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EDITED BY

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# The Christian's Library.

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## Introduction.

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**I**N commencing a new monthly magazine we are undertaking a service to which for some considerable time past we have felt a distinct leading. This leading we most sincerely trust is of the Lord Himself. Were it not for this we should tremble to add one more to the multitude already in existence.

We are well aware that some may feel disposed to question the wisdom of such a course. We value the help, the suggestions, and even the criticisms of all our fellow-labourers and brethren in the Lord. We desire, too, to remember the exhortation, "All of you be subject one to another" (1 Pet. v. 5), and yet we must ever remember that all service should be undertaken in direct responsibility to the Master Himself. Our only warrant for service either by pen or tongue should be that He under whose authority we lie has said, "Do this;" may it be said of each one of us, "He doeth it."

I.

The professing Church is in ruins—it is broken, scattered, and divided, and yet this does not in the smallest degree relieve us of the holy responsibility as well as the blessed privilege of building up ourselves in our most holy faith (Jude 20).

We desire that *The Christian's Library* should have a voice to *all* Christians. We especially have before us the needs of those who are young in the faith; but whether our readers be young or old, we earnestly desire that these pages shall contain help, food, and truth for all saints.

We rejoice to know that our God is the God of all grace; there are no bounds to His love, no limits to His mercy. The blessed gospel message contains good news to ALL sinners, and so likewise our God would have His people to “comprehend with ALL saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height,” &c. (Eph. iii. 18). He would have us, too, not only to have “faith in the Lord Jesus,” but also “love unto ALL the saints” (Eph. i. 15).

No doubt in a day like this, when the people of God are often found doing what is right in their own eyes, utterly regardless of “Thus saith the Lord,” love to the saints, as well as faithfulness to the Lord, may require a walk in separation from much that is current around us. Disobedience to the Word is never the right path for faith to walk in. Neither latitudinarianism on the one hand, nor sectarianism on the other,

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is the right state for the children of God, whether in days of apostolic power, or in times of confusion and weakness such as those in which our lot is cast. May our gracious God give to each a right discernment as to these things!

We earnestly solicit the help of the Lord's people in the issue from month to month of *The Christian's Library*. In three ways may help be given.

First, by continual prayer for both contributors and editor, that nothing may be inserted but what will meet with the Lord's approval—that all may be for Christ's glory, and for His people's blessing ;

Second, by contributing short, simple papers calculated to build up the soul in its most holy faith, and to encourage the heart amidst these times which are so perilous and difficult ; and,

Thirdly, by sending the magazine to Christian friends whether at home or abroad.

With these prefatory remarks we send forth our little magazine, accompanied by the prayer that if we begin at our Master's bidding we may have grace to stop when He bids us so to do.

“But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life” (Jude 20, 21).

Brethren, pray for us!

THE EDITOR.

## Some Ritualistic Doctrines Briefly Considered in the Light of Scripture.

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**S**INCE matters have arrived at the present crisis in the Church of England, chiefly through the leavening influence of the Oxford Movement, it does not require any very keen observation to convince an unprejudiced observer that Anglicanism is now on an inclined plane, and Romanism is at the bottom. Whatever differences may exist between the two systems in questions of Church government or certain external forms, the root-principles and main doctrines now advocated by Anglicans are, at bottom, the same as those of Romanism. The distance which separates them has been becoming gradually less; and the longing for a united Christendom—a Church from which the idea of schism and failure can be effaced, and which would present a united front in the world with all the prestige of ancient associations—the longing for an ideal Church such as this seems to act like a magnet in drawing Anglicanism towards the fold of Rome.

But, it will be asked, should there not be unity? Yes, surely, and moreover, as we often hear it said, our Lord prayed “that they all may be one” (John xvii.). Truly the unity for which He prayed was most precious; but it was a unity



## SOME RITUALISTIC DOCTRINES. 5

of which He Himself would be the centre, and which was to be brought about by the Holy Spirit attaching hearts to Him, and therefore to one another. "I," He says, "if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me" (John xii. 32); that is, as the crucified Saviour, lifted up on the cross, He would become the attractive centre, not for Jews only, to whom He spoke, but for Gentiles also—for *all* who would come to Him. This was a unity produced by a work in the hearts of disciples or believers, a unity founded on truth; but the unity which so many desire to-day is an outward unity, at the expense of truth, and therefore no true or divine unity at all.

As surely as England drifts under the power of Rome, so surely will she decline from the position she now holds as a free empire of the first rank. Both history and experience have shown that, whenever a people get under the power of a system which makes what assumes to be the Church the director of men's consciences in moral and spiritual affairs, curtails individual liberty, and silences individual inquiry in religious matters, their vigour of mind and freedom of judgment in ordinary things decrease in like manner. The history of the Middle Ages, as well as that of some nations at the present day, proves this. Individuals in such a system are like parts of some great machine, moved by one mainspring. Rome is

a most powerful and well-organised system, governed from one centre, and kept under complete control. From its remotest outposts to its centre, and from its most menial servants to its highest dignitaries, all is controlled by its supreme head—the Pope; who, again, is moved by that astute and able body of men, the College of Cardinals.

Now to deal effectually with the principles which we see gaining ground every day, the same principles which in times past brought about this great system, and which reassert themselves in Ritualism, is not an easy matter. What is most important to grapple with in such a movement is not that which appears on the surface—this is more the fruit produced: it is the underlying doctrines and principles which have produced this bad fruit. Any intelligent reader of Mr Walsh's book, "The Secret History of the Oxford Movement," can see that the same thing characterised that movement as marked the introduction of false doctrine in apostolic days—that is, it works its way under the surface; at the beginning in secret, and gradually more openly, as people are prepared to receive it. In the Epistle of Jude we find that "certain men crept in *unawares*"; so in 2nd Peter there would be false teachers amongst them "who *privily* shall bring in damnable heresies"; and in Galatians, "false brethren *unawares* brought in, who came in *privily* to spy out our liberty

## SOME RITUALISTIC DOCTRINES.

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which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage." To these last the apostle Paul says he "gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you." He made no terms with these false teachers; he was not looking to maintain a place for himself; he was standing faithfully for "the truth of the gospel," and as to this, he would make no compromise whatsoever.

One striking feature in the present controversy is the weakness and supineness of those who take the place of responsible guides. They are indeed too much governed by a desire to maintain the outward unity so necessary to their position, instead of by a determination to uphold the truth at any cost; and they are too much in sympathy with the doctrines objected to, to take any decided action in the matter. It has been well remarked that in a war of antagonistic principles, when vital questions are at issue, the man who temporises proves that he has really no principle at all. Sooner or later he will find himself overcome by that which he has failed to combat faithfully, and, like a castle built on sand, he will disappear before the flood, leaving nothing to mark the place where he stood but the memory of his own weakness and folly. If we do not mistake, the fate of the bishops will ultimately be something like this.

It would be a mistake to suppose that mere

protests against what is particularly offensive or illegal will either counteract the evil or prevent people from falling into it. Spiritual evils can only be successfully met by spiritual weapons—"Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts," and the only really effectual weapon is the "sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God." Bearing this in mind, it is proposed, in the future numbers, to examine briefly, in the light of Scripture, some of the leading doctrines which have been instrumental in forwarding what we know as the Ritualistic system.

F. G. B.

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## Backwards and Forwards.

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**S**TANDING as we do upon the narrow border line that separates one century from another, we cannot but look backwards and glance forwards. To every Bible student the past century appears filled with most suggestive events. In its second quarter a most remarkable movement of the Spirit of God took place. Some earnest and godly men were led to a diligent study of God's Word; there was a recovery of long-lost truths. The simple gospel of God's grace was apprehended with a clearness which set multitudes of

believing souls free from the bondage in which they had been held under law, and introduced them into the liberty of grace.

Along with this there came the revival of the blessed and purifying hope of the coming again of the Lord Jesus Christ, to take up His people from the earth to the mansions prepared for them on high. It became clearer and clearer that Christ's coming, and not death, was the proper hope of the Christian. Great was the blessing to the whole Church of God of the recovery of this long forgotten truth. The midnight cry went forth—

**“ Behold the Bridegroom, go ye out to meet Him ”** (Matt. xxv. 6).

Wherever this testimony has reached, the slumbering saints of God have been roused to trim their lamps, and thus to give a brighter light for Christ in this dark world; while, on the other hand, sleeping sinners have been wakened up to flee from the wrath to come.

Besides all this, which is indeed a blessed theme, and which we would gladly pursue did space permit, prophetic truth began to be more clearly understood, especially with reference to the future of God's earthly people, Israel, and their restoration to the land of Palestine.

The prophetic Conferences which took place at Powerscourt House (the first one was held from 4th to 7th October 1831) created a deep

impression amongst Christians far and wide, and led to an earnest and prayerful study of Scripture on these matters, the blessed fruits of which are being reaped to-day in the clearer and fuller understanding of all that God has revealed in His Word will shortly come to pass, both in connection with the Church, His heavenly people, and the Jews, His earthly people. The Church will be caught up to meet her Lord in the air in the twinkling of an eye (1 Thess. iv.), and Israel will then become once more the centre of all God's dealings with the earth.

The future of all the nations of the earth became better understood. The subject down for consideration at the second Powerscourt Conference on *Thursday, 27th September 1832*, was this:—"An inquiry into, and a connection between, Daniel and the Apocalypse." And as to this Conference, a letter, bearing date 15th October 1832, a letter now before us as we write, informs us:—"There was also marked, and I may almost say, universal reference to the Spirit; it characterised in a peculiar way, I think, what was set forth. We had . . . prayer together, morning and afternoon, which helped us much . . . ; and I found it a great blessing to my own soul in the matter. God's presence and Spirit has, I think, been very graciously with us."

Much that was at these Conferences for the first time discussed, and upon which much light

## BACKWARDS AND FORWARDS. II

was graciously given, we to-day see evident signs may be nearing a speedy fulfilment.

The last two or three years a great impetus has been given to the study of prophetic truth, and very large numbers of the people of God who had strenuously resisted the truth of the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ are now opening their hearts to receive it. For this we render thanks to our gracious God and Father.

The close of the century, then, witnesses these remarkable movements—a revival of interest in the blessed hope of the Lord's speedy return ; an unprecedented activity amongst the Jews to return to their own land, there to establish themselves as a nation amongst the nations ; a rapid increase of the power and eastward influence of the great Russian empire\*—all foretold in the prophetic Scriptures ; to this we may add the remarkable developments in Africa, which most probably are preparatory to the appearance of the King of the South spoken of in Daniel xi. All these things are intensely suggestive to every Bible student.

We are indeed living in times of thrilling import. Wars and rumours of wars are in the air. All the nations, armed to the teeth with deadly instruments of destruction, are watching intently and with feverish interest every movement of their neighbours, both far and near.

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\* See "Russia's Destiny."

Reader, we feel a serious responsibility resting upon us to point out these things, and to urge upon you a prayerful study of the Bible. We dare not fix a date for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we verily believe that the signs of the times are most significant. Not only are we nearing the end of the century, but the end of the dispensation is at hand.

The Church's sojourn on earth is about to close. The Lord is at hand. Are you ready to meet Him? Christ made peace through the blood of the cross. Is that peace yours?

“Being justified by faith we have

### **Peace with God**

through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. v. 1).

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

A. H. B.

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## **The Gift of the Holy Ghost.**

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“**W**HY do you not pray for the gift of the Holy Ghost?” said a Christian lady one night after a Scripture-reading.

“Because, having believed on the Lord Jesus Christ for eternal salvation, we have received the Holy Ghost. Hence we read, ‘The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy



## THE GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST. 13

Ghost which is given unto us'” (Eph. i. 13; Rom. v. 5).

“But are we not plainly taught by our Lord Himself to pray *for* the Holy Ghost? Did He not say, ‘How much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?’” (Luke xi. 13).

“True. It was quite right then, before the Holy Ghost came; but our Lord had to die and rise again, and ascend to the right hand of the Father, before this could be; for we read in the Gospel of John that ‘the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified’ (chap. vii. 39). But where, after He came down on the day of Pentecost, do we read of the apostles or any of the saints praying *for* the Holy Ghost? On the contrary, do they not constantly refer to the Holy Ghost as *dwelling in* the believer, and in the Church? The fact is that the world does not believe He is here because it cannot see Him, and the believer knows His presence and dwelling in him, not because he sees Him, but because Scripture says so, and he realises His gracious operations in him in various ways; and especially in His taking of the things of the Father and of the Son, and showing them unto him, shedding abroad the love of God in his heart, causing him to cry, ‘Abba, Father,’ and to confess that ‘Jesus is the Lord’ (John xvi. 15; Rom. v. 5, viii. 15; 1 Cor. xii. 3).

“But I suppose you pray for a greater measure of the Spirit?”

“How can I, if the Holy Ghost Himself dwells in me? If it were merely an action of the Spirit in me, or a certain amount of influence of the Spirit which I had received, I might *then* ask for more. But while this might have been true as to the saints who lived before the Lord had accomplished redemption and was glorified, nothing can be clearer than the Holy Ghost being a divine Person, co-equal with the Father and the Son. The Father sent the Son; the Son came, took flesh, and died for us; and when Jesus had gone into heaven itself, the Holy Ghost came down and took up His abode in those who were freed from their sins by the Saviour's blood. The Holy Ghost is a distinct Person from the Son who died for us, and from the Father who sent the Son, and yet He is one in divine essence and Godhead with the Father and the Son. The Holy Ghost is called ‘God,’ He has divine attributes, and it is He by whom we are sealed and indwelt till the day of redemption. How, then, could I ask for a greater measure, when the Person Himself dwells in me? I might and do ask to be strengthened with might by the Spirit in the inner man, to abound in hope by the power of the Holy Ghost, that sinners may be saved by the Spirit working in them, and such like; but where in the Scriptures of the apostles is there

## THE GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST. 15

an idea of a believer asking for a greater measure of the Spirit?"

"But do you not look for a further outpouring of the Spirit?"

"Most certainly I do; for God has declared, 'I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh,' which, I judge, will be in the millennium, because the prophecy refers to deliverance in Mount Zion and Jerusalem. This same prophecy was partially quoted by Peter on the day of Pentecost to show, from the signs which accompanied it, that it really was the coming of the Spirit, and not carnal excitement, as some of them supposed" (Joel ii. 28-32).

"But what I meant in asking this question was, Will there not be a greater outpouring of the Holy Ghost in the Church?"

"How can there be, if the Holy Ghost Himself is here in consequence of Jesus, the Son of God, the Accomplisher of redemption, being glorified as Man at God's right hand? Where is there such an expectation held out by the apostles? On the contrary, does not Paul give us a most appalling picture of 'the last days'? Did he not warn the saints of grievous wolves not sparing the flock, seducers waxing worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived? Did not Peter predict there would be 'false teachers . . . denying the Lord that bought them. . . . And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be

evil spoken of,' &c.? And did not loving John also say, 'Even now are there many antichrists, whereby we know it is the last time'? Surely, then, the apostles did not look for what some call a greater outpouring of the Spirit; nor could they, because the Holy Ghost Himself, the other Comforter, was here, and to abide with us for ever. It is this which invests the subject with such solemn importance."

"Then I suppose you would object also to pray for a fresh baptism of the Spirit?"

"If you look at Scripture, you will see there that, in reference to the gift of the Holy Ghost, our Lord said to His disciples, 'Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high' (Luke xxiv. 49); and the same writer tells us that Jesus added, 'John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be *baptized with the Holy Ghost* not many days hence. . . . Ye shall receive *power*, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be my witnesses,' &c.; and in the next chapter we are told that the Holy Ghost did come, and we see the spiritual *power* that followed (Acts i. 5-8, ii. 1-7). But if we turn to 1 Cor. xii. 13, we shall see what the baptism of the Holy Ghost is—'By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body.' The baptism of the Holy Ghost, then, was the uniting of all believers together into 'one body,' by uniting them all to Christ the Head in heaven, and to one another on earth as members

## THE GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST. 17

one of another. We are, therefore, spoken of as 'members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones'; and can this ever need to be repeated? The idea of a fresh baptism of the Spirit has no place in Scripture.

"The truth is, that Scripture teaches us who have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ that God dwelleth in us by the Spirit which He hath given us; that He dwells in our bodies, has been sent into our hearts to guide us into all truth, and teach us all things; and that by Him we are anointed, united to Christ, sealed; and that He is the earnest of the inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession. (Read prayerfully 1 John iii. 24; 1 Cor. vi. 19; Gal. iv. 6; 2 Cor. i. 21, 22; Eph. i. 13, 14.) The Holy Ghost also dwells in the Church on earth (1 Cor. iii. 16). He is the power on earth for everything which is the work of God in souls. It is by the Spirit through the Word that sinners are brought to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and have eternal life. They are thus 'born of the Spirit,' and therefore 'born of God'; and *then* He is sent forth to dwell in them. 'Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.' We are therefore enjoined not to 'grieve' Him; and as it is by His power 'gifts' are used for the ministry of the truth, it is also said, 'Quench not the Spirit.' 'As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.'" H. H. S.

## Feet Washing.

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**V**ERY precious and significant is the action of the Lord in the thirteenth chapter of John, where, at the conclusion of the paschal supper, He washes His disciples' feet. To the opened eye of faith it sets Jesus before the heart in the *present* activities of His love for His own. That which Peter at the moment did not comprehend, but which he should know as he was told "hereafter," we now understand by the power and teaching of the Holy Ghost, and according as we enter *consciously* into this grace of Christ, of which this scripture speaks, do we enjoy our present position of association with Himself, as those who are "His own" in the world.

But let us, by the Spirit's aid, follow this action of the Lord in the simple and touching way in which it unfolds itself before our eyes, as John narrates it.

The hour was come for Jesus to "depart out of this world unto the Father." The work which the Father had given Him to do *on earth* was, in the spirit of His mind, accomplished. The cross anticipatively was passed. The touching memorial of that love which is stronger than death, and which many waters cannot quench, had just been partaken of by the disciples. The betrayer was

about to consummate his dark and dreadful work, and with it would close all connection of Jesus with men, even His own, upon the footing on which He *then* stood. Those He so loved He would have to leave behind Him in the world. He had loved them while in the world Himself, and they, though yet in the world, would still be the objects of His love—"He loved them unto the end." Through all time, and through everything, would they be loved. Separated from them in person for a time He must needs be, but His love for them would ever be the same.

So felt the heart of Jesus as He looked upon His disciples as round Him they sat at the paschal board. But not only did He feel how He loved them, but He felt that all their blessing depended on Himself. He knew that "the Father had given *all* things into His hands."

The work of their redemption had been given to Him by the Father, and in His own *mind*, though the *fact* of it was still future, He had done it—done it infinitely well. The labour of His love for them in this was completed. The supper was the witness of it. But this was only part of the things given into His hands. Another part remained. "He was come from God, and went to God." He must bring them to God also—bring them into that fellowship and glory into which He was Himself about to enter.

Such were the deep and mighty thoughts of love and divine purpose that filled the heart of

Jesus as He looked upon His own. But how should He, when they could no longer see and hear Him, make them understand what His love would yet further do for them? How make them feel that He was still their servant, and that all their blessing depended on Himself in the activities of a love that could never change.

The abiding memorial of His dying love He had just put before them. Whenever they saw that broken bread and poured out wine, His words, "This is My body which is given for you," and "this is My blood which is shed for you," would come sweetly to their ears, and make them think of His *dying* love; but how should He in figure set His *living* love before them by an abiding presentation of it, and make them realise their association with Himself in the place He was about to enter for them?—"He riseth from supper and laid aside His garments, and took a towel and girded Himself. After that He poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded."

What a sight for their wondering eyes! That the Lord whose power they had witnessed so oft, whose glory on the Mount of Transfiguration they had seen, the One whom they knew to be "the Christ, the Son of the living God," that He should stoop to the lowest of menial service, and wash their soiled feet, might well call out from Peter, as about to wash *his* feet the Saviour



knelt, that passionate inquiry, "Lord, dost Thou wash *my* feet?" Peter loved his Lord, but little he knew the depth of that love, which from the height of divine and heavenly glory had come down to serve him. Little did he know the need he had of all *that* love had done, and would yet do for him; how *low* that love would have to stoop; how *constant* the service of that love would have to be.

The Lord tells him this—"What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter." But this was not enough for that ardent heart, and, still ignorant, he saw nothing in his Lord's action but that which was degrading to Him, and submit to that in his own person he could not, and exclaims, "Thou shalt never wash *my* feet." The necessity for that humiliation he did not feel or know, and so deprecates it, as once before—with reference to that of which the bread and wine speak, the cross—he had done, in those words which called forth that solemn rebuke of the Saviour, "Get thee behind Me, Satan; thou art an offence unto Me, for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." *There*, as it were, Peter would have stood between the Lord and the work that would glorify God and save sinners; in this Peter was Satan's tool, and it was more than ignorance, and hence the severity of that rebuke. *Here* Peter, through mistaken zeal for the Lord's own honour, would have stood between the Lord and his own

blessing, so the Lord merely tells him, "If I wash thee not, *thou* hast no part with Me;" *i.e.*, it would prove he was not one of "His own," and could have no part in the heavenly blessedness into which He was about to enter.

Only by the exercise of love, in a service such as the washing of their feet was meant to illustrate, could Jesus have "His own," while in the world, enjoy fellowship with Himself in heaven. From the glory Jesus would serve them ceaselessly in that way, and thus, in company with the supper, He gives His disciples this precious presentation of Himself as their girded Servant washing with water their feet.

As they looked on the bread and wine it would bring to their remembrance Himself upon the cross, "bearing their sins in His own body upon the tree." Eating that bread and drinking that wine, they would feed upon His death, and drink in that love which had done all this *for them*; which had saved them and brought them to God without one sin remaining to bar their entrance into His holy presence. Looking upon that towel and that basin with its water, they would have their eyes, through faith, let in upon Himself in His *present* love for them; a love that, though exercised from glory and outside the sight of their natural eye, would travel with them all the way across the wilderness world in which for the time He was leaving them. In realising His ceaseless service for them, as washing their feet,

and entering into what that washing would mean, they would enjoy His presence and share in His own joys.

To be in the enjoyment of the presence of Jesus, to serve with Him, and share with Him His own joys, is everything to the heart that knows and loves Him. Such it was to Peter, and he readily seized the force of the Lord's words, "If I wash thee not *thou* hast no part with Me," and in the eagerness to possess himself fully of the blessing proposed in the Lord's words, he replies, "Lord, not my feet only, but my hands and my head:" his desire being, that not only his feet might be clean, but his whole person fitted for association with his Saviour. He had the consciousness, not merely that his feet needed washing, but that his whole nature and being required cleansing. Occupied with his own feelings, he was in *ignorance* of the work of grace that had already been wrought for him, and in him by the Lord. He was just in the state of soul in which thousands of Christians are at this moment, *i.e.*, confounding *practical* sanctification with *actual* sanctification—the cleansing of the person with the cleansing of the ways, or, as it is sometimes put, *standing* with *state*.

Peter's reply becomes the occasion for the Lord to state plainly this difference: "He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit; and ye are clean." One whose body is washed all over in the morning,

or bathed (a different word in the original being used for this to that which is used for washing the feet), would need only during the day to cleanse the feet, which in Eastern countries, where sandals only are used, become defiled with walking, before partaking of the refreshments provided by the host. The one who entertains provides water for the washing of the feet of his guests, but not water for the *bath*, which would imply uncleanness of person. The Lord refers to this custom in his rebuke to Simon the Pharisee, for treating Him with neglect in this respect—"Thou gavest Me no water for *My feet*."

The spiritual significance, therefore, of the Lord's reply to Peter is very plain. As to the washing of the person, the disciples were clean—they were regenerate. By the washing of regeneration they were "clean every whit." They were *already* possessed of a new life and standing before God which nothing could make more perfect. "Born of water and the Spirit," they possessed a "divine nature" which had fitted them once and for ever, as to their persons, for God's presence, so they had at all times the *title* to fellowship with God in the holiest, but in order practically to enjoy this fellowship, and to have the consciousness of being in the holiest with Jesus, they needed to have their feet washed from the defilements contracted in their walk through an evil world, and this would be done,

not by the application of the word to their *persons*, and of the *blood* to their consciences, but by the application of the word by the Spirit to their *hearts* and *consciences*, so that they would practically judge and separate themselves from that in their thoughts and walk which was inconsistent with the nature and character of God, and thus would they be enabled to have fellowship with Jesus in the heavenly blessedness into which, as man, He had entered for them.

We would note here that it is not with blood (which applies to our guilt) that either the person or the feet are washed. In both cases it is "the washing of water by the *word*." In the one case for standing in life—a once completed act that cannot be repeated; in the other, for *practical state*, which being a question of communion and enjoyment, has to be repeated as often as any defilement in the walk is contracted.

A reference to the typical consecration of the priesthood in connection with the laver, of which this is clearly the blessed antitype, will make this clear. We read in Exodus xxix. 4, "And Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and shalt wash them with water." Then their coats were put on them, and subsequently blood was put upon the tip of the right ear, the right thumb, and the right toe. They were sprinkled with the holy anointing oil, and the

requisite sacrifices having been offered, they were once and for ever sanctified "to minister in the priests' office."

Their standing as priests was complete, and thus their *title* to enter the holy place always valid, but their *practical* ability to enter the holy place and minister at the altar before the Lord depended upon something besides, and that was the daily use of the *laver*, as described in Exodus xxx. 19-21: "Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet *thereat*: when they go into the tabernacle of the congregation, they shall wash with water, that they die not; or when they come near to the altar to minister, to burn offering made by fire unto the Lord: so shall they wash their hands and their feet that they die not." Their assumption of the priests' office connected itself with the washing of their persons in water at the time of consecration; their ability to practically exercise this office connected itself with the washing of their hands and feet at the laver on every occasion of priestly service.

It is this washing of *the feet* in the laver, for communion and service, that the Lord's action in washing His disciples' feet sets before us. It is the present living service of Jesus from the glory by which, through the action of the word, in the power of the Holy Ghost, on their consciences, He separates "His own that are in the world" from defilement, which, as already *sanctified* ones, they have contracted in their walk, so that they

## FEET WASHING.

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may have part as priests with Him in the service and worship of God.

All believers, little as they may know it and enjoy it, are perfected priests before God. Their bodies have been washed "with pure water." The blood of Christ has been sprinkled on them, and they have been anointed with the Holy Ghost. Their consecration is a complete and finished act, and they are *unchangeable*—as Peter says, "a holy priesthood." They *are* the true sons of Aaron; but to have *part* with the true Aaron—with Christ, now in the holiest in heaven—their *feet* must be washed constantly at the laver.

Christ is the laver. Believers do not wash their own feet. He does it for them. It is according to *His* knowledge of what suits the presence of God that He washes their feet. This action, in love and intelligence, is *all* from Himself. Our salvation and consecration to the priesthood is a simple sovereign act of Christ's love. We are passive in His hands as to it. We know when it has been done, and bless Him for it on the discovery of what has taken place. So our communion depends on Christ and not on ourselves. It is a simple sovereign act of love on His part that washes our feet and restores us to communion: "What I do thou knowest not *now*, but thou shalt know hereafter." Restored to communion, and power for service, when it has been lost through carelessness, we know

when we are thus washed, and *Who* has restored us. We bless Him for it. It is all we can do. "Clean every whit" before God, even when out of communion, we know ourselves to be. Unhappy because out of communion, we feel that our feet want washing; we look at Jesus and find Him at our feet washing them; we realise His grace in this action, and again our hearts are happy and free to serve Him, because again in *conscious* association with Himself: we have "part" with Him.

Blessed and precious Saviour, ever keep our hearts in the sense of Thy grace and love, while humbled in heart by the sense of all that, as to our hearts and ways, makes this living service of Thine so ceaselessly necessary! Till Thou comest, Lord, in glory, and hast Thine own with Thyself beyond the reach of defilement, oh! let Thy grace keep us all in *conscious* nearness to Thyself, and walking in Thy footsteps. Amen.

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C. W.

## Looking unto Jesus.

**I**T is not *looking backward* down the list of years,  
To see our failures, sins, temptations, follies, fears,  
And tears.

Nor is it *looking on*, with hope all bright and fair,  
To meet, so often, bitter disappointment there;  
And care.

No, it is *looking up*, a living Christ to see,  
And leaning calmly, Lord, and oh, so trustingly  
On Thee.

S. T. F.



## God Left Out:

REMARKS ON THE PRESENT NATIONAL CRISIS.

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**A** DARK cloud hangs over our land. As the year opens large numbers of families are plunged into grief and mourning. Many of us have been touched very closely, and all feel that we are passing through a serious national crisis, the issue of which God only knows.

We do not intend to enter into the arena of this world's politics. The Christian knows that his citizenship is in heaven. But we cannot but feel that the hand of God is being laid heavily upon the nation. A principle of deep importance is contained in the words addressed by Amos the prophet to the conscience of Israel of old, at a time when they as a nation were turning their back upon God—"Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?" (Amos iii. 6).

Israel had left God out of their national life and had turned to idols. None had been more highly privileged than they, but this became, in the day of their apostasy, the very ground of God's punishment. "You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities" (Amos iii. 2). It is a moral truth that pervades the whole of

### II.

Scripture that the nearer the relationship into which one is brought to God, the deeper become one's responsibilities. The privileges of Christendom being the greatest of all, so the Word of God leaves no room to doubt that heavier judgments by far await it at the close than those which were poured upon Israel in the crisis of their history to which Amos refers.

What Christian nation has been more privileged than Great Britain? Some, and even some true Christians, have argued that therefore this nation will be exempt from judgment in a special degree. We believe that the very reverse will be found to be the case. "And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works which have been done in thee had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee" (Matt. xi. 23, 24).

It must be evident to every thoughtful person that there is a growing disregard of God in our times. We do not mean to imply that this is only to be found in England. It is a characteristic feature of the last days of Christendom that men shall be "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God" (2 Tim. iii. 1-6). In France and other countries where Romanism has blunted the conscience, it is notorious that the Lord's Day is the day of all others given up to pleasure;

horse-racing, theatre-going, cricket matches, and every form of amusement, to which has lately been added bull-fights, are indulged in. For any professed Christian nation this is serious, it is infinitely more so for a country blessed with gospel light and an open Bible such as England has been. It is painfully significant of the times that the British Ambassador recently was found sanctioning by his presence the Paris Sunday sports, and that a steamer plied between Brighton and Boulogne to convey to the Sunday bull-fight crowds of people only too glad to witness the degrading spectacle. Cycling, golfing, lawn tennis, &c., are now becoming the quite popular methods of killing the Sunday in England.

### **God is left out!**

But can a nation, can any individual man, woman, or child leave Him out with impunity? No, a thousand times No! "Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required" (Luke xii. 48).

It is not for us to discuss the question of the South African War, but this we do feel, that the reverses and disasters should speak loudly to the consciences of men. We have arrived at such a state of things that all allusion to the Bible in a reverent manner, to prayer and to humiliation, is treated with scornful disdain. "God is not in all their thoughts."

The motto of the city of Glasgow used to run, "Let Glasgow flourish by the preaching of the Word"—this was at any rate a recognition of God and His Word; now it has been shortened to "Let Glasgow flourish." This is but one of the signs of the times. But will it do to leave God out? "God is not mocked," and though He bears long and patiently, yet a day of reckoning must come for a nation that despises its privileges and changes its "glory for that which doth not profit" (Jer. ii. 11-13).

The profanity of the daily press is likewise a painful feature of the times. Some of the most respectable papers seem never tired of hurling their irreverent ridicule at every allusion to the Bible and to God. For a leading article to write thus, "We learnt with a measure of ironical contempt that the Boers had set apart a day for national humiliation. Sincere or insincere?" is carrying contempt of God a little too far, and must be shocking to every God-fearing mind.

And what means the profane boast that "God is on the side of big battalions"? Why, simply what the fool hath said in his heart, that there is no God. Men who speak and write like this do not believe in a God at all. And so surely as this spirit pervades a nation, its days of greatness are numbered.

We believe that God has a controversy with England on this very ground, just as He had with Israel of old. Let the reader study Amos

iv., specially considering the five providential chastisements that fell upon the people, inflicted for the very purpose of drawing back their hearts to God, but ending in each case with the sorrowful refrain, "Yet have ye not returned unto Me, saith the Lord." And have we not seen some such disciplines as these of late years? Famine (ver. 6), drought (vers. 7, 8), blight and failing crops (ver. 9), pestilence (ver. 10), and disaster (ver. 11)—are all these to pass unheeded? Is God still to be left out?

Depend upon it, greater trouble lies ahead, not in Africa but in Europe. God's Word is not silent upon this point. All Europe will presently be involved in this great strife, clearly foretold in the Scriptures of truth.\* In the case of Israel, God's providential judgments having been ignored, a blow more terrible is announced to fall—God Himself has to be met, "Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel: and because I will do this unto thee,

**prepare to meet thy God,**

O Israel" (Amos iv. 12). Even so will it be when the nations of Europe, England included, will be gathered together for the last great war—the last so far as they are concerned—which

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\* See "The Future of Europe" and "Russia's Destiny." Price 6d. each. To be had of James Carter, 13 Paternoster Row, London, E.C.

will be waged, not one against the other, but between them all confederate on the one hand, and the KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS on the other :—

And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse ; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war.

His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns ; and He had a name written, that no man knew, but He Himself.

And He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood : and His name is called the Word of God.

And the armies which were in heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

And out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations : and He shall rule them with a rod of iron : and He treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

And I saw an angel standing in the sun ; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God ;

That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.

And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him that sat on the horse, and against His army.

And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.

And the remnant were slain with the sword of Him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of His mouth : and all the fowls were filled with their flesh (Rev. xix. 11-21).

This, however little man may believe it, will be according to God's Word the end of all the military power of Western Europe. But when this great conflict takes place, which will not be till after the coming of the Lord for the Church, England will not be, as she is now, alone amongst the nations, and the object of the bitter hatred of the Continental powers. No, at that time she will be one of the ten kings, and all these ten kings will be confederate : " These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them " (Rev. xvii. 13, 14). In that day man's profane saying, that " God is on the side of big battalions," will be proved to be a fallacy.

### **Europe is waiting for a man ;**

some such man as Napoleon Bonaparte in the early part of this century, who sprang so suddenly from obscurity into imperial power. And when this man arises—he may even now be alive!—he will gather together the combined armies of the ten confederate kings and hurl them in blasphemous defiance against Him who is Lord of Lords and King of Kings.

But how comes it to pass that England to-day is the target of so much hatred and attack amongst the nations? Why are the passions of her neighbours being inflamed against her to such an extent? In France, even in Switzerland, and that, too, in its Protestant cantons, it is becoming difficult for English people to reside without insult. Hand-bills are being circulated with the words, "Down with the English! Down with the Jews!" Why all this?

Many reasons possibly will be forthcoming, but there is one to which Christian people have not given sufficient heed.

England is a Protestant power. In spite of the thoughtless Romeward stampede of the Ritualistic party, England has been and still is the greatest barrier to the machinations of the papacy. Rome can do nothing with the Jews—but burn them as she did in the Spanish Inquisition! Hitherto she has not succeeded in doing much with England. But England's days in this respect are numbered. Of Protestant England the late Cardinal Manning wrote:—

"I shall not say too much if I say that we have to subjugate and subdue, to conquer and rule, an imperial race. We have to do with a will which reigns throughout the world, as the will of old Rome reigned once. We have to bend or break that will which nations and kingdoms have found invincible and inflexible. . . . Were heresy conquered in England, it would be



conquered throughout the world," (*Tablet*, 6th August 1859).

And if "conquered throughout the world," religious tolerance will soon be everywhere a thing of the past. Why, even now the same persecuting spirit is manifesting itself in this country. How did Rome conquer heresy in the past? Let the Inquisition in Spain, and Smithfield in England reply. In one of our Cathedral towns two ladies were recently overheard to say that they would gladly see all heretics burning at the stake!

But will Rome succeed? She will. No Christian intelligent in the Scriptures can doubt it after the study of such a chapter as Revelation xvii. For long Rome has been striving to bring it about by various methods, and we have little doubt that one of these has been to stir up the feelings of all the Continental powers, great and small, against her. In no quarter would joy be greater than at the Vatican at the downfall of England. We do not say that the war now raging will immediately result in this, but indications are not wanting nor rumours either of efforts on the part of the papacy to bring on a European war which it is ardently hoped may result in the humiliation of England; and what complications may not arise from matters now transpiring in South Africa it would be impossible to say.

And is the nation looking to God? The

boastful levity with which the multitude have rushed into war makes one tremble. One high in command is approvingly reported to have stepped on board at Southampton carelessly remarking, "I'll be back to the Derby!" Is not this leaving God out? Men may laugh at their enemies reading the Bible and uniting in humiliation and prayer, but "God is not mocked." The first British shell on the Sunday (!) previous to the terrible Magersfontein disaster dropped into the middle of a large open-air prayer-meeting. It is better for a nation as for an individual to be humble than to be humbled.

We have been greatly cheered to receive from a correspondent the following good news:— "How wondrous to think that a young (British) officer preached to two thousand soldiers the night before the battle, and surely many must have received the Word through the grace of God at so solemn a moment. Nations make war with nations, dear —, and so it goes on and will go on *till the end*. God is above it all, and behind all. He is holding *the results* of all these things in His own hands for the glory of His Son. One may gain and another may lose, but God knows it all, and it is all settled beforehand. How humble we need to be when this world's history is unrolled before us, and we have the light and mind of God about this poor world. He is gathering souls

out of it, to be with Himself for ever. The path of the Lord is ours, the divine path through it. It is terrible to think of all the sorrow, bereavement, and suffering."

Thank God, the same spirit of reckless impiety does not characterise each individual. But thoughtful people cannot fail to see that the tone of things in general has terribly deteriorated so far as the recognition of God is concerned.

The Franco-German War was another attempt of Roman Catholicism to shatter Protestantism. The time had not then come in the ways of God for such a thing. But who can say that we are not now on the very eve of the fulfilment of things that have long since been revealed in God's Word will terminate the history of Christendom, viz., Babylon and the Beast (Rev. xvii.)?

Certain it is that thirty years ago unbelief and profanity had not gained the power over professing Christians that they have to-day. To judge from the tone of the press it would be hard to conceive of a General in any European country taking the field in 1900, in the same spirit as did the German Emperor in 1870. Here is an extract from the address then delivered by William I. of Germany to his people when entering upon the terrible conflict between Germany and France:—" . . . . From my youth upwards I have learnt to believe that all depends on the help of a gracious God. In

Him is my trust, and I beg my people to rest in the same assurance. I bow myself before Him in acknowledgment of His mercy, and I am sure that my subjects and fellow-countrymen will do so with me. Therefore I decree that Wednesday, 27th July (1870), shall be set apart for an extraordinary solemn day of prayer and divine service in all our churches, with abstention from all public occupations and labour so far as may comport with the pressing necessities of the time. I also decree that while the war lasts prayers shall be offered in all divine services that in this struggle God may lead us to victory, that He may give us grace to bear ourselves as Christian men even unto our enemies, and that it may please Him to allow us to obtain a lasting peace, founded on the honour and independence of Germany.”—Signed, WILLIAM I.; Counter-signed, VON MUHLER; Berlin, 21st July 1870.

It is a great consolation to know that amongst those whose lives have recently been so sadly shortened there were a number of men who for many years had known the love of the Lord Jesus Christ, who had passed through death before them—they were able to say that “while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.” It is also comforting to know that many soul-winners have been at work amongst the wounded and the dying, pointing those nearing eternity to the “Sinner’s Friend,” and that their labour has not been in vain in the Lord. We earnestly com-

mend all such to our gracious God, and pray that Heaven's blessing may rest upon their labour of love.

In this article we purposely refrain from any discussion of the righteousness of the present conflict on one side or the other—that belongs to the region of politics. We simply desire to point out to the Christian reader some of the ominous signs of the times. We all need to be alive to the nature of the moral influences at work, and which are none the less serious because foretold in the Word of God. And let us not forget that it is always a foolish thing to—  
*leave God out.*

A. H. B.

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## The Church.

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**T**HERE are some words to which a sort of magic meaning has been attached, and which convey to the mind a kind of divine authority and a competency in the thing they designate to have a place of supreme power; in this way they have acquired a special sway over men's minds. Whether this is justified by Scripture comparatively few take the trouble to inquire. Thus, "the Church says it," is the gilding we find round many a pill containing poison, not true medicine.

What is the Church? Some will tell you

that it is circumscribed within the limits of the Roman communion ; others that it includes the Anglican, Greek, and Roman ; and others give it a still wider bearing. Before we admit the claims of any Church to possess authority in spiritual matters, and as the teacher through whom we are to receive spiritual instruction, we must first be satisfied that it is the true Church ; and secondly, that the principle, so often asserted that the Church teaches, is a sound principle. The word translated "church" in the Bible simply means an "assembly": according to its local Greek use, an assembly of privileged persons or citizens. The first mention of the Church of God in the New Testament is found in the well-known passage in Matthew xvi. 18. Peter had just confessed Christ to be "the Christ, the Son of the living God," a truth revealed to him by the Father ; and our Lord says, "Upon this rock I will build my Church" (or assembly). The foundation was Christ, and Christ presented under the title of the Son of the *living* God. He possessed a life which death could not hold. It was not possible, says the apostle Peter, that He, the Prince of Life, could be holden by death. And so in Romans i. 4 He is declared to be Son of God with power by resurrection of the dead. It is on this Christ, therefore, that the Church or assembly here spoken of is built ; and the gates of Hades, that is, all the power of the domain of death, could not prevail against it.

But if Christ is the foundation He is also the builder : “ *I will build,*” He says. It is the same truth as in 1 Peter ii. 4, “ To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious, ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house.” Here the “ living stones ” *come to the* living stone (Christ) and form the spiritual structure. In this view of the matter there is nothing but what is vital and real : no one is built into this spiritual building who has not received divine life.

