth year be unto you: ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it, nor gather the grapes in it of thy vine undressed. For it is the jubilee; it shall be holy unto you: ye shall eat the increase thereof out of the field." Such is the other institution mentioned in this precious chapter, and to which I desire specially now to direct your attention, whilst asking our God to aid us with His Spirit of light and truth, in the study of this too much neglected portion of His holy word. And first a few words on the name of jubilee, given by the Lord to this fiftieth year: it is derived from the Hebrew word *Jobel*, employed thirteen times in this chapter to denote this period. We again find it used six times, with the same meaning, in chap. xxvii. and once in Num. xxxvi. 4. The only places besides in which it occurs, are Exod. xix. 13, where some translate it by *the horn*, and in Jos. vi. 4, 5, 6, 8, 13, where it is rendered by some *rams' horns*. But in this last passage of Joshua, the greater part of the German translations, together with the LXX. and the Vulgate, read, *the seven trumpets of jubilee*. De Wette and Van Ess, translate thus also the expression in Exod. xix. 13.

Opinions are divided as to the etymology of the word. Some give it the meaning of *a sound greatly lengthened* in opposition to a sound by starts and interrupted. Others derive it from an Arabic word which means *a ram*, thence the horn of *a ram* or made with the horn of a ram. Others again from Jubal, the inventor of instruments, of music. It would seem to me more probable (while at the same time retaining the idea of the sound of a trumpet), that it is derived from a verb, which signifies *to restore*, or *bring back*, because that, on the day when the jubilee began, the silver trumpet pro-

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claimed the release, the setting free or at liberty, in one word, restoration everywhere in Israel.^d

Our word *jubilee* or *jubilation*, which signifies *rejoicing*, and the Latin *jubilatio*, *acclamations*, *cries of joy*, come from the Hebrew word *jobel*, and are quite in accordance with the feelings awakened by the trumpet of jubilee in the troubled souls and the broken hearts of the multitudinous troop of desolate ones in Israel.

The jubilee did not begin with the sacred year, that is to say, with the month in which the ears of corn became ripe, of which God had said to Moses, "This month shall be to you the beginning of months; it shall be the first of the months of the year," that is to say, of the sacred year in its connexion with the different feasts of the Lord.

The jubilee began in the seventh month, that is to say, the first of the civil year; it thus brought round again this civil year, for which the sacred year had been substituted since the Exodus. Thus, including the last half of the forty-ninth year and the first half of the fiftieth, it did not make necessary two successive years of rest for the land.

Of course, during its continuance (ver. 11, 12), the people did not sow the ground, because the seed-time would necessarily have fallen on the ninth month of the sabbatic year; they neither reaped nor gathered the the grapes, because they had neither sown the fields nor pruned the vines the preceding year; but as the jubilee finished in the seventh month of the sabbatic year, they might, in this same year, return to the labours of agriculture; and thus this command of God could take its

^d Another Hebrew word (*Theroumah*) translated several times by *jubilation*, for instance, in ver. 9 of this chapter, see also Lev. xxiii. 24; Num. xxix. 1; in other places it is translated by *rétentissement bruyant* (Num. x. 5, 6; 2 Chron. xiii. 12; Jer. iv. 19, xx. 16); by *cris de joie*, (Jos. vi. 5. 20; 1 Sam. iv. 5, 6, etc.); by *cris de réjouissance* (Ps. xxvii. 6, xxxiii. 3, xlvii. 5, lxxxix. 15, cl. 5), see these passages in the version of Perret Gentil; and again by *alarme*, (Jer. xlix. 2; Ezek. xxi. 27; Amos i. 14; Amos ii. 2; Zeph. i. 16; in all these passages Perret Gentil has *cris de guerre*). The thought common to all these different meanings of the same word, is still a *sound of trumpets*.

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course, without interruption (ver. 17), "Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard and gather in the fruit thereof."

But, moreover, the day for the opening of the jubilee is clearly defined in the ninth verse; it is the tenth day of the seventh month, the great day of atonement, one of the most solemn of the year. This day, when every Israelite, under pain of being cut off, was to afflict his soul before God—this day of mourning, of humiliation, of tears, had been chosen by God for all the people, as the first day of this year of liberty, of grace, and of joy.

Ah! the reason is that the acts of the high priests, in the day of atonement, bring before us in the most striking manner, the perfect work of Jesus for His people—sole source of all pardon, of all grace, of all liberty, and consequently, of all joy really worthy of the name.

The sixteenth chapter of Leviticus is entirely appropriated to describing what was done by Aaron, in this solemn day. He acted by turns for himself and for his house (the type of the church), and for all the congregation of the people of Israel (a type of the earthly people). He was clothed in the holy linen garments (a type of the human nature perfectly holy of Christ); he offered a calf for a sin offering, making an atonement for himself and for his house; he then cast the lot upon the two he-goats, and offered that which was for the Lord; he went into the most holy place within the veil, with the incense which he caused to burn before the Lord. Then he sprinkled the blood of the bullock seven times upon and before the mercy-seat. After which, he killed the he-goat of the people for a sin-offering; he carried its blood within the veil, and sprinkled it as he had done with the blood of the bullock. He made an atonement for the holy place, for the tabernacle, and for the golden altar, and cleansed them from the defilements of the children of Israel. The sins of all the congregation of Israel were confessed upon the head of the living goat, which was sent away into the wilderness, bearing away with him all their iniquities into a land not inhabited. Then Aaron changed his clothes, and having put on his own

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garments (Exodus xxviii. 2) in the holy place, he came forth and offered his burnt-offering and the burnt-offering of the people, and burnt upon the altar the fat of the sin-offering. He that had let go the goat for a scape-goat, washed his clothes and bathed his flesh in water, and afterwards came into the camp. The bodies of the beasts for a sin-offering, whose blood had been brought into the sanctuary, were burned without the camp. It was a sabbath of rest, and for afflicting their souls, which was to be observed every year—a perpetual statute.

Each time that this great day came round, nothing could exceed the distress, humiliation, mourning, and sorrow, with which Israel saw it begin, unless it were the joy and transports of delight with which the same people, Israel, saw it close. Every man returned in peace to his dwelling, carrying with him the precious assurance that the atonement for all his sins was completed according to the law. So long as the high priest was in the sanctuary, so long as there was still anything for him to do, all the congregation stood without, in tears and in fear, from the feeling of transgression which still weighed heavily on the consciences of the worshippers. But when, clothed with the garments of glory and of beauty, the anointed high priest came out of the tabernacle—when, lifting up his hands, he put the name of Jehovah on the children of Israel, blessing them according to the order of God; when he had pronounced these words, “The Lord bless thee and keep thee; the Lord cause His face to shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up the light of His countenance upon thee and give thee peace” (Num. vi. 22—27),—then from the midst of this great multitude, nothing more was heard but shouts of joy, one song of royal triumph.

But if such was the joy on each ordinary return of this feast of the Lord, how much greater and more unbounded must it have been when the day of atonement brought round the year of jubilee. After forty-nine of these solemn feasts had gone round, after seven years of freedom and rest to the land, at the very moment of the close of the tenth day of the seventh

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month, when the congregation had just been dismissed with the blessing of the high priest, then the priests blew with the silver trumpets (Num. x. 8), whose joyful sound proclaimed the beginning of this year of the loving-kindness of the Lord, and published liberty throughout the country to all its inhabitants.

Before going further, I would stop a little at the precious instruction which God has given us by thus wonderfully placing together the great day of atonement with the year of the greatest joy, by which it is immediately followed.

The Epistle to the Hebrews, in different places, sets before us Jesus Himself, as the one grand reality of the Levitical institutions, as the body which casts its shadow over these rudiments of the world. And in a special manner does it point out to us all the acts of the Jewish high priest on the day of atonement, realised perfectly in Him; for these acts, as well as the whole word of prophecy, testified beforehand, the sufferings of Christ and the glory which should follow. If He was "called by God an High Priest after the order of Melchisedec" (ver. 10), He nevertheless has not yet entered upon the exercise of this glorious priesthood; hitherto it is a type of that of Aaron which Jesus has fulfilled, and which He is still fulfilling. "Wherefore, it behoved Jesus in all things to be made like to His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, *to make reconciliation for the sins of the people*" (ii. 17). "Such a high priest became us, holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, *first for His own sins, then for the people's*; for this He did once, when He offered up Himself (vii. 26, 27). "Now, when these things were thus ordained [in the holy place and in the most holy place], the priests who accomplished the service, entered always into the first tabernacle [the holy place]; but, into the second [the most holy place], *went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the errors of the people. . . .* But Christ being come, a High Priest of good things to come, by

a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of bulls and of goats, but by His own blood, He entered in once into the holy place, *having obtained eternal redemption for us* (ix. 6, 7, 11, 12). "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (ix. 24).

The sacrifices offered by Aaron, in the day of atonement, his entrance into the holy of holies with the incense and the blood, his presenting himself before the mercy-seat in favour of the people: this is what Jesus has fully made good; to which we may add, that as Aaron, after having done thus, was to exchange his linen garments for the magnificent garments which were prepared for him, for glory and for beauty, in like manner, our heavenly Aaron has assumed a glorified body; and now we see him crowned *with glory and honour*.^e

And nothing now remains to be accomplished but the last act of Aaron in the day of atonement, and that is, our Great High Priest must yet come out glorious from the sanctuary to bless the people. Christ, who was once offered to bear the sins of many, must appear a second time without sin to those who look for Him unto salvation (Heb. ix. 28). Till then, the antitype of the jubilee cannot really be brought in.

In the mean time, the church being quickened together with Christ, being raised up together and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, already

^e Heb. ii. 9. Compare the Greek with Exodus xxviii. 2, in the LXX. You will find the same expressions, rendered here by *glory and honour*, and in Exodus, by *glory and beauty*. I have stated elsewhere, that in general, it is according to the Septuagint that the author of the epistle to the Hebrews quotes the Old Testament; I add, in passing, that such a passage as Heb. xi. 5, for instance, is only intelligible to me while this fact is remembered. "Before his translation, Enoch had received his testimony *that he pleased God*." This is not said literally in our translations of Gen. v. 22—24, but it is thus that the LXX have translated the beginning of these verses: "Enoch pleased God," instead of "Enoch walked with God." It is the same in Gen. vi. 9, xvii. 1, etc.

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participates, by anticipation, in a spiritual manner, all the blessings brought in by the year of jubilee. What were these blessings? They might be summed up thus: 1. Remission or forgiveness of debts. 2. Setting at liberty of slaves. 3. Recovery of alienated property and restoration of all things. 4. Abundant provisions for the poor, and rest for the ground and for man throughout the whole year.

We read in Luke, chap. iv., that Jesus having gone on the sabbath day into the synagogue of Nazareth stood up for to read. "And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias; and when he had opened the book, he found the place where it is written, 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind; to set at liberty them that are bruised. To preach the acceptable year of the Lord' (Is. lxi. 1, 2). And He closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down; and the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And He began to say unto them: This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." It is generally thought that this "acceptable year of the Lord" was an allusion to the year of jubilee; in speaking of which, God also said, "*Ye shall proclaim liberty*"^f in the country, to all its inhabitants. But how, if the jubilee, as a type, has not yet had a fulfilment, could Jesus say, "To day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears?" The thing does not appear to me difficult to explain. The very fact that Jesus Himself, the Anointed One of God, was reading these words which the Holy Spirit of prophecy had beforehand put in His mouth, this fact, if only we

^f The word twice rendered by liberty in ver. 19, of Luke iv. is ἀφῆσις; it is the same word which is used by the LXX, in Lev. xxv. 10, 11, 12, 13, etc., for *jubilee* and *liberty*. In ver. 10, διαβοήσετε ἀφῆσιω, ye shall proclaim liberty. Ver. 10—13, ἐνιαυτὸς ἀφέσεως, or ἀφέσεως σημασία, year or signal of liberty. The same word is translated by *release*, and applied to the sabbatic year, in Deut. xv. Josephus calls the year of jubilee *the year of liberty* (ἐλευθερίας).

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observe it, was a fulfilment of these words. Jesus had, in effect, the Spirit of the Lord; He had, in effect, been anointed to preach the gospel to the poor; He had, in effect, been sent to heal the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, etc. On His part, and on the part of His Father, all was ready for its fulfilment. How then did it come about that the realization of the jubilee, of this acceptable year of the Lord which Jesus proclaimed, was delayed and put off till the latter times? Alas! it was the hardness of heart of the Jews which was the cause of it. It was in vain that the King had invited them to His feast; it was in vain that He had said to them, "All things are ready, come to the marriage." They made light of it and went their way: the one to his farm, the other to his merchandise. As to Israel, the Lord had been forced to say, "All the day long have I stretched forth my hands to a disobedient and gainsaying people." Jesus was obliged to say (as it is told us by the same prophet Isaiah, xlix), "I have laboured in vain; I have spent my strength for nought and in vain. . . . The Lord said to me that I should bring back Jacob again to Him; but Israel is not gathered. . . . Jerusalem, Jerusalem! how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not?"

John the Baptist, the forerunner, who was to prepare the way of the Lord, came preaching in the wilderness of Judah, saying, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." His mission was to urge upon the people the necessity of feelings becoming true children of Israel in the day of atonement—of afflicting their souls before God, so as to have hearts prepared to welcome the Messiah, who would in that case, establish the kingdom of heaven, or the true jubilee. Great multitudes went out after him, and were baptised by him in Jordan, confessing their sins, in the very same way as these sins were confessed over the head of the goat Azazel by the high priest. Jesus Himself began by preaching, like John, repentance and conversion, because the kingdom of God was at hand (Matt. iv. 17).

Nevertheless, the jubilee could not begin till after the feast of the day of atonement. Notwithstanding such promising appearances at first—notwithstanding the eagerness with which they followed John, Jesus was obliged to say, “Who hath believed our report?” This appearance of piety among the Jews, was only like the dew of the morning which soon passes away. It again appeared for a moment, when the multitude welcomed with their homages the lowly King, seated on the foal of an ass, and cried, “Hosanna! blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord!” But only a few days after, these very Jews, following only the voice of their rulers, cried out still louder, “Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him, crucify Him!” and instead of identifying themselves by faith with the perfect sacrifice of the Lamb without blemish, and without spot, which was about to be offered—instead of taking their place under the sprinkling of the precious blood which was about to be shed, they were not afraid to call down His blood in condemnation on themselves and on their children.

Nevertheless, Jesus having prayed for His murderers—Jesus having said upon the cross, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do;” in answer to this prayer, God once more calls in grace to this unhappy people; and this, when the Great High Priest had finished His work of atonement: He has offered Himself in sacrifice; He is risen; He is gone up into heaven; has gone into the true tabernacle; and has sent down the Holy Spirit on His disciples.

And in the words which He addresses to the apostles, before going up into heaven, there is again an allusion to the type of the day of atonement, and of the jubilee: “Thus it is written, and thus *it behoved Christ to suffer*, and rise from the dead the third day, and that *repentance and remission of sins* should be preached in His name, among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem” (Luke xxiv. 46, 47).

Thus the twelve spake with boldness the great things of God to the multitudes which surrounded them; and Peter said to them, “*Let all the house of Israel* know

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assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts ii. 36). A little later, the same apostle, on the strength of the prayer of Jesus upon the cross, says to them again, "I wot that through ignorance ye did it"; and he offers them, in the name of Jesus who had died and was risen, the pardon for which Christ Himself had prayed in their behalf: "Repent ye, therefore," he adds, "and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out; *that the times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord*, and He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you, whom the heavens must receive until *the times of the restitution of all things*, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began" (Acts iii. 17, 19, 21). And what was this preaching, but a last call addressed to Israel to realise, by repentance and conversion, their part in the day of atonement, and the assurance that in that case, the Great High Priest, who on His side had perfectly fulfilled His work, would return as King of Glory, bringing to His people remission or pardon, refreshing or rest, and the restoration of all things of which God had spoken—in other words, the precious realities which were found veiled under the type of the blessings of jubilee?

In hearing these things, a great number of the Jews, it is true, had their hearts pricked with compunction, received the word with gladness, and were baptized. Peter, whom Jesus had made a fisher of men, had the joy of seeing, the first time he cast the net, three thousand souls snatched from the snare of the Devil and converted to Jesus Christ. Other thousands were afterwards separated from the perverse generation, and formed the first little nucleus so blessed of the church of God on earth. But notwithstanding all this, the nation continued under the judgment pronounced against it (Is. vi). Stephen was obliged to say to the Jews, "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost; as your fathers did so do ye." He paid with his life for his faithful testimony against their hardness; and he may be likened to the

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ambassador whom the fellow-citizens of the king sent a message after into a far country, to tell him, "We will not have this man to reign over us" (Luke xix. 14); and Paul, whose affection was so great for his brethren—his kindred according to the flesh—was likewise obliged to testify against them, "that they filled up always the measure of their iniquities." "Therefore" he said again, "the wrath of God is come upon them to the uttermost" (1 Thes. ii. 16). The wrath and not the favour of God is, to this hour, the harvest which the unhappy Jews have reaped. The true jubilee was to have brought to them *the remission of their debts*—the pardon of their sins—and behold them still as a nation, under the weight of these sins and of the curse which they have pronounced against themselves. It is still the time of Jehovah's indignation against His people. Instead of *freedom and liberty*, they only know slavery and bondage; they are under the humiliating yoke of their prejudices, their ignorance, their blindness, their hardness of heart. "Their understandings were hardened. . . . When Moses is read to them, the veil remains on their heart." Satan holds them in his chains. Instead of seeing themselves *re-established in their land*, their house is left to them desolate, their country is deserted; they are now for eighteen hundred years still wandering in the desert of the nations; and Jerusalem is still trodden down of the Gentiles. Nor have they any more found the *rest*—the sabbath—that sign between the Lord and them has been taken from them. "Judah is gone into captivity, because of affliction, and because of great servitude; she dwelleth among the heathen, she taketh no rest" (Lament. i. 3). The Lord has said, and has done it; the Lord "will cause all her mirth to cease—her feast days, her new moons, her sabbaths, and all her solemn feasts. And I will destroy her vines and her fig trees . . . and I will make them a forest" (Hosea ii. 11, 12).

Thus the Jews have lost, for a time, all the privileges which were promised them by the jubilee.^g They have

^g The triumphal arch, erected at Rome in celebration of the victory of Titus over the Jews, still exists, and will, in all pro-

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been set aside, rejected, until the indignation be past. But, thereupon, the church has come in. God has visited the nations, and will visit them still, in order to take out of them a people for His name. The church—the body of Christ, of His flesh and of His bones—is blessed in Christ with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places. Cut out of the olive tree, wild by nature, and planted, contrary to nature, into a good olive tree, in the place of the branches which have been cut off, with them she became partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree; and consequently she has a right, but in an infinitely higher sense, even a spiritual and heavenly one, to all the expressions of free grace which the types of the law or the promises of God secured to the children of Israel, who will one day fully enjoy them, when the fulness of the Gentiles being come in, the church will be no longer on earth.

It is in this way that we all, who are believers—members of the body of Christ—partake in the blessings pointed out in the institution of the year of jubilee, as I am now about to shew.

Who were those in Israel who most rejoiced to hear the sound of the trumpet proclaiming the acceptable year of the Lord? Without a doubt it was the poor, the wretched, insolvent debtors; those who, from distress, had been obliged to sell themselves to their brethren, whose slaves they were, or who had been obliged to part with their houses and their possessions; those who groaned, overwhelmed with toils and labour: in the

bability, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled, declaring, from age to age, the reproach of Israel and its subjection to the Gentiles. In testimony of which, are sculptured on this trophy the principal spoils carried off by the conqueror from the temple at Jerusalem; such as the *golden candlestick*, representing Israel as formerly light in the midst of darkness; the *table of shew-bread*, spoiled of its loaves, seeing that the twelve tribes, which they represented, are dispersed; and lastly, *the two silver trumpets*, with which once they sounded in the days of the people's gladness, and so proclaimed the jubilee. These precious things, once the glory of the children of Jacob, no longer exist, except in effigy, upon this monument of the pride of their Gentile oppressors. Striking proof of *Ichabod* written upon them, and of their loss of the jubilee.

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day the drought consuming them, and the frost by night, and their sleep departed from their eyes. What happiness, what transports of delight, did these joyful sounds cause in their hearts, which told them their deliverance was come and the end of their toils! Well, it is the very same thing with the gospel; it is to the poor it is preached; it is wretched sinners, lost, and by nature children of wrath, that Jesus is come to seek and to save. The church of Jesus Christ is a company formed gradually, like that of David: "And every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto Him; and He became a captain over them" (1 Sam. xxii. 2).

Ah! it was a happy day for these unhappy creatures, laden with debts, when the trumpet of jubilee sounded throughout the land; it was for them like a general acquittance given them by God Himself; it was the declaration that every plea of accusation against them was torn in pieces, annulled, annihilated. In the morning they were insolvent debtors; in the evening they owed nothing; their debt was considered cancelled, paid—it was *remitted*. It is true, that it is only when speaking of the year of release that the abolition of debts is mentioned as one of the privileges which characterised it; but if it is remembered, that the jubilee was but the continuation, the fulness, the perfecting of the year of release, it will easily be understood that all that which in grace took place in this latter year, must necessarily, also in that of the jubilee. Besides, it is of both these blessed years that I am here speaking. Well, I would repeat it. O what joy, what happiness, for these poor debtors, was the sound of this trumpet of joy! But what were this joy and happiness in comparison with that joy and blessedness which overflows the heart of a poor sinner, when, by faith, he gives ear to the sweet and soft sound of grace, to the voice of Jesus, which says to him, "Thy sins are forgiven thee; go in peace." We know that sins are often represented as debts; our creditor is the justice of God, who has a right to demand of us even to the last farthing. And by nature we are all insolvent debtors; very far from being able, even in the

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smallest degree, to diminish aught from this mighty debt: man can only increase it each day, and each moment of the day. And what would have become of us if God had not had compassion on us—if God, in his great love, had not given us His Son, who has paid all for us, who offered up Himself a ransom for us?

It is "in Him that we have redemption through His blood; the forgiveness (the remission^h) of sins, according to the riches of His grace." We have to do with a compassionate master who has freely forgiven us all our debt (Matt. xviii. 27). The death of Jesus has been, so to speak, the payment of this debt; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; He voluntarily took it upon Himself: this was why He tasted death and passed through the prison of the sepulchre.

When a debtor comes out of prison, it is a proof that he has satisfied his creditor; much more so if he comes out of his prison with glory. Thus Jesus, who was considered a debtor in our place, has fully satisfied the justice of God, who has raised Him up and glorified Him.

"To Him, give all the prophets witness, that through His name, whosoever believeth on Him, shall receive in His name, the forgiveness of sins. Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by Him, all that believe are justified from all things from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts x. 43; xiii. 38, 39). It was thus the apostles

^h ἀφεσις, properly, *remission, acquittance, liberation* (see above). And here, I would again remark, that a Jew among the remnant probably understood in a different way from us this petition in the Lord's prayer: "*Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors*" (Matt. vi. 12); or as in Luke xi. 4: "*Forgive us* (the same verb ἀφεσις, as in Matt. vi) *our sins, FOR we also forgive every one that is indebted to us.*" The reason "FOR" alludes to a positive fact; every seventh year, every faithful Jew was considered as *forgiving the debts* of all his debtors. That those to whom Jesus then spoke constituted a remnant of Jewish disciples and not the church, it is most easy to prove. Without enlarging upon the subject, I shall confine myself to recalling to mind the words which, a little later, the Lord addressed to Peter, after the confession this last had made: "*On this rock I will build my church.*" They are sufficient to show that the church was yet to come, and had not then received its existence.

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preached to the Jews the gospel-jubilee. And now it is to us that these words are addressed: "And you, who were dead in your sins, and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him, *having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting, in ordinances, which was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the midst, nailing it to His cross*" (Col. ii. 13, 14).

This is, in reality, *for us*, the trumpet of Jubilee; this is the good news which rejoiced our hearts with joy unspeakable and full of glory, when it was given to us to receive and believe it. And we see, that this blessed news, this *forgiveness*, this free and full pardon, most intimately hangs on the perfect work of our High Priest; it depends on it, it flows from it, as well as all the other blessings of which we have yet to speak, in like manner as the Jewish jubilee preceded the day of atonement.

But further, the jubilee opened a spring of great joy to another class of unfortunate creatures, namely, to such as, from the depth of distress, had found themselves under the hard necessity of selling themselves to their brethren or to the stranger (ver. 39—55) "And if thy brother that dwelleth by thee be waxen poor and be sold unto thee . . . Then he shall go out from thee, with his children; he shall return unto his family." Certainly, it was not the will of God that an Israelite should be treated like a slave by another Israelite. Certainly, it was not His will that a stranger should rule hardly over a son of Abraham; moreover, God had given to the slave the right of redeeming himself, in case that any of his relations could and would redeem him, or that he himself possessed the means for it. "And if a sojourner or stranger wax rich by thee, and thy brother that dwelleth by him wax poor, and sell himself unto the stranger or sojourner by thee, or to the stock of the stranger's family: after that he is sold he may be redeemed again; one of his brethren may redeem him: either his uncle or his uncle's son may redeem him, or any that is nigh of kin unto him of his family may redeem him; or if he be able, he may redeem himself.

And he shall reckon with him that bought him from the year that he was sold to him unto the year of jubilee: and the price of his sale shall be according unto the number of years, according to the time of an hired servant shall it be with him.”ⁱ But notwithstanding these precautions, provided by the compassionate care of God, it remains not less certain that the position of these poor creatures must have been both hard and cruel, who were no longer their own, and consequently could not dispose either of their time or their strength for themselves or their families. How must they have longed after the happy day which was to bring round the year of deliverance. With what transports of delight did they welcome the sounds of the trumpet which proclaimed liberty in the country to all its inhabitants— which enabled them to say to their masters, “Behold us free and in liberty like yourselves; you have no longer dominion over us: we return to the full enjoyment of our rights. God has declared it; the sacred trumpet proclaims it as from Him.”

Well, whatever were the transports of delight of a poor Israelite, set free from bondage by the coming in of the jubilee, they were a small thing compared with that which fills, or which ought to fill, the soul of a poor sinner when set free by grace from a yoke that was heavy, ignominious, and hateful, though in a very different way. Truly, we are all by nature the poor slaves of sin, of death, and of Satan. For, says the scripture, “Whom a man obeys, of the same also is he the servant. . . . And, whosoever committeth sin, is the servant of sin. . . . Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, ye are servants to him to whom ye obey; whether it be of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness. . . . When ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye then, in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.”

ⁱ These words will probably recall to the mind of more than one of my readers ver. 22 and 23 of 1 Cor. vii.: “For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is *the Lord's free-man*: likewise, also, he that is called, being free, is *Christ's servant*. Ye are bought with a price; *be not ye the servants of men.*”

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And is it not true that, we also “were *servants* of divers lusts and pleasures; the *slaves* of corruption, walking according to the course of this world, *according to the prince of the power of the air*, the spirit which now worketh in the children of disobedience?” Were not we—even we also—amongst the captives of the strong man, fast bound in the snares of the Devil, by whom we had been taken captive alive to do *his* will? Was it not “the spirit of bondage” which governed us? And did we not know, by sorrowful experience, that humiliating slavery to which they are condemned who are still under bondage through “the fear of death”^k—the wages of sin? Well, the gospel is for us the good news, the proclamation of liberty as to all that about which we have just spoken. The knowledge of the truth has set us free. The Son having made us free, we are free indeed. We are the children of the free woman. It is the spirit of adoption that we have received; and there where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty, therefore thou art no more a slave, but a son. “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ has made you free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.” “Having been made free from sin, ye have become servants of righteousness—servants of God.” Yes, “the law of the spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus, has made us free from the law of sin and of death.” “Sin has no more *dominion* over us, for we are under grace.” Jesus, He who is stronger than the strong man, has come, and having conquered him, He has taken from him all his armour and has divided the spoil, He has delivered the captives of this tyrant. “Having ascended up on high, He led captivity captive.” “Having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, *triumphing over them* in the cross.” He has conquered the world and its prince. By His death, He has destroyed him that had the power of death, that is the Devil, and he has delivered them who, through fear of death, well deserved to be all their life subject to bondage.—Very far from still being in dread

^k 2 Peter ii. 19 ; John viii. 34 ; Rom. vi. 16, 20, 21 ; Titus iii. 3 ; Eph. ii. 2 ; 2 Tim. ii. 26 ; Heb. ii. 15.

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of this king of terrors, each of us can say with Paul: "To me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, which is far better." "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?—Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!"

The third class of unhappy beings, whose hearts were rejoiced by the sound of the trumpet of Jubilee, were such as from poverty had been obliged to sell their houses and their lands. As soon as the Jubilee commenced, they had the most perfect right to return into the possession of their alienated properties.¹ The only exception was for houses which, belonging to Israelites, not Levites, had been built within cities enclosed by walls. If these houses were not redeemed within a full year, they remained absolutely the property of the purchaser (ver. 29, 30), probably signifying, that that which was specially the work of man could be alienated; God only secured possession of the *land*, and of the country dwellings, of which the villages were considered as forming a part. All that is *redeemed* of the Lord shall abide; all that is of man shall be consumed. But as to the houses of Levites, even within cities, they could not be alienated, because they were a *gift of God* on their behalf (Rom. xi. 29). Barnabas, a Levite, when he sold his field, shewed that *his possessions* were now elsewhere than below (Acts iv. 36, 37). "It shall be to you the year of Jubilee; and ye shall return each one into his possession and every one into his family." And here again was *the restitution of all things*, for each one returning to his possession, the land of Canaan was found at each Jubilee anew divided into portions amongst the families of Israel, exactly as it had been at the beginning by Joshua (ver. 10, 13). What joy for these poor creatures, cast out from their possessions! They could appear with confidence before their creditors, their successors in the enjoyment of their fields and houses, and say to them: "It is enough—now these

¹ John viii. 32, 36; 2 Cor. iii. 17; Gal. iv. 7, 31, v. 1; Rom. vi. 14, 18, 22, viii. 2; Ephes. iv. 8; Coloss. ii. 15; John xvi. 33; Heb. ii. 14; Phil. i. 21, 23; 1 Cor. xv. 55, 57.

goods belong to us again. The trumpet of God has proclaimed it; God has said it." How sweet for them again to find themselves possessors of the places which recalled to them so many happy remembrances; of the houses where they had passed their infancy in the bosom of their families. What joy for those who thus freely recover all that they had lost!

But again here, what was this joy when compared with that which our hearts feel at the thought and in the assurance of all that the work of Christ has recovered for us?—Man, as I have already said, is like a dethroned king. The Devil has spoiled him of all the privileges he once possessed; sin has blotted out the image of his Creator from him, and banished him from Eden, from the presence of God. Now by nature, there is no difference between one man and another, since all have sinned and have come short of the glory of God (Rom. iii. 23). In the solemn history of the passion of the Saviour, when even the words of the enemies of the Son of Man seem to partake of the deep solemnity of the moment, or were prompted by the Spirit of God whether in order that the scriptures might be fulfilled, or in order to express truths important, though unknown by those who uttered them—it was thus the impious Caiaphas prophesied, and Pilate, a heathen, the profane, indifferent Pilate *prophesied in* like manner, when he said, "Behold the Man!" Pilate had taken Jesus, and had scourged him, and the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it upon His head, and clothed Him with a purple robe. It was in this state that Pilate presented Jesus to the Jews, and that he said to them, "Behold the Man!" Yes, it was indeed "the Man," O Pilate!—Jesus, the Holy One of God, was there as the representative of sinners, presenting before all the image of what *man* had become through sin.

Here may truly be seen what has become of the primitive glory of man. His crown is a crown of thorns; the royal garment which he wears is only a clothing of derision, and which, like that of Jesus, covers wounded and bleeding shoulders. His sceptre is nothing more than a sceptre of a reed! Glory, dignity,

moral excellency—he has lost all by the knowledge of good and evil.

But, in Jesus, dead and risen for us, we recover all these blessings, or rather blessings infinitely more precious, and which no one can take from us. The new man, with which we are clothed in Christ, *is created after God* in righteousness and true holiness; it is renewed in knowledge, after the image of Him that created it. “If any man is in Christ, he is *a new creation.*” We who once were far off, have been brought nigh by the blood of Christ; we have, through Christ, access by One Spirit unto the Father. In Jesus, we are already glorified; He has made us *kings* as well as priests to His God and Father. Partakers of the heavenly calling, we have our citizenship in heaven. There is our country, and every day we are nearer to it, while passing through this world as pilgrims and strangers. There is our inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, *reserved* in heaven for us, who *are kept* by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Christians!—then each one of us has the privilege to exclaim with the apostle of the Gentiles: “I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature *shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*”^m

But lands and houses could be recovered before the Jubilee, provided the seller had a near kinsman, *possessing the right of redemption* who could and would redeem the thing sold by his brother, or if he *himself* could find sufficient wherewith to redeem what he had sold (ver. 25—27). It was the same, as we have seen, with the redemption of a Hebrew become the bondman of the stranger (ver. 47—50). This particular ought not to be passed over in silence, because it brings before us afresh the work of love and redemption of Jesus on our behalf. There never was a man in a state able to redeem himself; none of us could have ever found *suffi-*

^m Ephes. iv. 24 ; Coloss. iii. 10 ; 2 Cor. v. 17 ; Ephes. ii. 13, 18 ; Apoc. i. 6 ; 1 Pet. i. 4, 5 ; Rom. viii. 38, 39.

