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THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

DIVINE OPENINGS.

“Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him; and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.”—Luke iii. 21, 22.

HEAVEN OPENED ON JESUS.



HIS scripture presents to us a very wonderful scene,—a man on the earth on whom heaven is opened. Supposing the heavens were opened again now, and you became conscious that the eye of God rested on you, that He was close to you, how would you feel, my reader? Do you think God could speak of you, as of this blessed One here, as “well pleased” with your ways? God’s delight in Jesus was attested by the gift of the Holy Ghost. He was the seal of the Father’s delight in the perfect humanity and spotless ways of that lowly, praying Man. The Holy Ghost came on the Lord without blood, without redemption. The believer gets the Holy Ghost now as the direct result of the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ; it is the seal of certain redemption, as having been cleansed by His precious blood.

A

There had never been anything up to this moment, in the history of man, to equal this scene. The birth of Jesus was wonderful, and a messenger *from* heaven might and did announce His birth; but now the heaven is *opened* as He emerged from the water, and the voice of God, the Father, is heard saying, "This is my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased." He was the only sinless, holy, perfect, blessed man in this scene of whom God could say, "In thee I am well pleased." Oh! the Christian's heart is refreshed by the sight, so unique, but so perfectly comely and fitting. There is no "hear him" at this point, as in the transfiguration on the Mount. Why? Because His moral worth and blessed words ought to have gained Him every ear, and it is taken for granted that He would be listened to. Further on in the Gospel, the Father's voice is again heard saying, "This is my beloved Son," but adding emphatically, "hear him" (Luke ix. 35).

Jesus was about thirty years of age. Time—the true test of all—had been given to show what He was. Here was One of whom the world was utterly ignorant. God's Son was in their midst, and they knew Him not. Here it is no question of a man coming, and testifying to Him, as John the Baptist had already done, but the Father of that Son speaks, saying, "This is my beloved Son."

Reader, what think you of Him? Can you answer and say, "This is my beloved Saviour." It is a sad thing if you cannot.

Having seen thus *heaven opened* on the Son of

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God here on earth, I will now point out to you a few other things in the Word of God that are opened; and I trust, as the result, that your heart may be opened, for if your heart be not opened to receive Christ, hell will yet open its mouth to receive you.

AN OPENED BOOK.

In Luke iv. Jesus is seen, in the power of the Holy Ghost, led into the wilderness, there utterly vanquishing Satan morally by dependence and obedience. Thereafter "he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read" (ver. 17). He begins at home where He is known. "And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had *opened the book*, he found the place where it is written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book."

Now the passage, from which this is a quotation, goes on thus:—"To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and *the day of vengeance* of our God" (Isa. lxi. 2). But look at the grace of Christ; the moment he gets to that comma,—and for the unsaved sinner there is really nothing but a comma between him and hell—He closes the book. If the

Lord were to now open the book, it would be all over with you, unsaved reader, for "the day of vengeance" come, "the acceptable year of the Lord" has ended. Now is "the acceptable year of the Lord"—the day of grace, of mercy, of pardon, and salvation; when the Lord again opens the book it will be "the day of vengeance," and, then, where will you be?

When Jesus came to this comma, why does He not read on? Because He says, as it were, the day of judgment is deferred, put back, while grace utters her lovely messages. How long is the acceptable time called? *A year!* But it is "*the day of vengeance.*" Judgment will come in a moment, when you are not thinking of it. Judgment is short and swift,—a day suffices for it. It is a year of grace, and will you, therefore, trifle with it? I beseech you not to.

Does a "broken-hearted" one read this? God sent His Son to heal your broken heart. Are you a "poor" sinner? God sent His Son to enrich you with all the blessings of the Gospel. Have you been a captive to sin and Satan? Jesus came "to preach deliverance to the captives." Oh! it is worth while to have one's heart broken to know what it is to have Him bind it up. Would Mary and her sister have been without those four days at Bethany? "Oh, no," they would say, "our very sorrow, and misery, and necessity, gave an opportunity for showing what He was. We saw the tear in His eye, we heard the words of comfort

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from His blessed lips, we saw the work of power of His hand; no, those days we would not have been without."

Christ came, He says, "to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind." Christ opens everything. Are you blind, He opens your eyes. Are you in prison, He opens the door and sets you free. Are you in the grave? He unlocks its hold, and lets you out. What could man do for Lazarus? Lay him in the tomb. What could Jesus do for him? Call him out of the tomb, and then say, "Loose him, and let him go." It is life and liberty. This is the Gospel. Do you know it? Have you been healed, delivered, set free? This is the day in which Christ can bless you, in which the Lord can receive you,—it is "the acceptable year of the Lord," and it still goes on.

I love to think it was the Lord Himself first came to preach these glad tidings. The listeners were interested for a moment, and "wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth" (ver. 22). But presently, when He began to touch their consciences, it was another thing. God must reach the conscience, for while you learn that He is good, you must also learn that you are utterly bad; while you learn that "God is love," you must also learn that your heart is full of hatred against Him. If you learn the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, you must also learn that He is the truth, too. Thus, though the people wondered at His grace, they could not bear the truth, so they "rose

up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong" (ver. 29). Awful exposure of their heart's hatred! What does He do? "He, passing through the midst of them, went his way" (ver. 30). What was His way? It was a way of divine mercy and goodness to man in every conceivable condition. Did He meet hungry men—He fed them; blind men—He gave them sight; leprous men—He cleaned them; deaf men—He opened their ears; dead men—He raised them. Whatever the need was, He met it. This was His way. He was the Healer, the Helper, the Blessor, this gracious Son of God.

At length men got tired of being ministered to by Christ, when along with His grace, the truth as to man and his real state came out, and they made up their minds that they would not bear His presence any longer. They wanted and plotted to get rid of Him. This is what men did with this blessed One. They cried, "Crucify him, crucify him." Tired of His presence they put Him on the cross. Perfect love and goodness personified was in their midst, and they could only say, "Away with him!" When He was presented to them as their king, they cried, "We have no king but Cæsar," mocked Him with a crown of thorns, and purple raiment; and then having stripped and nailed Him to a tree, they gambled for His garments beneath His eyes. Who put Him on the cross? Men. Men with hearts like yours and mine. Yes, and our sins nailed

DIVINE OPENINGS.

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Him there. Of this expression of perfect goodness concerning whom God said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," man said, "He is guilty of death," and they put Him on the cross.

Look at the awfulness of the hardness of the heart of man. Dying, and as they thought Jesus was, dying of thirst, when one more tender than others would have given Him something to drink, the rest said "Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to save him." Seeing Him suffer, they say, Let Him suffer, give Him nothing to assuage His burning thirst; and He died! And does God at once take vengeance for the murder of His Son? No; God takes that moment, as it were, to say, "I will put away everything that could come between you and me." He rends the veil of the Temple from the top to the bottom. That which stood between God and man, is taken away by God. That death of shame and agony the Saviour suffered, at the hand of man, was the actual means of putting away the very sin of crucifying Him.

OPENED GRAVES.

A work was at that moment wrought by Jesus that opened the grave itself. Nature was, as it were, more tender than the hearts of men, "the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; and the *graves were opened*, and many bodies of the saints which slept arose" (Matt. xxvii. 51, 52). What took man into death? Sin. What took man out of death? Redemption. The graves were opened the moment

the Saviour died. Before even His own grave was tenanted, God opened the graves of the saints. Christ has robbed death of its sting, the grave of its victory. By dying He has annulled death? How do I see that first? By an opened grave. The whole question of sin has been settled by the cross of Christ, and the opened grave and resurrection of the dead, are God's testimony to His estimate of the value of the work of Christ, and now the believer is associated with a risen Christ.

OPENED UNDERSTANDINGS.

The Lord rises from the dead, the work of redemption accomplished. The proof of redemption is in the opened graves—*opened graves* the moment He died, and *empty graves* the moment He is risen. The day the Lord rose from the dead, He took His place amongst His own loved ones, said, "Peace unto you," and "then *opened he their understandings*, that they might understand the scriptures" (Luke xxiv. 45).

THE HEAVENS OPENED TO US.

But the work of Christ opens other things besides the grave, for, having ascended into heaven, and sent down the Holy Ghost, that blessed Spirit of truth indwells the believer, and we read of Stephen, that he being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, and said, "Behold I see *the heavens opened*, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of

DIVINE OPENINGS.

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God" (Acts vii. 55, 56). Heaven was opened then to a saint to look up and see Jesus at the right hand of God—to see a Man in the glory of God. A Man has gone in there to represent the believer in the glory of God, the Man who took his place, and bore his sins on the cross.

AN OPENED HEART.

These blessed tidings about a risen and glorified Christ the Holy Ghost loves to spread, and Paul, led of the Spirit, in Acts xvi., finds himself called to Europe to proclaim them; and at Philippi, by the river side, "a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, heard us, *whose heart the Lord opened*, that she attended unto the things spoken of Paul" (ver. 14).

Has the Lord ever opened your heart, my dear reader?

This woman heard and believed, and then took her stand out and out with the Lord's servants, for "when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, *come into my house*, and abide there; and she constrained us" (ver. 15). This woman opened her heart to the Lord, and opened her house to His servants. Her heart was the Lord's, and her house was His too.

Christ opened everything, opened heaven, opened the book, opened eyes, opened graves, opened understandings to understand the Scriptures, opened hearts and houses, and can you have a closed heart

still? Oh! listen to this, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev. iii. 20). Now you have the opportunity of opening. It has been the Lord opening hitherto. Is your heart still shut? Look then at Rev. iv., "Behold a door was opened in heaven." The Lord has there come and called up His own saints, and so what John sees open, the foolish virgins of Matt. xxv. will find shut.

You who refuse to open your hearts to the Lord, there is yet another scene that concerns you. In Rev. xix. 11, heaven is opened again, and Christ is seen coming out to "judge and make war," and then in chapter xx. certain "books were opened." The book of the history of your life down here is opened by the hand of Jesus, and what does He read of you. Born in sin, lived in sin, died in sin. Born in sin, lived an unbeliever, died an unbeliever, and lest there should be any doubt upon this point, God turns to His own book—the book of life. He looks down His register for your name, to see if your name is recorded there. Alas! it is not there. Oh, what a fearful thing for you! Will you not turn to Jesus to-day? Will you still shut your eyes to everything that He has opened? If so, you shall yet see two things. You shall see the Lord when He opens the heavens in glory, and the books in judgment, and you shall see

AN OPENED HELL,

POWER IN A NAME.

11

when the prophet's woe is fulfilled on the careless, pleasure-loving worldling, according as it is written, "Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflame them! and the harp and the viol, the tabret and pipe, and wine, are in their feasts; but they regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hands. Therefore my people are gone into captivity, because they have no knowledge: and their honourable men are famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst. Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and *opened her mouth* without measure: and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it" (Isa v. 11-14).

W. T. P. W.

POWER IN A NAME.*



TELEGRAM was handed to me; I quickly opened it, and found it was from one at some distance, asking me to draw a large sum of money for him. The money was required at once, and would be useless a few hours later.

The case was urgent, for it was almost time for the bank to close.

* The well-known writer of this article fell sweetly asleep in Jesus last July. It's truly a voice from eternity to the unsaved, and she "being dead yet speaketh."

I hurried into the street and called a cab, "Too late for the bank to-day," said the driver, but I heeded him not, and said, "Drive on, drive on!" The distance was short, but it seemed long to me, and I looked at my watch and asked the driver to hurry on. As we reached the door of the bank, its great bolt was drawn and the lock turned: I was too late! too late! I ran up the steps and knocked loudly, the key was placed in the lock; the door opened, and I was greeted by these words, "Past bank hours, no admittance now." "It is an urgent case," I said; "do let me in, I must have a sum of money to-night." The porter at first hesitated, then smiled, and let me go inside, at the same time re-locking the door, to keep out other intruders. The hours for business were over, one or two men were leaving their desks, and the last was just closing a cash-box. "Excuse me," I said, "but it is of great importance I should have a certain sum of money to-night; even though it is past bank hours, would you favour me?" He looked at me very calmly and shook his head, but seeing I was very urgent, waited for a minute and then said, "Where is your order?" "I have none," I said sadly, "but you will trust me, you know me." He looked thoughtful and said, "Ah, it is not a matter of trust; had it been a smaller sum, I might have given you it on my own responsibility, but I have no power to give you or any one else this large sum without a signed cheque. I am very sorry, but I cannot do it."

It was useless to say more, I was grieved, and

as I stood by the counter I prayed, "Lord, show me what I am to do." In a moment the answer came. I had the telegram in my pocket telling me the exact sum to draw, and bearing the name of the person who had sent it; I joyfully handed it over the counter, and my answer was, the money paid down without a moment's hesitation. As I left the bank, I could not help repeating over and over again. "There is power in a name!"

Reader, do you understand? It was needless to demand that sum of money. To protest that I was worthy of trust was of no avail, it was THE NAME that was required, and nothing else would do, but that name proved all powerful. This incident has oft-times led my heart to think of that precious name, that all-powerful name, which is above every name, that name which is as "ointment poured forth," to those who know it in truth, that name which is either a "savour of life unto life, or death unto death." Reader, have you ever tested the power of that name, the name of Jesus? Is it a precious, blessed name to you, calling out your heart's deepest affection, and causing a thrill of joy to vibrate through you at any moment; or is it a powerless name that falls unheeded or uncared for on your ear?

Jesus! Jesus! Jesus! Reader, is He yours? Has He saved you?

Is His name dearer and sweeter than any name to you? Is it the magnet that has drawn your heart from the perishing vanities of earth, to find

your rest, your home, your life, your all above? If so you will bear me out in saying, there is nothing like it. And there is the same power in that name now for every weary burdened soul. "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever," the balm, the oil, the comfort for every smitten heart. Are you in difficulty, not knowing how to turn, or what to do, "troubled on every side," the heavens as brass and the world frozen and cheerless? Ah! "the name of the Lord is a strong tower;" "blessed are all they that put their trust in him." "They looked to him and were lightened." Hope revives as you say, "He is mine." He can never die. He is the unchangeable One, and He has saved me, and He will never give me up, the living, loving Lord!