Scripture views men in either of two positions: first, as “ dead in trespasses and sins ” (the state in which all are by nature); and secondly, as quickened with divine life. The distinction between these two states, as before God, is as clear and defined as the skyline on an eastern horizon. In speaking on this important subject, our Lord introduces His statement with the words, “ Verily, verily,” and then says, “ He that heareth My word, and believeth Him that sent Me, hath eternal life, and cometh not into judgment, but hath passed out of death into life ” (John v. 24., R.V.). By the hearing of faith the believer *has* (1) eternal life ; (2) he shall *not* come into judgment ; (3) he *is* passed out of death into life. This is not a kind of development of some innate goodness in man, but it is God coming into the scene of spiritual death and giving eternal life to him who believes on the Son ; it is the communication, by

faith, of a new and divine life and nature, so that he becomes, in Christ, a new creature and passes out of the whole condition of spiritual death into life.\* This has a most important bearing on the subject in hand, for it would be blasphemy to say that when Christ is the builder, He builds into this spiritual house any other than "living stones," any who are still dead in trespasses and sins. In Ephesians ii. 21 the apostle Paul presents the same truth as has been already referred to in Peter: "In whom [Jesus Christ] all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord." As every quickened soul is added the building "grows," and this will go on till Christ comes, when it will be complete. So, in Acts ii. 47, the One who adds these living stones is "the Lord": "And the Lord added to the Church, daily, the saved." The Church began on the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Ghost came down; and, while it is quite true that the apostles and others were used of God to make known the truth concerning the risen Saviour to others, yet it was *the Lord* who added these saved ones to the building, thus fulfilling the promise, "*I will build My Church.*"

(*To be continued.*)

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\* It is true that eternal life and salvation are sometimes also viewed in Scripture as a future thing, taking in, not only the present possession of this life and salvation, as to the soul, but the full final result, when even the body will be raised from the dead.



## The Value of the Death of Christ.

**T**HE death of Christ is presented to us in Scripture as that by which redemption was wrought, and His precious blood as its efficacious means.

Have we not redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins? (Eph. i. 7; Col. i. 14). Is it not by the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot? (1 Pet. i. 19). Is it not declared that without shedding of blood there is no remission? (Heb. ix. 22).

Let the reader take the ninth chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, which I shall allow myself to quote here in full. It is well worth all human authority, be it of what age it may:—

“But Christ being come an 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 goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your

conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

“And for this cause He is the mediator of the new testament (or, covenant), that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament (covenant), they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth. Whereupon neither the first was dedicated without blood. For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book and all the people, saying, This is the blood of the testament (covenant) which God hath enjoined unto you.

“Moreover He sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.

“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: nor yet that He

## THE VALUE OF THE DEATH OF CHRIST. 47

should offer Himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; for then must He often have suffered since the foundation of the world; but now once in the end of the world (or, consummation of the ages) hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment; so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many: and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

Let the reader remark that "**without shedding of blood** there is no remission"; also the declaration that He must "**often have suffered,**" if He was to offer Himself often; and that "Christ was **once offered** to bear the sins of many." Let him turn to chapter x., where, *in contrast with daily ministrations*, "this man after He had offered **one sacrifice for sins**, for ever sat down."

Was the way into the holiest to be opened? It was through the rent veil, that is to say, His flesh. Indeed, if we examine the value of the death of Christ, what do we find attached to it in Scripture?

Do I need redemption? We have redemption through His blood, an eternal redemption, for "by His own blood, He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption" (Heb. ix. 12).

Do I need forgiveness? That redemption which I have through His blood is the forgiveness of sins (Eph. i. 7)—yea, without shedding of blood is no remission.

Do I need peace? He has made peace through the blood of His cross (Col. i. 20).

Do I need reconciliation with God? Though we were sinners, yet now hath He reconciled us in the body of His flesh through death (Col. i. 21, 22). When we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son (Rom. v. 10).

Do I feel the need of propitiation? Christ is set forth as a propitiation through faith in His blood (Rom. iii. 25). The need of justification? I am justified by His blood (Rom. v. 9).

How are we washed from our sins? He has loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, for His blood cleanseth from all sin (Rev. i. 5; 1 John i. 7).

Reader, have you learnt the value of the death of Christ for yourself? J. N. D.

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## The Paschal Feast.

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**I**SRAEL, saved by the blood, was one thing; and Israel, feeding on the lamb, was quite another. They were saved *only* by the blood; but the object round which they were gathered was, manifestly, the roasted lamb.

This is not, by any means, a distinction without a difference.

The blood of the Lamb forms the foundation both of our connection with God, and our connection with one another. It is as those who are washed in that blood, that we are introduced to God and to one another. Apart from the perfect atonement of Christ, there could obviously be no fellowship either with God or His assembly. Christ is our centre. Having found peace, through His blood, we own Him as our grand gathering-point and connecting-link. "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. xviii. 20). The Holy Ghost is the only Gatherer; Christ Himself is the only object to which we are gathered; and our assembly, when thus convened, is to be characterised by holiness and truth, so that the Lord our God may dwell among us. The Holy Ghost can only gather to Christ. He cannot gather to a system, a name, a doctrine, or an ordinance. He gathers to a Person, and that Person is Christ. This must stamp a peculiar character on God's assembly. Men may associate on any ground, round any centre, or for any object they please; but when the Holy Ghost associates, it is on the ground of accomplished redemption, around the Person of Christ, in order to form a holy dwelling-place for God (1 Cor. iii. 16, 17, vi. 19; Eph. ii. 21, 22; 1 Pet. i. 4, 5).

## 50 THE CHRISTIAN'S LIBRARY.

Let us look at the principles brought before us in the paschal feast (Exod. xii.). The assembly of Israel, as under the cover of the blood, was to be ordered by Jehovah in a manner worthy of Himself. In the matter of safety from judgment, as we have already seen, nothing was needed but the blood; but in the fellowship which flowed out of this safety, other things were needed which could not be neglected with impunity.

1. And first, then, we read: "They shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast with fire; his head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof" (vers. 8, 9). The lamb, round which the congregation was assembled, and on which it feasted, was a roasted lamb—a lamb which had undergone the action of fire. In this we see "Christ our passover" presenting Himself to the action of the fire of divine holiness and judgment which found in Him a perfect material.

2. "Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water." Had it been eaten thus, there would have been no expression of the great truth which it was the divine purpose to shadow forth; namely, that our paschal Lamb was to endure, on the cross, the fire of Jehovah's righteous wrath—a truth of infinite preciousness to the soul. We are not merely under the

eternal shelter of the blood of the Lamb, but we feed, by faith, upon the Person of the Lamb. Many of us come short here. We are apt to rest satisfied with being saved by what Christ has done for us, without cultivating holy communion with Himself. His loving heart could never be satisfied with this. He has brought us nigh to Himself, that we might enjoy Him, that we might feed on Him, and delight in Him. He presents Himself to us as the One who has endured, to the uttermost, the intense fire of the wrath of God, that He may, in this wondrous character, be the food of our ransomed souls.

3. But how was this lamb to be eaten? "With unleavened bread and bitter herbs." Leaven is invariably used throughout Scripture as emblematical of evil. Neither in the Old nor in the New Testament is it ever used to set forth anything pure, holy, or good. Thus, in this chapter, "the feast of unleavened bread" is the type of that practical separation from evil which is the proper result of being washed from our sins in the blood of the Lamb, and the proper accompaniment of communion with His sufferings. Nought but perfectly unleavened bread could at all comport with a roasted lamb. A single particle of that which was the marked type of evil would have destroyed the moral character of the entire ordinance. How could we connect any species of evil with our fellowship with a suffering Christ? Impossible. All

who enter, by the power of the Holy Ghost, into the meaning of the cross, will, assuredly, by the same power, put away leaven from all their borders. "For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: *therefore* let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth" (1 Cor. v. 7, 8). The feast spoken of in this passage is that which, in the life and conduct of the Church, corresponds with the feast of unleavened bread. This latter lasted "seven days"; and the Church collectively, and the believer individually, are called to walk in practical holiness, during the seven days, or entire period, of their course here below; and this, moreover, as the direct result of being washed in the blood, and having communion with the sufferings of Christ.

Blessed be God, we know that nothing can ever snap asunder the link which binds the true believer to Him. We are "saved in the Lord," not with a temporary or conditional, but "with an everlasting salvation." But then salvation and communion are not the same thing. Many are saved who do not know it; and many, also, who do not enjoy it. It is quite impossible that I can enjoy a blood-stained lintel if I have leavened borders. This is an axiom in the divine life. May it be written on our hearts! Practical holiness, though not the basis of our *salvation*, is intimately connected with our *enjoy-*



## THE PASCHAL FEAST.

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*ment* thereof. An Israelite was not saved by unleavened bread, but by the blood; and yet leaven would have cut him off from communion. And as to the Christian, he is not saved by his practical holiness, but by the blood; but if he indulges in evil, in thought, word, or deed, he will have no true enjoyment of salvation, and no true communion with the Person of the Lamb.

This, I cannot doubt, is the secret of much of the spiritual barrenness and lack of settled peace which one finds amongst the children of God. They are not cultivating holiness; they are not keeping "the feast of unleavened bread." The blood is on the lintel, but the leaven within their borders keeps them from enjoying the security which the blood provides. The allowance of evil destroys our fellowship, though it does not break the link which binds our souls eternally to God. Those who belong to God's assembly must be holy. They have not only been delivered from the guilt and consequences of sin, but also from the practice of it, the power of it, and the love of it. The very fact of being delivered by the blood of the paschal lamb rendered Israel responsible to put away leaven from all their quarters. They could not say, in the frightful language of the Antinomian, "Now that we are delivered, we may conduct ourselves as we please." By no means. If they were saved *by grace*, they were saved *to holiness*. The

soul that can take occasion, from the freedom of divine grace, and the completeness of the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, to "continue in sin," proves very distinctly that he understands neither the one nor the other.

4. We may perceive equal significancy and moral propriety in that which was to accompany the unleavened bread, namely, the "bitter herbs." We cannot enjoy communion with the sufferings of Christ without remembering what it was which rendered those sufferings needful, and this remembrance must necessarily produce a chastened and subdued tone of spirit, which is aptly expressed by the bitter herbs in the paschal feast. If the roasted lamb expressed Christ's endurance of the wrath of God in His own Person on the cross, the bitter herbs express the believer's recognition of the truth that He "suffered *for us*." "The chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed" (Isa. liii. 5).

Is there not a deep joy for the soul in the consciousness that Christ has borne our sins; that He has fully drained, on our behalf, the cup of God's righteous wrath? Unquestionably. This is the solid foundation of all our joy. But can we ever forget that it was for "*our sins*" He suffered? Can we ever lose sight of the soul-subduing truth that the blessed Lamb of God bowed His head beneath the weight of our transgressions? Surely not. We must eat our

lamb with bitter herbs, which, be it remembered, do not set forth the tears of a worthless and shallow sentimentality, but the deep and real experiences of a soul that enters, with spiritual intelligence and power, into the meaning and into the practical effect of the cross. In contemplating the cross, we find in it that which cancels all our guilt. This imparts sweet peace and joy. But we find in it also the complete setting aside of nature, the crucifixion of "the flesh," the death of "the old man" (see Rom. vi. 6; Gal. ii. 20, vi. 14; Col. ii. 11).

5. "And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire" (v. 10). In this command, we are taught that the communion of the congregation was in no wise to be separated from the sacrifice on which that communion was founded. The heart must ever cherish the vivid remembrance that all true fellowship is inseparably connected with accomplished redemption. To think of having communion *with God* on any other ground is to imagine that He could have fellowship with our evil; and to think of fellowship *with man* on any other ground is but to form an unholy club, from which nothing could issue but confusion and iniquity. In a word, all must be founded upon, and inseparably linked with, the blood.

What a beauteous picture, then, we have in the blood-sheltered assembly of Israel feeding

peacefully on the roasted lamb, with unleavened bread and bitter herbs! No fear of judgment, no fear of the wrath of Jehovah, no fear of the terrible hurricane of righteous vengeance which was sweeping vehemently over the land of Egypt at the midnight hour. All was profound peace within the blood-stained lintel. They had no need to fear anything from without; and nothing within could trouble them, save leaven, which would have proved a death-blow to all their peace and blessedness. C. H. M.

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## O Happy Day.

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HAPPY day, when we no more  
 Shall grieve Thee whom our souls adore;  
 When sorrows, conflicts, fears shall cease,  
 And all our trials end in peace!

O happy day, when we shall see  
 And fix our longing eyes on Thee—  
 On Thee, our light, our life, our love,  
 Our *all* below, our heaven above.

O happy day, of cloudless light!  
 Eternal day without a night!  
 Lord! when shall we its dawning see,  
 And spend it all in praising Thee?

Come, Saviour, come! O *quickly* come!  
 Take us, Thy waiting people, home!  
 We long to stand around Thy throne,  
 And know Thee as ourselves are known.

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## The Three Great Epochs of "the Kingdom and Patience of Jesus Christ."

REVELATION i. 9.

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MATTHEW xxii.—first, verses 1-3 ; second, verses 4-7 ;  
third, verses 8-14.

**E**VERY baptized Person in Christendom—the Jews also, which crucified Christ—as well as all the heathen world, are involved in God's testimony, as given in the New Testament, to the Person and work of His beloved Son, either for

**eternal bliss or eternal woe.**

Hence the deep importance of a real individual inquiry in every soul.

Where am I going to spend eternity? Is it to be in the Paradise of God, the heavenly Eden, with the risen glorified Christ, and all the redeemed of His precious blood, or with the devil and his angels in the bottomless abyss?

Reader, ponder the words—For ever! for ever! whether it be for heaven or hell.

The times in which our lot is cast are portentous, showing that we are nearing the end of the third and last epoch of this kingdom ; and that possibly in a few years it will be displaced by the kingdom and *power* of our Lord Jesus

III.

Christ. "Which in His times He shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, or can see; to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen" (1 Tim. vi. 15, 16).

His reign in Mount Zion will be supreme (Ps. ii. 6), having the whole habitable earth for its sphere (verse 8),—the Jews with all Israel, the spared ones through the great tribulation, together with the saved nations during that eventful period (Rev. vii.), that unparalleled "time of trial which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell on the earth" (Rev. iii. 10).

As to this crisis in the world's history, let me remind you also of the testimony of the great apostle of the Gentiles to the idolatrous Athenians on Mars Hill, viz., God "now commandeth all men everywhere to repent: because He hath appointed a day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead" (Acts xvii. 30, 31).

Be assured of this, reader, that in a little while God will manifestly assert the creatorial and redemption rights of His beloved Son, the rejected Lamb, over every one of Adam's race, not only the living, but the dead in their graves,

yea, over creation itself (John v. 28 ; 1 Cor. xv. 22-28 ; Rom. viii. 28).

Matthew xxii. 1-3 gives the *First Epoch* of the kingdom, viz., the invitation sent forth during the period of the life-ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ, after His baptism and temptation in the wilderness for about three and a half years ; which culminated in His great atoning sacrifice on the cross, that blessed work which was to involve Him in such suffering, and the anguish of which was ever before Him in His ministry of love amongst men, and found utterance in those memorable words—

“The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many” (Mark x. 45).

“I have a baptism to be baptized with ; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished” (Luke xii. 50).

“ . . . The bread which I give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world” (John vi. 51).

And though there was the fullest proof of the deity of His blessed person—John the Baptist's testimony — His own beneficent works — the Father's testimony through the opened heavens at His baptism, and the Scriptures from Genesis to Malachi (see John v.) ; yet “He was cut off out of the land of the living” (Isa. liii. 8), and Jew and Gentile, as with one voice, cried out at the bar of Pontius Pilate—

“Not this man, but Barabbas;”  
thus closing the first epoch of His kingdom.

*The Second* (verses 4-7) doubtless begins with the apostolic period, after the great atoning work of the cross had been accomplished, and Christ was raised up from among the dead by the glory of the Father; when the Holy Ghost was sent down from heaven, so that the invitation should be given afresh by the servants of the Lord, and that they should proclaim that there was no salvation in any other name but “the name of Jesus,” and that through His name, whosoever believeth in Him, shall receive remission of their sins (Acts x. 43).

Thousands through grace did believe and accept the invitation; but, as to the nation, all was in vain. The servants were entreated spitefully and slain, and God in His governmental dealings destroyed Jerusalem, by Titus, and scattered the Jewish nation.

The apostle John, and doubtless many others, lived to see this judgment on Jerusalem, and remained until nearly the end of the first century, carrying the message of love and mercy to the scattered ones during that time of trouble; but eventually the apostle himself was banished for his faithfulness to the island of Patmos, where he became the Lord's honoured channel for making known to His people the solemn truths of the Book of Revelation.

This brings us to the beginning of the *Third*



and last Epoch (verses 8-14), and carries us on, not only to the end of this age, and of time, but into the eternal state.

And from A.D. 100 what a history it has been of hostility to God's message of mercy and love, both from Jew, Gentile, and even the professing Church of God; for hatred of Christ and the truth of His Word is to be found around us to-day. What corruption of the Word is going on by many of the teachers in Christendom.

Is it not because of this disregard of the Scriptures that God is having a controversy with the Protestant portion of Christendom, using one nation against another for correction? "When I bring the sword upon a land, if the people of the land take a man of their coasts, and set him for their watchman: if when he seeth the sword come upon the land, he blow the trumpet, and warn the people; then whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet, and taketh not warning; if the sword come, and take him away, his blood shall be upon his own head" (Ezek. xxxiii. 2-4). Read also Job xxxiv. 29, 30.

It is not the writer's province to say much concerning the agitation in this country and throughout Europe, about the conflict going on in South Africa; but may all these solemn events now happening beget thoughtfulness as to eternal realities in the multitude around us. Otherwise those who are now escaping the trial of the South African conflict may yet be drawn

into a greater conflict soon to take place for supremacy in Europe. Revelation vi. 2 shows that presently a mighty conqueror will arise, who will carry everything before him; and Revelation xiii. tells us of a man more mighty than all the Cæsars put together, having ten kingdoms under his unholy sway; he is a blaspheming man, though the Emperor of nearly all Europe. But his reign will be a short one.

To bring this paper to a close, when God's King comes, as He will to take His true estimate of the multitudes in Christendom, who profess to belong to Him, it will not suffice in that important moment to call yourself Catholic, Protestant, Churchman, Dissenter, or Quaker; but the question will be whether you have on the "Wedding Garment," which the King in His love has provided for every repentant believing sinner. How solemn are Christ's words (Matt. xxii. 14), "Many are called, but few are chosen."

One word more, "Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord that exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord" (Jer. ix. 23, 24).

H. P.

## Does "Eternal" mean "Eternal"?

**N**O truth of Scripture has been more called in question of late years than that of eternal punishment, and as it is one of such vital importance to all, we desire to say a few words thereupon, especially for the sake of the young and of those whose faith has been shaken with regard to this solemn subject by the plausible arguments of those who on various grounds call it in question.

And first of all we are met by the astounding argument that "in the Greek language" eternal does not mean eternal! Asserted with authority, this sounds most conclusive, but examined in the light of Scripture is found to be absolutely false. The word for "eternal" in the Greek New Testament is *αἰώνιος* (*aiōnios*). It is maintained that it means "age-lasting" or "millennial," and *not* "eternal" in the ordinary acceptation of this word.

We join issue at once, and challenge any one to produce *a single passage* where the word is so used. By reference to any concordance the reader will see that the word "eternal" occurs about seventy times. In some of these passages it is undeniable that it can only mean "eternal" in the ordinary acceptation of the term, *e.g.*,

"The King *eternal*, immortal, invisible" (I

Tim. i. 17). Here it is applied to God Himself, and precludes the idea of millennial or age-lasting.

“The *eternal* Spirit” (Heb. ix. 14).

“*Eternal* redemption” (Heb. ix. 12).

“*Eternal* salvation” (Heb. v. 9).

Need we quote the numberless passages that speak of “*eternal* life”?

Will any one seriously maintain that eternal life means millennial or age-lasting life? It is absolutely impossible so to take it. It is over and over again stated in Scripture that believers have eternal life now in this world. What absurdity to say that they have millennial life before even the millennium is established!

But there is one passage which proves beyond all question what God intends we should understand by the word “eternal” as used in Scripture. We refer to 2 Cor. iv. 18: “The things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.” Here eternal is distinctly placed in contrast to temporal. “Eternal,” then, does *not* mean “millennial,” it does *not* mean “age-lasting,” it does *not* mean “*for a time*,” but it *does* mean “eternal” in the sense of enduring everlastingly. There is no avoiding this plain Scripture.

But the matter is of awful and vital importance, for the same word that God uses when speaking of His own essential Being or of the blessedness of believers is used by that same God when speaking of the punishment of unbelievers. Did God mean to frighten men with a fable? or

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has He told us the solemn truth beforehand in order that we might flee for refuge to the shelter which He has Himself provided in the Person and work of His own beloved Son, Jesus Christ the Lord?

Side by side with the unbelief in a future state, diligently taught from the pulpits, there is widespread and rapidly growing disregard of God and His Word.

For 1900 years the Bible has been read and studied, and unquestionably the plain and straightforward teaching drawn from its pages is this—that the punishment of the wicked is as enduring as the blessedness of the people of God. We are told that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul and the eternity of punishment are derived from Plato. This is absolutely false. If the language that Scripture uses in reference to the punishment of the wicked does not convey to the mind of the reader that that punishment is eternal, then do we affirm that no language can possibly convey to the mind the idea of eternity, for the same word that is used in connection with the existence of God is likewise employed when speaking of the punishment of the wicked.

“These shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal” (Matt. xxv. 46). The words “everlasting” and “eternal” in this verse are identically the same in Greek, and mean exactly the same in English. If the punishment is not everlasting, then the life

here spoken of is not ; but if the life is eternal, then likewise is the punishment.

But we are told that the punishment is everlasting though the punished person ceases to exist. This argument is absolutely futile. If a man is sent to gaol for five years, and dies at the end of two years, who in his senses would say that he had endured five years' imprisonment ?

Reader, if unsaved, you have no wish to go to heaven ; and if the devil can reason you into the belief that there is no hell, you will continue in your present indifference until you step into eternity, there to prove the truth of the words that "**It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment**" (Heb. ix. 27).

In the words of another : "The punishment of the wicked is said to be of equal duration with the life of the blessed. But further, it is said to be of equal duration with the life of God. In Rev. v. 14 it is said that they worship 'Him that liveth *for ever and ever.*' In Rev. xiv. 11 it is said that 'the smoke of their torment ascendeth up *for ever and ever.*' Now if the punishment of the wicked is said to endure as long as the life of the blessed and as the life of God Himself, I ask, How could God have expressed more strongly to living men its enduring everlastingly ? If He has said that the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost 'hath never forgiveness' (Mark iii. 29), if He has said 'their worm dieth not' (Mark ix. 44, 46, 48), what could God have said

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more if He had meant to convey what eternal punishment was? And note here that Rev. xxi. 6-8, where they are said to be in the lake of fire, is after the millennium, and all is over; when it is said, 'It is done' (Rev. xvi. 17), and God is all in all."

Again: "You may fancy that you are to judge God, and that you are competent to say that He ought to assign so much punishment to so much sin; but know that He is to judge you. The notion of His love, which makes it an obligation incumbent upon Him to act in such and such a way without His being able to help it, and so that eternal punishment cannot be, is a false, unscriptural, and senseless notion.

"He is love, but He is God, and acts freely and holily in His love. God is love, but it is GOD that is so. If the Spirit of God has touched your conscience, you know that *you* have deserved to be shut out of the presence of God for ever. You are conscious that you have deserved eternal wrath and punishment. If you are not, you do not know yet by divine teaching what sin is. And I pray you to remark that in this question it is not what may be nor what might be which is in question. You *are* a sinner! What, in your own conscience, does sin deserve? And further, if it is a question of what sin deserves, it is also a question of what Christ bore, of what His atonement was; for believers can say, 'He bore our sins, and was made sin for us.'"

Reader, we earnestly pray that you may not give up belief in a future state, not only for believers, but for unbelievers. Many wearied of life and burdened in their consciences with the weight of unpardoned sins, having ceased to believe in a hereafter, have sought, by self-inflicted death, that rest from tormenting thoughts which they might have found in Christ, the Saviour of the lost. But **“There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.”** (Acts xxiv. 15).

“Come unto Me,” said Jesus, “all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matt. xi. 28). Blessed Saviour, now seated in heavenly glory, Thy promise is as sure for faith to-day as when spoken in the ears of men here below weary of the empty follies, pleasures, and sins of this poor world!

Reader, come and prove it true, as multitudes, through sovereign grace, have done.

We once heard a man say that he paced his room one night in an agony of mind as he thought over his sinful life. He had a loaded revolver in his hand, and he tried to make himself believe that there was no such place as hell. Had he succeeded, he intended to blow his brains out. Thank God, he could not! In a short while he fled to Christ for refuge, and, filled with His peace and joy, began preaching to others of “the dear Saviour he had found.”

A. H. B.



## The Church.

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**A**NOTHER aspect in which Scripture presents the Church is as the "body of Christ." The apostle writes to the "Assembly of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called saints." These were the Christians in that city, and in chapter xii. he says, "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." In this body there cannot be a false member, for none but those who are linked with the Head (Christ), and who have received divine life from Him, form a part of it. It is not by water baptism, but "by one Spirit," that the members are baptized into this body: "He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit." True Christians, therefore, viewed as a whole on earth, are the body of Christ, and members in particular. The body is *one*, and has many members; the old wall of partition between Jew and Gentile being broken down. That they become members of the body by the baptism of the Holy Ghost, sent down on the day of Pentecost, is a most important truth, for *He* does not baptize into the body anything but that which is real; the outward profession of Christianity does not admit to this place. Membership of a church is not synonymous

with membership of *the* Church. The former may be by water baptism, &c., the latter can only be by being born again, receiving divine life, and being baptized by the one Spirit into one body.

The last aspect in which we have to consider the Church is—not as the house of God, according to the thought and purpose of God, growing to a holy temple in the Lord and composed only of living stones ; nor yet as the body of Christ, where there are none but true members ; but as a building committed to the responsibility of men who build therein. It is presented in this way in 1 Corinthians iii. Paul, as a wise master-builder, had laid the foundation—Christ Jesus—other than which no man could lay ; others builded thereon. Some built in gold, silver, precious stones—that is what is genuine and would stand the test ; others built wood, hay, stubble—that which has merely an outward appearance, but will not abide. In the professing Church there are true Christians, possessors of eternal life, and a vast number of nominal Christians—professors of religion, but not possessors of divine life. *We* may not be able always to distinguish between them, but “the Lord knoweth them that are His.” On the day of Pentecost, no doubt, the material which formed the structure then begun was all real and genuine, but very soon what was not real came in. All the later epistles describe

the corrupt state of things which began even in apostolic days. Second Timothy, the last of Paul's epistles, likens the building to a great house, in which are vessels, some to honour and some to dishonour. In the present day true Christians are mixed up, in all the sects and bodies of Christendom, together with a vast number of merely professing Christians. Nothing can be more destructive of all sound principle than to fail to see the distinction between the professing body, organised by means of the various ordinances, &c., and the true Church, composed only of *living* members. It is a root-error of the Ritualistic and Romanist systems, and leads to the fatal mistake of applying to the vast professing body those blessings and privileges of which Scripture speaks, but which, in reality, belong solely and exclusively to true Christians, and not to the professing body at all. Far from the professing body being the depository of the truth, or acting under the guidance of the Spirit, as some would have us believe, the history of the Middle Ages shows that darkness and ignorance, not truth, was what characterised it; in fact, what called itself the Church persecuted and killed many of those who held and taught the truth. Every honest student of the history of Christendom must acknowledge that it has been one of continual corruption and failure, until it reached a climax in the sixteenth century. As the inward state got worse and

worse, the pretentious display of outward pomp and power increased in proportion. On this subject it has been well said that men forsook the precious perfume of faith—a living, saving faith in Christ—and bowed down before the empty vessel (the Church) that had once contained it. They sought for other bonds of union, for faith in the heart no longer connected the members of the Church ; and they were united by means of bishops, archbishops, popes, mitres, canons, and ceremonies. The living Church retiring gradually within the lonely sanctuary of a few solitary hearts, an external Church was substituted in its place, and all its forms were declared to be of divine appointment. Thus it has always been, for Satan's object is to satisfy the pride of man with outward pomp and grandeur, while the heart is far from God, and there is no living faith in the soul. We may even go much further back than this, for the Ritualists of our Lord's day, like those of to-day, paid great attention to externals. They were most scrupulous about not eating bread with unwashed hands, the washing of pots, cups, brazen vessels, &c., the due observance of the traditions of the elders ; but they rejected the Word of God that they might keep their traditions—with all their outward show, their *hearts* were far from God. People may have what externals they please, but without faith in the heart it is impossible to please God. Once we see what

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the true Church is, as composed only of true and living members, all the pretensions to authority on the part of the false professing thing lose their power over the soul.

F. G. B.

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## “Take Ye Away the Stone”

(JOHN xi. 39).

**W**HILE it is good for the Christian to recollect that in the work of the gospel he cannot by his own efforts bring any dark sinner's heart to the knowledge of the truth, it is our privilege to be assured that the Lord Jesus Christ can and does *own* such efforts, and exerts His power to make them the means of bearing fruit to His praise.

Sometimes the glad tidings of God's grace appear so blessedly simple to ourselves that we think we only need to present the facts clearly to others to see them received, and salvation rejoiced in as a present possession. But we find in any service we may take up, that more than this is necessary. The truth may be clearly and faithfully proclaimed in the hearing of the unconverted without the slightest apparent effect being produced in the soul, and this leads to discouragement. The thought may occur to the worker that God is, after all, sovereign, all power

is with Him, and that He can easily bring souls to the knowledge of Christ apart from the feeble efforts of His people. And so the appetite for Christian service may relax in the idea that God can accomplish the number of the elect without any assistance from the arm of flesh, which although-in itself true, is contrary to the gracious thought of His heart as revealed in His Word.

We find in the chapter from which the words heading this paper are taken, a very striking instance of the wonderful manner in which the Lord Jesus Christ graciously associates with Himself in His work those who were about Him, His disciples, and indeed any who would hear the Word, and act in obedience to it. While away from the happy family circle at Bethany, sickness enters the house, and the sisters send to Jesus to acquaint Him with the news. The Lord then says to those about Him that the sickness is "not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby," clearly giving the state into which this household was plunged, and the condition of Lazarus, a very special significance. It presented indeed in a figure the state of man as a sinner, his weakness, his need, and his danger.

But now we find what would appear a strange and unexpected thing from Him who loved Mary and Martha and Lazarus. He abides "two days still in the same place where He was" (ver. 6). Had He forgotten the message of

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the distressed sisters? Was He unmoved at the condition of the sufferer? Surely not. He declared that it was “for the glory of God.” Yet He allows a considerable time to pass, and in the meantime is apparently insensible to the entreaty underlying the message sent to Him. The fact was that the Lord intentionally waited till Lazarus was beyond all human aid, and the power of man, for He mentions on departing, “Our friend Lazarus sleepeth,” afterwards, however, adding, when the disciples misunderstood, the plain truth that he had actually departed. Lazarus is permitted then to pass beyond the dread portals of death, beyond recovery, so far as man was concerned, and whence only divine power could recall him for the glory of God, and for the glory of God’s Son; and these things are, in fact, a picture of what has actually been the history of mankind.

By his act of disobedience in the garden, Adam came under the sentence pronounced against him, “In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die,” and from that day as a sinner man has carried the seeds of death within him. At length, after having been under probation during the Old Testament period, the coming of God’s Son brings to light the solemn truth that there was within him no spark of life for God, and the blessed Lord therefore teaches (John iii.) that man “must be born again,” must have altogether a fresh start, and that the Son

of God brings with Him, in His person, eternal life to whomsoever believes upon Him (John iii. 16; I John v. 11-13).

Lazarus, then, being already dead and inanimate, presents to us the solemn spiritual condition in which man was found at the first advent of the Saviour; but it no less sets before us the spiritual condition of man to this very day (Eph. ii. 4, 5; Col. ii. 13). Thank God, He who is "the resurrection and the life" has intervened in this scene of death, and has conquered Satan, who held the power of death, by descending into death itself, the devil's last stronghold, from which, as the mighty Victor, He is risen again in the power of an endless life, and has brought life and incorruptibility to light by the gospel (2 Tim. i. 10).

What, however, we may see from John xi. is the almighty power in His own Person graciously exercised in the deliverance of those already dead. This blessed work He is still carrying on, and He will continue to do so, thank God, till the last sinner is quickened before the number of God's elect is complete, when He will surely return (John xiv. 3). Meanwhile (and what grace it is!) He is pleased to associate others with Him, even as in this chapter He says, "Take YE away the stone." Could the divine power that raised the dead not move away this stone also? Had He need of human strength in the preliminary stage of the



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work, any more than when His voice of power recalled the departed spirit of the dead man? Nay, but it was divine grace. And when Martha states the actual condition of the dead, the Lord repeats that if she but believed, she should “see the glory of God.” Then they take away the stone, and the scene of death and desolation is laid bare in all its solemn, its repugnant reality, and the dead is placed before the Lord Jesus as the object of His power and love.

Is this not a blessed picture of what God's servants may do? Is it not for them now, as then, to be “workers together with God” (1 Cor. iii. 9), and to value the privilege of being concerned in the salvation of precious souls? Men were not allowed to roll away the stone from the grave of Christ. Indeed the women who visited the tomb were troubled unnecessarily—the stone had been already rolled away by angelic hands (Matt. xxviii. 2; Mark xvi. 3, 4). The disciples were invited to see where death *had been*, but where death had been spiritually swallowed up in life (Matt. xxviii. 6). God would Himself take care that this grave, the scene of life and victory, should be displayed; but when it is a question of the truth of the gospel, and the truth concerning man's condition, we should value the “fellowship” of the gospel, and see that as the Lord may give ability we may take away the stone in obedience to the Word of Christ, laying bare the true condition of man by

the Scriptures, that Christ's word of power may be heard by the dead sinner, "Come forth," when we may be assured that the dead will come forth possessing "eternal life" (John v. 24, 25). F. L.

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## Perfect Peace.

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"**H**AVING therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest," says the apostle, "by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, His flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God, let us draw near," &c. (Heb. x. 19-22).

All who come not through Him are rejected, because they do not know that they are so utterly sinful that they cannot come into God's presence except through the blood of His Son. And on the other hand, all who say, I cannot go in except through blood, see that it is the perfectness of love—God's own perfect blessed love—that to meet man's need spared nothing, not even His only-begotten Son. "He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. v. 21). This is the language of faith. He is the God, who, when I was the chief of sinners, gave His Son to

die for me. I know of no God but a God of perfect love, bringing me out of all my vileness, hanging on my neck in my vileness, as did the father to the returning prodigal (Luke xv.), and bringing me into His house to rejoice with Him in the exceeding riches of His grace.

We get perfect blessed peace through the blood of Christ, without one pang of conscience left. The worshipper once purged has no more conscience of sins (Heb. x.).

J. N. D.

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## Pilate and Christ.

(Read John xviii. 28 to John xix. 16.)

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**T**HIS Scripture furnishes us with the record of a conflict such as we do not find again in the whole Word of God. The soul of Pilate is the arena. The conflicting powers are, on the one side, the claims of truth and the voice of conscience; on the other, the fear of man and the love of the world.

Pilate is brought into immediate contact with the Lord Jesus Christ. Led from Caiaphas into the judgment hall, He stands before the Roman governor. His accusers remain without, fearing defilement that would prevent their eating the Passover—a circumstance which gives perhaps the most perfect example of how completely a religious man may become a dupe of Satan and

withal pride himself upon ceremonial observance. This, however, only necessitated Pilate's going out of the judgment hall to inquire the nature of the accusation. In reply they only say, "If He were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered Him up unto thee," whereupon Pilate urges they should take Him and judge Him according to their law. They again take shelter behind a statement that such would be unlawful only in result fulfilling the Lord's own utterance.

Pilate now returns to the hall of judgment, and is once more found in the sacred presence of the Lord of glory. What the feelings of Pilate were at this moment are not recorded, but of this we may be sure, none ever stood in the presence of Him who in His own Person "is over all, God blessed for ever," without being conscious that he stood in the presence of One who addressed Himself to the soul and conscience. This Pilate's subsequent history clearly proves. He now salutes the Lord with the question, "Art Thou the King of the Jews?" Jesus in perfect wisdom answers, "Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of Me?" This only draws from Pilate the truth that His own nation and the chief priests had delivered Him up. He also asks, "What hast Thou done?"

Beloved reader, what an answer could be given to Pilate's inquiry, "What hast Thou done?" Even at that hour what an answer could have

been rendered. At an earlier day they declared, "He hath done all things well, He maketh both the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak," but He had done infinitely more, for He brought into this world life and light in His own person, and His pathway from the manger to the cross was one beautiful course of testimony for God and of blessing to man.

But mark the Lord's gracious answer: "My kingdom is not of this world: if My kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is My kingdom not from hence." We have in these words, first, the fact that He has a kingdom; second, that it is *not* of this world; and third, that His servants have not to fight for earthly deliverance. How entirely the truth contained in these words of the Lord Jesus have been lost sight of in the circle of professing Christendom! Let my reader ask himself, first, if he has accepted the claims and authority of Christ; second, if he has apprehended that the source of this kingdom is heavenly; and thirdly, that the servants of Christ have to stand apart from worldly conflict for the *worldly* establishment of His claims.

Still, however, the Lord in all the calm and blessed dignity that was ever His, could but bear a good confession before Pontius Pilate. He was the King of Israel. Pilate again asks, "Art Thou a king then?" Jesus answered,

“Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth My voice.”

Never, perhaps, in the whole course of the Lord's ministry had He uttered words more simply defining the nature of His visit to this world, and wonderful that a man of Pilate's character and position should have been allowed to listen to such a testimony! Every word must have made itself felt in the conscience of this miserable man, and as he felt the power of that testimony the claims of Christ must have asserted themselves over his soul.

Reader, I ask you quietly to ponder the marvellous depths of these precious words, “To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness of THE TRUTH.” Who else could claim such a mission? Who else could say, “Every one that is of the truth heareth My voice”? None but He who *was* “the Truth” (John xiv. 6). He came into this world bringing into it “grace and truth,” and was in His own Person the true test of everything here. He declared the truth in relation to man's ruin and misery, but revealed in Himself the completeness of divine grace and truth that alone could meet man in that condition. He came bearing the testimony of what “He had seen and heard” in heavenly glory, but no man received his testimony.

As in that day so in this day, He still bears witness unto *the truth*; then in His own personal ministry, *now* through His servants, using His Word by the Holy Ghost. We have in the Word of God the truth in its completeness as to man's condition in time and the issues in eternity; we have also therein revealed the truth about God in His grace to man, and the awful results of slighting that grace.

Pilate raises the inquiry, "What is truth?" but, alas! like many a man since, he raised the question but waited not for the answer. Reader, is this your case? Care you to know "what is truth"? If so, you may know it in the very moral depths of your soul. Do you ask, "Where can I learn it?" I answer, in the presence of God. There, and there only, can you learn the truth, the truth about yourself, about the world, about Satan, but, blessed be God! much more than this, *the truth also about God Himself*. Light will discover to you the truth of your real condition, and Love will discover to you the fullness of that grace which awaits every returning sinner.

Pilate was afraid to face the answer; the conflict within was now raging in terrible reality; he feared getting too much under the sacred mysterious power of the testimony of Him who stood before him. But if he will not listen for an answer, he will go out and declare that "he finds in Him no fault at all." E. P. C.

**CORRESPONDENCE.**—(H. J. H., Delft.)—“Without entering into the question of whether, from a human point of view, the war (*i.e.*, in South Africa) is right or wrong, it seems to me clear from Scripture that England must lose eventually Africa, Egypt, and India.

“Russia (as the Gog of Ezekiel xxxviii., &c.) will in the end have India, Persia, and all the Far East. The King of the South (Dan. xi.) will occupy Egypt and possibly Africa. But England will have to take her place as one of the ten kings of the Roman Empire. She will be only *one* of them, and not supreme over them.

“Now the King of the South is one of the divisions of the *third* beast of Daniel vii. ; whereas England, as one of the ten kings, will be a part of the *fourth* beast of Daniel vii. How then can England occupy Egypt, which will be the territory of the King of the South ?

“England hitherto has had a place of supremacy in the world ; *this* she *must* lose. But England's downfall will be Protestantism's death-blow everywhere. Whether this is the time that in the ways of God these things are to be carried out, no one can say for certain. One thing is sadly true, that England is rapidly going over to the apostasies of Babylon the Great, and infidelity. And while from Scripture I see very plainly that her greatness must be lessened, in order for her to take her place as one of the ten confederate kings, yet it is sorrowful to think that her humiliation is due to her heartless giving up of God and His Word.

“Things are moving rapidly towards the final crisis. While in many parts of the earth, *e.g.*, China, Africa, &c., the boundaries of nations are changing, we know that soon the whole earth will change hands, and pass from Satan the usurper, to Christ the rightful heir of all.

“The coming of the Lord draws nigh ! Blessed be God ! the Christian, whether Dutch or English, &c., has ‘a kingdom which cannot be moved’ (Heb. xii. 28).”—ED.



## The Work of Grace, for us, and in us.

“Then were there two thieves crucified with Him, one on the right hand, and another on the left. And they that passed by reviled Him, wagging their heads, and saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save Thyself. If Thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. Likewise also the chief priests mocking Him, with the scribes and elders, said, He saved others, Himself He cannot save. If He be the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him. He trusted in God ; let Him deliver Him now, if He will have Him : for He said, I am the Son of God. The thieves also, which were crucified with Him, cast the same in His teeth.”—MATT. xxvii. 38-44.

“And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on Him, saying, If thou be Christ, save Thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly ; for we receive the due reward of our deeds : but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when Thou comest in Thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise.”—LUKE xxiii. 39-43.

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**T**HE Saviour, the Son of Man, was dying ; the just One in place of the many unjust ; bearing our sins in His own body on the tree. This was His great work *for* us. But of the two malefactors between whom He was crucified, both of whom had reviled Him—one became

converted, and showed a work of grace wrought *in* him.

The work of grace *for* us, and the work of grace *in* us, are not one and the same thing, any more than the death of Christ *for* the thief, and the change *inside* the thief (by the means of which he ceased to be a blasphemer and owned Jesus) were one and the self-same thing. The former is outside of us, and was wrought by CHRIST; the second is *in ourselves*, though wrought there by grace.

I desire to present a few thoughts which are connected with this most important subject.

And first, What is it which hinders God and a sinner meeting and being together? True, the sinner's will is opposed to God; his heart's affections, too, are alienated from God; and doubtless if he, a sinner, were in the light of God's presence, he would find, soon enough, that the light of God's presence discovers all the sin of the creature. But *the* difficulty was not in the creature, however sunk, alienated, and deluded he may be, and however unsuited for such an one the holiness and majesty of God's presence may be. There was another question, one of far higher and deeper import, viz., How could God, in His holiness and righteousness, meet a sinner who has by sin done dishonour to God? Sin is an insult to God—to God in His majesty and being—and the soul that gets into the light knows this to be so.

So far as God is concerned, the work of grace *in* us is never separated from the work of grace *for* us. From the day of the fall and of man's exclusion from Eden, God wrought *in* man, but always upon the ground of the work which He meant to do *for* man. And in working thus *in* man He has constantly presented some object to the mind in which the work *for* man was shadowed forth.