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cient wherewith to redeem his soul sold to sin and Satan. —No man, no earthly relation could “with his riches redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him; for the redemption of the soul is too costly,”ⁿ and could never have been accomplished by man. But Jesus, who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, Jesus took on Him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men. Forasmuch as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself fully partook of the same. He was made like unto us in all things, except sin; He became our kinsman, our near kinsman, and as such, He has been, He is the *Purchaser*, the Redeemer, He “who had the right of redemption;” and the manner in which He exercised His right was by shedding His blood for the ransom of His people. He perfectly fulfilled the part of our Goël.^o

He could and would redeem us out of the hand of the stranger, and restore to us infinitely beyond all that of which sin had robbed our first father. He has eternally ransomed us, and that *before the jubilee*. To Him be the glory and the praise.

In short, all the poor, in general, had reason to rejoice both at the approach and the arrival of the jubilee, as also in the sabbatic year; for in these years, there was at the same time for them, abundance of provisions and rest. No harvest: all the produce of the fields, the vineyards, the olive-yards, belonged alike or equally to all

ⁿ Psalm xlix. 7, 8.

^o Goël (*kinsman-redeemer*) is a Hebrew word, translated in ver. 25 and 26, by “Him who has the right of redemption.” This word would be a study in itself. I shall confine myself here to saying, that in the French Bible of Martin’s translation it is by turns, “*He who redeems*, Gen xlvi. 16; Ps. ciii. 4; *He who has the right of a kinsman*, Numb. v. 8; Ruth (nine times); *He who has the right of avenging* (blood), or *of taking vengeance* (for blood), Numb. xxxv. 12, 19, 21, 24, 25, 27; Deut. xix. 6, 12; Jos. xx. 3, 5, 9; the *revenger* (of blood), 2 Sam. xiv. 11; a *redeemer*, Prov. xxiii. 11; a *kinsman*, 1 Kings xvi. 11; *He who delivered*, Ps. lxxviii. 35; “*Thy Redeemer*,” Isa. xli. 14; and in short the *Redeemer*, Job xix. 25; Ps. xix. 14; Is. xliii. 14, xliv. 6, 24, xlvii. 4, xlviii. 17, xlix. 7, 36, liv. 5, 8, lix. 20, lx. 16, lxiii. 16; Jere. l. 34.

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—to the poor as much as to the rich proprietors. And even one of the objects clearly pointed out by these institutions, was, as has been already said: “That the poor of thy people may eat of it” (Exodus xxiii. 11). And on the other hand, perfect rest, at least, as to all culture of the soil; for as there was no harvest, neither was there any ploughing nor sowing. Thou shalt give rest to the land, and thou shalt let it rest. It was to the poor Hebrews the realisation of that word in the Proverbs, “The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and He giveth no sorrow with it” (x. 22).

Behold, here again, blessings which we enjoy spiritually through faith in Jesus. In Him there is provision in abundance for the souls of *the poor* who believe in His name. They who hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled. “I am,” said He, “the Bread of Life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.” Again He says, “I am the door; by me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved; and shall go in and out and find pasture. . . I am come that my sheep might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.” God has appointed Jesus Heir of all things. All glory has been given to Him; and his desire is to share all that He has with the church, His bride, His co-heir. “Out of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace”; and now the Holy Spirit tells us that all things are ours, whether the labourers of the Lord, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come. Yes, “all things are yours, and ye are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s.” In Him likewise our souls find rest and peace; in Him, whose voice of love still calls poor sinners, saying to them, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. . . . Learn of me . . . and ye shall find rest unto your souls. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you.” We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; the peace of God to keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus, and the God of Peace, who shall bruise Satan under our feet shortly, and who, ere He does it, is able to sanctify us wholly, and to preserve us blameless, until the coming

of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have indeed then every reason to say, "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee."^p

Now I would speak to you, my dear reader. If, as I cherish the hope, you are a child of God by faith in Jesus, you know, by precious experience, all the blessings which I have just recalled to your mind. You know and believe that your sins are forgiven you; you know, in some measure, the preciousness of the liberty of the children of God, into which you have been called; you know that heaven is yours, with the favour, the loving-kindness, and all the treasures of the grace of the God of heaven; you have part in all the blessings with which the Father has blessed you in Christ; and you taste, I hope, with delight the unspeakable peace of Jesus. And what more can I say to you? Nothing, unless it be: Rejoice in the Lord; oh! yes, rejoice always in Him. Be joyful in hope, and walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you are called; walk in Christ as the redeemed ones, as citizens of heaven, as children of the light and of the day, as the freemen of the Lord, the witnesses of Jesus, the friends of peace, should walk. As much as lieth in you, follow after peace; live in peace, both among yourselves and with all men, and let your words minister grace to those who hear them. In a word, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's; for having been bought with a price, ye are no more your own.

But if you are still a stranger to Jesus—to the grace and peace of God, I can only solemnly beseech you to believe in Jesus, in order to be saved. More than once, the gospel trumpet proclaiming a jubilee for souls, has sounded in your ears. Without doubt, more than once, the gospel of salvation has been preached to you. But, should it never have been before, it is at this time. It makes itself known to you in these pages. Now, if you will hear the voice of the Lord, harden not your hearts. While it is yet time, while it is still called to-day, before the last jubilee,

^p John vi. 35, x. 9, 10; Heb. i. 2; John i. 16; 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23; Matt. xi. 28, 29; John xiv. 27; Rom. v. 1; Phil. iv. 7; Rom. xvi. 20; 1 Thes. v. 23; Ps. xxiii. 1; cxvi. 7.

which certainly would otherwise be to you only judgment and condemnation, believe, O believe the gospel. May the God of all grace grant you His grace, and give you ears to hear. May the Lord Jesus, the Friend of sinners, pronounce over you His powerful Ephphatha! that you may hear His voice which calls you, and see for yourselves fulfilled that promise of the Lord: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour cometh and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear, shall live" (John v. 25). The desire of my heart for you is that you may be saved. And may God work it according to His mighty grace in Jesus.

But I would repeat it: this is rather a moral application than a fulfilment of the type of jubilee. The time for its fulfilment is not yet come: it is Israel, rather than the church, which is directly concerned in the realisation of this magnificent type; so also is the land of Israel, and in a more distant sense, the whole creation.

The sabbath of the seventh day coming after six days of labour, as the year of rest to the land succeeded six years of labour, without doubt, prefigured the rest of God; but so did it likewise that blessed time for the earth and its inhabitants after the other times of suffering, groans, and labours of every kind. Now, the jubilee, which returned or came round after seven sabbatic years, after seven times seven years, after the perfection of the fulness or the fulness of the perfection, pointed out, in a still more striking manner, that time of peace, of happiness, of liberty, and of rest: that time, called by the Holy Spirit, "The dispensation (or economy) of the fulness of times" (Eph. i. 10); generally called *the millennium*. Then alone will be seen the perfect realisation of these types which I have first considered, in the establishment of the kingdom of Christ and of God upon the earth.

And here I would recall to mind that the jubilee only began at the end of the day of atonement, after that the high priest and the people had each fulfilled their respective parts in this most solemn day.^a Now,

^a I would add that the day of atonement had fulfilled its round, in seven times seven years, before the jubilee was proclaimed; thus pointing out the fulness and perfection of the work of Jesus, or the atonement made by Jesus once for all.

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we have seen, that Israel, through its hardness and impenitence, knew not the time of its visitation, and refused to turn to the Lord. And on the other hand, Jesus, the Great High Priest, has not yet come out of the true sanctuary in order to bless the people in the name of Jehovah.

But very soon this long interval, without feasts, which succeeded the Pentecost, will end for Israel; very soon, the antitype of the feasts of the seventh month will begin for this people of God; very soon, these words will again have for the Jews a real meaning—a blessed reality: “*Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day: for this was a statute for Israel, and a law of the God of Jacob. And it shall come to pass in that day that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come who were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem.*” Later still (for in these passages it is either the trumpet for the assembling of the people, Num. x. 3, or that of the jubilee which is spoken of), behold “the Son of Man, coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory, will send His angels *with a great sound of a trumpet*; and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.”^r

But most especially in Joel ii. is it that we see the people summoned by the sound of the trumpet, before the great day of humiliation, and engaged to prepare themselves for it. “Therefore also now, saith the Lord, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: and rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth Him of the evil. Who knoweth if He will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind Him; even a meat offering and a drink offering unto the Lord your God? Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn

^r Ps. lxxxi. 3, 4; Is. xxvii. 13; Matt. xxiv. 30, 31. The *elect* in this last passage are evidently the ten tribes of Israel.

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assembly: gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet. Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God?"

The faithful remnant give ear to these exhortations, and at length, through the grace of their God, come to the knowledge of the solemn reality, as to themselves, of the great day of atonement. This we see in Zech. xii. 10—14, where the Lord thus speaks: "And I will pour upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon Him whom they have pierced; and they shall mourn for Him as one that mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for Him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born. In that day there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Meggidon.^s And the land shall mourn, every family apart. . . In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness." Israel or the remnant having afflicted their soul before God, as the law relative to the day of atonement appointed or required of them, then will Jesus close His service as high priest after the order of Aaron. "He will come out of the heavenly sanctuary, and reign after the order of Melchisedec; He will be Priest upon His throne. And the Lord shall be King over all the earth."^t

Then will the children of Israel enjoy perfectly, and in some respects literally, all the blessings prefigured in the jubilee, and that always on account of the perfect work of Jesus, the Messiah, the King and Priest. Thus, as to the *remission of debts*, these prophetic words will have their perfect fulfilment: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem,

^s Judges xx. 45, 47; xxi. 13; 2 Chron. xxxv. 22—25.

^t Zech. xiii. 1; vi. 13; xiv. 9.

and say unto her that her warfare is accomplished, *that her iniquity is pardoned*, for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins. . . And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I shall make up my jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. . . . I will be merciful to their unrighteousness and their sins, and their iniquities will I remember no more."

Or is it deliverance from bondage that is in question? "As for thee also, *by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit* wherein there is no water. Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope: even to-day do I declare that I will render double unto thee." "Thus hath the Lord said to His Christ: I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I helped thee; and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, *to establish the earth*, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages; *that thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth*; to them that are in darkness, Shew yourselves. . . Shall the prey be taken from the mighty? or the lawful captive be delivered? Thus saith the Lord: Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered; for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children . . . and all flesh shall know that I the Lord am thy Saviour, and thy Redeemer (Goël) the Mighty One of Jacob." For "the year of my Redeemed is come."^u

Or, the benefits which the jubilee brought to the poor who had been deprived of their lands are thus expressed: "Ye shall return each one to his possession." It is here especially that the type will be seen realized to the letter. According to the plain and unconditional promise made by the Lord to Abraham, the land of Canaan has been given to the children of Abraham for an everlasting possession (Gen. xiii. 14, 15, etc). They have been driven out of it because of their unfaithfulness; but this is but for a time. The promise of Jehovah abides,

^u Is. xl. 1, 2; Mal. iii. 17; Heb. viii. 12; Zech. ix. 11, 12; Is. xlix. 8, 9, 24—26, lxiii. 4. "The year of my *redeemed*," of those for whom I have fulfilled the part of *Goel* (Redeemer).

and very soon the oracles of God declaring their re-installation in their land will also have their fulfilment. Amongst a number of passages I could mention, I shall only quote the following: "Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the Heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and *bring them into their own land. . . And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob* my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children's children, for ever; and my servant David shall be their prince for ever. Moreover, I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; *and I will place them*, and multiply them, and I will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. . . I will be their God and they shall be my people."^v "And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel; and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens and eat the fruit of them.. *And I will plant them upon their land*, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God."^w

Again, Jesus says to the Jewish remnant who had followed Him, "In the regeneration, *every man who shall have left houses, or brethren, or fields*, for my name's sake, *shall receive a hundred fold*, and shall inherit eternal life" (Matt. xix. 28, 29).

In the last place the jubilee was a season of abundance and rest to the poor, and this again is what innumerable prophecies promise to Israel for the last days. After the long ages of desolation, during which the land will have rested, enjoying her sabbaths, it will again be inhabited; then "the wilderness and the solitary place shall rejoice and be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose." "Behold, the days come, saith the

^v Eze. xxxvii. 21—27. Reading this passage attentively it is easy to see that it does not relate to the return from Babylon, for here it is Judah and Ephraim that are said to be *but one nation, and that are to have but one king*.

^w Amos ix. 14, 15.

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Lord, that the ploughman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes, him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt."

The Lord hath said, "Zion is my rest for ever; here will I dwell, for I have desired it. I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread." The Lord hath sworn by His right hand, and by the arm of His strength: . . . They that have gathered the corn shall eat it, and praise the Lord; and they that have brought the wine together shall drink it in the courts of my holiness." "In those days, Judah shall be saved, and Jerusalem *shall dwell safely*; and this is the name whereby she shall be called: 'The Lord, our righteousness.'" "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and *great shall be the peace of thy children.*" "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." "And they shall *sit* every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid; for the mouth of the Lord of Hosts hath spoken it."^x

All these blessings which await Israel, will be found beautifully summed up in chap. xxxvi. of Ezekiel, ver. 22—38. "Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord God; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went. And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the Lord, saith the Lord God, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes. For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony

^x Is. xxxv. 1; Amos ix. 13; Ps. cxxxii. 14, 15; Is. lxii. 8, 9; Jerem. xxiii. 6; Is. liv. 13, xxxv. 10; Micah iv. 4.

heart out of your flesh, and will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. I will also save you from all your uncleannesses: and I will call for the corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you. And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that ye shall receive no more reproach of famine among the heathen. Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings which were not good, and shall lothe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations. Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord God, be it known unto you: be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel. Thus saith the Lord God; In the day that I shall have cleansed you from all your iniquities, I will also cause you to dwell in the cities, and the wastes shall be builded. And the desolate land shall be tilled, whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that passed by. And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are become fenced, and are inhabited. Then the heathen that are left round about you shall know that I the Lord build the ruined places, and plant that that was desolate: I the Lord have spoken it, and I will do it. Thus saith the Lord God; I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them; I will increase them with men like a flock. As the holy flock, as the flock of Jerusalem in her solemn feasts; so shall the waste cities be filled with flocks of men: and they shall know that I am the Lord."

Such is the deliverance, such the blessings, which the Redeemer (the Goël) will bring with Him, when "He shall come to Zion, unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob." How true will then be those words of the Psalmist: "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound [or sound of the trumpet]. They shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance." "Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem; praise thy God, O Zion. . . . For He

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hath blessed thy children within thee. He maketh peace in thy borders, and filleth thee with the finest of the wheat.”^y

Then the jubilee millennium will be indeed for Israel, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord. It will be also then the time of restitution of all things of which God hath spoken; and the whole creation shall partake of it. “For the earnest desire of the creation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God (for the creation was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same), in hope that the creation itself also shall be *delivered from the bondage* of corruption, into *the glorious liberty* of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.”^z

Then will end for ever that deep groan now unceasingly rising from the whole creation under the weight of the curse; suffering as they also do from the consequences of sin and death come into the world. Then there will be rest for the earth, restored to its state before the fall. Then even for the animals, freedom, relief from pain, and restoration to their first estate. The same God who gave this promise to Israel: “Behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy,” said immediately before, “Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind.” Then “the wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them; and the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the cockatrice’s den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.”^a

“And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left

^y Is. lix. 20; Ps. lxxxix. 15 (Perret Gentil); Ps. cxlvii. 12, 14.

^z Rom. viii. 19—22.

^a Is. lxv. 17, 18, xi. 6—9.

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of all the nations which come against Jerusalem, shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles." "The nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of the holy city. Then shall be sung, songs such as these, which will then have a glorious reality: "*The Lord reigneth*; let the earth rejoice, yea, let the multitude of the isles be glad thereof. . . The heavens declare His righteousness, and all the people see His glory." "Praise the Lord from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps: fire and hail, snow and vapour, stormy wind fulfilling His word: mountains and all hills, fruitful trees and all cedars, beasts and all cattle, creeping things and flying fowl: kings of the earth: and all people, princes, and all judges of the earth; both young men and maidens, old men and children: let them praise the name of the Lord: for His name alone is excellent; His glory is above the earth and heaven. Hallelujah!"^b

And let it be well observed, as our redemption and that of Israel is only in consequence of the work of Christ, so is it with this glorious deliverance of the creation. He is likewise the *Goël* for the earth. The earth is also "the possession which Jesus has bought" by His death. The world is the field in which was hidden a treasure (the church), and Jesus is the One who has sold all that he had (or given His life) to buy the field. Very soon He will come and deliver His purchased possession, which is still under the yoke of the adversary. Very soon He will break the seals of the book which contain, as it were, the contract of the possession, or the titles of the Lamb—Redeemer—to the possession and inheritance of all things. When all the seals have been opened, then the jubilee of the creation will commence, for the reign of the Lord will be begun (Apocal. v., xi. 15, 17).

Christians! But we ourselves also, we who have the first fruits of the Spirit, we who are united to Christ and made partakers of the divine nature, even we groan within ourselves, because, though by our inner man we belong to the new creation, by our bodies we still partake

^b Zech. xiv. 16; Apoc. xxi. 24; Ps. xcvi. 1, 6, cxlviii. 7—14.

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of this creation which groaneth and travaileth together. Beyond a doubt, our life is hidden with Christ in God, but we have not yet put on immortality. We groan, being burdened, waiting for the moment of exchanging our earthly house, which is but a tabernacle, for our eternal house, which we have from God in the heavens, the body of glory. Now our citizenship is in heaven; but we are still waiting for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change the body of our humiliation, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body. In Jesus we have redemption, even the forgiveness of our sins; but we groan after the redemption of our bodies, ever miserable vile, feeble, mortal; and in this respect we are saved but in hope. We are the Lord's freemen, but ever exposed to the attacks of the enemy, ever in conflict or warfare with spiritual wickedness in heavenly places, carrying about within us the Spirit of God, undoubtedly, but also the flesh, ever rebellious with its desires contrary to those of the spirit. We belong to heaven, undoubtedly, but living still in a world which is wholly lying in wickedness, a world which is altogether at enmity with the truth of God, and against Jesus whom it has crucified, a world that is already judged. Thus, though enjoying by faith the peace of the Saviour, this is not our place of rest, and for us likewise this world is a dry and thirsty land, where no water is. In passing through it we must meet with trials, conflicts, tribulations, of every kind. "In the world ye shall have tribulation," Jesus has said to us. Rest, happiness, glory, are still before us. Dear brethren, we know that "there remaineth a rest for the people of God." Glory is promised to us by the same God who has already given us grace. Now already we are adopted by Him in Jesus Christ, *to the praise of the glory of His grace*. Very soon we shall be *to the praise of His glory*. Very soon, yes, very soon the church will realise, but in a manner altogether heavenly, what was shewn in type by the year of release and the jubilee. "It is a righteous thing with God . . . to you who are troubled, (*to give*) rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven. Praise to the atoning work of Christ, we shall soon be clothed with a glorious body, and according to His promise,

introduced by Himself into His Father's house, where there are many mansions. "I go," He said, "to prepare a place for you; and if I go away and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also." "When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory." To Jesus all the glory belongs, but by adoption and redemption we have become joint heirs with Him. As He said to the Father, "The glory thou hast given to me I have given to them."^c

These "great and precious promises" will be fulfilled for us at the moment when the Lord shall descend from heaven. Then the saints who are sleeping in Him shall be raised by His voice, and we, who are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. And here is a thing to be remarked! In the same way, or in the like manner, as the Jubilee was brought in, with the sound of the trumpet, so likewise it is at the sound of the trumpet of God—for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead in Christ shall be raised incorruptible—and we shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.^d

Dear brethren, Is this what we are all waiting for? Is this our future—our only future? The last words we find in Scripture the Lord Jesus spoke to His Church was: "Behold, I come quickly." The last words which in the Scriptures the Lord Jesus puts into the mouth of His Church are: "Even so, come, Lord!" Do our hearts often repeat them as the expression of our sincere desire?

It is most important to be able to give an answer to these questions. Truly, the looking for the Lord Jesus has the most powerful influence as to practical holiness in all the details of our life. This is what I would desire to shew whilst unfolding the only two passages of this chapter which appear to me remain to be considered on this subject, in order to arrive at the end, at least, of my feeble light and small measure of understanding.

^c Heb. iv. 9; Eph. i. 6, 12; 2 Thes. i. 6, 7; Col. iii. 4; John xiv. 23, xvii. 22.

^d Thess. iv. 16, 17; 1 Cor. xv. 52.

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Vers. 14—16. “And if thou sell ought unto thy neighbour, or buyest ought of thy neighbour’s hand, ye shall not oppress one another. According to the number of years after the Jubilee thou shalt buy of thy neighbour, and according to the number of years of the fruits he shall sell unto thee: according to the multitude of years thou shalt increase the price thereof, and according to the fewness of years thou shalt diminish the price of it; for according to the number of years of the fruits doth he sell unto thee.”

The reason for this clause in the Ordinance is most easy to understand. Every Israelite, in the Jubilee, returning to his possessions, it is quite plain that it was not properly the lands that were sold, but only a fewer or greater number of harvests, according as the Jubilee was more or less distant. Thus, the man who sold his field two years after the Jubilee, sold consequently the *product* of forty-seven years, or, more properly, of forty years, for the years of rest for the land, when no harvest was gathered, must be deducted. Again, a man who sold his vineyard two years before the Jubilee, consequently sold only one or two *vintages* of his vineyard. Thus the interest in properties differed in value according as the Jubilee was more or less distant. The farther off was this year of redemption and restoration of all things, the more value had the lands and fields; on the contrary, the nearer it was, the less value every earthly possession had. Dear brethren! the very same thing is true as to the Church.

As long as the redeemed ones of the Lord kept the word of “Looking for the coming of the Lord”; as long as they really believed that the night was far spent, and the day was at hand; as long as they could say truthfully with Paul: “*WE which are alive and remain*” till the coming of the Lord; as long as each one amongst them could say with David: “My soul waiteth for the Lord, more than they that watch for the morning; more, I say, than they that watch for the morning,”^e their affections, loosened from things below, were set without an effort upon those in heaven: there were their possessions, their treasure, their

^e Apoc. iii. 10; Rom. xiii. 12; Ps. cxxx. 6.

life, their rest, their glory, their city, their country, their eternal house; in a word, Him they loved was there, and consequently, their hearts, their thoughts, and *conversation*. They were Nazarites purer than snow, and whiter than milk. They walked upon earth as strangers and pilgrims, as citizens of heaven; loving neither the world nor the things which are in the world, but on the contrary, shewing by their whole life, by their moderation, their disinterestedness, their sobriety, in every sense of the word, their spirit always happy that they were dead to the world. They understood so much better, because they realised in their daily life this exhortation of Paul to the Saints at Corinth: "But this I say, brethren, that *the time is short*: it remaineth that both they that have wives be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; *and they that buy, as though they possessed not*; and they that use this world, as not abusing it; for the fashion of this world passeth away." Their riches were in heaven; they took literally, and in earnest, that command of the Lord Jesus: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth." They had not the thought of heaping up to themselves "thick clay." Their conversation was without covetousness, being content with such things as they had. Like Paul, they could say: "Every where, 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."

But as soon as Christians lost sight of this precious truth; as soon as the servants had begun to say, "My Lord delayeth His coming;" as soon as science, falsely so-called, had treated as enthusiasm the expectation of the coming of Jesus, and taught that the multitude of passages relating to the coming of Christ apply only to the death of the Christian; from the moment that the coming of Jesus to receive His Church was commonly confounded with the coming of the Son of Man with His Church upon earth, for the judgment of the world; and consequently, when events which Scripture say are to precede this last, were placed arbitrarily

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before the first; from the moment when, for the gospel of the kingdom, preached by John the Baptist, Jesus Himself, and His Apostles, the reign of the Gospel was substituted (which after all is but a human invention); from the moment that men thought they could work *for the advancement of the reign of Christ*, as it is called, and began to dream of the conversion of whole nations, notwithstanding the plain and positive declarations to the contrary, as in Luke xvii. 26—30; 2 Tim. iii. 1—5, 13; 2 Thess. ii. 1—12; then, most naturally, the children of God, thus badly taught and led astray, waited no longer for the Lord, but for the realization of the dreams of their own fancy and feelings. And what has been the principal moral result of this departure from the truth? Alas! it is but too manifest in every place. Is it not evident that a worldly spirit has come into the Church, and has taken possession of it, just in proportion as the expectation of Jesus has been lost by it! Yes, the Church, in ceasing to believe in the coming of the Lord being at hand (and, consequently, the introduction of the glorious and heavenly Jubilee which awaits her, though even she may have ceased to wait for it), . . . the Church has become worldly; she has placed herself under the patronage of the great, the noble, the rich, and the powerful of this world; she has despised and defiled her Nazariteship, and has become drunken with the wine and strong drink of the world; she has become united and mixed up with the enemies of her Saviour; she has sought to settle herself down in this world, and to find here ease, honour, and rest. From hence arises a walk frequently so low among saints—thoughts, opinions, a language, and actions which have too much resemblance to the acts and language, the opinions and thoughts of this world—whereas they ought to be the contrast of them. They have no longer desired to be citizens only of heaven; heavenly blessings, which *alone* are promised and secured to us in Christ, were no longer sufficient for them; they sought their own, rather than the things which are Jesus Christ's; it might well be said of them that their thoughts were on earthly things. The heavenly calling has been despised and forgotten. The

character of strangers and pilgrims has been looked upon as an exaggeration; the salt has lost its savour; selfishness, avarice, and worldliness, have ravaged, weakened, and dishonoured for ages the Church of God. Alas! it can no longer be said as in the early times: "Behold the heavenly people of the Lord, a gathering of those who are not of the world, even as Jesus was not of the world; of those who, after the example of their master, testify of the world that the works thereof are evil; for these the world is still the same, the enemy of Jesus, the world of which Satan is the God."

But notwithstanding all the unfaithfulness of the Bride of Christ, the heart of Jesus cannot for a single moment forget or forsake her. If we believe not, yet He abideth faithful. He cannot deny Himself. Also, through His patient grace, better days seem now to dawn upon the Church. To day, perhaps, more than ever, since the days of the Apostles, is she exhorted afresh to awake and wait for her Lord. Every where, God is raising up a number of witnesses of the near appearing of Jesus,—truth of all importance, on which the word of God insists, and turns to again and again, perhaps more than to any other. To-day, more than ever, the Holy Ghost causes the sound to be heard on every side. "And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now is our salvation [the true Jubilee] nearer than when we believed." On all sides the cry has been heard, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet Him." What is this a proof of, but that the time is near!

May the Lord, who acts thus in Grace towards His poor yet blessed children, give us to understand, from the heart, and in a practical way, these calls which He addresses to us; and may we more and more see our brethren, the saints, rejoicing in hope of the glory of God, living as though always at the very eve of the solemn day when the trumpet shall sound, to proclaim the eternal Jubilee. Then also, by happy conformity to them, will they understand better such exhortations as these: "Seek the things above, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God; set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth."

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But if the effect of looking for the coming of the Lord is to loosen our hearts from the possessions, the joys and vanities which are here below, on the other hand it would never turn from the path of obedience, specially from the work of faith and labour of love, whether towards our brethren, or towards those around us. On the contrary, nothing is more calculated to send home responsibility on the conscience. This is what I would desire to show in closing.

God foresaw that in the case of badly disposed persons among the Israelites; their covetousness, selfishness, indolence or indifference, might lead them to take advantage of the approach of the Sabbatic Year or of that of Jubilee. And in reality there was a way of speculating upon it and making it an occasion of gain, or rather a means of justifying a man's own avarice and hardness of heart. They might say, "The year for the restoration of the poor draws near when they will again have abundance, then they can do without my lending a helping hand to their need since there remains so short a time for them to suffer. Besides, all debts will then be remitted. So it would be merely a trick and a loss to me to lend to them now; so I shall take care how I do it. Such a one among my brethren is the servant of a stranger; I could redeem him, but see, the Jubilee will soon set him free; why then should I spend my money only to save him so short a time of servitude. Let us wait quietly for the sounding of the trumpet of liberty, he can very well do without me."

We see how God answered these calculations of private ends: "If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother: but thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth. Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, the seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him nought; and he cry unto the Lord against thee, and it be sin

unto thee. Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him: because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto" (Deut. xv. 7—10). And in the chapter we are considering, see again the charges which God gives to His people as to the Jubilee: "And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen into decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him: yea, though he be a stranger, or a sojourner; that he may live with thee. Take thou no usury of him, or increase: but fear thy God; that thy brother may live with thee. Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase. I am the Lord thy God which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, to give you the land of Canaan, and to be your God. And if thy brother that dwelleth by thee be waxen poor, and be sold unto thee;^f thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bond-servant: but as a hired servant, and as a sojourner, he shall be with thee, and he shall serve thee unto the year of Jubilee. . . . Thou shalt not rule over him with rigour; but shalt fear thy God" (ver. 35—43).

Thus we see, that the glorious prospect of the Jubilee does not by any means make us careless as to our present duties; but on the contrary it encourages us in them and urges us to fulfil them. However near it may be to our hearts, this looking for "The blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, the grace of God does not the less teach us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteous and godly in this present world."

Without doubt, in all ages, impious fanatics have known how cleverly to spread abroad rash and absurd predictions of the pretended *end of the world*, in order to enrich themselves at the expense of the credulous multitude; but the children of God, who are subject to the instructions of the word, will ever keep themselves far from such enormities. Nothing so much as the persuasion of the near return of Jesus, would lead them to obedience and holiness. Let it never be forgotten, this

^f As the two sons of the poor widow (2 Kings iv. 1).

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is the great motive, the motive generally presented in scripture as the strength of the precepts given to the saints; it may well be said that there is not a duty, not a detail in the walk of a child of the light which is not founded upon this truth, which comes so home, and is so certain, and so solemn, and so glorious.

For example, is it said, that the daily expectation of the return of Jesus will make us indifferent to the physical or temporal miseries of those around us. For myself, I can only say that nothing would so seem to me to draw out the sympathies of a Christian for these sorrows. Did not, to take an example, Noah, a preacher of righteousness, Noah warned before of God of the judgment about to burst on the world of the ungodly, did he not with so much the more earnestness beseech those around him to turn and flee from the wrath to come, by taking refuge in the ark, as the respite of 120 years granted by the Lord, drew near its close. And for ourselves, beloved, if we really believe that the Lord is at hand, and that when once He who now letteth be taken out of the way, then that wicked shall be revealed, with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, a strong delusion being sent to them that they should believe a lie; the time of patience and of grace will be past for them; the apostasy will be at its height bringing with it the great tribulation and the judgment. . . . Yes, if we really believed these things, of which, we also, have been divinely warned:—Ah, I ask, could we remain indifferent to the fate of those around us? Shall we not be forced to cry to them to save themselves from this untoward generation which is going on to perdition, to believe on Jesus, in order that they might be counted worthy to escape all those things which shall come to pass, and that they may be in the number of those whom Jesus will keep from the hour of temptation, that is coming upon all the world to try them which dwell upon the earth (Apoc. iii. 10). Being convinced of the truth of such things, is it not powerful to cause each one of the redeemed of Christ to give a faithful testimony to the grace and truth of his God; as also to urge on those whom the Lord has more

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especially given as messengers of the Gospel, to proclaim the salvation which there is in Jesus, the only name under heaven which is given among men whereby they can be saved. And on the other hand is it not as discouraging as deceiving the expectation of the *spiritual* kingdom of Christ and of the conversion of the nations by means of the preaching of the Gospel, an expectation ever found false for ages, always falsified by facts, and which nevertheless continues to be the moving spring of the missionary labour of a number of pious labourers of the Lord.

As to the temporal miseries of those around us, how is it possible that the hope of the glory and of the appearing of Jesus should make us indifferent to their relief: since, as we have seen, on one hand, this hope loosens our hearts from the things of this earth, and, on the other, we know that the Lord will be pleased in a special manner to acknowledge and reward in His grace the works of love. But it needs only to open the word, and it will be seen how these works are joined with the looking for the coming of the Lord Jesus.

1 Thess. iii. 12, 13: "And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men. . . . To the end He may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, *at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.*"

Heb. x. 24, 25: "And let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: *and so much the more as ye see the day approaching.*"

I would now from amongst many passages, cite some which prove the *practical* and sanctifying *tendency* in general of the belief of the near approach of the Heavenly Jubilee; they shew the all importance which this truth ought to have in the eyes of every Christian who desires to glorify the Lord.—In fact, it is held out to us as a motive for *love for Christ.*

1 Cor. xvi. 22: "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema *maranatha*, that is to say, *the Lord is coming.*"

For the mortification of fleshly lusts.