But some one may read this who knows nothing of the power or virtue of that all-prevailing name; who has never known what it is to lay that name before God in faith, and claim the answer that name merits. Perhaps indeed you have gone in your own name, but like an unsigned bank cheque, it has proved worthless. "They shall call his name Jesus, because he shall save his people from their sins." Reader, has He saved you? Have you called upon that name in faith? Have you bowed to its authority? For "every knee shall bow—and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." The day is coming when you too shall be compelled to bow to the name of Him whom you have so long despised and

THREE UPLIFTINGS.

15

rejected, and if you refuse His gracious offers of a free salvation now, you will one day have to own the power of His name in judgment. Dare your eye refuse to look unto Him now for salvation in the day of grace? You will yet have to see Him whom you reject; for "every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him." Listen to His voice now. "Turn ye! turn ye! for why will ye die?"

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden; and I will give you rest." K.



THREE UPLIFTINGS.



F my reader will turn to the sixth chapter of the Book of the Prophet Isaiah, he will find a description of what the prophet saw "in the year that king Uzziah died"—a sight which evoked the cry from his inmost soul, "Woe is me! for I am cut off [*margin*]; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." And then the reason which produced this cry is given, "For mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts" (v. 5). The burning holiness of the Lord, expressed by the seraphim (or

"burners"), disclosed the deep corruption of his heart to this prophet of the Lord, now measured by a standard which had never heretofore reached his soul.

This chapter therefore calls upon us to turn back to examine that scripture which tells of the course and death of the leprous king to which it refers. In 2 Chron. xxvi. we read his history, and how *his heart was "lifted up" to his destruction*; while in Isa. vi. we see what brought home to the prophet the corruptions of his own heart, measured and disclosed by *the glory of "the Lord, sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up."* But when we turn to the New Testament (John xii.), where this same scene is recalled and interpreted for us, we are told that "These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him." It was the glory of Jesus, the Son of God and Son of Man, whose voice speaks to our inmost souls, in the accents of His grace, in these words:—"I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (John xii. 32).

We have thus, in these connected passages of Scripture, three times mentioned a "*lifting up*." In 2 Chron. xxvi., a sinner's heart, in spiritual pride, "*lifted up*" to his destruction; in Isa. vi., the glory of the Lord of hosts, high and "*lifted up*," in convicting rays; and in John xii., the Son of Man in grace for sinners,—"*lifted up*," between earth and heaven, on the cross of a malefactor,—the Saviour of the lost, the Daysman between God and sinners,

THREE UPLIFTINGS.

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—to draw all men unto Him; thus disclosing the heart of God.

One more “lifting up” we find in Ezek. xxviii., where, in a dark and mysterious way, the fall of the mighty enemy of our souls—“the strong man,” Satan—is described. Filled with pride and rebellion against God, the revolt of this being great and mighty, the “anointed cherub,” “full of wisdom,” “perfect in beauty,” whose “heart was *lifted up* because of thy beauty” is implied. Yet, in that moment of pride and rebellion is he cast down from his eminence, and fated to be cast by his conqueror out of the heavenlies to the earth (Rev. xii.); and from the earth to be “cast into the bottomless pit” (Rev. xx.); and from that, when “loosed for a little season” out of prison, “cast into the lake of fire,” “to be tormented day and night for ever and ever,” in the “place prepared for the devil and his angels.”

We come, therefore, to the moment in the history of God’s ways, when everything must from that time be measured not only by the law of God, but by His own glory. Its burning rays have now shone forth as revealed, though not yet openly manifested, and every soul must be able to meet that glory, the glory of Him who is a “consuming fire,” or be lost for ever in everlasting destruction from His presence and the glory of His power.

Think of this, my reader. You may be virtuous, amiable, upright, honest, sincere,—for I do not speak now of the openly evil, “whose end is de-

struction" and "outer darkness" their portion, as driven away from His presence for ever; but to those who, like the prophet of the Lord, served Him faithfully; who denounced the evil they saw around, reasoned and pleaded with sinners, told out faithfully God's ways and the privileges of His people, warned in earnest language, of judgment to come; yet who never had till this moment measured their own hearts, and seen their deep corruption, under the blaze of that glorious light at which the seraphim veiled their faces with their wings, unable with open face to behold its burning rays!

Isaiah was one like this. Living in the midst of a people, just like thousands at the present hour, who were nominally the Lord's, under the religious privileges of that day, he sang the song of the vineyard of the Lord of hosts (ch. v. 1), and told forth the loving culture and tender care of His hand, to produce fruit meet for Him from their hearts. His vineyard then was "the house of Israel," "the men of Judah his pleasant plant." "He looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry" (v. 7). Judgment must come therefore upon those who were then, as now, named by the name of the Lord, and who brought forth evil and rebellion and wickedness, where fruit had been sought, and where the culture and privileges of His hand had been bestowed.

Isaiah, therefore, must now pronounce the "woes" upon such. "Woe" to the covetous (ver. 8);

THREE UPLIFTINGS.

19

“woe” to the drunkard (ver. 11); “woe” to scoffers (ver. 18, 19); “woe” to the liars (ver. 20); “woe” to the self-sufficient (ver. 21); “woe” to the corrupt (ver. 23). Six times over the burning lips and pen of the prophet pronounce “woes” upon those who profaned Jehovah’s name. “The anger of the Lord” is kindled, he says; “darkness and sorrow” are at the door; “hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure, and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it. And the mean man shall be brought down, and the mighty man shall be humbled, and the eyes of the lofty shall be humbled: but the Lord of hosts shall be exalted in judgment, and God, that is holy, shall be sanctified in righteousness” (ver. 14-16).

At last the leprous king expires,—a rotten loathsome leper, in a several house. Outwardly, like you perhaps, my reader, he had sought the Lord; he reigned well, and his nation was blest; “his name spread far abroad” too. He made great munitions, and was marvellously helped, till he was strong; and as long as he sought the Lord he prospered. But the moment came when the deep evil of the heart was discovered, which no outward blessing from God, or professed seeking after Him, had disclosed. “His heart was *lifted up* to his destruction.” He dared to enter into the presence of God like one who had a right to be there. And God smote him with leprosy. It rose up in his forehead, plainly and openly, so that all could behold.

The leprosy of sin and spiritual pride came to the surface, disclosing the corrupt stream which poured through his veins. The springs of his heart were reached, and he was a leper till the day of his death, "cut off from the house of the Lord," for "the Lord had smitten him." Separate from all he rots and dies, and is buried.

What a picture of a sinner's condition, course, and end! And then, when Isaiah's mind was thinking, it may be, of the fate of the sinner, portrayed in the history of this man whose heart had been lifted up to his destruction, the glory of the Lord of hosts was lifted up before him. What a lesson then reaches his heart! He who had denounced others, and pronounced six woes against them, finds the burning rays of Jehovah's glory piercing to the quick of his soul, and the woes that were pronounced against others were concentrated upon himself; the seventh woe finds that *he* is the one whose leprosy of heart is laid bare. The burners (seraphim) had cried, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts!" with not one word of denunciation against him; but the light of the glory of God pierced with its convicting rays into the quick of his soul, and "Woe is me, for I am cut off," just as a leper, is his cry. Convicted in the depth of his being, he finds there "is no difference" between himself and those whom he had denounced. Yet the burning rays do not consume him; the day had not come when they will do their work; the hand of Him whose glory thus had shone forth, was stretched out still in

THREE UPLIFTINGS.

21

mercy. The anger of the Lord was "*kindled*," but did not yet *consume*. The hand that was stretched forth to smite, was stretched forth in mercy still (Isa. v. 25).

Over seven hundred years of long-suffering pass away, and the glory was laid by; the Lord of hosts appears on earth, when the axe was about to strike the root of the trees in judgment. He veils His glory, but now reveals it that of an only-begotten Son (John i. 14). Three times over do we find Him telling of His being "*lifted up*" in the Gospel of John. Sinners were to be called, because none were *righteous*. "I came not to call the *righteous*," He says, for "there is none righteous, no, not one." Sinners required a Saviour, and Jesus was there. Born a Saviour, He lived a Saviour amongst men. But none were reached. A *Holy* Man, and *fallen* men, had no link between them except the fact of humanity. He must therefore die, or dwell alone. But what would a Saviour be without His saved? What a Redeemer, without His redeemed? What a Sanctifier, without His sanctified? Hence Jesus at once announces the cross. 1. It was a *necessity* for man that the Son of Man *must* be "*lifted up*" (John iii. 14). 2. It was the *wickedness* of man's heart that would be disclosed in this lifting up,—“When YE have *lifted up* the Son of Man, *then* shall ye know that I am he” (John viii.). But then it would be too late. And 3. The corn of wheat must die, or abide alone (John xii.), “And I, if I be *lifted up* from the earth, will draw all

men unto me;" and thus the *heart of God would be revealed*. If He walked on earth, He would draw the Jew; but, lifted up between earth and heaven, the Daysman between a leprous world of sinners and a thrice holy God, meeting the *sinner's* need and *His* glory, bearing the divine judgment in all its burning holiness, and bearing our sins—(reader, were yours there, or are they on your own soul? faith alone can reply!)—in His own body as His own, He dies!

Reader, the Daysman has laid His hand upon that throne, and met its glory in judgment. Has He laid His hand on you? Refuse Him thus,—for "His hand is stretched out still" in mercy,—and hear what follows for you, as certainly, by-and-by, as is His mercy now. He "*lifted up* his hand to heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever and ever, . . . that time should be no longer; but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, . . . the mystery of God should be finished. The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly" (Rev. x. and xi.). Satan's woe had fallen on the apostates of the Jews; man's woe on the empires of Europe; and now God's final woe falls on all who are out of Christ, and everlasting destruction from His presence and the glory of His power are the end of that scene!

Look once more on the last reference to Isa. vi. in the New Testament (Acts xxviii.), "Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet, . . . the

"CLEAR SHINING AFTER RAIN."

23

heart of this people is waxed gross, and their *ears* are dull of hearing, and their *eyes* have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them."

Reader, there *is* such a thing as the heart being hardened, the eye closed, the ear dull of hearing. Is it so with you? Or can you say, "'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us (can you say, *unto me?*) by his Spirit.' I possess them and rejoice in them in Christ my Lord! And now with open face, beholding His glory, I am being changed into His image, from glory to glory, even by the Spirit of the Lord. I rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

F. G. P.



"CLEAR SHINING AFTER RAIN."



"**E**LL right at last!" involuntarily escaped my lips, as I saw approaching me, at the close of a Gospel meeting, an elderly man, whose smiling face bespoke a new found joy.

"Yes, thank God, it is!" said he, and the long life of a self-satisfying religion, or rather

one which lulls but cannot satisfy, followed by a few weeks of painful discoveries of the sandy foundation on which he had all along so faithfully built, had now ended, and he was *at peace*! Well might he say, "Thank God!"

And the bright face, cloudless and sunny, told the tale.

There is joy in heaven; yes, and joy in the heart of all who receive Christ, and to whom power is given to become children of God.

The change in his countenance was so striking,—the transition from gloom to gladness, from despair to rapture—that I felt constrained to ask him if conversion were not a wonderful thing?

"Yes," said he, "it's just like—like—like coming out of darkness into light."

A good illustration, thought I. So it is—and "marvellous light," too; and hence we find it written of the believers in Jerusalem, immediately after their conversion, when they had so much to endure for Christ's sake—"after ye were illuminated." How expressive, but true of all who are truly converted! But how is this?

Well, my reader, we are either burdened by a load of sins, against which conscience cries out, or else we are deceived by a Christless religion, whereby the conscience is drugged, until we are converted. Either way, the soul is guilty and wretched. Then when this is felt, as, indeed, it should be, the load becomes intolerable—dark forebodings, dread misgivings, a "fearful looking for of judgment," tor-

ture and agonise it! The very face portrays the inward battle,—food, sleep, occupation, are secondary things, and the one absorbing passion can only find expression in the publican's prayer—"God be merciful to me, *the sinner*." Thoughts of an offended God terrify, feelings of personal guilt overwhelm, and the only star of hope is lisp'd in the lovely word "MERCY." The distracted soul tremblingly interposes that golden word between God and its guilty self.

Then, with more than lightning speed, mercy comes, and in her train forgiveness, peace, salvation, flowing freely now from the blessed "redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Mercy's message falls on the ear with tidings of a full, free salvation, and faith leaps to embrace the news. Then the glad illumination! The burdened conscience springs from her load as cleansed by the precious blood of Christ; the heart feels for the first time the pulsations of a new life, and the smile of divine satisfaction plays upon the face.

And that is something new, and as real as new.

Friend, have you ever known it? Like many, you have doubtless pursued the will o' the wisp far too long, till, perhaps, your wearied heart would grasp the substance. Well, let me urge you to come to Christ. Beside Him all is shadow. He is enough to fill the poor little heart of man with all its immeasurable longings. Ah! let me commend Him, the Saviour, the Christ of God, to you. Only prove Him. One taste of His grace will furnish

the proof. A host innumerable vouches for His worth. Myriads of guilty ones witness to His grace. God proclaims His exclusive right to save. His glorious Godhead, His lowly, perfect manhood, His infinite condescension, His love beyond expression, His death, resurrection, ascension, intercession, and coming glories, all assert Him as the only, but the ever ready Saviour. Charming Gospel message! Oh! dear reader, what can be said more? Is it not for you to reply, "He is mine, and I am His"?

J. W. S.



AN ALMIGHTY RIGHTEOUS SAVIOUR-GOD.



LET me illustrate to you what salvation is. There is a peculiar sweetness in the word salvation, and to an awakened soul there is none more charming.

A ship is lost at sea; everything is swept away that would afford the means of reaching land. She is drifted about by the wind and tide, and is at the mercy of the waves. She is lost, absolutely lost. What do the dear people on board that vessel need? Salvation! To them the word is full of meaning, volumes are contained therein. A ship heaves in sight, and bears down upon them. They behold,

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in that vessel coming to their rescue, salvation. Their sorrow is turned into joy; and their faces, once the picture of misery, are now the expression of unspeakable happiness. Already they feel the force and blessedness of that word,—salvation. They are taken from the wreck, transferred to the other vessel, and taken safely to land. It is a complete deliverance,—it is salvation. Lost and helpless they were, but *now* saved, and consequently full of joy and gratitude.