The sacrifice offered by Abel, the victims of the patriarchal worship, the sacrifices of the sanctuary, &c., all pointed onward to the work which Christ was to do *for* man—a work by which alone God could be just while justifying a sinner, and which alone can ever satisfy the conscience of a sinner in the presence of God about sin. But the work *in* man preceded the work *for* man in all these cases. At Calvary the Son of Man gave Himself a ransom for us. From that day onward the work of grace *for* man has had nothing added to it, nothing new from the time that “by one sacrifice He perfected for ever them that are sanctified.” But though the work *for* man is finished, yet is the work of grace *in* man quite as needful now as ever. That it is wrought *in* man by the Holy Ghost, through faith in the work accomplished *for* man, is true; but it must be wrought *in* man or man is lost.

The peculiarity of the conversion of the thief upon the cross is, that it is a case in which grace was working *in* a man to open his heart to Christ,

*at the very moment* that Christ was doing *for* man that work without which no way was opened for God to bless, nor open for man to come for blessing.

On this account the distinctness of the two things is the more easily seen, and this may help some to see how they should not confound them together, and how impossible it would be for the one to be exchanged so as to be made to take the place of the other.

Justice had brought the two thieves, for their misdeeds, to the violent death of the cross. There they were surrounded by a mass who were gathered to the spot to revile and blaspheme the dying Saviour.

The thieves heard the revilings, and adopted them, for they cast the same in His teeth. But an entire change came over one of them. Light broke in upon his soul, and in his case it was the light of life—eternal life.

God had taken His rightful place in the man's soul. The effect is immediate ; and, remark—he rebukes his fellow-malefactor : “ Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation ? And we indeed justly ; for we receive the due reward of our deeds : but this man hath done nothing amiss.” When the candle of the Lord searches a man, it is sure to discover sin in him to himself. It must be so ; for righteousness and holiness are inseparable from the light of God, and man is unholy. The light detects and shows

the unholiness. Yet is there in this experience of the thief also another feeling expressed. He knew sin to be inseparable from himself; he knew it, and yet he sought to put it down with an unhesitating mind. He rebukes his fellow-malefactor for doing the very thing which he himself had done just before, and the which he had but just ceased to do.

This was, as man would count it, practically inconsistent. Quite so. Conscience, when it gets into God's presence, and has the light of life, acts in a way which is very inconsistent with human thoughts of consistency and propriety. He was inconsistent as a man, but consistent as a saint. It is strange, that first dread and hatred of sin, which leads us to put our mouths in the dust and to condemn sin in ourselves—part of our being as it may have been. But it is a blessed instinct of the new life, of life divine in a soul, that sin must be condemned, for it is hateful. This true taste of what sin is, is a very different thing from the dread of the consequences of sins. Dread of the consequences of sin and sins may alarm and terrify the soul, and drive it to seek a Saviour. But the light of life shining in quickening power into a soul, separates between it and the sin itself: gives it an altogether new estimate of what sin is. "Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss."

How full, both in the general statement and in the particular detail, is his confession of sin! What an abandoning and disclaimer of all human righteousness! "We indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds."

And it was light, not vague and ill-defined, that shone in upon his soul, but clear and distinct; for it was the light of a contrast between the Christ of God and himself: "But this man hath done nothing amiss." Himself and the Christ were in his conscience, contrasted the one with the other. His language was that of faith; and little as he knew it, he was, in the hour of the Lord's being forsaken by all, giving the description of Him which will be owned of God to be true of Christ alone. "This man hath done nothing amiss" will be loudly proclaimed as true of Christ alone in the glory; and all of us that will be there will know and own the perfectly graphic, distinctive description, as being His alone. Of Adam's race, not one, from Eden down to the placing of the great white throne—not one, save the seed of the woman, of whom it could be said in truth, "This man hath done nothing amiss."

God, sin, himself, the Man that is Jehovah's fellow—these were not only new experiences of his soul, but they marked that he had a new life, and had got into a world of light, where things are seen just as they are. But his faith went further, and he sees not only the personal pecu-

liarity of the Sinless One at his side, but also that there was in Him a heart on which, spite of all the contrast between the Christ and himself, he might cast his every care. "Lord, remember me when Thou comest in Thy kingdom." The glories, and the kingdom, and the majesty of the Lord brake in upon his soul—sinner as he was—and yet he saw that in that One there was the only rest, the alone hope for him. This also is an instinct of the new nature. It will see and own the contrasts between the Christ and what we are, but it will cleave to Him in spite of our misery and His gloriousness—it will cleave to Him as being *all* our salvation.

If we are to be vessels filled with grace, we may be assured that there has been a somewhat similar work wrought *in* us—and we shall be able to record it as a work of the Lord in us—a work which puts us just where the Lord's work in the dying thief put him, viz., into the position of expecting from the Lord, into a position in which the Lord could show some of the exceeding riches of His grace, as He did in His answer to the thief. The thief asked to be remembered in the kingdom: Jesus answered, "Verily, I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise."

Christ had His rightful place in this poor sinner's soul, and no mistake about it, and this place was His from the time that the rocky heart was riven open. But what the thief ex-

perienced in his own soul—the blessed work which God was doing in the soul of the poor thief, while it fitted him to receive the grace, could not appear in heaven in place of the blood of the Lamb of God: it could neither justify God in justifying a thief, nor discover to the thief, that which, in the light, is his justification before God. Without shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. Christ was there and then shedding His blood, giving His life, the Just One in place of the unjust. And whether that poor thief, or any other sinner, were ever saved or not—He, risen from the dead and gone into heaven, the way is plainly set forth, in which God declares that He is free to bless the vilest of the vile—the way, too, in which the vilest of the vile that comes by it finds a way of peaceful access to God.

If no one upon earth cared for that new and living way, yet *it is a new and living way*, and it is open—open for man to draw nigh to God, even into the holiest of all in the heavens.

The work of grace *in* us cannot be substituted for, cannot be put in the place of the work of grace *for* us; the work of grace *in* me cannot vindicate God's holiness so as to justify Him in moving in favour of me, a sinner. And, clearly, so far as it is a work of grace wrought *in* me by God, God has moved in my favour to work it ere it ever was wrought. And, moreover, it contains in it, for just the self-same reason, no



answer to my conscience if it is in the presence of God—nothing that can make for me a perfect conscience.

God has a right to act without man's leave, and in spite of man. None can say unto Him, "What doest Thou?" But then He has a character of His own, which He will not deny. And if He will have mercy on whom He will have mercy, and will have compassion on whom He will have compassion, He does so in a way which thoroughly vindicates His holiness and His justice, in a way which elevates conscience in man, while it gives to it perfect liberty and boldness of approach unto God in the light.

People may argue against justification by faith alone; but they may depend upon it that if they ever find themselves in the same light of life in which the poor thief found himself, they will find that they themselves appear very miserable, and that there is an attractive beauty about the Christ, who is all the salvation of the soul.

Many may turn faith into a work for themselves to work, but they will find that the Spirit convicts of *unbelief*, and that all their rest is in the Lord Himself, and in the work He has wrought *for* poor sinners.

From the day of Pentecost the testimony of God has been about that work itself, and how heaven was opened thereby for the Holy Ghost to come down, and for man to draw near by faith.

When the testimony of God is received, as, for instance, about Christ as a new and living way (see Heb. x.), the soul that receives it finds its assurance to be in the work itself so presented to it,—not in its own feelings, thoughts, or experiences about it, but in the work ITSELF. For so has God been pleased to settle it. The light shining in brings with it its own testimony: It places me in the sight of God upon His throne in heaven, where He has placed Christ, who bare sin in His own body on the tree, that He might become the new and living way of blessing from God to man, and of approach by man to God.

The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is revealed as the God who has provided Himself a lamb, that His mercy and His compassion might be evident before all—heaven opened upon them.

That the heart of man is so wicked and so deluded that it cannot, will not, believe such things of God is true; and in this is seen the awfulness of man's condition. He must meet God, and he hates Him, and loves to nourish hard thoughts of Him. But when the light of life does break in, it is its own evidence.

Its entrance may not be understood at first, but the light will be found to be evidence of the subject whence it comes, and will be found to be the light of life.

J. G. B.

## A Letter on the National Crisis.

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**T**HOUGH our Lord has impressed upon us the fact, "My kingdom is not of this world," one cannot but feel deep sorrow at the heavy losses one's country has sustained in this war.

I look beyond what is happening at the present moment, forward as well as backward, and cannot help being saddened at anything which might precipitate the downfall of our country; for which, one cannot but realise, practically all the countries of Europe are hoping and waiting with bated breath.

*God* has blessed her hitherto. She has been the refuge and defender of the oppressed of all kinds, the home of liberty. She has been the beacon from which the great truths of the gospel have shone forth, where the Word of God has been free and unfettered.

This, apart from the entrance of that Word in saving power into the soul, has produced a freedom and independence of character, the envy of the world, which is *never* found in a priest-ridden country. The more priest-ridden, the less pronounced—the less priest-ridden, the more.

England is her own worst enemy. She has

been for years, within one's own memory, slowly but surely, now more and more rapidly, giving up her proud position as defender of the faith of the gospel, justification by faith, &c., and, instead, going back to priestcraft and superstition, with their *outward* trappings of religion; and side by side with that, as is always the case, increased profanity and irreligion.

Can we not recognise this latter feature even in reference to this war in the daily press? How the *Morning Post*, the great ritualistic organ, has jeered at any acknowledgment of God in the Boers. One would honour it even in one's enemies. And how, too, as recorded in that journal, the clergy (the ritualistic, doubtless) branded the suggestion of the Evangelical Alliance, of a day of humiliation and prayer, as a piece of impertinence coming from such a tag-rag and bob-tail arrangement; that such should have had the insolent audacity to make this proposal! Had not the *Anglican clergy* already *repeated litanies*, &c.!

Thank God there are some left, though they may be a constantly diminishing minority, who think and feel otherwise, and who look to God that His hand be not put on their country. They know that "to whom much is given, of him will much be required." But they know also, that if there had been *ten* found in Sodom, it would not have been destroyed. And in the still existing strength of Protestant feeling in

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this country, and the fear of God that goes along with it, lies, to my mind, our one hope of the continued preservation of the nation. There are plenty scheming her destruction.

What is it that causes this great feeling in continental Europe against us? It is an UNREASONABLE *hatred*. Take Switzerland—what grudge can she have against us? Yet we are hated out there. It is attempted to be accounted for in many different ways, all of which, in their measure, may have something to do with it, or even to a certain extent have originated it. But I am certain, as the feeling against England in Ireland, which no amount of truckling to the priests and to their murderous traitor dupes *will ever alter*, it is fostered and kept alive by the Romish clergy.

Why are the clerical organs of Italy, a country otherwise one of the least inimical to us, radically pro-Boer and anti-English? They have no reason to love the Boer. Romanists can hold no office in the Transvaal, nor can they, I believe, have a chapel.\*

Might the following not help us to solve the riddle? Cardinal Manning wrote of England that the Queen's supremacy is the essence of heresy, and "the Reformation *in concreto*"—that

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\* From information more recently received it would appear that Rome is gaining ground, even in the Transvaal.—ED.


the English Government "has headed the unbelief and sedition of Europe, and directs the full power of England against the Catholic Church, and above all against the Holy See;" and is "essentially a denial of the Divine Institution of the Church, and represents a population, not only in schism and heresy, but traditionally hostile to the spiritual authority of the Church and the Pontiffs." Again: "If ever there was a land in which work was to be done, and perhaps much to suffer, it is here. I shall not say too much, if I say that we have to subjugate and subdue, to conquer and rule, an imperial race. We have to do with a will which reigns throughout the world as the will of old Rome reigned once. We have to bend or break that will which nations and kingdoms have found invincible." Again: "Were heresy conquered in England, it would be conquered throughout the world. All its lines meet here; and therefore in England the Church of God (*sic*) must be gathered in its strength."

To that end, indeed, they work by every device, we may rest assured, whether by egging on all Europe against us, or by advising a "Church of England clergyman" to remain where he is, so as to have more influence over others, and thus work their ends better.

To be forewarned is to be forearmed; we have to look ahead further than the Boers—" *Quos Deus vult perdere, prius dementat.*" G. B. I. C.

## Thoughts

### While Awaiting the Ultimatum as to War with the Boers.

BOVE the din and strife of war  
There shines the Bright and Morning Star ;  
And, called from earth to heaven above,  
My refuge is in Jesu's love.

The hand of God disposes all,  
When kings arise, or rulers fall ;  
And still His purpose standeth fast,  
That Christ shall reign o'er all at last.

Oh ! blessed day when wars shall cease,  
And earth shall hail the Prince of Peace ;  
When every tongue shall own Him Lord,  
And praise His Name with sweet accord.

But ere with glory in the skies  
The Sun of Righteousness shall rise,  
We shall be called from earth afar  
To Him, our Bright and Morning Star.

O blessed Lord, our hearts can say,  
What joy if Thou shouldst come to-day !  
Then in a moment we shall be  
Made like Thee, when Thy face we see,  
And ever, ever dwell with Thee.

NEW ZEALAND,  
*30th September 1899.*

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“ Yet a little while, and He that shall come will come,  
and will not tarry.”—HEB. x. 37.

## Who is Willing?



CORRESPONDENT has sent in the following cutting from the *Daily Mail* of 21st February 1900:—

“Mafeking, 9th February 1900. Last Sunday a splendid football match took place. . . . The Boers do not fire on Sunday, but respect the Sabbath by digging out trenches and building forts. They are too pious to fire a shot, and we therefore make holiday every week. Next Sunday we shall have a cricket match in the morning, cycle sports in the afternoon, and a grand concert in the evening to celebrate the eighteenth Sunday of the siege. The bachelor officers will give a dance in the evening.”

Another correspondent sends us the following, which is very solemn after the foregoing profanity:—

“At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; if it do evil in My sight, that it obey not My voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them” (Jer. xviii. 7-11).

God is not mocked. While we rejoice to know that many a God-fearing man has been labouring for the eternal interests of his fellows at Modder River, Ladysmith, and elsewhere, yet it would seem as if the fear of God were rapidly disappearing from society.



The Bible is within the reach of all, but the bulk of the rising generation rarely take it into their hands, still less do they allow it to speak to their consciences. Rationalism that abounds in the pulpits, and Ritualism that, after the example of Rome, substitutes tradition and the Church for the living Word of God, are largely accountable for this alarming feature of our times. And yet many Christians seem to be asleep. Some even object to any direct testimony against these very dangers. Would to God we all felt them more, and sought to redouble our efforts to awaken our fellows! It soon will be too late.

We would suggest that some short and simple pamphlet exposing from Scripture the falsity of the prevailing teaching in most of the parishes of this country, and at the same time presenting the truth of God that would counteract it, could be left at every house in each village and town of the land. The servants of Satan are far more active than those who ought to be serving their Lord. Are there not some Christian young men who will spend either their Saturday or Sunday afternoons going from house to house with these silent messengers? Many villages might thus be reached. We should be glad to hear from them on the subject and to supply them with books to the utmost of our ability.

“Work, for the night is coming.”

ED.

## Hints on Daniel.

### INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

**T**HE study of the inspired history of God's ancient people Israel is humbling in the extreme, for it is one of the many instances which go to prove that man, however privileged when placed in responsibility, invariably fails.

When read in connection with the prophetic word, it is nevertheless most encouraging to faith, for it teaches us how God is ever faithful, and that, in spite of human failure, He will yet glorify Himself in the blessing of His unworthy people.

But, failure having come in, before God in grace can establish them in blessing, he must first of all in government pass them under His chastening rod. Grace and government are thus two important principles of God's dealings with His own. It is ever blessedly true that God is always and entirely *for* His people in grace, though for a time He may appear to act *against* them in His government. It is thus that the Book of Daniel opens.

Things had sunk to a fearfully low level even in Judah. Every careful reader of the Books of Kings and Chronicles will remember how speedily after the separation of the ten tribes did these (commonly called *Israel*, in

contrast to *Judah*) turn to idolatry. The oft-repeated sentence, "Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin," is sadly familiar to our ears, for it was this wicked King of Israel who led the ten tribes into idolatry.

For a time Judah and Benjamin remained faithful, but, alas! they too fell into the same sin, until at length of Manasseh we are told that he "seduced them to do more evil than did the nations whom the Lord destroyed before the children of Israel" (2 Kings xxi. 9).

It was then that the prophetic warnings began to fall upon the ears of the people. Indeed the prophetic office seems always to have been connected with the failure of the people of God. This is a principle which runs through both the Old and New Testaments. As soon as ruin and declension have set in, then the Lord speaks by His servants the prophets, warning all who have an ear to hear of those righteous judgments which must fall if disobedience be persisted in, and holding out to faith bright promises of blessing upon repentance.

But the Book of Daniel has a peculiar character about it. It is not addressed to the people as a whole, it is a communication made to Daniel himself about that people. In others of the prophets, such as Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, God addressed Himself directly to the people themselves, through the prophet, no

doubt, who constantly thundered in their ears the well known words, Thus saith the Lord.

“Higher criticism” has stumbled here as everywhere else. Rationalists have been at marvellous pains to scrutinise the Bible. They are more familiar with the letter than multitudes of true believers, but, destitute of the Spirit, they utterly fail in understanding what they read. This is one out of the many cases in point. They have observed the omission of what Dean Farrar is pleased to call “the mighty formula of, Thus saith the Lord,” and have used this as evidence of what they call the “late date” theory. But their infidelity was the parent of their criticism. They had decided beforehand that Daniel was not a prophet, and this in face of what the Lord Jesus Christ had said in Matthew xxiv. 15. Daniel was an *historian*, say they, and not a *prophet*. “Not once does he use the mighty formula!”

The fact is, the words “Thus saith the Lord,” would have been entirely inconsistent with the character of the book. As we have before observed, God does not here address His people as such; the time had gone by for this. According to the announcement of Hosea, nearly two hundred years previously, “Lo-Ammi” (not My people) was the solemn sentence now written upon them. On account of their persistent idolatry, continued in through

long lines of kings, persevered in notwithstanding ample prophetic warnings, and culminating in Manasseh, who "set a carved image, the idol which he had made, in the house of God, of which God had said to David, and to Solomon his son, In this house, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen before all the tribes of Israel, will I put My name for ever" (2 Chron. xxxiii. 7)—on account of all this, Jehovah was moved to jealousy, and He refused any longer to recognise Israel as His people. Lo-Ammi is the sentence. A crisis, long threatening, had now been reached in the history of the nation.

Even in Isaiah's time, about one hundred and fifty years earlier, things in Israel had come to a terrible pass. Uzziah's rash act in entering the temple of the Lord to burn incense, which by the law of Jehovah was allowed to the priests alone, who were consecrated for this very thing (2 Chron. xxvi.), was speedily followed by the glaring idolatry of Ahaz (2 Chron. xxviii.). Isaiah was then called forth, and addresses the solemn warnings of judgment to the consciences of the people, while at the same time appealing to their hearts and causing to pass before their vision bright pictures of future blessing, despised by them in the prophet's day, but destined yet to be accomplished when the Branch shall grow out of the root of Jesse (Isaiah xi.).

The Kings of Judah had "forsaken the Lord," they had "provoked the Holy One of Israel to

anger" (Isa. i. 4); but though provoked, He forgave, and though forsaken by the people, He did not yet forsake them. He addresses them still as His people through His servant Isaiah: "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, My people doth not consider" (i. 3). "**My people,**" let this be compared with the language of Daniel, *e.g.*, "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy (*i.e.*, Daniel's) people" (Dan. ix. 24); compare also Daniel x. 14, and xii. 1. In these instances the Lord does not speak of them as His people, but as *Daniel's*. Lo-Ammi (not My people) was the sentence now written upon them. This is a most solemn reflection, and indispensable for a right understanding of the book.

Another evidence of the same kind is found in the title that Jehovah frequently assumes throughout the book, *viz.*, "The God of heaven" (see especially chap. ii.). In the Book of Joshua He is seen as the "Lord of all the earth" (Josh. iii.) going before His people, and driving out the Canaanites before them in order to establish His redeemed people in the land of promise. But now that very people have "sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan"; the land, God's land, has become "polluted with blood." "Therefore was the wrath of the Lord kindled against His people, insomuch that He abhorred His own inheritance" (Ps. cvi.). He withdraws from active intervention on behalf of His

people ; “the throne of the Lord” which had been set up at Jerusalem amidst all the glories of Solomon’s day (1 Chron. xxix.) is now removed from the earth, dominion is given into the hands of the Gentiles, and, with Nebuchadnezzar, “the times of the Gentiles” (Luke xxi.) commence.

Daniel is the prophet of the times of the Gentiles, and not merely of the days of Antiochus, as the higher critics would have it.

*(To be continued.)*

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## The Last Days of the Apostle Paul.

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**L**UKE, the inspired historian of the Acts, closes his narrative with the account of Paul’s arrival at Rome as a prisoner. It would be interesting could we pursue the history of this great and faithful servant of God, this “chosen vessel” who should bear the name of the Lord “before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel,” and be acquainted with the end of his career of devotedness to his Master, but the Lord has not thought fit to give us an inspired account of it. The Lord’s object in the Acts was not to write the biography of

a man, however excellent, but to place before us the establishment of His Church on earth, by the power of the Holy Ghost, and by means of the instruments which He had chosen.

Nevertheless, by carefully reading the apostle's epistles, and putting together what he says of himself in them, we may learn much concerning the close of his life down here. I propose, in these pages, to attempt to retrace it.

We know under what circumstances the prisoner Paul had been taken to Rome. In order to escape from the snares laid by the Jews for his destruction, he had appealed unto Cæsar; that is to say, as a Roman citizen, he had demanded to be judged by the emperor himself. Nero was Emperor of Rome at this time, sadly celebrated for his cruelty and dissolute life. At the beginning of his reign, however, attentive to the voice of wise counsellors, he had been kind and just. It was at this moment that Paul was taken to Rome.

Julius the centurion, to whose care the apostle had been confided, and who had shown him great kindness on the journey, delivered him, with other prisoners, to the captain of the guard (prætorium), that is, to the one who commanded the emperor's guards. The prætorium (guard) was the place where the guards and their commander lived;\* the soldiers composing it were

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\* This name was also given to the residence of the provincial governors (John xviii. 28).



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pretorians. The prefect (captain) of the guard to whom Paul was committed was Burrhus, a man represented in ancient history as honest and virtuous. He had been Nero's tutor, and had always tried to curb his vicious tendencies. The centurion Julius doubtless gave him a favourable report of the apostle, telling him that it was to this poor prisoner that he, the soldiers and the crew, owed their lives, and testifying to Paul's noble, pious, and courageous conduct.

However that may have been, Burrhus treated Paul with attention and kindness, and allowed him to "dwell by himself with a soldier that kept him." As was the case with Felix and Festus, the captain of the guard probably had opportunities of hearing the gospel from the lips of Paul. Others of the guard certainly had, for the soldier who kept the apostle was changed every day; his duty being not to leave the prisoner for a moment—hence he was continually in contact with him. This circumstance, which no doubt was distasteful to Paul, inasmuch as the soldiers may have been rude and disagreeable, nevertheless furnished him with the occasion for preaching the gospel to one after the other, and we may well believe that, constrained by the love of Christ, and hungering after souls, he took care to embrace it. Thus many must have heard him speak of the Lord and the riches of His grace, and witnessed his patience in bonds, his gentleness, and that life of which he

could say, "Yet not I, but Christ liveth in me," so that "the life of Jesus" was "manifest in his mortal flesh." What an impression this must have made on them!

Nothing strikes men of the world so much as a Christian who walks with God. Such was Paul. Moreover, writing to the Philippians, he could say: "But I would that ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me (his imprisonment) have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel; so that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places" (Phil. i. 12, 13). Every one knew that if he were a prisoner, it was neither for political reasons, nor for the evil doing of which the Jews accused him (Acts xxiv. 5), but simply for the name of Christ.

How admirable are God's ways! He causes even the malice of men to work for the accomplishment of His counsels of grace. Thus the gospel had found its way even into Cæsar's palace, and was received by souls there. We learn this from the words of the apostle: "All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Cæsar's household" (Phil. iv. 22). Who were they? What position did they hold in this house? We do not know; they were saints of God, that we know. In the palace of one who became a cruel tyrant, amidst the frightful corruption which pervaded this dwelling, God had His witnesses!

*(To be continued.)*

## Correspondence.

**Chelmsford (Matt. xii. 31, 32).**—“It is ever Satan’s way to harass and perplex simple souls by means of difficult texts, and generally speaking those most troubled by these texts are the very ones to whom they least apply. It is just so in the case of your friend and Matthew xii.

“A reference to the analogous passage in Mark iii. 22-31 makes it quite clear to whom this awful warning applies, viz., to “the scribes which came down from Jerusalem.” These persistent opponents of divine grace, a grace borne witness to by miracles of divine power, were forced to admit the reality of all that the Lord was doing—‘Unclean spirits, when they saw Him, fell down before Him,’ &c.

“A special case had just taken place (Matt. xii. 22). The devil had been cast out by the Lord. The Pharisees had seen it; they could not deny it; and yet, rather than acknowledge that the miracle had been wrought by the power of the Spirit of God, they deliberately attribute it to Beelzebub, the prince of the devils. This was the unpardonable blasphemy. Mark iii. 39 makes this perfectly clear, ‘Because they (*i.e.*, the scribes and Pharisees) said, He (*i.e.*, Christ) hath an unclean spirit.’ To attribute to Satan what was the manifest work of the Holy Ghost,

showed up the incurable wickedness of the religious leaders of that day.

“In order to deprive your friend of the knowledge and joy of salvation, Satan has raised in her mind the question, ‘*Is it possible* for one who has done so-and-so *to be saved?*’ Let her triumphantly point to Acts xvi. 31, and say, ‘*It is impossible* for one who believes on the Lord Jesus Christ *to be lost!*’

ED.

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## Faith's Ground of Confidence.

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**W**HEN the soul apprehends the Lord Jesus as the one offering for sin, it has confidence in God; and that on the very ground of His knowing thoroughly our sinfulness. It is impossible that God should pass over the blood of the Lord Jesus, and impute to sinners those sins which He has washed away.

God cannot impute sin to a believer without condemning the value of Christ's blood-shedding and virtually denying the efficacy of it. Faith knows that death is God's own sentence against sin, and that it has been executed on Christ in the sinner's stead. Faith “sets to its seal that God is true,” and receives His thoughts who has said about the blood-shedding of Jesus, “When see I the blood, I will pass over.”

J. N. D.

## The Mass and the Eucharist.

**N**OW that the Mass, in a more or less modified form, has been introduced into a good many Anglican churches, it is important to inquire briefly how the doctrine stands as viewed in the light of Holy Scripture, and what is the true teaching about the Eucharist.

The Mass, according to the Roman usage, has been defined by the Council of Trent to be a propitiatory sacrifice available for the sins of the living and the dead—truly propitiatory; Christ is unbloodily immolated there. It is not merely a commemorative service, they say, but a propitiatory one. Now if we turn to the Epistle to the Hebrews, chapter x., we shall find that this doctrine of a repeated and unbloody sacrifice is diametrically opposed to the plain teaching of that chapter, for the inspired writer expressly contrasts the *one* sacrifice of Christ with those offered *continually* under the Jewish ritual. What marked the Jewish sacrifices was *repetition*, because the blood of bulls and goats could not take away sins. What marks the sacrifice of Christ is *non-repetition*, because it is of continual, abiding, and eternal efficacy before God.

Two words which are connected with these

sacrifices in this epistle serve to emphasise and bring out clearly the force of this contrast. The word applied to the sacrifice of Christ some five or six times is "*once*," for it is complete; the word applied as characterising the Jewish sacrifices is "*often*," and the whole thought is repetition. The idea of the repeated sacrifice of the Mass is a denial of the completeness and abiding efficacy of Christ's sacrifice offered up once for all upon the cross. An unbloody sacrifice, as it is called, could not be available for sin, for "without shedding of blood is no remission," and the idea of a repeated sacrifice in any shape or form is a denial of the truth set forth in the words, "nor yet that He should offer Himself often," the sacrifice being completed on the cross.

When living faith in Christ and simplicity declined in the early Church, an air of mystery was cast around the celebration of the Lord's Supper; men got occupied with the outward ceremony and sought in it that peace which can only be found by faith in that which the Supper calls to remembrance, that is, the atoning death of Christ. What appeals to sight and sense has ever had more power over the natural mind of man than that which is discerned by faith. So it was in the days of Hezekiah: the Israelites worshipped and burned incense to the brazen serpent which Moses had made in the wilderness, but that good king destroyed the piece of brass

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and called it what it really was, "a piece of brass" (2 Kings xviii. 4). As time went on in the history of the Church things went from bad to worse, but it was not till the year 1215 that they had reached the point when transubstantiation, having been added to the doctrine of the Mass, was formally acknowledged; this was when the Papacy had reached its highest pitch of power under the same Pope who appointed the Inquisition. That doctrine teaches that when the words of consecration are pronounced, the elements are transformed into the real body and blood, soul and divinity, of Jesus Christ, complete in each element. This blasphemous theory is mainly supported, or rather attempted to be justified, from the words spoken by our Lord, "This is My body," "This is My blood," and from what He says as to eating His flesh and drinking His blood in John vi. They materialise that which is to be apprehended by faith, and pervert its meaning.

But why materialise when our Lord says, "This is My body," &c., any more than when He says, "I am the door," "I am the true vine"? To say He was a literal door, or vine, would, of course, be nonsense. It is perfectly clear that He did not refer to His literal body and blood, for He was then in His body before them, and His blood was not shed, without which there could be no remission. A figure used by Christ Himself to show the absolute

necessity of His death is, that unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground *and die* it abides alone, but if it die it brings forth much fruit. So Christ must die if others are to be saved, and it is Christ *in His death* that is remembered in the Lord's Supper. Hence the importance of the fact that it is a *remembrance* (and this necessarily implies something that is past), as He says, "This do in remembrance of Me." To transubstantiate the elements would be to make a dead Christ, when no such Christ exists, for He is not on the cross, nor in the grave, but on the throne; the same blessed Person, but in a glorified body, actually and livingly in a state in which He cannot be offered in sacrifice.

To the true Christian the Lord's Supper is a most precious institution, and it is most true that deep reverence and due order should characterise it. In it he calls to remembrance that Saviour who, in the same night in which He was betrayed, said, "This do in remembrance of Me;" and what could more fittingly set forth His love to His people, His devotedness even to death for God's glory and their salvation, than such an institution? Praise and thanksgiving alone become the occasion; hence the word "Eucharist" is most suitable when used in its true signification of thanksgiving. To be taken up with what is external in it is to miss the real object for which it was given. This has been forcibly illustrated by a writer in the



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following manner. I have a charming portrait of my mother, which reminds me of her just as she was. If people were to occupy my attention with the canvas or the colouring, I should feel that those who spoke knew nothing about it. That would not be my mother. What is so precious to me is my mother herself, and those who turn my attention from her to the means employed to recall her to my mind, have no idea of what my mother is to me. The portrait is of no value except as far as it is a good representation of her who is not here. I could not throw it aside as a mere piece of canvas. I discern my mother in it ; I cherish this portrait dearly, but if I stop at the perfection of the painting as a work of art, the link with my heart is lost.

It is a mistake to suppose that the Eucharist is in any way the subject of our Lord's discourse in John vi. If the eating His flesh and drinking His blood there spoken of were the Lord's Supper, then no one who did not partake of that feast could be saved ; for He says, " Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you." On the other hand, if the Eucharist were the subject there, every one who partakes of it would possess eternal life, and would share in a blessed resurrection at the last day, for " Whoso eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath eternal life ; and I will raise him up at the last day."

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The true teaching of the chapter is plain and simple to faith, and does not need to be involved with mysticism in its interpretation. Christ had just fed the multitude, thus showing Himself to be the Jehovah of Israel, according to Psalm cxxxii. 15. Then He proceeds to speak of Himself as the true bread of life, to be fed upon by faith. The doctrine is the great foundation truth of Christianity: "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you." *Eating* is a forcible figure of speech for conveying to us the thought of appropriating individually and personally to oneself, and unless any one appropriates Christ by faith, in His death—His flesh given, His blood shed—that person has no divine life at all. We need not go outside the chapter to prove that this is not a *material* thing, but *by faith*, for verse 47 says, "He that *believeth on me* hath eternal life." Again, verse 35, "He that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that *believeth on Me* shall never thirst."

A further truth in this connection is—not only the absolute necessity of feeding on Christ by faith in order *to get* eternal life, but the privilege the Christian has of continually doing so when he *has got* that life. So we read, "He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him." This is the Christian's privilege of enjoying communion (common thoughts and feelings) with Christ,

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from whom he gets his life. It is true that the chapter contains much valuable teaching on *the same subject* as is recalled to remembrance in the Lord's Supper—an incarnate Christ, giving up His life to death to be fed upon by faith; but the Lord's Supper is *not* and cannot be the subject of the chapter, for it had not then been instituted, and the theories built upon the supposition that it is are therefore groundless.

F. G. B.

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## The Last Days of the Apostle Paul.

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**T**HE end of Acts shows us that Paul had hired for himself a house, where he dwelt two whole years, and that there he “received all that came in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him” (Acts xxviii. 30, 31). The Lord protected His faithful servant and rejoiced his heart by enabling him to preach the Word of God, even in bonds. Probably Paul remembered the encouraging words spoken to him by his Master at Jerusalem, when he was exposed to all the hatred of the Jews.

“And the night following, the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul, for as thou hast testified of Me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome” (Acts xxiii. 11). And in order that this testimony should be rendered, God removed obstacles, inclined the hearts even of the powerful of this world, and thus the gospel, “the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth,” was boldly proclaimed in the great imperial city by him who had written: “I am debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians; both to the wise and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also” (Rom. i. 14, 15).

We are not told how many came to Paul's house—Jews or Gentiles, poor or rich, wise or simple—to hear the good news about Jesus Christ. Neither do we know how many of those who came received the Word and were saved. The day of Christ, that day when all will be brought to light, will disclose what gems have been added to Paul's crown, how many jewels to the Saviour's treasure (1 Thess. ii. 19).

We know at least of one who believed the gospel and was the fruit of the ministry of the imprisoned apostle: a poor Asiatic slave, Onesimus, who had fled from his master, Philemon of Colosse. The Lord led him by some unknown means to hear Paul, and in Christ he found true liberty (John viii. 32, 36).

## LAST DAYS OF THE APOSTLE PAUL. 121

With what affection Paul speaks of him! His son whom he had "begotten in his bonds," he says to Philemon, when sending him back "a faithful and beloved brother." In times past unprofitable to his master, but now profitable to Paul and Philemon (Phile. 10, 11; Col. iv. 9). God rejoiced his heart by allowing him to taste the fruit of his service in prison. The happy servant of Christ had witnessed for his Master and brought souls to Him. If he was in bonds the Word of God was not; nothing can hinder its free course.

To sustain and encourage him in his work, God has given Paul many friends and fellow-labourers who had followed him and cared for him in captivity: Epaphras, Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke, and others. Timothy, his beloved son in the faith, was also with him. All of them, encouraged by the apostle's courage, "waxing confident in the Lord," he says, "by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the Word without fear" (Phil. i. 14).

The brethren at Rome, to whom, seeing the apostle had given such joy, and among whom some were already known and related to him (Rom. xvi. 1-16), came, doubtless, to console and counsel him. Thus was fulfilled what he had written: "For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established; that is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual

faith both of you and me" (Rom. i. 11, 12). They were edified, the apostle was comforted, and although in bonds, he was among them in "the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ" (Rom. xv. 29).

*(To be continued.)*

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## The Path of the Christian.

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Notes of an address on Philippians iv. 4-10, given at Hammersmith, 9th October 1899.

**W**E see that the path of the Christian is not, naturally speaking, a pleasant one.

The path of the apostle was a sorrowful one. He has enumerated for us some of the difficulties he met, and we can see that, like his Master, he was a man of sorrows. Not in the same absolute and perfect way, of course, that the blessed Saviour was; but still the apostle followed in His footsteps, and his path was of the same character.

The Christian's pathway is unchanged from that day to this. If we avoid sorrow, we avoid the path of Christ, and then there can be no testimony at all, neither the positive nor the negative testimony our brother has been speaking to us of.

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But nevertheless the Christian is a joyful person; no matter what the circumstances, he is to "rejoice alway."

For the young Christian just stepping out into the path, it is a great thing to know that whatever comes, he is to rejoice, and he has the power of the Spirit for it. It is natural to the Holy Spirit to produce joy. God is the "blessed God," and when He acts in power He produces what is like Himself. It is natural to the Christian to rejoice, and he is bound to do it. The Holy Spirit gives the capacity for it, and the exhortation to do it, and that is a great comfort for every young Christian.

In this epistle we get Christ as the example and object for the Christian in varied ways. How wonderful it is that the Lord should be an example for us in that act of absolute devotedness we get in chapter ii.! Then in chapter iii. we have Him as the object, giving energy to press on towards the mark. Here in chapter iv. we get superiority over circumstances. It is a great thing to have God's exhortations. "Rejoice in the Lord alway, and again I say, Rejoice."

We are called up to the mark by His Word, and we find it is mere obedience on our part to do it.

There are two or three characters of circumstances here—First, what I may call *indifferent* circumstances: our business or our duty to our

fellow-man; and as to that, we are to *yield*. "Let your yieldingness be known." We are not to stand on our rights, or our *supposed* rights rather, for we have none at all in reality. We are always to be on the ground of surrender. We should find it would smooth away a multitude of difficulties in our everyday life, and save us an immense deal of sorrow, if we were always on the principle of surrender. If we meet with injustice or assumption, the Lord is there to stand for us. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, we may be in heaven; but the world is a real place, and we are real people in it, and we have real difficulties, and the Spirit says, "Let your yieldingness be known to all." The need for yieldingness is the first thing that crops up as we go out to the business of life.

But there are things we have to resist when the truth is in question, and that to our last breath. There is no question of yielding then, and the moment you stand fast for the truth, sorrow comes. It brings you into trouble, as we see in the case of Moses in Exodus xxxii. Those who stood by him had to use the sword against their relatives and friends. The same with Elijah, and with Daniel, and with the three Hebrew children. It brought them into sorrow, and very deep sorrow; but they had to stand fast. It is the same thing to-day. Jeremiah found no one would have anything to say to him, and so we may find. Acquaintances may



drop off—never mind! The first thing the Spirit insists upon is God's own exhortation to *rejoice*. We have the capacity and also the power for it.

In Moses' day the choice was between *God* and the golden calf. Is the world altered to-day? I think not.

In Daniel's day it was a question of worshipping Jehovah or the image of a man, and that will be the final test in the future day, when the world will go after the image of a man. The three Hebrew children stood firm, and they found they could walk in the fire: *God* was with them.

In the sixth verse the apostle touches on the *sorrowful* circumstances, and what is the exhortation? "Be careful for nothing." Where care comes on the heart and oppresses it, those are the sorrowful circumstances; but he says, "Be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God—and the peace of God shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." It is all "through Christ Jesus." There is, and can be, no enjoyment of this peace unless you have to do with Christ. You have everything through Him. Every blessing and soul-comfort we receive must come through Him.

Elijah failed because he did not make known his requests. It is not enough to stand firm for the truth and expect to be carried through

victoriously. The Christian won't be carried through unless he is dependent. Have we not seen many eminent Christians fail?—men of mark among the saints, men of excellent gifts—and yet, in the moment of trial, they have failed. They thought they were going to get through in their own strength.

The ranks thin, the enemy's darts go here and there, the truth seems to be held as a forlorn hope, as if it might be carried away at any moment! What will carry you through, and bring you victoriously to the end?

Faithfulness and devotedness to Christ brings us into sorrowful circumstances, and what we need is to make known our requests to God, and to *depend on Him*—not on our own strength or on our own stand for the truth. Elijah failed, because *he did not depend on God*. "I only am left"—he had only himself to talk about.

When we come into sorrowful circumstances for faithfulness to the truth, when the path becomes narrow, and we lose on the right hand and on the left, what the Spirit counsels is to "make known your requests to God"; and then His peace will garrison our hearts. It is the figure of a beleaguered garrison, and One is introduced who has power to sustain and support.

It is not by our power, nor by what we have done or *can* do; not by what is *past*, but by *dependence on God* for what is present. It is what we see in the blessed Saviour Himself.

He went into the Temple, and in faithfulness to God He goes back to what God's house should be, to the *beginning*; and judged of the whole scene by the original principles God set up. "Make not My Father's house a house of merchandise." That was at the beginning of His ministry. At the close, He did the same thing, but then He calls it a "den of thieves." He judges it by what God had established, and He drives them out.

Faithfulness to the truth puts us in a place where God's original principles must be upheld, and those who have been going on with what man has brought in, oppose this in every possible way.

I was struck with verse 5 of 2 Timothy iii. as our brother read it: "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." The *power* of godliness is *Christ*. What will keep the soul and maintain us in our path, is the Lord Jesus Christ being the object of our heart.

I believe we look at things too much in an abstract way, and forget the place the Lord Jesus Christ holds in the administration of every blessing, of power and of grace. All that produces and maintains what is godly is through Him. There is no possibility of producing a godly walk save by heart-communion with the Lord Jesus Christ. Those who are without godliness are the worst enemies we have to meet,

But our circumstances are not *always* sorrowful. That characterises what the world is, but it does not complete the life of a man—he would go mad if it were so. There are also joyful circumstances in the life of a man, and God has not left us without them. We get them in the eighth verse, and the apostle says, “Think on these things.” There are indifferent circumstances, and in them we are to be yielding; then sorrowful circumstances, and in them prayerfulness comes in. In joyful circumstances we are to have *thoughtfulness* characterising us. If your mind is to be occupied, your thoughts are to be happy thoughts, not miserable ones. Miserable thoughts you are to make known to God, and you will get His peace, and He will garrison your hearts so that the enemy cannot get in, or use the miserable thoughts to upset your soul.

But as to the joys the Christian soul is to have, he is to rejoice and be thoughtful of them, and, as all else, this is *Christ*. If you are to be thinking of something, it is Christ; but here, Christ in His saints. Surely equally beautiful—not *wonderful* in Christ; but when you see a poor wretched sinner like yourself picked up, and see in him these beautiful perfections and traits of Christ, that *is* wonderful! You will never see them in *yourself*, but you will see them in every other Christian. *Christ is there*, in every beloved saint brought to God, and

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having the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. It may need a discerning eye to see it, and need faith and grace; but all these are ours. To find Christ in the saints is what we should be set on. To find out what is *not* of Christ is one of the sorrowful circumstances, and a very sorrowful one; but what is to fill the soul of the saint is to see Christ in his brethren—not in yourself, but always in your brethren. The consequence is, that not only is the garrison maintained in face of the foe, but you are able to sally forth and carry all before you. When “the God of peace” is “with you,” you can go forth in power (ver. 9).