Coloss. iii. 4, 5: "When Christ, who is our life, *shall appear*, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory. Mortify *therefore* your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry."

To obedience and holiness in general.

1 John ii. 28: "And now, little children, abide in Him; that, *when He shall appear*, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him, *at His coming.*" Chap. iii. 2, 3: "We know that, *when He shall appear*, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure."

2 Peter iii. 14: "Wherefore, beloved, *seeing that ye look for such things*, be diligent that ye may be *found of Him* in peace without spot and blameless."

To guard ourselves from forming rash judgments.

1 Cor. iv. 5: "Judge nothing before the time, *until the Lord come,*" etc.

To vigilance.

Luke xii. 35—37: "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord, when He will return from the wedding; that, when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord, *when He cometh*, shall find watching."

Mark xiii. 33—37. "Take ye heed; watch, and pray; for ye know not when the time is: as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye, therefore; for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning; lest, *coming suddenly*, he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you, I say unto all: watch."[§]

§ These two passages relate to the return of the son of Man, and consequently do not so directly concern the church; but they are also written for us as to their practical *application*, which, in the last especially, is most general. We know that it is the same with several others which have a similar meaning.

To patience and long-suffering. Heb. x. 36, 37: "Ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye may receive the promise. For yet a little while (how little, how little!), and *He that shall come will come, and will not tarry.*"

James v. 7, 8: "Be patient therefore, brethren, *until the coming of the Lord.* Behold the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it. . . . Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts; *for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.*"

1 Pet. iv. 12, 13 (compare 1 Pet. i. 6, 7): "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that *when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.*"

To moderation, sobriety, and confidence, without disquietude.

Phil. iv. 5, 6: "Let your moderation be known unto all men. *The Lord is at hand; or, the Lord is near.* Be careful for nothing."

1 Pet. i. 13: "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind; be sober, and hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto you *at the Revelation of Jesus Christ.*"

To faithfulness in the use and exercise of gifts received of the Lord for common profit.

1 Tim. vi. 13—15: "I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession, that thou keep this commandment without spot, unbukeable, *until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ:* which in his times He shall shew, who is the blessed and only potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords." See also 2 Tim. iv. 1, 2.

1 Pet. v. 1—4: "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being

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examples to the flock. *And when the Chief Shepherd shall appear*, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."

And how many more Scriptural declarations might there not yet be mentioned. When speaking of the end of God in converting sinners to Himself, it is a double end: 1st. To serve the living and true God; 2ndly. *To wait for His Son from heaven* whom He raised from the dead, Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come" (1 Thess. i. 9, 10). Is it to give comfort to those who mourn for relatives sleeping in Jesus: "Comfort one another with these words," said the Apostle. See what these words are in 1 Thess. iv. 13—17. Do we want to know to whom it is the Lord will appear when He returns, we read, He "will be seen a second time without sin, by those who look for Him unto salvation" (Heb. ix. 28). Do we want to know until when the Church ought to continue to observe the Lord's Supper in remembrance of Jesus, it is said, that as oft as we eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death *until He come*. Does a question arise concerning the confidence we may and ought to have in Him who has loved us, each faithful one may say, as to himself, as did Paul: "I know in whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him *against that day*" (2 Tim. i. 12). And as to our brethren, it can be said: "Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it *until the day of Jesus Christ*" (Phil. i. 6). In a word, is there a crown of righteousness, of which Paul, ready to seal by his death his faithful service, could say, "The Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me *in that day*," and who shall receive with him a distinction so special? "And not to me only, he adds, but unto all them also *who love His appearing*" (2 Tim. iv. 8).

And what could I more add to this mass of testimonies to prove the solemn responsibility we are set under to keep this Word of the waiting for the Lord, and consequently the waiting for the true Jubilee, unless it be this voice of Jesus Himself to each of those who keep this word: "Hold fast that which thou hast, that no man

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take thy crown" (Apoc. iii. 11); or this prayer of Paul's, which I would now put up for us all, to the Father of all grace: "And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ"? (2 Thess. iii. 5).

"Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God, our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

Through Israel's land, the Lord of all,
A homeless wanderer pass'd,
Then closed His life of sorrow here,
On Calvary, at last.

O Zion! when Thy Saviour came
In grace and love to Thee,
No beauty in Thy royal Lord
Thy faithless eye could see.

Yet onward, in His path of grace,
The holy Sufferer went,
To feel, at last, that love on Thee,
Had all in vain been spent.

Yet not in vain—o'er Israel's land
The glory yet will shine;
And He, thy once rejected King,
Messiah shall be thine.

His chosen Bride, ordain'd with Him
To reign o'er all the earth,
Shall first be framed, ere thou shalt know,
Thy Saviour's matchless worth.

Then thou, beneath the peaceful reign
Of Jesus and His Bride,
Shalt sound His grace and glory forth,
'To all the earth beside.

The nations to thy glorious light,
O Zion, yet shall throng,
And all the list'ning islands wait,
To catch the joyful song.

The name of Jesus yet shall ring
Through earth and heaven above;
And all his ransom'd people know
The Sabbath of His love.

“As regards the coming of the Lord, the purpose of God *is evidently* to make saints always wait for it as a present expectation; and this is shewn in never telling them the moment. Nothing can be more explicit than Scripture on this head. St. Paul then made no mistake in expecting ‘the speedy return of Christ from heaven.’ He waited for God’s son from heaven, and taught others to wait for it continually. He never prophetically announced the time. In each he was perfectly guided by the Spirit of God. That this was the Lord’s mind as presented in Scripture, the following passages shew: But ‘let your loins be girded about; and your lights burning, and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that . . . they may open unto him immediately And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch and find them so, blessed are those servants Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of Man cometh at an hour when ye think not.’ So again, ‘If that evil servant say *in his heart*, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to smite the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him and shall appoint him his portion with hypocrites.’ Yet in the very same discourse, directly after, the Lord says, ‘While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made,’ etc. That is, if the heart counted on delay, it betrayed its wickedness; yet the bridegroom would delay, so trying the faith of his own. Yet, adds Peter, the ‘Lord is not slack concerning His promise as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish for the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation.’ That is, the delay is not slackness in His promise to us, but God’s patience with men prolonging the time of grace and salvation. But the same Apostle warns us that there would be scoffers, saying, ‘Where is the promise of His coming?’ The Apostle then, taught of the Holy Ghost, acted in the Spirit of Christ’s direction to His disciples in the lively, and joyful, sanctifying, yea energising constant hope of His coming, and yet never predicted the time which *He* had put in His own power, who had said, ‘Sit on my right hand *till I make* thine enemies thy footstool.’”

No. XI.

TRUE POSITION IS POWER—DEPARTURE
FROM IT IS WEAKNESS.

IN grace, where alone, as lost and ruined, we could stand, we learn that all our blessings are accomplished by Christ and vested in Him. To possess and to enjoy remain with us. Simple as this truth appears, none is practically so embarrassing to our legal and self-dependent spirits. To possess and to enjoy God's gifts, we must first value them as gifts; and here is our difficulty. Our pride blunts our sense of need, but the earnest soul counts all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus the Lord. The surrender of nature proves the appreciation of grace, but it does not obtain it; though it opens the door to possession and to enjoyment. Grace is laid up for me; as I value it, I enjoy it. There is none *newly* provided or prepared for me; for it is already provided and laid up in Christ; and I enjoy it when I am in a position to enjoy it. We see this in the apostle's prayers in Ephesians. In the first, that the saints might know the power which wrought in Christ, and what He has accomplished for them; and in the second, that they might know Christ Himself—that they might be filled with all the fulness of God. As the soul enters on the position in which grace sets it, it knows the power which wrought in Christ. Truly, power must first work in me to raise me to that position, and for this is the prayer; but being in the position, I not only know the power but the fruition of it, and while I keep it I enjoy power efficiently. I do not *gain* the position. Through grace it is mine, and I take it. There is power in the taking of it, and still greater, evidently, in keep-

ing it; because it is its effect. It is possible for a man to assume a position in name, of which he, in reality, knows nothing; but this will soon test him. If a man assume the position of being "heavenly" without knowing the power which wrought in Christ—the only question is, *Is he "heavenly"?* If through grace he be, he is so in spirit and act, and *by gift*, even as Christ is. If he be this only by assumption, there is an effort to prove it rather than enjoyment in the possession of it. In the one case you labour to convince others; in the other, to magnify your possession.

I am bound to take every position in which the grace of Christ has set me; and my weakness is because I do not. The position is the verification of Christ's power; and in taking it and maintaining it, I am acknowledging Him, even though thereby my own infirmities are more openly disclosed. While to hold the position proves that I have possession and enjoyment in it, though I should fail to prove to others my title or fitness for such a position. Thus the position of itself affords me strength to value and to keep it. If I know that my position is "heavenly," is it not power *to be* heavenly, to take the the position of being so? I am entitled to it through grace; and I own my title (it being a true one), and my soul adopting heavenliness as its right, and in a way I could not expect if I were only *looking* for such a position. When once we are impressed with the copiousness of Christ's work, and what grace is, we take up the position, as we have light, and we are taught instinctively that it is a moral error to surrender it; as undoubtedly it is a return to nature. We are, however, constantly allowing the question of fitness to mar our enjoyment; but it is grace that puts us there, and while we own Christ and His work we enjoy the effect of it. Our eye rests on the goodness of the giver, and not on the unworthiness of the receiver; and our labour is not to make ourselves fit for that expression of grace, but to walk worthy of the vocation. Let a soul refuse to acknowledge the vocation as his, and his action, however sincere, must, at least, be legal and coerced. Another hindrance is, the tendency to measure ourselves with the difficulties in

the path, and not to look at Him who puts us there:— a sure evidence of want of true energy, “There is a lion in the streets!” For difficulties in the way always occur to those who have no heart to encounter them. Thus Israel lost Canaan; and the giants, and the cities walled up to heaven, shut out the goodness and majesty of God. But what was the language of one who would hold his position? “The land which we passed through to search it, is an exceeding good land. If the Lord delight in us, then He will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey.” Caleb held the position, and he had the power of it; and when years afterwards he laid low the giants and cities, he had the full fruition of it.

It is possible to have enjoyed our position (and this was power, for it is of grace), and yet to have lost it. We have not walked worthy of it; that is, we have not in spirit kept the position; and the effect is a craving, if I may so speak, for enjoyment and deliverance which were once known. Alas! how many things, and in how many forms, are in this state offered to compensate us for our loss! Attention to forms, good works, acts of obedience, and the like, are freely proposed and adopted; but if we had kept our position we should not only have known the power which wrought in Christ, but the reaching forward, according to the second prayer in Ephesians, would be unto Christ Himself and all the fulness of God. The going on to perfection, is alone the progress of the soul; and this has to do with Christ in glory. Skilful in the word of righteousness, confirmed in the results of His work, the soul learns its proper and true place with God, and has power accordingly. How can we have power when we do not know our title to it nor own the grace which confers it? The Epistle to the Hebrews is entirely occupied with this. It teaches us in detail that “we are partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.” Surely holding anything does not entitle us to be made partakers of Christ; but holding the position in which grace sets us, we know our fellowship with Him who is the Source of it. It is only as the soul is sustained by

faith that it can own the greatness of the place conferred on us. Faith practically results from an acquaintance with God, which He, who declares the Father imparts to us. We thus know Him, and as we know Him, we freely take the place His love assigns to us; and as we maintain and assure ourselves of our right to that place, do we realize the power of the grace which has called us to it. We could have no genuine power to act in any position if we doubted our title to it. Wherever there is a shallow and imperfect sense of acceptance, there is always a shallow and partial admission of *all the other* gifts through grace. If the soul be not established on the broad basis of full justification without works before God, its power to progress will be always deficient and uncertain. But, on the contrary, if I have learned distinctly the real value of Christ for me, before God, though I may make many mistakes, and slowly shake off old religious prejudices, yet the light gradually breaks in on my understanding, and I advance in acquaintance with the power which wrought in Christ. Paul is an example of this.

Many were the deep-rooted and once true religious prejudices he had to break through; and slowly enough he escaped from them—yet he advanced; and why? simply because he never let go the grand doctrine of justification by faith without works. The great landing-place where grace had set him he would not surrender; and hence his power, not only to carry him onward through his religious prejudices, but also where others slipped from their places in grace to hold it still for them and for the church. As he maintained the true position before Peter, can we not see that his soul was animated with the power of it? Though Peter be confronted and Barnabas be turned aside, yet he enjoys the power of the position he maintains; and he loses sight of man while he shows forth the virtues of Him who hath called him out of darkness into His marvellous light. If Barnabas rejoined him again (as from 1 Cor. we may suppose), did he not rejoice that Paul had so faithfully maintained the truth of God? And must he not have felt his own departure as weakness? And of this weakness we have an

evidence on another occasion; so true is it, *that we have imperfectly apprehended the doctrine of grace, when we are unable to walk worthy of our vocation.* Paul would not consent to take Mark, who had previously returned from Pamphylia and went not with them to the work; and though now repentant, Paul thought it not good to take him, for he had departed from the position he once assumed. But Barnabas, the son of consolation, the man who went to Tarsus seeking for Saul, does not see this. He takes Mark with him and sails to his native country, Cyprus, in nature and unto nature! Such is the man that can be turned aside from the full liberty of the Gospel. Paul maintains the right position, and he has power to go on in it; and well was it for the Church and well was it for Barnabas and Mark that he did so. Any position we are led to by God's grace, let us never surrender. "Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned." It is to call in question the excellence of the position when we surrender it; for how then could we prove our appreciation of it as God's calling? Now this applies to every truth we learn, for we do not merit—we only apprehend. We see, own, and enjoy, what grace has done for us. If I surrender it, it is not an acquisition of my own I surrender; but it is God's gift, which He calls on me to own, and which to surrender is plainly equal to a refusal to own that it was of grace; or at least it is an evidence that I did not know that it was of grace. If a believer acts unlike a child of God, is he restored the sooner and the better by surrendering the fact that he is a child of God—or by maintaining that he is one—and consequently that he ought to be humbled and self-emptied, and cast upon the grace which has given him so high and so undeserved a calling? In the one case he escapes censure, for he denies responsibility; but in the other, he learns from the censure (for he owns and rejoices in the responsibility), though he is thereby afflicted. This desire to escape censure by denying responsibility is a great evil, and arises from a low state of communion, because the soul has been imperceptibly filled with other things, and the sense of grace has become faint. Trial, or more deadness follows.

When Israel gave up its position as able to go up and possess the land, judicially they forfeited the power to do so. They doubted their power before they tried, and in their hearts they turned back into Egypt. Their proper position they surrendered. The weakness which thus declared itself might have been of long growth, *yet as long as they held the position of being able they progressed.* They surrendered, and they were humbled and debarred from the place of blessing. So was Mark, to whom reference has been made. They immediately; but not so Mark. They were under law. Mark was under grace. Their attempt to recover their position was presumption. Mark, though disciplined for his secession, and perhaps separated from (see Col. iv. 10), was profitable and forthcoming for service, when many others were declining. This shews that if in weakness we have surrendered a place which grace called us to, it or a higher one remains open to us: for it is not by merit, but by grace I am saved. True if I surrender, I shall, and ought to be, judged and disciplined, and for a time unfit for the position I surrendered, which was my weakness. Caleb and Joshua never surrendered the position of being able to possess the land, though many years passed over before they were allowed to prove their power to do so. It is always important to own and abide in what God calls me to, and as He calls me; for it is His grace to me, and by His grace I can alone keep it. I might essay to keep my position, but in a careless way; but this would not be power and would lead to judgment. This happens when there is more of imitating others than learning for myself. The position to be of power must be in spirit and energy according to God, or it is merely human, which is worthless. Eli is an example. Rightly a priest—but with neither the discernment, nor the energy suited for such a place. Both the house of God and his own house gave evidence of his indolence and imbecility. The man that is not true to God is true nowhere. Eli might have had heart, but he had no soul for God: and being overcome by the judgments which his carelessness had expedited, he died as powerless as he lived. But this was not because he took a true position, but because

he was negligent in it; and cursed be he who doeth the work of the Lord negligently. Of course every position is not open to me. It is not a true one unless I have a divine warrant for it. But having a divine warrant for it, though I cannot enjoy the fruition of it, yet it is strength to maintain it, even though the opportunity for declaring it be long deferred. It was so with Caleb and Joshua, and so with Daniel. It was so with Paul, though his eye only by degrees opened to the grandeur of the position to which he was called. Yet faithfulness to the position that he saw, gave him power to go on. "To him that hath more shall be given." It has been said "I ought not to take position without power." Now what ought to be the answer to this? Is it not the enquiry whether the position I am called to be of grace or not? If it be and I take it, I know the power in the act that made it mine; for it is faith that leads me to do so—and that is Christ in me. Let us not excuse ourselves from a position to escape the responsibilities of it. There are inalienable ever-existing rights and privileges to the Church, of which by failure it may lose the enjoyment—still repentance always puts us at the open door to possession. Sorrow does not this, though repentance be thus produced, for godly sorrow produces it; but it is not the sorrow, but the fruit of it rather, which restores the church to the enjoyment of her unalterable position with Christ. Repentance is a change of sentiment from conviction. To the errant and faithless this always ensures recovery, because it proves the value of the ways of God instead of one's own. The church has never lost its right to the affections of Christ, or the privilege of His Lordship. It has failed to maintain these blessings; and thereby has forfeited power and commission to maintain subordinate glories. The moment it occupies a true position, be its state ever so low, *it is in the power suited to it.* The church at Corinth was low enough—their condition one of disorder and defilement—yet the word to them is, to come together in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ. Taking their proper position, though weak and defiled as they had been, they are empowered to abide therein and

get rid of whatever offended. I do not allude to this for the purpose of arguing that we may reckon on the same *kind* of power if we take the same position; but I do so to shew that the needed power follows or flows from taking our true position. I think the position cannot cease, for it is secured in Christ, but there might be, and there is, a different order of power required at different times. All that I desire to insist on is, that my taking my proper position irrespective of former failure is the place of power. We see, in every revelation of God to man, that there are relations established between them which no weakness or infidelity can disannul; though during the season of weakness or infidelity, they are not, or they could not be, enjoyed. But restoration when that was sincere, was always marked by a return to these unchangeable relations, and an acknowledgment of them. When Abram returns from Egypt, he builds an altar where he built one at the first. If his restoration be a perfect one, it reinstates him with God, and more, because it is grace restores. God never restores without engaging us more intimately with Himself. Jacob added to his trials even in Canaan, because of his tardiness and forgetfulness to go back to Bethel and there to revive his soul in the grace which visited him on the first night of his exile. Shalem and the altar there, El-elohe-Israel, is the halting-place of the slothful soul, one who will not roast that which he took in hunting: eager to obtain, but with energy expiring when results were to be enjoyed. It was thus with Jacob; it is thus with many a one; but there is no power in such a condition, for it is not the place of grace, and so, after deep and sore trial and disappointment, Jacob is taught that, though he may have done much in the interval unworthy of the blessing revealed at Bethel, yet it is with God, as he had revealed Himself, he has to do, and not with his own fitness, and therefore Bethel is his ground; and being there it was not merely Bethel engrossed his soul, but El-Bethel the god of Bethel, which was the power of his position. If we turn to the book of Judges what do we find? Though Gilgal be Bochim, each deliverer's power is that Israel was God's people; and hence Deborah could praise

for the avenging of Israel, and sing praises to the Lord God of Israel. She saw God in all His terrible greatness and majesty as the God of Israel, as if Israel had never departed from the vigorous devotedness at Gilgal. The earth trembled—the heavens dropped—the mountains melted before the Lord—even that Sinai from before the Lord God of Israel. *To see* what God is to His people, and to own it, is the secret of power. Barak could not receive the instructions of Deborah according to their nature and tenor; for doubtless he looked more at the people and their deserts and their condition, than at God as the God of Israel. And here is the clog to us all. Gideon's mind had to be cleared of misgivings on this point before he is in efficient service; but when confirmed in it how great was his power. Perhaps no thought so invigorates the soul in reading the book of Judges, as the ease with which each deliverer counts on God's favour towards His rebellious and fallen people. Though vanquished and enslaved, the deliverer's power always lay in his regarding God as their King. Appearances were against it on every side; but faith counted on it and took that place, and there was power accordingly. David gets rid of Michal when he brings back the ark—the effect of true position. Could the soul do a worse thing than seek a lower place than the one assigned it by God? Certainly not. And it is not humility.

See Ezra and Nehemiah—how eagerly and unhesitatingly they, not only in their hearts but in practice, return to the position to which God had called their nation! True, they had to endure a long and a painful captivity; for God is not unrighteous, though He be very gracious; and if we rightly know Him, we shall receive the punishment of our iniquity and submit to His righteous hand, but never forget His grace nor where His honour dwelleth. True also they returned to Jerusalem shorn judicially of the physical power with which they were once honoured. But though conscious of all this (yea, calmly submitting to it), yet they confidently resume their old position with God, and though there be many enemies, yet as long as they retain it they have power and blessing. Let them say (see Haggai), “The time

is not come;”—Let them refuse to take the position, and what is their power and blessing? It was, “you looked for much and it came to little; and when ye brought it home I did blow upon it.” But when they were admonished and resumed, it is, “from this day I will bless you.” Now we learn here what has been a sore evil to the people even in this day, namely, that because they are not able to present as great and as powerful a front to the world as they once were permitted to do, or were endowed with, that consequently they have no light, that the time is not come for them, as they revive or are restored from Babylonish thralldom to resume the place with God to which He originally called them, and thence all their weakness, I am persuaded. We want to learn from the foundation all that God has called us to; nothing short of His vocation will satisfy Him nor bless us. May our souls indeed learn that if we would have power to serve Him we must own the place, and take the place, His grace sets us in. To go back to a lower position or to tarry in one, is to have the Lord to “blow on what we bring home.” The church can never cease to be the body of Christ; bone of His bone, and flesh of His flesh; and now nourished and cherished by Him, and the Holy Ghost ever present to reveal Him. As it owns and takes this position, it proves its confidence in Him—realizes the blessing of it—and is thus confirmed in it. The church may have lost her ornaments, but not the affections nor nurture of her Lord, nor His Spirit that waits on her. She may be feeble and faltering, but she is loved in spite of it all; and she but crowns her sin when she owns it not. In like manner each believer should own and abide in the place where Christ’s full work has set him. There cannot be power in the soul if it be not so. The less we own Christ’s supremacy over all power, the less power practically can we expect, and the less deliverance from under Satan’s power can we enjoy. If we have conflict with wicked spirits in heavenly places, it is because we *are* in heavenly places; and fellowship with Christ’s victory over all the power of evil, can alone give us ease and dignity in passing through the world that lieth in the wicked one. The true soul

always wants the sense of this victory; and as long as it owns the full service of Christ and where His grace sets it, it is satisfied and progresses with energy. But if it lose its place, as in this dreary journey we are apt to do, though it retains the sense of former relief, it will become occupied with expressing its own victory or giving proofs of it more than with Christ's. The end of this always is that such attempts are found unsatisfying, and so powerless that there is an insensible but decided return to worldliness once renounced. Nothing but true position is power, for nought else is grace; and may we praise our God for it, and evermore rejoice in His love in and by our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE DISPENSATIONS.

GENESIS informs us that *Creation* was completed in *six* days, and that God rested on the *seventh*.

This corresponds with the dispensations: the millennium forming the *seventh* period.

The *eighth* day, in scripture, always has reference to the resurrection, or *new* state: so with the *eighth* or *eternal* period.

Observe this: we have

1. The *Adamic* dispensation. Man in innocency.
2. Man *fallen*. God's grace in giving *promise*.
3. Noahic. Government after the judgment of the flood.
4. Abrahamic or Patriarchal. Separation from idolatry.
5. Mosaic. The *Law*.
6. The Gospel. Heaven *opened* to *faith*. Heb. x. 19-25.
7. The Millennial. Heaven *opened* to *sight*. John i. 51.
8. The *Eternal*. The NEW Heavens and NEW Earth. Rev. xxi. 1-5.

W. C. B.

No. XII.

THOUGHTS ON JOHN XX.

“For as yet they knew not the scripture that He must rise again from the dead.”

RESURRECTION *from* the dead is victory over death and the grave. It is a mystery which again and again was found to be beyond the thoughts of the disciples. As they came down from the hill after the Transfiguration, and afterwards, as they are together on the road to Jerusalem, they betray their unskilfulness in that mystery, and show that their minds had never dwelt in the light of it—and yet it was to have been found in scripture. The sign of Jonas the Prophet, among other witnesses, had told it—for according to it the Son of Man was to be *but three days* in the heart of the earth. Resurrection, generally was understood; but this special form of it was not.

Resurrection, however, in its common character, or resurrection at the last day, is but a coming up to judgment. It is not victory, as the Lord's resurrection was, and as the resurrection of the just is destined to be. It is rather defeat, or the sealing of the doom of the ungodly. And these truths or mysteries (when thus rightly divided), make us see, that the action of even such a loving soul as Mary Magdalene in this chapter, is, in one sense, but a poor thing, while the anointing of Mary of Bethany in chap. xii. becomes, by contrast, in our sight, a very blessed thing. There was divine intelligence in it. That anointing tells us, that she knew the secret of her Lord's victory over death. The breaking of the box of spikenard was her way of celebrating that victory before it was accomplished—just as the inscription on the Cross was God's way of anticipating and celebrating the same.

The saints will share this triumph with their Lord—but still the conquest and the day is all His own. He is the first-fruits of the harvest, the first-born from the dead. He is to have the pre-eminence in this, as in everything. And this pre-eminence is strikingly and finely seen, as in a figure, when we look into the empty sepulchre of this chapter.

The clothes which had been wrapped about the body of the Lord were there, and there also was the napkin which had been about His head. Nothing that had bound Him, that was not loosened. His rising had done this. It was not so, when Lazarus rose; for there was no victory over death in the body of Lazarus. But here, in the garden of the sepulchre, there was the resurrection of One who could not be holden of it (Acts ii. 24). From Lazarus the grave-clothes are loosened; but here, the resurrection had loosened them.

And more than this, There is no symptom of struggle here. The clothes are laid aside *in order*. There is no disturbance. The victory had evidently, been gained without a struggle. Indeed, it had been already achieved at Calvary, when the Surety gave up the Ghost. The victory has now rather to be declared than to be gained. Still, however, in all this wondrous mystic scene, we may find the Lord in the place of pre-eminence. For, as we read, the napkin which was about the head is seen lying in a place by itself. All the grave-clothes are there. The body had been freed from head to foot. But still, the napkin which was about the head lies in a place by itself. It is thus pre-eminent and distinguished, even in the midst of other mystic glories, other spoils of glorious war, and witnesses of complete and easy victory. And just so, after this pattern, is it in the mystery. The gates of hell shall not prevail against the Church, the body of Christ. It shares the life of the Son of God, and the gates of Hades cannot prevail. But all this virtue which belongs to her, comes from her having that life. It is all found there and there only. But as for *Him* it was not possible that He should be holden of it. The body may share the triumph, and so

it shall; but the life and power which secures and wins the day over death is all His.

But further, as to this chapter.

Angels, let me observe, learn their lessons by *sight*. As we read, "seen of angels"—and again, "which things the angels desire to look into." And together with this, I may say, as they look and learn the lesson, there is no *moral hindrance in them*.

This is their place, so to speak, in the school of God. They are not personally interested in the lesson, as we are—they are spectators merely; but then, their power of vision is perfect—not dimmed by any moral pravity.

According to this, are they seen in this chapter. They learn the mystery of the resurrection, resurrection from the dead or life in victory, by *sight*—but they learn it *at once*.

This is beautiful in its place. But still, there is something more precious, I doubt not, by far.

They do not learn their lesson, as we do. They learn it as *admiring spectators*; we learn it *through our necessities and mercies*. They may learn it more quickly than we do, but they cannot learn it after a method so dear and grateful to Him who is the common Teacher.

These distinctions we further get in this beautiful chapter. The angels learn the resurrection of the Lord from the sight of the empty tomb. They sit there, and they gaze, and they wonder and worship, knowing the mystery at once, and without effort, at the sight of the place where the Lord had lain; but poor Mary Magdalene is dull, and others of us still more dull. For Satan and nature have a blinding power in us, but Satan and nature do not stand in the way of angels. Our Mary has to learn the lesson with a rebuke; but still she learns it as one who was *personally concerned* in it—and that gives her, dull though she was, an interest with Him who was teaching the lesson, beyond all that angels could awaken. She was as one in a wreck whom a gracious Deliverer was rescuing—they were but as the admiring crowd on the beach. The divine Deliverer may get His praise from them, but she is His prize.

This is the difference—a difference of no small value in the reckoning of grace, in the calculations of a heart “that delighteth in mercy,” and finds more joy in the *recovered* sheep than in the ninety and nine *which went not astray*.

And the Lord, pleased with such disciples of His grace, is seen in this chapter to be patient and gracious in teaching this lesson of the empty tomb, or the mystery of resurrection from the dead, to the slow-hearted disciples, whether to Mary in the garden, to the company gathered within the closed doors at Jerusalem, or to the distant Thomas eight days afterwards. And He teaches it so as to fill their spirits with the lesson—and this is learning mysteries indeed, or with a divine witness. Magdalene follows Him in spirit to heaven—the disciples, receiving His risen life, go forth to publish it—and Thomas worships Him in His glories, in the conviction and satisfaction of His illuminated heart.

Thus, after these ways, we see the differences. There are before us Mary of Bethany, the disciples of this chapter, and the angels.

Mary of Bethany had already known this mystery of life in victory, or resurrection from the dead, and had in spirit practised or lived that lesson. She anointed the Lord at the Passover, even then, while on His way to His burial, anticipating His resurrection, or waving Him before God as the sheaf of first-fruits. She looked on Him as already at the other side of death and the grave, and anoints Him for His living and eternal glories. She talked of life in the midst of death, of the victory of the Son of God, ere He had met the enemy to fight the battle; and with her box of spikenard or her ivory palace, had greeted or gladdened the consecrated king and priest of God.

The angels now, at the sepulchre, learn this lesson, and learn it, as we said, at once and without difficulty, when they see the place where the Lord had lain.

The disciples learn it with slowness of heart, some more, some less, under the patient teaching of their

divine Master. But they learn it as needing it for themselves.

Thus is it with these different classes in the school of God. But as the *moral* of all this, I may add, that better is it, to *live* our lessons than merely to *learn* them; better like her of Bethany, to practise them in the power and experience of our souls, than to be gathering them up again and again from the words of our divine Teacher. But still, beloved, such is His grace, and the joy He finds in His own mercy, that I will be bold to say, it is, in *His* account, better that we learn His lessons as *sinner*s than as *angels*—better to learn the wonder of the empty sepulchre, the mystery of life in victory or resurrection from the dead, through our own necessities and mercies, than as mere spectators.

Angels may *safely* learn the great things of Christ by sight, as they learn one of them, as we have seen in this chapter. They have no school of conscience to go to, no personal necessities, in the midst of which to discover and gather up the mercies of God. But we cannot learn the same lessons at all (at least, in God's account), if we learn them not in the conscience, through our necessities and our mercies, as interested sinners and not as angel-spectators—as those who know they cannot face eternity but from the lessons which they learn at the empty tomb of Jesus.

The truth that has been from the beginning is learnt there—and that is, the victory of the Son of God for us sinners. Because of this, the blood of old on Noah's altar, and the still earlier lamb of Abel, wrought with God as they did. Because of this, the sprinkled lintel sheltered Israel in the place of death and in the day of judgment. And because of this, through all generations, the faith of sinners has found peace with God. The resurrection from the dead tells us that the seed of the woman, though bruised in the heel, had bruised the enemy's head. It bespeaks the mystery of life in victory, life regained for sinners, the presence of God restored to us in peace and liberty.

Nothing but resurrection *from* the dead could have

done this.* Had not Christ risen, we should be yet in our sins. A resurrection at the last day, again I say, is defeat. Look at it in Rev. xx. It is not worthy to be called a resurrection. It is the guilty one brought up to judgment. But a resurrection like Christ's is victory—and the resurrection of 1 Cor. xv. is such. It is before the last day, at "Christ's coming;" and it is a resurrection *from* the dead, as His was, for it is only "of those that are His."

May we wait for this, dear brethren!

* We may remember the energy of one in the Church of God who, knowing his part in this "resurrection from the dead," sought to know more and more the power of it (see Phil. iii). But we are cold and feeble.

FRAGMENT.

THE Gospel of God's Son is good news: good news of His person: blessed expression! All until the gospel was a *claim upon man*. A claim can never be *good news*. The gospel never alters the claim of God upon man, but maintains it; and shews that all is over with man, because he never can meet that claim. But the gospel brings in the *power of God*: power on behalf of man: not power to *help* man to meet the claim of God upon him. But it reveals the righteousness of God, consequent upon man being altogether without strength. Thus peace flows into the soul, when it ceases from everything else and submits to the revealed righteousness of God, which is upon every one that believeth. While a person is looking for *help*, he is under law, and has *never been in God's presence*. The thought of *help may be held* while a person is looking forward to some future meeting with God; but if I am in the presence of God now, *help* will not do. I am lost. I want now righteousness and pardon: and I want it *now*. And the soul will not have solid peace until it is in the presence of God, righteous and pardoned. The apostle says, "The Gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation, because therein is the righteousness of God revealed." A righteousness which is declared unto all, to Jew and Gentile, yea, to every creature, and which *is upon all them that believe*.