It is thus with man. The whole world lies in wickedness, is guilty and condemned, and in danger of eternal perdition. Man, who is a sinner, is lost, like the vessel on the sea, with masts, compass, boats, and rudder, all gone. It is his condition in relation to God and eternity. He is self-destroyed. Lost! is the word that describes his condition.

Now, what does he need? It is salvation; present, complete, and eternal salvation. But how is he to get it? for in himself he is lost, guilty, and condemned. Like the condemned culprit awaiting the execution of the sentence, if mercy does not interpose, justice must take its course, and he must pay the penalty of his crime.

Thank God, mercy has interposed, blessedly interposed, in behalf of the poor condemned sinner. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John iii. 16). In this way has God interposed, in His infinite mercy and love, for the rescuing of man

from eternal perdition. "Salvation is of the Lord" (Jonah ii. 9). "The Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear" (Isa. lix. 1).

And mark, beloved reader, how the attribute of righteousness is mingled with God's love in the sinner's salvation. God is a Saviour-God; as it is written, "There is no God else besides me; a just God, and a Saviour, . . . look unto me and be ye saved" (Isa. xlv. 21). Again, "To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness; that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. iii. 26). On the ground of the infinite worth of the sacrifice of His Son, God can come out in righteousness as well as in mercy, and save the sinner. The question of sin has been settled by the Lord Jesus on the cross, which leaves God free in righteousness, as well as in love, to save.

Some are looking at their faith, others at their frames and feelings, others at their works, others at their resolutions; but the verse says ME,—“Look unto me, and be ye saved.” Ah, yes, it is Himself who is the Saviour-God; our look must be to, and our trust must be in, Him, and Him alone.

In conclusion, dear reader, "Salvation is of the Lord," it is the purchase of the blood of Jesus the Son of God; it is ready, it is free, it is without money and without price; it is brought to you, it is offered you, it is pressed upon you, as God's gift. Will you have it, and be saved for eternity?

E. A.

THE LOST HAND, AND THE FOUND SHEEP.



SOME time ago when a friend of mine was on a visit to me he kindly gave my little boy a new bright Waterbury watch, which in course of time required some repair, and I took it to a jeweller to be adjusted.

While waiting in the shop to hear what was amiss with it, the watchmaker accidentally dropped one of the hands, which he thought fell upon the floor. For some time, kneeling down, he made diligent search for it, but without the desired effect. Leaning over the counter, I quoted to him, when on his knees, these and other scriptures:—"All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way" (Isa. liii. 6). "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke xix. 10). "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep" (John x. 11). "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand" (John x. 28). At the same time, I requested him not to give up seeking the *lost* hand, and remarked that if God was seeking him, a *lost* sheep, He would never overlook

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him, never pass him by, nor give him up, but would *find* him; and I pressed the point that it was only the LOST that could be FOUND.

I would here say, that from past acquaintance with him I feared he did not possess either eternal life or peace with God.

He rose from his knees in considerable exercise of soul, and I told him the Holy Ghost was, so to speak, brushing about in the rubbish of this dark world to find *lost* sinners, just as the woman mentioned in Luke xv. swept her floor for her lost piece of silver, lighting a candle for the purpose. I said to the young man, that as this watch-hand could not be easily replaced, being of a special kind manufactured in America, he had perhaps better strike a light and brush up in further search; which he most willingly did, till there was a small heap of dust in the middle of the floor, in which he searched carefully, but still unsuccessfully. I reminded him, that if he could find the *lost* hand, we would rejoice together over it as the woman rejoiced over her found piece of silver, and as was so when the lost sheep was found, and when the prodigal returned to his father.

A second time he rose from his knees, evidently in deeper exercise of soul, and said he would like to be *found* as a *lost* sheep, owned he was really *lost*, and deserved to remain *lost* for ever. He said he had a praying father, who would get his dear old heart gladdened if he knew his son's soul was saved. On the following Sunday he went home to

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see his father (a believer), who resides in a neighbouring town.

During the day the son became so anxious that his father sent for a relative to speak to and pray with him. In the interview God, in His grace and mercy, *found* the *lost* one, and gave him peace in believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, and in trusting His precious blood that cleanses from all sin, and shelters from all judgment; and, thank God, this dear soul is now, I believe, rejoicing in his safety on the shoulders of the Good Shepherd, and on his way to glory to be with Him and like Him for ever.

Dear reader, do not lay down this paper on merely satisfying your curiosity by reading the narrative, but listen a little to another story, and allow your conscience to answer a question or two.

Have *you* ever realised your *lost* and ruined condition, taken your true place as such before God, and received peace in believing in the Lord Jesus Christ? Eternal praise be to the name of the Lord if you have!

Have you ever given joy in the presence of the angels in heaven over you, as a *lost* and *found* repentant sinner, more than over ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance? If so, I join in thanking God.

The lost ones are being found far and near, and soon the last will be found, then the door will be shut for ever. Well indeed will it be for all who are not found outside the door that will never

more open. The Good Shepherd is on the look out for the lost and helpless. He passes by all who think they are not lost, and who imagine they can get back in their own fancied strength.

But remember, He *finds* only the *lost* ones; others need no finding. He did "not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Matt. ix. 13). My friend, don't deceive yourself, nor let Satan deceive you either. God says we ARE LOST, without strength, and without hope in the world. Do not for one single moment dream of ever getting back of yourself.

Did you ever hear of a sheep finding its way back of itself to the place it had strayed from? I never did. Nor have I heard that any soul ever did. Sheep, unlike some animals, always stray farther away.

So it is with the sinner. He strays farther and farther on the dark mountains of sin. Ever since our first parents strayed away behind the trees of the garden of Eden, man in his natural state has tried to get as far away from God as possible.

Satan wants you to remain lost, and lost for ever, and is doing all in his power to accomplish his purpose. He will hinder your blessing as far as satanic power can hinder it, which is one reason why it is so important this solemn question should be deeply pondered. The Lord Jesus Christ came down to where we are on purpose to seek us, save us, and satisfy us with Himself in the glory for ever.

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Beloved soul, then why not let Him have His way with you? He said when down here (and it is as true to-day), "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. xi. 28).

O do think of being lost for ever, in the regions of eternal misery, away in endless duration from "the Shepherd that died for the sake of the flock,"—for lost sinners; and away from, ah! it may be, a father or a mother, a brother or a sister, a husband or a wife, who is now praying for you, and yearning over your soul at this very moment.

Now, altogether apart from the consequences of sin, and the rejection of the wonderful salvation wrought out by the Saviour, is there nothing to attract your heart in that Blessed One who, at such a cost, and in such love, came from such a height and went to such a depth to save such lost ones, and who is gone back to prepare a place for all who receive Him in this the day of God's grace and long suffering mercy? "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2).

May God, by His Spirit, even while you are reading this paper, dear unsaved one, open your eyes to the reality of all that is now before your soul, so that you may see where you have strayed to, and the consequences. May He find you just as you are and where you are, and thus bring you back to Himself, that you may have your eternal portion in Himself, for His own precious name's sake. Amen.

J. N.

RELIGION OR CHRIST.



BEFORE the coming of Christ men knew that they were weak, for the law brought out man's weakness, and showed that he was always breaking it; but until Christ came, the truth was never fully brought out, that man in his nature was totally opposed to God, and could not be improved. If the poor man lying at the pool of Bethesda, in John v., could only have got to the place of healing, he would have been healed, but he had no strength; and if you could only keep the law, and be what you ought to be, you would be all right for time on earth. But you cannot. The law says you are to love the Lord with all your heart, and you do not. The law says you ought to be holy, and you are not. The law says you ought to keep the commandments, and you have not; and therefore the law only condemns you. The law discovers the weakness of man; but until Christ came, there had not come out this, that man was "*dead*." You will find this word "*dead*" often in Scripture. "You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins."

"Oh, but," you say, "I am not dead; I am all alive." Yes, so you are; alive in sins. Alive to Satan, but dead to God. Have you heard the

voice of the Son of God? Have you bowed to Jesus? If you have not, you are still *dead*. I care not how religious you may be. Can religion save a person? Look at Nicodemus, the most religious man then on earth, a Pharisee, a ruler. What does Jesus say to him? "You must be born again." His religion was no use to him. It was the highest ecclesiastical council of the most religious nation that put the Lord to death. Satan will help you to be the most religious person in all the world, if he can only keep you from Christ.

When once you are brought to Christ, the tale is altogether altered. It is not religion now you talk about; but it is all about Christ. When I say religion, I mean that outward form, the shell without the kernel—a form of prayer, a round of ordinances—where Christ is not known. There is nothing that hurries people into the endless sorrows of a lost eternity like religion without Christ. Have you heard the voice of Jesus calling you? If you have not, no matter how religious you may be, you are dead; yes, *dead*!

"But," you say, "the dead must mean some terrible class of persons, some very wicked people." Where do you put yourself, then? I ask. I know no worse person than myself; and I will tell you why. I know the evil of my own heart, and the gravity of my own sins, and I do not know other people's. But is there any real beating of your heart towards Christ? Have you ever met Christ? Has your life been marked by love to the Saviour because

you have known His love? Ah! if you have known His love, you are out from among the dead. You are among the living; for you have heard the voice of the Son of God. All depends on whether or not you have heard the voice of the Son of God; that decides whether you are among the dead or among the living. Life manifests itself. A living child takes food; it may be sick, of course, but that is a temporary thing; a dead child has no desire at all. If I go to talk to an unconverted person about Christ, there is no interest. If he do not speak out, and say he dislikes the subject, yet the moment he can escape he does so. I remember very well the only time a young man spoke faithfully to me about my soul when I was unconverted. It was at the bottom of my father's grounds; and I sent him to hell in my heart, though my lips said nothing. I was angry beyond description because he dared to speak to me about Christ. Utterly "dead in sins," I showed my state to God, if not to man for courtesy's sake.

Get quite clear on this point, my dear reader. The "dead" are those in whose heart there is no pulse of life toward Christ, who care nothing for Christ, where there is no love for Christ; and oh, tell me, is there any love for Him in your heart now? Is there any pulse of life in your heart now? Not unless you have heard the word of Christ, and believed it.

Whenever the word of the Lord is really received, there is a mighty effect on the spot. The

impotent man in John v. hears from the Lord the single word "Rise;" and he does it. One word from Christ is sufficient, and he obeys it. In the obedience of faith, he rises on the spot, takes up his bed, and goes out. And it is just the same with the Gospel now. When you hear the word of Jesus now, if you believe it, immediately you are made whole; immediately you, who have been numbered among the dead till that moment, are among the living. You get from Him, on the spot, what that blessed Saviour loves to communicate,—*life* to a dead soul. Oh the immense power of the word of Christ! His word is heard, believed, received; and look at the effect. Immediately the dead spring into life, the defiled are cleansed, the guilty are justified; yea, the soul is saved on the spot, and knows it.

People say, "We do not believe in sudden conversions." I do, then. There never was a soul converted yet that it was not sudden. It takes but one moment to pass from death unto life; there is but one moment in which a soul passes from darkness to light. There is but one moment when a soul passes through the door, turns its back on the world, and turns its face towards God.

Now, whenever grace is tasted, Christ known, God believed, and His word bowed to, the Holy Ghost comes to dwell in the believer, and leads him to be a witness for Christ, like the man I have referred to, who goes away and says, "Jesus made me whole." I like that word, "*Jesus made me*

whole." No hiding the colours. At first he knew not who He was who had healed him; he only knew he was made whole. And that is often the way with a soul. At first, perhaps, it knows but little,—knows something of what Jesus has done, but does not know Himself,—but by and by clearer light comes, and then comes out a clearer ring, "*Jesus made me whole.*" That is what a loving heart says. Ah! tell me now, is not that what you would like to go on your way saying? Would you not like to be a witness for Christ now,—all your life a witness for Him,—a witness for His love,—a witness for His grace? to say boldly "*Jesus has made me whole,*" instead of that miserable, "I do not feel sure; I hope I am saved, but I am not certain; I do believe, but I am not sure I've got salvation"? What is the person who so speaks? A witness *against* Christ, I say, instead of a witness for Him, for he is really saying, "I have come to Him, and He has not given me rest."

Suppose I come from further China, where Confucius is the object of faith, and I meet a person and ask him, "What are you?" "Oh! I am a Christian." "What do you know about Christ?" "I know he is a Saviour." "What did He do?" "He died to save sinners." "Do you believe on Him?" "Yes." "Then you are saved?" "Oh, I could not say that; I hope to be, but I couldn't say that I am saved." "Well," I reply, "I am a believer in Confucius, and I hope the same. I hope to be saved. I am as well off as you. Your Christ does

no more for you than Confucius for me ; he passed through fire and water. I shan't turn to your Christ." Is not that a witness against Christ ?

But I turn from this one and meet another, and ask, "Are you a believer in Christ?" "Yes." "What has He done for you?" "Oh, He has loved me; He has died for me; He has saved me; He has washed away all my sins in His blood; He has blessed me; He loves me, cares for me, and sustains me daily, for He ever lives to make intercession for me; and He is coming quickly to take me into eternal glory." "Oh," I say, "the witness that you give me about Christ turns my heart round to Him. That Christ is worth having. Confucius can't do this for me; I must get to know your Christ. This is what I want." This man is a witness for Christ; the other is a witness against Him.

There is thus, you see, the greatest difference possible between religion and Christ. To be religious is quite possible, be miserable all your life, and lost eternally at the end thereof. To have Christ, is to possess life, peace, pardon, and joy now, and to pass into everlasting glory with Him shortly.

Let me urge my reader to at once turn to Jesus, and simply trust Him. Hear His own word, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Should you not come to Him now, you will find yourself "cast out" in the day of His judgment.

Reader, have you *religion*, or *Christ* ?

W. T. P. W.

“ HE SPOKE DEEP DOWN IN MY HEART.”