Christ will be seen perfectly in all, in the day of glory; but we have the day of glory now before the Day comes, as we see the traits of Christ, in His moral and blessed character, coming out in such poor weak vessels as we are. It is just the weak He takes up, not the strong. “I will glory in mine infirmities, for when I am weak, then am I strong.” To say we are weak, is to say we are proper people for Christ to display His power in. When a man is laid low on a sick-bed, perhaps at the point of death, the power of the flesh is at an end. It is when the flesh is in the place of nothingness that God can display His power.

May we be going on in the judgment of ourselves, to be occupied with these things of verse 8 in our brethren!

W. T. W.

## Hints on Daniel.

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### THE FAITHFUL CAPTIVE.

**T**HE first verse of chapter i. contains what Dean Farrar tells us "seems to be a remarkable error"! The error, however, is in the mind of the objector, not in the Scripture.

We do not wish to occupy our readers with the irreverent reasonings of professed Christian ministers. They have been refuted over and over again by men as learned as those who pretend to a learning unhampered, as they tell us, by orthodox belief. True it is that we are living in days of rapidly increasing infidelity, but God has been pleased to give testimony to the accuracy of His Word, which leaves men without excuse if they disbelieve it. After all the laborious efforts of the Higher Critics to undermine the inspiration of the Old Testament in general, and of Daniel in particular, absolutely nothing has been advanced but what has long since been answered, and it is presuming upon the ignorance or the indolence of their readers to keep dishing up afresh their stale arguments.

Rationalists tell us that there was no siege of Jerusalem in the third year of Jehoiakim, at least they do not *think* there was! Scripture affirms that there was. We have no hesitation

in saying that we prefer to go by the Scripture. Without preface or introduction, the book of Daniel opens with a simple record of the fact that the King of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. Isaiah had long before predicted it. "Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house . . . shall be carried to Babylon, and of thy sons . . . shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the King of Babylon" (Isa. xxxix.). Those days, alas! for Israel had come. "The Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand" (Dan. i. 2).

With what solemn significance these words sound upon our ears! "The Lord gave." Was it not the same Lord that, with an outstretched hand, had brought His people out of the house of bondage in Egypt? Yes. Was it not the same that had carried them as on eagle's wings through a vast howling wilderness? Was it not the same that had led them triumphantly into the land of Canaan, and had displaced nations more numerous and mightier than they? It was. "I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt . . . but My people would not hearken to My voice: and Israel would none of Me. . . . Oh that My people had hearkened unto Me, and Israel had walked in My ways! I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned My hand against their adversaries" (Psalm lxxxi.).

But if Judah's king had turned a deaf ear

to all Jehovah's entreaties, and if the state of the nation as a whole was such that God can no longer publicly identify Himself with them, yet individual faith can walk in a path of obedience and separation to God as much as in the brightest days of David and Solomon.

The King of Judah lay bound with fetters in Babylon, the vessels of the house of the Lord were stored in an idol's temple, the wall of Jerusalem was broken down and burnt with fire; yea, more, the chief priests were the ring-leaders in rebellion, they had filled the Lord's house with the abominations of the heathen, they had mocked the messengers of God, despised His words, and misused His prophets (2 Chron. xxxvi.), and yet do we read that "Daniel purposed in his heart" to keep himself as separate from all the defilements of Babylon as ever it would have been possible to do in Jerusalem itself. It might have seemed a small matter to eat of the King of Babylon's meat, the natural man might even have reasoned that it was expedient so to do, but Daniel was guided by the word of the Lord. Such scriptures as Exodus xxxiv. 15, Leviticus xix. 26, and Hosea ix. 3, must have acted powerfully upon his conscience. He might have to stand alone in his faithfulness, he might be misunderstood by all his fellow-captives in Babylon, but his decision was made, he set the Lord before him, and he soon found



that He placed Himself at his right hand to help him.

This first chapter of Daniel is a sort of introduction to the whole book, but it contains moral principles of the utmost importance, and most encouraging to faith in days of general declension and failure. Though the dispensation in which the child of God finds himself may change, yet it is ever true that "them that honour Me I will honour" (1 Sam. ii. 32). We are all apt to be depressed in days of ruin, and to give up as hopeless all attempt to maintain a walk consistent with the claims of God and His Word, but not so with Daniel. There was heart and conscience work with him. In the words of another, "Daniel is faithful in all that constitutes a complete separation from the world, according to the Jewish rites, in refusing to eat of meats from the table of a pagan monarch; and this conduct of faith . . . meets the approval of God."

It may be well to observe in passing that there is nothing inconsistent with divine principles that what, in the matter of meats, was peremptorily forbidden to Daniel, should be permissible to the Christian. The dispensation was different. Daniel was under law, and what was required in him was strict and unqualified obedience to its every detail. In Daniel's day this obedience was beset with unwonted difficulties, but nevertheless he braced himself up, not in his own

strength, but in that of the Lord his God, and he faced the consequences be they what they might.

When Christianity was brought in, other motives were introduced: "Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no question for conscience sake" (1 Cor. x. 25). At Corinth the saints of God were living surrounded by heathen idolaters, and the meat that was sold in the market was, in all probability, a part of what had been offered to an idol. Nevertheless the Christian man's conscience was relieved from all anxiety on that score. An idol to him was nothing: "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof." Asking no question, he might freely eat. The case is even supposed of a Christian bidden to a feast at the house of a heathen man (1 Cor. x. 27). Here, too, difficult as the case might be, the Christian man was free to eat, asking no question. But if he were distinctly told that what was set before him had been offered in sacrifice to idols, then he was not to eat out of consideration for the conscience of the other.

A careful study of 1 Corinthians viii. and x. upon this point will show that, where an intelligent Christian might have perfect liberty to eat, yet the grace of Christ would ever lead such to consider the consciences of others, and to refrain from that which might be any cause of stumbling to a weak brother. It would lead us too far

from our subject to enlarge upon these interesting and important passages of Scripture.

Daniel, in the matter of the king's meat, owed obedience to a higher authority than Nebuchadnezzar; rather than yield in this, which was a plain case of obedience to the law of Jehovah, he braved the wrath of the despotic ruler of Babylon. But in the matter of the change of name he has to submit, painful as the ordeal must have been. He was a captive slave, and hence had to yield to his master in all matters that did not conflict with his allegiance to God. Satan's effort was to obliterate from the minds of Daniel and his faithful companions all recollection of the true God, and to substitute a familiarity with the names of the gods of the heathen. A concordance will show that *Daniel* means "God's judge" — *Hananiah*, "Whom Jehovah graciously gave" — *Mishael*, "Who is what God is?" — *Azariah*, "Whom Jehovah aids." In place of these suggestive names, the prince of the eunuchs bestows upon them names taken from the idols of Babylon (*see* Dan. iv. 8).

But they had set the Lord before them, and God in His providence interposes marvellously on their behalf. He brought them into favour in the court of Babylon, and gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom which far exceeded that of the magicians and astrologers, which were in all the king's realm.

(*To be continued.*)

## Resurrection Power.

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(BRIEF THOUGHTS ON EPHESIANS i. AND ii.)

THE *connection* between Joshua and the truths in Ephesians is resurrection power in both. A people led by supernatural power. The *contrast* is this. Joshua's was merely earthly blessing; in the Ephesians it is the Son of Man, Son of God bringing in all the deep counsels of God.

Everything turned as to Joshua on his being the one chosen of God for the work, and on his being subject as the chosen one of God to lead Israel into the land he could go forward with perfect confidence. If Joshua had not obeyed God in going over boldly to possess the land, he would not have got the blessing. God had commanded him, and he was to have courage, "Only be thou strong and very courageous. . . . Have not I commanded thee." With the Lord the blessing was attended by obedience, but it did not, so to speak, hang on it. The word given to Joshua was also given to all the people with him.

In the second chapter Joshua stops, in a way one would hardly expect, to send spies into the land. Spies must go on to see if there was any poor wretched sinner with whose heart God had been dealing. Rahab must be provided for. The people were going on by grace and in a

supernatural way, under divine power. Passing Jordan was beyond human power ; that was to be done through the power of the priesthood, the people being connected with it by picking up the stones and carrying them over for a witness. Aye ! if the stiff-necked people that God had been leading through the wilderness was to get into the blessing, it must be entirely by His power. If it was a question where Christ found us, all that can be said is that we were dead, and the power of darkness triumphed over us.

Notice how obedience is marked in connection with the Lord Jesus Christ in Ephesians i. The leading thought of the mind of the Son of God from the beginning has always been to carry out His Father's thoughts and counsels. He met them as the anointed Man.

It was a touching proof of the grace of God, that when He was going to lead His people into the land, as Jehovah and King, by a high and mighty hand, He should think of a poor harlot whose heart trembled before Him, and pause to assure her heart. Set that in connection with Ephesians ii. 7, "That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness towards us through Christ Jesus." He looked at heaven itself, and would have there an exhibition of the exceeding riches of His grace ; and what shall that be?—a company of poor sinners in heaven associated with the Son of His love in the very glory prepared for Him as

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anointed Man. How this supposes a power which is of God in which the hand of man intermeddled not! When the priests went down into the water, it was no power of man that parted the waters. Here it is what He wrought in Christ. Christ rising from the dead did not take possession of blessing for Himself alone, but also for all who were His. His Headship by communication of life was quite a different thing from Federal headship. God saw Eve in Adam before she was formed, so the Church in Christ when He rose from the dead; we are created in Christ Jesus unto good works. If a potter puts clay in the wheel, it is to make it into a vessel fit to hold water; you are vessels which God has formed unto good works. He did not waste work, but with the express purpose that you might be obedient.

Oh! what a blessed confident thing is the walk of the believer who is taught by Him. If God created me for a special purpose, I can go straight forward boldly to do it. What have you to do down here? Good works. What are they? To walk as Christ walked. G. V. W.

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WE may have been brought to see the sinfulness and evil of our condition before God, and the power of the blood of Jesus in satisfying the holiness of God; but we do not know liberty till we see God for us in the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. J. N. D.

## Correspondence.

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**Herne Bay (Isaiah xix. ; Ezek. xxix., xxx.).**  
 —“I am sure that Isaiah xix., like Scripture in all its parts, contains moral instruction of the deepest importance for this and all time ; and yet, I am equally sure that its accomplishment is not during, but after, the time of the Church's sojourn upon earth.

“In saying this, I do not question its partial fulfilment in Isaiah's own day. But ‘the burden of Egypt’ follows upon the restoration of Israel ‘to the place of the name of the Lord of hosts, the mount Zion’ (xviii. 7), so that its actual accomplishment can only be at that time, a time when ‘the land of Judah shall be a terror unto Egypt’ (xix. 17)—clearly not to-day.

“Without doubt Egypt has been helped by England, and in the goodness of God that country has thus been opened up for the gospel. It is not for *this* that England will be humbled (Ezek. xxx. 6-9), but for her own disregard of that very gospel, and of that very Bible which she has been the instrument of spreading in almost every corner of the globe.

“But in the day which immediately precedes the manifestation of Christ in glory to this earth, Egypt as a distinct power will reappear (the King of the South of Daniel xi.), and during ‘the

rushing of nations' (Isa. xvii. 12-14), which will then be taking place, all that wherein she trusts—her wisdom (Where are thy wise men?), her princes and her counsellors will fail her. 'Let them know what the Lord of hosts hath purposed upon Egypt' (xix. 12). His purpose is first to smite her, but in the end to heal her (ver. 22), as the last three verses of the chapter so remarkably foretell.

"England's confidence, as you observe, has been in her generals, her men, her ships, her wise counsellors—in everything, in fact, but in God. The moral instructions of such a chapter as Isaiah xix. might well teach her the folly of this. At the same time it is clear to me that the chapter is speaking of a period after the removal of the Church, and before the return of Christ in power and glory to the earth."—ED.

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WE must all, converted or unconverted, give up the world. The veriest votary of the world must sooner or later give up its vanities and its pleasures, its hopes and its interests; he must give them up. The only difference is this, that the Christian gives them up for God; the worldling gives them up because he cannot keep them. The King of Egypt gave up Egypt and Egypt's court, as well as Moses. But there is this difference, that the King of Egypt gave it up for judgment, Moses gave it up for Christ.

J. N. D.



## The Conscience in the Light of God's Presence.

THE knowledge of our proper relationship with our gracious God, as Father, and of our calling and standing in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ—the heavenly Son of Man at God's right hand—necessarily goes far beyond all questions of conscience and exercises of soul in the children of God. Yet because of this, and in order to the full blessing—"fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ"—the conscience of the believer must be in the light; the walk in the light; all that is individual judged *there—alone with God*, for there is no such thing as *corporate* conscience. May it not be said that the Lord's great purpose, in all His dealings in grace, is to bring the souls of His children—the individual soul—into fellowship with Himself? Does not John so present it in that precious Word, 1 John i. 1-7?

There seems to be a special need at this hour to speak as to conscience being in His presence, so that all might be judged according to God. It was always so, surely; but this present is a solemn moment. Christendom, spurious and apostate Christianity, enlarges—Satan is working mischief as an angel of light; flesh or man's

nature is active ; combinations between the true people of God and mere professors are weakening the former, and nullifying their testimony—the mass, indeed, are sunk down to the level of the earth, alas ! Of those who are in some measure separated to God, what urgent need of self-judgment as to the will and ways ! What confession may be made ! What humiliation is becoming ! All this demands that conscience should not only be exercised, but be in the light of the Lord's presence. In fact, this lesson may be learnt, that while there may have been activity in God's service, even joy, and the Lord (for faith was there) using the strength of His servant, yet conscience not having been fully in the light, and self and nature not judged there—communion with God, and its happy, peaceful effects and power, have been unknown, or very imperfectly known in the soul.

We read those remarkable words in Ephesians v. 8, "Now are ye light in the Lord : walk as children of light." What does the apostle mean in its practical experimental sense by "light in the Lord" ? Surely if the gentle, but strong, hand of the Spirit of God leads the renewed soul—the new man—the divine nature in the believer—into immediate contact with its Source (*i.e.*, God Himself)—conscience brought there—all will be seen, all judged (according to the measure given) in that presence "where no flesh can glory." There the flesh is judged, there sin is seen in its

exceeding sinfulness, there the will is detected, there it is no longer the *fruit* only of sin and flesh which is judged, but the *roots, deep-laid roots*, exposed and made bare in that light. The world is there unmasked; above all, grace, seen and learnt in its proper, divine character, and the soul by faith established in it; there the blessed Source, the God of all grace, bowed to in another and deeper way; reconciliation known more truly; the living glory of the Father's name connected with the soul; and some ray of the beauty and glory of Jesus, the Son of Man, seen and appreciated through the power of the present and eternal Spirit. "Now are ye light in the Lord." The heart may make progress now in the power of its communion, yet the work in conscience goes on from time to time, whenever there is something in nature not in obedience to Christ, "casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. x. 5).

It may be further stated, that the conscience being in the light, and the affections of the soul drawn out to God, who reveals His glory in the face (Person) of Jesus Christ, the soul learns what "fear and trembling" mean in the Word. Yet that fear is in the very light of the grace, consciously possessed and in the taste of it. For sure I am, at least I believe the thought to be

according to truth, that while tasting the love of God in Christ, and the joy of relationship—while the cry of Abba, Father, intelligently understood as giving a place of heavenly sonship with and in Jesus—while such affections may be higher and deeper blessings through the Spirit, yet there is a blessed, solid, divine satisfaction and joy in discovering and knowing the holiness of God. Oh, the joy when the Spirit sanctions and enforces that truth in the light, that nothing can be suffered in the child as to will—nothing recognised by God which is contrary to His nature and being! All must be judged—the levity and folly of man, the will and way, the mixed motives—all exposed there, that God may impart deeper blessing. Hence chastisement, and the exercises of Hebrews xii., “That we might be partakers of His holiness.”

The Scriptures, in their rich and varied treasures, afford abundant illustrations of the action on conscience and exercises of soul when man is brought into the light of God. We see there the divine hand at work, illuminating the understanding, quickening and enlightening, as well as purging the conscience, purifying the heart by faith, and drawing out its affections, renewed by grace, to God; to us, the affections gathered round and centred in the Person of the Son. It may be profitable just to glance at a few instances of the Spirit's handiwork, to exemplify and apply what is stated above. The case of

Abraham would not be adduced as showing *exercise* of soul and conscience. Yet as to the general question of God acting on man's soul, it is most important to observe that if Abraham, called and elected peculiarly as the Lord's witness against an idolatrous world, needed power for difficult requirement, the Holy Ghost teaches us in Acts vii. the secret, that "the God of Glory appeared unto him." The glory shone into his soul, and he "obeyed, and he went out, not knowing whither he went" (Heb. xi.).

In the account we have of Moses, in Exodus ii. and iii., seen in the light of Acts vii., where we get some comment on these chapters, we find *exercise* of soul. We see his conscience brought into the light, and its effect in power and communion. There is activity in him (Exod. ii. 11-14), and love of his brethren, though expressed with carnal power and wisdom; "he looked this way and that way;" "he supposed his brethren would have understood;" marking the want of calmness and guidance, and he has to flee from the consequences of his act. But when he beholds the glory from the burning bush; when he has to put off his shoes from off his feet (the rough shoe of nature must come off), for it was holy ground; when sent by Him who calls Himself "I am that I am," what a contrast do we find! Unable to move or speak at first, yet, when the heart of Moses is assured, and faith is there, the rod of power is taken instead of the carnal weapon;

boldness now in the presence of Pharaoh, endurance in difficult service "he endured, as seeing Him who is invisible," and of this exercised servant the Holy Ghost deigns to say, "Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth" (Num. xii. 3).

In the history of Job, we have a still more apt illustration of our subject. We see there, in a pointed way, the difference wrought in a man, and he a child of God, when conscience is brought into the light of His presence. It will suffice here (without entering into the details of God's wondrous dealings with His servant Job) to notice the case generally, and it is happy to remember the Holy Ghost's own comment on the cause of Job's trial and great afflictions: "Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy" (James v. 11). The end of the Lord was to give His servant and precious child, Job, deeper blessing, true communion with Himself, and this He did *by bringing his conscience into the light of His presence*. No one would suppose it was mere natural uprightness which Job exhibits at first—that he was religious or pious according to the flesh. God's own words to the Adversary of Job and man (chaps. i. 8, ii. 3) would show the contrary. But Job's nature rejected grace, and *exalted itself*. He was occu-

pied with *himself*, his good works, his prayers, his righteousness (the history of many a soul, and quickened soul too, at the present hour); and God would have all judged according to the light, hence His dealings with Job. We see the terrible process. We hear fearful language before God in the bitterness and trial of his soul; he is sifted, his heart is *wrung out*. Ah! to those who in their measure have known something of this process—the Spirit of God carrying conscience into the light, when the heart must be wrung out; “the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts,” judged; all passing under His eye, who has judged, and has brought this judgment into conscience.

The process continues, as we know, till poor (but rich!) Job utters the memorable words: “I have *heard* of Thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye *seeth* Thee. *Wherefore* I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes” (xlii. 5, 6). Grace now understood in the light, produces self-aborrence, self-loathing. Grace gives the broken spirit, which we so essentially need at this hour. Grace teaches us. May the reader of this remember (and if the point be urgently pressed, let him bear with the writer a little), that it *is only in the Lord's presence that grace can be appreciated in its proper or divine character*. Hence the importance of this subject. Let this thought be well weighed, that *communion is before walk, or service, or exercise, or gift*. Oh! for the power

of true communion! One drop of the love of Jesus in a broken heart and softened spirit!

Look for a moment at that word in Titus ii. 11-14, and connect it with the Lord's presence. "Grace," the apostle tells us, "teaches us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts (in fact, *ourselves*), we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." The soul, being true, covets to learn thus. It is to be learnt of grace. Where? In the Lord's presence, for outside that we cannot really know grace. But, further, this precious grace teaches us to look for that blessed hope (the return of Jesus to take us up into the air to Himself), and the appearing of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ (the Epiphany or public manifestation of the Glory of Jesus, when the saints will be manifested with Him). Blessed be His holy name, for such a hope!

Isaiah, Daniel, Ezekiel, and other prophets, in their day and history, would witness something of the same. We may take a passing notice of Isaiah, and the rather as it furnishes so lovely a picture of grace and light acting on conscience. What cry burst from his lips, as narrated in chapter vi., when he saw the glory of Jehovah Jesus filling the temple (consult John xii. 41, where the Holy Ghost shows us it was Jesus)? "Woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips." And when the grace reaches him—for we see three virtues or powers flowing



to him from the throne and person of the Lord ; first, full conviction of what he was ; secondly, full forgiveness and purging of conscience ; thirdly, the heart won, and the dependence of true affection—"Here am I, send me": the servant and prophet formed, and that for difficult service, the message of judgment. These illustrations might suffice, but I would yet briefly notice one or two in the New Testament.

Then, when the mighty instruments for God's work were prepared, the Holy Ghost being down here, consequent on the work of the Lord Jesus, there is necessarily a deeper action on conscience—a deeper and brighter glory visits the soul. Not that the deep and bright glory of God did not visit Abraham, but Abraham never could have known the communion which Paul and John enjoyed. The question of righteousness had not been raised—which we know the law did—and instead of promises, to which Abraham, in his wondrous faith, looked, Paul and John (the Church's portion) possessed the Accomplisher of the promises, the Lord of Glory, the heavenly Son of Man—all was deeper—"The true Light now" shone. It was "fellowship with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ."

With what wondrous grace, then, divine tenderness and power, the Lord Jesus dealt with Peter's conscience after his fall, restoring his soul and putting honour upon His servant (John xxi.)! The Lord had accomplished redemption, and in

resurrection light and power, stands before His poor trembling servant, conscious of having accomplished sin and a terrible fall. The Lord does not take up his sin—the fruit or expression of the sin within—but He deals with the *root*—the deep-laid evil in his nature, the immense self-confidence in Peter, the carnal energy which characterised him. Alas! if one may speak for others, how much of this have we found in ourselves, and the bitter fruits; how far has it been judged in His presence? “*Peter was grieved, because He said unto him the third time, Lovest thou Me?*” Here was conviction of conscience. There is nothing but grace from the Lord, winning the affections of the soul of His servant, but showing him it could no longer be Peter for power of walk, but Christ in Peter. When filled with the Holy Ghost, we have the mighty Apostle of the Circumcision.

In Saul of Tarsus we have that which exceeds; he meets, he sees, in his mad career (the very expression of the Jews' hatred to Messiah), the Lord of Glory, who has accomplished redemption. Saul beholds the heavenly Man, from whose face streamed down the glory of God—a glory too effulgent for man: he is blind for a season. Saul utters these strange words (conscience-struck and confounded), “Who art Thou, Lord?” He finds that Jesus the Head in heaven speaks of all the saints as Himself. “I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest.” He preaches the gospel of the

glory, that Jesus is the Son of God. Peter's testimony was that He was Lord and Christ ; but *παῖς* (servant) rather than this full divine title ; the Son of God. How sweetly this honoured servant afterwards learns the secret of power, as recorded in 2 Corinthians xii. 9, when the Lord shows him that it is dependence in conscious weakness which was the condition of power. " My grace sufficeth for thee, *for* (the condition) My power is made perfect in weakness." It may be observed here, that revelation itself, blessed and glorious as it is, is not power, but communion with God in the revelation. It produces for Paul here, the thorn in his flesh, lest he should be exalted above measure. " All power is of God." The creatures—even the angels who have kept their first estate — only have strength as communicated to them ; hence the secret of the blessings of dependence, — "dependent supplicants alone prevail."

Further, do we not find, in Revelation i., the secret of that power which enabled John, the beloved apostle, to have communion with the heavenly scene opened to him, as recorded in chapter iv.—he has title and power to look within the door opened in heaven. He has communion there with the crowned elders, as secure as they are ; yea, as the throne itself. When John's conscience was brought into that living blaze of glory—judicial glory, no doubt, around the Person of the Son of Man (chap. i., when he was in the

Spirit on the Lord's Day), he "fell at his feet as dead." The glory was exceeding bright and overpowering. Yet in fulness of grace and divine tenderness, Jesus said, "Fear not."

*John never feared anything after that.* Seals, trumpets, vials, judgments, all pass before him; he is unmoved in their midst. John is witness to the end (compare John xxi. 22, 23), not only of the coming of the Lord Jesus, but of the kingdom and glory, of the New Heavens and the New Earth. May each of our hearts taste, in sweet communion, the love of our Father; and, in personal love to Jesus, our Lord, bow head and heart in worship, saying, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Amen.

J. G. B.



## Hints on Daniel.

### NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM.

**T**HE last verse of Daniel i. is evidence of the prefatory character of the first chapter of the book.

"Daniel continued unto the first year of King Cyrus" (i. 21). This does not mean that he died in that year, for chapter vi. 28 informs us that he prospered "in the reign of Cyrus the

Persian," and chapter x. 1 describes what was revealed to Daniel "in the third year of Cyrus, King of Persia." But he lived until the introduction of the first of the three great empires, which he was given of God in prophetic vision to see would follow the Babylonian. Not only so; but God gave him to witness, on the one hand, the fulfilment of His word through Jeremiah that spoke of the seventy years' captivity in Babylon (see Jer. xxv. 11); and on the other, the equal fulfilment of that same word that foretold the return to Jerusalem at the close of the seventy years (Jer. xxv. 12, xxix. 10). What God warns of in judgment He will infallibly bring to pass; what He promises in mercy will likewise as certainly be fulfilled. "God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent: hath He said, and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?" (Num. xxiii. 19). Oh! that men would heed this solemn, yet encouraging truth.

With the second chapter the distinctly prophetic part of the book commences, and this, we shall see, is divided into two portions of almost equal length. The first, extending to the end of chapter vi., is especially occupied with a description of the conduct and characters of the great Gentile powers; whereas the second, from chapter vii. to the end, enters into particulars concerning these same powers, which more

closely connect themselves with the condition of the Jewish people in the last days.

Hence it is that in the first portion the dreams and visions are not Daniel's, though he alone was able to interpret them. God was addressing Himself to the conscience of Nebuchadnezzar, letting him know what was to befall, not only the Babylonian, but those three succeeding empires, until, in the latter days, all the power and glory of man would be laid low before Him whose kingdom would "never be destroyed." If God is going to judge, as according to Scripture He most certainly will, all the great systems of the world, political, social, and religious, He takes care to give ample warning, so as to leave man without excuse. Let the world take heed in time, and before the judgment falls! Let the Christian, while he reads the prophetic Scriptures, keep himself apart in heart and life from the world that is hurrying on to its doom! Thus and thus only will he be able to give any ray of light for Christ amidst the increasing moral darkness of the last days. Lot was no help to any one in Sodom. He had linked himself too closely with all its interests. Christian reader, may one great lesson that we shall learn from our study of this portion of God's Word be to "keep ourselves unspotted from the world"!

Had not Daniel "purposed in his heart" to maintain a holy separation to God from all the

abominations of Babylon, he never would have been chosen to be the vehicle of the communication of such stupendous revelations. In like manner, no worldly-minded Christian will ever rightly understand this or any other part of the prophetic Scriptures. In the words of another: "The personal behaviour of Daniel is the basis of and introduction to the revelation of the whole book. It is the same with us. Separation from the world—a decided refusal to have our portion in that which it furnishes—puts us into a position to receive those communications from God which, whilst their fulness is contained in the written Word, we never receive but through the direct teaching of God, whatever be the instrument which God may make use of to impart such communications to us."

But God has not only words of warning for the world, pointing them on to that which will end up all that now, to the eye of man, looks so fair and promising; He has also words of encouragement for His people, even though, for a time, He was forced to abhor His own inheritance, and to give them into the hand of the heathen (Ps. cvi.). So it is that we find in the second section of the book visions of which Daniel himself was the recipient, and which especially concern his own people. The true character of the great Gentile powers is most forcibly delineated; their hostility to God and His people in the last days—days yet to come

—are clearly made known; and the judgment that will eventually overtake the future representatives of the last two of these great empires is described in marvellous detail, for it is they that are more immediately concerned in the history of the Jewish people in the latter days.

Consistent with this twofold division of the book, it is of interest to observe that the language used in the first section differs from that found in the second. From chapter ii. 4 to chapter vii. 28, the original language is Syriac or Chaldee; whereas from chapter viii. 1 to the end of the book it is Hebrew. This is most remarkable, and yet most natural. Syriac was the language with which the Babylonians were familiar, and as the communications of this part of the book chiefly concerned them, God gave them in the language which was current amongst them, whereas the Hebrew of the second portion was just as suitable there, when we remember that the visions described had reference chiefly to the Jews. How perfect are all the ways of God!

Nebuchadnezzar “dreamed a dream.” God was making known to him “what shall be in the latter days;” He likewise brought home to the proud monarch the utter weakness of all human wisdom. The dream went from him, and Babylon’s wise men were called in to make known to him the interpretation of the thing, but they stand helpless and dismayed before the



unreasonable demand of the cruel and furious despot.

“There is not a man upon earth,” they truly exclaim, “that can show the king’s matter” (ver. 10); but Daniel’s God was “in heaven” (ver. 28). And that God who had just turned backward the wise men of Babylon, and made their knowledge foolish, was just as certainly going to confirm “the word of His servant,” and “perform the counsel of His messengers” (Isa. xliv. 25, 26).

For however much Israel as a nation had failed, God was true to His own word, “Them that honour Me I will honour” (1 Sam. ii. 30). If for their unfaithfulness Israel was carried away captive to Babylon, a faithful Daniel will be honoured of the Lord in the land of his exile. For no matter how low the people of God may sink, nothing changes His *love* towards them. The heathen monarch might have reasoned that because He had allowed them to be carried away captive, therefore He had ceased to love them, but at the very start he is taught the lesson that “the secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him” (Ps. xxv. 14). In the words of another: “Their conqueror must be taught that, after all, the *mind*—the *heart* of God, was with the poor captives. The *power* of God might be with the Gentile for a season, but the affections of God and His secret were with His own, even in the hour of their abasement.”

(*To be continued.*)

## The Last Days of the Apostle Paul.

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**D**URING his captivity Paul received many marks of sympathy and affection from those in whose midst he had worked and to whom he had been a blessing. The Philippians especially, who, when he was free and at Thessalonica, had twice sent him help, now bethought them that the prisoner of the Lord at Rome might be in need, and sent him a present by Epaphroditus, who was one of them. Such were the links of love which united the assemblies and those who laboured amongst them. The apostle was deeply touched by this remembrance from Philippi, and he writes: "But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity. . . . But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God" (Phil. iv. 10, 18). Thus even in captivity there was much to rejoice the heart of the Lord's servant: the affection of the saints, the devotedness of his fellow-labourers, and the possibility of service for himself. But there were shadows too: "Some," said he, "preach Christ of contention, not sincerely

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supposing to add affliction to my bonds" (Phil. i. 16); yet he was above all these petty feelings, and had the glory of his Master before him. Christ was preached, he rejoiced and put self on one side.

But speaking of the things of Christ to his visitors was not all. He was deeply interested in the distant assemblies of Greece and Asia. Many of his precious letters were written from Rome whilst in chains, and the Lord who inspired them has preserved them for the instruction and edification of His Church until the end. Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon and Philippians date from this time. In the first he says: "I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ, for you Gentiles" (Eph. iii. 1). Moreover, it was just because he had preached Christ, come to the nations as well as to the Jews, that these last, filled with jealous hatred, had sought to kill him (Acts xxi. 27-29, xxii. 21, 22). He was at Rome for this reason. Further on he calls himself "the prisoner of the Lord," and "an ambassador in bonds" (Eph. iv. 1, vi. 20). In Colossians he speaks of himself as in "bonds," mentions Aristarchus his "fellow-prisoner," and closes his epistle with this touching appeal, "Remember my bonds" (Col. iv. 3, 10, 18). His letter to Philemon also testifies to having been written in prison: "Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ" (Philem. 1, 9, 10, 23); and Philippians is full, as we have already seen, of allusions to this.

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In like manner the letter to the Ephesians, that heavenly epistle which makes known the mystery hidden from before the foundation of the world, and puts the Christian in heaven in Christ at the start, according to the eternal counsel of God; that to the Colossians, which treats of the glorious person of the Head of the Church; the epistle to the Philippians, a touching unfolding of the experience of a soul to whom Christ is all—life, example, goal and strength—of a soul that for His sake has suffered the loss of everything here, in view of a heavenly future with Him; and finally, that lovely letter to Philemon, showing how the life of Christ may shine out even in the common relationships of life;—these four books came straight from the heart of Paul the prisoner, in the power of the Holy Ghost, and indicate the heavenly atmosphere in which he moved, and his unfailing care for the saints. Believers have ever found a mine of blessing, consolation, and encouragement in them.

But in the last two epistles there is more: we find ground for believing that Paul recovered his liberty. He wrote to Philemon: "But withal prepare me also a lodging: for I trust that through your prayers I shall be given unto you" (Philem. 22). So far it is only a hope; the apostle was not sure of being given back to the saints in Asia. But when writing to the Philippians he speaks with certainty of seeing them again. He

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was willing to die for the Lord ; “ to depart and to be with Christ ” was “ far better ” for him. “ Nevertheless,” he says, “ to abide in the flesh is more *needful* for you. And having this confidence, *I know* that I shall abide and continue with you all, for your furtherance and joy of faith : that your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me, *by my coming to you again.*” And further on he says, “ I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly ” (Phil. i. 24-26, ii. 24). Remember that these are inspired words, and that the apostle does not say, “ I hope.” The Lord showed him that it was more *needful* for the saints that he should remain ; so that, having this confidence, he says, “ *I know* that I shall,” and not in captivity, but returning among them, so that they may have cause of rejoicing. The Lord could not disappoint such faith.

The epistle to the Hebrews was probably written about this time. There we read : “ Know ye that our brother Timothy is set at liberty ; with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you ” (Heb. xiii. 23). After at least four years spent in captivity, two at Cæsarea and the rest at Rome, Paul was again free. The charges brought against him by the Jews were presumably found insufficient to ensure his condemnation. Festus and his council had already “ announced that he had committed nothing worthy of death,” and King Agrippa had declared, “ This man

might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Cæsar" (Acts xxv. 25, xxvi. 31, 32). Nero may have thought the same, and acquitted Paul.

*(To be continued.)*

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## “Mark ye well her Bulwarks.”

(PSALM xlvi.)

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COME, “mark ye well her bulwarks,”  
'Tis God that made them strong,  
With mercies sure and grace divine,  
His city loved so long ;  
Aye, mark ye well her bulwarks,  
Her site how wondrous fair !  
Her palaces a refuge are,  
For God Himself is there !  
Then mark ye well her bulwarks,  
“Behold what God hath wrought !”  
In dust she lay, her beauty gone,  
Forsaken and unsought ;  
But graven on *His* hands is she,  
And Israel's God is true,  
He loved her and He raised her up,  
And built her gates anew.  
Ah ! mark ye well her bulwarks,  
Was this the guilty one,  
That killed and stoned God's messengers,  
Cast out and slew the Son ?  
Messiah's blood lay at her door,  
Her hands imbrued in sin  
Of crimson dye—blood-guiltiness  
Like this had never been !

Yes, mark ye well her bulwarks,  
 And praise the grace divine  
 That raised her when in death she lay,  
 And called her light to shine.  
 Messiah's blood lay at her door,  
 But *'twas for her He died* ;  
 Her stones are raised, her walls rebuilt,  
 Through Him, the Crucified !

Then mark ye *well* her bulwarks,  
 And see that " God is love " ;  
 Where sin abounds grace o'er-abounds  
 His matchless love to prove.

Consider well her palaces,  
 And all her streets explore,  
 For God—*this* God—He is our God  
 E'en now and evermore.

A. E. P.

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## Correspondence.

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Hartlepool.—If Matt. xxiv. 14 means that the gospel must be preached in every nation before the Lord comes, how can we reconcile it with expecting Him at any moment ?

What is the relation of that word to Col. i. 6, 23 ?

" Matthew xxiv. 14 is constantly felt to be a difficulty in the way of expecting the return of the Lord at any moment, for in spite of all the missionary zeal and activity there are undoubtedly parts of the world not yet evangelised. But all is as clear as a sunbeam when once we grasp to what period the verse applies. The '*gospel of the kingdom*' will be preached during

the interval *between* the coming of the Lord *for* the saints (*parousia*), and His coming *with* them (*epiphaneia*).

“It is well to see that Matthew xxiv. and xxv. present the coming of the Lord in its relation to the three classes, Jews, Christians (both professing and real), and Gentiles or heathen. Matthew xxiv. 1-31 deals with the subject in its Jewish aspect; xxiv. 42—xxv. 30 as it affects Christendom; xxv. 31 to end, in relation to the living heathen nations.

“Bearing this in mind, let us look at the first. Here all is Jewish. Jesus and His disciples had just left the Temple after the announcement of the judgment that was to pass upon it (xxiii. 38), and the declaration that He who was then present with them was nevertheless to go away, but to return (xxiii. 39).

“Naturally this led to the disciples' *two* questions in xxiv. 3. In the analogous passage in Luke xxi. 7, the disciples' question is confined to the first subject (*viz.*, the destruction of the Temple). *There* they ask, ‘What sign will there be when *these things* shall come to pass?’ Whereas in Matthew they ask, ‘What shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the age?’

“This is full of meaning. Luke is inspired *more especially* to deal with the circumstances then immediately to be fulfilled in the destruction of the Temple by Titus; whereas Matthew



is *especially* dealing with what is yet to be *at the close* of the dispensation. I say *especially*, because Matthew's words (xxiv. 5-13) may in measure be applied to the past circumstances of the Jewish nation, though in their completeness they will only be fulfilled in the time to come, and possibly a time not very far off. So in like manner, while Luke specially is dealing with what is passed in the history of the Jewish people, he nevertheless passes on to what will take place when 'the times of the Gentiles' are fulfilled (xxi. 25-29).

"Now what is '*the end*' to which our Lord four times refers in Matthew xxiv.? See verses 3, 6, 13, 14.

"It is the end of the age which was then in progress. Now to the Jew there were but *two* ages (see Matt. xii. 32), 'neither in *this* age, neither in *the age to come*.'

"What are we to understand by these two ages? The first was the age of the law, and that age, so far as the Jew is concerned, has not yet come to an end. The age to come is the age of Messiah's presence. The present period during which God is calling out the Church from amongst the Jews and Gentiles is not reckoned in this. *From Pentecost to the Parousia is a parenthesis* in God's dealings with the earth. It is a period of *unreckoned time*, and hence the impossibility of fixing the date of the coming of the Lord. All the reckoned prophetic times,

such as the seventy weeks of Daniel, the 1,260 days, &c. &c., are *outside* of this present parenthetical period. Here I am convinced lies the secret of all correct interpretation of dispensational truth.

“Now in Matthew xxiv. the disciples were still on Jewish ground. The Church's birthday was Pentecost; it was then, and not till then, that the believers were baptized into ‘*one body*’ by the Holy Ghost descending from Christ, the exalted Head of the body. See Acts i. 5; 1 Cor. xii. 13.

“In what the Lord here says He passes over in silence the whole Church period, the parenthesis to which I have just alluded, and He links together the then existing Jewish testimony with the testimony of the Jewish remnant by-and-by after the Church has been removed. Just as there was a time of persecution immediately *after* the time of which the Lord was then speaking, so there will be a time of persecution, *far greater* (Matt. xxiv. 21; Dan. xii. 1), immediately preceding *the end* of the age of the law, and the introduction of the coming age of Messiah's presence with His earthly people.

“But all this is distinctly *Jewish*: ‘Let them which be in *Judæa*,’ &c. (ver. 16), and ‘pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the *Sabbath* day’ (ver. 20). Here it assumes that the people addressed were under the law (which the Christian is not: see Rom. vi. 14; Gal.

v. 18, &c.), and would therefore be limited in their flight to the Sabbath day's journey.

“It will be an awful time of persecution; so terrible that many will be martyred. ‘But he that shall endure to the end, the same shall be saved’ (ver. 13), that is, he will be delivered to enter into the rest and peace of Messiah's kingdom, or the Millennium. The ‘*end*’ is not the end of a man's life, but the end of that age. But what will this persecuted Jewish remnant be doing? Scattered by persecution, they will go amongst all the heathen nations and preach ‘the gospel of the kingdom.’ This gospel of the kingdom is not the same as the gospel preached during the interval between Pentecost and the Parousia—it will be preached between the Parousia and the Epiphaneia. It will be a testimony carried by the persecuted Jewish remnant of that period to the heathen nations, announcing the coming of the King to set up His kingdom (the Millennium). The results of this preaching are seen in the judgment of the sheep and goats of Matthew xxv. Some of the nations receive their testimony and enter in consequence the millennial kingdom; others refuse them and go into everlasting punishment.

“It is well to see that this judgment takes place before the thousand years, and is confined to the nations alive on the earth when Christ comes at His Epiphaneia. Hence Matthew xxiv. 14 is no reason why we should not look for the Lord

day by day, for it will be accomplished, not before the Parousia, but before the Epiphaneia.

“Colossians i. 6, 23 refers to quite a different subject. There we are taught that the gospel which Paul preached (not the ‘gospel of the kingdom,’ but the ‘gospel of the glory of Christ’—in other words, not that Christ was coming as King to earth, but that He has gone up to heaven as the glorified Man, the head of His body, the Church)—that *that* gospel was preached to *all the world*, and to *every creature* going far beyond the limits of one nation, such as Israel. It is the world-wide character of the gospel preached during the present interval between Pentecost and the Parousia that is here brought before us.—ED.

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THE more the searching eye of God rests on me, trusting to the perfect work of Christ, the more, as it were, does He discover the perfect value of the blood of Christ. The clearer the light, the more is it to show that not a spot or stain is on me. What does He see? The efficacy of the blood of His own provided Lamb—that which has put away my sin. The same light that detects the sin manifests its being utterly, and for ever, put away; yea, has burst forth and shone in the putting it away.

## Made Sin for Us.

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FRAGMENTS OF A WORD SPOKEN AT THE  
FUNERAL OF ———.

2 COR. v. 21.

ALLED as we are again and again to meet one another in scenes like this, it is a most important thing to bring clearly before the mind what the *real rest* of the soul is in the presence of the Lord as to *eternity*. Waiting for God's Son from heaven, still the mind ought to have very vividly before it the grand truth which alone gives the soul peace.

In the verse read, Paul speaks of what lies at the very root of it, "For He hath made Him to be sin for us," &c. It would not be possible for any one individually to be in the presence of God, in real and perfect peace, unless knowing the force of this passage. Of all the statements of Scripture the most marvellous, and put forth by a God that cannot lie.