Nº XIII.

1 PETER I. 14—16.

“As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: but as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy.”

But for simple faith in God and the consciousness that the Spirit of God is still guardian in the church, one would not know how or what to speak in these days. If you speak of grace, and dwell upon the fulness and freeness of it, there are so many hearts that will delight in it after a carnal manner, and use it as a cloak for evil; not merely those who do, as Jude says, “turn the grace of our God into *lasciviousness*,” but who will cover over a deep spirit of worldliness, excuse themselves much obedience on the ground of grace. Indeed, this is the prevailing leaven of these days. It is the root of that latitudinarian spirit which is tolerant of many evils and much disobedience. On the other hand, if you speak of holiness of walk, many souls put themselves under legal bondage, which robs them of their joy and peace, or at the best makes them the slaves of their own frames and feelings, or promotes that self-righteous spirit which fills the heart with intolerant pride.

Still the truth must be told; and it will have its fruit in some hearts. In the passage above we see the most touching appeal to the heart of a saint; and these two principles, grace and holiness, exactly in unison. The appeal is not to bondmen or servants, but to children. “As obedient *children*,” and it is from “Him which hath called you.” Grace has brightly shone in these two facts, “He *hath* called us,” and “whom he did foreknow,

he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many *brethren*" (Rom. viii. 29). That is, He hath called us, and has made us *His children*. The appeal is this, seeing He who has thus acted in such grace, and brought us into such relationship, is Himself holy, so should we be holy. And there is grace in this appeal, for He desires that we should be before Him in joy and love; which could not be without holiness. This our God has secured to us in Jesus, "having chosen us *in Him* before the foundation of the world, that we should be *holy and without blame* before Him in love" (Eph. i. 4). But God has *now* separated us unto Himself from an evil world, and from our own evil too, hence the present appeal to be "as *obedient children*." The principle is this, the children should be as the Parent. God is holy; hence His children are to be holy. As holiness is a characteristic of the Father, it should also be a characteristic of the children.

Now, if this principle had more weight in our minds, our chastenings would be found much more fruitful; for surely that soul that longs after holiness will profit more than the careless soul, by the varied chastenings of the Father's hand. "For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but He for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness (Hebrews xii. 10).

Many are apt to contrast grace and holiness, but there can be no *contrast* between any of the attributes of God. All His attributes express Himself, and He is One. Grace, indeed, shines most in this, that we *sinner*s of the *Gentiles* should be *reconciled* unto God, and built up with the Jews a holy temple in the Lord, etc. (see Eph. ii. 11—22; see also same chapter all through, especially verses 4, 7, 10). "Grace reigns through righteousness" (Rom. v. 21).

I am sure of this, if we would serve the Lord, we must be holy. Not in self-righteousness, but "as *obedient children*." As those that wish to be as He is. Every exhortation to His children, and every recognition of them is full of this principle—holiness. As, "To the saints,"

“holy brethren,” “redeemed from all iniquity, to be a peculiar people,” etc.

One could dwell very much upon this important subject; and I trust the Lord may lead our souls more into it. For it is evident, from the Word, and from past experience, that God’s work is accomplished by means of holy and godly people. A true position and clear knowledge of truth will not suffice; holiness is what God looks for. The reason is evident, since to do God’s work he must have the soul walking with himself, in communion with his mind. Witness the contrast between Abraham and Lot.

Let brethren in Christ everywhere look well to this, for there is lack of power: much truth abroad; but it seems to have little power in separating souls from evil. For when we see light spreading, if that “light in them be darkness, how great is that darkness.” There seems to be lack of power for *obedience* to the truth when it is seen. Why is this? 2 Tim. ii. 21 implies there is such a thing as *meetness* for the master’s use. And this is the *meetness* “being purged from these” (vessels of dishonour) *not* having knowledge.

Let us remember this, “the Lord knoweth them that are His; and let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.” I doubt not the Lord is doing a work among souls; and if we would share the rewards of such a work, we must see to it that we are found “in all things *approving* ourselves as the ministers of God.” “As workers together with Him, giving no offence in anything” (see 2 Cor. vi.)

FRAGMENT.

LEADING HEADS OF PSALMS.

Psalms i. ii.—The righteous man flourisheth; and the Lord of the inheritance set up. The order is blessed: first, righteousness established in Him who was separate from sinners; then the men of the earth set against the Just One; but His triumph in resurrection, and the inheritance given to Him, and given by Him to those who overcome in and by him. See Rev. ii. 26–27. Compare John xvii. 22.

N^o XIV.NOTES ON THE PRAYERS IN PAUL'S
EPISTLES.

IN the Epistles of the Apostle Paul we may find five prayers for the saints, which follow in remarkable order.

1. In Ephes. i. 15—23: Fundamental principles of truth are shown.

2. In Ephes. iii. 14—21: The family relationship, knowing the love of Christ.

3. In Phil. i. 9—11: Practical walk and blessing.

4. In Col. i. 9—14: A present deliverance and redemption.

5. 2 Thess. i. 11, 12: Counted *worthy to suffer*.

We thus perceive a beautiful succession in these prayers.

EPHES. I. 15—23. FIRST PRAYER.

17. "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him." The soul is here led into immediate association with His glory present and future. "The Father of glory." We being now *united* with Him in glory, having been already *quickened*: yet how few are alive to all this!

18. "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints."

Wisdom, revelation, and understanding, connected with knowledge, are needed, in order to enter into all this. The Ephesians were addressed as in a lower standing than the Thessalonians. They were "*in God the Father*." But here it is that "the Father of glory may give," etc. Paul asks these two things, wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, that they may be

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enlightened to comprehend not merely the God of Christ, but of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, thus blending the two; and know “the hope of his calling”: this does not mean our salvation, but our association with God. All that the Lord inherits now is the saints. What power we should have, if we realized that we are “*His inheritance*”!

19, 20. “And what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised him from the dead, and set him at His own right hand in the heavenly places.”

Here we find another step—resurrection; but peculiarly with reference to a present thing: the present power of God put forth not merely in quickening, but in raising up, and seating in heavenly places: the same mighty resurrection-power which raised His Son is now exercised to lift up our souls to Himself. But man is so utterly dead, that who can realize thus being set so far above!

21. “Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.”

Paul here is tracing Him from higher to lesser glory. How ought such a view as this to lead us to a true estimate of forms and ordinances down here. What have *we* to do with such?

22, 23. “And hath put all things under His feet, and gave him to be the Head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.”

The glory which fills the church as an empty vessel—
“the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.”

EPHES. III. 14—21. SECOND PRAYER.

14—16. “I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man.”

A prayer in association with the Father. Remark

here, a distinction between this and the previous prayer i. 3, 17, "The God and Father," etc. Here it is "the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," shewing a distinct realization of Christian association with the family.

17—19. "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God."

Every day we need to learn more of this height and depth of love. In the first prayer, the apostle's desire is that we may know the position of the church as so set in the heavenlies; for the more we know of God's glory, the more we are fitted to understand His love who brought us into such a place. Therefore this wondrous mystery had been hidden so long because the church was not prepared to receive it until now;— "*Strengthened with might by His Spirit*" that they "might be filled with all the fulness of God." He first prays that they may *know* what the church is, and then that they may practically learn this, and enter into it. In the first prayer, he asks that they may have the knowledge of God; in this prayer, that they may know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge. We may find here a sevenfold blessing supplicated, closing with asking that we might be "filled with all the fulness of God," beyond this the apostle cannot go, therefore he casts us on Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think (20, 21): and who will have glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

PHILIP. I. 9—11. THIRD PRAYER.

"And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; that ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ; being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God."

Paul here prays for practical blessing, that their love

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may *abound*, and that they may be filled with the *fruits* of righteousness.

First, he prayed that they might have the knowledge of the Father; secondly, that they might know the love of Christ, and here that their love may abound. Beautiful order in all this, in accordance with the character of each Epistle. The one to the Ephesians is addressed to them as revealing their position, and the love of Christ in bringing them into that high place. Here it is from servants to servants,—and that they may act like Christ the perfect servant. See Paul's service in chap. i., Christ's service in chap. ii.; also the service of Timothy; and that of the Philippians, who were not only standing in the same blessing and grace as the Ephesians, but they had "fellowship in the gospel" unitedly seeking God's glory. We ought to watch opportunities for serving one another and for fellowship. What a depth of joy there is in Christian fellowship—in realized union—we ought to seek to cultivate this.

"Love" abounding "in knowledge" should be in the intelligence of the mind of God. Our love may not be true, because not in consistency with God's love. God always punishes a fault, and never passes it over: I might exhibit false love to a saint, and do away with God's discipline.

Paul prays that their love may be of such a high character, because they were in such a high place that he could thank God upon every remembrance of them (ver. 3).

We should ever be willing to receive any chastisement of our Father. "Thou wast a God that forgavest them, though thou tookest vengeance of their inventions" (Ps. xcix. 8).

Suppose we are acting in any way contrary to God, He punishes but forgives (see David, etc.) We ought to love as God loves, "in all judgment," that is true love. "By this we know" that we love the children of God, when we "love God" and "keep His commandments"; but we must never *go on in evil* with our brethren. God's love is a perfect love; and our love to one another should be like His.

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10. "That ye may approve things that are excellent." A quick sight and sense to take up what is excellent—a fine sense of spiritual discernment.

Refinement of spiritual sense is alone known by that heart who is walking *with* and *in* the Lord.

In passing through a world of evil, we ought to *touch* only those "things that are excellent," and thus seek to "walk worthy" and "without offence." "That ye may be sincere"—we fail most here; it is the last thing we attain: we are made up of deceit to God and to man.

Look back at a past day, and see what failure. But let there be full acknowledgment and confession, and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin; but there must be a true and hearty desire to turn away from every thing that is insincere, that we may be "without offence till the day of Christ." We should earnestly seek to be no stumbling-block to others, causing no scandal, but exhibit Christ in our walk. If we thus closely tested our hearts, blessing would surely follow.

"Abound" in love,—approve things excellent, and be sincere and without offence till the Lord's return. Every thing we do *now* should be with reference to *that* day when we shall be acknowledged openly by Him, and all so done will be *gain* to us as done to the Lord, and will have a future reward; all will be loss if we are walking in the flesh.

11. "Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God." Marvellous words! What condemnation to each—how are our *fruits* manifested? Are any of us *filled* with the fruits of righteousness? A few may shew forth a little fruit here and there; but no words can express more fulness even to excess than these. All fruit will be to the praise of God's glory and that *by us*! He gets glory *by us*! Oh, who would not desire to give it to Him? Every act goes back to Him and He remembers all! First, abound in love; second, approve things that are excellent; third, be filled with fruits to the glory and praise of God.

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COLOSS. I. 9—14. FOURTH PRAYER.

The various characters of these prayers are founded on what the apostle had heard of their condition (ver. 3, 4, 8); they had faith and love to all the saints in the Spirit: this was not mere natural affection. What we see of Christ in each other that alone will stand.

Here he prays "that ye might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and long suffering with joyfulness; giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son: in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins." Paul asks that the Colossians may be strengthened with all might, and "filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding"—wise in spiritual applications. Many gather up much of God's word and wisdom, etc., and yet have not spiritual intelligence and comprehensiveness.

He first prays that they may be filled with the knowledge of His will; and then follows the exhortation to walk worthy: the will being known, then comes the walk "worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing"; and then being fruitful in *every* good work, going on increasing in the knowledge of God. *Know* and then *act*. Lastly, he prays that they may be strengthened unto all patience and long suffering with joyfulness, and give thanks for being made fit for the inheritance of the saints in light, as also for being delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of Christ.

All this is shewn to be a present thing—secure—"hath delivered from the power of darkness," "hath translated us into the kingdom," etc., "have redemption," etc.

If, in suffering, we contemplate the greatness of the

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inheritance, the trial sinks into insignificance. Let us note the remarkable order in which these prayers follow each other.

2 THESSALONIANS I. 11, 12. FIFTH PRAYER.

“Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of His goodness, and the work of faith with power: that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

This church was in the highest standing; therefore we find a deeper order of truth in this prayer, and a closer application. “We are bound to thank God always for you—your faith groweth exceedingly—charity aboundeth,” etc. Paul entreats for the Colossians, that they might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, giving thanks for the love manifested by them; but here he asks, that “God would count them *worthy* of this calling.” How? By putting *suffering* on them—such honour!

They had received the word in much affliction at the first (1 Thess. i. 6), and now Paul says, “we glory in you in the churches of God,” for your patience in “persecution (4, 5) and tribulation that ye endure,” “counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer.” Like old John Bradford, thanking God at the stake for the honour of suffering for Him.

The Thessalonians were “in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ”; then note their conduct, “faith groweth exceedingly,” and charity aboundeth, patience in persecution, thus “counted worthy” to suffer (see 1—5). But, alas! how little our hearts estimate this honour.

The Galatians and Hebrews were not fit for this; but the Thessalonians had evidenced a *true* testimony (ver. 10); and in the second chapter, Paul can say, “we are bound to give thanks always to God for you.” Therefore they were to rejoice that they were counted worthy of this calling, knowing that “the Lord is faithful to stablish and keep” them.

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Paul desires that they may not only be counted worthy to suffer, but "fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness and the work of faith with power" (ver. 11). That is the power of faith in endurance; "the good pleasure of his goodness," that the name of the Lord may be glorified; your sufferings to minister to His glory! Marvellous place to put the creature in! "*Ye in Him.*"

Works failed to glorify Him in creation (see Rom. i.), so that the only way God gets glory is in the walk, and ways, and sufferings of His people!

E. F.

FRAGMENT.

LEADING HEADS OF PSALM III.

The power of faith in suffering in righteousness, communion unhindered by it—trial in the flesh, but joy in the Lord.—This the circumstances of the righteous man who would not walk in the way of the ungodly, therefore they rose up against Him, but His delight was in the law of the Lord and the Lord was with Him, all help in Him and in Him alone, and this prevailing over all the power of the enemy.—This was realized in Christ when in weakness in the flesh—and such the leading of His Spirit in those that are His, in like circumstances.

AND OF PSALM V.

Verse 1 to 3.—Engagement with the Lord above, when in circumstances in the earth below—this realized in Jesus Christ the righteous—and in those in such circumstances under the leading of the Spirit of Christ.

Verse 4 to end.—Expression of righteousness unto the Lord concerning those that are in the earth, in the power of holy separation of heart, in engagement and delight in the ways of the Lord.

N^o. XV.NOTES ON THE SONGS OF PRAISE IN
THE OLD TESTAMENT.

THERE are found in the Old Testament seven songs which may be studied for the profit and comfort of our souls.

Exod. xv. is a song of triumph. 1. "Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea."

Our souls, in the position in which we stand as one with Christ, ought to know the full meaning of this song. We ought to triumph like Israel at the Red Sea; our enemies dead, all conquered by Jesus; ourselves brought out of Egypt; and though still we have conflict, yet we ought to realize that we have victory in Christ; we are dead and risen in Him; the Cross has vanquished all our enemies.

God brought Israel into this place in the wilderness, and there were no murmurings then. We are brought into the wilderness to glorify God. Each may have sorrows and trials, and why is this? That God may meet us in every circumstance, and that we may triumph in God. Remember these things, "are written for our admonition on whom the ends of the world are come." If God gave Israel such a redemption as we find in the close of chap. xiv. 29, 30. What cannot we do? We can

do all things; the Cross shews this. *Expect* all help from God in every varied circumstance, and there will be no depression of soul then. If in affliction, trial, poverty, sickness, etc.; the heart turns away from God, we fail; and then real sorrow comes in; but if God is there, we have no trouble, for He triumphs over all our enemies.

We find the second song in Numbers xxi. 16, 17, "And from thence they went to Beer; that is the well whereof the Lord spake unto Moses, Gather the people together, and I will give them water. Then Israel sang this song, Spring up, O well, sing ye unto it."

Our well is Jesus, "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. ii. 3).

The Lord spake to Moses of this well, and he gathered the people together; they counted on the water bubbling up, and they sang. Israel needed another song in the wilderness, and a well in a land of drought; it springs up and draws out praise. The Lord tries the heart; is it Jesus who is looked to, or are you trusting to anything else? This is a most simple song. Let each ask, am I gathering to the *well*? a well of living water springing up to everlasting life! As you sing praises, it will bubble up.

The third song is in Deut xxxii., Moses spake this song to all the congregation of Israel, "Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain," etc., and why? "*Because* I will publish the name of the Lord." Here we have a song of triumph, on the ground of what GOD *is*, and not on what *we* are (vers. 1—4). "He is the rock" and "His work is perfect;" but then see ver. 5, "They have corrupted themselves, their spot is not the spot of His children," etc. Man is corrupt, but in God we triumph.

The fourth song is seen in Judges v., Deborah's song of praise to the Lord for avenging Israel.

Vers. 1, 2, present victory. We ought to be present victors; we each have our enemies; and we ought to come together as victors over them. The Lord hath avenged us. But do we do so? Alas! we often fall

before them; the flesh, the world, Satan, are not under our feet. Can we say with Deborah, in ver. 21, "O my soul, thou hast trodden down strength?" We ought practically to feel this constant struggle and constant triumph; that the flesh has been subdued, the world overcome, and Satan trampled under our feet. So many mouths are shut because there is no conquest in God's strength.

The fifth song is found in 1 Sam. ii.. Hannah's triumph in God because He brought life out of death—resurrection. In the first chapter she is mourning over her barrenness—God gave her a child—life out of death—"The barren hath borne seven"—"The Lord maketh poor and maketh rich—He bringeth low and lifteth up—He raiseth up the poor out of the dust to set them among princes" (vers. 5—8). The song in Exodus xv. places us in the wilderness—here we are lifted into resurrection—taken from the wilderness, "to make them inherit the throne of glory."

Each song brings out a new character of praise. May you thus rejoice and get near to God each for yourselves. This is a day of abounding evil; each must live with God, and walk in integrity of heart bearing fruit to His glory.

The sixth song is in 2 Sam. xxii., David's closing scene. He had sinned, but he had gone back to God. His deep affliction was the result of his sin, and not merely on account of Saul. God delivered him from all his enemies. Have you declined from God? He is a God of grace—go back to Him, and He will give you victory over all your enemies. This song connects with the latter days—a song of hope. This is a song for us.

The seventh song is emphatically called "the Song of Songs, which is Solomon's." This is the most precious of all, because it speaks of nothing but love; the others of judgment, deliverance, victory, and triumph; but here it is pure perfect love; and it is not merely the beauty of the Bridegroom that is seen, but also of His Bride. He looks on her with eyes of love, all fair, no spot.

If we took God's estimate of the church, as seen in His Son and one with Him, would not that make the heart rejoice? If we could only see *His* delight in *us*, then we should be able to go forth in the spirit of this song.

E.F.

Church of God! as faithful watchmen,
 Let our beacons broadly blaze;
 Sure of conquest with our Captain,
 On our foes we'll fearless gaze.
 Present victors—present victors!
 Shouts of triumph let us raise.

O may we, as faithful brethren,
 Mourn the wide-spread ruin round;
 Sigh o'er all our sad condition,
 While we still maintain our ground.
 Present victors—present victors!
 Ever in our Conqueror found.

O may we, a faithful priesthood,
 Love and truth together blend—
 With "fresh oil" each day anointed,
 For our "holy faith" contend—
 Present victors—present victors!
 Strong in our Almighty Friend.

O may we, the bride of Jesus,
 Spotless, lovely, sanctified—
 For His joyful advent waiting,
 In His power and love "abide"—
 Present victors—present victors!
 We *shall* soon be glorified.¹

¹ Written in reference to the foregoing songs.

Nº XVI.

PROPHECY—NO SALVATION FOR THOSE
NOT INTERESTED IN IT.

I USE the term *prophecy* here in its widest and most popular sense, as being equivalent to prediction given by God—or the communication by God to man of the knowledge of events long before they take place.*

My statement is plain and distinct; and if it seem hardy, yet it is correct: no prediction—no salvation; no interest in divine prediction—no salvation for an individual.

My statement is two-fold:—1st. That the salvation provided by God is inseparable from prediction; take away the prediction and itself is gone; 2ndly. That individual participation by this or that person in the salvation is inseparable from the interest of the same individual in the prediction; to have no interest in the prediction is to have no interest in the salvation. A most important

* The light of divine prediction in the Old Testament, as it is called, throws into light things of and to be upon this earth; the thread of whose history winds ever around the family of Abraham—the Jews—as its centre, and Jesus their king; the light of divine prediction in the New Testament throws into light what will be in heaven—the Lord Jesus, and the church as His body, is its thesis. Perhaps another remark may be made, suggestively, well here, viz., as to *the earth*, the things to come have no existence there as yet, IN FACT; as to those of heaven, they all exist there in germ in Christ, who is there already. This gives a stringency to the use of the word *prophecy* when applied to the things of the earth, which it has not when applied to things in the heavens. Jerusalem and its circuit of blessing and glory *is not*; no trace, no root of blessing can be found *in* the land. Its King must come from a far land to bring its blessing. On the other hand—though in the heaven of heavens, and not in those heavenly places where the church's glory is to be—He is in heaven; and because He lives we live also; we are in Him that is there—accepted (or graced) in the Beloved—hidden in Christ in God.

difference, however, as we shall see, exists between salvation as proclaimed for earth, and salvation as preached for a heavenly people.

If this position is tenable, it gives a wholesale value to prophecy which is immeasurably more weighty, more important, and more calculated to arrest the soul's attention than the proofs in detail from Scripture,—justly interesting and all-important in their place as these are—which shew us that all the details of practical conformity in life and walk of both the former people of God, and of the disciple to His master, are, in one place or the other, connected with hope and with promises. These may not, cannot be neglected—they speak most clearly the faithful love of our Lord on high, who in His word has applied to our hearts, minds, and consciences, things yet to come in detail; but that which gives even to this truth its fullest weight and importance, is its connection with the other: that is, that Christ, by His Spirit, applies in detail from the Word, items of what has been a grand principle of God in His own plan of redemption.

When sin had entered, and man was under its power, and estranged from God in heart and mind, God declared to Satan, “The seed of the woman shall bruise thy head.” This was not a promise given to man; it was a prediction as to Immanuel, the light of which, as so given, fell on things as they were around the scene then present, and so was *prophecy* in the stringent sense of the word: yet, as we know from the light of 1 Cor. xv., Col. i., Rev. xix. and xx., it had to do with One who had other scenes and other places to cleanse than those of earth alone. “The seed of the woman shall bruise thy head”—we have here a prediction most explicit—a sure word of God, who cannot lie, and who is able to make good His word—and this word was the sole basis for faith to fallen man. Has God said, that the seed of her who was beguiled and was first in error shall destroy the head of her betrayer?—then to God sinful man may yet look up. Self-betrayed and ruined, man need not be the prey of Satan; a Deliverer is predicted; in Him that has predicted, man may rest; and if he rests, there he must hope. This

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first ray of redeeming love, this first dawning of the compassion and mercy of God in Christ was so given as to guard every point that needed guarding. It was an open declaration of war by God against Satan; it declared how, through Divine power and wisdom, the wicked one should eat of the fruit of his own doings, and have his power annulled by the seed of his captive; it made good the claim, in word at least, that the world thus betrayed to Satan belonged to another; it condemned man's sin, while it showed out his position, and silently put forth the truth, just despised, that a creature's blessing is inseparable from obedience to *the Word* of the Creator. Man's tenure of Eden was in obedience in not touching a tree; to fallen man what ray of light, repose, or hope, save in this declaration; he that received it as the true and sure word of God would find it more mighty than the woe and ruin of sin and the power of him whose head was to be crushed by the seed of the woman. This avowed *intention of God for the future*, was his mode of giving both repose and hope to the sinner. If Adam rejected *this intention of God for the future*, he had no rest, no hope; if he received it, he virtually took the place of a fallen creature, but of a fallen creature who, having despised his Creator's word, when subjection, easy enough, was the security for continuance of enjoyment, had now, amid ruin, to receive that which every testimony around and within seemed to declare to be impossible, and which, moreover, involved in it the declaration that there were higher and deeper glories in God than those displayed in creation, or which he could find out. Implicit, blind reception of, and submission to, the divine word, with a "Let God be true and all else liars," was fallen man's sole ground of blessing; and it put man into his proper place; it made him not the end, centre, or object of the blessing; but another, even Christ, and man, got rest, repose, and hope by-the-bye. God's display of Himself in the annulling of the power of Satan by the seed of the woman involved, indirectly, what a humbled heart, and it alone, could rest upon.

I call attention to the fact, that God kept fully His

place of God; and that the counsel and plan were His and His alone; *why* he chose to let the rays of the light of redemption in, in one way more than another, is madness and folly to ask, if the question proceed from sense and reason in an unreconciled sinner: if from humble enquiry, as of one that has tasted that the Lord is gracious, it is a question well put by a worshipful spirit and heart, and has its answer most abundantly in many parts of the Word. But *the fact* that such was the way chosen—which is admitted and established by the question being put (in any spirit, good or bad)—and not the answer to the question is my theme. The declaration, “the seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent” was a testimony of *some one to come*, not as yet revealed there; the essence of whose virtue was not present in root even in the woman, as we well know. Analyse the declaration, and you will find it contains the description of that, of which there was not one element present in Eve; the germ, nor the power to germinate, was not in her, but in another; the range of whose power, as there looked at, was, for the scene there present—earth: and it was prophecy. The Word of God may try man as well as bless him: if it does so, it shows that there is nothing in him but sin; it finds nothing in him that it can approve save the need in the midst of which, however great, it can display its creative power—the fulness which is in God and of God. This trying of man was one great object of the law in the Old Testament; it proposed to man fallen a blessing, upon condition of an obedience which supposed him to be unfallen; and it thus discovered and made manifest the self-ignorance and pride of man’s heart; for man, instead of crying “Woe is me!” when he thinks of the law, finds in it (not his own condemnation before God but) a means for him to condemn others—a distinctive privilege of light when used out of God’s presence. The sinner can condemn another sinner for the sin he himself commits, and even, as did the Jews, condemn him who had not sinned, but kept the law, because, in his zeal for Him that gave the law, he showed mercy on the Sabbath, and so disturbed the self-gratulatory conceit of

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the Jew, who would bind down "rest," to cessation from all that was not needful for every-day profit in a world of sin. And yet, while the heart of a Gentile (to whom law was never given of God, and who, if under law, is self placed there), can glory in Law and self-righteousness out of God's presence—nor Jew nor Gentile, so exercising themselves, ever thought of what Paul says, that all such glorying is outside of God's presence. For when man, in receiving the Law, found himself in that presence, even Moses said, "I do exceedingly fear and tremble;" and Israel begged that God might not come near to them after that manner again.

But so far as God's mode of acting and displaying truth is concerned, man has been tried and *been measured*: under the Law's reign, the only One that kept it was murdered—murdered by Jews, who vaunting themselves in the Law, were too proud to have any association with the dogs of the Gentiles, save to murder the Prince of Life—murdered by the Gentiles, who (despising both Law and Lawgiver), in the pride of their darkened hearts, lent their power to the rebel Jew against the Son of Him who, because the Jew had rebelled, had transferred to the Gentiles the power of government in the world, taking it away from the Jew. Man had measured himself herein; and, more than that, had produced, in the Cross and death of Christ, a measure of what man was, altogether new in kind, and as perfect in the application of details as it was infinite in principle; because it applied itself not as the Law to things done merely, but to spirit, and thought, and affection in man; and because it brought the infinite God, and that too in the character of a merciful and compassionate though despised Saviour, close to man, to man fallen and ruined yet a rebel against mercy and love.

There is but one Name given under heaven among men wherein is salvation—but one Saviour. Yet, since His coming into the world, since that God has been manifest in the flesh and rejected, there are differences to be noticed in the statements of grace from those which went before. Then an earth was to be blessed; and the testimony flowed forth of what He that *was to come* would

be and do; the Law, in the meanwhile, while it was a Law given to measure, as to Israel, the Blessor that was to come in His character as man and Jew, necessarily passed every other Jew through the crucible, and found him wanting. When it had found Him whom it described—Himself (who had fuller virtues and glories than it could paint) took His own place—and it was of Him that God gave witness once and again:—“This is my Beloved Son in whom I am well pleased;” and not only did God thus testify to Him before man, but in the stream of mercies addressed to man in ruin, under the wages of sin, He gave a testimony which left man’s selfishness without excuse, if not won by it. The sightless eye that regained its power of using light—the deaf ear that opened afresh the channel to the inner man—the sick—the hungry and needy—the dead—the devil-possessed—which were as brands plucked from amid the destroying influences of sin, were all, and that in fallen man’s circumstances, testimonies from God to the heart of man, as to the person of His Son. But, as there was no room for Him in the inn when born, but the ox’s or the ass’s manger was His crib; so was there no place for Him in man’s heart—no place on earth fit for Him, according to man (the Jews being empaneled jury, and the Gentiles being judge), save the Cross. The most that love could give Him was seen in John at the Cross; and, after that, in the costly tomb and burial of Joseph of Arimathea, where the world lost sight of Him; but shewed, alas! afterwards, that it willed to lose sight of Him. God having presented the One who was the subject of His testimony, the Centre, as the Beginner and Ender of all His ways, does not now speak of Him; He cannot speak of Him (He being in heaven on the throne where the Father is), as One *that is to come*; neither, when He proclaimed *our* gospel, could it be said that in the scene there present there was no element, no root, no germ, no power of germinating existing there. All, and more than all, this is in Him, the Lamb that has been slain, but is alive again for evermore; in Jesus our Lord and our God—all is there; and what is more, the blessing proclaimed in our hearing (if it has fruits

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and a harvesting yet to come), is *present* and *positive*—eternal life *in* the Son—that in Him is the fountain of life; and that it forms, and fills, and feeds the church. One Spirit with the Lord. “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?” The testimony is about the seed still, as at first; but it is the declaration with delight of what the Father finds present with Himself in heaven on His throne, for Himself as Father and the God of heaven. I in the Father and He in me—Christ Head of His body the church.

In this view, the gospel, our gospel, is neither prophecy nor even prediction; it is the declaration of a certain counsel of God, and of certain thoughts of His mind, which are *not to come*, but are realised; for Christ is in heaven, and we know Him—are in Him; God, even the Father, has placed Him at His right hand; and the Holy Ghost has come down and made efficacious the testimony of the divine thoughts, not only as to the resurrection, but also as to the glorification of the Son of Man upon the Father’s throne. And be it remarked, that the Son of Man upon the Father’s throne is altogether extra-dispensational. It was a secret hidden from ages, even as He is also personally hidden there, and the church is hidden in Him. Being there, He is not the Blessor of Israel, or of the prophetic earth, or of the nations that lie outside; to all these He is as a certain Jesus that was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive. Neither does He fill the heavenlies: the place where our developed glory is to be. No; He is most anomalously placed—where He alone of man ever can be; where alone He can exercise actively none of the offices which pertain to the earth (though all are in Him and recognised as in Him, for all power in heaven and on earth has been recognised as His); a place where He makes good all for the heavenlies and the earthlies; a place where He prepares now a people for the heavenlies, and is personally all to them in the wilderness, a place He must quit ere He can enter into possession of the heavenly place, which will be His abode when He begins to act for the earth. When the Lord left the grave ere He formally and normally took His place on high in the

glory which, as Son of God, He had with the Father before the world was, two things are to be noticed:—1st. He tarried here long enough in the earthly places to look around upon Jerusalem and the scenes given for a time into the enemy's hand; and this while in love He lingered forty days, and was seen among His own from time to time: and, 2ndly. He *passed through* the heavenlies (Heb. iv. 14, *διεληλυθότα τοὺς οὐρανοῦς*), and saw the places now scenes of conflict to them that have faith, and of Satan's presence, but where He *will* display His glory for the church when He quits the Father's throne. Our blessing is *to be displayed* in the heavenlies; but it is too full to be measured by them; and the existence of it and its display are separable. The church is in Him, who is Head of His body, the church, and those to whom He and the Father's thoughts are revealed are in Him—they are blessed, and they have the blessing.