LONG and anxiously I had looked for some sign of divine life in my precious child, but I saw none. She was strong and bright and merry, good tempered, and ever ready to help me, and, perhaps, gave me less trouble than her sisters; but God had not wrought in her soul, and she showed a distinct distaste for any mention of His name. The story of the love and work of Christ never brought one smile from her; and when asked to join us in our little readings, she would often say, “Why, I would rather go and play.”

I took little notice of this to the child, but my heart was often heavy as I saw her run out and in to the great old chateau in France, where we were living at the time, and heard her shouts of merriment as she played with the other children in the curious old garden.

And why was it I saw no sign of anything but natural life in my child? Had she been less carefully trained than the rest of my family? Had I failed to instruct her early? Had I not sought to interest her in Bible stories, in spite of her strange aversion to them? All these, and many other questions, I asked myself. We had faith in God con-

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cerning her, and had early looked for proof of life. She was nearly six years old; my other children had confessed the Lord before that age, and from two to three years of age had at least shown some interest in the Bible stories usually loved by young children; but it was not so with my little D——. As we read together each day, she had the most stolid indifference in her face and manner; and when asked a question in turn with the other children, her usual answer was, “I do not know what you say,” or “I don’t know what you mean.”

Only once can I remember her being in the least interested when a friend read her the story of John the Baptist in the wilderness. She asked me to read it for her the next day, and I gladly took the opportunity of trying to interest her in other Bible narratives. But in vain. So time went on. A friend who was with me thought she traced some sign of softening in the dear child, for she too was anxiously looking for it, but I saw nothing to assure my heart.

I was weak and ill, and was led to pray that, if it pleased God to remove me, I might have the assurance of this dear child’s safety before I was taken. My weakness increased, and it was thought best to take me to England before winter; and as the journey had to be undertaken at once, I had to part from three of my little ones for a few weeks. With a mother’s anxious care, I said, “What if I should never see this child again? I have no assurance of her salvation.”

The children were kept out of my room lest the fatigue of leaving them too much with me should unfit me for my long journey, but I cried to God for my child.

A few days before I left for England I was resting on the sofa in my own room, when a sharp tap came to my door, and a fair head and rosy face was thrust in, and an anxious pleading voice said, "I must come in, indeed I must; they have kept me from you too long." Amused by what I judged the indignation of my little maiden, I drew her near me and told her she might come on the sofa beside me; and thinking to soothe her troubled spirit, I said, "Come, dear, and I shall tell you the story of a cat and mouse."

The large eyes, now full of tears, gazed at me, and she replied, "Not now, not now the story of a cat and mouse. I have waited three days to tell you something, and I must tell you it now, I am converted;" and that dear little head, relieved of its burden, rested upon mine. For a moment I was silent. Had my prayers really been answered, and was I to have this joy ere I started on my journey? Could it be?

"Tell me, dear D——," I said, "are you sure?"

"Quite," she answered; "I am certain. I shall tell you all about it. I was so very unhappy, for I knew I was not converted; and they would not let me see you, and that made me unhappy too; so I went into the nursery quite alone, and I knelt down by my bed, and said to God, 'O God! am I

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converted or not? do, do tell me.' And He told me I was, and that my sins were all put out by Jesus; and then I was so happy, for God had spoken to me."

"How did God speak to you?" I asked, "you could not hear Him?"

"Oh yes, I did; He spoke deep down into my heart, and I can never forget it."

Thankfully I accepted my child's confession. I had failed to interest her in the things of God; but when He had spoken deep down into her heart, there was life and peace. K.



GOD THE GIVER, AND MAN THE
RECEIVER.



N Luke xviii. two men went up into the Temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. They both presented themselves before God; they felt they had to say to Him; with Him they had to do.

But mark the difference of the two men. The one exalted himself, the other abased himself; the one justified himself, the other condemned himself; the one condemned God, the other justified God; the one made God a liar, the other confessed Him

the God of truth; the one pleaded that he was not as other men, the other pleaded God's sovereign mercy. The one went down to his house as he came, a poor self-righteous, self-justifying, God-condemning, judgment-deserving sinner; the other went down to his house *justified*, yes, JUSTIFIED—JUSTIFIED! "Every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." Read Luke xviii. 9-14.

Beloved reader, which of these two men represents you?

Now they bring children to the Lord Jesus, that He would touch them; but His disciples rebuked them. The loving Saviour said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God." There was a place in His large loving heart for them. Mothers, fathers, bring your children to Jesus, and He will bless them. Bring them in unwavering confidence, and He will touch them and save them.

But mark the next, "Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein." How helpless is an infant, and how simply and unpretentiously a little child receives what is offered it. The kingdom of God must be received in the same way. *Receive* is the word; not *merit*. God's gift must be received without the thought of deserving. "The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. vi.). "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of

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God, even to them that believe on his name" (John i. 12).

Now notice the next case in our chapter. He is a rich man. He comes to Jesus, and says, "Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Mark the words, "*What shall I do?*" With him it was not receiving as a little child; it was meriting. Heaven was to be purchased; eternal life bought; his righteousness was to be his title; God's mercy despised.

"Thou knowest the commandments," said Jesus, "Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother." In Matthew xix. 19 it adds, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

The young man replies, "All these things have I kept from my youth up."

Let us see whether that was so; and in what comes out we learn the everlasting end of man's doing to be saved. "Yet lackest thou one thing; sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me." The young man's head drops, for he has broken the law; he has kept his vast riches, while the poor have filled the land. He is convicted, and condemned by the law; but unable to stand the light, he turns upon his heel, and goes away very sorrowful, for he was very rich.

Man must be a *receiver* of eternal life, for it is all up with his *meriting* it; and he must get it on the ground of the everlasting *done* of the Son of God.

On the cross, in His dying agony, He cried, "It is finished." He had come to do the will of God, and, blessed be His name, He had done it. "I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do" (John xvii. 4). And on the ground of that death and finished work, God can give eternal life, pardon sins, and justify and save the believing sinner. See Acts xiii. 37-39.

A little lower down in the chapter we have the case of a poor blind man sitting by the wayside begging. Not a rich man, but a poor man; not one who could talk of meriting, but one who could place all on the ground of mercy, and receive all as a gift. That is it; that is the place man must take—that of a receiver, not on the ground of deserving it, but of mercy.

So on hearing the multitude pass by, and learning that it was Jesus of Nazareth passing by, he cries out, "Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me."

"And Jesus stood, and commanded him to be brought unto him: and when he was come near, he asked him, saying, What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee?" Wonderfully blessed! "*What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee?*" Jesus was to do the doing; the blind man was to be the receiver, and right glad was he to take that place.

"Lord, that I may receive my sight," was his instant reply; and as instantly was he the recipient of the blessing. "And Jesus said unto him, Re-

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ceive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee. And immediately he received his sight, and followed him, glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise unto God."

Wonderfully simple! wonderfully real! wonderfully blessed! Man the needy one; God the giver, man the receiver; then, and not till then, praise rises from a heart overflowing with a sense of His grace and mercy, and in the knowledge of being in the possession of His salvation, and of all His untold blessings in Christ.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" (Eph. i. 3).

Beloved reader, have you taken the place of a receiver, discarding all idea of merit? If so, then follow Jesus, as did the blind man, and let your heart expand and overflow in praise and thanksgiving to the God of all grace.

E. A.

LINES FOUND IN AN INFIDEL'S BIBLE.

The proudest heart that ever beat
 Has been subdued in me;
 The wildest will that rose to scorn Thy friends, to aid Thy foes,
 Is quelled, my God, by Thee:
 Thy will and not my will be done;
 I would be ever Thine;
 To sing Thy praise, Incarnate Word, my Saviour Christ, my
 God, my Lord,
 Thy Cross shall be my sign.

SCATTERED SEED.



WELL, friend, if it were raining showers of gold sovereigns, what would you do; would you go on with your work, or make sure of the gold?" said an evangelist to an old man by the roadside, who was busily gathering rubbish in a tin pail.

"Oh! I should stop and pick up the gold first," he replied knowingly.

"To be sure you would. Now it has been raining gold this eighteen hundred years; do you know what I mean?" The old man looked up wonderingly. "I mean," he continued, "all the unsearchable riches of Christ have been showering down on poor sinners all this time. Have you received them?"

"I'm afraid not."

"It is high time that you had."

"Yes, I know that; I'm eighty years of age."

"There now, and yet you are busily engaged, but forgetting the gold showers!"

"But it's right to do this," said he, turning back to his tin pail of rubbish, with apparently the greatest indifference.

"Surely; but you know men, as they say, generally look out for the main chance, and its all chance in man's world. But here is the main certainty;

you had better look out for this. Make sure. If gold was falling, you would fill your pockets at once. Now, take your place as a guilty and lost sinner before God, and believe on His Son the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will receive the remission of sins, and the gold showers, so to speak, will fill your heart. Accept this little book and read it. Good day."

How many thousands are to be met with on the high road of the world in the same condition, striving for a large fortune or a little pittance, as the case may be, but deaf to God's offers of grace, blind to their own eternal interests, and no heart for the unsearchable riches of Christ; knowing *about it*, probably, but yet *not knowing Him!*

Passing along down the road, an elderly woman came out of a house to post a letter. Having remarked upon the weather, the evangelist repeated to her what had just passed, adding, "the old man did not at first quite understand what was meant."

"Ah! he ought to have done," she replied earnestly, "if he had the grace of God in his heart. He used to pray. I know who he is."

"Have *you* the grace of God?"

"Yes, I've had it this thirty years."

"I am glad to hear that. Then let the living water flow out; tell all your neighbours, let them hear all you know about Jesus."

What a different response! Dear reader, do you know the grace of God? Grace is abounding, reigning through righteousness. (Romans v. 20,

21.) It brings salvation to the guilty and the lost. Grace is what you need. Your best works are mixed with sin; the law condemns you, but grace will set you free, and teach you the way of holiness. What a contrast! An old man of eighty without God, and an old woman knowing His grace for thirty years. A short period at most must decide the eternal destiny of both;—the former, if called away as he was, to find out his folly when it is too late; the latter, to reap for ever the glory God gives with the grace.

A few hundred yards farther, a man sat in a cart drawn up at a cottage gate. "A little book about Jesus," said I, handing him one. "Ah! we little know," he replied, as his face lit up, and he readily took the book, "when we see a stranger go by that he is a Christian, till we speak together." A few words were exchanged about the Lord, when a blacksmith, who was standing at a little distance, listening to what passed, drew near. "And are you a Christian too?"

"I know whom I have believed, and when my sins were forgiven," was the reply.

A similar testimony followed from the wife of the man in the cart, who came up just after. All three appeared to be rejoicing in the Lord. "Well, friends," I continued, "if you are Christians, every one all round about where you live ought to know it. Your light should shine; and it will, if the lamp is well lit."

"Yes, but we shall have trouble down here, but that's to purify us," said one of the three.

"Yes, it is cleaning the glasses for the light to shine out more clearly. Good day."

Proceeding on his way, the preacher came upon a man resting upon his barrow by the roadside. "The good old book says that 'the rest of the labouring man is sweet,'" was the present greeting. "I'm labouring now, and looking for *eternal* rest; are *you*?"

"I hope so."

"I'm sure."

"Sure?"

"Yes, *sure*. Jesus said, 'Come unto me, . . . and I will give you rest,' and I came, and *I have rest of conscience*. Now, I'm taking His yoke and walking with Him, *enjoying rest of heart* by the way. And also waiting for His return, to see His face, and *share eternal rest*. And why not you?"

"I heard a preacher say that when we'd spent as many years in eternity as there are blades of grass in King's-mead, we should be no nearer the end."

"Well, now is the time to make sure of eternal blessing, and the only alternative is eternal woe."

"Ah! yes, there are only the two roads, the broad and the narrow," said the man on the barrow.

"Exactly. Then come as a poor sinner to Jesus,—that is entering the strait gate; and walk under His yoke,—that is treading the narrow way; and look for His coming, when you will have eternal rest. But you *must come to Him first*. I have the

the first, am enjoying the second, and looking for the third. Believe as a poor guilty lost one on Him, and the blessing is yours. Make sure. And read this little book."

"Thank you, sir; I'd as soon have that book as my dinner."

My reader, have *you* come to the Saviour? Has He given you rest? Are you burdened and heavy laden with sin? He bids you come. *All* are invited. "Come unto me, all,"—"all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." It does not say, Come, and ye shall find it. It is better than that, "I will *give you*." You have not to search about for it, He *gives it* to every one that comes to Him. Will you come? Come *now*, and *rest* most surely shall be yours; present, lasting, permanent, eternal rest. Come.

Distributing books right and left, the evangelist presently came to a place where a group of men were working at a rick. A chimney sweep, black from head to foot, who stood by, greeted him jestingly as he approached. "You be'ent afraid to come by, sir, be you?" alluding to his own appearance, covered with soot.

"Oh no." And handing him a book containing the Gospel, added, "That will tell you how you can become whiter than the snow, through the precious blood of Christ."

He was evidently taken aback at the unexpected response. The Lord grant that it may have impressed his soul. Dear reader, all in nature are

blacker with sin than the blackest of chimney sweeps. Sin is blacker than soot. The latter is but outward; but sin has affected man's whole moral being, and he is utterly unfit for the presence of God. Nothing but the precious blood of Christ can cleanse him. Are you cleansed? "It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul" (Lev. xvii. 11). None but those who are redeemed by blood will ever escape wrath or enter the glory of God. No other passport will avail there.

Passing along a field just beyond, as the traveller drew near to his destination, a young man crossed his path, carrying a large sack of sheep fodder. "You have a heavy burden there upon your shoulders."

"Yes."

"Have you got rid of the burden of sin? You would find a great difference going up yonder hill if I took the burden off, would you not?"

"Yes."

"If you get rid of the burden of sin, you will travel much lighter through this world."

"I expect I should."

"Well, who can take it off?"

"Jesus Christ, I expect."

"Then believe on Him, and He will do it. If I offer to take your burden, and you believe me, it is soon done. And if you believe on Him, He will take the burden of sin from your heart. Only trust Him."