Mark that "*Him*." Why Him? Because there was *but* that *One* (if you look at the whole line of Adam you will find no second), none but *that One* of whom it could be said, as the dying thief bore testimony, "This Man hath done nothing amiss." The holy, harmless, undefiled *One*, searched by Satan who had nothing

VII.

in Him. The disciples all tried Him, and it brought out nothing, nothing but affection. Then when it came to the question, should He take the cup of wrath from the hand of God? Yes, He would. There was no will in Him. He was the perfectly obedient One. Not only there was no leaven working in Him, but there was no will—it was “Lo, I come” from the beginning to the end of His course.

It is altogether beyond the ken of a human mind, that thought of God, how to put away sin. God saying, “I will take the one that is My Fellow,” then telling us, “I made Him to be Sin.” Did you ever think of all that Jesus bore when nailed to the cross at Calvary? There was no legal curse, but something apart from every other kind of suffering. When you see God's face hidden, and hear that cry, “My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me,” not one *ray* of light! Thoroughly searched! What can *you* have to do with the question of *sin*? How amazingly the perfection of Christ comes out in Psalm xxii.! He was the only One who could touch one drop of that cup, not one of all the human race *without* sin save *that One* who was *made Sin*.

Oh! what is it to stand in the presence of God and the Son of God there! How can you look at yourself, and see the *contrast* between yourself and this One who was made sin for you, without loathing yourself in dust and ashes? If this Christ was the perfect Servant, what is all

my service in the presence of God where *He* is? What if He could not find the perfect answer to every question in this, "He made Him to be sin?"

The second part of the verse gives what is not exactly substitution. He was our substitute. I cannot come into judgment because He was judged for me. He was my substitute under the wrath of God which was due to me. If He had not been there, God's face would have been hidden for ever from me. All the billows, all the wrath went over Him instead of *me*, and there my soul has found rest. It is not a *theory* that you who believe are where all that could be raised against you *is gone*—that is all blessedly true; but that is not a thousandth part of what you have, "That we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." There are two different words here: "God made Him to be sin that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

Christ is raised up, seated at God's right hand, and all God's delight is in Him, and it rests on the people He has brought to God. If He is a Saviour, where are the saved ones? He wrought the work in this way that they might know themselves not only accepted in the Beloved, but to be connected with Him in glory. They become the righteousness of God in Him, and when the day of resurrection comes, and when we shall see Christ standing in His body of glory, all the holy brethren will be around Him, and He will say, "Behold I and the children which

God hath given Me." What an answer it is to every question.

Now clearly we can understand being made the righteousness of God in Him. If that is to be our portion, we can each say, "Am I to stand close to Christ?" And if not, then He would look round and not be happy without me. What, Lord! such an one as I to be there? Yes, and where God is heaping up the reward, what will it be! "Behold I and the children Thou hast given Me!" For that He went down to the very bottom to bring them up to the very top. The first part of the verse would not *satisfy* without the second, and I, with all my failure, *am I* to have a thought to discourage? How could I? God's marvellous strange wisdom made Him to be sin for us *who* knew no sin, and when peace is settled, how wondrously the future shines forth. Whose thought could it be but God's? It must be of God! There is a moral greatness about it telling of none but God. Who but God could have had the thought of making *His own Son* bound to die on the cross to bring us back to Himself in all the acceptancy of that Son of His love?

These thoughts have come to my heart in connection with a blessed thought which I enjoyed on my pillow last night, and I felt it profitable to bring it before saints on this occasion of another beloved brother having gone to be with Christ our Lord.

G. V. W.



## Deliverance from the Law.

ROMANS vii.

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**T**HIS chapter gives us the way in which the believer is delivered from the *law*, and from the *state*, as in the flesh, to which the law applies, together with the experience of a quickened soul, learning what the flesh is in its sinfulness and helplessness before being delivered from the law.

It is a regenerate person using this term to express the possession of eternal life; but one in whom, as yet, the Holy Ghost does not *dwell*. The state is the *effect* of life, divine life in the soul, but without the *power* of the Holy Ghost, giving deliverance from the bondage of sin, because still under law in the *conscience*. Two distinct natures are at work, and in conflict the one with the other. An unconverted, natural man has no such conflict—nor *can* he *delight* in the law of God. Such an one not only is not subject to the law of God, but he hates God Himself. He may put himself under law to satisfy his pride and self-righteousness, whilst hating Christ with all his heart, as Saul of Tarsus did up to the time of his meeting the Lord on the way to Damascus, but allow that he is “carnal, sold under sin,” he never will. On the

contrary, the more a man is really under law, apart from grace working in the soul, the more he justifies himself and judges his neighbour (Luke xviii.). He trusts in *himself* that he is righteous, and never allows he is "sold under sin," and therefore under condemnation.

Now, it is all-important to distinguish between the possession of life by faith in the Son of God --a soul quickened by the Holy Ghost, and the indwelling in one thus quickened of the Holy Ghost Himself, consequent upon faith in the work of Christ. The evidence, with the effects that flow from it of the one, are quite distinct, and in contrast with those that accompany the other. In the one case there is, because of life, right feeling, but in the conscience entire bondage to sin; for though Christ personally is looked to, His work on the cross is not fully known, and the soul, under legal workings to obtain righteousness and holiness, is occupied with itself and its own doings. It is all "I," "I," "I."

In the other case, because of the Spirit Himself personally dwelling in the believer, there is liberty, "for where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2 Cor. iii. 17); and with this the fruits of the Spirit—"love, joy, peace" (Gal. v. 22). The heart and conscience have now Christ and His work in view, consequently self and its doings are lost sight of.

In the chapter we are considering, it is not

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simply *guilt* on the conscience before God in view of judgment to come that is troubling the soul, but a sinful *nature*, and the inability to rise above the power of evil within, and follow what the renewed nature knows to be good, that is the cause of distress. Christ is believed in, and His blood, as cleansing from *sins*, may be more or less looked to; but Christ, dead and risen, as *delivering entirely from the law*, is not known. *Walk* is in question, and the *law* is before the soul, claiming, on God's part, righteousness and judging sin. The more divine life works in the soul, and the conscience is awakened under the *spiritual* power of the law, the more intolerable is the misery, for the more complete is "the captivity to the law of sin" felt to be.

Faith in Christ, dead and risen, delivers from this state by giving deliverance from the law, and the apostle states the ground of deliverance in these words, "Ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God;" adding, "We are delivered from the law, being *dead* to that in which we were held" (R.V.).

The question then is asked, seeing it is a matter of deliverance from the *law*, Is the law sin? as if the law was something bad in itself. Quite the contrary, is the answer. So far from the law being sin, it is the *law* that tells us

what sin itself is. Looking back upon this state, after having been delivered from it, and recognising what had been going on, the one speaking says, "I had not known sin but by the *law*; for I had not known lust, except the *law* had said, Thou shalt not covet." The lust was there, but unknown as sin, and law brought it to light in the conscience as sin in God's sight. Sin was there in the nature, lying dormant as it were; the law came, and only stirred up its energies. "Sin," says he, "taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was *dead*." Thus he learnt that the law had *only* the effect of quickening sin into action. In his conscience till the law came he was alive, and sin was quiet. "The commandment came, sin revived, and I died," he states.

By the law sin, as a nature, was discovered and stirred into activity, so that in his conscience he died—was made conscious that death, instead of life, according to law, was his state before God. Sin had deceived him, and slain him by the law. "The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good." The question now asked, is, "Was then that which is good made death unto me?" Not at all. Why then had the law been sent? Just for this purpose, that sin might appear to be sin, working death by a good thing, and that sin might appear sin, might be thoroughly brought to light—

“That sin by the commandment might become *exceeding* sinful.”

The *law* was given by God to man to show him, in his own conscience, his state as simply a sinner, helplessly under death and judgment, but never to bring him *out* of that state. Not being ordained to give life, righteousness, or deliverance, it can only work in the conscience of a truly converted person, when spiritually applied, the sense of sin, bondage, death, and judgment: “By the *law* is the knowledge of sin;” “The *law* entered that the offence might *abound*;” “The strength of sin is the *law*;” and “as many as are of the works of the *law* are under the curse,” “because the *law* worketh wrath” (Rom. iv. 15). This is what the soul under *law* alone can learn, and the conclusion thus come to is, that “the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin.”

Furthermore, the discovery is made, that though there be entire hatred of sin, and full desire to do good—“Delight in the law of God after the inward man”—the practical state, while under law, is one of utter inability to follow what is good, and complete captivity to what is evil. The mind is renewed, a new nature being there, life and holiness are working powerfully in the soul, but it is wrapped about by a thick mantle of darkness and distress. “A *law* of *sin*” holds it captive under the power of sin; the misery is complete, utter helplessness is felt, and then the

agonising cry bursts forth, "O wretched man that I am! who shall *deliver* me from the body of this death?"

The *law* has blessedly done its divine work in the soul. The power of sin has been once and for all learnt, and with this the powerlessness of the new nature, of itself, to deliver the soul out of its difficulties. The *Spirit* now takes up the question, and gives the answer of God to this divinely wrought appeal, by presenting Christ to the soul in all the efficacy of His work for it on the cross—not *here* as having borne our *sins*, but as having died to *sin* for us, and that we have died with Him to sin. The soul is at once set free; joy and peace take the place of the previous misery, and the believer, *now* sealed and indwelt by the Holy Ghost, realising its deliverance from the *law*, and thus *from its* bondage to sin, is able to praise God with a full heart: "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

No longer occupied with itself and its own efforts to get free from sin, the "I" and "me" drop out, and Christ by the Spirit fills the vision of the soul. Intelligent *now* as to the real state of the case, he recognises that two natures had been in conflict with one another in him, and arrives at the conclusion: "So that, with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." He distinguishes them characteristically, and now, indwelt by the

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Spirit, identifies himself with what he is in his new nature, as one born of God. Delivered from the law, and the "body of this death," by fully apprehending the efficacy of Christ's death for him before God, he now not only understands his *practical* state, but realises that in Christ's death he has died out of all the condition he was in as child of Adam, and that before God he is no longer in the flesh, but *in* Christ risen.

It is as knowing *deliverance*, consequent upon our having received the Spirit, the seal of our full acceptance of Christ's *work for us on the cross*, that we can adopt the language of the earlier part of this chapter, and say, as looking back upon a *past* state, "when *we were* in the flesh, the motions of sin, which were by *the law*, did work in our members, to bring forth fruit unto death ; but now we ARE DELIVERED FROM THE LAW, having died to that in which we were held."

It is of all importance to see clearly that, while all is based on Christ and His work, and that we have been born again of the Spirit by FAITH in Christ, it is only as possessing the Spirit Himself *in* us that we are "*in* Christ," and no longer "*in* the flesh." The statement of *Scripture* on this point is absolute : "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be the Spirit of God *dwell in* you" (Rom. viii. 9). C. W.

## Hints on Daniel.

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### THE SECRET REVEALED.

“**T**HEY sought Daniel and his fellows to be slain” (chap. ii. 13). It might have seemed to them as though their God had forsaken them, and that an easier and safer path would have been theirs had they only not taken such a decided stand for God. Their very faithfulness had exposed them to greater danger than others of their fellow-captives (chap. i. 17-20).

But Daniel was not only faithful to God and His word in an evil day, he had *faith in God*. He knew that the knowledge and understanding that he possessed was not merely the result of human wisdom, but came from “a God in heaven” who “knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with Him” (ii. 22). And faith always produces *confidence*. Daniel goes in before Nebuchadnezzar and desires of him time, adding that “he would show the king the interpretation” (ii. 16). He expresses no doubt whatever, but calm in the assurance of God’s favour, he boldly faces the infuriated monarch, even as later on he braves the lions’ den.

But the confidence of faith is confidence not



in man, however wise, but in God; and such confidence will always express its *dependence* on God in prayer. "Daniel went to his house" (ii. 17), but not alone, for he sought out his three companions that they might join him in desiring "mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret."

God heard and God answered. "Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision," and prayer is turned to praise. "Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven."

"The God of heaven." This title is characteristic of the book of Daniel, and most consistent with the fact before noted, that the prophet is living during the period of the nation's history when *Lo-ammi* (not My people) was written upon them. Those glorious days were over when God identified Himself with His people, and went before their victorious armies as "the Lord of all the earth" (Josh. iii. 11, 13). The nation had turned in their apostasy to idols, and Jehovah takes the distant place of "the God of heaven." But in spite of all the unfaithfulness of the nation, He responds, as we have seen, to individual faith.

It is beautiful to notice the attitude of Daniel's soul. When the secret was revealed, instead of rushing in immediately before the king, he goes straight into the presence of God, and pours forth his heart in praise and thanksgiving. He owns Him as the One to whom all power

belongs in the government of this world. "He removeth kings, and setteth up kings" (ii. 21), but not only this, "He giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding."

A principle of immense importance is contained in these last words, and the frequency with which the passage is misquoted sufficiently proves how many have failed to grasp it. How often we hear it said that God giveth knowledge to them that "have no understanding." While this may be perfectly true in one sense, the very reverse is stated in Daniel ii. 21. God may be very pitiful of our ignorance, but there is an ignorance which results from unwillingness to do His will. To carry out in practice the truth of God will always entail suffering to the flesh, and this we are not always prepared for. Many desire to understand Scripture in an intellectual manner who shrink from living it out. But of this we may rest assured, that God's principle is, "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine" (John vii. 17), and not otherwise. And again, "If therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light" (Matt. vi. 22). Oh, for the single eye!

The great need amongst the people of God to-day is to seek the glory of the Lord with an undivided heart. So long as there is a reserve in the soul, and an unwillingness to carry out in practice the revealed will of God, there will,

there *can be* no progress in the knowledge of the truth. This applies to prophecy as well as to every other part of Scripture, as the passage before our notice clearly shows, "He giveth wisdom to *the wise*," not to the ignorant, "and knowledge to them that know understanding. He revealeth the deep and secret things." May the Lord produce in the heart of both reader and writer a deep and true desire to do His will at whatever cost!

Daniel is brought in before the king, and it is beautiful to see the humility with which he bears himself. "Art thou able to make known unto me the dream?" asks the king. "There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days," is Daniel's calm reply. Daniel makes no parade of his knowledge, but hides himself in order to magnify his God before the eyes of the heathen monarch.

"He that revealeth secrets" was unfolding in the vision of the night the course of this world's empire with special reference to the "latter days" (ii. 28). The proud Babylonian conqueror, elated with his many victories, his mind reeling with the successes which had attended his armies, beheld in a dream the mapping out of the future of the great Gentile powers. God, a God that he knew not, was speaking to him in a dream, in a vision of the night, not only to reveal to

him "what shall come to pass," but also that he might know the thoughts of his own heart (ii. 30).

May God, that same God, speak to our hearts likewise! And may He, by His Spirit, apply to our consciences the solemn truths we are about to examine! May the bright rays of light, which God has been pleased to vouchsafe to us through the prophetic word in reference to the future of this poor world, so shine upon our path in this dark scene, as to separate us from the whole course of this present age!

The world is surely and rapidly going on to its judgment. May we each one be more alive to the solemnity of these things!

*(To be continued.)*

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## The Last Days of the Apostle Paul.

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**A**ND what use did the apostle make of his short time of freedom? When writing to the Romans, and ignorant of how he should see them, he expresses his intention of going to Spain (Rom. xv. 28). He may have carried out this project. But from the letters to Timothy and Titus, written after his first im-

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prisonment, we learn the names of some places that he undoubtedly did visit. He went to Asia Minor. Did he go to Ephesus? We are only told that he desired Timothy to remain there while he went into Macedonia (1 Tim. i. 3). He had said to the Ephesian elders that they would see his face no more (Acts xx.), but he went to Miletum, for he says, "Erastus abode at Corinth; but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick" (2 Tim. iv. 20). He passed through Troas, where he left his cloak and books with Carpus, intending no doubt to return (2 Tim. iv. 13). During this journey he may have revisited Colosse and his friend Philemon (Philem. 22). He had been to the island of Crete with Titus (chap. i. 2), and he went to Macedonia, where we cannot fail to suppose that he saw his dear Philippians. He had also been at Corinth, where he left Erastus (2 Tim. iv. 20). Finally he contemplated spending the winter at Nicopolis, a town in Epirus, to the west of Macedonia (Tit. iii. 12). Thus we see he had revisited many among whom he had laboured, and no doubt had been comforted by his friends and children in the faith.

But changes were already manifest. The ruin that he had foreseen (Acts xx. 29, 30) was increasing, and of Asia, where he had laboured so abundantly among Jews and Greeks, he has to say, "This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me; of whom are

Phygellus and Hermogenes" (2 Tim. i. 15). Phygellus and Hermogenes were perhaps among those whom he had warned so solemnly that 'of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" (Acts xx. 30).

This last journey must have caused very mixed feelings of joy and sorrow to the apostle. The Second Epistle to Timothy throws light on the state of things in the assembly. Paul was sent to prison for the second time, treated more harshly than before, and only came out to meet death. How he reached Rome again in bonds, we know not, but we know that many changes had taken place there. Nero had emancipated himself from all constraint, and now gave way to his wicked instincts, unbridled cruelty and debauchery. A frightful persecution of Christians was taking place under his auspices, and Paul having heard of this may have desired to encourage his afflicted brethren by his presence, and thus gone in the way of danger. This is possible, knowing as we do his love for the saints, and that he did not count his own life dear if he could fulfil his service to the Lord.

How different was this imprisonment to the first! Paul might not dwell in his own house, enjoy his previous liberty to preach the gospel, nor be respected as a Roman citizen awaiting judgment. Instead, he was in a real prison for belonging to the hated Christian sect, and de-

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spised alike by Jews and Gentiles. "Wherein I suffer trouble as an evildoer, even unto bonds ; but the word of God is not bound " (2 Tim. ii. 9). So hidden and distant was his prison, so scattered were his friends, that Onesiphorus of Ephesus had to seek diligently before he found him. His bonds were no longer known in palace and town, nor was he as heretofore surrounded by friends, fellow-labourers, and prisoners, who mitigated his lot and co-operated in service. Erastus had remained at Corinth, Trophimus was sick at Miletum, Tychicus was at Ephesus, Crescens in Galatia, and Titus in Dalmatia. Demas, his sometime fellow-servant, had, alas ! left him, "having loved this present world." He was almost alone ; only the beloved physician Luke was with him. We can well understand his ardent wish to see Timothy, his beloved son. "Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me ;" "Do thy diligence to come before winter," he wrote. He knew that his earthly career was nearing its close, and he longed for one occupied in the Lord's work like himself. He begs him to bring with him the cloak and the books he had left at Troas with Carpus, when he thought no doubt of returning thither. Winter was at hand, and instead of passing it at Nicopolis, Paul was to endure hardness in prison. He needed his cloak, and could no longer say, "I have all, and abound." No, he was poor, old, alone, and destitute. A last and touching feature of his request to

Timothy is, "Take Mark, and bring him with thee; for he is profitable to me for the ministry." There had been a time when Mark had abandoned the work, and when Paul had declined to be accompanied by him; but the Lord had strengthened Mark for service, and Paul recognised this. What grace in Master and apostle! (2 Tim. iv. 9-13, 20; 1 Cor. xvi. 10; Acts xiii. 13, xv. 37, 38).

However, in the midst of this loneliness and darkness, the Lord had sent a ray of light to gladden his servant. Onesiphorus of Ephesus, a devoted Christian who had already been of great service to the assembly in that town, had come to Rome and sought to see Paul. To show interest in a Christian prisoner at such a time of persecution was exposing himself to great risk. But Onesiphorus was not hindered or discouraged by the difficulty of finding the apostle, neither was he terrified by the danger. "He sought me out very diligently," says the grateful apostle, "and found me. He oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain." Such devotion might have cost him his life. How beautiful, too, is Paul's testimony concerning him! In these days of lukewarmness, we might well crave this same love, and the saints might be revived thereby. Onesiphorus is one to whom the Lord might say: "I was in prison, and ye came unto Me." Paul was thinking of this day of reckoning when he added, "The Lord grant unto him that he may



find mercy of the Lord in that day" (2 Tim. i. 16-18 ; Matt. xxv. 36).

No doubt the believers at Rome came to comfort Paul as often as they could. He says, "Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren" (2 Tim. iv. 21). But how many were left of those whom he saluted at the end of his epistle to the Romans ; how many of them had already lost their lives for Christ's sake in the cruel tortures in Nero's gardens ?

*(To be continued.)*

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## The Morning Star.

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**T**HE Morning Star is mentioned in three places in Scripture, as figurative of Christ as the object of the Christian's hope.

In 2 Peter i. 19, the Morning Star is said to have arisen in the heart of the believer. In the address to the Church at Thyatira, which, according to the prophetic word, depicts the darkest stage of the history of the Church in the Middle Ages, it is held out as the hope of the believer. Then, lastly, in the closing chapter of Revelation, Christ presents Himself to His Church once more as "the bright and Morning Star."

The Lord's coming for His people is an event which may take place at any moment; before another night closes in, He may descend from heaven with a shout; the dead in Christ be raised, the living changed, and all go to meet the Lord in the air, and so to be for ever with the Lord (1 Thess. iv. 14-18).

In 2 Peter i., prophecy is said to be God's lamp, shining in the darkness, so that in the light of it the Christian can know what this world is, and what will be its end. It is a world which has departed from God; its end is judgment; and the knowledge of this ought to separate the Christian from it in heart and spirit.

The Morning Star is that which shines out at the darkest hour of the night, just before the dawn of the day—it ushers in the day. The “day,” as we have it in the last chapter of Malachi, will be for God's earthly people Israel, when the Sun of Righteousness will arise for blessing to them; meanwhile the Morning Star has already arisen in the heart of the believer. This is no mere theory or a dry doctrine; it is a living truth, the presentation of a living Person to the heart. The present period of time is characterised by three momentous facts—the absence of Christ, the presence of the Holy Ghost, and the return of Christ as the hope of the Church; it is to the last of these we desire to draw the reader's attention now. In the

parable in Matthew xxv., the cry which awoke the sleeping virgins at midnight was, "Behold the Bridegroom"! It was not a mere theory of some peculiar school of doctrine, but the presentation of a *living Person* to the hearts of His people, and this in connection with His coming.

And is it not striking that the Morning Star should again be brought before us in the address to the Church at Thyatira? The state of things in that Church is just what we find fully developed in the Middle Ages, when the whole professing Church had for long lost this bright and blessed hope. They had sunk into the world, and nearly the whole of Western Christendom was enveloped in the darkness of Romanism. Yet even then God had His witnesses, and here is the promise to encourage the overcomer in such a state of things—"I will give unto him the Morning Star." If the night be ever so dark, or the difficulties ever so great, faith can lay hold upon Christ as the Coming One.

Then, just as the last chapter of the Old Testament closes by presenting Christ in connection with His coming in blessing to Israel, His earthly people, so the last chapter of the New closes by presenting Him in connection with His coming for His Church as the "bright Morning Star." Why, let us ask, is this little word "bright" reserved for this last chapter of Revelation? Doubtless it is to show that, however great the failure of the Church as a responsible witness for

Christ has been, however terrible the judgments about to be poured out on the world, nothing has changed Christ, nothing has dimmed the brightness of the "bright Morning Star." But do we realise that this is the night of Christ's absence? and are we watching for the Morning Star? It is not a question whether we can correctly explain the doctrine of the second advent (quite right in its place), but are we really expecting His coming? "Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when He cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that He shall gird Himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them."

How Christ values attachment of heart to Himself! It is as much as to say: "If you are watching for Me during My absence, then when you are at home in the rest of My presence, I will spread the table in heaven and will serve you. I will be the minister of your necessity now, in a scene of necessity whilst you are watching for Me; and I will be the minister of your joy then, in a scene where necessity could not come."

Is it not remarkable, too, that the Book of God should close with the words, "Behold I come quickly"? May the ready response go up from the hearts of many thousands of the Lord's people, "Yes, come, Lord Jesus." Amen.

F. G. B.

## “They shall See His Face.”

(REV. xxii. 4.)

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I KNOW not when—but this I know  
That I shall see His face:  
I may be called by death to go,  
Or wait His coming here below,  
But I *shall* see His face.

That face once spit upon for me,—  
That holy blessèd face!  
And stared at in His agony,  
While hanging on the cursèd tree,—  
Yes, I shall see that face.

But not a cloud of sorrow now  
Can shade His glorious face;  
Eternal gladness crowns His brow,  
Where heavenly hosts before Him bow,—  
*There* I shall see His face.

E'en now by faith my soul can say,  
I see my Saviour's face;  
Though mine be here a darkened way,  
This cheers me on from day to-day,  
Until I *see His face*.

C. G.

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READER, have you rested where God rests? What does God think about Christ? Does your soul say, That is sufficient? God rests in Him as having made peace through the blood of the cross. Is that peace consciously yours?

## Correspondence.

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Hartlepool :—“If the Body of Christ is complete at His Parousia, who are those spoken of in Revelation xx. 4, &c.?”

“It is quite true that ‘the Body of Christ is complete at His Parousia.’ The Church which is His body is being formed during the parenthetical interval between Pentecost and the Parousia. Only when the Lord Jesus went up to heaven as the glorified Man, having accomplished redemption, did He become the Head to the Church which is His body (Eph. i. 20-23). Only at the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Ghost came down, were the disciples baptized into one body (Acts i. 5; 1 Cor. xii. 13). Prior to that day they were separate *units*; after that day they were *united* to the Head in heaven and to one another upon earth. So the Lord said to Saul of Tarsus, ‘Why persecutest thou Me?’ The poor persecuted saints were a part of Himself, for they were members of His body. The baptism of the Holy Ghost took place at the day of Pentecost. There is no such thing as fresh baptisms of the Spirit, as we constantly hear people say to-day.

“Now just as there were saints *before Pentecost* who nevertheless did not form part of the Body of Christ, so there will be saints *after the Parousia* who in like manner will not be part of

the Church. The Church is being formed, and will be completed during this present interval.

•“ But others besides the Church will have part in the first resurrection.

“ Revelation xx. 4 speaks of three distinct companies that have part therein; *first*, the twenty-four elders, which includes all the saints raised from Eden right on to the Parousia; secondly, two companies of saints martyred during the interval between the Parousia and the Epiphancia, viz., those ‘that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God,’ and ‘*those* which had not worshipped the beast, &c.’ (the word *those* should come in the middle of the verse, and it makes the sense clearer).

“ The first of those martyred companies is mentioned in Revelation vi. 11-13, and I believe will be slain during the *first half* of Daniel's seventieth week. The second are alluded to in Revelation xiii. 15, and will be slain during *the last* half of the week.

“ Revelation vii. speaks of two companies *not slain*, but *saved* during the brief interval between the Parousia and the Epiphancia; the first from amongst the tribes of Israel; the second from amongst the heathen nations. I do not think that the palm-bearing multitude pass through death at all—they ‘*came out of the great tribulation*,’ this is not how you would describe those who died during it.

“I do not think that any die in the Lord during the Millennium. During that period death will be an exceptional thing, and the direct judgment of God upon sin (Isa. lxxv. 20).”

ED.

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### THE GROUND OF PEACE.

THE moment we begin to rest our peace on anything in ourselves, we lose it. (And this is why so many saints have not settled peace.) Nothing can be lasting that is not built on God alone. How can you have settled peace? Only by having it in God's own way. By not resting it on anything, even the Spirit's work within yourselves, but on what Christ has done entirely without you. Then you will know peace; conscious unworthiness, but yet peace. In Christ alone God finds that in which He can rest, and so is it with His saints. The more you see the extent and nature of the evil that is within, as well as that without and around, the more you will find that what Jesus is, and what Jesus did, is the only ground at all on which you can rest.

J. N. D.

#### JUSTIFICATION—

Grace does it, - - Rom. iii. 24.  
 in virtue of the blood, - Rom. v. 9.  
 on the principle of faith, Rom. v. 1.  
 unto life, - - - Rom. v. 18.



## Musings on the Book of Ruth.

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“If thy brother be waxen poor, and hath sold away some of his possession, and if any of his kin come to *redeem* it, then shall he *redeem* that which his brother sold.”—LEV. xxv. 25.

**R**EDEMPTION, as one has said, was no *afterthought* with our God; it was His purpose from the beginning. By the work of redemption He prepares the highest glory for His own blessed name, and the fullest joy for His creatures.

“The morning stars sang together,” it is true, “and all the sons of God shouted for joy,” when the foundations of the earth were laid; but the shoutings of *grace* when the new creation is finished by the bringing forth of the Head Stone, will be louder still. Never were such music and dancing in the house before as when the poor prodigal had returned, and been received as one alive from the dead. Never had such affections been awakened within him before. Never had the father's treasures been brought forth till then; till then the fatted calf, the ring, and the best robe had been laid up; and never had the father himself so full a joy in his child as when he fell on his neck and kissed him. And so is it in the wondrous ways of our God. Creation brought forth the resources of His love, and

wisdom, and power, and heaven on high was glad through all its order, and earth smiled beneath, the fair witness of His handiwork; but redemption has drawn forth still richer treasures that were lying hid in God — has awakened still more adoring joy and praise “in the presence of the angels,” and has given new and divine affections to the children of men.

And nothing now hinders us from sharing in these joys of the Father's house, but refusal to take the character and place of returned prodigals. “Thou never gavest me a kid,” said one who trusted in himself—he had never tasted of real gladness; no feast of fat things had ever been spread for him, for he drew upon himself as though he were something; for “these many years do I serve thee,” said he in his own sufficiency, “neither transgressed I at any time thy commandments.” He was of those who “trusted in themselves.” And then, and then only, is our joy hindered, when in this pride and vain conceit of our own sufficiency, we come not to God as received prodigals. For to come as such is the decreed way of the whole family of God, and so their only spring of joy and triumph; as it is written, “And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne and *unto the Lamb for ever and ever.*”

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Everything is to stand in grace. Love was of *old*, because God is love, and love was therefore made known in the work of *creation*, and that by communicating goodness and blessing. But love has found a fuller scope for expressing itself in the work of *redemption*, in bringing grace and showing mercy ; and this is its *new* character (see 1 John ii. 8). Grace, the source and power of redemption, is "the glory that excelleth ;"—the light that shined from heaven in converting grace and power round Saul of Tarsus, was "above the brightness of the sun at mid-day." Grace is the fullest, and indeed the only worthy expression of the unsearchable riches of divine love. The heavens will rejoice in grace (Rev. v. 11, 12), and Israel, as representing the joy of the earth, will, in the end, triumph in it also (Isa. xl. 1, xli. 10 ; Zeph. iii. 14, 15).

Among the witnesses to this final security and joy of Israel, in the grace of God their Redeemer, the Book of Ruth appears to me to have a very distinguished place, presenting, as it does, an illustration of the duties of the *Goel* or Kinsman Redeemer (see Lev. xxv. 25 ; Num. xxxv. 19 ; Deut. xxv. 5), and thus, as we shall find, furnishing the type of Israel in their sorrows and captivities down to the time when the Lord their *Redeemer* will, through the riches of His grace, delight in them again, and their land shall be "married" (Isa. lxii. 4). But in order the better to apprehend this typical character of the Book of

Ruth, we must use a little diligence in tracing the ways of God with Israel previously to the time of Ruth, and the distinct character of some of the books which introduce us to it.

*Deuteronomy* exhibits to us the perfecting of the covenant between Jehovah and Israel. After Moses had rehearsed their ways, delivered to them ordinances and commandments again, and warned and encouraged them, he stands before the people of Israel and says: "This day the Lord thy God hath commanded thee to do these statutes and judgments: thou shalt therefore keep and do them with all thine heart, and with all thy soul. Thou hast avouched the Lord this day to be thy God, and to walk in His ways, and to keep His statutes, and His commandments and His judgments, and to hearken unto His voice: and the Lord hath avouched thee this day to be His peculiar people, as He hath promised thee, and that thou shouldest keep all His commandments; and to make thee high above all nations which He hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honour; and that thou mayest be an holy people unto the Lord thy God, as He hath spoken" (Deut. xxvi. 16-19). This was a formal binding of the Lord and the people in covenant together, and thus the compact is solemnly and duly witnessed by the Book of Deuteronomy.

The Book of *Joshua*, which follows, shows the wonders of Jehovah's outstretched arm in the sight of the nations, and in the behalf of His

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people, His leading them in triumph from city to city, and subduing kings before them, till Joshua their captain had taken the whole land according to all that the Lord had said unto Moses. For thus it is written, "So Joshua took the whole land according to all that the Lord said unto Moses; and Joshua gave it for an inheritance unto Israel according to their divisions by their tribes, and the land rested from war" (Josh. xi. 23); and again, "There failed not ought of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel—all came to pass" (xxi. 45); and again, Joshua, when about to go the way of all the earth, could stand before Israel and say, "Ye know in all your hearts, and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, not one thing hath failed thereof" (xxiii. 14). And thus the Book of Joshua abundantly asserts the truth of the Lord, and His covenant faithfulness.

The Book of *Judges* follows; and as the preceding book had been the witness *for* the Lord that He had fulfilled all His covenant with Israel, so does this book witness *against* Israel, that they had utterly broken their covenant with the Lord. It is true that Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the Lord that He had

done for Israel. But that generation were gathered to their fathers; and as we read that "there arose a new king over Egypt which knew not Joseph," but became unmindful of all the kindness which the Lord had shown for His nation by Joseph, and was turned to be the adversary of Joseph's brethren, so we see another generation now risen in Israel, who with uncircumcised Egyptian heart knew not the Lord who had visited and redeemed their fathers.

Throughout these times of the Judges we see their repeated backslidings, and the Lord again and again correcting them by judgments, and turning in mercy to forgive their iniquities and heal their diseases. Often as a hen gathereth her chickens would He have gathered His erring people; but the closing testimony of this book against them is, "Every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Judges xxi. 5).

Thus we have in *Deuteronomy*, the covenant solemnly settled and entered into—in *Joshua*, the Lord's accomplishment of all His mercies engaged to Israel under that covenant; and in *Judges*, Israel's utter breach of all their vowed and pledged allegiance. This was the righteous forfeiture of all their blessings. So that the time had now come when the Lord must decide either to lay hold on judgment, or to bring mercy. He now might swear in His wrath that Israel should never enter His rest—they had been assayed, and were found "reprobate silver."

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“O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself,” might now be the lamentation over them; but the Lord was about to reply, “but in Me is thine help,” for Jehovah is God and not man; He who in righteousness might now have eased Him of His adversaries, and avenged Him of His enemies, prepares mercies for them, allows mercy to rejoice against judgment, and says, as at this time, “How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim?” (Hos. xi. 8). And therefore in the history of Ruth the Moabitess which immediately follows the Book of Judges, *He gives them a sample not of final severity for their sins, but of the grace by which they shall be gathered and the glory into which they shall be brought in the latter day.*

The constant respect that is had in Scripture to the histories of the people of God in olden times, for the illustration of His further and still future ways, either in such an artless and passing manner as may at first be perceived, or in the more full and distinct interpretation of them as types or allegories, gives us great authority for considering the Book of God generally as being of a prophetic character. The scenes in Paradise, Cain, Abel, the Deluge, and the ruins of Sodom, the times of the Patriarchs, the Exodus, Joshua, David and Solomon, the sufferings and the acts of the Prophets—these with others are

all taken up and treated as typical; and how distinctly does the Spirit give this character to the Scripture histories in Psalm lxxviii., when after announcing that he is about to open his mouth "in a parable," and to "utter dark sayings," he details simply the ways of Israel's rebellion and perverseness, and Jehovah's judgments and mercies, thus giving us to know that all this history was a parable also.

In like manner when in I Corinthians x. the apostle had traced the manners of Israel in the wilderness, and the consequent judgments of the Lord, he says, "Now all these things happened unto them *for ensamples.*"

The history of Sarah and Hagar with their children is more distinctly announced to be an allegory; Cain, Balaam, and Korah are pointed out as the signs of Christendom's offences and judgment; and Babylon is revived in spirit, though the name and remnant, and son and nephew have been cut off from it, and it has itself been swept with the besom of destruction. And I doubt not that the history of Ruth, beautiful and attractive as it is, is designed of the Spirit to be something more than a help to discover the genealogy of the Lord (Matt. i. 5), or than a pleasing moral and affecting scene in domestic life, but that we may also read in it, and vindicate by it, the ways of the Lord of Hosts with His loved and still remembered Israel.



I know that the watching of the imagination, that we offend not by it, may be much needed here, but the comfort and edification of the saint in the unfoldings of the ways of God by means of such allegories will witness for them ; and as it is again and again promised, "To him that hath shall more be given," our delight in the holy oracles and godly use of them will enable us, like instructed scribes, to bring forth fuller treasures. May the Spirit of truth make us such !

*(To be continued.)*

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## Hints on Daniel.

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### THE GREAT IMAGE.

(DAN. ii. 31-46.)

"**T**HOU, O king, sawest, and behold a great image." God was pleased to give the Gentile monarch a vision of the future. No wonder that "his spirit was troubled, and his sleep brake from him," as he beheld "this great image, whose brightness was excellent . . . and the form thereof terrible."

No human power could recall the forgotten dream ; no human wisdom could interpret it. But the God of heaven was mapping out before

the astonished and frightened king the whole course of "the times of the Gentiles" alluded to by our Lord in Luke xxi. 24.

Few who have given any serious attention to the study of the subject have any difficulty in understanding to what the different parts of the great image refer. The interpretation given by Daniel removes all difficulty as to the head of gold. "Thou" — addressing Nebuchadnezzar, the Babylonish king—"art this head of gold" (ii. 38). We shall see that while beyond all question the first great empire of "the times of the Gentiles" is here distinctly shown to be the Babylonian, Scripture makes it equally plain which are those that follow.

There are four in all. The first is *Babylon*. Not that there had not been vast and magnificent empires before ever Babylon was heard of, *e.g.*, Assyria and Egypt. But they do not enter into the scope of Daniel's prophecy. When we advance further in our study of the book, we shall see that there are two great classes of prophets in the Old Testament; first, those like Isaiah, who address themselves directly to the Jewish nation, while the nation is still owned of God; second, those like Daniel, who are called to their prophetic office when the nation is outwardly disowned. In the first, we shall find much more about the Assyrian; in the second, more about Babylon and the Gentile powers that followed Babylon. The Assyrian is the

enemy of Israel when recognised of God in their own land; and although the great Assyrian empire has long since passed away, prophecy distinctly reveals that the Assyrian will be revived in the last great crisis before the setting up of that kingdom of Christ which "shall stand for ever." Israel will yet be restored to their own land; they will there be recognised again by God as His people (Hos. i., ii.), and in that day the Assyrian will once more come forward as their antagonist (Ezek. xxxviii., xxxix.). This will be after the coming of the Lord for His saints.

Daniel is the prophet of "the times of the Gentiles." He by no means confines himself to a description of the days of Antiochus Epiphanes as the "Higher Critics" would have us to believe. These "times of the Gentiles" began with the deportation to Babylon. The throne of the Lord was then removed from Jerusalem, and power was given into the hands of the Gentiles. These "times" still continue, and will until the Lord comes out of heaven in judgment. Then once more will the Jewish nation be owned. These things will become clearer as we proceed with our examination of the Book of Daniel.

But the Babylonian empire was not to last long. Jeremiah had been given to foretell that after seventy years (Jer. xxv.) the power of Babylon should be broken; and here in Daniel's

interpretation of the great king's dream we are told, "After thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee" (ii. 39).

Nothing could equal the magnificence of Babylon so long as it lasted. History has given us amazing records of its glory and prosperity. Nebuchadnezzar had received his grant of power direct from God Himself. "The God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory." Of none of the succeeding empires is this said. Universal dominion, so far as man's connection with earth and heaven are concerned, was placed in his hand. The following chapters show how this power was abused. One only, He who is both God and man, the Son of man, will rule over a wider dominion than that which was entrusted to Nebuchadnezzar. "All things" in earth, heaven, and sea will be put "under His feet," and He will reign in righteousness (Ps. viii.). Absolute monarchy in the hands of fallen and sinful man invariably leads to cruel tyranny and unbridled lust; when Christ shall reign "the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever" (Isa. xxxii. 17). Lord, haste that day for this groaning creation!

But the God of heaven "removeth kings and setteth up kings," and so the astonished king is informed by the very God who had given him all his greatness, "After thee shall arise another

kingdom." This was to be "inferior to thee," in *splendour* and magnificence, but not in *extent*, for it "shall bear rule over all the earth." It was none other than the Medo-Persian.

While it is most interesting to see how all history *confirms*, as of course it must, the prophetic scriptures; yet we do not need to go outside of the Bible for the *explanation*. Not only did God foretell through Jeremiah the *duration* of the Babylonian empire, "It shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon," &c. (Jer. xxv. 12), He also distinctly informs us of the *succession* of its various kings. "All nations shall serve him (*i.e.* Nebuchadnezzar), and his son, and his son's son" (Jer. xxvii. 7). Now in Daniel v. it was the last of these three, Belshazzar, that was on the throne of Babylon. But on that terrible night his "kingdom was divided, and given to the Medes and Persians" (Dan. v. 28). History confirms this, but Daniel was inspired of God to write it before the event took place.

In process of time the Medo-Persian empire passed away. It lasted longer than the Babylonian (B.C. 536-333), but was eventually crushed by the armies of Alexander the Great. History tells us this, but Scripture was beforehand giving us the *name* of the third empire even before the second had risen into power. "The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of

Media and Persia. And the rough goat is the king of Grecia" (Dan. viii. 20, 21).

We have then in the Book of Daniel itself the names of three out of the four great Gentile powers—(1) Babylon; (2) Medo-Persia; and (3) Grecia.

But God was not merely gratifying the curiosity of Nebuchadnezzar, He was dealing with his conscience. It was especially the things that should take place "in the latter days" (ii. 28) that God was bringing before him; and hence much more is told us in reference to the *fourth* kingdom, than any of the other three. Can there be any reasonable doubt as to which this fourth kingdom is?

As far back as B.C. 1452 (*i.e.* three thousand three hundred and fifty years ago!) God used the lips of Balaam, who for filthy lucre's sake would fain have cursed God's chosen earthly people, to foretell the blessed day of Israel's redemption. He saw in vision the coming kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ. Do not the stirring events of the present hour give ground to think that that glorious moment is near at hand? "Out of Jacob shall come He (Christ) that shall have dominion" (Num. xxiv. 19).