In saying this, it may seem that I abandon in measure, my position taken at the commencement of this paper; but not so. They that think so have not, perhaps, weighed fully the distinctive peculiarity of our blessing; or the difference between *being* and *having*. Our blessing is this, we are blessed in and with the Blessor. It would be false to say that Christ is not now as fully blessed, and as sensibly blessed, in separation from all trouble and in possession of as positive blessing as He ever will be. Well, we are in Him; as He is, so are we though in this world; and in Him we are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heaven in Him. That the savour of His joy is NOW more manifested in connection with His Father's presence as such, and pleasure, as HEREAFTER it will be characterised and designated rather by His being manifested as the living link between the Lord God Almighty in government, worship, and blessing, and all in heaven and earth, through His church, is true. But what we *are* in Him, we are, as much as we ever shall be; and, more than this, it is the higher and better portion. What would all the glory to come be to me if I could have it without Christ, and without being in Christ? NOUGHT; but if one say, "What is it to be one with Christ and in Christ, if I

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have not the glory?" My answer is, *It is everything.* The goods get all their savour from the company, and as expression of the communion; but the communion, the fellowship, is *the ONE* all-important expression of the Father's love, of the Son's joy—of a Bridegroom's heart, of his bride's response. But not only so: for as thus partakers of the divine nature, the heart, satisfied with divine grace and love, all shines; the desert where we are, all things are of Him who hath reconciled us to Himself; and the anticipation of glory is unselfishly tasted as the expression of His unselfish love, which will have the church to be seen loved as He is loved and displayed in the glory given unto Him. But, further, while we are already blessed in Him, and while our gospel is rather the revelation of the secret delight of the Father in the Son, and of what He sees in Him as Son of Man, Head of His body, the church, the reception of the blessing by faith is absolutely and entirely inseparable from the reception of the Spirit, who is the seal and earnest, not of our getting a blessing hereafter in Him, as though we had none yet, but of the inheritance of which He will take possession when He leaves the bright place of His present rest, to take up the position of King of kings and Lord of lords for the earth; and of the Lamb, united openly with the Lord God Almighty in the throne, in worship, in light, and in active blessing; when the people now blessed shall be shown in glory. If in our gospel the blessing is all in Him where He is; and it is participation with the Blessor, and fellowship in Him in the delight which is in God over His purity and perfect righteousness (in the liberty of which His every office and even position as Son of Man is sustained), this is ours already in Him; but it is ours, not according to the flesh or world around us, but as exclusively according to the Spirit of life and the Holy Spirit, as these things are exclusively in heaven and not at all upon earth. And until the Spirit ceases to be the seal and earnest of the inheritance, or until faith in the Lord and the presence of the Spirit can be separated, he that has faith as necessarily looks forward in hope for glory to be revealed in the heavens, and then in the earth, as he

knows certainly that the blessing of being one with Christ is his already, and is immeasurably beyond the having in possession the glory to come.

As to *prophecy* for the earth—the salvation was connected, and still is, with One that is to come to deliver it from its thralldom. As to us the blessing is found; it is in the Deliverer; but placed where He is, no one ever knew Him, as being known of Him, save through faith and by the Spirit: who, if he be a witness to Jesus, as a Giver of life, is here—and makes it known to those in whom he works, that He is here—until the glory is ready for Him to whom and for those in whom He testifies.

However feeble my statement be, I present it; let them that are Spiritual discern as to it, as well as to all else in the presence of the Lord, and according to the sure word of His written standard.

By the Law, God measured man; in the Gospel, He presented the measure of Himself in grace. In the former, the trial was twofold: of man fallen and of the Son of Man, as under the law perfect, before Jew and Gentile, as man perfect; the fruit of whose perfection will fill the scene of His then trial with every blessing it can contain, which He will divide, yea, to the rebellious also. In the latter, have we not also two things, as it were, measured? 1st. The Father's estimate of the Son of Man, as placed upon His throne; and 2ndly. Of the Son in all glory in the majesty of the highest, as in Hebrews. According to which He will fill:—first, the Father's house with an adopted family; and, secondly, the heavenly places with a new glory, the glory of the court, whence He will fill earth with divine blessing fitted for it, while Himself has there the bride of His love—and is the central living link to unite all in blessing.

N^o XVII.

CONNEXION OF THE CROSS WITH THE
ENTIRE DEVELOPMENT OF GOD'S WAYS
WITH MAN.

WHATEVER brings out the perfectness of the blessed Lord's work, and the way in which it is adapted to the whole moral condition of man, while glorifying God in respect of that condition, and thus bringing man into association with God's glory—whatever shews the connection of the sacrifice of the cross with the entire development of God's ways with man, confirms the faith of the saint, and enables him to admire the wisdom of God with increased intelligence and a deeper spirit of adoration. I send you, therefore, a few, I trust, plain thoughts, as to the way the cross bears on the previous history of man, the manner in which it is linked up with it all, in connection with some of the statements of Gal. iii., as to the order in which law and promise came. In the first place, to say nothing of the eternal counsels of God, or of the promise of eternal life, given *us* in Christ Jesus before the world was (precious as the consideration of it is as founding our hopes on the sure thoughts of God Himself) we have, from the outset, when sin had entered, the blessing and the deliverance established in Christ the second Adam, not in any promise to the first. "The seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head." The seed of the woman was the second Adam, and as is evident not the first. The first is quite passed by. Man, the first Adam, was neither righteous nor holy. He was innocent, which excludes both righteousness and holiness. He had not the knowledge of good and evil. Righteousness discriminates between good and evil in the relationship in which we stand towards others, whether God or the creature, and acts in the sense of responsibility according to the claim which such relationships have on us. Holiness hates

promise—law, raising the question of man's righteousness (law broken and promise despised)—Christ's death (sin put away, the law's curse removed, conscience purged, righteousness divinely wrought out), and then risen as the head of a new race in the power of the Spirit and eternal life—the promises enjoyed according to the divine counsels and divine righteousness; Christ being Himself the heir, after the pattern of the offered and risen Isaac, and believers in Him cleansed from sin and divinely righteous, by that which was wrought before they were grafted in Him, after the power of a new life and in the energy of the Holy Ghost.

FRAGMENT.

LEADING HEADS OF PSALMS.

PSALM vii.—In the sufferings of Christ, in the day of His humiliation, He looked up unto Him that was able to save Him from death. No delivering power was sought in the earth; but He cried unto God against its oppressive power; and here is the patience and faith of the saints.

Righteousness and grace had no restraining power, when presented in all their blessedness in the person of Christ; nor have they on evil men, when found by His Spirit, in His saints. They rather provoked evil nature, and drew out its enmity; but the righteous makes his complaint unto God, in patient endurance.

While in the earth, righteousness was rejected in Christ; He looked up, and now a new thing is seen. The enemies are cast down; the name of the Lord is honoured; and the congregation of the peoples compass Him about; and such intelligence of blessed victory given to the saints in Christ, led by His Spirit, as the truth is in Him. Such the just living by faith.

And now the end of all is seen; the wicked perishing in his own pit, and the righteous praising the Lord Most High.

N^o. XVIII.WANT OF SYMPATHY IN BELIEVERS
TOWARDS THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

IF I am not deceived in my judgment, and if I have not mistaken the statements of the Divine Word, there is such a thing, and there *ought to be*, as sympathy between the members of the body of Christ and Christ Himself, who is the Head of His body, the church.

But that there is a great deficiency of that sympathy on the part of the children of God, I am compelled to believe; and on that subject I now write. I speak plainly, and I speak from conviction, when I say, that there is a sad lack of sympathy, not of Christ towards His people, who are the members of His body, but of His people, who ought to be here in every thing the servants of His glory, towards Christ Himself. The affections of *His* heart, and the thoughts of *His* mind, do not rise as they ought, through Him to God, from hearts and minds that are satisfied with His abundant grace, though the wilderness be still their present path.

What I demand, then, on behalf of the Lord Jesus, is, that those who are His, take an interest in all that is His! His love is worthy of it; and of all our various privileges, that is the most precious which makes it an impossible thing for us to separate between ourselves—worthless as we are—and Him the Heir and Lord of every glory. For we cannot, and we know we cannot, divorce ourselves from association with Him in His honour, His affections, and all the deep and gracious thoughts of His heart.

Hence it is, that all which does not honour Him, is an affliction to those that love Him; and all that honours Him is a joy to their hearts. For, being the members of His body, that which sets aside His word is against their

testimony; and all that grieves His Holy Spirit tries and afflicts them. Yes, if we love Him who first loved us, if we are members of His body—and He that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit with Him—may God vouchsafe grace to give proof of our love to Him, and of our oneness in life with Him!

There are three things which are sometimes blessedly united together; but which, in the present case, must be distinguished. 1. There is in Christ Jesus the testimony of the grace of God towards poor sinners; 2. There is in Him the blessedness which belongs to us who believe in His name; 3. There are the experiences which, as being already saved, we have here below in the wilderness.

1. How blessed a thing it is for us that the work, by which God has made the light of His nature to dawn in our hearts, and by which His compassion and His mercy become so known to the poor sinner, that he not only *may*, but is bound to, draw near to God, is finished! That Christ, being risen from the dead and sat down at the right hand of God, all the light of the beauty of the character of God shines down upon the world! And if indeed the darkness comprehends it not, still the light which shines in darkness is always the light of the glory of the gospel of Christ, who is the image of God (2 Cor. iv. 4), the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (ver. 6, and Heb. ii. 9). In spite of all the darkness, in the midst of which the light shines here below, it is still the light of life, which the love of God has caused to shine, and is the answer to every question and to every need of the poor sinner who seeks God. In it *God* finds His rest; *Christ* is satisfied with the same; and the Spirit of God gives us to find there the true foundation for eternity for our souls. It is the answer, perfect and satisfactory, to all that Satan, or the world, or the flesh, can object against us; because it has met the requirements of an ever holy God, and is the fitting basis of His mercy, and foundation of His throne as the Throne of Grace.

That a poor sinner, who is a child of wrath, and under the power of the prince of darkness, should take an interest in God is clearly impossible; and if he thinks to

do anything for God, the thought can proceed only from pride of heart; for, until he has received Christ Jesus and salvation by Him he has no knowledge of the true God. The God of his imagination is I will not say what; but the word of God tells us, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent" (John xvii. 3); and this is enough to set aside the thought. Not having found the door (John x.), the proper business of the poor sinner is to seek and to find it; and not to pretend to do anything which is an expression of gratitude toward one whom he despises even by being ignorant of Him. From such a one sympathy cannot be required nor received.

2. But it is quite another thing as to those who have received the word of which Peter speaks (1 Pet. i. 23 and 25), who are "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. . . . But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the Gospel is preached unto you." They walk in the way, and they find not only a most entire deliverance from all that was against them; whether in God or in themselves, or in their circumstances; but, walking in the way, they find in it incomprehensible riches. They are Christ's; and the God that gave them to His Son, chose them in Him before the foundation of the world; and though they feel their own weakness, they see also that they are accepted of God in the Beloved; and that He is their beauty and their robe of righteousness before God. Born of God, they are partakers of the divine nature; they are children of God and sealed with His Spirit of promise, as the earnest of the inheritance which they are waiting for in hope. Moreover, the blessing with which they are blessed is not according to what they were, nor according to what they are in themselves; it is Christ, the faithful servant of God, by whom and for whom they are, and their blessing is according to the exigency of the love of God, who will have His Son, as Son of Man, honoured in the heavenly places. Therefore He has given Him a glorious bride; for all God's counsels revolve around Christ; and all are for the glory of that Christ who is our all. We read, in the

Ephesians, what is the fruit of Christ's love to the church: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. v. 25—27).

What, then, is the blessing which we have in Christ? Who can answer? Yet, blessed be God! it is not now, because we see nothing in Him that we would fain be silent. No; it is rather because there is so much in Him, and because we see so much in Him; so much that tells His perfect beauty and entire preciousness, that we sometimes feel the expressiveness of silence. It is a kind of homage, at least, rendered to the unbounded fulness and immeasurableness of His love. Who can measure the majesty of the position of Christ? Who can scan the boundless future of glory prepared for Him? But, if that were possible, it would not suffice; for it is neither that which surrounds Him now, nor that which will hereafter surround Him, that can fully express what He is in His person, and what is the joy which God the Father finds in Him; nor what that is, which, in His infinite grace, He sees, to His pleasure, to exist for Him in the church. No; it is impossible to fully fathom what the blessing is which is ours as the just and perfect expression of His love to the church of His God. But let us pause a moment upon this sympathy of the church towards Christ. However defective in practice, it is in principle most sure, and of all her privileges the most precious, to love Him for His own sake who first loved her. And if one cannot, by reason of the infinitude of His love, speak of our love to Him; because it is so feeble in comparison that it is hardly worthy of the name of love when seen in the presence of His; yet we know we love Him. It may indeed be, that around us are multiplied proofs of our having walked in the flesh and not in the spirit, yet can we, through grace, appeal to Him as Peter did, and say, "Lord, thou knowest all things: thou knowest that I love thee." Most surely this is true; because it is He himself who has shed abroad in our hearts that love of God,

which is the distinctive privilege which the betrothed one seeks in looking forward to her position of wife. Is it the fortune, or the domains, or houses of her Lord? Is it the being better lodged, and better clothed, that she would think of, as that which is to distinguish her from the servants? Never! *She is to be the wife*: there is to be the tenderest of relationships between her and her husband; and it is Himself she loves and not His possessions. She is a help-mate for Him, His pride, His joy. And out of this position, which alone belongs to her, out of this relationship which is her's alone, flows a life peculiarly her own. How frequently is this seen, even in this world of sin and misery, both among the rich and the poor. The person, honour, and interests of her husband (cost her what it may), find their defender in the wife. But such affection is but a feeble picture of what the church ought to be and may be here below towards Christ.

3. In what, then, do we fail as to that sympathy towards Christ? Alas! does not the very question produce a singular and painful feeling in our bosoms that are so little warmed by His love; and in our souls that are so little occupied with the beauty and glory which are in Him? It would be a great deal more easy to enumerate all the inconsistencies in the life of Abraham than in the life of Lot. The very brightness of the light that shone around him; the pilgrim-strangership, the daily walk of him who looked for a city, throw out into relief all his inconsistencies. Abraham's ordinary life made evident his occasional failures; but the normal state of Lot was so sadly in habitual conformity with the world, that it is not a particular action, rarely, if at all, repeated, nor even a particular habit, which was slow of correction, that strikes the mind, in the review of his history; but after a careful study of his life, one is rather astonished to find that amidst such a heap of worldliness the eye of God, which cannot err, found in him, however smothered, a faith which identified itself with God. Sad business to be thus obliged to look for the proofs of the existence of faith. It is greatly to be feared that those (if there be such) who may stand in need of an answer

to the question—"In what have we failed?" will receive with hesitation the reply. But be it so, I will yet speak out freely my thoughts without fear.

I suppose, then, that we greatly fail in having the same thoughts and feelings as our Lord Jesus, *as to testimony which has to be rendered to Him, in these last days, and as to the gospel.* I speak not of that love for the souls of poor sinners who lie perishing all around us, which might well induce us to sacrifice everything if, peradventure, they might be saved. The value of the soul—of one's own—of that of a human being, is worth more than we can sacrifice; but I speak not as weighing its worth, I speak of the sentiment of love for Him who is the light of eternal life, and of that interest in all the thoughts of God with respect to Him which is enough to make us feel, that—"the name and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ ought to be proclaimed, whether unto the condemnation of those that reject, or to the salvation of those that receive it," as St Paul expresses in 2 Cor. ii. 14—17: "Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place. For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: to the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things? For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ."

Do I speak thoughts which are peculiar to myself? or do I not rather utter what every disciple recognises to be suitable in itself and according to the will of God? Is not such honouring of Christ due from the love which each disciple bears to Him? I speak not as feeling in my own heart the zeal and fervency of love for that blessed name which I would; but I do appreciate it; and I am at least ashamed, and confess my want of zeal and fervency, and seek, notwithstanding, to do what I can. "She hath done what she could!" was a blessed word of praise from the lips of Christ to a poor feeble one. If little in ourselves, may the like praise be ours! But is

it not astounding, that the poor sinner, who possesses the knowledge of such a panacea as the gospel is, should forget not only its worthiness to be proclaimed, and the needs of those around Him; but also the privilege of announcing it, that is put within his power.

Much the same is it, if we consider the testimony which God has placed in the hands of the disciples of Christ who are on earth; a testimony which has always to be rendered to the grace of God; but which, in measure, changes its form according to the epoch in which we live. It is always (or, alas! must we not rather say it ought always to be) a testimony to the person and glory of the Son of God, as to the position in which He is, and as to what pertains to Him in that position, or in that which He is about to take, when He leaves His Father's throne, to take His own. Moreover, there are all the spiritual blessings in heavenly places which pertain to us as being His, and the responsibility flowing from thence. The responsibility is inseparable from the blessing, if God, who will not give His glory to another, does nothing except for His own honour. God will not, cannot, nourish our love of self. We are not, and we cannot be, the object and the end of the counsels of God. It is CHRIST ALONE who can be that. All, therefore, in us which comes from God, and which is the expression of the goodness of God, tends to the glory of Christ, and has this alone as its natural object of research. That which does not strengthen us in our service and devotedness to Christ, our Lord, is not a blessing but a snare.^a

The declension and failure upon earth of the church has greatly changed the effect of many a truth upon the heart of the child of God. Truth which, when first revealed, was but a subject of pure and unmixed joy now necessarily awakens in the heart that has understanding another sentiment than joy, a feeling inseparable from humiliation.

If I take the history of the churches of God, of

^a This shews the mistake of those who walk according to providential blessing; our blessings are spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.

Christianity in its manifestation upon earth;—it has now continued 1800 years;—at first salvation by grace; the value of the word; the presence of the Spirit, were well-known truths. But where can we find the presence or the effectual power of these things, between the 12th and the 16th centuries? No; salvation of free grace, through faith, had been exchanged in the professing world, for salvation by the deeds of the law; human traditions—many of them of the most senseless kind—had superseded the Word of God; and an ecclesiastical head had usurped, not only the place which belonged to the Holy Ghost, but he had also, by usurping the power of the kings of the earth, declared in opposition to Christ, that His kingdom was of this world; and thus utterly changing the character of the kingdom of Christ.

In the early days of the Church's history, there can be no doubt as to the place which the heavenly calling, the mystery of the union of Christ and the church, and the doctrine of His return as Bridegroom held. These were the doctrines, recognised as of all-absorbing interest. But how difficult is it to trace their existence between those first days and these, the last! Here and there, perhaps, one finds a rare and curious statement, which shows that they were not altogether forgotten through the whole interval; and, alas! how feeble is our faith in them now! If salvation of free grace, the blessedness of having the Bible as the open book of God's word, the presence of the Spirit, the heavenly calling, the mystery, and the coming of Christ, are, to those that have light, subjects of joy and thanksgiving, can we forget the fact, that all these precious truths have been lost on earth to those who should have held them fast? Can we forget the dishonor thus put upon our Lord? Can we forget the actually existing state of things in this respect of those around us who are our brethren in the Lord, and whose hearts have not yet received, to their blessing, these things? If the taste of these truths in the mouth is that of the sweetest honey, nevertheless in the inward parts, when it comes there, it is bitterness. In the discovery to us of these most precious truths, there is a blessed token of the faithfulness of God and our Sa-

viour, who is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; a token in itself as precious as the truth it reveals. But it is the faithfulness of God to Himself, and to the glory of His Son, in spite of the sin of His people upon earth. We taste the grace of God in its height and in its depth; for it is *grace* which gives us to taste that truth which the people with whom we are in fellowship upon earth have forgotten and lost: and in this, for those at least who love God, there is certainly a subject of the deepest humiliation. I would, that that mixture of the bitter with the sweet, which these truths produce, especially when we think of who it is to whom they are discovered almost as a fresh revelation, may exist in us, and exist in a very unmistakeable form.

The actual effect of the law upon the Jews is a very grief to think of. The law was in itself a rule of life, to show to those, to whom it was given, what their state really was. Their walk was not according to the law: it condemned them, at every step, their acts, their lives, and their ways. Nothing in them was according to its holy requirements. The effect of such a law ought to have been anguish to all who were under it. For they were condemned and hopeless through it.

As to a part, a very small part who had conscience, it was so: but not to the nation as a whole. They were quite satisfied with, and proud of, . . . what? Being condemned? They thought not at all about *that*; for that would have supposed a recognition of rightful subjection to God, holy and present. The Jews gave Him not that honour: but, seeking their own glory and desiring to turn every thing to it, they forgot all in the law which was against them, and thought only of the distinctive peculiarity of having received a law from God. Of this privilege they boasted, and availed themselves of it as a means of judging and condemning others. Alas! it was like the madness of a prisoner, who, when arraigned and condemned to death, instead of recognising his own forfeiture of life, should please himself with the honour done him by the judge in addressing him so peculiarly before the whole court; and should find in his own sentence a mere clue to the judgment of others.

But such is flesh! The effect of the law upon Christ was very different. The law was against every man except Himself—but so far from its being against Him it did Him honour. It was, to a certain extent, a description of Himself; for, having no sin in His flesh, he could obey the law, and He found it a path for His feet, and walked in it perfectly all His lifetime here below. But what was the effect of the law upon Christ? The light which was in Him, to which, in its measure, the law did homage, showed Him also man's state of rebellion and his coming judgment; and this was sorrow to his heart. Instead, therefore, of its being to him a pleasure to judge others, his heart was full of sorrow on their account; and He gave Himself for them.

May the children of God judge themselves in this also; whether the effect of the light of the ruin, and apostasy, has been to them the means of self-exaltation, or of profound humiliation, for the dishonour done to God and to Christ (in which we have our full part), and for the state of ruin amidst which the objects of divine affection are found. Are the histories of the church fables? Or, however defective, are they the writings of sober men? And are we to learn a lesson from them? Has there been a need, felt, owned, *acted upon*, for the reformation, in order to bring afresh into due prominence the foundations of the faith. Is it true that there are churches many and opposed to each other, and yet, amidst the wide choice, there seems to be none which, in the world's dotage, will suffice for either rationalist or religious? If I speak these things as a man, according to man's range of thought, there is enough to condemn and humble. But if I see in scripture predictions of such a state of things and of God's judgment upon it, I ought, I admit, to be thankful for the light of His precious word, but I ought to be humbled on account of it. It is a privilege, no doubt, to have the light by which I know these things beforehand, but what can I say of the sin itself all around me; sin which God has predicted, which He is about to judge—sin which I cannot remedy—sin of the body of which I find myself a part? I ought to humble

myself: I do humble myself before God, and with so much the more of liberty of spirit and heart, because He has given me grace to see that He is *for* me, spite of all. But can I stop there? No, I must announce it to the children of God. But if I announce it, it is not, certainly, as a glory, nor as a distinctive privilege. There may be *some* that have ears to hear, though there are *many* who deny and reject this truth. But can one be content, can one boast over the ignorance of those who will not regard it? No. That would not be like Christ nor like His Spirit. Christ has no pleasure in such things; nor can His Spirit in him who, while he feels the privilege of truth possessed, lose sight of the fact of individual fellowship with the system about to be judged. If I am of the church, as a body on earth which has failed, my distinctive privilege, in regard to the sad truth of ruin all around, consists in readiness, while vindicating God and condemning man, to humble myself for all, to confess the sin of those who cannot see it, and to bewail their loss and the dishonour done to Christ by their state.

I would that the experience of Jeremiah were now ours; and I freely confess, that I fear God does not see the state of soul suitable to the light He has given us in His word. God forbid, that any of us should find in that sad truth of the ruin, a subject of self-exaltation, as if we were not livingly interested in, and forming part of, what is ruined, and as if the honour of Christ and the blessedness of His people were not involved. That the revivals of late in Europe have always been connected with such humiliation of spirit, and that they stop when the sense of blessing given has led, in any place, to forgetfulness of that state of humiliation,—a sense of which, first brought with it the blessing,—is a fact of large deduction.

Again, that the truth of the Lord's return should be recognised as the only true hope of the church, and that the man of God should find therein his joy and consolation is good and altogether according to the will of God. Also, that a child of God should taste the love of God in the fact, that, in a day like the present, this hope

should be his own portion to enjoy, is easily understood; but that this truth should produce in us nothing but joy, is not true. This truth casts its light upon a dark world in rebellion against Christ, which has grieved and vexed His Holy Spirit, and is lying under the power of the wicked one. Its light reveals many a sad cell of darkness in the world's church; and if one contrasts the days of its infant joyfulness with those of its old age, what a force and energy in the one, what folly and decrepitude are now visible in the other! Is it the same body? Alas! it is the same body which was set in witness,—in the responsibility of witness,—on the day of Pentecost; but, taken possession of by an adversary, it can scarcely be recognised for the same. It was the place of the manifested presence of God, heavenly, full of love, apart from the world, a constant judge of the flesh and of all the devices of Satan. Are these the features which we trace now? I see not how the soul which loves Christ which loves the members of His body to whom His honour is dear, can avoid, in the light of the hope of His return, feeling that there is much to humble, all around, though that hope will bring with it the position of the highest individual blessedness.

To individualise that hope down to the measure of one's own future joy, and to forget to enjoy it in sympathy with the heart of Christ, which takes in God and all that is dear to Him, is not a proof of manhood in any.

We are Christ's, and, as so blessed of God, we have to own responsibility to His name on the earth; and, as led by the Spirit of Christ, have to feel for His honour and name, and not merely to seek our own individual joy and comfort.

As God has bowed down in grace and mercy to us, they that are in the Spirit find it easy and natural to themselves to bow down in humiliation before Him and for one another. For self is abased in the presence of grace. The flesh, however, will shew itself in another way, and either not feel the need of humiliation or, admitting it, be occupied in demanding humiliation from others, rather than interpose itself to bear the

burden. To deny the suitability of humiliation, and not to feel that which produces it, is one and the same thing as forgetfulness of that supreme fulness of grace which has found us, notwithstanding the misery of the fallen state of all around. It shows a want of sympathy with the heart of Christ, in respect of that which is to Him such dishonouring ruin. On the other hand, to be occupied with pressing that others should humble themselves, is not a proper expression of the sense of our own failure, nor of our own state of weakness. For if all have need to confess, and if we are in a low estate, who am I, to take a position of strength and to demand of others humiliation, instead of humbling myself before God, and for them if need be. No: I can, in very humbleness, and in the sense of ruin and weakness, humble myself for my own part in the evil, and for the sins of others, and then rest counting upon God to do what still remains to be done. Whereunto we have already attained, let us mind the same thing, let us walk by the same rule; and if in any matter, a man be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto him.

FRAGMENT.

LEADING HEADS OF PSALMS.

PSALM vi.—Righteousness expressed in deep sorrow and bitterness under chastisement from the Lord. This bitter indeed, because joy and communion with the Lord is hindered; but in the spirit of righteousness, the appeal is to the mercy of the Lord. In that day the enemies of the righteous prevailed; but when the chastisement was past, then too did their power cease.

Mark the difference between the bitter experience in this Psalm, because it was the Lord, and the uninterrupted joy of Psalms iii. iv., because it was only man; and therefore joy and communion with the Lord was unhindered. This intelligence is very blessed. It is the very contrast with unrighteous men; communion is unknown to them, the want of it is no sorrow; but they have no escape to the sanctuary in the day of trial at the hand of man, and under this they sink.

N^o XIX.

THE LAMB'S WIFE.

IN the Apocalypse, the Lord is much spoken of as "the Lamb"—a title which suggests the thought of suffering and atonement. But in this Book of the Apocalypse, He is neither suffering nor doing the work of atonement. All that is over and perfected, as we know; He is rather exercising Himself in His strength, judging and conquering. This may, therefore, at first surprise us, that He should so generally, in the progress of the action in this Book, be called "the Lamb." But, like all else in the oracles of God, this is only beautiful and perfect in its way and season, when considered a little.

Redemption is conducted by either *blood* or *power*. The blood of our Redeemer, or our kinsman, acts towards God, as I may express it, His power acts against Satan. The blood of Christ ransoms us from the righteous judgment or demand of God; the power of Christ rescues us from the captivity of Satan.

This is sure and simple; but, then, there could be no rescue or deliverance from Satan, if there had not been a ransom given or paid to God. And hence it is, that our Redeemer gets His title *to go forth and deliver*, from the blood which He had shed *to atone*; and thus, in the Apocalypse, where He is acting as our Redeemer *by power*, He is ever kept in sight as "the Lamb."^a

We are all, I may say, familiar in our thoughts with

* The ordinance of the jubilee gives us something kindred with this. The trumpet which announced its approach was sounded on the day of atonement. That is, all the restoring virtues of that mystic 50th year was declared to derive itself out of the atonement or cross of Christ, from the act of reconciliation to God through the blood of Calvary (see Lev. xxv.) So the stone and shepherd of Israel comes from the sorrowing Joseph, who had been hit by the archers (Gen. xlix.)

such truth as this. The *Cross* of Christ sustains the *inheritance*. The inheritance is a *purchased* thing as well as a *rescued* or *delivered* thing. There is no recovery or regeneration of this ruined scene, except on the ground and title of the expiation accomplished at Calvary. In a purer sense than perhaps it was once said, we may say, "No Cross no Crown"—in symbol of which, the royal rights of Christ were written in every language of the nations on the cursed tree.

This is so, as we surely know. In the action, therefore, of rescuing the inheritance from Satan, the usurper, and then reigning over it as regained or delivered, the Lord Jesus is spoken of as "the Lamb," the One who had already made atonement; or, as redeeming *by power* on the ground of having redeemed *by blood*, He is introduced at the opening of the action of this Book, in the combined characters of "the Lion of the tribe of Judah," and "the Lamb as it had been slain" (chap. v.)

But, further, the Lord Jesus, in this Book, is judging the nations, as well as rescuing the inheritance from Satan; He is visiting the world for its iniquity and unbelief.

Such an action as this, He is to conduct as the One *who had been once despised and rejected*. Scripture abundantly tells us this. It is the *refused* King that is to call forth the rebel citizens to have them slain before Him—It is the *disallowed* stone that is to fall and grind to powder (Luke xix.; Matt. xxi.) Jesus is to be honoured where once He was put to shame—He is to be rich, where once He was poor—He is to be enthroned in strength, where once He was crucified in weakness. The despised Son of Man is to judge, to avenge, and to conquer.

All this is clear, and sure, and simple, in the light of the oracles of God; and therefore we may say, as far as the action of this Book is upon *man*, judging him (be he Jew or Greek), or visiting him with wrath or plague, the action is conducted by the *rejected* Christ; as far as the action is upon *Satan*, redeeming the inheritance out of his hand, and quelling his power in this scene of his usurpation, it is conducted by the Christ who *made atonement*. The Lord does not judge man, because He

had been the Lamb slain for sinners, but because, as the righteous witness for God in the world, the world had rejected and crucified Him; but He does overthrow the might of the great enemy, and rescues the inheritance out of His hand, because He had paid the ransom-price of that inheritance by His precious blood.

All this the wayfaring man may read in God's own perfect and sufficient Book; and all this gives the Lord Jesus, in the Apocalypse, where He is judging man, and answering the way of the usurper, that title which at once expresses Him to us as the *rejected* One, and as the *atoning* One—for we find that His title, "the Lamb," in this Book at times connects itself with the first of these ideas, and at other times with the second of them (see chaps. v. 6, 8, 12, 13; vi. 1, 16; vii. 9, 10, 14, 17; xii. 11; xiii. 8; xiv. 1, 4, 10; xv. 3; xvii. 14; xix. 7, 9). And this may easily and naturally remind us of that well-known chapter, Isaiah liii., where the Lord Jesus is looked at as "the Lamb," but at times treated there as the *victim*, whose blood cleanses; and at other times, as the *One whom man was hating and despising*.^b

But again—as we find the Lord as "the Lamb" in this Book, so do we find the church as "the Lamb's wife." If I recollect aright, it is the *only* title in the course of this Book, which is given to the church. And no doubt, there is correspondency in these titles; He is "the Lamb," and she is "the Lamb's wife;" and this latter title is to be interpreted according to the same rules which have already led us to interpret the former.

The Lord, we have seen, is "the Lamb," as having made atonement to God, and as having been rejected by men. Accordingly "the Lamb's wife" is the church, as connected with the virtue of the blood of Christ, and also with His rejection in the world. It tells us that we are purchased, and saved, and reconciled; but it tells us also, that we are strangers in the world, a rejected

^b After the judicial action of this Book is over, and Satan is bound, the Lord is seen in the new Jerusalem, and over the rescued earth, under the same title, "the Lamb" (see chap. xxi. 9, 14, 22, 23, 27; xxii. 1, 3).

heavenly people, companions of a despised Jesus. Had we but affections, I might surely say, this is both comforting and serious truth.

Our character as saints, according to this truth, is lost, when we practically deny either the one or the other of these things. That is, we do not, in living power, present the due image of "the Lamb's wife," when we either live in the bondage of the rudiments and ordinances of a fleshly, worldly, sanctuary; or when we affect citizenship in the earth, forming alliance with the kingdoms of the world, or acting according to the course of it. By the first of these things, we practically deny that we are purchased and saved by Christ; by the second, we refuse the thought that we are rejected with Him. We do not shew forth our union with "the Lamb."

Had we but affections, again I say, how should we value such a calling! Great dignity, *moral* dignity, is conferred on the church, by giving her, after this manner, association with Christ in the day of His rejection. She will be the companion and associate of His glory and power by-and-bye; but she is now joined with Him in this age of His rejection and weakness in the world; and this is something of a deeper character, as our hearts one with another so well understand.