How blessedly simple the Gospel is! Men have

many devices of their own to reach heaven, but God's way is Christ. "I am *the way*, and *the truth*, and *the life*" (John xiv. 6). As another has said, "The way to the Father, the truth of the whole thing, and the life to enjoy it." *Christ is all*. "If ye believe not that I am he," said Jesus, "ye shall *die in your sins*" (John viii. 24). But "whosoever believeth in Him *shall receive remission of sins*" (Acts x. 43). Reader, how is it with *you*?

E. H. C.



**"I SHALL NOT BE HERE LONG,
MOTHER."**



SHALL not be here long, Mother; I am not worthy of the lowest place in the kingdom of heaven, but my sins are all washed away in the blood of the Lamb. May we meet in heaven, Mother, singing Hallelujah."

These were the last words of a young man who has gone to be with the Lord.

Beloved reader, are YOUR sins washed away in the blood of the Lamb? I entreat you to answer this question before God, as you sit with this little book in your hand.

"A SAVIOUR, CHRIST THE LORD."

55

They are either washed away, and you made fit for heaven; or else your sins are on you still, and will sink you into the lake of fire for ever!

Nothing but "the blood of Jesus Christ, God's son, cleanses us from all sin."

M. A. D.



"A SAVIOUR, CHRIST THE LORD."

Melody,—"Nothing but the Precious Blood." The melody is also known as "I am now a Child of God," in "Later Songs and Solos."



O this world of sin and woe
Came the Saviour, long ago,
The Eternal Word, the Father's only Son.
He became a child of days,
Unto God's eternal praise.
He hath suffered, and His mighty work
is done;

He was numbered with the dead,
On the cross His blood was shed.

O adore ye
Him in glory!
Set on high, o'er all things Head.

"Jesus," evermore the same!
There is not another name
Under heaven that is given among men,
None whereby we must be saved,
We by sin and death enslaved.

"Jesus" only, who is coming soon again,
The ascended Living One,
Hear Him, God's beloved Son.
O adore ye
Him in glory !
Praise Him ! heaven is begun.

All the way is open now ;
Glory, honour, crown His brow ;
He is seated with His Father in His throne.
O extol His worthy name,
"Jesus," evermore the same.
He is coming from that glory for His own.
Sing " His precious blood was shed,
And He liveth who was dead."
O adore ye
Him in glory !
Christ the Lord, o'er all things Head.

There is yet a brief delay,
And whoe'er will come, he may
Come to Jesus, and for evermore be blest.
Oh, He saith, " Come unto me,"
Saved for ever thou shalt be ;
Come to me, ye weary, I will give you rest."
'Tis His voice awakes the dead,
Where His precious blood was shed.
O adore ye
Him in glory !
"Jesus," Saviour, Lord, and Head.

“THIS IS NOT DEATH; THIS IS VICTORY!” 57

“THIS IS NOT DEATH; THIS IS VICTORY!”



ARVELLOUS words these, indeed, to come from the lips of a dying mortal, now on the verge of eternity! But I heard, and can never forget them.

Soon after sunrise on a glorious Lord's Day morning in July 1874, I was hastily summoned to the bedside of a middle-aged lady I had been attending for a short while. Floods of golden light illumined the chamber where she lay, and a glance at her face told me she was rapidly sinking, and that the swoon, on account of which I had been urgently sent for, was the harbinger of her departure now near at hand. Scanning my face earnestly as I lightly touched her wrist, where no pulse could be felt, she eagerly said: "Doctor, am I dying? Don't be afraid to tell me. You know I am quite ready, so you may tell me the truth fearlessly."

I knew how tenderly and truly she loved her husband and her five children, all standing round her bed, and how she, the devoted and ever-thoughtful wife and mother, was beloved by them, and so felt what a wrench it would be to part from each other, but, at such a moment, it was better that all

should know the truth, so I quietly rejoined: "Yes, my dear friend, I think you have come nearly to the end of life's journey here. Your pilgrimage is over, and you will soon be at home with the Lord."

"Do you really mean that?" was her quick reply, as a smile of deep joy, and a flush of glad surprise lit up her handsome face.

"I do indeed, I think before the sun has gone to his rest to-day, you will have gone to yours for ever."

"Oh, that's glorious! Do you mean that to-day I shall be absent from the body, and present with the Lord?"

"Yes, that is just what I mean."

"Then I shall see Jesus to-day, my precious Lord and Saviour. Oh, what good news!" and she clasped her hands with emphasis, while in her heart she turned to the Lord in accents of praise. Then fixing her eyes on her husband, she exclaimed, "J——, did you hear what the doctor has been saying? He says I am going to see Jesus to-day, that before the sun sets I shall be for ever with Him, in all the rest and glory His precious blood has secured for me. Is not that glad tidings? I feel much at leaving you, and all the dear children, but you will all meet me again in heaven I know. You will be there I know, my love, and"—now turning to the children respectively, and calling each endearingly by name, she added—"you will be there, won't you—and you—and you—and you—"

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and you, my youngest? Yes, you must all meet me there."

Weeping profusely, as they all were, she bid them weep not for her, as she added: "Think of this, the doctor says I am to see Jesus to-day. Yes, to-day I am to see Him, and be with Him for ever."

She paused a moment or two, and then turning to me abruptly exclaimed: "Doctor, you told me I was dying. That is a mistake. **THIS IS NOT DEATH; THIS IS VICTORY!**"

And so indeed it was—a complete fulfilment of the blessed Lord's words, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death" (John viii. 51). She said much more in the same strain, and continued rejoicing in the Lord, and in the thought of that day seeing Him, till soon after noon, when she joyously passed into His blessed presence.

Such a scene could never be forgotten by an eye-witness. And what was this, my unconverted reader? Do you tell me it was the ebullition of an excitable nature? Well, that may be your way of reading it, but let me ask you, Do you fancy you are likely to have a similar ebullition on your deathbed? Do you think that to be told you would die this day, shortly after you have dropped this paper, would fill you with joy? Nothing of the kind. You know better. The one thing you are afraid of is death. Why? Because "after this the judgment." Yes, you know that death

and judgment are before you, and they are too distasteful, direful, awful things for an unsaved sinner to meet. I don't wonder you dislike funerals, and would not care to be alone in a room, or a house, with a corpse. I don't blame you for fearing death, but it just shows, my friend, where you really are, as to your soul's state. You know not the fruit and effect of Christ's death.

The difference between the end of a believer, and an unbeliever is immeasurable. To the one of whom I have written, death was not death, it was "victory" most truly. Now to you, my unsaved reader, death would be an awful calamity. To you it would mean defeat and eternal damnation, for the meaning of God's word, "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment," may be expressed in two words—two terrible words—*death*, and *damnation*. No man that gets into judgment can escape damnation.. When God judges, He will do so in righteousness without one whit of grace. Now He is speaking in grace, which reigns through righteousness, and the believing sinner is gifted with eternal life as the fruit of Christ's death.

It is wonderful to think that the death of Jesus, when He is confided in, really delivers the believer from the necessity—I say not the possibility—of death. Let me quote in full the verses in Hebrews ix. already alluded to: "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

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second time, *without sin*, unto salvation” (Heb. ix. 27, 28). Ponder, my dear reader, the “as” and the “so” in these scriptures. “As” what? “As it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment,” *i.e.*, that to die and bear God’s judgment of sin is the lot of man by nature. “So” what? “So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many”—*i.e.*, that Christ has taken on the cross these two consequences of sin—death and judgment. What is the result? The believer is delivered from the common lot of man. The believer in Christ is connected and identified with Christ, who is on the resurrection—the heavenly side—of death and judgment, and, inasmuch as Scripture says, “As he is, so are we, in this world,” the believer knows now that he has death and judgment behind him at the cross, instead of before him.

It was the knowledge of this that made my sick friend so joyous in the hour of her departure. She thought not of death and judgment, but of Christ and glory, and could truly and happily say, “This is not *death*, this is *victory*.” She knew the emancipating effect 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 before the world began; but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath *abolished* (annulled) *death*, and hath brought life and immortality (incorruptibility) to light through the gospel”

(2 Tim. i. 9, 10). She knew why Jesus became a man—viz., that He might die and deliver others, as it is written, “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same; that *through death* he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage” (Heb. ii. 14, 15).

What a Saviour! what a salvation! what a victory! The devil destroyed, and death annulled; the believer delivered, and brought to know that Christ is his life before God. What could fill the heart that knows this but peace and joy? Well may we triumphantly inquire, “O death, where is thy sting?” It is buried in the bosom of Christ, and we, who believe, shall never taste it or feel it. “O grave, where is thy victory?” It has no reply. Christ has lain in its cold depths, broken its bonds, burst its barriers, and now shares His victory with all His own, so we may well shout, “Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Happy am I to be able to sing—

“Death and judgment are behind me,
Grace and glory are before;
All the billows rolled o’er Jesus,
There exhausted all their power.”

Reader, which is before you, death or victory?

W. T. P. W.

"JESUS."

63

"JESUS."



HERE are four places, very distinct and diverse, connected with which we find the name of Jesus.

First, the Manger:—"His name shall be called Jesus [Jehovah, Saviour]; for he shall save his people from their sins."

Second, the Cross:—"Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews."

Third, the Glory of God. "I am Jesus," was His voice to Saul of Tarsus.

And fourth, the Throne:—"God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. ii. 9-11).

Pause, dear reader, and think of the contrasts—the deep shades, the brilliant lights—presented in the history of this Man. The extremes, the opposites, the varieties, more chequered than fable can picture, in the life of the "Man Christ Jesus." Mark, it is the Manhood, not the Godhead, of Jesus, on which I ask you to ponder,—both equally true,

First, the incarnation,—“This shall be a sign unto you,” said the angel to the shepherds; “Ye shall find the babe, . . . lying in a manger.” Ah! what depths! A “sign” indeed, and a proof too, of the boundless condescension of that only begotten Son of the Father’s bosom. A “manger!” does not the word sound discordant from the heavenly music by which His birth was announced? But how fair the halo of humility, how entrancing the rays of grace, that encircled this lowly birthplace of Jesus! It was indeed a wondrous descent from the glory He had with the Father before the world was, to the fashion of a man, and to circumstances so humble. A heart-engaging scene, and one that speaks of love to those into whose midst He came. And so the shepherds said to each other, “Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass.” They came; they found the Babe lying in the manger; they made known the saying told them concerning the Child; they returned, glorifying and praising God. They were the happy, thankful witnesses of an event, obscure as to earthly circumstances, but of more interest to the hosts of heaven than the birth of the world itself.

The first place, then, pregnant with the name of Jesus, is the manger. But the shades grow deeper. For if the love that brought Him thus low was wonderful, what shall we say of the grace that led Him to the cross? He “became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross,” is the striking

language of Scripture. His path was ever downward. It consisted in the refusal of the glory of this world. Obedience to God, in a scene of rebellion against Him, involved necessarily the loss of favour here. Alas! "what is highly esteemed among men, is abomination in the sight of God." Man's estimate of things is perverted, his moral judgment warped and vitiated by sin. Whatever he values, God despises or condemns, and *vice versa*. Hence the path of true obedience to God, the path of truest testimony to Him, is criminal in the eyes of man. And thus was it fully with that of Jesus. The cross was His portion here, as an obedient and perfect man. So Pilate superscribed the words,—"Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." Never did a richer diadem surround a kingly brow. Never was such a moral victory won. The triumph of evil had been absolute at that moment, but for the resolute and superior triumph at the same time of suffering goodness. The power of evil, of Satan, reached as far as death; and under that power Jesus died, laid down his life. But the power of God wrought beyond death, and Jesus rose. Baffled was every foe by that earthquake sound of victory.

In all this we see the sinless One, who could not be holden by death, laying down His life as the result of full obedience to God in a scene of sin. At the same time, as sin-bearer, He wrought atonement—"was made sin for us;" but that deeply important subject is not our theme. We are meditating on the faithfulness that brought Jesus to

death. The cross emits brightest rays of devotedness, and breathes the savour of that holy and blessed name. But the humility of the manger, and the faithful love of the cross, express their beauty still. Jesus rose from the dead, He ascended; He was seen by Stephen, standing at the right hand of God; and thence He spoke to Saul, in words above quoted, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." He claims His lowly name of Manhood. He links the glory with the cradle and the cross. He would introduce Himself as the same Jesus, though His circumstances be those of heavenly splendour. What He was here, He is there,—“the same.” The gospel of the glory opens those bright portals to our ravished gaze, and shows to us the Babe of the manger, the martyr of the cross, now the glorified Son of Man. Oh! how blessed to know Him there, and to know why, as man, He is there. How the heart leaps at the sight, how the ear thrills at the sound, of His name! And so Paul preached in the synagogue that “Jesus was the Son of God.”

We are accustomed to associate the name of Jesus with the village of Nazareth. Our thoughts turn backward historically; but it becomes us to associate that name with the glory of God and with Heaven now. The name of Jesus should strike my ear as a sound, not from earth, but from heaven. Nazareth and earthly circumstances fade away in the light of His new place as man in that eternal glory. “Yea, though we have known Christ

after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more" (2 Cor. v. 16).

His relations are now new, though He is the "same Jesus."

Now, lastly, that name is about to claim universal homage,—in heaven, in earth, and under the earth; things supernal, terrestrial, and infernal, must yet own His lordship. Not a knee but shall bow, not a tongue but shall confess, to His name,—the name of Jesus. When the great names of earth shall have been all forgotten, and their glory tarnished, His lowly name, that of the manger and of the cross, shall exercise its everlasting power. Thank God for all who have felt its spell, and proved its saving power, and who have bowed the knee in heart-acknowledgment of His lordship already. It is assuredly meet, for He is worthy. But His throne of judgment will yet assert itself universally; and they who scorn this name to-day, shall perforce confess it then. The Lamb will yet be the Lion, the Saviour the Judge, the lowly Jesus of Bethlehem and Calvary the omnipotent disposer of eternity. All judgment is committed to Him, because He is the Son of man (John v. 26).

Dear reader, what think you of Christ? "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry. . . . Blessed are all they that put their trust in him."