Space will not permit of any lengthy exposition of this prophecy, the most remarkable in all Scripture, when we remember its early date, its wide scope, and its perfect accord with all other parts of the prophetic word! It foretells

the crumbling to pieces of all earth's kingdoms before Him who is presently coming in judgment to set up a kingdom "which shall not be destroyed" (Dan vii. 14). We can do no more than quote the passage and commend it to the reader's prayerful consideration: — "And he looked on the Kenites, and took up his parable, and said, Strong is thy dwelling-place, and thou puttest thy nest in a rock. Nevertheless the Kenite shall be wasted, until Asshur shall carry thee (*i.e.* Israel) away captive. And he took up his parable, and said, Alas! who shall live when God doeth this? And ships shall come from the coast (or *side*) of Chittim (*i.e.* Cyprus), and shall afflict Asshur, and shall afflict Eber (*i.e.* the country beyond the river Euphrates), and he (*i.e.* Chittim) also shall perish for ever" (Num. xxiv. 21-25).

It is the power spoken of under the term of "the coast of Chittim" that is the fourth kingdom of Daniel's great image. Without naming it Balaam foretells the quarter from whence it was to come—a mighty *Western* power, which was to come into conflict with the *Eastern* empire of the world, but in the end to be destroyed itself. It was the *Roman* empire, which in Balaam's day had no existence whatever. It had not even been heard of when Daniel wrote.

We see to-day an immense Eastern empire in process of formation. Scripture is clear as to

the place Russia is to fill in the coming crisis of the world. The revived Roman empire will be antagonistic to it, but is doomed to perish before it.

*(To be continued.)*

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## The Last Days of the Apostle Paul.

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**A**S we have said, Paul had carried with him into his prison sad memories of the state of the Church. It had become like a great house, where there were vessels to honour and also to dishonour. It had become necessary for a man to purge himself from these last. All they that were in Asia had turned away from the apostle and his doctrine. False teachers were overthrowing the faith of some. There was a form of godliness, but a denial of the power thereof. "From such" he tells them to turn away. Conceive the trial it must have been to the apostle to see this ruin! Then, too, his enemies were attacking him: "Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil," he says. Was this the same Alexander who was put forward by the Jews at Ephesus to justify them and to oppose Paul? We are not told in what



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way Alexander showed his enmity, but we get a glimpse of one cause of his suffering for Christ's sake (2 Tim. ii. 17-21, iii. 5, iv. 14; Acts xix. 33). At the end of his course, aged, poor, and in prison, he was forsaken by some and hated by others.

And how did he bear these afflictions? Was he cast down and discouraged because at the end of his long life of hardness, this assembly which was so dear to him had become a prey to ravening wolves, and of men who taught pernicious doctrines? Did his work seem all in vain? No, he looked up to Him in whom he found his resource, and his heart travelled back to the eternal counsels of God which can never fail. Thus he was able to bear trials with patience, and to encourage others. "God hath not given us the spirit of fear," he writes to Timothy, "but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner; but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus, before the world began; but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and incorruptibility to light through the gospel. . . . I suffer these

things: nevertheless I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day" (2 Tim. i. 7-12). This is what sustained Paul amidst all kinds of sufferings: he had confidence in Him who had loved and saved him, and could see the glory of the coming day shining beyond the present trial. "I endure all things for the elect's sakes," he said, "that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him: if we suffer, we shall also reign with Him" (2 Tim. ii. 10-12).

The apostle was at last brought before Cæsar. He could recall the day when he had made his defence before Festus, Agrippa, and Bernice, and had said, I would to God that you were as I am, except these bonds.

No doubt the same spirit of love and courage which animated him then was burning in his heart now; but how much more solemn and affecting was the present scene. He was no longer before men who were more or less kindly disposed towards him; here was the cruel emperor Nero, who had already inflicted so much suffering on the hated Christians; here were the great men of his Court, accustomed to bloodshed like he was, and besides, doubtless many Jews and Gentiles come to be present at

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the trial of one accused of being "a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition . . . and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes"—all were eager to hear him condemned to death. And who was with Paul? Had any friends come to encourage the aged Christian, the good soldier, the prisoner of the Lord, by their presence and sympathy? Not one. Fear of the scorn and wrath of man held them back. "At my first answer," Paul says, "no man stood with me, but all men forsook me." He was alone as far as man could see, but a faithful, never-failing Friend, the same that Stephen had beheld by the Spirit sustaining him before the council, was now present with the apostle, though unseen to others. "All men forsook me, notwithstanding," he touchingly adds, "the Lord stood with me and strengthened me." That was enough for him. "He strengthened me," Paul continues, "that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear." What preaching? That which Felix, Festus, and Agrippa had heard from his lips, the gospel which tells of a risen and glorified Christ; a Christ who opens the eyes of men to the light of heaven and turns them from the power of Satan unto God, who will one day appear in glory to judge the world. Nero, the powerful and dreaded emperor, the man incriminated by such evil deeds, heard that day the solemn call of God, as well as his courtiers and the crowd

surrounding the judgment-seat. Never before had such a prisoner been seen, never before such words been heard in that place. Paul thus finished and crowned his ministry. The Lord had chosen him to bear His name "before the Gentiles and kings," and now he had proclaimed it before the greatest monarch of the time (2 Tim. iv. 16, 17; Acts xxvi. 18, ix. 15).

What was the result of this first defence? Paul wrote to Timothy, "I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion" (2 Tim. iv. 17). Was Nero, like Felix, laid hold of by the power of the truth? Was his conscience aroused? Did he say to the apostle, "Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." We cannot tell, but we know that, once more, Paul escaped from the jaw of the lion.

But the dear servant of the Lord well knew that this was only a short respite. He wrote to his beloved Timothy, after exhorting him to make full proof of his ministry: "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing" (2 Tim. iv. 6-8). He was expecting death; his blood would be poured out like the libations of

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wine after the sacrifices. But what did it matter to him? To die was gain to him, to go to be with Christ was "far better." That Christ should be magnified in his body, whether by life or death, was all his desire. And Christ had just been magnified before all by the testimony he had given in making the preaching fully known. What could emperor or executioner do to him who reckoned himself always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, who did not count his own life dear if his Master was glorified? Nothing indeed.

What a glorious future opened before the eyes of the apostle! The splendour of the day of Christ, the glory of His appearing, the crown of righteousness which the Lord would place on the head of the faithful soldier, and, above all, the joy of being always with the Son of God, who had loved and given Himself for him! This was enough to veil from him the dreary prison, the forsaking of all, the suffering, the reproach, even the executioner's axe, and to make him exclaim with triumph: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? . . . Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us. For 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" (Rom. viii. 35-39).

We know nothing of any further appearing of Paul before Nero, nothing of his sentence or death. Ancient church history tells us that he was beheaded as a Roman citizen about the year 67. "Absent from the body," he is "present with the Lord," and awaiting, with the many other martyrs and also with all believers, the moment when Jesus shall come back in glory.

May we follow his faith, considering the end of his conversation!

A. L.

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## Inspiration.

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"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God (*lit.* is God-breathed) and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."—2 TIM. iii. 16, 17.

**T**HIS is a word full of encouragement to the man of God in the present day, when professed friends of the truth are far more to be dreaded than its open enemies.

The man of God is he who seeks to walk in the world according to the mind of God, and this not in the world seen in its character of

opposition to the Father, but in its character of professed Christendom, outwardly owning the authority of Christ.

Just as in the days of Israel's decline, when Jehovah's authority, nominally owned, was indeed totally set aside, he who stood for Jehovah was marked out as "the man of God," so to-day, when that which God destined to be the display of His mind down here has been so ruined by man that the Church and the world are no longer distinguishable, he who would still seek to know God's mind and walk according to it in such a scene is marked out as "the man of God." Blessed title for a day of failure!

But if the Church is in ruins (and who that knows the glory of the "former house" can but own the ruin), and if the support of apostolic and prophetic counsel is gone for ever, what is there for the man of God to turn to, that he may know the mind of God, and find guidance through the confusion?

It is to the Scriptures he turns, and here faith rests. The enemy, recognising this as the "strong tower" of faith, is directing his special and most subtle attacks against it. He would do nothing less than destroy in the soul the certainty that all Scripture is God-breathed.

But this is the rock that the blowing of the winds and the beating of the floods never have and never will move. The winds of doctrine blow hither and thither the unstable soul, and

the advancing floods of evil that precede the revelation of "the man of sin" quickly sweep from its moorings of conventional or traditional belief the soul that has no 'sure and steadfast' anchor.

But the man of God finds refuge here. God breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.

Life is the result of God's own sovereign acting, totally independent of man otherwise than as the object of that acting. So Scripture in its entirety is the result of God's own sovereign activity.

Man's mind has had no more power to shape the form of Scripture or determine its character than the lifeless clay had power to inform itself with life and become a living soul.

The consideration of this precludes the acceptance of all theories of partial inspiration, subtle attempts of the devil to undermine the authority of Scripture over the conscience. It is the belief of many pious people that God gave the thoughts and left the thus inspired writers to clothe these thoughts in suitable language.

This will only pass as long as it is unexamined. Words are either the audible expression of thought or they are mere sounds signifying nothing. Change a word, you change the thought, if only by a shade; change the order of the words, again you change the thought. Clearly, then, if we have man's words we



have man's thoughts, and the stream is corrupted at the source. If we are to have God's thoughts we must have God's words in God's order, else we have merely a distorted image, and not a divine revelation at all.

But God was revealing Himself in His Word, as He revealed Himself in the living Word, the only begotten Son. This the mind of man is, from its very nature, incapable of grasping, and therefore incapable of expressing, because the finite cannot comprehend the infinite. Only a divine mind can give expression to that which is divine. So the apostle speaks in 1 Corinthians ii. 13: "Which things also we speak, not in *the words* which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth."

Hence, incontrovertibly, Scripture presents itself to us as in the fullest sense *God-breathed*. Divine in its source, the blessed revelation of God in His nature and ways comes to us uncontaminated by the mind of man, and is the spring of life eternal, able to make us wise unto salvation.

But there is another dangerous and plausible thought. It is that Scripture must be rational if it is to be received as divine, since man's reason is, it is contended, given by God. This too is self-destructive for those who believe that Scripture is the revelation of God Himself. It is consistent, but quite meaningless as an argument from those who deny revelation.

For the human mind, even unfallen, is finite, and therefore cannot furnish a criterion for that which is infinite in its nature. Scripture is not irrational, but ultra-rational. It is not presented to man for him to judge and find it satisfactory or not, according as it satisfies his finite mind or not; but it judges him, demands total subjection of all that he is to its divine authority.

The thought that the fallen and hostile mind of man, only evil continually in its thoughts and imaginings, ever exalting itself against God come in grace, should be a meet judge of a divine revelation, bears clearly enough the impress of its origin. It comes from the father of lies.

But then again many believe that the regenerate mind of necessity enters into Scripture rationally and understands it by the reason. There is a measure of truth here veiling another subtle and dangerous error. While it is blessedly true that the operations of the believer's mind can and should be controlled and directed by the Spirit of God in entering into divine things, yet it is all the while in subjection. The Spirit presents a divine object, the heart is formed by that object, and by it the feelings and activities of the intelligence are characterised. The characteristic activity of the merely natural reason in self-will is not there at all; there is no place for it, it can only come in to puff up, death is its only place with all that belongs to the natural man.

In answer to this, the commonest, and most dangerous, to young believers, of the attempts to bring in man's mind as assimilating divine truths, it is well to notice the implication of the Parable of the Sower.

• The seed is the Word of God, that same God-breathed Word that is the object of these various forms of the adversary's attacks. When this seed, sown by divine agency, falls into good ground, is it assimilated, or does it enter into the nature of the soil into which it falls? It is sown as seed, as seed it springs up and bears fruit. Whatever it takes up it transforms to its own character. So with the Word of God; its fruit is wholly divine, and the nature of the fruit determined by His will who thus begat us by the Word of Truth. All that is carnal, instead of assimilating it, is judged by it. Its blessed action is to transform the believer in the power of divine life to the image of the blessed Lord who Himself took the place of the "corn of wheat."

It is easy to see how totally this is opposed to the thought of the human mind in any way assimilating or discerning that which is divine.

But reaching this point where man is set aside in every possible way, we are free to follow the blessed passage we have been considering to its natural conclusion.

The man of God, in such a scene, resting upon Scripture in its entirety as God-breathed, finds

its divine character established for him in his place of dependence. For it is profitable, not only for his guidance where all else is gone, but for his use in every possible way, both towards himself and towards others. It affords him divine certainty of doctrine, divine conviction or refutation of sin or error, divine correction or straightening of that which may have erred from the "right" line, and divine instruction or schooling in righteousness, that which it behoves the man of God to maintain here above all else.

Thus and thus alone is he perfect, complete, *ἄριστος*, wanting in nothing that should go to make a man of God, and not only so, but he is perfected, perfectly fitted by growth and exercise in divine things, to every good work. S. II. II.

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## Correspondence.

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Beckenham; Gen. ii. 9.—"The safest principle for the interpretation of Scripture is to take all as literal where possible. If the two trees are symbolical, why not the garden too? The rationalism of the present day would fritter away the whole Bible, and make even Adam and Eve a mythical story. But the finite reasoning of a fallen creature is an unsafe guide. Better to stick by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever," ED.

# Musings on the Book of Ruth.

(Continued.)

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**T**HE Book of Ruth opens with a simple scene of domestic sorrow. The family of Elimelech\* of Bethlehem in Judah, is forced by stress of famine to seek a livelihood in the country of Moab. Here he dies, and his two sons form alliances with the daughters of that strange people, and in process of time, none was left of this family, but the widowed, childless Naomi. "Woe is me for my hurt"—in the words of the daughter of Zion, by the prophet, might she then say—"my wound is grievous: but I said, Truly this is my grief, and I must bear it. My tabernacle is spoiled, and all my cords are broken: my children are gone forth of me, and they are not: there is none to stretch forth my tent any more, and to set up my curtains" (Jer. x. 20).

Now here we have at once something to arrest

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\* Elimelech, who was the father and head of this afflicted family, signifies, "My God the King," and is properly and characteristically the title of Messiah *in connection with the Jewish people*. As the Elimelech, Israel is His household, and *not the Church*, and how truly has this household of His become a wanderer in strange lands, no longer Naomi but Mara. But the Church is not properly set in connection with Him in this character; and therefore, as for other reasons, I do not judge that the Church is typified in this book.

IX.

our thoughts. Behold famine in that land which the Lord Jehovah had promised should flow with milk and honey for His chosen people! But this was the sure testimony that that chosen people had been unfaithful, and therefore all this evil estate (the sorrows of the land and the captivity of her children) exhibits Israel as they now are, suffering for their unfaithfulness under the righteous displeasure of the Lord. Their cities are wasted without inhabitant now, as then partially in the days of Naomi, the land is utterly desolate, the Lord has removed her children far away, and there is a great forsaking in the midst of the land. Famine then was what dispersion is now; for the transgression of the people must account for both; one reason and one only can be given for their sorrows in all periods; the voice in every calamity of Israel is the same, "*My God will cast them away, because they did not hearken unto Him*" (Hos. ix. 17).

The marriages of Mahlon and Chilion, sons of Israel, with the daughters of Moab, show us Israel's present utter loss of their sacred Nazarite character, that the "holy flesh has passed from them," that they are no longer sanctified and separated unto God, but are mingled with the nations, have learnt their works, and are become defiled as sinners of the Gentiles. And Naomi, bereft of her two sons and her husband, exhibits their destitution and loss of everything that

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could wear a trace of their former estate ; for though reserved of God, as a people, to meet the purposes of His future mercy, yet their special character is, for the present, utterly lost and gone ; they have become, in God's judgment, as one of the nations, and " Lo-ammi " is written on them.

But the Lord, as we learn from this history, in due time returned in mercy to Israel ; for His constant word to them is that " He will not contend with them for ever." Though He make a full end of the nations, yet will He not make a full end of them. He visited and redeemed His people in giving them bread again ; and the earliest tidings of this awakens all Naomi's recollections of Israel. As soon as she heard that the land might be dwelt in again, she arose and went forth out of the place where she was ; and though naked and afflicted, and needing everything, she traces her way back to Bethlehem-Judah.

What a mother in Israel is here ! She would yield up her daughters-in-law, loving and faithful as they had been to her, and at once surrender all the alliances which she had formed among the Gentiles, and the sources of relief and comfort which had been opened for her there, and return as Mara, empty and afflicted, rather than be any longer a stranger to the land of her fathers ! She appears before us a true Rachel, who now refuses, as we know, to be comforted,

and will refuse till her "children shall come again to their own border" (Jer. xxxi. 15-17). For such is the heart of the children of Israel. Gladly would they come forth from all the advantages and comforts which have been made theirs in the places where they have been scattered, and return, Mara-like, to their own land. Let the tidings but reach them which reached Naomi at this time, that the land is open to them, and the ways to Zion which now mourn, and all her gates which are desolate, shall rejoice, and speedily again be full of people.

And here the character of Ruth fully and at once develops itself. She is fixed upon being one with Naomi, her mother-in-law,—she will forget kindred and father's house. She is tempted on the one hand by the dreary prospects which Naomi presented as awaiting her if she would still go forward,—and she is tempted on the other by Orpah's revolt, and return to the more profitable promises of Moab; but all this serves but to manifest and approve her,—she stood in the evil day. Like Elisha, in such a case, whom neither the voice of his master on the one hand, nor the taunts of the sons of the prophets on the other, could move him to change that word, "As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee" (2 Kings xi. 4). "Entreat me not," says she to Naomi, "to leave thee, or to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I



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will lodge ; thy people shall be my people, and thy God shall be my God." She would leave behind her all recollections of Moab and her people,—she would be one with Naomi though in widowhood and destitution. No longer a daughter of Moab, she was "steadfastly minded" to be only of Israel, one with the people of the Lord.

Thus is this sinner of the Gentiles found among the children of the kingdom ; and from this moment Israel becomes represented in Ruth, who therefore, as we shall find, takes up after Naomi the wondrous tale of God's ways with His people. Their fortunes now become typically set forth in hers, for the chosen Israel of God in the latter days will be as this sinner of the Gentiles ; Israel shall then be accepted through the same riches of grace that now saves the Church, the fulness of the Gentiles, as says the apostle, speaking to the Gentiles : " For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief : even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy. For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all " (Rom. xi.).

It is on this principle I rest assured that the present call of the Gentiles has no place in the typical history of Ruth. She was, it is true, a Gentile, and this has led some to misinterpret the mystery. But *Israel is now as the Gentiles,*

*and as Gentiles will be finally accepted.* For as we who were sinners of the Gentiles, and as such were "no people," but have now through grace become the people of God ; so will Israel, who are now "no people," be made the people of God in the latter days. Israel shall hereafter be made the vessel of mercy for the making known of the riches of glory, as the Church has now been made (*see* Hos. i.-iii. ; Rom. ix. 23-26), and thus the Gentile birth of Ruth was needed to set her forth a fair and perfect type of Israel, who are *treated* now as strangers, but to be finally gathered with the same mercy as is now gathering us, who were strangers *indeed*. Blindness in part has now happened to them, but in the day of their covenant their sins shall be taken away.

This suggests (and I would here turn aside to speak of it a little) the very striking exhibition of the dealings of the Lord with Israel, which is made in the prophet Hosea, and which is similar to that made in Ruth the Moabitess.

Hosea is presented to us as under orders to take a wife of whoredoms and children of whoredoms, and he does so. He takes Gomer, the daughter of Diblaim, and by her he has a son, whom he is commanded to call Jezreel ; then a daughter, whom, as in like manner commanded, he calls Lo-ruhamah ; and then another son, whom he names, still at the bidding of the Lord, Lo-ammi. The first of these children's names signifies the *dispersion of Israel* ; the second, *mercy denied to*

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*Israel; the third, the Lord's rejection of Israel as His people.*

In this action Hosea might say in the words of another prophet, "Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel;" for in all this the apostasy and judgment of Israel are clearly set forth. The marriage of the prophet with the wife of whoredoms is Jehovah's covenant with faithless Israel, yielding them, as its fruit, judgment upon judgment, till the children of Israel were found, as they now are, reprobate silver, a "Lo-ammi," a people disclaimed of their God.

But this marriage of the prophet, typical as it was of the sin and judgment of Israel, is grounded on a fact in their history to which he consequently alludes. Hosea prophesied, as we read, in the days of Jeroboam, who was of the house of Jehu; and the circumstance that brought that family into the honour of the kingdom, that is, "*the blood of Jezreel,*" is the sin which called forth the typical marriage of the prophet, and is taken up by him as the pattern of Israel's transgression, and thus the ground of God's dealings with them. We will (in our next number) open the scene to which he thus makes allusion, and we shall find that, like Ruth, it illustrates the duty of the Goel.

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THE Spirit of God does not operate to two different ends—a heavenly and an earthly—at the same time.

## “O Grave, where is thy Victory?”

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THE Scriptures of truth speak very clearly of the reason of the presence of death in the world, not only to-day, but down the ages. Man may explain it away as he will, either as the “debt of nature,” or, as the scientist expresses it, “the failure to correspond with our environment” (a heartless exposition indeed!), but God’s Word alone can give divine certainty as to a momentous fact that has been sadly making itself felt in many a home at the present time. “By one man sin entered the world, and *death by sin*” (Rom. v. 12). The fact of death being amongst us to-day is explained to us by God (who goes back to the beginning of things) as hanging upon that terrible advent of sin, connected with the disobedience of the “one man,” Adam, which has entailed such grievous consequences upon his descendants (Rom. v. 19).

As we turn to the Old Testament, we find how truly Satan held even the righteous “all their lifetime subject to bondage” (Heb. ii. 15)—how the enemy of souls could use upon men the “power of death” that God had allowed to pass into his hands for the time, and which he

## "O GRAVE, WHERE IS THY VICTORY?" 233

wielded, so far as man was concerned, with a certain justice. Having accomplished man's downfall, he could present to his victim the terrors of the grave, and at the same time, by reminding him of his sinful condition and disobedience, insist upon the hopelessness of his fate. So Job can speak of the transitory nature of human life, and of the grave closing the enjoyment of blessings here (chap. vii. 6-10); the wicked also must needs meet it (chap. xxi. 12-14); he himself sees it as the end before him (chap. xxx. 23, 24), though he can look by faith beyond (chap. xix. 23-27), and Elihu can direct him to the Ransom, and deliverance from the second death by His means (chap. xxxiii. 24). The Psalms contain many references to the same thing (Ps. vi. 5, xxxi. 17, xlix. 14, 15, lxxxviii. 3, 5, 11, &c.); the wisest of men re-echoes the strain (Eccles. ix. 10); and the prophets also have many passages relating to the subject (Isa. xxviii. 15, 18; Ezek. xxxi. 14, 17; Hos. xiii. 14, &c.), the latter passage alluding dimly to God's triumph over the power of the enemy, and perhaps, with Isaiah xxv. 8, furnishing the apostle with the language he uses in 1 Corinthians xv. 54, 55.

With the coming of the Son of God, this and every other truth is fully cleared and brought to a focus. Grace and truth came by Him (John i. 17), not a part of either, or both, but the completeness of the two according to God. Christ

spoke of Himself as the Truth (John xiv. 6), and so truly is this the case, that He not only perfectly declared God's heart, but man's condition also, and became Himself the test of man's state. Even "His own" (the privileged, enlightened Jew) received Him not, but thrust away the perfection of love presented here to men by Him who, while truly Man, was nevertheless, and at the same time, as truly God (John xv. 22-24). This being so, the terrible truth comes out, that not only was death, the death of the body, man's portion here, with the "second death" before him after his passage through the grave's dread portals; but even now his condition spiritually was that of death (John v. 25)—"dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. ii. 1), absolutely lifeless in the presence of that "Life" which "was the light of men" (John i. 4).

What then does divine and sovereign grace accomplish? What does the blessed Saviour now perform? In such a world of desolation and of death, of darkness and corruption, He proclaims Himself not only the Life, but the Resurrection and the Life (John xi. 25); that is, not only has He life in Himself, but life that can be imparted to those already dead. And He allows Lazarus to pass beyond all human aid "for the glory of God," even as God has permitted sin and death to enter the world and has gained to Himself a glory that would otherwise have been unknown. The Saviour, too, meets this condition in a

“O GRAVE, WHERE IS THY VICTORY?” 235

manner worthy of Himself. Feeling all the terrible forces that were at work to cause such a state, He groans within Himself at the reality of death as He felt it, while He weeps in sympathy with the afflicted sisters. Yet both sorrow and death flee away at the sound of that voice which wakes the dead, and life breaks into the very scene of death. Truly this was a victory wrested from the grave, when the dead man hears the voice of the Son of God and comes forth from the grave, being a sample of the power committed to this blessed One in respect of the dead generally (John v. 28, 29). Lazarus comes forth—he was dead and is alive again (Luke xv. 32)—but his progress is impeded by the grave clothes, for hand and foot he is bound by the bandages of death, and the vision interrupted by the handkerchief twined round the features (John xi. 44). How graphic the picture of the new-born soul, having life but not liberty, and not knowing deliverance from “the law of sin and death,” from which he is now freed by receiving in faith God’s fact, that sentence has been carried out upon “sin in the flesh” in the death of Christ (Rom. vi. 6, 7, viii. 3, 4).

But was it by divine *power* only that this life and deliverance have been accomplished? No, but by divine *love* also, and this in the face of divine holiness. Let us visit another grave, differing indeed in every feature, save that death was or had been there, and that all its reality

and bitterness had been known. Let us accept the angel's invitation (Matt. xxviii. 6; Mark xvi. 6), and reverently enter, in spirit, the opened mouth of that fresh tomb, as did those two of old (Luke xxiv. 3-5). It is empty, indeed, for the Living One is not to be sought among the dead, as the two shining visitors announce to the disciples; but it bears still traces that He, who is alive for evermore (Rev. i. 18), had once been there. The evangelist, one of the two thus privileged, has given us details as to the state of this tomb, and in what condition it had been left by the departing and triumphant Saviour. What a scene of divine and complete victory! No struggle as if he that "had the power of death" had been vanquished by any *effort*. The linen bandages that had enveloped the sacred body of the Lord remained still in the position they had taken at the time of burial, there being no need to unwind them in order that He who had risen in the power of an endless life should be extricated as Lazarus. In like manner the "napkin" was lying still in its own place "wrapped together" (John xx. 7), retaining, it would appear, the form of that blessed head so lately crowned with thorns. He who shortly after passed through closed doors into the midst of His own (John xx. 19) had been unimpeded by such obstacles, and all that had characterised the place and state of death had been left behind.



Faith takes this up and sees all the judgment attaching to the old nature, "sin in the flesh" (Rom. viii. 3) left behind in the grave of Christ. Well may we exultingly cry, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be unto God, who giveth *us* the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. xv. 54, 55).

F. L.

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## The Bible.

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**I**F there ever was a time in which it was necessary to press upon people the importance of the study of Holy Scripture for themselves, in humble dependence on God for guidance, it is now. The Ritualists would have us take the Bible *through* the Church, or the Bible *and* the Church—to take the Church's meaning; for, say they, if you do not you will have all sorts of new sects arising through individuals taking their own meaning from Scripture.

Even if we allowed the principle that the Church teaches, we should first have to settle what Church's interpretation we are to receive—is it the Roman, Greek, Anglican, or what? Or where, in this quagmire of human opinions, is the Christian to find a divine and solid foundation

for faith? But Scripture itself does not allow this principle of Church authority as teacher; on the contrary, it is the Church which *is* taught, and it was by the teaching of those gifted of God that the Church was first formed. The Scripture was written by inspired men, vessels chosen and fitted by God for the purpose, and did not come from any Church. Nearly all the New Testament writings are addressed to the *people*, to the assemblies of Christians, and, in some cases, it is expressly said that they were to be read "to all the holy brethren," or that, as in Colossians, "when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the Church of the Laodiceans, and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea."

Even in the ordinary affairs of life the principle of *direct* responsibility is admitted. If the father of a family goes abroad and sends letters to his children for their instruction and guidance, the persons who carry these letters would have no right to say, "You must take our interpretation, you must understand these letters in the sense we give; if you do not, you will all take different ideas of your own from them." To so act would be to interfere with the authority of the writer to speak *directly* to his children and in a manner suited to them, and to meddle with the right of those children to be guided by his words.

The Scripture is a revelation from God to man, and surely He has perfect wisdom, He

knows how to speak in a way suited to the wants of all ; to say He does not would be blasphemy. If Christians take a wrong meaning out of the Bible, who is to blame? Certainly not the Author of the book, but themselves. If we bring our own preconceived notions to the Scripture, and then try to make it square with our ideas, we cannot expect divine guidance ; but if, feeling our own need of wisdom, we humbly ask of God, we shall find that He "giveth liberally and upbraideth not." The apostle Peter tells those to whom he wrote, "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby ;" and Timothy from a child had known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make wise unto salvation and to fully equip the man of God to all good works.

We have a perfect example in our Lord Himself ; He met and overcame Satan with "It is written," quoting from the Old Testament Scriptures. The apostles themselves, when about to leave the churches they had watched over with such care, always cast the faithful over on that unfailing safeguard in a day of departure from the faith once delivered to the saints—the Scriptures. Thus Paul, when addressing the Ephesian elders for the last time, does not commend them to a Church for wisdom, or a line of successors, but to *God* and the *Word of His grace* ; and the apostle John, after warning his beloved children in the

faith of the evil that was coming in, says, "Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning." New doctrines were continually springing up, but the true foundation for faith is in what they had heard from the beginning; that is, for us, the written Word of God. So Peter says he would endeavour that, after his decease, they would have these things always in remembrance: this we have to-day in the inspired epistles. In Revelation, the last voice of inspiration, he who has an ear to hear is told to hear (not the Church, but) what the Spirit saith *to* the churches; this is contained in the Scriptures.

To look for *the truth* in the agreement of the various churches of Christendom, or in what people call the unanimous consent of the Fathers, would be a vain and fruitless task, for the doctrines in which the leading churches really agree are not many; and even if they were, their agreement is no guarantee of truth. As for the unanimity of the Fathers, it exists only in people's imagination. If the Bible be an inspired revelation from God—and no one can deny that it is, without taking infidel ground—then it must contain the truth pure and undiluted, adapted to those to whom it comes; and it must carry divine authority, as the voice of God to the soul. This no human writing can claim. That it is all that has been said, and much more, is an immense blessing; for in it the simple and upright

“AS UNKNOWN AND YET WELL KNOWN.” 241

Christian has an all-sufficient light and guide in the darkest and most difficult times, and in days when truth once held is being given up in exchange for mediæval speculations. F. G. B.

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**“As unknown and yet well  
known.”**

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STRANGERS here—  
Not a link with earth unbroken,  
Not a farewell to be spoken,  
Waiting for their Lord to take them  
To Himself, and like Him make them.

Strangers here—  
With their hearts upon a treasure  
That has dimmed for them earth's pleasure,  
Lamps well trimmed and brightly burning,  
Eyes for ever upward turning.

Strangers here—  
Pilgrims through a hostile nation,  
In a groaning old creation,  
Journeying on 'mid shame and scorning,  
Gazing at the Star of Morning.

Strangers here—  
Earthly rank and riches losing,  
Worldly ties and claims refusing,  
On to Christ in glory pressing,  
All things there in Him possessing.

Strangers here—  
But in Him their hearts are resting,  
Faith looks up in days of testing,  
Follows Him with true allegiance  
Loves to walk in His obedience.

Strangers here—  
Soon to be at home together,  
Going in with Christ for ever,  
He, who bore their deep dishonour,  
Giving them His wealth and honour.

Well known there—  
Oh! what joy for Christ to take them  
To the Father, who will make them  
Welcome in His mansions yonder,  
Strangers here—to be no longer.




## Hints on Daniel.



### THE STONE THAT SMOTE THE IMAGE.

(DAN. ii. 34-46.)

LD Testament history closes about 400 years B.C. Malachi was the last writer, but Nehemiah records the last historical facts.

In the time of Nehemiah the second of the four great Gentile powers was still reigning supreme. The third, or Grecian, had not even been heard of in a united form except in the prophecy of Daniel (viii. 21). But the Scripture

must be fulfilled, and so we learn from history that in process of time the Medo-Persian empire gave way before the headlong rush of Alexander the Great, "the great horn" of the he-goat (viii.). This will come before us later on in our study of the book.

Not only does the Old Testament foretell the rise of the fourth empire, but it distinctly intimates its geographical position in relation to the third. It is well known that Chittim in the Old Testament stands for Cyprus; and we have already seen that from "the side of Chittim" ships were to come to afflict Asshur. Chittim, therefore, lay west in reference to Asshur or Assyria.

The same expression, "the ships of Chittim," occurs in Dan. xi. 30. There it refers to the intervention of the same western power in the affairs of the same eastern power, the difference being that while Dan. xi. 30 has already in measure been fulfilled, Num. xxiv. 24 alludes to what is yet to come.

No sooner do we open the New Testament than we find ourselves in presence of another great power of universal dominion. A decree goes forth from Cæsar Augustus, the Roman emperor, "That all the world should be taxed" (Luke ii. 1). Since the days in which Daniel wrote (about B.C. 607), history can tell us of no more than four universal empires. Scripture mentions them each by name. Once for all, then, let it be understood that the four parts of

Nebuchadnezzar's image, as well as the four beasts of Dan. vii., refer to the four great Gentile powers :—

1. Babylon.
2. Medo-Persia.
3. Grecia.
4. Rome.

It was under the Roman that Christ was born, and all the world was set in motion to record the fact (Luke ii. 1, 2). It was while that same empire was at the height of its power that Christ was crucified, and that same empire will receive its last and crushing defeat when as KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS He will come forth in judgment (Rev. xix.). For though it has passed away as an imperial power it will be resuscitated according to the clear predictions of Daniel and the Apocalypse.

There can be no question that "the beast" so frequently mentioned in the Apocalypse is the Roman empire. Perhaps some may ask, Where is it to-day? Has it not long since passed away? True, but Scripture leaves no room to doubt that it will revive. One text, and that a most remarkable one, is sufficient to refer to just now, In Rev. xvii. 8 we read, "The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition, &c." Elsewhere\* we have entered at length into this

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\* *The Future of Europe*, JAMES CARTER, 13 Paternoster Row, E.C.



important subject, but it is clear from Scripture that presently the Roman empire will once more make its appearance in Europe, and the verse we have just referred to shows that when it revives it will derive all its power from Satan. Rev. xiii. 6 shows us what will be its impious and blasphemous character. A solemn picture this is indeed, and one which may well cause us serious reflections as we see the increasing godlessness of the times in which we live.

“The fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron,” &c. (Dan. ii. 40). The description that follows gives in few words a marvellous picture of what the Roman empire was in the past and what it will be in the time to come, it may be so near at hand. Strength characterised it in its beginning in contrast to the grandeur of the eastern empires of Babylon and Persia. But eventually the strength of the iron became mixed with clay, and the kingdom was divided. This no doubt refers to the inroad of barbaric hordes of which history speaks, and which became a source of weakness to the empire, at length causing its downfall.

When in the future the Roman empire makes its reappearance, that stage will be reached figured by the toes. The ten toes of the image in this chapter correspond to the ten horns of Dan. vii., and Rev. xiii. and xvii. In the last phase of the empire an extraordinary state of things will exist, hitherto unknown in Europe, namely, that while the empire will retain its unity

under one imperial head, it will nevertheless be divided into ten kingdoms, each ruled over by a separate king. This is clear from Rev. xvii.

“And in the days of these kings”—let this expression be clearly noted—“shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed” (Dan. ii. 44). *This fifth kingdom will be the millennial kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ.*

It may be that some of our readers have been under the impression that the kingdom of Christ here spoken of is the kingdom of grace (so-called), and that we are to see in “the stone cut out without hands” a figurative description of the gospel; but we are persuaded that while “the stone” undoubtedly refers to the Lord Jesus Christ, nevertheless it is not His birth and first coming in grace which is here to be understood, but His coming in power and judgment by-and-bye. When Christ was born at Bethlehem the Roman empire was in all its undivided greatness and strength. Instead of His coming being its death-blow, it was under its direction that He was crucified.

Furthermore, Nebuchadnezzar was here given to see in vision what should be “*in the latter days*” (ii. 28). God, whose one great object in prophetic revelation is the glory of His Son, was carrying on the Gentile monarch's thoughts to the glorious day, when not merely a “little flock,” as now, should own their absent and rejected Master's sway, but when “all people, nations,

and languages should serve Him" (Dan. vii. 14).

Not the proclamation of the gospel, but the execution of judgment, will bring this about.

It is of all importance to note that it is "in the days of these kings," that is, in the last and yet future phase of the Roman empire, that "the stone" smites the image; it smites the image on *the feet*. "Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors" (Dan. ii. 35).

Thus is graphically described in prophetic vision the close of "the times of the Gentiles"—times which began with Nebuchadnezzar, which still continue, but which will terminate when the Lord comes forth from heaven in judgment (Rev. xix. 11). Then will the nations of Israel be once more taken up by God, and owned by Him; for He who comes as the destroyer of the godless Gentile powers, will appear at the same time in Zion as a Deliverer, "and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob" (Rom. xi. 26), and "so all Israel shall be saved."

These days are fast approaching. Gentile unbelief is rapidly ripening into full-blown apostasy. The nations of Western Europe are with feverish haste preparing for their last, their fiercest, and most awful conflict, when with one mind they shall give their power and strength unto the beast to make war with the Lamb. But "the

Lamb shall overcome them" (Rev. xvii. 14), for "God hath put in their hearts to fulfil His will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled" (Rev. xvii. 17).

"The dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure" (Dan. ii. 45).



## Letter on Evolution.

**M**Y DEAR ———,—I have just read through Bernard's Sermon on Evolution, and rise from the painful task with mingled feelings of pity and—well, shall I say it?—indignation!

The poor man knows neither what he says, nor whereof he affirms. He is groping in the dark, and attempting to teach.

The Darwinian theory of evolution is bad enough when applied to material things; it is infinitely worse when used to explain spiritual things.

To be told that we are more highly organised Ascidian molluscs, or more fully developed apes, is degrading enough, but is not the blasphemy of putting Christ as a link in that chain of evolution revolting to every moral sentiment of the soul?

Words fail me to say how I thank God that

He has given me something better than a labyrinth of error such as this. What good will all this quasi-learned guesswork do for a poor guilty sinner about to step into eternity?

I say to such men as B.: "Get out of the pulpit if you have nothing better to talk about than heathen philosophy. The Platos and Aristotles were better than you. They were groping in the dark certainly, but they had never had the light. *You* are plunging into the darkness from the light."

Of course a man like B. knows nothing of what saving faith means. I am doing him no injustice. He does not believe in such a thing. Is he a sinner? How then is he going to stand before God?

Will he at the judgment-seat spin out his theories about "the progress of the race"—"the Christian (!) theory of the evolution of man"?

But what about his poor hearers? Will they be helped to appear before God by being told that "Christianity is a product of human (!) endeavour to pierce the veil between us and the unseen world"?

Alas! the religious leaders of Christendom today are just what the religious leaders of the people were in the days when the Lord Jesus Christ was on earth—*mis*leaders of the people. "Let them alone," said Christ; "they be blind leaders of the blind, and if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch" (Matt. xv.).

Imagine blindness such as this : Christ "came when the human race was ready for Him" !

Has he ever read, "Which none of the princes of this world knew, for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory" ? (1 Cor. ii. 8).

Was this being ready for Him ?

And again : "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin ; but now they have no cloak for their sin, . . . now have they both seen and hated both Me and My Father" (John xv.).

What sort of readiness for Him was this ?

I don't believe in the honesty of a man who has at every turn to be assuring me of how honest he is. This book is always assuring you of its honest and reverent doubts.

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I have greater sympathy with the old lady who exclaimed, after hearing some such theorising as this, "You might as well think to nourish the body on flints and sawdust, as to nourish the soul on these metaphysical questions" !

"The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God" (1 Cor. iii. 19).

"We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness ; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God" (1 Cor. i.).

Oh, for faithful men of this stamp in all the pulpits of Christendom !

A. H. B.

## Correspondence.

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Hartlepool.—“If the Old Testament saints and the tribulation saints share in the ‘first resurrection,’ but are not a part of ‘the body of Christ,’ the Church, what is their relation to Christ and the Church? The latter are said, in Rev. xx. 4, to live and reign with Christ, and only the Bride shares the throne with the royal Bridegroom.”

I do not know that we are called upon to *define* the relationship. Suffice it to say that there are different relationships, and of them all, the Church holds the nearest, and may we not say, the dearest?

In John iii. 29, we read of the bride *and* also of the *friend of the bridegroom*. I do not quote this passage to prove that we are to understand that the bride here spoken of is the Church, but simply to show that these are two different relationships. If John was the friend of the Bridegroom he held a near place to the Bridegroom, and his joy was fulfilled; nevertheless he was not in the position of the bride.

Old Testament saints will be in glory, as will all who share in the first resurrection, but in that glory the Church will hold a special place of nearness, “God having provided some better thing for us,” &c. (Heb. xi. 40).

Saints of this present period, through grace, are brought into a place of nearness to God, which can only be measured by the place that

Christ Himself holds. "I go to prepare a place for you," He said (John xiv. 2). Consequent upon redemption accomplished, Christ has gone, as Man, into glory, and has sent down the Holy Ghost to bring us consciously into this place. This passage does not mean that He is *preparing* our place, but that His presence in glory prepared the place which we are already brought into down here. We occupy the place of sons; the spirit of adoption being in our hearts, we cry, "Abba, Father." We are loved with the same love that the Father bore to Christ, His own beloved Son (John xvii. 23), and presently we shall share the same glory, "the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them, that they may be one, even as We are" (John xvii. 22). These and such words could not be said of Old Testament saints, nor of the tribulation saints, they are peculiar to the saints of this present period. ED.

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THE signs of the times continue to be most significant. The fourth Zionistic Congress is now sitting: the Jews are still intent upon a return to Palestine. Also, "the Russian Government are pressing on their armaments on a disquieting scale. . . . Within a few weeks the troops on their way to the Far East will number nearly a quarter of a million."



## Musings on the Book of Ruth.

(Continued.)

THE times of Ahab were corrupt in the extreme. There was none like him whom Jezebel his queen stirred up to sell himself to work wickedness and to do very abominably in following idols. But in those times Naboth of Jezreel stood as the righteous one in the land. Though it were to please the king, he would not depart from the law of the Lord and sell his inheritance. He knew that it was the decree of the God of Israel that inheritances were not to remove from tribe to tribe, but that every one in Israel should keep himself to the inheritance of his fathers (Num. xxxvi. 9). But for his righteousness's sake he is called to suffer through the subtlety of Jezebel, and by the hand of certain sons of Belial his blood is shed in Jezreel (1 Kings xxi. 13), and his inheritance, the inheritance of his fathers, is usurped by Ahab. For this deed the Lord, by His prophet, denounces judgment on Ahab and his house; and accordingly by stroke upon stroke he makes a full end of them, and the blood of Ahab, and the blood of Joram his son, and the blood of Jezebel, are shed in the portion of Jezreel. Jehu, the son of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimshi, is called forth to finish this judgment, to be the avenger of blood, and to cleanse the land that had been thus polluted with it (Num.

xxxv. 33), and as his reward the throne of Israel is secured to his family for four generations (2 Kings x. 30).