Supposing one were to come to us in the day of the gladness of His heart, and ask us to rejoice with Him, we should feel at once that He was treating us with a measure of confidence that was very grateful to us. But supposing that another were to come in the day of his sorrow, and seek from us that we would feel for him, and enter into the secret of his trouble with him, we should be very sensible of this, that he was treating us with a still larger measure of confidence, and we should be still more gratified. The heart knows all this very well. And thus is it with Christ and the church. The church is called to be the companion of the Lord in that age of the world which is marked by His scorn, and rejection, and weakness in it. This is her characteristic. She knows the reconciliation perfectly, and has peace with God; but she knows Christ's place in the world that

has refused Him, in the midst of a generation that has mistaken Him and His glory altogether. She is called to know Him in His sorrow and rejection; and when we consider *who* He is, this is the highest *moral* dignity that any creature could sustain; just as her place and condition in the system of coming glories will be the loftiest and richest that any creature could fill.

And such is the Bride, "the Lamb's wife." I mean, characteristically, not assuming to speak her worth and honours in detail. But such she is in the character of her calling.

One may catch the bright idea of such a calling, and marvel and adore the grace and wisdom that have designed it. But, while doing this, one may feel that we have to look out beyond the measure of our own poor heart, for capacity to prize and enjoy such a mystery; and far beyond our own poor ways, for anything like a worthy image or reflection of it, in the joy and power and service which ought to accompany the faith of it.

FRAGMENT.

LEADING HEADS OF PSALMS.

PSALM viii.—The glory of Christ in the kingdom, unfolded by Him who knows the end from the beginning. In Matt. xxi., when a sample of the kingdom was given, in the king riding into Jerusalem, Jesus quoted and applied this Psalm to it. Again, the apostle calls the things of it "the world to come;" brought out consequent to the sufferings of Christ, and His present place at the right hand of God, crowned with glory and honour, when all things shall be put under him, which we do not now see.

Then will the name of the Lord be excellent in all the earth; His glory set above the heavens; the enemy and the avenger stilled; the babes praising His name; everything that hath breath praising the Lord.

N^o. XX.

2 KINGS, VIII. 13.

“The Lord hath showed me that thou shalt be King over Syria.”

“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.”

The doctrine of “the desperate wickedness of the heart,” as a truth of universal application, is the verdict of divine Omniscience, however questioned by individual experience. Every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ has doubted it in his own case, till he has been taught it by God Himself. But after this lesson so taught of God, and acquiring depth by increasing experience, it is another lesson to learn practically the deceitfulness of the heart. The reception of this doctrine in the power of it, helps to keep the believer humble and watchful. Thus, “the Lord keepeth the feet of His saints,” putting “His fear in their hearts.” And being in the fear of the Lord all the day, they are kept from many an outbreak of desperate wickedness, the common result of walking in self-confidence. “For he that trusteth in his own heart is a fool.”

Elisha, “the man of God,” is at Damascus, and Benhadad the king of Syria was sick; and in his sickness he honours the prophet of the Lord—true picture of man, driven by necessity at last to that God whom he has all along despised. He sends his servant, or prime minister, Hazael, with a costly present, to enquire of the prophet, “Shall I recover of this sickness?” “And Elisha said unto him, Go, say unto him, Thou mayest certainly recover: howbeit the Lord hath showed me he shall surely die.” There was nothing mortal in his disease, and there was no natural sagacity in the prophet; but the Lord before whom all things are open and naked, told him he should surely die. This deeply

affected the prophet, and gave, so speaking, a cast to his countenance, that Hazael could neither understand nor endure his gaze. "And he [Elisha] settled his countenance steadfastly until he [Hazael] was ashamed: and the man of God wept; and Hazael said, Why weepeth my Lord? And he answered, Because I know the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel: their strongholds wilt thou set on fire, and their young men wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt dash their children, and rip up their women with child. And Hazael said, But what, is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing?" He did not think himself a dog. He was ready to resent the imputation. The thought of such deeds might have been abhorrent alike to his judgment and feelings. He was not aware of the deceitfulness of the heart. The prophet does not accuse Hazael of perfidy or of hypocrisy, but simply replies: "The Lord hath showed me that thou shalt be king over Syria." Hazael was ignorant both of the deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of the heart. He knew not how many checks there are in the things around us, and from the position in which we are to hinder the outbreak of the desperate wickedness of the heart, which is unsuspected; because it lies, as it were, dormant, till aroused by circumstances. Hazael, as a prime minister, had tasted power, but the sickness of his master now presented the opportunity of passing from the responsible power of a minister to the irresponsible power of a usurper; and did he know or suspect the way to crime thus opened before him? Does the slave, groaning under the yoke of the oppressor, suspect that oppression is in his own heart; and, if he changed places with his oppressor, it would break forth into action? Do we suspect, that the most sanguinary wars which have spread devastation over the fairest countries, and rendered whole populations miserable, spring from the same lusts which involve two individuals in personal altercation.

"From whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members"! Is persecution peculiar to some particular form of religion, or the necessary result of at-

tempting to bind the consciences of others by laws of our own, so that fealty to the "one Law-giver" becomes a crime? Did the suffering Puritans, driven by episcopal persecution to seek for shelter in the wilds of a new country, suspect that they carried into exile the principle of persecution in their own breasts, ready to burst forth against those who submitted not to them when they should be in circumstances to exercise authority? The heart is so deceitful as to hide from itself what is in it, so as to be taken by surprise at the outbreak of evil.

But it may be said, that Hazael being ignorant of God was ignorant also of his own heart. Let us turn, therefore, to the case of one who had known God in repeated mercies and marvellous deliverances.

The reign of Hezekiah affords relief to the spirit after the history of "that king Ahaz." At the outset, Hezekiah evinced very godly jealousy in breaking in pieces the brazen serpent, because that ancient symbol of divine mercy had robbed the Lord of the glory due to Him alone. Hezekiah had experienced, that the Lord's ear was open to the cry of His people, to his own cry as well as that of the prophet Isaiah, for deliverance from the proud Assyrian. He had also cried unto the Lord in the extremity of his sickness; and the Lord heard him and sent him word of recovery by the prophet Isaiah, and confirmed his word by a marvellous sign.

Hezekiah was not insensible of all these marked mercies and deliverances. He pours out his heart to God in grateful acknowledgment. "What shall I say? He hath both spoken unto me and himself hath done it. I shall go *softly* all my years in the bitterness of my soul." But did he go softly? In a little moment the scene is changed, and an occasion afforded for the manifestation of vain-glory, which Hezekiah had not suspected to be in his heart, and for the which the trials of his eventful life had not hitherto afforded scope. But now, Hezekiah, instead of being laid low in sickness, is in the enjoyment of health; instead of groaning under the oppressor, he is himself an object of admiration—ever dangerous to the soul of the saint. "At that

time Berodach-baladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent *letters* and a *present* unto Hezekiah: for he had heard that Hezekiah had been sick. And Hezekiah hearkened unto them and shewed them all the house of his precious things . . . there was nothing in his house nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah shewed them not.”

“And many brought gifts unto the Lord to Jerusalem, and presents to Hezekiah, king of Judah: so that he was magnified in the sight of all nations from thenceforth.”

“In those days Hezekiah was sick to the death, and prayed unto the Lord: and he spake unto him, and he gave him a sign. But Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him; for his heart was lifted up: therefore there was wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem.” For fourteen years he had walked humbly with God, and magnified him. But on his recovery he was himself first magnified by others, and then he magnified himself, taking the honour to himself as the man for whom the Lord had wrought a miracle. Men are readily attracted by something marvellous; but they fix their wonder on some object short of God Himself. They regard the wonder and the subject of the miracle, not the God who has wrought the wonder. “Verily, verily, I say unto you, ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled.” “Hezekiah rendered not again to the Lord according to the benefit done unto him; for his heart was lifted up.” He had thought in his own heart, that if the Lord recovered him, it would be for him “to go softly” all his days. “Howbeit, in the business of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to enquire of the wonder that was done in the land, God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart.”

Many a heart, besides that of Hezekiah, has been deceived by the thought of carrying into recovery the deep realities which occupied the soul on the bed of sickness. Many a one, besides Hezekiah, raised up in answer to prayer with the honest intention of glorifying God by “going softly,” has glorified God indeed, but in another way, by learning what was in his heart, jus-

tifying God in his sayings, bowing before him, and saying, "Good is the word of the Lord." Yet it is good when it does its painful office of "piercing even to the dividing asunder of joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intents of the heart." Good, O how good! when it reveals the grace of God abounding over the sin it has detected. "Good is the word of the Lord which thou hast spoken. He said, moreover, For there shall be peace and truth in my days."

Had Hezekiah died when the Lord bid him "set his house in order," he would have departed in the judgment of men as blameless; but he would have died in much ignorance of his own heart. Who does not see how much safer it is to leave "our times in the hands of the Lord," than to have life prolonged for fifteen years. The Lord in his wisdom generally allows his saints to live long enough to shew that they are in themselves "men of like passions" with others, that He alone "makes them to differ" from others, that they have nothing but that which they have received, and that they are what they are only by the grace of God.

Hezekiah's restoration taught him in one way, that which "the thorn in the flesh" taught the apostle Paul in another, that (such is the deceitfulness of the heart) we are prone to turn the highest favours which God bestows to self-exaltation. The spirit of grace and supplication vouchsafed to Hezekiah in his sickness and so remarkably answered, was not persevered in on his restoration. The Lord left him. He rested upon his recovery; but we can only "stand by faith." If self-righteousness is an abomination before God in all men, what must it be in His saints, and yet he is little exercised in his own soul who has not detected the subtlety of his own heart, to be proud of any distinguishing grace which the Lord has given him. "And thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty: for it was perfect through *my* comeliness, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord God, but thou didst trust in thine own beauty."

Our God is the only wise God, and His manifold wisdom, which was shewn forth in Hezekiah's recovery, and in Paul's thorn in the flesh, is shewn in

others in sickness and in health, in imprisonment and enlargement, in abounding and suffering need; all these circumstances furnish occasions—to us, to know what is in our hearts; to God, to unfold the inexhaustible store of His grace.

Let us turn to the frank, open-hearted, upright apostle Peter. Fervent in his love to Jesus, he was ignorant of the deceitfulness of the heart. The Lord's eye could look on Peter in the midst of a scene in which he had not yet been placed, even as the same Lord had shewn Elisha that Hazael should be king over Syria. The daily companion of Jesus, witness of His miracles, partaking of His more secret instruction, when he expounded to His disciples His parables, experimentally knowing the care of Jesus in providing for him and His companions, when he had sent them forth without purse or scrip;—Is he such a dog? Shall he deny Him? The thought is repelled with honest indignation. “Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee.” It was to Peter that the Father had made a special revelation of the glory of the person of the Lord, that He was the Christ the Son of the living God. And when the Lord Himself, witnessing the turning back of many who had followed him to a certain point, challenged the twelve: “Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God”? What, shall Peter deny his own confession, and the honour put upon him in the revelation made to him of the Father—impossible, he thought others might be offended because of Jesus, but surely not Peter. “Though all should be offended because of thee, yet will *I* never be offended.” Now the error of Peter and of all of us, is to take for granted that we know our hearts as well as the Lord knows them. We act on our own estimate of our intentions, instead of the Lord's warning. We watch not—we pray not for special keeping, where not only the Lord, but our own experience also has shown us our weakness. We trust to the integrity of our intentions; and we “enter into temptation,” unaware that we are brought into the place

where the strength of our resolutions or the integrity of our intentions is to be tested. Let the scene be changed. Peter is sleeping in the garden when the Lord is in agony; "He could not watch with the Lord one hour." The Lord could draw the line, which Peter could not, and which it would be dangerous for His disciples to attempt to draw in their own case. "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." Weak in reality, although strong apparently; for Peter, aroused from his slumber to fleshly confidence, "stretched out his hand, drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest and smote off his ear." Brave action to fight single handed against a multitude—"But the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God," and to watch and pray, and to have no confidence in the flesh, is far harder. Jesus is deserted by His disciples; despised and rejected of men. Will Peter now stand by Him? Will he lay down his life for Him? Will he stand by his former confession? No. He equivocates, denies, curses, swears, "I know not the man." The Lord had now shown that He knew Peter's heart better than Peter knew it himself. He restores him with a look; but Peter went out and wept bitterly.

The history of Peter shews us the connection between the deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of the heart. Little did he know that cursing and swearing were there ready to burst forth on the occasion being opened. Is there a Christian of any experience who does not know the shame of confessing Jesus before men to be more powerful than the most upright resolution? How deceitful are our hearts in making us willing to pass as one of the company in which we are, instead of maintaining our vantage ground of confession unto Jesus. It is comparatively easy when we are among many who acknowledge Jesus also to acknowledge Him; easy to fall in with the common-place religious conversation, but for Christ to be the only object, for the Lord to be always before us, necessitates the cross. If we do not take it for granted on the authority of Him who "knows what is in man," that our "hearts are deceitful above all things and desperately wicked," so that we are led to watch and pray, we shall enter into temptation and

make the experiment to our own cost, although it may lead us to "justify God in His sayings, and clear Him when He is judged." Let us rather marvel that any are kept (for what can keep but the faithful power of God) than at Peter's fall. "If any man thinketh that he standeth, let him take heed lest he fall." "The flesh is weak," by no means consciously weak, but the reverse; strong, bold, and confident. "Let not the mighty man glory in his might." Many are the instances of undaunted human resolution. But human resolution is not the spirit of him who is the witness of Jesus. It has need to be broken, and to know that it is but weakness. "Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go thou canst not follow me *now*; but thou shalt follow me afterwards. Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee *now*? I will lay down my life for thy sake." Had the Lord rushed armed to battle at the head of His followers, in all likelihood Peter would have followed Him reckless of danger. But such boldness is weakness; for the path of faith, instead of following Jesus to battle, has to follow Him unto rejection. Such was the path of the Master. "Ought not Christ to suffer, . . . and to enter into His glory." Such is the path for the servant, the way to glory is only through the cross. But when Peter had learnt that the Lord knew him better than he knew himself, when he had learnt to suspect the deceitfulness of his heart, so that he would rather the Lord should read it than he himself;—when Peter had learnt the true secret of turning the Lord's omniscience to a practical personal account—"Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee—" then no longer prepared to glory in his "wisdom" or in "his might," the Lord could "signify to him, by what death he should glorify God," and say unto him, "Follow me." What Peter could not do in his own time, and way, and strength, the Lord enabled him to do in His time, His way, and His strength.

"What, then, shall we say to these things"? First, a Christian is "a truth-doer, and should habitually come to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God." This will prevent not only

his acting a character, but also that subtle snare of using the character he has among others as a blind to conceal his own faults. Secondly, we must remember, that God's end and object is to glorify not us, but His own Son Jesus Christ. This is ever the object of the Holy Ghost, and when He "writes up" the names of the Lord's people, he hesitates not to record their sins, failings, and blemishes, sometimes even without comment, that we may learn the impossibility of any flesh glorying before the Lord. Of the best it can only be said, "to the praise of the glory of His grace;" and if that is but very imperfectly learnt here, it will be very evident when we shall know even as we ourselves are known. But lastly we are taught, both historically and doctrinally (it may be experimentally), that such is the deceitfulness of the heart, that no gifts of the highest order, no graces received out of the fulness of Jesus, no honest zeal for His name, no devotedness of past service, no activity of present service are a safeguard against it. We can only be "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." And the unrescinded rule prescribed for our safety by Jesus is, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me." The flesh in the saint is shewn in its fearful evil, by its very contiguity to the Spirit. But the heart deceitfully thinks that it needs not to be continually guarded against, and it readily gives new names to old lusts and passions; but the verdict remains unrepealed, "the flesh profiteth nothing." While watchfulness and prayer are ever needed, he only will be blameless, and shameless, and without offence, who walks in the solemn conviction that he has to fear the outbreak of the foulest sins; and unless his soul be occupied with Jesus. The sin from which his heart would recoil, if deliberately presented, may be the very one into which he is insensibly led from one step of temptation to another. "Now unto Him that is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy. To the only wise God, our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

PRESBUTES.

N° XXI.

THE LITTLE CHILD.

MATT. XVIII. 1—22.

WE must receive the kingdom of God as a little child. Yes, indeed; and the moral of that thought is very beautiful.

The Lord Jesus, the Son in flesh, has by His death atoned for the sin which brought in death. But He also, in His life and passage through the world, acted on principles which were the very opposite and contradiction of that sin. Surely He did. He did not *remove the penalty*, and leave the *transgression uncondemned*. This He could not have done. By His death, He suffered the judgment; but in His life, He practically and thoroughly gainsayed the sin which had incurred the judgment.

This must have been so. He could not accredit the sin while suffering its judgment. The sin was pride or creature-exaltation—man seeking to be as God, affecting the place, and rights, and majesty of God. The life of Jesus, in full contradiction of such sin, was that of the self-emptied Son—the subject, obedient Jesus. The station in the world which He assumed, the trade He followed, the family He was born into, the company He kept, the circumstances He lived in, all tell us this.

Again, we may say, it could not have been otherwise. But, let me add, from the beginning God has been exercising His elect in this same lesson, humbling them while blessing them, leading them out of the original penalty or judgment into light and blessing again; but leading them by such a way as taught them, that man should not again exalt himself. And this He has done by taking up the weak, and the foolish, and the poor, in whom to illustrate His holy principles, and by whom to carry on His gracious operations.

Noah and the ark of gopher-wood; Abram, and the

call from home and kindred to be a stranger here, without friend or inheritance; the barren wife and the younger brother of the Book of Genesis; the captives in the Egyptian brick-kilns, and the infant cast out among the flags of the Egyptian river; the rod and the uplifted hand of Moses; the feet of the priests; the lamps and pitchers of Gideon; Samson with the ass's jaw-bone; David with his stone and sling; all witness this lesson, that while bringing to us and securing to us all blessing, the Lord would humble the pride of man, and throughout the wondrous story of His doings, expose the folly and the wickedness of the first departure from Him in self-exaltation.

And the elect, thus exercised and thus used of God, have rehearsed the beautiful moral of all this, and said—"Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name, give glory." Daniel did so when he declared to the king, that it was not in him, but in God, to interpret dreams; as did Joseph, also, long before. But again, I say, the life of Jesus, from first to last, was speaking this language in forms of beauty and perfection, such as have glorified God beyond all that His rights and majesty were of old gainsayed in the garden of Eden. And this is very principal in the reckoning of our souls, when we are spiritually awake to the mysteries of God.

But, I ask, Has God ceased to teach this lesson? Now that we are in the Church, and on the road to the *heavenly* country, has God ceased to teach this lesson? We might rather judge that He is teaching it with increased emphasis. And is it not so? "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven," answers this. A little child is nothing in this world—a cipher in its great account—a weak thing—a foolish thing—a thing to be passed by, not worthy of being either courted or dreaded in the important game of the world's rivalries. It may have its own things, but they are toys. And so the Church. She has her own things, and peculiar things they are, but just such as must be esteemed toys, or childrens' play-things, by those who are concerned in the contentions of pride and selfishness on the earth.

The Little Child.

Our scripture, Matt. xviii. 1—22, gives us some of them—“If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him—if he repent, forgive him—if he will not repent, sue him and win him, if you can—try every way, be servant to him that has injured or insulted you—get others to seek him—if all fail, simply set him aside. If you want anything, ask God about it; if you do anything, take God’s principles in the doing of it.” This, we may say, is the voice that is heard here. These are among the things of the Church—“a lamp despised in the hand of him that is at ease.” For how can the world value the light of such principles as these?

And yet all this is according to the stone and sling of David in other days. It is the weak thing. “Two or three met together in my name,” says the Lord. Can anything be weaker in the judgment of man? And yet, in the judgment of the Spirit, such an assembly was doing the business of the sling and the stone, or the lamps and the pitchers. It confounds the strong, the noble, and the wise of this world. It brings to nought the things that are, though in itself nothing. “Ye see your calling,” says the Apostle, looking at such an object, “how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in His presence” (1 Cor. i. 26—29).

Surely the Lord in the Church is teaching the old lesson still. And we are to be *always* practising it, exercising ourselves in those principles which are the Church’s peculiarities, though they are but weakness and foolishness in the thoughts of men. These are to be *always* our lesson, as the Lord says to Peter in this scripture—“I say not unto thee until seven times, but until seventy times seven.”^a

^a The present dignities of the Church are hidden in heaven. The angel of the little child beholds the Father’s face there.

But how entirely has Christendom refused to learn this lesson of "the little child"! She has consented to forget that it was a poor despised Galilean, a carpenter's Son, that suffered the death of the cross. Christendom—the professing world around us—treats the mystery of redemption as if it had been some great personage that made atonement. It was God Himself, the Son in flesh, Jehovah's Fellow, that did so. That is indeed true. But as touching His place in the world, or among men, it was the despised Jesus, the carpenter of Nazareth in Galilee. He did not go to Calvary from king's courts, or amid the acclamations of the world; but He was the rejected One. The station He took in the world, as I noticed before, the trade He followed, the family He was born into, the company He kept, the circumstances He lived in, all tell us who He was, "a worm, and no man—a reproach of men, and despised of the people" ere He went to Calvary as the Lamb of God.

But Christendom has forgotten this. It may boast of Calvary, and of the Lamb of God in a certain way; but it has entirely lost sight of Nazareth and of the carpenter's Son. It links the *palace* with the *cross*, greatness in the world, wealth and ease, with the confession of Jesus and of the Gospel.

And it was in the face of such a perverted mind as this that the Apostle, through the Spirit, lifts himself up before the saints at Corinth (1 Cor. i.), for he purposes to introduce Christ crucified to them again. They were receiving again the spirit of the world—they were walking as men—and they needed that Christ crucified, *in full character*, should be introduced to their souls afresh. For in that expression, "Christ crucified," the Apostle did not mean Christ in His *sacrifice* only, but Christ in His *humiliation* also; Christ regarded not merely as the Lamb for the altar of God, but as humbled all through, from His birth in the manger to His death on the tree. It is this full mystery which the Apostle desires to have brought in with power on the conscience, that the spirit of the world, which was defiling the saints at Corinth, might be controlled. And it is only in that mystery, "Christ crucified," opened and applied in its full form,

that "the wisdom of God and the power of God" are to be found. But in that mystery, faith is very conscious that it does come into communion with the wisdom and the power of God—a wisdom which interprets all around, and a power which separates from it all.

O how poorly has the soul learnt this mystery of "the little child," the living practical lesson of a scorned and rejected Jesus—the world-conquering truth, that the Son from the bosom was but a despised Galilean here, though the mind and the pen can trace the form of it without doubt or difficulty! Lord, give us to know the honour of witnessing Thy rejection in this proud world!

FRAGMENTS.

LEADING HEADS OF PSALMS.

PSALM ix.—The outbreathings of the Spirit of Christ in this Psalm are most blessed—for in spirit He is in the things of glory, while in circumstance in the trials of rejected righteousness down here—and yet out of them in communion in the things to follow after: this, the blessed power of faith and patience of the saints, sustained and led by the Spirit of God. The enemies are seen defeated, though still in their own triumph. The faithful in Christ Jesus are triumphant in Him, though still, as sheep for the slaughter here. The principle is large and blessed, whether for those to be gathered in Zion, or for those to meet the Lord in the air: intelligent faith triumphs above present weakness in both—all to the praise of our one supreme Lord.

PSALM x.—The Spirit of Christ, detecting the imaginations and purposes of the evil man, and in abhorrence of them crying out unto the Lord, from the place of humiliation, for righteous judgment.

Ver. 16-18.—Power consequent on humiliation, because of the Lord reigning, and righteousness established. Blessed are they that endure in patience.

No. XXII.

THE GATHERING TOGETHER OF THE
CHILDREN OF GOD AS SUCH
IN OUR DAYS.*

THAT it is God Himself who forms churches by the converting of souls through faith in His Son, is a principle that the Christian can hardly deny. Thus, here at Nice (or elsewhere), supposing we were to find one or two hundred persons converted? Those persons would collectively be the church at Nice, as we read that at Jerusalem, all they who had gladly received the apostles' word formed the church of that city. God Himself, in giving them by faith to be members of Jesus, constituted them also members of His church, of which Christ is the head (Eph. i. 22, 23; ii. 19—22). No man on earth can change this, can either cut off or add a single member; herein man has only to recognise what God has wrought.

Now, can it be the will of the Lord that His disciples should put asunder what He hath joined together, so that in the same city, or town, or locality, there should be various assemblies of saints distinct from each other, and bearing different names—some the name of a country, some the name of such-and-such a man, and some a name arising from the profession of such-and-such particular point of truth; as if Christians had not all one Father, one Saviour, one faith, one heavenly and eternal country? (Eph. iv. 3—6; Gal. iii. 26—28; Col. iii. 11). No, such was not the Lord's mind when He said, "That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee; that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me" (John xvii. 21). To this many will reply, that this portion of Scripture speaks only of the spiritual and invisible oneness of the children of God, which will ever exist amongst those

* A free translation from a tract published in French.

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who are members of Jesus Christ. But the words added by our Lord tell us clearly His mind, "*That the world may believe that Thou hast sent me.*" The world believing only that which it sees, cannot believe in the existence of *the Head* of that of which *the body* is nowhere to be seen in its true unity, but only *fragments* scattered here and there. This body, fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, was the appointed means (through the manifestation of its unity by one assembly of saints in each locality), of leading the world to believe in its (the body's) glorified head.

And this, indeed, was once manifested in Jerusalem, when the disciples gathered together *in one place*, and moved by *the same spirit*, "*continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers*" (Acts ii).

But soon the leaven of strifes leavened the whole lump (Matt. xiii. 33); and Paul was obliged to say to the Corinthians, "There is among you envying, and strife, and divisions. For while one saith, I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?" (1 Cor. iii. 3, 4). Nevertheless, neither the Corinthians nor any other of the apostolic churches, seem to have entertained for a single moment the thought of forming separate churches in the same place, according to the particular views of some members of the body.

It was at a later period that this work of the enemy was accomplished; and now-a-days the principle of separation is even justified, and said to be a necessary consequence of the varied mouldings of the human mind. As if it was ever the purpose or will of God, that man's spirit should animate and direct the body of Christ, instead of the Spirit of Christ Himself. These divisions, we are told, are the fitting occasions for the manifestation of grace and patience among Christians. As if, because God in His infinite wisdom brings good out of evil, the evil that we commit could cease to be evil; or that we should do evil that good may result from it; or, lastly, as if there will not ever remain a sufficient measure of infirmity, and diversity of views in the churches to exercise the patience and the graces of

Christians (Rom. xiv. and xv. 3). Indeed, to separate from those whom we ought to love and bear with, is a singular way of shewing grace and patience!

Could we admire the love and patience of a husband and wife, who should choose to separate from each other, because they did not think exactly alike on all points, nor had the same dispositions, preferring each to live according to their own choosing, excepting the mutual agreement to be on friendly terms whenever they should meet?

Such, however, is the unity which the disciples of Jesus Christ are called to manifest, as some would have us think; seeking to persuade us, moreover, that that is all the Lord sought for His disciples, when He said, "That all may be one as Thou, Father, art in me and I in Thee; that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that Thou has sent me!"

What, then, is the duty of those who believe? Let us hearken to the instructions of the apostles to the first disciples at Jerusalem—"Save yourselves from this untoward generation" (Acts ii. 40). Separated, then, from the world in which we live, according to this word, let us meet together in one place, continuing steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. Let us, above all, receive by faith that word of our Lord given, doubtless, with reference to the sad state of His church in such times as ours: "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew xviii. 20).

Having faith in this word, let us persevere in meeting together as disciples for the breaking of bread; not forgetting the assembling of ourselves together, but exhorting one another unto love and good works (Acts xx. 7, and Heb. x. 24, 25). We shall then have the best of all systems, a Scriptural one; the gathering together of believers in the name of the Lord Jesus, and under the guidance of His Spirit.

If, in such assemblies, God should manifest the gifts of pastors and teachers, as He has promised to do in His church until the end (Ephes. iv. 11); it would be the

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duty of each member to recognise such, and to make use of the gifts granted by God to some for the edification of all (1 Corinth. xvi. 15, 16; 1 Thess. v. 12, 13; Heb. xiii. 17.)

This in no wise diminishes the privilege and obligation of each member to give out a hymn, to pray, to exhort, in the assemblies of the saints, according as the Lord shall Himself lead so to do by His Spirit (1 Cor. xiv. 26—33); for such was the custom of the churches before there were any elders or rulers appointed, as also afterwards (Acts ii. 41—43; 1 Corinth. xii. and xiv.)

Indeed, we do not worship God as pastors and teachers, or ministers of the word, but as God's priests. Now, though all are not ministers of the word, yet all are worshippers to offer in the church spiritual sacrifices, acceptable unto God by Jesus Christ; the fruit of our lips confessing His name (1 Peter ii. 5; Heb. xiii. 15). Where these principles are realised, or at least fully recognised, and then realised according to the measure of grace given; there do I see brethren gathered together, a church according to the word; that is "lively stones built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" (1 Peter ii. 5).

If any think to condemn such principles, by asserting that God is a God of order and not of confusion, they only shew their ignorance; for it is precisely with reference to this truth that the apostle exhorts us to follow out such a walk in the assemblies of the saints.

Such reasoning only proves that Christians who speak in this way, have quite another idea of order in the church of God than the apostle Paul. For him, it is order according to the Spirit and by the Spirit; for them, it is order according to the flesh and by the flesh.

Nor would gifts or ministry in such an assembly at all diminish the liberty to preach Jesus, belonging to every Christian; for he who is called to evangelise by the Lord does it on his own individual responsibility; as the first disciples in Jerusalem who, scattered abroad by the persecution, went from place to place, preaching the word of God (Acts viii. 4).

Thus, on the one hand, the body of Christ would be manifested in its unity, in the meeting together of disciples around the table of the Lord for worship and mutual exhortation. And, on the other hand, a wide field for preaching the gospel left to the individual responsibility and activity of each.

And these two things, though so distinct from each other, are, nevertheless, almost universally confounded, in the present state of disorder into which the church is fallen.

For what, indeed, is the general character of meetings for the public worship of God. First of all, if we consider what passes in national churches, we find that faith and conversion (at least when the pastor is a converted man) are pressed on the hearts and consciences of the unconverted, who are, nevertheless, associated with believers in prayer and giving of thanks, and even admitted to the table of the Lord, as if they were brethren, members of Christ. The same principle is true as regards *worship*, among the various denominations of Dissenters, although separation is maintained at the Lord's table. The consequence of such confusion is, that both worship, and the preaching of the gospel respectively lose their true character. The preaching of the gospel loses its power, from the fact that while the congregation is exhorted to believe and to turn to God, on the one hand, it is nevertheless considered as occupying common ground with believers as regards worship, so that souls are thus kept in false security, and the word is deadened.

Worship, on the other hand, is enfeebled, because those who are considered as members of the church of God, and who receive the Lord's supper as such, are continually kept in a doubting state of soul, and from growing in grace, through the constant exhortation to believe and be converted.

Such, however, was not the custom of the apostles. They preached to the multitudes in the market-places, in the synagogues, and wherever it was possible so to do; but they met together *with those who believed, their own disciples, in upper chambers*, and there they prayed and

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gave thanks, broke bread, and exhorted one another (Acts ii. 44; iv. 23; xx. 7, etc.).

To the multitudes they announced "faith and conversion for the remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts ii. iii. etc.). To disciples gathered together as churches, "having believed, you have been sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise." "You were converted from idols unto God to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven." "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God?" "And you are not your own, you are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (Ephes. i. 13; 1 Thess. i. 9, 10; 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20).

But when the first disciples were scattered, and had become mixed up with the world, the present worldly state of things was introduced into the church. One portion of the Christianised world, retaining perhaps truer principles about sacrifice and worship than others, has nevertheless completely profaned this holy truth of sacrifice by its unholy ceremonies and absurd usages. On the other hand, another portion of the Christianised world, while openly protesting against this sacrilegious profanation of the sacrifice of Christ, has, nevertheless, almost entirely laid aside all true principles of worship, in the place of which preaching has been established, together with a worldly system of forms of prayer read from the pulpit. How could it be otherwise, when Christians had forgotten the assembling of themselves together? for who could pray, sing, or give thanks, in a word, "worship in spirit and in truth," excepting those "who, after they had believed, were sealed by the spirit" (John iv. 24; Ephes. i. 13).

Doubtless in many small assemblies, such a state of things has been felt to be unscriptural, and in part remedied; but a measure of this confusion will ever remain, so long as the assembling of the children of God is not realised.

The meeting together of several Christians for the purpose of preaching the gospel is also sometimes called

a "brotherly meeting or assembly," and not only so called, but put in the place of the united worship of the children of God. Most assuredly do I believe that the Christian is authorised to preach Jesus individually or collectively with his brethren, as he may feel led so to do. I believe that such assemblies are blessed for the conversion of sinners; but I do not believe that they can ever occupy the same ground as the meeting together of the children of God in the name of Jesus; for no where do I see, either in the teaching, or in the practice of the apostles, that preaching the gospel to the world was ever the rallying point for Christians. No! the table of the Lord, this is our common centre, around which we are all one; for we are all partakers of that one bread (1 Cor. x. 17). We find the following expression in the Word of God, designating the meetings of the saints, "the disciples met together to break bread" (Acts xx. 7).