"God's counsels ere the world began,
All centred in the Son of Man;
Him destined to the highest place,
Head of His Church through sovereign grace:
To Him enthroned in majesty,
Let every creature bend the knee."

J. W. S.

“I FOUND IT TRUE.”



N a beautiful spot in one of the midland counties stood an old-fashioned house, surrounded by a lovely garden full of flowers and fruit, in the midst of a large village inhabited by a population more or less strict in outward religious observances, but, with few exceptions, densely dark as to the true knowledge of Christ. The family that occupied the house was what would be called *religious*; but only one member of it, the eldest daughter, had been brought from darkness to light through faith in the Son of God. The father and mother, going away for a change, left the young people in charge of the house, also desiring that they should take an interest in and show a care for the temporal needs of any who might be sick in the adjoining village.

Just at this time a man named Joseph L——, well known throughout the place, had broken his leg. He had been a dreadful character, and had become the terror of the village through his rough and drunken ways. Many a time the young girl mentioned, and her brothers and sisters, had run to get out of his way when meeting him. He was one of the last that men would naturally expect to be brought to the Lord; but the eye of God was fixed upon this poor sinner for blessing, and the

love of God had marked him out as a vessel of mercy, and trophy of His everlasting grace.

Laid aside through his accident, his wife and family were constrained to work hard in the hay-fields to obtain a livelihood, so that he was often left many hours alone, a prey to his own thoughts, with nothing to reflect upon in the past but a godless misspent life.

"Remember to send poor Joseph some dinner almost every day," said the mother to her daughter before she left home. This was carefully attended to, but it was deeply impressed upon the latter what a blessing it would be for him if he could be brought to a knowledge of Christ as his Saviour. But how was this to be accomplished? She was young in the things of the Lord, and had never yet made a bold and open confession of Christ in her own family circle, the most difficult of all in many instances to commence in. She longed to visit and speak to this man of his lost condition, and of the Saviour of sinners, but feared the laughing and teasing of her brothers, &c. Still the responsibility of it was so pressed upon her that she felt she must go at all cost, and resolved to steal away whilst the rest were busily engaged gathering a large crop of strawberries for preserving. Concealing her Bible beneath the folds of her dress, she stole out of the garden, and along the path to the picturesque little cottage, surrounded with roses and honeysuckle, where Joseph lived.

Knocking timidly at the door, he invited her to

enter. After inquiring about his health, and referring to the dinner that was going to be sent in, she at last ventured to speak to him of eternity. To her surprise she found him ready to listen, so, producing her Bible, slowly read to him that precious portion in Isaiah liii. 5, 6: "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and *the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.*" The Lord seemed to have prepared the ground for the good seed, His own Word, so that it was not difficult to impress upon him that he was a lost sinner, but as yet he could not grasp the truth that Christ had died for *him*. His visitor sat some time with him, and he lay patiently listening to all that was said. After pressing upon him that Christ had done the work upon the cross, and that God must be satisfied with it, so that by believing the Gospel he would be saved, she rose to go.

Lingering at the door, she added, "Well, Joseph, do you believe that I am going to send you the meat for dinner?"

"Why, of course, Miss S——," he replied.

"But I might forget, or tell a lie and deceive you; but you believe it because I said it. Now when God says that Jesus was wounded for our transgressions, &c., and that He gives salvation to all who believe His Word, cannot *you* trust *Him*?"

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He is a God of truth, and is faithful and just to forgive sins. He can make no mistake; His Word is true. Why can you not trust Him?"

Not long after Miss S—— left the village, but a year or two later again returned. Meanwhile poor Joseph had died. One Sunday evening she was watching by the bedside of one far gone in consumption, and waiting for the moment when she would be absent from the body and present with the Lord, when an elderly woman, one among the few known as Christians in the village, came in to see the invalid. After a little fellowship together over the Word, she said, "Oh! Miss S——, I have a message for you."

"For me?"

"Yes; from Joseph L——. I went to see him the day after you left, and found him alone. 'Why, Joseph,' I said, 'are you alone?' 'No,' he replied, 'I am not alone.' 'Why, is Kitty (his wife) at home?' 'No.' 'Nor your daughter?' 'No; but *I have Jesus with me.*' 'What!' said I, filled with astonishment; 'how did this come about?' 'Why, when Miss S—— was here in the summer she said she was going to send me some dinner, and told me all about Jesus, and how He died for sinners on the cross, and about His precious blood. And then she said, "Now you believe me, *why will you not believe God?*" so I thought about it again and again, and *I found it true, and He is with me.*'"

Thus had God in His rich grace blessed the

simple message of the Gospel to this poor hardened slave of sin at the lips of His feeble and timid messenger; first laying him aside, and separating him from his course and companions in sin through a broken leg. How wondrous and perfect are all His ways! However deeply dyed the sinner may be, none is too great a one for Him to save. "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7).

Dear reader, what think ye of Christ? Have you believed God about Him? Have you taken Him at His word? If not, oh think about it *again and again*. You will find it *true*, and Jesus will be with *you*. He died for the guilty and the lost. Believe on Him, and henceforth you are found amongst the number of whom it is said, "He was wounded for *our* transgressions, he was bruised for *our* iniquities," &c. Death lies right before you, and after death judgment—*eternal* judgment. Escape it you cannot, if you *will* go on in your sins. There is but the one way of escape, *through Christ*. Then, *will* you have Christ? Are you burdened with sin? receive Him *now* by faith. *Believe* on His name (John i. 12). Then shall He be *your* Saviour, and you shall be His,—His now, and His for ever; a sinner saved by grace, washed in the blood of the Lamb.

"Look to Jesus, look and live;
Mercy at His hands receive;
He has died upon the tree,
And His words are 'Look to Me.'"

E. H. C.

"THIS MAN."



WHAT a meaning there is in these two little words for you, my reader. The worst that could be said by the murmuring Pharisees and scribes concerning the meek and lowly Jesus was,—"This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them" (Luke xv. 2). What a blessing for thousands that it was so, and it is even so still. Yes, "this man," the friend of sinners, "receiveth sinners" still. And His voice is still crying, "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out" (John vi. 37). The proud and haughty ones of earth would pass the sinner by, their thoughts of sinners being that those only were such who were past all remedy, but He who knoweth the heart hath declared all mankind sinners. The whole world has been brought in guilty before God. And now on the ground of righteousness, He is prepared to receive sinners of every shade, of every tongue, and of every clime. Are you a sinner before God in very consciousness? Then "to you is the word this salvation sent."

But listen; a little further on in "this man's" history, He is brought into Pilate's judgment-hall, vested with a "purple robe," decked "with a crown of thorns,"—mock royalty. The people "had him in derision." They "spat upon him;" they "smote

him on the cheek ;” they cried, “ Hail, king of the Jews,” and mocked him. Their cry was, Away with “ this man ” (Luke xxiii. 18). “ Not ‘ this man,’ but Barabbas ” (John xviii. 40). And it is the same world still. That “ message ” has never been recalled that was “ sent after him,” saying, “ We will not have ‘ this man ’ to reign over us ” (Luke xix. 14).

Eighteen hundred years have rolled away, but still the world goes on in its old course. It can get on very well without Him, but, my dear unsaved reader, how do you stand in relation to “ this man ”? You have had a hand in all this that the world is held to be guilty of; namely, the murder of the Son of God. Its hands are still dripping with His blood, and its heart is still thirsting for the blood of His saints. It has no place for Him to this day. A common stable and a common grave were good enough for the Christ of God, or any of His devoted followers. Outside man’s religious circle is His place, outside the temple, outside the city. “ No room in the inn ;” no room in the city; no room in the world. “ Away with him, crucify him, crucify him.” “ Not ‘ this man,’ but Barabbas.” Officers were sent to fetch Him, but evidently He apprehended the detectives, like many since, who have gone to scoff and remained to pray. They hung upon His lips, they drank in His sweet faith-inspiring and soul-stirring words, and returned to the chief priests and Pharisees, declaring that “ never man spake like ‘ this man ’ ” (Jno. vii. 46).

"THIS MAN."

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What do you now think of Him, my reader? Have you heard His voice in your soul yet? Are you responding to the sweet invitations of His loving heart? or do the words still rise in your hearts, and to your lips, "Not 'this man.'"

Listen! Calvary's hill is all astir. Three dying men are suffering yonder; one of them is the sinbearer. It is the great day of atonement for a guilty world. The heavens grow dark; men gnash upon Him with their teeth. The last hour arrives, the last moment has come. He prays for His murderers. "It is finished." All is over.

But hark; there appeared two other witnesses, one (hung on a cross beside Him) says, "*This man* hath done nothing amiss." The other, a Roman soldier, a centurion, and an eye-witness of the whole tragic scene. Hear what he has got to say—"Truly, 'this man' was the Son of God" (Mark xv. 39).

Reader, are you satisfied with "this man" yet? He can save to the uttermost all that come unto God through Him.

But again, "Be it known unto you that through 'this man' is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and by him all that believe are justified from all things from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts xiii. 38, 39). Dost thou believe on the Son of God? The Lord enable you to believe now, to cast yourself upon Him who is mighty to save.

J. G.

DRIFTING; OR, HAVE YOU THE ANCHOR?



NE summer I spent a pleasant holiday upon the coast of Fife in the vicinity of Largo, that rambling fishing village celebrated as the birthplace of Alexander Selkirk, whose adventures formed the basis of the renowned story of Robinson Crusoe. From the cottage where I lived could be seen a smart steam yacht at anchor in the bay, the property of a gentleman who was spending the season at a neighbouring estate. Sometimes the crew came ashore in a small boat for pleasure or supplies, and not unfrequently returned the worse of liquor, only too easily obtained at the taverns of the seaport about a mile distant.

One day while strolling along the beach I saw three men come to shore, who, without attempting to secure their boat, made for the town, leaving it in the shallow water well up on the strand. An hour or two after the tide began to ebb, and the little craft gradually receded from the shore. By and by the men appeared, but only to find their only means of transit to the yacht beyond their reach. One buckled up his trousers above his knees and waded out as far as he dared with a boat-hook, in hopes of reaching it, but failed. Then they tried throwing large stones into the sea beyond the boat, if

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possible to cause it to come nearer land. Their efforts were all in vain; the dingy had reached deeper water, the current was running out, and slowly but surely the boat was drifting to the open sea.

The men whistled often and loud to their companions in the yacht, so as to attract their attention to send another boat to their help, but all to no purpose; night was setting in, and the village too far off to get assistance there. It seemed as though the boat must be lost, and they obliged to stay ashore till morning. Ah! I thought, how like myself once, how like the unconverted soul, adrift upon the sea of time, borne by the waves of circumstances nearer the vast ocean of eternity, like the frail little bark with no anchor, no rudder, and no strong hand to steer. Nor is it all fair sailing; many cross winds and foaming billows sweep across the stormy main, and soon the awful tempest of divine wrath will break upon the world of the ungodly. Oh! dear unsaved one, what will you then do? where can you hide? With no prospect of heaven, how terrible your lot!

“ He smiles in heaven, He frowns in hell;
He fills the earth, the air, the sea;
I cannot in His presence dwell,
I must before His presence flee.”

A guilty one feels ill at ease before a holy God.

The Word of God tells of the anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast (Heb. vi. 18-20). The Lord Jesus Christ passed within the veil of the heavens is the sure ground into which hope as an anchor

sinks; faith is like the rope which connects the soul with the anchor. Though tossed about upon the tide of time, the moorage of the believer never fails. Hope is bright and certain in its prospect, for glory with Christ fills the radiant horizon of eternity; while the "strong consolation" is ministered to the heart that flees for refuge to this hope set before us. The risen Jesus put our sins away, and made peace by the blood of His cross; and we can rejoice in hope of the glory of God, and that when He appears we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

But to return to my story, the best of which is yet to be related. The men, baffled in their efforts to reach the boat, now held a consultation as to what was to be done. One of them was the captain, who, having his arm in a sling, could not be of much use. At last they began to walk out to a reef of black rocks, beyond which their craft was rapidly drifting. The evening was fast closing in, so I walked out to the rocks to see the result. When the furthest point was gained, Bill, one of the men, stripped off his upper clothes and plunged into the sea. Being a good swimmer, he struck off in a straight line for the boat. The captain knew his man, and, though he had been drinking freely, he believed him able to save the boat. But the task was a daring one, as the sea was icy cold, and when he reached the dingy the difficulty would be to get into it without upsetting it. The moments seemed minutes. The captain stood with watch in hand,

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noting the time. At last a hullo from Bill indicated that he had reached the boat. He skilfully got into it by the stern, when, seizing the sculls, he quickly rowed to the shore, amidst the cheers of the spectators. A few minutes later and he stood dripping and shivering in the kitchen of mine host before a blazing fire, while the guidwife supplied him with something warm to drink, and dry clothing.

Bill risked his life to save his master's boat, but the Lord Jesus Christ laid down His life to save your guilty soul. Oh! the matchless love and power of Him who died for the ungodly. He alone can save you. How like the drifting boat you are, without cable or anchor to moor you to the Rock of Ages. Often have your vows and resolutions snapped like spider-webs beneath the slightest temptation, and you sin and sin again without hope of deliverance. You may have tried many ways to better yourself, but all have failed. Will you not trust Jesus? He faileth never. Look away from self to Christ. He bore the awful judgment blast upon Calvary, and now at God's right hand He lives for evermore to introduce you into the sunshine of the Father's love. Able to save to the uttermost those that come unto God by Him, He says to you, "Come unto me, and I will give you rest."

"Such an offer! Full and free—
Can it be really meant for me?
Shall all *my* sins on Christ be laid? (Isa. liii. 6.)
Shall all *my* debt by Him be paid? (Gal. iii. 13.)
Yes, Jesus says it, who has died. (Rom. iv. 5.)
'Believe,' and thou art justified! (Gal. ii. 16.)"

T. R. D.

JESUS THE SAVIOUR KEPT AT A DISTANCE.

“Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!”



It is sad to think that the man who uttered this expression *died the death of the wicked*. If Balaam could have lived the life of the unrighteous, and died the death of the righteous, it might have been so; but this is an impossibility.