But Jehu in all this had himself in view ; and while pretending zeal for the Lord, was really satisfying his own lust. As Ahab had coveted the vineyard of Naboth which was in Jezreel, hard by his palace, and for the sake of it had shed the blood of the righteous, so Jehu loved dominion, and for the sake of it, and not in the spirit of service to Jehovah, did he execute the judgment of God upon the house of Ahab. And therefore in his turn, like Ahab, he is made to answer for the blood of Jezreel ; as says the Lord by Hosea, "I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu." But the prophet adds, "And I will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel, and it shall come to pass at that day that I will break the bow of Israel in the valley of Jezreel" (Hos. i. 4). Thus upon this sin, *i.e.*, the blood-shedding at Jezreel, the prophet suspends the final judgment and excision of Israel ; and justly so, for the sin of Israel, as I will now show, was as the sin of Ahab, or as the sin of Jehu.

Our blessed Lord was the righteous one in Israel in His day, as Naboth had been. He was properly the Heir of all the nation's greatness. He was the son of David, and claimed to be received as such (Matt. xxi.). The vineyard, the inheritance, was His ; but the wicked husband-

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men, though allowing His title, refused Him possession, and said, "This is the Heir; come, let us kill Him, and let us seize on His inheritance." And they did so; they desired that the vineyard might be their own, they loved their "place and nation" under the Romans, and in the spirit of Ahab and of Jehu, they caught the Heir and cast Him out of the vineyard, and slew Him. His blood at this moment thus stains their land, it is upon them and upon their children, as the blood of Jezreel, the blood of Naboth the Jezreelite, was upon the house of Ahab; and for this they are now in the character of the prophet's children, scattered as "Jezreel," denied mercy as "Lo-ruhamah," and disowned of their Lord as "Lo-ammi." And as Jehovah said of Naboth's vineyard, "Surely I have seen yesterday the blood of Naboth, and the blood of his sons, and I will requite thee (Ahab) in this plot" (2 Kings ix. 26); so are the wicked husbandmen still to answer, blood for blood, that the land may be cleansed (Num. xxxv. 33), and that that which is now the Aceldama may become the portion of the righteous again, the vineyard of the Lord of Hosts (Dan. xii. 1; Zech. xiii. 8; Mal. iv. 1).

Jehu acted in this as the avenger of blood, the kinsman of Israel, and was rewarded, as we have seen, with the kingdom for four generations. And so the true Kinsman and Avenger of Israel, the blessed and glorified Son of man, shall fall on the rebellious and grind them to powder, and

be brought near before the Ancient of days, and receive dominion and glory, and a kingdom to possess it for ever and ever.

But how should we be warned by this, and remember Naboth's vineyard, as we are graciously taught to remember Lot's wife. It was "the stuff in the house" that was lusted after, and has made both of them, as it were, "pillars of salt," *perpetual witnesses* to us that "they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition." Jehu would be religious too, he would be zealous for the Lord if that could serve himself. The interests of Baal and his worshippers were not one with his; he rather was served by the judgment of Jehovah upon them, and therefore he could break down the image of Baal, and make his house a draught-house unto this day. But it was *himself* he was serving all the time; he took no heed to walk in the law of the Lord. Oh, brethren! the friendship of the world is enmity with God—nor is it less so, though it may clothe itself with zeal for the Lord.

But in the prophet Hosea, as in the type of Ruth (as we shall in the end see), mercy is made to rejoice against judgment. "The woman beloved of her friend, yet an adulteress," is received again after many days (Hos. iii.); Jezreel the dispersed is gathered; Lo-ruhamah, who had not obtained mercy, does obtain mercy; the Lo-ammi, who were no people, become again the

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people of God. For thus saith the Lord by His prophet, "It shall come to pass that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God: there shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land, for great shall be the day of Jezreel" (Hos. i. 10, 11). Then shall Jezreel, the whole land and people, be the witness of *grace* as it is now of *judgment*, for as the Lord saith, "I will cleanse their blood that I have not cleansed, for the Lord dwelleth in Zion" (Joel iii. 21). The portion in Jezreel shall become the portion of the righteous again, the vineyard and inheritance of the Lord shall be given to a nation (in the latter days) bringing forth the fruits thereof. And so in the kindred type of our Ruth,—she that was a sinner of the Gentiles, who came from among the Lo-ammi, is made, as we shall find, the wife of "the mighty man of wealth," and the mother of a new and honoured race in Israel, the fair and perfect pledge of Jehovah's everlasting love. And this typical character of Ruth is indeed afterwards distinctly acknowledged, for it is said to her, "The Lord make thee like Rachel and like Leah, which two did build the house of Israel;" which leaves us no liberty to doubt that we read a parable in her history, and that Israel is represented in her (Ruth iv. 2).

## “What has become of Hell?”

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**T**HIS is the heading of an article which appeared lately in one of the popular magazines of the day. The writer of the paper dwelt at considerable length on the fact that the mention of hell, or future punishment, had almost dropped out from the preaching in nearly all the pulpits throughout Christendom; eternal punishment had, he said, almost universally disappeared from the vast majority of the sermons now to be heard in our churches.

It is unnecessary here to enter further into the particular views of the writer of this article regarding eternal punishment; but the fact that it is seldom heard of, and indeed boldly denied, is plain to every thoughtful person. How are we to account for this fact? Is it not mainly because preachers like to please their hearers, and they know that warnings of judgment to come are an unpleasant sound in the ears of men bent on making life as pleasant as they can. Another cause is doubtless to be found in the growing infidelity and unsettling of the authority of the Word of God in the minds of a vast number in the theological schools and institutions which profess to train men for what is called the Christian ministry. Satan's aim is to lull people to sleep with the delusion that all will come

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right in the next world, or that they will attain happiness after some temporary retribution, or perhaps that they will be annihilated and cease to exist. How could a God of love, they say, punish any one eternally? And so the enemy of souls whispers into the ear, “Peace, peace, when there is no peace.”

Now all these false doctrines strike at the root and foundation of true Christianity. Man estimates sin according to the poor false estimate of fallen man; he does not view sin as it really is in God's sight. In like manner he estimates God's justice and holiness according to the puny standard of his own reason, and his estimate is therefore shallow and altogether short of the mark. The soul taught by the Word of God sees in the cross of Christ the true measure of sin as God sees it, on the one hand, and of God's infinite and perfect righteousness and holiness on the other. Listen to Jesus saying in the garden of Gethsemane, “O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me,” as He anticipates the awful cup of God's judgment against sin, the extent of which He alone knew. On the cross He says, as the victim, the holy sufferer, “My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me,” when He was bearing sin. And *why* was He forsaken? The answer is given a little lower down in the Psalm, “But Thou art holy, O Thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel,” God's infinite holiness and righteousness de-

manded that He should hide His face from the One who became, in divine love, the Sin-bearer in that awful hour when judgment was being meted out against sin according to the righteousness and holiness of an infinitely holy Being. None but an infinite Being—Jesus, the Son of God—could exhaust the judgment of God, draining the cup of His indignation against sin, and then say, “It is finished.” No mere man could ever exhaust the judgment of a holy God, or say, “It is finished;” the punishment of the lost must therefore be eternal, according to the measure of God’s holy indignation against sin.

It has been truly said that there never was anything like the cross in the history of eternity—never could be or will be: it stands alone. *There* all man’s sinfulness and hatred against God was brought to a climax and fully demonstrated; and *there*, too, God’s perfect righteousness, holiness, majesty, and truth in His judgment of sin in the person of the Substitute, as well as His perfect love to the sinner, in making even sin’s worst act the occasion of blessing and salvation, was perfectly and fully manifested. In the cross was demonstrated before the whole universe the solemn fact that God could not possibly tolerate sin; when Jesus, the Son of man, gave Himself up in perfect love and devotedness for the glory of God and the sinners’ salvation. Therefore the cross is eternal in its issues, by that work “eternal forgiveness” of sin



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is secured, "eternal redemption" is accomplished, a sacrifice of eternal value has been offered through the "eternal Spirit," an "eternal inheritance" has been promised, "eternal life" is the possession of all believers, and we are passing on to "eternal glory." But if the results of the cross are *eternal* in blessing to the saved, they are none the less *eternal* in judgment to the lost. Thus we read of "eternal fire," "eternal destruction," "eternal judgment." And as it is the very same word for "eternal," in the language in which the Scriptures were written, which describes the blessings of the saved and the judgment of the lost, as well as the "eternal God," "eternal Spirit," &c., it *must*, therefore, mean "eternal" in the most unlimited sense.

Man possesses an immortal, a never-dying spirit. When God created mere animals, He said, "Let the earth bring forth the living creatures," &c.; but not so when man was created; *then* He said, "Let *us* make man in our image, after our likeness," and He "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life." These things could not be said of any mere animal which dies and perishes. Man has spirit, soul, and body: his body may die and go to decay, but his spirit lives eternally. The *body* is mortal, that is subject to death; the *spirit* is never said to be so in Scripture. The annihilationist idea that the unsaved cease to exist when they die, or possibly after some temporary

punishment, is totally contrary to Scripture, for death never means ceasing to exist ; if it did the saved would cease to exist, and even Christ Himself. The "second death" is not ceasing to exist. Revelation xx. 14 expressly says that it is the "lake of fire."

How intensely solemn these questions are, and if we remember that the *eternal* destiny of the soul is settled *here* in this world, how anxious it would make us for the salvation of others. Everything around us in this world is passing and fading—"the things which are seen are *temporal* ;" in contrast with this, those things which belong to the next world are undying and unfading—"the things which are not seen are *eternal*." And what a debt of gratitude the believer owes to Him who has saved him *from* eternal wrath and *for* eternal glory.

F. G. B.

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## Hints on Daniel.

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### NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S GOLDEN IMAGE.

(DAN. iii.)

**F**EW chapters have been more violently attacked by modern criticism than the one which now lies open before us ; and yet, remarkably enough, none have come through

the fiery ordeal bearing such unmistakable evidence of its genuineness and divine inspiration.

Dean Farrar, that most reckless of critics, has ventured the judgment that it is "historic fiction . . . . superb in its imaginative grandeur." And yet, strange to say, he adds, "So far from slighting it, because it does not come before us with adequate evidence to prove that it was even intended to be taken as literal history, I have always regarded it as one of the most precious among the narrative chapters of Scripture." But inconsistency is a small matter compared to the treason against God and His Word which marks the infidelity of "higher criticism."

The contention of the Rationalists is that Daniel lived in Palestine and not at Babylon; that he flourished in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes (about B.C. 166), and not during the time of King Nebuchadnezzar (about B.C. 606); that he was writing fiction, and not fact. The reader must choose between Scripture and scepticism; he must put his confidence either in the unchanging Word of God, or the constantly shifting theories of men.

In this series of papers it is not our object to convince unbelieving gainsayers, but to help true believers to a right understanding of the Book so far as the Lord enables us. But there are many, especially amongst the young, who

are somewhat stumbled by the positive assertions of those who "claim to know," and for their sakes we would say that all the objections raised against the genuineness of this chapter have no firmer foundation to rest on than the speculations and imaginings of the human mind, which is ever at enmity against God. It is interesting to know that one by one these objections have been proved groundless by the testimony of long buried monuments, and that everywhere this chapter bears unmistakable evidence of having been written in Babylon, and by one who must have lived at the time that Daniel claims to have flourished.

No Palestinian Jew in the days of Antiochus could possibly have had the intimate knowledge of Babylonian customs which is everywhere evident throughout this chapter. Even the very garments which were worn are described with an accuracy which would have been well-nigh impossible had the writer lived four centuries after the time about which he was writing, as the critics affirm.\*

In the first verse of our chapter we are told that Nebuchadnezzar set up his image "in the

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\* On this and other matters connected with this subject we would refer our readers to an able and interesting defence of Daniel in a book entitled "The Inspiration and Accuracy of the Holy Scriptures," by John Urquhart. Price 7s. 6d.

plain of Dura, in the province of *Babylon*." It is now known that there were two other Duras besides this one, and Daniel was not ignorant of the fact; it is most improbable that one living in the days of Antiochus could have had this knowledge. But Oppert, the great French assyriologist, has discovered what he considers to be the very site where once stood this colossal image. After describing the mound, *El-Mokattat*; he adds, "On seeing this mound one is immediately struck with the resemblance it presents to the pedestal of a colossal statue, . . . and everything leads to the belief that the statue mentioned in the book of Daniel (chap. iii. 1) was set up in this place." And further, "There is nothing incredible in the existence of a statue sixty cubits high and six cubits broad; moreover, the name of 'the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon' agrees also with the actual conformation of the ruin."

Little need now be said upon the subject of the Greek words found in Daniel. These were supposed to give conclusive evidence of its origin during the days of Alexander's Grecian empire. Professor Driver's argument runs thus: "The verdict of the language of Daniel is thus clear. The Persian words *presuppose* a period after the Persian empire had been well established; the Greek words *demand*, the Hebrew *supports*, and the Aramaic *permits* a date after the conquest of Palestine by Alexander the

Great (B.C. 332).” According to the Professor himself, the only real reason for giving up the orthodox belief as to the book lies in the fact that there are *Greek* words which, according to him, *demand* a later origin than that which Daniel pretends. The reader might imagine that Greek words bristled forth at every turn. Will it be believed that there are *only two* which are now said to be Greek, and these two are names of musical instruments? This absurd argument has long since been answered, but recent discoveries have brought to light that Greek musical instruments had found their way as far east as Nineveh in B.C. 650—that is to say, fifty years before the time of Nebuchadnezzar. It is a well-known fact that the name of an article travels with the article itself. Consequently, the presence of those two Greek words proves that the musical instruments in question were known in Babylon at that early date; they do not prove that the writer of the book must have lived in Palestine at a later date.

But the Christian needs no external evidence of the inspiration of Daniel. One word from the lips of Him whom he has learned to trust with all his heart, both for time and eternity, sweeps away as with one breath the whole structure upon which the higher critics so complacently have built their infidelity. In Matthew xxiv. 15 we hear the voice of the Lord Jesus affirming that Daniel was *a prophet*. The critics

assert that Daniel was a writer of *fiction*, and at best a poor historian falsifying facts to suit pious ends. The Christian believes that he was recording absolute *facts* which contain deep, moral lessons, and that he was uttering inspired prophecies, *some* of which have been already fulfilled, *many* of which still remain to be fulfilled, and *all* of which were future when Daniel wrote them.

The Christ of God has said, "Daniel, *the prophet*," and with Him the critics have to do. It is our earnest prayer that many of them may have to do with Him *now*, and may their every thought be brought "into captivity to the obedience of Christ"! It is refreshing to read the following words from the pen of one who until recently was one of the foremost of them, but has been obliged from honest conviction to part company with them: "On the one side we have a body of doctrine, which has been the support in life and the refuge in death of millions of men of all nationalities and grades of mind, which has been witnessed to by saints and martyrs. . . . On the other side there is a handful of critics, with their lists of words and polychromatic Bibles. And yet, the 'higher criticism' has never saved any souls or healed any bodies." \*

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\* See *Contemporary Review*, October 1895. Article by Professor Sayce.

## Why is there Suffering?

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**D**O you say that you cannot believe that a God of love will punish eternally? that your reason revolts against it? Just think: Endless fire! endless torment! Do you say, No, I cannot believe in any such a God as that; and if you do, then I say, your God is a tyrant. Stop! stop! my friend, are you not a little hasty, a little rash in your statement? How is it with you? Are you perfectly happy in what you have said, and ready to meet God with it? If not, had you not better take it back. And now, will you listen one moment while I carry your objection a little further? If your thought of God's goodness and love is so great, that He could not permit endless punishment for the wicked, why not carry it still further, and add, No, the God in whom I believe is so good, and loves His creatures so much, that I cannot believe that He would ever allow His creatures to suffer at all. That which people call pain and suffering is all a myth—there is no such thing, if our God is a God of love.

Now this part of the argument is just as good, just as sound, and just as reasonable as the other, and yet you do not believe it at all, and you cannot if you try. There is such a thing as suffering—there is such a thing as pain, sorrow, anguish,



and even torment ; and how do you reconcile it ? how account for it ? You like to think that God is too good to punish sin, and yet you are obliged to acknowledge that there is suffering all around you ; and God's Word shows us that all suffering is directly the result of sin in the world. By man came sin, by sin came death, "and death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." And a very remarkable thing it is, that men shrink from suffering as they shrink from death, and there is nothing which makes suffering so terrible as a guilty conscience.

Man was not made to suffer—not made to die ; but created for the glory of God, and for the enjoyment of God. But when man set up a will of his own, and rebelled against God, he got suffering and death, and had to go out of Paradise ; because, there, everything was suited to God's holiness. Man has become a sinner, and is no longer fit for God's holiness, and must go out. How is he to get back ? You see, it is not a question of love, but of sin.

God made man upright—made him good—made him innocent. Man made himself a sinner, lost his place, lost his innocence ; and there was not a man born in paradise, and not a man fit for it.

Paradise was a real place, but it was more—it was a moral condition—a standing before God. Man first lost his standing, he became a sinner ; then he lost his place, and he could not regain it,

because he could not regain his standing. Once guilty, and he could not make himself innocent. Once a sinner, a sinner for ever, unless God comes in to restore him. He can never go back by any effort of his own. How, then, can he be saved? or rather, how can he ever be delivered from eternal guilt, eternal sin? For sin is not only an act, but it is more—it is a moral condition. It is enmity against God; it is insubjection; it is self-will. Repentance won't blot out guilt: sorrow and tears do not atone for sin; and if you can tell me how long it will take for guilt to become innocence, and how long for sin to become holiness, then you can tell me how long the suffering of the wicked must last. But the gospel offers deliverance. Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift. "The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord;" and "the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin."

C. E. II.

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## The Shepherd of the Sheep.

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**T**HERE is a certain danger, if our hearts get occupied with some particular text, of losing what Christ is, connected with it. So here, He says, "I give unto them eternal life;" your souls say, "We shall never perish."

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Well, most precious the thought is ; but if I rest in its value for me, I think more about the sheep than the Shepherd. We are in danger of losing the way the blessed Lord is brought out in this way : what we want to look to is that our souls, by being occupied with Christ, get formed after Him—we should have this object always before our souls.

The more we study the gospels the more we find what an Object we have for our souls to rest upon. We have Christ now in glory, and the remembrance of all He was ; and our affections are drawn out after Him. “ He that entereth in by the door is the Shepherd of the sheep ”—the first thing is He comes into the fold, comes in by the door, that is the place for people to come in by. The folds in those days were places of shelter for sheep, to protect them against wild beasts. The Lord comes in by the door, subjects Himself to what God had appointed. The moment His sheep took the first step, He took it with them, coming in by the door and subjecting Himself to do His Father's will (Phil. ii.). So at the temptation, Satan says, “ Why don't You make these stones bread ? ” but the Lord answers, “ I have no command for it.” You get His perfect lowliness—He goes always down. In the form of God, He goes down and takes the form of a servant ; and then goes right on down to death. Then God highly exalts Him, giving Him a name which is above every

name. As a servant, He never had a will of His own.

All that reveals Christ to us in this path is most precious. God opens to Him—in His governmental ways. The sheep hear His voice, He calls His own sheep by name, and leads them out. The Lord leads them out—the blind man in the previous chapter is turned out, then the Lord takes him up.

He had come in to get His sheep and save them: "He leadeth them out." Leads them *out*: they were not to stay Jews any longer. God had set up Judaism. Who could have left it? But He was taking His sheep *out*—the nation was found at enmity with God. All that God had set up connected with the first man, He has set aside in Christ. God has done all He could for His vineyard, but at length He roots it up. You get it in the parable of the fig-tree; there is the end of man under God's culture. They killed the Son, rejected and cast Him out, therefore there is judgment upon man in the flesh.

When He Himself came they were enemies: it was said, "They have both seen and hated both Me and My Father." First He takes them *out*, then He calls His own sheep by name. What I see here is the personal care of the Shepherd. The Jews had the law, the ordinances, and so on; but here the blessed Lord Himself is concerned, and that in the personal knowledge of His sheep. You get a blessed instance of calling

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His own sheep by name in the case of Mary—He says “Mary”; calls His sheep by name. When He leads them out, He goes before them. Now there I get a blessed thing—if a danger is in the way the Shepherd meets it; or if there are two ways the Shepherd is before me—the sheep know His voice and they know the road. The sheep follow Him. Is there a doubt about the way?—well, there He is if we are near enough to Him to know His voice.

“A stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers.” Take the case of a child—if it hears a knock at the door, it knows at once its mother’s voice. There is another great principle I get here; that is, absolute, sufficient authority for it. Why do you leave the fold? There is the Shepherd’s voice; in that voice there is what is sufficient to guide me and to authorise me to follow Him.

“This parable spake Jesus unto them . . . I am the door,” &c. — that is connected with authority—“By me if any man enter in”—Christ is the only way: as He entered in Himself, so He is the prescribed way. The Jewish fold kept them safe in a certain way, for a time; but it did not save people—being a Jew did not save; but following Christ you will be safe. The Jewish fold was a kind of safety, but safety by a person being shut up in it; but there was no pasture there. “By Me,” says the Lord, “if any man

enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture." There is liberty with God, and from the power of sin—they go in and out, and there is pasture. The pasture is all God has set before us to feed upon. "I am come that they might have life," He says—being a Jew did not give me life; but Christ having come, the eternal life which was with the Father, He says, "I am come that they might have life." Then He says, I know those that are Mine, and am known of them—that is a blessed truth: I have One who laid down His life for me; and there is the revelation of Christ to the soul, making known that He takes knowledge of us; He knows us individually. It is not exactly, "As the Father knoweth Me, even so know I the Father;" but "As the Father knoweth Me, and I know the Father" (vers. 14, 15). That is, He is in the same relationship with us, as He, a man down here, was with the Father.

Here He is interested in them, as He says elsewhere to the armed band who came to take Him, "Whom seek ye? . . . if therefore ye seek Me, let these go their way." He stands in the gap that the sheep may go free. "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice; and there shall be one flock, and one Shepherd." You get the interest the Father takes in them. "Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I may take it again"—

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Christ laid down His life ; glorified God perfectly in that place, in the place of sin-bearing. It is a remarkable word : no created being could say "therefore doth God love me," so that he could give a claim to God ; but here Christ could give a motive to His Father to love Him. He goes down to the very place of death, and is made sin. His love to the Father was perfect ; His obedience perfect, when He was made sin ; but He brings man out of the whole condition he was in, by redemption. And is not this a better state than Adam was in ? Surely, for the position of the Christian now is the expression of love, truth, holiness, &c., in Christ.

What He did for us perfectly glorified His Father ; it gave a motive to His Father to love Him. It was His one desire to glorify His Father — His obedience was infinite, His love to His Father was perfect (ver. 18). He gives to His sheep eternal life ; He had the power, being the Son of God, to give life — He that hath the Son hath life. We can say more ; it is not only that He has given it ; but that, having died and risen again, we have a Man in the power of divine life, out of death and judgment—He is my life ; and I have been quickened together with Him. He has gone down into death ; was made sin, and been under Satan's power and God's judgment ; and it is not merely that He quickens us, but we have part with a risen Christ. Then you get the second thing—

He refers to His works—"The works that I do in My Father's name, they bear witness of Me." And then He proceeds to give their character as Pharisees; they were not of His sheep. "My sheep hear My voice and I know them, and they follow Me"—through all, and in spite of all.

Christ only had a right to say, "Follow Me." He says it to Philip in chapter i. of this gospel. "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish"—"because I live," He says, "ye shall live also." Christ must perish before I can perish. "Neither shall any pluck them out of My hand," no force outside can pluck them; He keeps them according to the power He has. It is not only that they get His life in them, but He gives His life for them. Look at the case of Lazarus—"I am the resurrection and the life." He shows His power of life, and then passes on to die Himself. I get the one who could raise Lazarus, going to die. Then, after having manifested this life, He gives His life for us, to take us out of the condition we are in. "The wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep . . . I am the good Shepherd." Here I have, not merely the true shepherd, but the *good* Shepherd—the One who cares for the sheep.

You get the danger of being plucked out, but for the constant keeping of Christ. "My Father, which gave them Me, is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand." The Father has given



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us to Christ, and then He does not close the account without bringing out Himself and the Father as one. What a blessed account of what He is as the good Shepherd! You get all that He is as giving life, and laying down His life. Having Him to follow, and His voice, they need not fear; it is a question of His faithfulness and His power.

The Lord give us to have that entire dependence upon Him! We want that personal looking to Christ that keeps us in the apprehension of His love. The Lord give us hearts to cleave to Him!

*[The foregoing are brief notes of an address on John x. given by J. N. D. in Dublin, shortly before his death.]*

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## “The King in His Beauty.”

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**F**ROM the golden fields of India,  
Laden with a costly freight,  
From the distant land of Sheba  
Came a queen in royal state.

Eagerly she gazeth onward  
Toward the city of the King,  
Earnestly she presseth forward  
Homage, with her gifts to bring.

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Solomon in all his splendour  
Shines at length before her eyes,  
And her heart with glad surrender  
Ceases Sheba's gifts to prize.

Spices lose their sweetest fragrance,  
Precious stones of lustrous hue  
Pale before the light and radiance  
Of the scene disclosed to view.

“Face to face, mine eyes behold thee  
Seated on thy golden throne,  
Ah! the half hath not been told me  
Of thy worth, for thou alone

“Far exceedest all in beauty,  
Glory, majesty, and state ;  
Would it were my bounden duty  
At thy feet to stand and wait :

“There to hear thy words of wisdom,  
There to serve thee, if I might,  
Happy slaves in such a kingdom,  
Bondage changed to pure delight.

“Nevermore thy fame shall slumber,  
Live for ever, blessed King !  
Had I harps in countless number  
To thy praise I'd tune each string.”

\* \* \* \*

Lord, this story wakes the yearning  
To adore Thee face to face,  
Sets mine inmost soul a-burning  
To behold Thy power and grace.

Knowledge of transcendent order,  
 Aspirations pure and true,  
 Here on earth scarce touch the border  
 Of Thy robe of heavenly blue.

Angels worship at Thy pleasure,  
 Saints in light Thy praise repeat,  
 Heavenly lays, sublime in measure,  
 Rise no higher than Thy feet.

Ah! throughout the wide creation,  
 Fairest treasures, rich with fame,  
 In the dust must yield oblation  
 To the glory of Thy name.

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### The Ground of Peace.

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THE moment we begin to rest our peace on anything in ourselves, we lose it. This is why so many saints have not settled peace. Nothing can be lasting that is not built on God alone. How can you have settled peace? Only by having it in God's own way. By not resting it on anything, even the Spirit's work within yourselves, but on what Christ has done entirely without you. Then you will know peace; conscious unworthiness, but yet peace. In Christ alone God finds that in which He can rest, and so is it with His saints. The more you see the extent of the evil that is within, as well as that without and around, the more you will find that what Jesus is, and what Jesus did, is the only ground at all on which you can rest.

J. N. D.

## Correspondence.

Cardiff:—“Please explain Mark iii. 29. Would it be open blasphemy, as taking the name of Christ in vain?”


“I think that verse 30 really and simply explains verse 29. The blasphemy here spoken of is not taking the name of Christ in vain, or speaking against Him. Terrible as this is, nevertheless there is forgiveness for it. Paul says of himself that he was before a blasphemer, &c., but that he obtained mercy (1 Tim. i. 13-17). Here in Mark iii., like in the parallel passage in Luke xi., it was the special case of the Pharisees who had just witnessed the power of Christ casting out an evil spirit by the Spirit of God (Matt. xii. 28). They, instead of owning that the power was that of the Spirit of God, attributed it to the devil. This was the unpardonable blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. You often hear people speak of “*the* sin against the Holy Ghost.” There is no special sin against the Holy Ghost. In one sense all sin is against the Holy Ghost. Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost was attributing to the devil that which really was the work of the Spirit of God.

“May the Lord lead you on in His ways, and by a prayerful study of His Word, enable you rightly to divide the word of truth! Our lot is cast in dark and evil days, but if we follow Christ we shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life (John viii. 12).”—ED.

## Hints on Daniel.

### THE FIERY FURNACE.

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NE of the saddest and most serious features of the times in which we are living is the widespread unbelief that exists in reference to the Scriptures.

Infidelity is not now confined to the bold attacks of the atheist, the sceptic, and the secularist. It is being diligently propagated by means of religious literature and pulpit ministration by men who pose as seekers after truth, and who make a pretence of dealing with the oracles of God in a most reverential spirit. Nothing is more deceptive to the vast majority of people than this.

Few have the ability to sift evidence or to weigh arguments. They are easily affected by an appearance of straightforwardness and a show of piety.

Then the Bible tells us some unpleasant truths. It speaks to the consciences of men. It is a relief to him who has not bowed in heart and conscience to its divine revelation to think that "good men and true" are not all agreed as to its absolute inerrancy. The Bible depicts man's condition morally before God to be as bad as it could possibly be. It describes the future of the unregenerate in language that,

if true, is enough to make one tremble. It hides not the fact of the sinner's utter ruin, yet at the same time reveals God's perfect but only remedy. But until that ruin is confessed, and that remedy accepted, the effort will always be to impugn the veracity of the faithful witness.

While one pities the deluded victims of that modern form of infidelity, the Higher Criticism, it is impossible not to feel a thrill of indignation against the men who are moved by Satan to voice the unbelief so pleasing to the minds of those who prefer the world that they can see, and which is temporal, to the heaven that they cannot see and which is eternal. "The carnal mind is enmity against God" (Rom. viii. 7); this was clearly demonstrated at the cross in the rejection of Christ, the living Word—it is as clearly seen to-day in the rejection of the written Word. Under the plea of "reverent and honest doubt" the pulpits and the religious press of our times pour forth into the world torrents of bitter antagonism against the inspiration of Scripture. It is the sure forerunner of the apostasy so clearly foretold in the Scriptures of truth (2 Thess. ii.).

But in these early chapters of Daniel (iii.-vii.) we find not only accurate historic narrative, but moral instruction of the most important character. Satan's effort is, by raising all sorts of critical questions and doubts as to the history, to deprive the soul of the spiritual profit to be

derived from a prayerful meditation, in a believing spirit, on those pages of divine inspiration.

Nebuchadnezzar had set up his image. We need not stop to inquire from whence came the thought. He had just returned from Egypt where he had been victorious, and had no doubt seen the colossal statue of Rameses the Great, which is the wonder to this day of every traveller in that land. He would outdo even this in magnificence by making an image in his own land, not of stone but of *gold*.

But there was more than mere self-glorification in his act. How were all the "people, nations, and languages" that God had put under his dominion to be held together? What factor is the most potent in separating peoples, and even families? Is it not religion? What bloody wars has it not brought about? What massacres? If unity in religious worship could only be produced, then would there not be a power as effectual to unite, as diversity therein is mighty to divide?

Wherever coercion of conscience in religious matters has taken place, persecution has ever been the terrible weapon in the hands of the strong against the weak. The fiery furnace of Nebuchadnezzar, the Inquisition in Spain, the prison, the faggot, and the fire of our own land tell the same sad story.

But there were "certain Jews" in the province

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of Babylon, men of faith and conscience, who, when the call to fall down and worship the golden idol went forth at the sound of cornet, flute, and all kinds of music, stood firm in their allegiance to the true God, the Jehovah of Israel. This was all the more remarkable an exhibition of steadfast faith and purpose, inasmuch as idolatry had always been the snare into which Israel had fallen even in their own land.

But they had enemies around them, unscrupulous men who shrank not from utilising the cruel weapon of persecution to avenge their own private wrongs. The Chaldeans had not forgotten that it was through these very men that they had lost their place and influence in the court, and that the king had been forced to confess that Daniel's God was a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets. They knew how to work upon the vanity of Nebuchadnezzar.

"There are certain Jews whom thou hast set over the affairs of the province of Babylon . . . these men, O king, have not regarded thee: they serve not thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." This was enough. In his rage and fury the king commands to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego before him.

"Is it true?" he inquires of them. "Do not ye serve my gods?" &c. Then he gives them



but one alternative ; “ If . . . ye fall down and worship the image which I have made, well : but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace ; and who is that God,” he cries in impious defiance, “ that shall deliver you out of my hands ? ”

The calm dignity with which the three Hebrew children carry themselves in presence of this threat is truly magnificent. “ O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter.” They had served him well and faithfully when the claims of his service had not interfered with their allegiance to their God, but now it was a question of obeying God rather than men ; and in every dispensation the principle holds good that the claims of God are paramount, and that a faithful walk demands implicit obedience to His Word.

“ Our God whom we serve,” they say, “ is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.” Noble decision ! May their example prove invigorating to the faith of both writer and reader in this day of latitudinarian indifference and Laodicean lukewarmness ! “ I have set the Lord always before me : because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved ” (Ps. xvi. 8).

The Word of the Lord through Moses in this case was clear : " I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before Me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth : thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them," &c. (Exod. xx. 2-7). And if idolatry was inexcusable under the law, is it permissible under grace ? If wrong for the Jew, is it right for the professing Christian ? Little wonder is it that the Romish hierarchy have cut out of the prayer book which they place in the hands of the people, this second commandment, and have divided the tenth into two in order still to keep the number ten. Either this second commandment must go out of the book, or every image, statue, and crucifix must be swept from their chapels. Surely the steadfastness of these three Jews may put to shame much that goes on not only in Romish chapels, but in ritualistic churches.

Nebuchadnezzar's rage and fury now knew no bounds. He commands that they " should heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated," and that his " most mighty men " should bind these three devoted witnesses for the true God and cast them into its midst. So urgent had been the king's commandment,

and so exceeding hot was the furnace, that these poor tools of Nebuchadnezzar's anger were devoured by the flames.

And what of the three faithful men who, in simple dependence upon God, were braving all the power of Satan? In this, the hour of their extremity, they proved the truth of words uttered a century before through the lips of Isaiah the prophet: "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour. . . . Fear not, for I am with thee" (Isa. xliii. 2-5).

The astonished king rose up in haste. "Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?" he asks of his counsellors. But now, "Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and"—more surprising still—"the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."

Whether or not any besides the king himself were given to see the fourth, we are not told, but God took care that all "the princes, governors and captains, and the king's counsellors" gathered together should see "these men, upon whose bodies the fire had no power." He vindicates His own majesty, and honours those who had honoured Him. "Blessed be the God

of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent His angel and delivered His servants that trusted in Him," &c. Even so shall it be in the case of some from amongst the same people, who in a day yet to come shall refuse to bow down to the image of the beast.

*(To be continued.)*



## Musings on the Book of Ruth.



TO resume the history, then, we may here notice that we have Naomi and Ruth in the land of promise, the place of all desired blessing, the appointed scene of glory, and the land of the living. But they are there at first empty and afflicted, though the land is fruitful again, and the harvest is gathering. But so will the Lord's remnant be found when the nation has returned. As says the Lord by His prophet, "I will leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord" (Zeph. iii. 12).

But Ruth and Naomi are not wholly unblest; they are, at least, *at home*, and though in scanty measure living on the gleanings of another's field, and waiting for the crumbs that fall from another's table, yet kindness is shown to them by one who was "a mighty man of wealth"

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(chap. ii. 8-13). And so will the kindness of a mightier and more generous One than Boaz be seen, when tending again "the poor of the flock, the flock of slaughter," and when bread shall be given them, and waters shall be sure (Isa. xxxiii. 16). And so will the poor of the flock trust in Him, and wait upon His hand as their Shepherd in the cloudy and dark day, so will they enter into the pavilion of His presence and hide themselves while that day passes by, and remembering the days of their fathers, they will humble themselves, like Ruth, as less than the handmaids of the Lord.

But Ruth ere long was destined to look on this "mighty man of wealth" as her kinsman and husband, sharing with her—gladly sharing with her—the treasures of those fields where now she gleaned a scanty living; as will His poor and afflicted remnant\* that shall trust in Him for bread and water, soon see their *Kinsman*,

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\* We speak here of the elect people in the last days under the title of "the remnant," for so the Scriptures speak, inasmuch as the true Israel, or the Israel of God, has at all times been but as a remnant in the midst of a reprobate nation. (As now, and at all times, with the Church, the saints are as the elect in the midst of corrupt Christendom.) And so will the true Israel be but a remnant when Israel becomes a nation again, resettled in the land of their fathers (see Isa. vi. 12, lxxv. 8; Rom. ix. 27-29, xi. 26). And this last remnant will become the seed of the future nation, the "All Israel" which is to be

“the King in His beauty,” and their Zion, “a quiet habitation, never to be removed.”

Israel of old had been taught to love the stranger as one born among them, for they had themselves known the heart of a stranger; and in the mercifulness of Him, whose they were, and who feedeth the young ravens that cry unto Him, and openeth His hand and filleth all things living with plenteousness, they had been thus commanded—“When ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest. Thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every grape of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger” (Lev. xix. 9, 10).

As a true son of Israel, Boaz, the Bethlehemite, remembers this word of the God of Israel, and does even more than was commanded. This poor stranger from Moab, as we read in the story, is well reported of to him by the reapers;

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saved (Rom. xi. 26). As it is written, “A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation.” And till then, while the troubles continue, they will suffer, as alone faithful and righteous in the midst of evil; they will then cry to the Lord (as the Psalms largely, I believe, present to us), and then will the Lord in due season appear for them; and when His indignation on the enemy begins, His remnant shall be preserved (Isa. xxvi. 20, 21). Blessed be He who ever heareth the cry of the poor destitute!

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he salutes her with kind and condescending favour, and she accepts his grace with thankfulness, satisfied with what her toil could gather, while he exceeds all her desire, serving her with his own hands, and giving her a place among his sheaves. Sweet expression of the Lord's ways with His waiting poor ones now, and of His feeding His remnant in the land hereafter! And we here observe how this kindness of this "mighty man of wealth" encourages the faith of those afflicted daughters of Israel. Ruth repeats the story of his kindness to her mother-in-law; and then the recollection, which appears till now to have slumbered, that this mighty one was of their kindred, is awakened in Naomi, and she is stirred up to lay hold on his strength and expect a still larger blessing at his hand. "It is good, my daughter," said she to Ruth, "that thou go out with his maidens, that they meet thee not in any other field."

Further encouragement from Boaz, we may presume, and other tokens of favour shown unremittingly till the end of the harvest, at length brings Naomi's faith to exercise itself in his full and perfect favour. From his very gifts she seems to draw a plea for her hopes of further and greater, till her heart is enlarged to the full measure of his utmost bountifulness, and she speaks in the confidence of this to her daughter, saying, "Shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee? And now is not Boaz of

our kindred, with whose maidens thou wast? Behold, he winnoweth barley to-night in the threshing-floor. Wash thyself, therefore, and anoint thee, and put thy raiment upon thee, and get thee down to the floor; but make not thyself known unto the man until he have done eating and drinking. And it shall be, when he lieth down, that thou shalt mark the place where he shall lie, and thou shalt go in and uncover his feet, and lay thee down; and he will tell thee what thou shalt do." Naomi would have nothing less than *himself and all his wealth*—her lips will scarcely utter the large desire of her faith, but she counts upon it, and lays her plans for it. The name of Baali (my lord) will no longer satisfy her; she must call him Ishi (my husband) (Hos. ii. 16). And in like manner, how sweetly will His chosen ones be encouraged, and allured and comforted by their Kinsman in the second wilderness of the latter day. For a time they may remain unacknowledged. "Doubtless Thou art our Father," will they then say, "though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not; Thou, O Lord, art our Father, our *Redeemer*." The remembrance of their *Redeemer*, their *Kinsman*, will come into their mind, and they will plead with Him then. (See Isa. lxiii. 7, lxiv.)

In full faith of the blessing, and that Boaz would, as Naomi had expected, tell her what she was to do, Ruth enters on the plan prescribed



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to her for acquiring Boaz as her husband. In all this Naomi and Ruth were as one—the one by counsel, the other in action, helping forward the common blessing. Thus Ruth now hearkens to the counsel of Naomi, goes down to the threshing-floor, and does accordingly. Then she seeks a pledge from Boaz. She comes to trust in the shadow of his wing. She would have him spread his skirt over her, doing for her the full services of her near kinsman. She trespasses as far as faith warrants her, but no further; for Boaz, as they judged, was the nearest kinsman on whom it lay to repair the ruins of Elimelech's house; and thus Ruth is strong in faith, and seeks the blessing confidently, but withal, humbly and graciously. And her faith is rewarded; according to it is it done to her. She finds no terrors in this "mighty man of wealth," but all is the law of kindness, for though he cannot acknowledge that he is the first-bound to her as under the law of the next kinsman, yet he blesses her in the name of the Lord as his daughter—his adopted one—pledges to her his love, vindicates her, and is her ready debtor in grace to do all that she required. Tenderness and delicacy mark all their intercourse through the night; confidence on her part, and full grace and readiness of love on his; and in the morning he dismisses her with tokens of his affection and care. And laden with these, she returns to Naomi, and they rejoice together.

Naomi again, in counsel, interprets all the ways of this mighty kinsman, assuring Ruth that he "will not be at rest" until he had perfected his kindness to her.

In all this, we are given clearly to trace the coming ways of God with Israel. Of old had He sought them; He found them in a desert land, He led them about; till He made them to ride on the high places of the earth. This was their time of love. Unsought, He then took Israel for His inheritance, and spread His wings over them. "When I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread My skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness; yea, I swear unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee" (Ezek. xvi. 8). But in the latter day, *the Lord must be sought unto*, as Ruth now seeks Boaz, and as He witnesses by His prophets—"I will go and return to My place, till *they acknowledge their offence, and seek My face*; in their affliction they will seek Me early" (Hos. v. 15). "Then shall ye call upon Me, and ye shall go and pray unto Me, and I will hearken unto you, and ye *shall seek Me and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart*" (Jer. xix. 12). And again, "*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*" (Ezek. xxxvi. 37). Then Israel, like Ruth and Naomi, shall encourage themselves in the Lord, shall seek the shelter of His wing again,

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and the covering of His skirt again, and plead with Him for His land and for His people—the remnant shall return unto the mighty God of Jacob. And the confidence and delicacy of her approach, and His ready acknowledgment of her virtues and worthy name, which we have observed, sets forth something of the way between the Lord and His Jewish remnant in the days when she is waiting for Him, and desiring to be taken into His banquet house, and have Him perform all the part of a kinsman for her. The book of Canticles, in its full prophetic import, appears to exhibit the same in beautiful mystical characters. Confidence in His love, and yet tenderness and humility, will surely mark the path of the spirit of His waiting Israel then.