A meeting for preaching the gospel is not properly the "gathering together of two or three in the name of the Lord, with whom he has promised to be present in their midst." Of course, I do not mean, that the Lord is not always present with his children, and more especially so when their purpose is to bear testimony to His grace unto the world, in order to bless that testimony; but I maintain that it is not to such a congregation that the promise above quoted applies. Indeed, who would dare apply to such an assembly, composed for the most part of unbelievers, the promise of the Lord's presence joined as it undoubtedly is to this other word, "All that ye bind on earth shall be bound in heaven." No, because it is evident that those who have not the Spirit of God, cannot discern the things of God, nor decide about them.

For similar reasons, it is evident that meetings for preaching the gospel, can in no wise be assimilated to those assemblies of the first disciples, of whom Paul speaks (1 Cor. xii. xiv.) Nor can such a congregation be compared to the one spoken of by Paul (Heb. x. 25), where he says "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together." For, indeed, a congregation assembled

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to hear the gospel preached, is not the assembling together of Christians, nor is it ever enjoined on them as a matter of obedience to the Word. For instance, I am perfectly free as a Christian to attend a meeting for preaching the gospel, whether as preacher or hearer; but the Word of God leaves that to my spiritual judgment, and never enjoins it as a positive command. For, indeed, it might so be that there were twenty meetings for preaching the gospel in the place of my residence, and would to God there were more! But which of the twenty ought I to frequent?

But since Christians are called to meet together around the table of their Lord and Saviour for worship and mutual exhortation, there is a positive and express command not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together.

But to conclude this part of my subject, I would say, that to preach the gospel individually or collectively is an excellent thing, but that it is never presented to us in the Word as the rallying point around which Christians are called to meet, thus manifesting their unity to the world. To present it as such, is to impart false notions concerning the unity of Christians; it tends to divide rather than to unite.

It is painful to be obliged to speak of so much failure and disorder in the church of God. But if we refuse to probe the wound, how can we apply the remedy? Such, however, is the conduct of many who seem resolved to shut their eyes to the evil, employing useless remedies of their own invention. "They have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly." In order to bring about the union of Christians, we find some establishing meetings for the preaching of the gospel, others prayer meetings, missionary meetings, in short meetings of every kind and character. Christians go to Paris and to London at a great expense to meet with Christians whom they have never known before, and whom perhaps they will never meet again on earth; but as for leaving the various sects of Christians, arranged according to man's wisdom or tradition, give up this, I say, in order to meet with Christians of one's own

locality, around one table, and under the promised guidance of one Spirit, why, it is not even to be spoken of—anything else but that.

And yet the Lord asks for nothing else but that. He does not impose on our consciences such an endless variety of meetings of different kinds; He does not call us to manifest our oneness in so expensive and difficult a way, impracticable for the large majority of Christians, union for a few days only during the year, and therefore not based on true principles. What the Lord requires, is possible for all to realise, noiseless and without pomp, true in its character, and in all seasons, viz., simple union with those of our brethren in whose midst His providence has placed us. And the world, too, expects such union at the hands of Christians. Whence does it happen, says the world, that after having met with Christians assembled from the four quarters of the globe you come back to your town and your village to resume your former course, living apart from the two or three Christians of your locality worshipping and breaking bread, each one in his own sect.

What, indeed, is such union? Alas! we must confess the truth, the world is in the right. Such is not the union the Lord seeks among His dear disciples; and this brings us back to this principle of scripture: that all who are born of God should meet in the name of the Lord, and under the guidance of His Spirit. This alone will put the preaching of the gospel and worship in their respective places, giving to each its true character.

This is the true basis for the union of the children of God.

For my own part I can own no other; and I believe indeed that schism is just this—the laying of another foundation for the union of the children of God, than the one above mentioned. For example, Christians invite me to meet with them, but in so doing I must also worship and break bread with the world.—I refuse.—Who is schismatical? I who refuse? No! but those who, by uniting the world to the worship of the children of God, put me on the obligation of refusing, that I may not disobey the word of our Lord, who forbids

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His children to have communion with unbelievers (2 Cor. vi. 14—18, Acts ii. 40). Now nothing can oblige me to disobey the word of our Lord, although it may have been forgotten, and laid aside for many a century.

Other Christians again invite me to meet with them, but then I must recognise such or such a particular confession of faith, or approve of such or such a system, or own a ministry not established by God.—I refuse.—Who is schismatical? Not I who refuse, but those who impose such and such conditions on our meeting together as the Lord has not imposed on His children. And to appeal to numbers, or to practices long established, or to any authority whatever, in a case where it is a question of principles, is nothing short of the principle of popery.

It is evident, moreover, that in meeting with Christians who have embraced a particular system or form of church government, I am necessarily more or less separated from those who have embraced another system of church order; and thus, since each is occupied in erecting a different compartment in the Lord's fold, these varied forms and systems become so many hindrances to the gathering together of the sheep of Christ's flock in one fold, under the guidance of one Shepherd.

Those, on the contrary, who impose on their brethren no other conditions than those required by God Himself, viz., the being born again and separation from the world, such Christians do what they can towards the manifestation of the true oneness of the children of God, and are in no wise guilty of schism, however frequently such an accusation may be brought against them.

These are my reasons for abstaining to join myself to any of the various denominations of Christians known as Vaudois, Episcopal, Presbyterian, Methodist, Independent, or Baptist Churches, etc., etc. Not that I do not heartily desire the union of the children of God, but, on the contrary, just because I do desire it, and can in no wise be a party to the setting up of so many hindrances towards its accomplishment, which is the case as regards all such systems of man's invention. For these reasons, I take my stand simply as a Christian, standing

on Christian ground. On such ground, I can give the hand of brotherly communion to all who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Saviour and mine, walking together in the same paths, unless man's ordinances and systems interfere. On such ground, too, I can invite all my brethren to meet together as one in Christ, a privilege which I should undoubtedly lose all right to exercise, were I to join myself to any of the numerous sects into which the family of God is divided in our days.

Would that this blessed unity of the children of God were better understood—that it were more realised! what blessings might we not expect for the Church and the world! If, for instance, all the children of God dwelling here at Nice were to meet together in one place, and in one spirit, what light, what encouragement, what consolation would they not receive from the exercise of the different gifts bestowed by the Lord on His children! What a testimony to the world! Might we not hope that we should then witness, to a certain extent, the accomplishment of that word of scripture—“*If all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all: and thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth*” (1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25). But in order to do this, we must give up all those carnal distinctions of Protestants and Vaudois, of Episcopalians and Presbyterians, etc., etc.—we must lay aside all pretensions to the delegated authority of a minister, a pastor, or an evangelist, from whatever church, academy, or committee such authority may proceed.

We must consent to be nothing but Christians, disciples, brethren, meeting together under the guidance of the Spirit, ready to receive all that He may give us, were it through the channel of the weakest amongst us; and ready, also, to be used by the same Spirit according as He may deign to use us for the edification of our brethren.

The Spirit is one; if we give ourselves up to His direction, He is mighty by His divine power to gather

together the scattered members of Christ's body, for the realisation and manifestation of our unity in Him. But if, while desiring this unity, we nevertheless continue to seek it in connection with the varied systems of man's ordering—if we seek to uphold such systems, in any measure or degree, or by any skilful compromise whatever, we leave the sure and solid ground of the Word of God, which knows nothing of such systems, nor of such compromise, to place ourselves on the sandy foundation of man's institutions, which have ever varied, and will ever vary according to times, circumstances, and locality; and which, in short, have never remedied the evil. Instead of walking by faith, expediency would be our principle in such a case.

Brethren, the Word reminds us that "the time is short," and that the Lord is coming. Do we wish that He should find us mixed up with the world, and divided amongst ourselves, like unto those who beat their fellow-servants, and eat and drank, and were drunken? O no; but rather like unto Israel, who, waiting for the promised deliverance, separated themselves from the Egyptians, to meet together as one family, in all the places of their habitation, around the paschal lamb, the symbol of their deliverance.

Thus separated from the world, and meeting together as one family, in our varied dwelling-places here below, we, too, are called to await the return of our blessed Saviour, shewing forth His death, and exhorting one another unto love and good works.

For occupying such ground, and leaning no longer on Egypt for help, we shall increasingly and blessedly experience the Lord's own faithfulness, and the sufficiency of His word and Spirit, in all that appertains to the gathering together and direction of His saints here on earth.

Thus our gathering together unto Himself will daily and increasingly become the real object of our hope, being enabled to join in the cry of the Spirit and the Bride—

"COME, LORD JESUS."

Nice, December, 1853.

N^o XXIII.

REMARKS ON PUSEYISM.

I AM satisfied that the great business of the Christian, the great utility of such a work as "The Present Testimony," is to bring before the saints, and the world, if they will read it, the great principles of Christianity, and more particularly when they have been buried under the rubbish of man's mind, plentifully heaped up in the early ages, and built up by schoolmen in the middle ages with Aristotle's help; and to bring forth from the revelations of the word the unsearchable riches of Christ, and the thoughts and ways of God. This is the true preservative against the errors and seductions of the time; and indeed nothing else will preserve from them. Still I suppose it may not be wholly useless, though an inferior part of Christian service, to point out any thing peculiar in the forms of evil, the notice of which may help to clear the minds of God's children from them; or to bring before the watchful eye of the saint the bearing of facts and events in the current of evil which Providence allows to go on, or of which, in order to bring about blessing, it may hasten the development upon earth. Governed by this feeling I send you a few words on Puseyism, and, first, a remark or two on the census of religious denominations. There is one effect of the late census in this respect, which probably has not struck all who have read it. The number of sittings afforded by bodies not belonging to the Establishment is, to those it provides for the population, as 93 to 100; but owing, as it appears, to the greater number of evening services, the attendance on places outside the Establishment is in point of numbers some half million more than that of those who frequent the opportunities it

nate, in contrast with a risen, Christ, the Source of life and blessing, the Head of a new race. Furthermore, I deny entirely that Christ incarnate is the pattern-man to a renewed race. He is the man who is a pattern in His walk; but sinlessness in flesh is not the pattern-state for man in the flesh, in whom "this infection of nature doth remain, yea, in them that are regenerate." For Christ, in the birth of our nature, was made like unto us in all things (sin only excepted), from which He was clearly void, both in His flesh and in His spirit. . . "but all we, the rest, although baptised and born again in Christ; yet offend in many things; 'and if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.'" If it be replied, "But it is only asserted that we have the principle of it in us in this life, and it will be perfect in another," that is precisely to assert that a risen and glorified Christ is the pattern-man, and not an incarnate one here below. We are to be conformed to the image of God's Son, risen and glorified, and as we have borne the image of the earthly then bear the image of the heavenly, in its full display and development.

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BE not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein. We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle. For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the High Priest for sin, are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.

N^o: XXIV.

COMPARISON OF ADAM WITH NOAH.

THE first earth and the first heavens, having been overflowed by the waters of a Deluge, perished under the judgment of God. They yielded their place to the heavens and the earth which are now (2 Peter iii. 6, 7). In the Holy Scripture the beginning and the end of both these worlds is given to us, together with the details which belonged to each.

The history of the first world ends before the end of the eighth chapter of Genesis: that of the world which now is begins then, and continues, with the exception of a few verses, nearly to the end of the Revelation. This first history seems indeed short, when it is considered that it contains the account of what passed during 1650 years. But the ways of God are not as our ways, nor God's thoughts as our thoughts; and it becomes us to receive with humility what He has given to us, and to study it with attention. If God has written a book, He has done it with the object of presenting Himself, of revealing Himself to us. This is the explanation of most of the difficulties which we find in the Bible, namely, the end which God had before Him in writing the book.

Let us examine first the beginning of Genesis. The first chapter (including the first three verses of the second annexed to it) gives to us the history of the Creation, and makes known to us the glory of the Creator under His name of GOD; the majesty of His being, His creative and eternal power, and His goodness. In the fourth verse of the second chapter we find, for the first time, the name of Jehovah; but this name is here joined with another, viz., with that of God (Elohim). It is the same under which He manifests Himself in the work of creation.

He calls Himself by the name of Jehovah-Elohim in His relationship with man set in the Garden of Eden. The happiness of Adam, as a creature blessed and in relationship with his Creator, is the subject of this chapter. Jehovah-Elohim confides to his creature (Adam) the care of the creation in the garden. Man is lord and centre of a system. In the third chapter we have, first, the Serpent and the fall of man; and then the first rays of the light of divine grace in the declaration to the Serpent: "The seed of the woman shall bruise thy head;" lastly, man sent (in grace) forth from the Garden of Eden, lest he should eat of another tree, and abide for ever a sinner. It ought to be remarked, that directly the human family is outside of Eden—the place of their blessedness as creatures—the name of Jehovah is found *alone*, without the addition of that of Elohim. In the fourth chapter, we have two great divisions of the human race, of which one part is for God, the other declares itself for the world. The fifth chapter is little more than a genealogy—all important as it is, and precious as are the details of it. The three following chapters (that is to say, the sixth, seventh, and eighth) give us the judgment of this first world, and its destruction on account of sin. The goodness and the power of God created this present world. His patience (based upon the excellency of One who was to come) was manifested towards it after its fall; but the evil having been fully developed, the just judgment of God came down, and the world perished. It may be remarked, that this mixture of evil with good, which took place at the close of this first world, was its capital sin. Sin having been brought into Eden, and having received a sanction from Eve and from Adam, God drove them out from the garden, and pronounced upon the creation a curse, in order to testify His displeasure. After that, He separated into two distinct classes the posterity of Adam; but when this divine separation had been despised, and that these two distinct races had thoroughly confounded themselves together, then was the world judged by its Creator. Sin and the determination on man's part that all should be mixed together, ought (it would seem to me) to be considered, above everything, insupportable, in

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a world which had been created in order to show forth the attributes of its Creator.

Noah, the first man of the world that now is, was also the last man of the first world. Born in sin, he found grace in the eyes of God, who showed forth His compassion and His mercy by him, and in saving him and his family. If the first world was in the beginning created by God for the manifestation of His own glory as Creator, as we read in the first chapter of the epistle to the Romans, and then given to man as innocent; the existence of the present world has to do rather with the showing forth of the patience and long-suffering of God [chap. viii. 21, and chap. ix. 11—17]; and it was put into the hands of a sinful man (as we shall soon see) in order to try if he was capable of governing in the name of God, and restraining evil.

There appears to me a contrast, in the first place, between the power committed to Adam and that entrusted to Noah; and, in the second place, between the normal state of the earth under Adam driven out of Eden, and that of the earth under Noah, come out (according to God's own invitation to him—chap. viii. 6) of the Ark.

As to ADAM, we find (chap. i. 26):—

“And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. . . And God blessed them, and God said unto them: Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth,

As to NOAH, it is written (chap. ix. 1):—

“And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them: Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth. And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air; upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hands are they delivered. Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things. But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat. And, surely, your blood of your lives will I

and every tree in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat."

require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God made He man. And you, be ye fruitful and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein."

Remark particularly these expressions:—"And the *fear* of you and the *dread* of you shall be upon all creatures;" and, "Surely your blood, the blood of your lives will I require;" and, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed."

The animals, the birds, the fishes, were placed,

An exception being made of their life, In the hands and under the power of Adam, and of his family.

The food of man was the green herb, seeds, and fruits; that of the other living creatures on the earth, the green herb.

Adam's employment was to dress and to keep the garden.

Without an exception of their life, Under the fear and the dread of Noah, and of his family.

To the food of man in the time of Adam, flesh without the blood was added.

The responsibility of putting to death the man who should kill another was given to Noah.

It cannot fail to be perceived, that in the case of Noah there was a beginning afresh: there was a new relationship between man, as head, and the creatures, with new privileges and a new responsibility. The Charter of it was new likewise. And the strength of this power—this responsibility to watch over the life of man, and of all creatures in this respect—was the bringing in of a *principle* which is explained to us in the thirteenth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, namely:—the principle of magistracy; for the sword is the ensign of government: and the sword was put into the hands of a man in the

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good providence of God, for the government of sinful men. It is of the utmost importance to understand well the truth which is here presented to us. God, according to His counsel and wisdom, willed the maintaining of good order here below; and, in order thereunto, He placed the sword in the hands of Noah. The thought was as of God Himself, the Creator and Sustainer of all things (present in Spirit, though hidden from human sight) to place in the hands of a man the responsibility of governing amongst men, though sinners, and in a world not renewed. It is the basis of all government: and, notwithstanding that Noah failed in his duty (as we read at the close of the same chapter), the truth that man upon earth ought to be governed by a man is of divine appointment, and is likewise (as we shall soon see) a testimony to One who is to come.

As to *Providence*, I have another remark to make, which is connected with the expression of the two judgments which God pronounced upon the two earths:—

Chap. iii. 17—19.

“Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it (the fruits) all the days of thy life. (18) Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee, and thou shalt eat the herb of the field. (19) In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat (thy) bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.”

Chap. viii. 21.

“And the Lord smelled a sweet savour; and the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man’s sake; for the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more everything living, as I have done. (But) while the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease.”

It ought to be observed that Noah, as also his children, belonged to both worlds: their persons had been saved out of the ruin of the first world, and grace had given them entrance into the second. Dust they were indeed, and unto dust they were to return; but, notwithstanding the state of their bodies being the same, there was, nevertheless, a difference in the sentence of God upon the two different earths.

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Because of thy sin—"Cursed is the ground."

"Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee."

On one hand, it is a judgment, on account of sin, passed against the earth.

Though there is only sin in man, I will not again any more curse the ground.

"Seed-time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease."

On the other, it is a declaration in favour of man, notwithstanding his sin.

And what throws still more light upon this is *the Covenant*—the charter of this present world's privileges (chap. ix. 8):—

"God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying: And I, behold I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you; and with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the Ark, to every beast of the earth. And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth. And God said: This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you, and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud. And I will remember my covenant which is between me and you, and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. And the bow shall be in the cloud, and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth. And God said unto Noah: This is the token of the covenant which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth."

What a contrast between the charter of the privileges belonging to Eden and the charter of the privileges of this present world! Human obedience to the command not to touch of a tree; the goodness of God in providence towards a sinful world—these are the two principles.

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The Rainbow continues to this day, and is the ensign of this world, and proclaims it to be the world of the providence of God's goodness, notwithstanding the sin of which the rainbow is in itself the memorial.

When I consider these things, I cannot help seeing in the first world the manifestation of God as Creator, and in the second, the manifestation of God as the Preserver of men as sinners upon the earth—the God of Providence. As to both worlds, the testimony is restricted to the earth with the physical heavens which belong to it, and does in no way affect the heavenly places which belong to another subject:—that is to say, to the heavenly glory, concerning which there is no instruction in the Old Testament.

In the case of Cain, we find the ordinary error of the unconverted with regard to the protection of God. The heart estranged from God does not recognise that God has an object of His own in His providence and long-suffering patience:—that is to say, redemption; and that He alone can explain His views correctly. Their own ease and enjoyment being the object and end of men, they cannot suppose that God is not of the same mind as themselves;—nothing blinds the mind so much as selfishness.

It is beyond a doubt that the Lord Jesus is called the second Adam, and that He is to be the One that comes in in His place as Antitype, and that likewise (though He is not called the second Noah) He will nevertheless have to fulfil the duties connected with governing amongst men in a time to come.

SECTION II. Adam the Type of Christ.

1. The Lord Jesus as the second Adam.

1 Cor. xv. 44—47. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, the first man, Adam, was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening [life-giving] spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural, and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven."

As such He is the Head of a race:

Ver. 48. "As is the earthy such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."

What a precious gift of the love of our heavenly Father is the written word, which gives us all the details of this blessed subject which we may well desire to know. In the first place there is a remark to make as to the description which God gives us of the creation in the first chapter of Genesis.

When describing the origin of the heavens and the earth, we read, "God created the heavens and the earth" (ver. 1), but when describing the particulars of what took place in the first five days, it is always "*and God said*"; (ver. 3), [the first day] *Let there be light*; (ver. 6) [the second day] *Let there be a firmament*; (ver. 11) [the third day] *Let the earth bring forth grass*; (ver. 14) [the fourth day] *Let there be lights*; (and ver. 20) [the fifth day] *Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life*: (ver. 24) the sixth day begins in the same way, "And God said, *Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind*,"—but the description of the creation of man which follows is not thus given. (Ver. 26), "And God said, *Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, etc.* So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him, male and

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female created He them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful . . . and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl (see also chap. ii. 7). And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils of the breath of life; and man became a living soul."

After this the distribution of food is related: one kind for the human race and another kind for the remainder of the creatures. In reading the first and second chapters of Genesis it is to be remarked, that in the first place, in the beginning, man was made lord over all that was in existence, to govern it in blessing, and his dominion was to be exercised over the creatures who belonged to the creation here below.

2nd. That in his primitive state he was a living soul.

3rd. That there was an inheritance prepared on purpose for him—the garden of Eden.

4th. That his duty there was to dress and to keep the garden (15).

5th. That the possession of all was given to him, and was to remain his on condition of his not eating of one single tree (17).

6th. That his authority over the creatures is recognised by God, because that God brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them, "and whatsoever Adam called every living creature that was the name thereof."

7th. That having no companion, the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone: I will make him a help meet for him" (Ver. 18). (Ver. 21) "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib which the Lord God had taken from man, made He a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh."

Christ is the Antitype of Adam.

The fulfilment of each of these seven particulars is found in the antitype.

The fifth chapter of the epistle to the Romans tells us that Adam was “the *figure* of Him that was to come.”

And it indeed is not difficult (with the Word of God open before us, and our hearts open to what is contained in it) to trace points of resemblance between Jesus the Son of Man and Adam who is called Son of God (Luke iii. 38).

We shall see that it is Jesus *as Son of Man* who is the antitype of Adam the Son of God.

The force of the figure is most evident in its application to Jesus as *Lord*,^a and as to the Lordship of Jesus.

Phil. ii. 5—11. “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus: who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is Lord* to the glory of God the Father.”

How this explanation of the connexion which there is between the humiliation and the glory of Jesus comes home to the hearts of the children of God!

Acts ii. 36. “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God has made this same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.”

Ephes. i. 18. “I pray that God would open the eyes of your understanding . . . that ye may know . . . what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power,

^a It seems to me that the name *Jehovah* is not well rendered by “Lord.” For *Jehovah* is a name expressive of essence, and imports that He who bears it is the fountain of life—has life in Himself: but the name of *Lord* implies only that which flows from a certain position of possession and government belonging to some one. No being who is not *Jehovah* can be made or can become *Jehovah*—but God can communicate the kingdom and the possession of all things to whom He will.

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which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under His feet" (ver. 19—22).

Apoc. xix. 16. "And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh these words written—'King of kings, and Lord of lords.'"

All that we can say, with regard to the extent of His dominion of whom we now speak, is, that it is over the whole universe. According to these verses, every thing both in heaven, and in the earth, and under the earth, shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

As Adam was a living soul, so also Jesus is, as second Adam, a life-giving spirit. That which was perhaps the distinctive feature of the first Adam was that he was a living soul; but it was not thus with Jesus, for to Him belongs a glory infinitely higher and distinctive, even that of being the life-giving Spirit. He is the only begotten Son of the Father and Son of God from before the foundation of the world. But in grace He has taken this glory also—a glory which supposes not only that He has eternal life in Himself, but also that He has the power of communicating it to whom He will. And this He could not do, to such sinners as we are, unless He had borne upon the cross the judgment of the wrath of God against our sins. For He did not become the resurrection in order to raise the dead (that is all that have died) out of their graves, without being also "the life" in order to give eternal life to all those who believe on Him.

John v. 19—29. "Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do: for what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth Him all things that Himself doeth: and He will shew Him greater works than these, that ye may marvel. For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and

quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom He will. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent Him. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in Himself; so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself; and hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

2 Cor. iv. 3—6. "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."^b

Parallels according to 1 Cor. xv., between

THE FIRST ADAM	AND	THE SECOND ADAM.
Death	ver. 21	The resurrection of the dead.
In him all die	" 22	In Him shall all be made alive.
Sown in Corruption	" 42	Raised in incorruption.
„ Dishonour	" 43	„ in glory.

^b Perhaps this is the proper place for presenting the truth, that in each of these two is found a distinct headship: that is to say, Adam is the head of one race and Christ is the Head of another (see Rom. v. 12—21, 1 Cor. xv. 20—49.

John iii. 6 (and read 1—8).

Gen. v. 3; 1 Peter i. 23; John i. 12—14; 2 Peter i. 3, 4, etc.

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Sown in weakness . . .	ver. 43	Raised in power.
„ A natural body . . .	„ 44	„ A spiritual body.
The first man, Adam, was made a living soul	„ 45	The last Adam was made a quickenng spirit.
Of the earth, earthy . . .	„ 47	The Second Man, the Lord from heaven.
As is the earthy, such are they also which are earthy	„ 48	And as is the heavenly, such are they also which are heavenly.
As we have borne the image of the earthy . . .	„ 49	We shall also bear the image of the heavenly.
Flesh and blood	„ 50	The inheritance of the kingdom of God.
Corruption	„ „	The inheritance of incorrup- tion.
The sleep	„ 51	The change.
Death or the desert	„ 52	Raised incorruptible or changed.
Corruptible	„ 53	Incorruptible.
Mortal	„ „	Immortality.
Death	„ 54	Swallowed up in victory.
Death and its sting	„ „	Death without sting and the grave without victory to the believer.
The grave and its vic- tory	„ „	But thanks be to God who giv- eth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.
For the sting of death is sin	„ 55	
And the strength of sin is the law	„ „	

But how in every way does the second Adam surpass in excellency the first!

Let us briefly examine the contrast which is found in the fifth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans:—

“By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned—for until the law sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression, who is the figure of Him that was to come” (ver. 12—14).

“But not as the offence, so also is the free gift; for if through the offence of one [the mass] many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. And not as it was by one that sinned so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. For if by the offence of one, death reigned by one, much more they which receive abundance of grace, and

of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by One, Jesus Christ. As then by the offence of one judgment came upon [rather 'toward' than 'upon'] all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of One the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, even so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous. Moreover the law entered that the offence might abound; but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."

Let us now consider who will be His associates in glory—the joint heirs, through grace divine, of His blessed position. For this subject of the joint inheritance is that which has been most studied; and in all difficult subjects the door which is best known is always the one to go in at.

Perhaps the consideration of the double marriage of the Lord will help most minds to lay hold of that which is distinctive to "the Church."

Thus we are taught in the Word that Jehovah is to be known as the Bridegroom, the Husband of the Holy Land, and that the Church is the espoused of the Lamb.

The Earth married to Jehovah (Isaiah lxii. 2—5.) :—

"And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness [O Jerusalem], and all kings thy glory; and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name. Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of Jehovah, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God. Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken: neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate; but thou shalt be called Hephzibah (*my good pleasure is in thee*), and thy land Beulah (*married*);^c for Jehovah delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married. For, as a young man marrieth a virgin,

The Lamb as the bridegroom of the Church (2 Cor. xi. 2) :—

"I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy; for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin unto Christ; but I fear lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity which is in Christ."

(Eph. v. 23.) "The husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ also is the Head of the Church, and He is the Saviour of the body: as then the Church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, even as

^c Compare Matt. iii. 17 and ch. xvii. 15.

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so shall thy sons marry thee : and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee."

Jehovah had over the rebellious children the right of a (master) Baal (Jer. iii. 14, 31—32.) "I was a master [bahal] unto them, saith Jehovah" [rather master than husband—lord]: but in Hosea ii. 16, He says : "And it shall be at that day, saith Jehovah, that thou shalt call me, My husband [Ishi]; and shalt call me no more, My baali [master]:" and (verse 19) "And I will betroth thee unto me for ever ; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving kindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness : and thou shalt know Jehovah. And it shall come to pass in that day, saith Jehovah, that I will hear ; I will hear the heavens, and the heavens shall hear the earth. And the earth shall hear the corn, the wine, and the oil ; and they shall hear Jezreel. And I will sow her unto me in the earth ; and I will have mercy upon Lo-Ruhamah [her that had not obtained mercy]; and I will say to Lo-ammi [not my people], Thou art my people."

Moreover, we find in Jeremiah that the Holy Land will lose the name of her virginity by taking that of her husband (chap. xxiii. 5, 6):—"Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice upon the earth. (In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely):

Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it ; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing ; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh ; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church : for we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery : but I speak concerning Christ and the Church. Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself ; and the wife see that she reverence her husband." (Compare this portion with that which is found in Genesis ii. 21—24).

(Apoc. xix. 16). "Alleluiah : For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him : for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white : for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage-supper of the Lamb ! And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God."

(Chap. xxi. 2.) "The Holy

and this is His name whereby He shall be called [this king]: THE LORD [Jehovah] OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."

(Chap. xxxiii. 14—16.) And we find the same name used in speaking of the wife as (in the xxiii chap.) is applied to her husband:—"Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will perform that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel and to the house of Judah. In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of Righteousness to grow up unto David; and He shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land. In those days shall Judah be saved and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, THE LORD [Jehovah] OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."

In the 45th Psalm, the King is Elohim. It is by this name, rather than by that of Jehovah, that He is there presented to us; but here it is Jesus as the Son; and the bride is the earth. For, like Solomon (the prince of peace for the earth), Jesus will be manifested according to His glory, as Jehovah and as Elohim; and the Holy Land will be under the protection of His powerful arm.

City [this is after the millenium], New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." (Ver. 9, 22)

"Come hither, I will shew thee the Bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain,^d and he showed me that great city, the Holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God. . . And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it, and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it."

(Chap. xxii. 1.) "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. . . And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him: and they shall see His face, and His name shall be in their foreheads. (Ver. 16.) I, Jesus, have sent mine Angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning Star. And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst, come. And who-

^d This is during the millennium; and perhaps at the foot of this mountain is the Holy City upon earth, which is called (Ezek. xlvi. 35) Jehovah Shammah—Jehovah is there.

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soever will, let him take the water of life freely. . . He which testifieth these things, saith, Surely I come quickly ; Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

These verses which I have just cited recall to mind another portion — that of John xvii. 20—26:—"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word ; that they all may be one ; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us : that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them ; that they may be one, even as we are one : I in them, and thou in me, that they be made perfect in one ; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am ; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me : for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee : but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it : that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them."

Here then, in detail, is the evidence upon which is based the assertion, that there are two marriages yet to come:—first, of Jesus the Son of man—God-man—the Man of sorrows, who was dead, but who is risen again and glorified : the Lamb and the heavenly church, as in the Epistle to the Ephesians—in one word, of Jesus with

the body which (between the moment of His rejection by men and His return to reign) has been formed. And, secondly, of Jehovah (Jesus in His divine glory for the earth) and the Holy Land.

The contrast between the two is most clearly established by comparing Deuteronomy xxviii. and the first and second chapters of the Ephesians.

In Deuteronomy xxvii. 15—26, there is a succession of curses pronounced against the nation—terrible curses which are called down upon the disobedient Israelites—and

In the 28th chap. we are given the providential, national blessings (but still only what is earthly) which belong to Israel as obedient.

“On high, above all the nations of the earth . . . thou shalt be blessed ; . . . in the city, . . . in the field . . . in the fruit of thy body, of thy ground . . . of thy kine . . . of thy cattle . . . of thy flock. Blessed shalt thou be in thy basket and in thy store . . . and thou shalt be blessed in thy going in and in thy coming out,” &c., &c.

Everything is of the earth, earthly, and they are all temporal blessings. But read further, verses 1—14 :—“And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth : and all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God. Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground,

But in the Epistle to the Ephesians, that which is there taught us is : “*Blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places.*” “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ : according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love : having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace ; wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence ; having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself : that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth ; even in him : In whom also we have obtained an in-

and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store. Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and blessed shalt thou be when thou goest out. The Lord shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways. The Lord shall command the blessing upon thee in thy storehouses, and in all that thou settest thine hand unto; and He shall bless thee in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. The Lord shall establish thee an holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, and walk in His ways. And all people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the Lord; and they shall be afraid of thee. And the Lord shall make thee plentiful in goods, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers to give thee. The Lord shall open unto thee His good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow. And the Lord shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the Lord thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and

heritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."

Everything is in the heavenly places, and they are all spiritual blessings: all well adapted for the body of Christ: all suitably arranged for those in whom it was God's good pleasure to show forth his name of God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; in like manner that the earthly blessings will be the glorious witness to the name of Jehovah.

to do them: and thou shalt not go aside from any of the words which I command thee this day, to the right hand or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them." Everything is of a nature suited to an earthly people.

To this brief sketch of the two different kinds of blessings (viz:—blessings on earth and blessings in the heavenly places), we may add that we are never spoken to about the church in the Old Testament; but rather, about the people of God upon the earth. The church, which is heavenly, was kept as a secret by God: a mystery which did not belong to the province of Israel: a secret which God has revealed by means of his Son when rejected. After the rejection of the Son, Paul was the chosen instrument for the revelation of this mystery. The Apostle Paul assures us that the truth of this divine, this heavenly church, had been kept by God as a deep secret until his (that is to say, Paul's) time.