It is running an awful risk to put off the question of righteousness till a dying day. Visiting a Christian a short time ago, who was within a few days of glory, it was a source of comfort to this one to know that the question of her soul's salvation was a settled one. There was no anxiety as to it, but peace and thankfulness. Balaam loved money. It is not that he could not make use of prayer, and, in the long-suffering of God, his prayer was answered, but the answer was trifled with. Let the trifler remember that God is not mocked!

With the false prophet, too, there was no enjoyment in his heart of the glowing truths his lips gave expression to. All was so distant to him. Hear what he states:—"I shall see him, but *not now*: I shall behold him, but *not nigh*." And seeking "enchantments" to further his selfish ends at the same time, his soul was indeed far away from God.

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Although Balaam represents a class of men who occupy the place of servants of God, but who in reality are serving themselves, "loving the wages of unrighteousness," yet there are very many others who keep themselves at a distance from the Lord Jesus Christ. Such persons are not atheists, or what the world would pronounce as bad living people. In profession they are Christian, but have never known nearness to Christ. Such have never been truly able to say—

"Jehovah lifted up His rod—
O Christ, it fell on Thee !
Thou wast forsaken of Thy God :
No distance now for me.
Thy blood beneath that rod has flowed :
Thy bruising healeth me."

Alas ! many are procrastinators, putting off eternal salvation till it be too late. Let the reader reflect that at the judgment-seat he will have to do with Christ as a *Judge*, if he has not previously had to do with Him as a *Saviour*. There may be forgiveness now : there will be none then. If God be a gracious God, and one that *cannot* lie, then why not believe Him ? If His beloved Son died on the cross of Calvary, meeting the judgment of God for sinners, why not thank Him, and own it in a world which does really not own Him ? Had you better not own Christ now in this world than be denied by Him when He comes in His glory ? Many, many who never meant to be lost will be, and thus become not only "dupes of to-morrow

e'en from a child," but infinitely worse dupes of the devil, and "e'en from a child" lulled to sleep in the arms of procrastination.

If the second death and eternal life are realities, then look them in the face now. Eventually you will have to do so,—perhaps when it is too late!

What keeps you from trusting the Lord Jesus Christ for your soul's salvation! The first line of a well-known hymn runs—

"Just as I am, without one plea."

It is not just as you were, or just as you will be, but "just as I am." Believe us when we say Jesus Christ will receive you as you are. The prodigal son was received just as he was. He, repentant and self-judged, was not told to keep his distance till he had divested himself of his rags, but the father fell upon his neck and kissed him. God loved sinners, though hating their sins. The best robe, too, was all in readiness to put upon him. Simeon speaks of God's salvation, which He has "*prepared before the face of all people.*" Observe it is *God's salvation*, and it is "prepared" too, and placed before the face of all people, not above their heads, not surely at their feet to be trampled upon; not at their backs for them to slight and neglect it. No, but before their face. It is only for the unsaved reader to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and he shall be saved. Do not procrastinate, do not put this most important question off till what you may think a convenient season.

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Put salvation at a distance from you now, and ere long you may find it at an eternal distance. We are told of a man who found it to be so. He had lived to himself in this world, and after his death, and probably a pompous funeral, he is lifting up his eyes in torment, and sees a poor man, who had been a believer, and known to him, in a place of repose and happiness, but he was "afar off." Before death a moral gulf had existed between them, now "a great gulf fixed." Nothing now but judgment for him, who in time had neglected salvation. People go on, hoping all will come right in the end. This is nothing else than a delusion; it will all come wrong in the end for the neglecter, whether rich or poor. Are you right with God now? If not, what ground can any one have for supposing all will come right in the end? Right! when you have treated the best that God has done for you with indifference—sought after temporal things, but let eternal things slip.

No man can be upon the two roads at one and the same time. You must be in either one or the other. The end of the broad road is destruction, the end of the other is eternal life. Neither was it an ingredient of solace in the rich man's cup of misery to know others were in the same torment as he himself was. His real prayer for his blinded brothers teaches us the contrary. Sometimes those have been met with who think that if they can just say at the last, "God be merciful to me a sinner," they will leave the rest to the mercy of God. A

fisherman who had rejected the gospel of God's grace, in his dying agonies cried, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" and nearly in the same breath made use of such language as was shocking to hear, and so passed away. The prayer of the publican was not specially framed for use in one's dying hour. There is nothing to hinder us in supposing that the publican was in health. It is a great mistake to suppose that forgiveness of our sins and eternal life are only for the aged, the sick, and the dying. The fact is that people are far less disposed to trust in Christ when they are old than when they are young. Sin hardens. People may not think so, but Satan knows it quite well. It is said of a well-known statesman that when near his end, as we say,—the end of his life in this world,—he exclaimed, "I fear I have put off repentance too long for it to be of any avail now." The enemy of men had previously whispered, "It is too soon;" now he suggested, "It is of no avail,—too late." It is not enough to know "the way of salvation;" it is to be *in* it. The Pythoness, in the days of the apostles, followed them, saying, "These men are the servants of the most High God, which show unto us the way of salvation," but she was not in the way of salvation.

Reader, are you in the way of salvation, or in the way leading to condemnation? Put not the question from you. *God says* "now" is the accepted time.

W. R. C.

THE TWO CORPS: A CONTRAST.

THE 'UNCONVERTED.

"MARCH! march! march!
Earth groans as they tread,
Each carries a skull, going down to the dead;
Every stride, every stamp, every footfall is bolder,
'Tis a skeleton's tramp, with a skull on its
shoulder;
And, oh! how it treads, with high tossing head,
That clay-covered bone going down to the dead."

E. COX.

THE CONVERTED.

"March! march! march!
How lightly they tread,
Looking up to that One who rose from the dead;
Every stride, every step, every footfall is bolder,
'Tis a sinner draws nigh, with a load off his
shoulder;
And, oh! how he treads, looking up to his Head,
Who triumphantly rose from the midst of the
dead."

J. WILLANS.

A QUERY.

Reader, just ask yourself this question,—Which
corps am I really in? If you answer honestly,
you will know whether you are marching to hell
or to heaven, as you read this.

W. T. P. W.

D

“SCARLET MADE AS WHITE AS SNOW.”



“**W**HAT do you think of me to-day, doctor?”

The speaker was a man in what we call the prime of life, but upon whose face the hectic flush and the sunken eye told only too plainly of consumption.

“I think you are very ill,” said the doctor, quietly.

There was a short pause, and then the sick man spoke again. “What do you think of my case? shall I get well again?” and he gazed anxiously up into the doctor’s face.

There was a longer pause, and then the doctor said, slowly but kindly, “No, my friend, I do not think you will, you are dying.”

A look of anguish and of despair came over the dying man’s face. Eternity in all its reality was opening up before him, and the past was still unforgiven. He had been moral and upright in his ways before men, a good and steady workman, a kind and most affectionate husband and father, but he felt now that in all that there was nothing for God. He had only lived for himself and for this world, and now he was leaving it, and had nothing to rest on; little wonder that his face reflected the trouble of his soul.

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The doctor added a few friendly words, and then took his leave, for he himself did not know

"That name most blest and precious,
All other names above ;"

which alone can bring sunshine to the dark heart, and comfort in the dying hour. But that love which hastened forth to meet the returning one in Luke xv., is ever on the watch for the faintest turning of the heart to Him. The Lord had indeed laid the strong man low, but it was that He might reveal Himself unto him.

The dying man's wife had heard what passed with the doctor, and had also noticed that look of anguish which came over her husband's face, and it filled her own heart with sorrow. What could she do? What could she say? Who could she send for? She did not yet know the Lord for herself, but the cry of her heart was, "Lord, help us!" And the Lord did not just *help*; but, as He always does, *He did it all*. One night very shortly after this, while she was sitting by her husband's bedside silently watching him, he looked up suddenly, and addressing her, said,—

"In the Bible isn't there something about scarlet being made white as snow?"

"Yes," she said, "I think there is."

"Will you try to find it for me, and read it to me?" he said eagerly.

She got a Bible and opened it, but it seemed a big book in which to look for one little verse, and

where should she find it? But the Spirit who has been given to guide into all truth, and who delights to do so, was watching those dear seeking ones, and ere long the sick man's eye rested on those wondrous words in Isaiah i. 18, which have anchored many a weary heart, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." As cold water to a thirsty soul, and as good news from a far country, so those words of life and power came to this poor dying man.

"Read it again," he whispered eagerly; and again she read, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

"Yes," he exclaimed, with a sigh of relief, "that will do for me, *scarlet made as white as snow!*"

The trouble, the anguish, the despair, were all gone; he had now got a resting-place.

And what of you who have been reading these lines? You too are bound for eternity. It is much nearer than perhaps you think. Let me ask you, Are your sins of scarlet made white as snow? That is, are they gone? blotted out because another—even God's beloved Son—has borne the judgment due to them? or are they still upon you? "Oh," you say, "I am not yet upon my deathbed; I am strong and well, and have plenty of time to think of that again." Take care; remember you may

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not have a deathbed, you may be cut off in a moment as many a one is. Or the Lord may come, and if you are not one of His own, you will not be caught up with them to meet Him, but be left behind for judgment.

Besides, if it be blessed to *die* forgiven, it is also blessed to *live* forgiven; and let me tell you that the only thing which brought back the shadow on the face of the one of whom you have just been reading was this, “Oh that I had known of this when I was well, and had lived for Him who died for me; but now I am dying, going indeed to be for ever with Him, but what a chance I have missed!”

As the end drew near, one bent over him and asked, “On what are you resting?”

“A good foundation,” he answered feebly.

And surely it was, when it was the word of the living God. Is that what you are resting on? If not, listen to His voice saying unto you, “Come *now*, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.”

Let the response of your heart be,—

“Just as I am—and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark blot,
To Thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come!”

Y. Z.

A FOOL, AND MAKING GOD A LIAR.



LITTLE ago in the State of Missouri, I was visiting a pretty little town in the service of the Lord. When leaving, and while waiting for the train, I gave away some Gospel papers, and when the train arrived, got on, and soon found myself in a seat with a lady who had received one of the papers. She was very pleasant, and glad that I should share the seat with her. I thought to myself, "Here is a Christian, or one who will be glad to hear about the Lord." The train started, and after looking up, I went at my work.

"Are you a Christian?" I said. "Are you saved?"

"Yes," was her ready reply, but in a way that led me to suspect that her condition was not what her answer implied.

"Are your sins forgiven?" I asked.

"Well, I have never done anything that is wrong; I have no sins to repent of; I am not afraid to meet God."

"But do you not believe God's Word?"

"Oh, yes; I read it to my husband very often; he has lost his sight, and I read it through to him."

"What does God say in His Word? Does He not say, 'There is no difference, for all have sinned?'"

Moreover, does He not say that 'the whole world standeth guilty before God?' And does He not speak of man's condition as being sinful, lost, ungodly, unrighteous, and condemned?"

"Well, I have never sinned; I do not see what He has to condemn me for?"

"My dear friend, allow me to say that since we have been sitting together you at least have made God a liar four times; and if you have never sinned before, you are guilty now of one of the greatest sins on record, that is, making God a liar. He says that you are a sinner and guilty, and you say you are not. 'Let God be true, but every man a liar'" (Rom. iii. 4).

Much more was said, she keeping to her ground of self-justification and condemnation of God, and I to my text, "All have sinned,"—all are guilty and condemned, and needing God's mercy.

Just then I noticed an old gentleman sitting in the seat in front of us, and half listening to our conversation. I handed him a little book, entitled "Saved." After a few moments he handed it back to me, saying, "I have no use for it."

I replied, "I hope you do not reject the Saviour; you are an old man, soon to go the way of all the earth, soon to meet God, and the great question with you is, How will you meet Him? Where will you spend eternity?"

"I don't believe anything of the kind," the old man replied, "no one knows anything about God. As for the Bible it is what the priests have got up

to frighten people with ; I don't believe a word of it."

Thus with the old man all was surrendered,—God, the Holy Scriptures, every ray of light that came from Him ; all was given up or refused, and he himself left in the awful and dreary darkness of unbelief. A willing dupe and slave of Satan, led on blindly to hell.

One thing during the conversation struck me, as illustrating the utter folly of the old man's position. I said, "Supposing at midday, when the sun is in his strength, a man were to say, 'The sun does not shine.' What would people say of him?"

"They would say that he was a fool," was the ready response.

"Certainly they would, and the Word of God says, 'The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God'" (Psa. xiv.). In the midst of God's creation, surrounded with His glorious works, for you to say 'There is no God,' makes you a very great fool ; and with the sacred Scriptures before you, telling you of God's great love in the gift of His Son to save man from impending wrath, makes you a greater fool still."

Thereafter we reached our destination, parted, and were soon lost to each other in the multitude of a great city ; but to meet again, "For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Rom. xiv. 11, 12).

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Sin takes various forms; with some it is self-righteousness, and making God a liar; with others, like the old man, it is denying His very existence, and scorning revelation. But in each case it is sin, and sin and God cannot go together; therefore if man will cleave to his darling sins, refusing the “fountain that is open for sin and uncleanness,” there must be an eternal separation between him and God. “The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God” (Psa. ix. 17).

O that men would be wise and consider their latter end!

“Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon” (Isa. lv. 7-9). E. A.



“WHAT MEANEST THOU, O SLEEPER?”

(Read Jonah i., ii.)



WE have in Jonah a remarkable illustration of the way in which a soul learns, through deep and terrible exercises, its own nothingness, and that “Salvation is of the Lord;” and you will see he does not get deliverance until he says this.

In the first chapter he illustrates, in a most strik-

ing way, what man is as a sinner in departing from God. There is glaring disobedience and sin, and then, as a consequence, he is in a most critical position; but he is profoundly careless and indifferent until he is awakened. There are souls now as careless and indifferent, who have never yet been awakened.