And this hope shall not be disappointed ; for according to Naomi's largest expectations, Boaz seems to take no rest until he finishes the matter. On the morning after he had in grace pledged his kinsman vows to Ruth, he begins his services in accomplishing them, and there is none else that will own her, or take her poverty and ruin upon them. She is disclaimed by him who should have been the repairer of her breach, and Boaz alone will stand forth her kinsman and redeemer. Without delay, in presence of all the appointed witnesses, he takes Ruth in all her degradation for his own, and endows her with his name and wealth. The poor gleaner of his fields is made to share the magnificence of this "mighty man

of wealth"; the poor stranger from Moab is made the first of all the mothers in Israel. Rachel and Leah may be forgotten now, for one has come into their stead to build up the house of Israel.

And the figure of Israel, as they shall be, is here beautifully given to us. For it shall be, when the Lord sees that there is no man, when He wonders that there is no intercessor, that then His own arm will bring salvation. Of all the sons that Zion has brought forth, none will guide her or take her by the hand—the nearest kinsman will fail in that day—counsel will have perished from the wise, and understanding from the prudent; in vain will salvation be looked for to the hills and to the multitudes of mountains—"Then will the Lord be jealous for His land, and pity His people" (Joel ii. 18); then will He put on "zeal as a cloak" (Isa. lix. 17) and appear for the "recompenses for the controversy of Zion" (Isa. xxxiv. 8). As the true Boaz, He will not be in rest till He "has finished the thing"; till He clothe her with garments of salvation, and rejoice over her as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride.

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READER, have you rested where God rests? What does God think about Christ? Does your soul say, That is sufficient? God rests in Him as having made peace through the blood of the cross. Is that peace consciously yours?

## Gathered to Thy Name.

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**G**ATHERED to Thy name, Lord Jesus,  
Losing sight of all but Thee,  
Oh! what joy Thy presence gives us,  
Calling up our hearts to Thee.

Yet with reverence we would linger  
In the shadow of the cross,  
Which has closed our hearts for ever  
To the world and all its dross.

And we see with joyful wonder  
How the cross has cast its light  
On the throne of God up yonder,  
So that we can walk in light.

Deepest shame and brightest glory  
In that wondrous scene we trace,  
For it tells the twofold story  
Of God's grace and man's disgrace.

Loved with love which knows no measure  
Save the Father's love to Thee,  
Blessed Lord, our hearts would treasure  
All the Father's thoughts of Thee.

All His joy, His rest, His pleasure,  
All His deep delight in Thee,  
Lord, Thy heart alone can measure  
What Thy Father found in Thee.

Oh the joy, the wondrous singing,  
When we see Thee as Thou art,  
Thy blest name, Lord Jesus, ringing  
Sweetest music to God's heart.

Notes of gladness, songs unceasing,  
Hymns of everlasting praise,  
Psalms of glory, joy increasing  
Through God's endless day of days.



## “Dead with Christ—Risen with Christ.”

(COL. ii. 20, iii. 1.)



**T**HE Christian's risen life is exhibited in two things—death unto that which is here, and heavenly-mindedness. “Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ,” writes the apostle, “from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances?” The expression “rudiments of the world” goes a vast way. I am dead, not only to sin, but to all the religiousness of human nature. A Jew has this religiousness, and it was cultivated of God; but it brought not forth good fruit, it produced nothing but “wild grapes.”

Now, if we do not see that we are risen, we shall be cultivating human nature for God. He Himself has tried this already; and He says, that not anything could have been done more than He has done (Isa. v.). But man would still, still be striving to cultivate the religious-

ness of human nature, and introduce sinners into heaven otherwise than by death. We are dead and risen again, and it is simply heavenly.

In this, is the real power of our living above sin. It assumes death, it goes upon the principle that we are "dead to sin" (Rom. vi.). We get a blessed liberty in seeing and accounting ourselves dead. We have a new life. Christ has taken His place where death and resurrection have put Him. And there I am, where Christ is. It is altogether another life. And this life has its own world and its own sphere of affections. "They that are after the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit" (Rom. viii. 5).

Resurrection life is manifested in walking through this world as abstracted, withdrawn from, unactuated by, the motives of the world. A Christian has new motives. If I see a man walking through the world without things here affecting him, I say, "He is either mad—or risen with Christ." Alas! we are not as consistent as madmen. All the motives of the world never touch the new nature. Do you think it could be thinking about friendship with the world? could be seeking riches, or honour, or power? The motives which actuate men have no influence upon it. Perplexity comes in by our having a motive which is not drawn from heaven; whenever I see myself, or another, in

difficulty, I may be quite sure some other motive is at work.

There is always a tendency to decline from this singleness of eye.

When we first receive the knowledge of life in Christ, we are absorbed, we readily admit all else to be "dung and dross" (Phil. iii.). But when decline comes in, we get old motives into action again. Little by little we are not absorbed, and then a hundred things begin to be motives—things of which I took no notice, which did not act before. People say, "What harm is there in it?" When I begin to inquire, "What harm is there in this or in that?" there is the tendency to decline. There may be no harm in the thing, but the thought about it shows that I am not absorbed with that which is heavenly. "Thou hast left thy first love." It is not in great sins but here that decline in the saints is manifested.

When the sense of grace is diminished we decline in practice. Our motives must be in God. Sometimes effort is made to press conduct, works, and practice; because (it is said) full grace was preached before; now, that there is decline in practice, you must preach practice.

That which is the rather to be pressed is grace—the first grace. It is grace, not legalism, will restore the soul. Where the sense of grace is diminished, the conscience may be, at the same



time, uncommonly active, and then it condemns the pressing of grace, and legalism is the result. When conscience has been put in action through the claims of grace, that is not legalism; and there will be holy practice in detail.

We may fall into either of two faults—that of (because fruits have not been produced) preaching fruits, or that of getting at ease when certain things come to have influence over us again, through thinking that what we approved of before was legalism.

We shall not get back by dwelling on detail. Christ is the great motive for everything, and we must get up into the knowledge of resurrection in Christ to remedy detail. Here, there is wonderful truth and wonderful liberty.

Another very important point is the tone and spirit of our walk. Confidence in God and gentleness of spirit is that which becomes the saint. For this we must be at home with God. The effect of thus walking in Christ, setting the Lord ever before us, is always to make us walk with reverence—lowliness, adoration, quietness, ease, and happiness. If I go where I am unaccustomed to be—if I get for instance into a great house, I may have much kindness shown me there, but when I get out again I feel at ease; I am glad to be out. Had I been brought up in that house I should feel otherwise. The soul is not only happy in God for itself, but it will bring the tone of that house out with it;

because of its joy in God anxieties disappear, and it will move through the ten thousand things that would trouble and prove anxieties to another, without being a bit troubled. No matter what it may be, we bring quietness of spirit into all circumstances whilst abiding in God.

If a man be risen with Christ, if he be dwelling there, it will show itself thus. We shall not be afraid of the changes around: we shall live, not in stupid apathy and listlessness, but in the exercise of lively affections and energies towards the Lord. One great evidence of my dwelling in Christ is quietness. I have my portion elsewhere and I go on. Another sign is confidence in obeying.

This connects itself with fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ—fellowship, not only in joy, but in the thoughts of the Father and the Son. The Holy Ghost, the third person of the blessed Trinity, is our power of entering with the affections into the things of God. "The Father loveth the Son"—what a place this puts me in, to be thus cognisant of the Father's feelings towards His beloved Son.

In our proper place we get our mind filled and associated with things that leave this world as a little thing—an atom, in the vastness of the glory, which was before the world was.

J. N. D.

## Purgatory and Prayers for the Dead.

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VERY few people would have believed, fifty or sixty years ago, that these doctrines would be openly taught within the Church of England ; but the fact remains that there has existed since 1873 a widely-spread society, called the "Guild of All Souls," for the express purpose of propagating them. What they teach is as follows : " We believe that the mercy and justice of God in His dealings with their (faithful departed) souls are reconciled by their being detained for a certain time in a middle place, there to be punished, and purified, and dealt with, according to His good pleasure, until He sees fit to admit them to the enjoyment of the Beatific Vision."—*The Intermediate State.*

The Roman doctrine, as stated in the Catechism of the Council of Trent, is very similar : " There is also the fire of purgatory, in which the souls of just men are purified by a temporary punishment, to qualify them to be admitted into their eternal country, into which nothing defiled entereth."

The doctrines of purgatory and prayers for the dead have been an immense source of wealth to the Church of Rome for ages. The Doctors of that Church have skilfully played upon the credulity and kindly feelings of the people, in

order to extract money for masses and prayers for the liberation of souls from pain and torment. Every error in Christendom is levelled in some way against either the *Person* or the *work* of Christ, and the idea of purgatory is a deadly shaft aimed at the sufficiency of His atoning sacrifice to fully meet the question of sin.

Now, it is true that there is a purgation of which Scripture speaks ; but it must be experienced in this world, or not at all. Thus, the inspired writer who penned the Epistle to the Hebrew Christians, opens by presenting the Son, who, having by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. For this purging of sins the believer has not to wait for a future day for its completion. The One who did the atoning work necessary for this has sat down at the right hand of God—the witness that it *is* complete.

Purgatory was one of the many corruptions which gradually crept into the early Church, and went on increasing from the time it was first brought into prominence by Pope Gregory the Great till it reached its highest pitch, when indulgences to deliver from its pains were farmed out by Tetzal at the beginning of the sixteenth century. The doctrine was largely borrowed from the heathen philosophy which taught an intermediate state of purifying for sins committed here, by punishment, preparatory to the soul's entrance into Elysium—a place of bliss.

The Jews also taught a somewhat similar doctrine. In fact the advocates of purgatory tell us that the Jews prayed for the dead, and do so still. Probably they did; for our Lord says that they made the Word of God of none effect by their traditions. Some of them denied that there was any resurrection, angel, or spirit—are we therefore to deny this? The argument has really no force at all.

To allege that any purifying process is needed by the Christian after death is to deny that a complete purgation of sins has been accomplished here. But Scripture leaves no room for doubt on this point. "Though your sins be as scarlet," says the prophet, "they shall be as white as snow"; "The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from *all* sin"; "Their sins and iniquities I will remember *no more*." A perfect work, accomplished by a divine Person, must bring about a perfect result, and so complete is the cleansing that no trace of sin remains on the believer in God's sight; for the blood cleanses from *all* sin. It is not a question of sins up to a certain date and not afterwards, as people say; there is no such idea in Scripture, for *all* were future when Christ died, and He atoned for *all*. Apologists for purgatory have to twist passages very far out of their meaning to try and find some justification from Scripture; and it only needs to examine the portions adduced, with the context,

to see how far they are from proving the points in support of which they are quoted. For example, 1 Peter iii. 19. Here the apostle says that Christ was "put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit : by which also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison : which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah." The passage does not say that Christ went to prison and preached to spirits there ; *the spirits* are said to be *in prison*, but that is a different thing.

In Genesis vi. the Spirit is spoken of in connection with Noah : " My Spirit shall not always strive with man," says God ; and Peter elsewhere (1 Pet. i. 11) speaks of the " Spirit of Christ " in the Old Testament prophets. It was the Spirit of Christ in Noah who preached to the people of that day, while the ark was building ; God in His patience waited *then*, just as He does *now*, to see if any would repent ; but having been disobedient, they are in prison awaiting judgment. Those referred to are the disobedient in *the days of Noah*, and the preaching took place *then* through Noah. In any case purgatory is not a place for preaching, but for purifying ; at least so it is said, and when Christ died He did not go to preach there, but went to paradise that very day.

To take another passage, Luke xii. 58 has nothing to do with purgatory : it is an appeal to the Jews to whom our Lord spoke, as to whether they observed the times, for He

Himself was there, was in the way with them, so to speak ; but they refused Him, and should have to bear the consequences.

Again, in 1 Corinthians iii. 11-15, it is not a question of purging of sins at all, but of trying the work—such as preaching, teaching, &c.—of responsible servants. Being “ saved so as by fire ” has nothing to do with purifying : it relates to one (though he himself be a true Christian) whose work will not stand the test ; *it* is burned up, but *he* is saved, but so as by (or, *through*) the fire ; he suffers the loss of his reward. Like Lot, he escapes the doom of Sodom, but all his goods are burned up.

Some have said that, while a man's sins are forgiven through the precious blood of Christ, yet the power or habit of sin remains to be dealt with in the other world. Those who so argue are ignorant of the fact that God has provided for everything. He gives to the believer a new and holy life and nature : he is made a “ partaker of the divine nature ” (2 Pet. i. 4), and when he leaves this world the old evil nature is left entirely behind.

It is refreshing to turn from the polluted streams of tradition and speculation to the clear fountain of Holy Scripture, and to hear what it says about the justice and love of God ; for how different are the theories in question from the pure gospel ! They are a denial of the love of God which has been manifested and brought

near to us in Christ ; and they make God a penal exactor, who can only acquit the soul after the last penny has been paid by purifying sufferings in the other world. Scripture, on the other hand, declares that the Christ who came to tell out God's love has died, and has fully drained the cup of judgment due to the sinner, leaving absolutely nothing remaining but blessing.

Christ says to the thief on the cross, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise," and, dark sinner as he was, yet he was so completely purged by the death of Christ as to be fit to be His companion that day in paradise. So, the apostle says, he had a desire to depart and *to be with Christ*, which is far better ; and he was willing rather to be absent from the body and *present with the Lord*. Stephen says, when dying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" ; and Paul says to die is gain.

The truth is that Christianity finds men lost and dead in sins ; it brings eternal life by faith in Christ—a new and holy life and nature suitable for God's presence. This the true Christian has as a present thing : he is cleansed, justified, and fit for heaven at any moment, without any intermediate process ; and he can go there in perfect harmony with the holiness and righteousness of God, in virtue of the cleansing efficacy of the blood of Christ ; in fact, he is made the righteousness of God in Christ already (2 Cor. v. 21.)

F. G. B.



# Hints on Daniel.

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## THE HUMBLER MONARCH.

(Chap. iv.)

**T**HOUGH at first sight the chapters we are now considering (iii.-vii.) might seem to be purely historical, a little attention will show that they have a strikingly prophetic character.

The moral features exhibited by the great Gentile powers at their commencement abide more or less distinctly all through their course, and will be seen with even greater clearness at their close.

True worship is never a matter of compulsion, but of conscience. It is ever a mark of false religion for man to interpose between the conscience of his fellow and God; it matters not whether that religion be heathen, or professedly Christian idolatry.

It is important to bear in mind that the people of God who are in view in the Book of Daniel are Jews and not Christians.

In so saying, we assume that our readers are more or less familiar with dispensational truth. When Nebuchadnezzar set up his image it was a God-fearing Jewish remnant that refused to bow down and worship, or in any wise to own the idol that he had made. And at the close,

XII.

after the coming of the Lord for the Church (1 Thess. iv.), there will again be a faithful remnant from amongst the same people who will likewise maintain their allegiance to Jehovah in spite of the terrible persecution under Antichrist and the Beast (Rev. xiii.).

Just as idolatry specially marked the first beginnings of the great Gentile powers, so Scripture has revealed that it will be at the end.

Though "the times of the Gentiles" are still running their course—they began with Nebuchadnezzar and will continue till the day of Jerusalem's deliverance (Luke xxi. 24)—yet during the present time they present an outwardly Christian character. So long as the Church is upon earth, the Holy Ghost who dwells in the Church is the power that hinders the development of all the evil that Scripture clearly foretells will close up the history of Christendom. The solemn testimony of the Word of God is this, that the Gentile powers, so far from learning the knowledge of the true God, and yielding submission to Him, will in the end burst forth in more determined rebellion.

It may be said that these powers no longer exist in an imperial form, that nothing remains but their broken fragments. While this is true, it is equally true that Scripture foretells the resuscitation of the last of the four empires. No doubt the man of the world does not expect any

such thing, but the simple believer in God's Word knows beforehand many a thing that the wisest politician entirely ignores. When the Roman Empire revives, as undoubtedly it will, the world will be completely taken aback. "They that dwell on the earth shall wonder . . . when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and shall be" (Rev. xvii. 8). This is the undoubtedly correct rendering of this passage.

It is just here that these historical chapters of Daniel have such a prophetic interest. The first act of man when placed in a position of absolute monarchy was to institute idolatry, and enforce it on pain of death. Revelation xiii. shows that so it will be at the close.

I have no doubt that the beast of Revelation xiii. 11 is the Antichrist of other parts of Scripture.\* According to 2 Thessalonians ii. 4, he will set himself in the temple of God at Jerusalem and make himself to be worshipped, but not only this, he will set up an image to the Beast and cause men to worship it. He will possess miraculous and Satanic power, so much so that he gives power to this image to speak, and all who will not worship it he will cause to be killed.

Now at the time that these terrible things will take place the only people on earth who will

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\* See *The Man of Sin: who will he be?* By A. H. B.

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recognise the true God will be the Jewish remnant. The Church will have been already "caught up," and the Spirit of God, though removed as He will be at the coming of the Lord, will have wrought repentance in the souls of that remnant. Rather than bow the knee to the false god they will face death itself. It will be the time of "the great tribulation." Without doubt the Book of Revelation as well as all the prophetic parts of Scripture will be of immense consolation to these suffering and persecuted saints. The church period will to them be a matter of history, and they will be awaiting the return of Christ, not in the air, but to Mount Zion. He will come not to take them out of the earth to heaven, as He will for us, but to bless them on the earth and to overwhelm all their adversaries.

At that time how sustaining to this tried remnant will be the history of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego! It is so truly for all times, but especially so then for their circumstances will be exactly identical. How appropriate, too, the words:—"If any man have an ear, let him hear. He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints" (Rev. xiii. 9, 10).

Three great features marked the remnant in Daniel's time, and will no doubt at the close.

First, entire separation from everything condemned by the law (Dan. i.): second, understanding of the mind of God (chap. ii.): third, utter refusal of the false god (chap. iii.). In principle of course these things apply at all times, but in studying the Book of Daniel it is well to remember that we have specially to do with things and times that are Jewish.

Another great characteristic of the times of the Gentiles comes out in Daniel iv. Man always seeks to exalt himself. Since the Garden of Eden there has only been one exception in the person of Him who while very God was as truly man. This blessed One "humbled Himself." He took the lowly place of dependence and obedience. His meat and drink was to do the will of His Father, and this will He accomplished in perfect submission even at the cost of death, and that, too, the death of the cross.

But ever since the entrance of sin into this world, man left to himself has always turned away from God. "There is none that seeketh after God" (Rom. iii. 11). It is sadly true of us all that as sheep we have gone astray and turned every one to his own way. The greater the power man possesses, the more does he use it to exalt himself. It was so with Nebuchadnezzar, from the story of whose humiliation we might well learn the sin and folly of that which is so common to us all, namely, pride and haughtiness of heart.

All that Dean Farrar, copying the rationalistic school, can see in the history of Nebuchadnezzar's madness is a "worked up" story. Not Daniel but a "Palestinian Jew" concocted the story out of "some dim traditions" by "giving free play to his imagination . . . . after the common fashion of his age and nation." It is well that simple people should be aware what utter unbelief fills the minds of most of the religious leaders of Christendom. They have given up all real and honest belief in the inspiration of Scripture. Need any wonder if this strong ebb tide of infidelity should presently sweep back the rising generation into the dark ocean of apostasy and despair?

But judgment does not fall until ample warning is given. Twelve months before, a dream was sent from God that filled the king's mind with fear and trouble. Once again he calls to his assistance the soothsayers and magicians of his realm, but all in vain. The men of this world never will take heed to the plainest danger signals that God in His mercy places full in their pathway; they do not even understand them. But Daniel again stands before the monarch whose dream he had once before brought back to his memory and interpreted for him. Fearlessly he again delivers the message which God has sent him, and calls upon him to take heed to the solemn warning and thus escape the doom that awaited him.

But no! At the end of twelve months the proud king was walking in his palace, and as he surveyed the magnificent city of gold, his bosom swelled with pride within him that *he* had built it all by the might of his own power, and for the honour of his own majesty. Where was God in all his thoughts? "While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O King Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee."

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## A Last Appeal.

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**A**MONG the details of the life and labours of our Lord Jesus Christ, preserved for us by the evangelists, none are more precious and affecting than those which concern His last moments previous to the betrayal. This epoch has been very fully dwelt upon by the apostle John, in whose mind it doubtless remained clearly imprinted, although in the other gospels we are afforded most interesting facts. John has, however, devoted rather more than five chapters to the narration of the Saviour's parting words to His own. Even among ourselves we have the feeling that the wishes of the departing are entitled to special regard;

and the counsel that we receive with deference during days of health and strength, we accept with something akin to veneration from one who has come to the close of life's journey.

These sentiments can, we think, with reverence be transferred to our blessed Saviour with regard to the time we have above specified, and this without in any measure weakening the authority of His other words. All are alike of value and blessing to us, but in the chapters referred to are spoken with His death particularly in view; while in chapter xiii., the way Jesus deals with Judas is most touching in its solemnity, as introductory to the season of sweet confidence He displays in laying bare His heart to His own, an act, we may well feel, impossible while still the traitor lingered.

It is difficult to meditate aright upon the feelings of that perfect heart, not only in the choice of, but the continual presence of, this one who was to deliver Him up. We say it is "difficult," because the Scripture affords no clue in the gospels, whatever we may discern in what has been given beforehand, by the Spirit of prophecy—especially in the Psalms. Once only does it break suddenly forth in a manner as solemn as it is sudden. The refusal of the truth of man's condition of death, and the necessity of the "eating the flesh of the Son of man and drinking His blood" (that is, appropriating by faith a Christ gone down to



death), if we are to have life in us; and the Father drawing to the Son, not man choosing the Son; all this leads many to go back and company no more with the little band of disciples. To these latter the Lord then turns, asking if they also would leave. Peter replies, that they had no one else to whom they could go, Christ had the words of eternal life.

Then it is that, for a moment, we are permitted to see one bitter ingredient in the cup of moral suffering that had long been His, and that He was then tasting. "Have I not," He says, "chosen you twelve, and one *of you* is a devil?" (*i.e.*, false accuser). He had watched the retreating footsteps of those who had refused the truth, and (knowing all things that should come upon Him) He sees in this desertion man's hatred of God, and self-seeking, that would culminate in one of that race (for whom He had come, and would shortly lay down His life), betraying Him for the price of a common slave, after having been received with nothing but love. He says (in effect) that man's heart, once upon the rapid incline of "*refusal*" of the truth, would quickly "*resist*" it; and this resistance would come to a head, in the living Truth being delivered up, "falsely accused," and at last crucified. What food for reflection, and humiliation for the disciples! "One *of you* is a devil!"

And the time came that this must be fully

brought out. Judas, who had been chosen an apostle, clothed with healing power (Matt. x. 1), and admitted to all the intimacy of the little circle of those the Lord's grace had truly reached, must be manifested. To this we commonly *limit* the Lord's action at the time of the last passover feast, when the fact of Judas' treachery is plainly stated; but if the passage in John xiii. be carefully studied (and it is the fullest account of the scene), there will, we believe, be found in Christ's word and deed something more—a last tender appeal. And if this unhappy man had had any heart whatever, how must he not oft-times have been rebuked and ashamed at the unselfishness and unwearied care of the Lord, as well as by the searching power of His words. Surely a guilty feeling must have passed through his mind as he heard the warning, "Take heed and beware of covetousness" (Luke xii. 15); and when later at Bethany he complained of Mary's dedication of the spikenard to the person of Christ, in view of His death, the covetous heart must have known some shame, as the Lord said, "The poor ye have always with you, but *Me* ye have not always" (John xii. 8). Nevertheless the whole of the disciples were drawn aside, in abetting the selfish unbelieving thought, that originated with Judas (Matt. xxvi. 8).

And so the moment came when the ways divided, but (if one may so say) on the Lord's part it would not be without a struggle. Bidden

by Christ, the disciples prepare the passover feast, and when reclining at table, He tells them (and what intensity the words breathe), "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you, before I suffer" (Luke xxii. 15). The meal commences, and as they were eating, the blessed Master makes known to them the solemn truth, "One of you shall betray Me" (Matt. xxvi. 21; John xiii. 21). A solemn sadness breaking over the scene, John is beckoned to by Peter, to seek who should be the perpetrator of such a sin, and the Lord answers, "He it is to whom I shall give a morsel when I have dipped it; and when He had dipped the morsel, He gave it to Judas Iscariot." Now this act, we feel sure, was not to single out the traitor only, but there was surely in it something that should have broken Judas' heart. It was the well-known Eastern form of showing special honour or regard for a guest, and as well as being a fresh proof of that love, that had sheltered him many a time, did it not intimate the unchanged character of that Master, against whom he had *already* entertained such terrible intentions (*cf.* Mark xiv. 10-11, 18-20). May we not suppose that it occasioned even in that wicked heart a struggle, which the Lord, who reads all hearts, must have watched with solemn, if sad, interest? Then Judas himself says, "Master, is it I?" but by the import of the Lord's reply we may discern clearly that a balance had been struck in

the mind of that unhappy man. He thought of the silver of the chief priests, and the decision is taken. By the time he had uttered the question, it was clear that he had been proof against such appeals, and the Saviour answers, "Thou hast said." Satan possesses him then in an awful manner, and at the Lord's command to "do quickly" what he had determined, he departs from that upper room, John graphically telling us "it was night." Light had indeed departed from that soul, for "if therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness"!

With all holy calm the Lord Jesus then proceeds to institute the commemorative feast which distinguishes the new covenant, as the passover had characterised the old. But at this Judas was not present. It would have been a restraint upon the freedom, neither could He have said of that one in handing the loaf and the cup "given *for you*," "shed *for you*." During the very season that the loaf and cup had been given a new aspect and meaning, Judas and the chief priests were assembling their impious band with torches and weapons. The energy of Satan within him will lead him to the adoption of a tender kiss as the signal of treachery, and the deed is done. But imagine his feelings, when, in possession of his much-desired thirty silver pieces, he finds (contrary possibly to his expectation) the Lord does not deliver Himself as heretofore, but is led as a lamb to the

slaughter. Precious Saviour! We can say that, although by nature we have hearts as unworthy as his, we know that Thou hast suffered, just for unjust, to bring us to God (1 Pet. iii. 18). Let us "consider Him who endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest we be wearied" (Heb. xii. 3).

F. L.



**Notes of Mr Darby's Parting Address at  
the Priory Tea Meeting (in Tent),  
7th August 1862.**

Hymn 173.—1 Cor. xv. 51 to the end.

**I** HAVE one word on my heart to press on you before going away, "Be ye steadfast, unmoveable" (ver. 58). If our hearts are not close to Christ, we are apt to get weary in the way. All is a vain show around us, but that which is inside *abides*—is true—is the life of Christ—all else goes. When the heart gets hold of this fact, it becomes (as to things around) like one taken into a house to work for the *day*, performs its duties well, but *passes* through—does not live in the circumstances. To Israel the cloud came down, they stayed; it lifted up, on they went, 'twas all the same to them. Why? Because, had they stayed when the cloud went on, they would not have had the Lord! One

may be daily at the desk for fifty years, yet with Christ—the desk only the circumstance—the doing God's will—making manifest the savour of Christ, that's the simple thing. Whether I go or you go, I stay or you stay, 'tis all one. May that one word be realised in each of us, “steadfast, unmoveable,” in whatever sphere, as matter of providence, we are found. So the divine life shall be manifested—Christ manifested; that abides, all else changes, but *that* life remains, abides for ever, aye, *for ever*.

There is not a single thing in which we have served Christ which shall be forgotten. Lazy, alas! we all are in service, but all shall come out that's real; and what's real is Christ in us and that only. The appearance now may be very little—not much even in a religious view—but what's real will abide. Our hearts clinging closely to Christ, we shall sustain one another as members of the body of Christ. The love of Christ should hold the whole together, Christ being everything, and we content to be nothing. . . . Helping one another, praying one for the other. I ask not the prayers of saints—I reckon on them. The Lord keep us going on in simplicity, fulfilling as the hireling our day, till Christ shall come, and then shall every man have praise of God—“Praise of God,” be that our *object*, and may God knit all our hearts together thoroughly and eternally.

Hymn 139.

## A Purged Conscience.

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“**H**OW much more,” says the inspired writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, when contrasting the sacrifice of Christ with those offered under the Jewish ritual, “shall the blood of Christ, who through the Eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” What, let us ask, is a purged conscience? It is a conscience so fully cleared from every charge of sin by the blood of Christ, applied by faith, that no question remains unsettled between the soul and God. How few seem to possess this; and yet it is the privilege of every one who truly believes on Christ! Will the knowledge of this complete and eternal forgiveness make the Christian careless in his conduct? Far otherwise indeed, it is the strongest motive to make him most careful.

How mighty, then, and how efficacious is the sacrifice offered up at Calvary; nor need we wonder when we consider *Who* the one was who was there, both the Offerer and the Offering, the Priest and the Victim. Who was the Person who there offered Himself without spot to God? Chapter x. of this Epistle gives the answer. “Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the

book it is written of Me) to do Thy will, O God." Look back into the volume of the book of God's eternal counsels opened for us; and, before the world was created, before man was made, before sin entered, in those bygone ages where chapter x., quoting from Psalm xl., brings you, and what do you find? Think of the majesty of the Persons, see how the Son, the second Person of the blessed Trinity, in that past eternity, when sacrifice and offering would not suffice, voluntarily undertook to do the will of God, in the body prepared for Him. Immense truth!—and so, if it was God's will to be the Author and Source of this salvation, as it surely was, it was none the less Christ's will to be the Instrument of it.

Turn back to chapter i. and see Him, eternally the brightness of God's glory, the express image of His Person, Creator and Sustainer of the universe, having set Himself down, as the Purger of sins, at the right hand of the Majesty on high. Admit only the dignity of the *Person*, and the sufficiency and efficacy of the *work* accomplished on the cross follows as a necessary consequence. Who would dare to detract from a work so glorious, so complete, so efficacious for the sinner's salvation, so all-sufficient for God's glory, by casting into the scale, as a set-off against their sins, some puny bit of their own ceremonial righteousness? Those who do so will do it to their own un-



utterable and eternal loss! And this sacrifice *has* been offered, the One who offered Himself *has* taken His seat at the right hand of God, the Holy Ghost *has* come down from a glorified Christ to witness to us, the veil *has* been rent, the way into the holiest *has* been opened up by the blood of Jesus, and the true believer *has* access at all times into the very presence of God by faith.

Ritualism was tried under the Jewish system: not, indeed, the unscriptural rituals of a corrupt Christianity, but a ritual established for the time by God Himself—"meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed until the time of reformation." But these things could not give a purged conscience, they could not afford true rest and peace of soul; how much less could the self-imposed ritual, founded, not on the commandment of God, but on the traditions of men. All this is now set aside: Christ having died and risen, the blood having been presented before God, the efficacy of His atonement fills the holy place, that is, heaven itself. The Christian needs not, therefore, ornaments to aid, or priests to carry on, his worship; for he has boldness to enter into the holiest himself, and he has there his Great High Priest always living in the presence of God for Him.

In what has been here said as to the fulness and completeness of the remission of sins and the gift of eternal life which the true Christian

has received, there is no thought of overlooking what is also true, namely, his responsibility to persevere in the path of faith right on to the end. Both sides are true, and both are most important. On the one hand, Scripture views the Christian as "in Christ"; this is his standing before God, unchanged and unchangeable, and here there is "no condemnation," he is "accepted in the Beloved." On the other hand, he is viewed as going through this world needing humbly to seek divine guidance and strength, that he may be kept from the evil. Here the warnings and rebukes of Scripture come in and have their full force. Just as a father has to discipline his children, so God has to teach His people many lessons—painful and humbling sometimes, but necessary; but He will never fail to bring them through, for "God is faithful, by whom ye were called into the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord." And if Christ has to discipline when we wander, it is *in love*, that He may restore, not forsake. "As many as I love," He says, "I rebuke and chasten," but He will never fail those who trust in Him, for He is "able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them."

F. G. B.

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I was defiled by my sins, but I am *cleansed* :  
 I was guilty, but I am *justified* :  
 I had offended, but I am *forgiven*. J. N. D.

## Musings on the Book of Ruth.

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“**S**O Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife ; and when he went in unto her, the Lord gave her conception, and she bare a son.” The blessings before pronounced upon them by the people that were in the gate, and the elders, are now made theirs by the hand of the Lord Himself.

“The Lord make the woman that is come into thine house like Rachel and like Leah, which two did build the house of Israel : and do thou worthily in Ephratah, and be famous in Bethlehem.” And so it came to pass :— They called the name of this son that was born to Boaz and Ruth, Obed, and he was the father of Jesse, and Jesse was the father of David, and in David the Bethlehemite was the throne established ; and in David’s Son shall it be established for ever ; willing deeds shall be done in Ephratah, and famous things shall be spoken of Bethlehem ; for out of Bethlehem-Ephratah was the seed of Ruth, according to the flesh, to come forth, who shall be Ruler of His people Israel. And there shall the house of Israel be built through this most honoured mother. The Lord who, concerning the flesh, has come of her, shall make His Israel again a crown of glory in His hand,

and a royal diadem; the first dominion, even the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem; Zion shall no more be termed "Forsaken," nor her land "Desolate," but she shall be called Hephzibah (my delight is in her), and her land Beulah (married), for the Lord will delight in her, and her land shall be married. (Isa. lxii. 4.)

Then shall she blossom and bud, and fill the face of the earth with fruit; the barren shall sing. She that was "the poor and the stranger," the daughter of Moab and the widow in Judah, shall forget the shame of her youth and the reproach of her widowhood, for her Maker will be her husband (Isa. liv.); and she that was desolate and a captive, and removing to and fro, shall receive her children again within her own borders. The barren shall be as seven. The gleaner shall be the honoured partner of the mighty; for "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill, that He may set him with princes, even with the princes of His people; He maketh the barren woman to keep house, and to be a joyful mother of children" (Ps. cxiii. 7-9).\*

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\* We may observe that there was but a comparatively short interval between *the return of Naomi* and *the marriage of Ruth*. Naomi had been in captivity ten years; but before the harvest, during which she returned into Judea, was well over, Ruth was the wife of this

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In this action we observe that Boaz, treating with the kinsman, seems to bind himself not to redeem the inheritance of Elimelech, except by taking this poor and afflicted stranger to be his wife. In like manner has the Son of man so joined Himself with Israel, that He will not stand up to claim as His own the earth and its fulness, the world and its kingdoms, but as "King of Zion," as "Son of David," as one with that nation whom of old He had separated to Himself as the lot of His inheritance. (See Ps. ii. 6-8.) For it is in Israel that He will glorify Himself (Isa. xlv. 23), as He says by Isaiah, "This people have I formed for Myself; they shall show forth My praise" (Isa. xliii. 21). And it is the *full and complete duty of their kinsman* that He will then graciously acknowledge and perform, He *will avenge their blood, He will redeem the inheritance and build up His brother's house* (Lev. xxv. 25; Num. xxxv. 19; Deut. xxv. 5); for "thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will bring again the captivity of Jacob's tents, and have mercy on his dwelling-places; and the city shall be builded on her own heap, and the palace shall remain after the

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mighty kinsman. So Judah's night had been long, as well as dreary; but comparatively *soon* after their return (though, like desolate Naomi, in all the present degradation), the remnant may become the strong nation, and Judah made a praise in the earth.

manner thereof. And out of them shall proceed thanksgiving and the voice of them that make merry : and I will multiply them, and they shall not be few ; I will also glorify them, and they shall not be small. Their children also shall be as aforetime, and their congregation shall be established before Me, and I will punish all that oppress them " (Jer. xxx. 18-20).

In connection with Ruth, I would here further observe, that the person and action of the Lord Jesus, as the Goel, the *Kinsman of Israel*, and *the Redeemer of the inheritance*, is again strikingly exemplified in the prophet Jeremiah.

Jeremiah was the faithful Jew in his day ; he witnessed the sin and foretold, even weeping, the sorrows of his people. And so the Lord in His day stood in the midst of the evil, alone faithful ; and as a second weeping Prophet, He told of the coming judgments of the daughter of His people. In Jeremiah we have the Christ, not in the character of the Lamb of God, but in that of the Kinsman, the faithful weeping Prophet of Israel. And it is in this character that we must hear Him saying, "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by, behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto My sorrow." For who can estimate the bitterness of the tears of Jesus when He wept over the city, saying, "If thou hadst known, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace." But He who sowed in tears then, shall

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reap in joy hereafter, and gather His sheaves in the land of Israel, even filling His bosom with them. And so we have also this reaping typified to us in the action of the same prophet purchasing, as the nearest kinsman, the field in Anathoth, which belonged to Hanameel, his uncle's son.

In this mystical action, Jeremiah was under the direct instruction of the word of the Lord (see Jer. xxxii.). At this time he was in prison for the testimony of God against Israel, and the Chaldean enemy was at the gates of the city. But the prophet has nothing to do but to obey the word which the Lord had sent him. He does not stand to question the way of the Lord in this strange procedure, nor does he for a moment pause to take counsel in his own heart about it; but being so commanded of the Lord, he weighs the money, subscribes the evidence, seals it, and takes witnesses that he may purchase the field in Anathoth. In faith that "the end of the Lord" would surely appear to be in all truth and mercy, he takes care to secure the evidence of the purchase according to the law and the customs. He gives them into the hand of the faithful Baruch, that they might be put into a place of safe keeping, there to "continue many days," and then, when his obedience was thus fulfilled, but not till then, he inquires of the Lord why was all this? Why in the present threatened

ruin of Israel, when all there was soon to be the sport and spoil of the invaders, should he have been thus required to bury his money in this devoted land? The Lord, in answer, tells him the purposes of His heart; for His secret is with them that fear Him. He tells him that the land which now for a season was to be desolate, without man or beast, should return into the possession of Israel again, that fields should be bought there for money again, and evidences subscribed, and witnesses taken again in the land of Benjamin, and in the cities of Judah.

And such is the action of Israel's true and faithful Kinsman. He has already paid the price of redemption; He weighed it in the balances when "He was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death," and the Lord has been well pleased, and has "crowned Him with glory and honour," and thus sealed His title to the inheritance; and He, the blessed Kinsman, "continues for many days," expecting till He shall see, in "the world to come," "all things put under Him" (see Heb. ii. 5-9). Then shall He return into the long-lost inheritance, be seated in Adam's forfeited dignity, have dominion over the works of God, and be brought forth as the heir of all things. The earth and the fulness thereof shall be His, then in possession as it is now in title, and the everlasting doors shall be lifted



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up to Him (Ps. ii., viii., xxiv., cx.). And then shall the full joy of that song be known, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof, for Thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth."

Beloved brethren, what a company and what a joy is this to be! That you and I may have increase of faith to gain fresh spoils from "this present evil world," and to wait for "the world to come"! The world that now is, has rejected the Son of God; but "the world to come" shall own Him. It was "this present evil world" that sold Him for thirty pieces of silver. It was this world that crucified Him. It was "the pride of life," "the deceitfulness of riches," the receiving "honour one of another," the everyday buying and selling, planting and building, eating and drinking of this world, that crucified Him. It was "that which is highly esteemed among men," that did this thing. And it is all this that still refuses to have Him to reign—that would have Him still to delay His coming. But it is all this upon which His day is to come as a thief.

O beloved, love not the world, nor the things that are of the world. "Remember Lot's wife;" "Be ye like unto men that wait for their Lord;" You have died with Christ—glory in His cross;

own as precious the blood of the Son of God (which the world has shed, and is to answer for), by being willing to be rejected with Him. And know that ere long He will own your worthless names before the angels of God, and present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy. To His name, which alone is the worthy one, be all praise for ever and ever!

J. G. B.

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## Correspondence.

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**S. A. B.; Acts i. 15-16.**—Did Peter act too quickly in the matter of Matthias? How about Paul?

There seems no reason whatever to suppose, as some have done, that Peter acted too quickly in this matter. Scripture at any rate is silent on the point. On the contrary, it appears to me that Peter acted in perfect and striking consistency with what the Spirit of God has taught, not only here, but in John xx. and elsewhere.

It is important to bear in mind the difference between John xx. and Acts ii. In the former passage, the risen Christ breathed on His disciples and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," &c. This they did there and then receive, and yet the Holy Ghost as "the promise of the Father" they did not receive until afterwards, when the day of Pentecost was fully come.

Both these truths are of the deepest importance; neither can be ignored without serious loss to the soul.

It may be asked, Wherein lies the difference? The subject is vast, but briefly it may be said, that in John xx. the *risen* Christ breathes upon His disciples spiritual life in the power of resurrection: in Acts ii. the *ascended* Christ bestows the Holy Ghost as an indwelling Person. The former is more connected with the *intelligence* of the new man, the latter with *power* for testimony to others.

Accordingly we find that Peter, after the resurrection, but before the day of Pentecost, is enabled to apply the Scripture with remarkable intelligence. His application of Psalm cix. leads him to suggest what the Spirit of God later on in the Acts, so far from condemning, actually sanctions (Acts ii. 14; vi. 2).

This intelligent application of the Scriptures is all the more remarkable when compared with its lack in John xx. 9, which, though occurring after the resurrection, yet took place before the breathing on the disciples of John xx. 22.

But further, the selection of another in Acts i. is rather connected with the continuance of the old Jewish system of things, than the introduction of the new in which was neither Jew nor Gentile; this latter starts not merely with a risen, but with an ascended and glorified Christ

A gap had occurred amongst the apostles

through the sin and death of the traitor. The Scripture (Ps. cix.) foretold the appointment of a successor. Peter, led surely of God, selects two that had the necessary qualifications; it may have been the only two that he knew. But Peter does not appoint, the Lord alone does that, though signifying His choice by means of the lot, which was a common practice amongst the Jews.

Lastly, the twelve apostles, of whom Matthias is the added twelfth, are evidently connected with the twelve tribes of Israel; but Paul's apostleship stands on an entirely different footing. He is not the thirteenth, and never could have been the twelfth. He is the apostle, not of an earthly, even though risen Christ, but of a glorified Christ, and with this the Church is connected.

**C. A. G.**—In such a case as you describe, the Lord alone can give the needed wisdom (James i. 5-9). Where there is faithfulness to Him, and the light which He has given from His Word, a path will surely be opened for fellowship, worship, and service, even though we may be tested by long waiting. Do not go before your faith, nor lag behind your conscience. As to continuing to hear wrong doctrine, see Proverbs xix. 27.

ED.