"Now to Him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, *which was kept secret* since the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the Scriptures of the Prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith" (Rom. xvi. 25, 26.)

(Ephesians ii. 20—iii. 12.) "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. For this cause, I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, if ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: how that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery, as I wrote afore in few words, whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and

prophets by the Spirit; that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body [*i. e.*, with Christ] and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel; whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ: and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in the heavenly places might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: in whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.”

These passages are too plain and simple to need to be explained for those whose faith is simple; howbeit, it may be well to make some general remarks, taken from the Old Testament, which may help to meet the objections most generally met with.

The promises made to Moses have not made of none effect those which God gave to the patriarchs; and the promises given to the patriarchs have not made of none effect those given to their forefathers. This is self-evident; for, to say the contrary is to make the promise of God of not so much worth as the promise of a good man, inasmuch as difficulties cannot hinder God from performing His will and fulfilling His promise if He wills it: whereas, a man of worth (though as being nothing more than a mortal man, he may lose the power of being faithful to his word) would cease to be a man of worth if he were not true to his word. But God cannot lie. It is impossible. What he has said he will fulfil. This is the reasoning of Paul in the 3rd chap. (ver. 15—18) of his Epistle to the Galatians. Though a narrow heart, and the thought that God had no respect to the Gentiles, as such, was the effect which the law produced upon Israel; ^e nevertheless, this thought was neither according

^e It seems strange that such a thought should be entertained at a time when Israel was under the judgment of God, and the government of this world was in the hands of the Gentiles.

to the prophets, nor Moses, nor the patriarchs. The Israelites were, as a nation, the witnesses for God. The nations were without God in the world. To Israel belonged the light which flowed from the possession of the promises and of the ordinances of worship of the true God—the responsibility consequent on these things. “What advantage, then, hath the Jew, or what profit is there in circumcision? Much every way; chiefly because unto them were committed the oracles of God.” (Rom. iii. 1, 2.)

If it be forgotten that the distinctive privilege of the Jewish nation was, to be the channel of God’s testimony, the thread is lost by which God intended we should form a judgment concerning this people; but, because they were the channel of testimony and of blessing too, this does in no way prevent others being likewise blessed. The unbelief of Israel, and its unfaithfulness to its distinctive privileges, has in no manner made void the blessing. The unfaithful witness and the unfaithful steward has been set aside and judged (Rom. xi.), but the blessing to which Israel ought to have borne witness remains untouched.

But that which I desire in particular to call attention to is, that the testimony which God has given from the beginning presents not only a blessing for the Gentiles (when the Jews will be blessed upon the earth), but also a blessing through the means of the Jews. They are even to be joined with them. But that of which the prophecies of the Old Testament have never foretold, is of a body taken out from among the Jews and Gentiles, and formed for the Son, during the interval which passed between the rejection and the death of the Messiah, of which both the Jews and the Gentiles were guilty, and the Lord’s return. And this body is for the heavens, and not for the earth. Here is the testimony of the prophets with regard to the blessing of the nations when joined with Israel:—

Malachi iv. 2—6, & i. 11.

Zechariah xiv. 12, & 16—21.

Haggai ii. 5—9.

Micah iv. 1, 2, 3, & v.

Daniel vii. 14—27.

Isaiah ii. 1—5, & lii.

Psalm cxlviii. 11, 14.

Psalm ii. 1—12.

Psalm xviii. 49. xxii. 23—28.

Psalm lxvii. 4, 5.

And Moses has said: "Rejoice ye nations with his people." (Deut. xxxii. 43.)

It would be true to say that Israel had been blessed more than all nations, since God has declared Himself their king; but, on this account, to say that God has despised the nations, and has had no thoughts of blessing for them, is quite another thing, and is not true.

The rebellion of Egypt and the hardness of Pharaoh's heart was the cause of the judgment that came down upon them: the conduct of Ammon, Moab, and Edom brought down on each one of them its judgment in particular. But when we consider that Israel will be the blessing for all the earth, and that the nations will be blessed through its means (when Israel will have found wisdom to prize that presence of God which was with it even from the time of its coming out of the land of Egypt), we see then that the blessing of Israel is not incompatible with that of the nations. And we may go still further; for if God takes a central place in Israel, in order to become the blesser of all the earth, Israel itself cannot have the blessing without the nations being blessed with it. There will be, without doubt, degrees of glory and of blessing; and that of Israel will be the highest. In these three passages (Hab. ii. 14, Isaiah xix. 24, 25, and Ezek. xlvi. 35) there are three concentric circles of blessing: that of the nations generally; that of those nations who are most intimately related with Israel, and that of Israel itself, which is the highest of all. And there is not a single passage in the Word of God which supposes it can be otherwise when the blessing spoken of is one to be enjoyed upon earth. For there the Jew must always have the pre-eminence; since Jesus Himself, as a man upon the earth, was a Jew; and if, in the heavenly places, the sinner from among the Gentiles is on the same level with the sinner from among the Jews, it is not so upon the earth.

It is very important to see that Jesus, as the seed promised to the patriarchs, ought necessarily to be of their race—a Jew; and that, as to things here below, all has always rolled around the Jewish people. If the blessings for the heavenly places are the most excellent, and if in

heaven there will be no distinction, nevertheless, for the earth, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob looked for a seed which, according to the verses quoted by Paul in the 4th chapter of the Romans, was to be the means of blessing, first, for the circumcision, then for the un-circumcision.

It seems to me that, admitting this scripture, it is impossible—first, to lower the position of pre-eminence which God has given to Israel upon earth, and which is even to be the means of blessing for the Gentiles ; or, secondly, to bring the Gentiles into the blessing which belonged to the Jewish nation *before* the day of Pentecost : or, thirdly, to deny that the nations will be blessed through the means of Israel, when the time of blessing shall have come in.

Upon such a subject it is difficult to stop ; but, perhaps, sufficient has been said to show not only the contrast there is between Adam and Noah, but, likewise, that it is in the *heavenly* character of His glory—not the earthly—that the Lord Jesus is the antitype of Adam.

The first man, earthy, is given as a type of the heavenly man. In the same way, Eve is the type of the Church which is to be revealed in the heavens, and we shall be glorified with Him in the heavenly places, as we see in the two last chapters of the Apocalypse.

NOAH AND CHRIST.

It remains for us to examine under what character Noah pre-figures Christ : on what principle, and in what way, Christ is, according to the Word, pre-figured by Noah.

Though there is no doctrine the authority of which rests upon nothing but a type, nevertheless, it is well to remark that a symbol recognised by God, in the Word, as a type, has more authority than a symbol which, though in itself a description of things to come, has not had the name of "*a type*" given to it by the Spirit of God. As a child of God, I dare not deny that Adam is *a type* of Christ, because the Spirit of God says so positively (Rom. v. 14). I can then say, on the authority of

God's word, there is instruction for me about Christ in the history of Adam. But I dare not say it with the same boldness as to Noah ; because the Spirit of God has not (that I know) said that Noah is the type of Christ. Nevertheless, by examining both the histories (viz., that of Noah and that of Christ), such a resemblance is found between them, as to leave a full persuasion that the Spirit of God has so arranged as to give details of Noah after the pattern of what He saw was to come in certain details as to Christ.

For example.—The destruction of the world where Noah was, is given to us by the Holy Spirit as bearing witness to the state of the world that now is (2 Peter iii. 5—7).

Noah and his family being saved out of the deluge, are given to us as a symbol of salvation through faith in Christ. 1 Peter iii. 18—21.—“ Christ has once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God ; being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit : by which [Spirit] also He went, and preached to the spirits [now] in prison ; which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing wherein few, that is, eight persons were saved by water. The like figure^f whereunto baptism doth also now save us : not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God by the resurrection of Jesus Christ ; who is gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God.

Noah and his family were hidden in the ark as we are in Christ. The danger and the fear of judgment cause us to hide in Christ, as the very same kept Noah and his family in the ark until the judgment was passed. The same judgment which destroyed the wicked saved this blessed family, and so it is with us.

^f The word translated “figure” is *αντιτυπος* (in Greek) and not the word (*τυπος*) type. But we see that in the mind of Peter there was a correspondence, which he would have us to observe, between the salvation of which Noah and his family were the objects and the salvation which is ours. The expression, *a like figure whereunto*, may have been used to show, that there is a correspondence in the salvation by grace.

The ark was of God; it was He who commanded it to be built; He protected it, and He caused it to rest upon Mount Ararat before the door was opened. In like manner, Christ came forth from God: we believe on Christ because God has commanded us to do so. It is He who is our Saviour, and it is He who has revealed to us Christ upon His throne, and we dare not come out from our place of refuge before he tells us. It would be easy to multiply points of resemblance.^g

When Noah came out of the ark, the sword of judgment was placed in his hands, for the restraining of evil in a world where God had declared His intention of manifesting His gracious providence.

During the millennium, Christ is, as to the earth, the Prince who will reign in justice; but the extent of His power is wide indeed. When He leaves the Father's throne He will take possession of the heavenly places, and He will drive Satan and his angels out of them (Apoc. xii.) How long will be his stay in the heavenly places we are not told, but there He will receive His bride and there the nuptials will take place (Apoc. xix. 1—10). From thence He will come down to the earth as King of kings and Lord of lords, always in the same thought of putting down the enemies of God and establishing righteousness. The Beast and the false prophet, the chiefs in rebellion, will be judged. He will remember Israel, and His heart will not be satisfied without blessing also the nations. He, who is, at one and the same time, called the Dragon (that is to say, he who has the power of the usurper amongst the nations), the Old Serpent (that is, the deceiver by means of subtilties and wiles), the Devil (or accuser), and Satan (the adversary), is taken and thrown into prison for a thousand years. There is an attempt also made by some of the nations before His power is acknowledged (according to Ezekiel xxxviii.), and perhaps also by treacherous ones (as in Ps. xviii. 44, the strangers have yielded me feigned obedience or lied to me), but His reign is established not-

^g The judgment upon Israel, as a nation, in the end, presents in full development, and that in connexion with Christ, what the present redemption, according to Peter, does in moral principle (see Isa. liv. 9).

withstanding over all the earth. This is the last of the dispensations, and will include, both in the heavens and on the earth, the principles of all those that have preceded it.

It is a subject for consideration, under what name Jesus will execute the judgments that are coming; whether it is the same as He will bear when Head over the whole earth during the millennium, or not.

The description of the conqueror sent forth by God, in Rev. xix. 11—17, does not give us the glory of Jesus in His character of second Adam, nor, as it seems to me, of Noah, nor of Melchizedek. It rather recalls to us the position of Abram (Gen. xiv.).

The millennium is but a dispensation. It is not the eternal state. It is certainly the most important of all the dispensations; but still it is but a dispensation. It consists of two parts--of which one is in the heavenly places, the other in the earthlies. The two portions, though closely united together, are still each of them distinct.

Above, there will be the Father's house, and the glorious courts of the divine government. In the Father's house, the Father and His only-begotten Son, with the adopted family (full in that day of the Spirit of God), will have their rest and enjoyment in affections perfectly heavenly, because they are perfectly divine.^h In the glorious courts where God will be revealed with the Lamb in the midst of the Church, which (filled with the Holy Ghost) will become the Tabernacle prepared by God for His habitation, and will be also the seat of His government, and of the glory which belongs to the pre-

^h The presence of the person of Jesus, the God-Man, and that presence alone--can give us any just idea of the blessedness which awaits us. In Eden, man was set at a distance from God infinitely great; because the Creator is infinite, and His creature is finite. In Jesus, while, on one hand, we see in Him all the glory both of His Father and God; on the other, we see in Him, as Son of Man, a perfect enjoyment of all that which is in God and His Father. The new and divine nature which He communicates to us through means of His Spirit, is capable of tasting all that of which He tastes, and of enjoying all that which is to Him a subject of enjoyment.

sence of the Divine Majesty. There Jesus, the Son of Man will appear as the Lamb, and likewise as the Son of God, now Heir of all things, on account of His service to God in His work of redemption.

On earth below will Jesus likewise be manifested and glorified; but it will not be exactly with the same glories as those displayed on High.

On the earth He will be manifested—

As Jehovah (Ps. cx. 1 and 5, etc.);

As God (Ps. xlv. 7, etc.);

As Jehovah, the God of Israel (Ezek. xlv. 2, Ps. cxviii. 26, Matt. xxiii. 39, etc.).

He will exercise all His offices likewise—

As Son of Man (Daniel vii. 13—18, 27, etc.);

As Son of Abraham, or Head over the Household of Faith (Gal. iii. 16—18, Rom. xi. 26, 32);

As Son of David or King of Israel (Ps. cxxxii. 11, 1 Kings, viii. 25).

Jesus will exercise likewise all the officesⁱ which are

ⁱ God, the Creator, has put man, His creature, to the proof in the most gracious way, by bestowing on him free gifts. He has bestowed on him a series of them; but man has shewn himself incapable of profiting by them, for by a want of obedience, most criminal on the part of a creature, to the wise and good prohibition of his Creator, sin entered in at almost the first. First, God put into the hands of Man the garden of Eden; a scene filled with blessedness for man in a state of innocency; then, when sin had entered, God held forth a promise of One that was to come. He drove out from His presence the family of Cain, who became the founder of a world morally at enmity with God; but sin continued to increase on the earth. A little further on in the history, having saved Noah and his family by the deluge, He gave them a new earth in possession, even that which now is. A covenant was made with them in Providence, and the sword of judgment was put into their hands. The fall of Noah as an individual in these, his privileges, is found in the same chapter. He was drunk in his tent. Very soon after, the impious attempt to build the Tower of Babel shewed the state of ruin in principle of this earth.

Then God gave the call to Abraham—a call which brings in the principles of the heavens; but if Abraham at the call of God left his country and idolatry, he did not leave behind him his kindred; he took with him Terah and Lot, and, alas! he failed in obedience, for, doing his own will—he went down into Egypt. Terah died, and Lot, ceasing to walk like a believer, is left be-

necessary, whether for the bringing in of that dispensation, or for the regulating and sustaining it; or for the

hind ; and Abraham alone becomes the depositary of the promises both of the heaven and the earth by means of the promised seed. Father of the household of faith, both Jew and Gentile, and the nations outside, are to be blessed upon earth through this seed, and the heavens also are to be filled with blessing by means of the same. The promises and the covenants given to Abraham, are renewed to Isaac and Jacob ; but in the case of each we see that the creature is utterly incapable of retaining the blessing. After this, God essayed to bless Egypt as well as the countries around it, through its means, by introducing there the Jewish people, who have been (since He divided the nations) the central object of His providential care upon earth. The result we only know too well.

In the case of each of the three patriarchs, it is the call of the individual as such, and the individuality is always kept up, because the hope of the promise is of *one* only seed. Nevertheless, the family of the individual is likewise always found—that is to say, the husband and his wife. In the case of Israel in Egypt, it is a company of families. Joseph went down into Egypt alone ; he found there a family—a wife and children ; and the families of his brethren were joined to him there. When they left Egypt, they were a great nation. And this nation God set in Canaan head over all the people of the earth ; because God was to be their king. In giving them ordinances for their own blessing, God gave them a mediator,* priests and prophets, a most suitable manner of worship for God as God of an earthly people—the Law, etc. But the nation was rebellious, and preferred the golden calf to God, and despised His ordinances. God, after having shewn forth His long-suffering towards Israel, removed them from their place in judgment, and the supreme power in the earth was given into the hands of the image in Daniel. The heart of the Beast was given to this image, and it lent its power to the Jews for the murder of the Messiah—the Desire of nations. God made use of this image, and of Satan, who is the spirit working in it, for the chastening and the punishing of Israel ; but whilst the sin of Israel and of the nations was coming to perfection, God gave a new thing to another witness, even to all who believe.

* The thought of a mediator, of a high-priest, of a prophet, etc., is not received from Moses ; though these truths may be for the first time clearly presented to us under that dispensation. The need in man, which called for the offices, the services of such an one, existed from the very first. The first filaments of these truths are found when man is first found as a sinner in the presence of God.

If the revelations given by God are examined in the order in which they follow one another, it would seem to me, that in each succeeding step, there is more of God and less of what is human, in the place in which God would

deliverance, at its close, of the vast body of believers which will be found in the midst of an unreal profession. In Him, likewise, will be manifested, and fully sustained by Him, all the responsibilities which God has entrusted to the hands of man from the creation up to the moment of the commencement of the millennium. From the beginning man has lost everything, and up to the end man will lose everything, by reason of his spirit of independence. Christ regains everything, and keeps all in his hands, because of His spirit of obedience and dependence.

The audacity and the folly of independence of God, and the beauty and value of dependence are thus manifested.

set man. Adam, after his fall, is left much more to himself, and with much less light than Noah; and under Moses, the details of the relationship of man towards God are much more multiplied and various. As now, it is evident that all is of pure grace, by means of pure grace, as the end is characterised by being pure grace.

The good word of the grace of God, the Father of Jesus, in the heavenly places—having for its foundation *His* resurrection and taking up into heaven; who on earth was put to death on the cross—this has been given to all who believe. For it is in the cross—the perfect expression of man's hatred against God—that God has found the victim of propitiation for sin—the Lamb, who has been slain, risen, glorified; and from Him flows to all who believe, the gift of His Holy Spirit. But where is this witness? What has become of this Church? The heart of man has not known how to divide between things which differ; it has not judged the flesh and the world which have crept in secretly into the house of the living God: Satan has entered in, and has taken possession of it; and the Church, which calls herself such, has willingly sheltered itself under the skirts of the image of Daniel, or under the protection of the four beasts. It is also her desire that the Law should be the root of all blessing. The kingdom established in mystery has failed in the hands of man; and all, as we see in the Apocalypse, is very soon to be judged; must be judged, in order to give place to Him, who alone has been faithful to God. And Jesus will very soon bring in that which will be the perfect antitype of all that has gone before it. The paradise of God will be safe in His blessed keeping. The distinction between the family of God upon the earth and those who are driven out from his presence will be sustained. He will maintain the rights of God upon the earth. He will bless the heathen through the means of Israel; will be king, mediator, and high-priest for Israel upon earth, while at the same time He will appear in the heavenly places with a heavenly church.

And since all is of grace—all in order to shew forth the grace of God, and the glory which belongs to Him as Redeemer, so He will not be alone in whatsoever way He is pleased to manifest Himself. Having saved by faith and His Spirit a remnant out of each dispensation, He will cause them to appear with Him in His glory—blessed happy witnesses of grace towards a lost race.

As to these two principles, it must be added to the creature's shame (in his spirit of independance) that obedience was but duty on his part to his Creator, and it is even, the creature's own glory: but to the praise of Jesus can it be said, He was voluntarily obedient in the position of the humbled servant, and even took it of His own free will, in order to glorify God and His Father, and to shew how blessed a thing dependance is, by the salvation of poor sinners.

Two other important truths remain to be noticed:— first, that all that He will do on earth during the millennium, He will do not only as being of one mind with God in His counsels, but also in His character of servant of a God not seen to be present. Secondly, that the millennium brings before us (on this same earth where sin has abounded) not only the contrast between His conduct as God's faithful servant, and the conduct of man, faithless to all the trusts which God has committed to him, but also (alas! to our shame) that dispensation will give us another specimen of what man is.

The sin of man will be shewn in its true light, and the root of sin will also be shewn, and man as a sinner will be without excuse. When Christ was upon earth the world had nothing by which to take hold of Him, and Satan had no power against Him. And why? Because He was God's perfect *servant*. His will was, to be always in subjection to God's, and God's only. The answer will be made to me, Yes: and because His flesh was not wicked as ours is. True! but how is it that our flesh has become wicked? Ah! it is because Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden (whose flesh was innocent and pure) renounced their position of dependance. They thought and *chose* for themselves. But this is not all. God in His grace has presented us with a testimony as to the work of His Son as the Saviour. God does not now demand from me obedience as He once exacted it in the garden of Eden, but He addresses Himself to me as a poor sinner. What He desires is, that we, poor sinners, just as we are, should take the position of dependance. He desires that Jesus should be honoured as the Saviour. What can we do for the glory of God? We are only poor

ruined sinners. This is true. But if it is God's good pleasure that His Son should be glorified by the salvation of poor sinners, to refuse to believe is not only to refuse to be blessed, but it is refusing to glorify the Son of God in that which I can glorify Him (for I am a poor sinner), it is persisting (to my own proper ruin) in the spirit of independance of God. God be praised that we have found to our own blessedness the value of dependance! For, by believing in Jesus, and in the grace of God through Him, we have found that neither Satan, nor the world, nor the flesh, can do anything against us. The strength which faith in Jesus gives to a poor sinner, is beyond the strength of the flesh, of the world, and of Satan. It is *the will* which holds fast man in his enmity against God. Man would in everything be God, but God will not give His glory to another. That which now passes every day upon this earth in its state of estrangement from God, will likewise take place on this same earth in the very light of the Divine presence in the millennium, and thus the real root of sin will then be uncovered.

In the dispensation to come—all that which now acts upon the flesh to strengthen it against God will be removed, and everything that could teach it the value of obedience will be present. A fresh trial will be given to man; and it will be seen that nothing is wanting but the opportunity to shew it, that, if left to himself, he would prefer to be the companion of Satan (if only he can do his own will) rather than be blessed by renouncing his own will for that of God. After terrible judgments, Satan will be bound (Apoc. xx. 1, 2). The world whose god he is (2 Cor. iv. 4), and prince (John xiv. 30), will be delivered from his tyranny. All creation will rejoice, instead of being, as it is now, subject to vanity (Rom. viii. 19—21); but not only is the absence of evil promised, but also the presence of all that is good. Jesus will have it in possession, and what must be the state of this world when made ready for Him, and when ordered and ruled by Him! The earth will be full of the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea (Hab. ii. 14); Israel, and Egypt, and Assyria,

will in a special manner be blessed (Is. xix. 24, 25).^k But Israel, nevertheless, will have a glory distinguished from all the rest, and Jerusalem will be the centre of all its blessings (Ezek. xlii. 48). This is where the glory of the heavens and the glory of the earth will be united (John i. 51; Is. iv. 4—6).

In that day man will see what are the fruits of the obedience of Jesus shed abroad (to the joy of the Saviour's heart) amongst the poor. Man will rejoice in it; he will feel the blessedness of it; but all this experience cannot alter his flesh, nor make a lasting impression on him. Satan comes out of his prison, and all the ends of the earth follow in his train in open rebellion against God and His Christ. This is what the flesh is, yours and mine, dear reader, in itself.

1. Noah, as has been already remarked, was, so to speak, the man belonging to both worlds. Thus, in the millennium, we see that Christ will be both in the heavenly and the earthly places, and in each of these, his spheres of glory, there will be that which belongs to both the old and the new system. In the heavens, the new things, in themselves perfect, will be manifested in the old heavens still unchanged. On the other hand, on earth the old things will be set directly under the order and power of the new things. Though upon the earth men will not be in glorified bodies, and man there will not necessarily be renewed in soul and in spirit. But the general state will not be as up to that time—viz., a state of darkness with some rays of light, brilliant in themselves, but in appearance weak by reason of the contrast with the thick darkness which reigns. Light will be shed abroad everywhere, and the darkness will be hidden. Christ will be there, and the fulness which is in Him will shed itself abroad through everything in blessing, in holy blessing, and blessing all around it, but in a world which is not changed. This must be particularly observed. Within the city in the heavens all will be perfect. There will be no sin there; God himself will be there and the Lamb. For those who shall be found in this city, there will be no fall at the end of the dispensation. All within the city will be perfect. But it is not

^k This is the extent of the land promised to Abraham.

the same with that which is without the city, though it be found in the heavenly places. All that is there is not perfect. The heavens have not been changed; and if righteousness which remaineth for ever will be manifested within the holy city, it is not necessarily the same throughout the heavenly places. Glory can in itself be perfect without the circumstances of its manifestation being so likewise, as was perfectly the case with the Lord Jesus in the transfiguration. On earth redemption will display itself during the millennium as being still in development. There its manifestation will be not only displayed in connection with a dispensation, for sin will be still upon earth, and redemption will be there seen still developing itself. In heaven another thing is seen as to its blessedness. God does not come into the earth except in His relationship with Jesus the Saviour. Sin is found there. Even at Jerusalem (Is. lxxv. 20) and perhaps close to the temple (Ezek. xlv. 22, 25) there will be judgments which will shew this; but where sin is, there redemption is not fully accomplished.

2. If the dispensations be examined in succession, it will be seen that there are intervals between them; intervals in which the one just passed is judged, and the one to come is in principle established. It is very difficult to understand these intervals. In the first place, *in appearance* they partake of the principles, the nature, and the character, both of that which precedes and of that which follows them; but they are not exactly either of one or of the other; a certain action of God is displayed in them, and God is beyond all dispensation. Who can comprehend what passed in the time that Jesus was upon earth? One of these intervals is found between the dispensation that we are in and that which is to come. And if the retrospect of the last of these intervals makes us feel our ignorance, the difficulty is *not less* when we look at that which is *to come*. On the contrary it is increased; first, because it is the future with which we have to do; and secondly, because the ripening of sin in the present dispensation, and the glory of the dispensation to come, are both much greater than the sin of the past dispensation and the glory of the present

one; and thirdly, because the manifestation of the Divine presence will be greater, for in the last interval Christ, contrariwise, rather sought to hide His glory.

The heavenly places are now in the possession of wicked spirits (Eph. vi. 11, 12), and the earth is under a power not of God. Evil is coming to perfection in the Jewish nation, among the Gentiles, and in that which the Church boasts itself to be, and is so called. Very soon the cup of their iniquity will be full. Deliverance and judgment are at the door. When and how will the next of these intervals commence? Between the moment that the Lord leaves the throne of God, His Father, and the establishment of His kingdom down here upon earth, all that passes is within, it seems to me, the coming *interval*—the overlapping of the two economies. The forming of a new witness to the Jews and to the Gentiles—the manifestation of grace for a remnant out of both of these—the judgment of Babylon, of the Beast, and of the false prophet—the judgments upon the earth—Satan bound, etc.—would all seem to me to be during the *interval*; and I do not otherwise understand the purifying of the earth (Apoc. xix. 11 to xx. 3, and Dan. vii. 9—12). But the purifying of the heavenly places (Apoc. xii.) and the rapture of the saints, are these within the coming interval or not?¹ Perhaps the fifteenth chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians, as evidently containing in principle all that takes place between the first coming of Jesus and the establishment of the new heavens and the new earth (for ver. 28 is after the Millennium), might aid us.

The difference in the experience of Enoch and Noah, both believers, has been well remarked upon. The first was taken at once into the glory of God in heaven, with-

¹ The question is of interest, because, as it seems to me, it involves two important matters, viz., 1st. Are these two things wrought by God for Christ, He being still hidden in God on the throne, or are they the first expressions of the service of the Son of man coming out in service from the throne? and 2ndly, Are these two things connected primarily with the mystery, or with the kingdom? I add, that what seems to me to constitute the great difficulty in connexion with the subject, is our want of light upon the kingdom set up in mystery.

out having either seen the judgments or tasted of death; and this is the calling of the Church. The second was saved out of the midst of the divine judgments pronounced against His evil generation, and against an earth which had corrupted itself, and at length is found upon earth. This is what awaits Israel. The first was the man for the heavens; the second the man for the earth.

I would add, that the second, namely he who was saved out of the midst of the judgments, took no part in the execution of the judgments. His history as to the earth, which was given into his hand, begins at the conclusion of the judgments.

It is a subject for consideration, under what name Jesus will execute the judgments that are coming, whether it is the same as He will bear when King over the whole earth during the Millennium.

The description of the conqueror sent forth by God in Rev. xix. 11—17 does not give us the glory of Jesus in His character of second Adam, or of Noah, or of Melchizedek. It rather recalls to us the position of Abram (Gen. xiv.).

Even before Noah came forth from the ark grace in God had shewn itself, for God remembered him, and made a wind to pass over the earth. The waters were assuaged; they decreased and were abated; the ark rested as soon as possible on Mount Ararat. God sent to him, in the mouth of the dove which he had sent forth, an olive leaf plucked off. God invites him to come out of the ark, and gives him the earth in possession.

“Bring forth with thee every living thing, . . . that they may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth.”

“And Noah builded an altar, and offered burnt offerings upon the altar. And the Lord smelled a sweet savour; and the Lord said in His heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man’s sake, for the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more” (Gen. viii. 21, 22).

“And God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth” (Gen. ix. 1).

If Christ begins to manifest Himself in the character

of Noah, before the judgments are poured out, and that the bringing in of grace is before His entering into possession of the earth, then the connexion that there is between the name of Noah^m (Rest) and Jesus as the Peace will easily be seen (Isaiah xlii. 1—8, Mal. i. 11).

3. Sin was not in the place where God set Adam, so there will be no sin in the place which is the antitype of Eden—the paradise not on earth, but the paradise of God Himself in the heavens. There was sin in the place into which God brought Noah, as there will be in like manner on the earth during the Millennium.

4. The appearing of Christ upon earth the same as in the case of Noah, is followed by a declaration of judgment to be exercised. The sword, or the right of putting to death, which God placed in the hands of Noah, recognised that sin was there. It was the order of God's government for the restraining of evil, but still ever for the good of man. Government there will be, in one sense, in heaven, where there will be no sin; for God is the Author of order. But the sword supposes sin, and that the power of God is there in order to restrain it.

This is what Christ will do. He will maintain (even through the means of judgments) peace and righteousness. He will reign in God's name for the sake of man, as He once suffered, because He would glorify God and save man.

Instead of becoming drunk like Noah in his tent, where he discovered to his own children his nakedness and shame, the joy of Christ, the true Nazarene, will be divine; and the more this joy will be disclosed, the more, at the same time, will Christ be revealed as the only refuge, the only robe of righteousness, the only One that is worthy.

5. Neither will the sign of the rainbow, that token of the covenant and of Divine Providence, be wanting to Him. But instead of being an accidental thing, which the light of the sun and the memorial of judgment produces from time to time, it will be the ornament of the

^m It was Lamech who called his son Noah, saying, "This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed."

person of Him who sustains all, and will sustain all in His reign in blessing, ever turning away the wrath of God by the righteousness of His reign.

6. He will reign amongst the nations—the despised Nazarene will reign; and He will bless, according to the desire of His own heart, all those who seek the glory of God. He will not allow of the tower of Babel, that expression of the confederacy of the flesh against the judgments of God. He will have the extent of the conquests of Nimrod under His sceptre, and all the habitable world will acknowledge Him.ⁿ

7. The wife of Adam had a name proper to herself, that is to say, “Eve,” (The Mother of) *All Living*. In the counsels of the grace of God, Jerusalem from above is recognised as such, and we shall reign with Him; but the wife of Noah is not recognised as such, she has no name.

The closing scene will be according to the Divine purpose beforehand. For, after having shewn that this expression of His divine grace and condescension, in a way quite new both in heaven and earth, has not had the effect it ought to have had upon man, the Lord will close up the whole by allowing Satan to come out from his prison, in order that His own power to keep His own, and the true character of man when left to himself may be fully recognised.

To sum up all in few words. It would seem to me, that the contrast between Adam and Noah will be again found in Christ, in the two spheres of His glory during the millennium. In the heavens He will be in principle the second Adam during the millennium, I say *in principle*, because I acknowledge that that which is shewn forth to us in the heavens during the millennium is to have its full unfolding after the millennium. Upon earth Christ will be ruler for God.

ⁿ In a Jewish map which I have seen, the kingdom of Nimrod is traced out as containing all that which God promised to Abraham; and this kingdom will be under Jesus, as Son of Abraham. But that which will be His right, according to what God gave to Noah, will be the whole habitable earth.

That which follows the millennium is of all interest, but it is not my subject now. The character of Christ's reign, and the manifestation of His grace in a way quite new within it, are also of more than interest, but I dare not touch upon it now. I shall be thankful if these feeble remarks should be the means of directing the attention of any one more competent than myself, to shew the connexion that there is between the first position in which the different members of Noah's family were set and their position at the end. Their position at the time of the Lord's appearing it is easy to trace up to a certain point, and is of the highest interest in studying the word of prophecy.

FRAGMENT.

How *perfect* the Son does His work in John's gospel. He takes up *one sinner after another* throughout chapters i.—x., and does not leave them for the hand of any other; but one and all He perfects Himself, giving them the sense of this, that on leaving His presence they had already found all they wanted as sinners:—no ordinance, no apostle, no church, was needed to improve their state.

He takes up *each* of His saints in chap. xiii., and washes them "clean every whit," fully ready, like accepted guests, to enter the house in a way worthy of it.

He takes up *the house* itself in chap. xiv., and prepares it for them—does this service all Himself—and then He takes up His saints *all together*, returning and receiving them unto Himself, to the house thus prepared for them. Chap. xiv. again,

There is a completeness and a singleness in all these operations. He does each service *Himself alone*, and does it *perfectly* like the Son of God.

1 TIM. iv. 1—3.

Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.

2 TIM. iii. 1—9.

This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was.

END OF VOL. VI.