Jonah is told to go east, and he goes west. There is thorough disobedience; and that is what the Apostle Paul says of us all, when he speaks of "the children of disobedience: among whom also we *all* had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others" (Eph. ii. 2, 3). Observe, the "child of disobedience" ripens into a 'child of wrath.' And what is that? A man may go on in disobedience and refusal of the claims of God now, but he cannot escape the judgment of God at the last. May you never reach the spot, my dear reader, where the wrath of God abides on you for ever. Believe the Gospel now, for the object of that Gospel is to deliver you from your sins and their consequences, and to bring you to God, that you may be a child of God, and know Him as your Father.

Jonah illustrates, then, the innate disobedience of man. God had said to him, "Arise, go to Nineveh. . . . But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish [destruction] from the presence of the Lord, and *went down* to Joppa [beauty]; and he

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found a ship going to Tarshish: so he paid the fare thereof, and *went down* into it, to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord” (i. 3). Mark how Jonah’s course is downward, like every child of Adam who has not been turned to God. He goes *down* to Joppa, and what does he find? He finds a ship going to Tarshish. Of course he finds a ship! The devil would be sure to have a ship there that day if there had never been one there before, to meet the disobedient soul as he gets there. And the devil has plenty of Joppas—earth beauties—and plenty of ships for you, my unsaved reader, to help you to get your own way and do as you like. He will pander to your lusts to ensure your destruction. Hell is the Tarshish to which you are surely wending your way.

But Jonah paid his fare, we read. And what is the fare, on his downward road, which the unconverted man pays? He pays his sinful fare to hell, and the price is his own soul. The Christian is on the upward road to heaven, and he has not to pay his own fare. Thank God, it was paid for him by another, even Jesus the Saviour.

Next, Jonah goes *down* into the ship,—another downward step. And don’t you think, my friend, that your course has been a downward one until this very hour? And you have not got to the bottom yet. But the Lord had His eye on Jonah, and, thank God, He has His eye on you too. You have not your eye on Him, but He has His eye on you.

God now begins to take Jonah in hand, for He "sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken" (i. 4). The effect was great, and all, save one, were alarmed; for we read, "Then the mariners were afraid, and cried every man unto his god, . . . but Jonah was *gone down* into the sides of the ship; and he lay, and was fast asleep" (i. 5). How often it happens that when God draws near unto a man he is profoundly unconscious of it; he is "fast asleep,"—lulled asleep by Satan. Some are lulled asleep by the pleasures of sin; others by the thought that they are not so bad; that they are better than their neighbours,—are orderly, religious, careful, moral people. Oh, if this be your condition, may the Lord arouse you! May he make this paper the shipmaster to you, to rouse you from your sleep of sin.

What roused Jonah? "The shipmaster came to him, and said unto him, What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not" (i. 6). And thou, O unsaved reader of these lines, what meanest thou? Arouse! be awakened, for what is the next thing coming? Destruction,—sudden destruction! "The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say [as men do more than ever *now* say], Peace and safety, then *sudden destruction* cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; *and they shall not escape*. . . . When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed

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from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with *everlasting destruction* from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power” (1 Thess. v. 2, 3; 2 Thess. i. 7-9).

You may say that Jonah’s insensibility in the tempest-tossed vessel is but a picture. True; but what is it a picture of? Of the state you are in. Every one in that ship, save Jonah, knew the danger; and every Christian knows your danger, my friend,—knows you are in danger of perishing; nay more, knows that perish you must, unless you too are waked up, and led to say, “Salvation is of the Lord.” You are, alas, indifferent now, and indifferent in a day when everything that God can do He has done, and the whole light has come out. Again I cry, “What meanest thou, O sleeper? Arise!” See what your state is. The shipmaster could only say, “Call upon thy God, *if so be* that God will think upon us, that we perish not.” He did not know that God does think on us. He did not know what the Christian knows, nor that God says, “I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. 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” (Jer. xxix. 11-13). God has so thought of us, that He has sent His only

begotten Son into the world to die for us, for "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God" (1 Peter iii. 18).

Jonah's friends were not sure of any way of escape; but, thank God, I can tell you of a way of escape, through the blood-shedding of the Lord Jesus on the cross. In their extremity, the Gentile mariners "said every one to his fellow, Come, and let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this evil is upon us. So they cast lots, and *the lot fell upon Jonah*" (i. 7). It is a good thing when the lot falls upon a man and he feels that he is *the* sinner. Then (i. 8) they ask Jonah four questions, which I will also ask you: (1) "What is thine occupation?" Sinning. That has been your occupation since you came into the world. Do you say, That is a terrible charge? God says, "The thought of foolishness is sin" (Prov. xxiv. 9). (2) "Whence comest thou?" Oh! it is a terrible thing when the Lord has to say to souls, as He did when on earth, "Ye are from beneath" (John viii. 23). (3) "What is thy country?" Ah, my friend, there is no mistake about your country. You belong to the world,—*"Ye are of this world"* (John viii. 23). You are in and of the world, and the world loves its own. (4) "And of what people art thou?" The enemies of the Lord. All unbelievers are such, though they may not like to own it.

The Christian's occupation is pleasing the Lord. Where does he come from? "As is the heavenly,

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such are they also that are heavenly.” His country is heaven, and his people are the children of God.

Jonah, now fairly “come to himself,” in reply to these four queries, says, “I fear the Lord, the God of heaven.” Can you say that? The mark of a converted man is, that he fears the Lord; that of the unconverted, that “there is no fear of God before their eyes” (Rom. iii. 18). At Jonah’s reply “were the men exceedingly afraid, and said unto him, Why hast thou done this? for the men knew that he fled from the presence of the Lord, because he had told them. Then said they unto him, What shall we do unto thee, that the sea may be calm unto us? . . . And he said unto them, Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you; *for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you*” (i. 10–12). Jonah comes to the conviction that he is the guilty one. It is a great moment when the soul gets to this point. I am verily guilty; I am so thoroughly guilty, that I am only fit to die. Others felt that they should perish; Jonah felt that he *deserved* to perish.

But though many learn that they are guilty, they have still deep lessons to learn, ere they find out what God’s salvation is; for when they have found that they are guilty, oftentimes they begin to try to mend; and here, at first, “the men rowed hard to bring it to the land; but they could not.” It was all of no use. “So they took up Jonah, and

cast him forth into the sea; and the sea ceased from her raging" (i. 15). Then he would feel indeed it was all over with him. And so, but for God, it was. The only way of escape now for him was through the life of another.

"Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights" (i. 17). It is given us for a figure. Jonah was preserved from these billows swallowing him up by the direct intervention of God. And what can prevent you and me from being swallowed up by the waves and billows of Divine wrath? Nothing but the direct intervention of God. But he has intervened, blessed be His name! The Lord Jesus Christ has come down in grace, given His own blood, taken sins upon Himself, been made sin, died, and has been raised again, and is at the right hand of God, and the Christian's life is "hid with Christ in God."

Jonah gets wonderful experiences in the belly of the great fish. He has been convicted, not only of sin and guilt, but of powerlessness too, and that he has a heart opposed to God. The first thing a soul does that is awakened is to pray, and "Jonah prayed unto the Lord his God out of the fish's belly" (ii. 1). But I want you to see that it is not his prayer that brings him deliverance. He says, "Out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice." There is positive agony of soul. Do you say, I know nothing about that? You will know it,

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then, my friend, one day, when your cry will never be heard. In the history of his soul, Jonah had gone down into the depths of hell, therefore he never went there actually. He now adds, “Thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: all thy billows and thy waves passed over me” (ii. 3).

I love to think of this verse, too, as a shadow of the experience of my blessed Saviour, who went through all the waves and billows of Divine wrath that never one of them might fall on me. But the man whom God takes in hand goes through deep exercises of soul, though I want you to see that your exercises, however deep, do not save you.

Every man must, sooner or later, learn what a fearful thing sin is, and how great the holiness of God. He learns there are depths of unbelief and impurity in his heart that he never knew before, and that the more he struggles and strives to restrain these evils, the more they bubble up, for their name is legion. Sin ever distances from God. Hence Jonah says, “I am cast out of thy sight; yet will I look again toward thy holy temple” (ii. 4). But what now are his experiences? “The waters compassed me about even to the soul: the depth closed me round about, the waters were wrapped about my head. *I went down to the bottoms of the mountains*” (ii. 5, 6). Three steps, says Jonah, I took myself,—*down* to Joppa, *down* to the ship, and *down* into its sides to sleep. But when God took hold of me, I went deeper down still,—“*down*

to the bottoms of the mountains." Here his exercises get deeper still. "When my soul fainted within me I remembered the Lord" (ii. 7). But, my friend, it will not do to merely remember the Lord. You must believe in Him too.

But the soul that is real before God, is ever led to judge itself and its ways,—*i.e.*, it repents. That Jonah did this is evident from his next words, "They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy" (ii. 9). This is the judgment he passes on his former life and the world which had allured him. Repentance, be it never so real and deep, is not deliverance however, and this he sighs for, but seeks to get in a wrong way, when he adds, "I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed" (ii. 9). Still he is not delivered. Sacrifices and vows cannot deliver. Have you learned this? Jonah did, for he pulls up short, and exclaims, "Salvation is of the Lord" (ii. 9); and immediately deliverance comes in. Many a soul is in the state of Jonah ere he said, "Salvation is of the Lord." Such are saying, "I will sacrifice, I will vow, I will pay." Ah! you are in the belly of hell still, and the soul never gets out that way; the gates are all barred. But the moment self is let go, with its sacrifices, its vows, its prayers, and its paying, and the soul sees that "salvation is of the Lord," then deliverance comes.

"And the Lord spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land" (ii. 10),—

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not into the mud, but on to dry land. He was saved by a miracle. And that is what the Christian says, “I am saved by a miracle. I was on my road to hell, I had paid my fare and gone down into the ship; but the Lord came in, and took hold of me, and saved me by a miracle.” Yes, it is a greater miracle that saves a soul now than the one that saved Jonah. It was a great miracle certainly that saved Jonah, a wonderful thing that God should prepare a great fish, but not half so wonderful a thing as that He should design and plan such a wondrous scheme as that by which my salvation is secured. I am saved by the life of another, like Jonah, but not till that other has gone down into death for me. My sin was put away by the death of the One who had life in Himself,—the One on whom death had no claim. He could offer a sacrifice that could clear the soul from every penalty that could fall upon it. He sweeps away the penalty by bearing it, and He sweeps away the sin by dying; and then He comes up on the resurrection side of the grave, and the Christian’s life is hid in Him.

I look up and see a living Man in glory, and God says, I am “in Him.” There is dry land for you, my friend. Truly “SALVATION IS OF THE LORD!” and those who simply believe in Him can sing with joy,—

“The Lord is risen: with Him we also rose,
And in His grave see vanquished all our foes.
The Lord is risen: beyond the judgment land,
In Him, in resurrection-life we stand!

W. T. P. W.

“I WROTE IT WRONG;” OR, THE DEAF-MUTE’S “IF.”



SHORT while ago a party of four Christians were busily engaged in visiting the houses in one of the far-off valleys of the Highlands. It was a wild weird-looking spot, surrounded by bleak barren hills stretching away on either side of a narrow stream which ran along the bottom of the strath, as far as the eye could reach. We were leaving some little books at every house, and inviting the people to some gospel meetings that were to be held on the two following nights.

Knocking at the door of one of them, an elderly woman appeared, and, in response to our invitation, asked us to come in and have a talk with her.

We went in, and soon found ourselves seated round the fireside, with her and her daughter, a young woman who seemed to be about five and twenty years of age, and whom we found was both deaf and dumb.

We at once felt interested in the latter, especially as her mother told us she had learned to read and write, and would like us to have some conversation with her. Taking up a pencil and paper which she herself had got ready for us, one of her visitors wrote down some questions, to which this dear soul gave the following interesting answers.

"Do you love Jesus?"

"Yes."

"God's Word says, 'He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life;' and also, 'Whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' Can you say that you have this?"

"I am not sure if I have or not yet."

"Will you believe what God says if I show you from His Word how you may know it?"

"Yes."

He then turned to those precious verses in John v. 24 and 1 John v. 13, and pointing them out to her, wrote down on the paper,—

"HATH, *not* hope (John v. 24).
KNOW, *not* feel (1 John v. 13)."

"Do you believe? Then, on the authority of God's Word, you have everlasting life."

"I am not sure."

"Why do you say 'not sure,' when God says 'he that believeth *hath* everlasting life?' If *you* believe, GOD says *you* HAVE everlasting life. Now which is it to be,—your own doubts and fears, or GOD'S own Word; *uncertainty*, or *certainty*; *hope*, or *HATH*? Satan wants you to doubt God's Word and be unhappy, but God would have you rest simply on what HE says, and, if you believe on Jesus, to know that you ARE saved and HAVE eternal life. Won't you just rest there, and then all will be bright and clear?"

"I believe Jesus Christ is our Saviour."

“Whom did Jesus die for?”

“For sinners or ungodly.”

“Are you one?”

“Yes.”

“And a very bad one?”

“Yes.”

“Well, it says, ‘He came into the world to save sinners.’ *I* believe Him, and know He died for *me*, and that He is *my* Saviour. What can you say?”

“If I believe Him, I shall be saved.”

A little disconcerted at this reply, her visitor simply underlined the first three words, “*If I believe,*” and then handed back the paper to her with a look of surprise. For a moment she seemed very thoughtful, and then suddenly took up the pencil, and scratched out the little word “if,” while a smile lit up her countenance.

Her visitor continued,—“But I believe, and *am* saved,—not shall be saved,—because God says so. If I were to die to-night I should be with Christ for ever.”

“I wrote it wrong,” was her answer.

“Well, dear soul, which is it with you? are you simply trusting on Jesus as your Saviour? If so, God says you **ARE** saved, and would have you to *know* it.”

She then wrote down, “**GOD SAYS SO,** I believe Him, *I have everlasting life.*”

At this moment the remainder of the party, who had been visiting elsewhere, entered the house.

One of them took up the conversation with her, and addressing her on his fingers, put several more questions to her, all of which she replied to with a bright and confident look, leaving no doubt to any present that her soul was now resting on the Word of God in the simplicity of a little child.

And now we would just ask each reader of these lines, Have *you* everlasting life? It is God's free gift to lost and ruined sinners. Reader, have you seen yourself in the light of His holy presence as a lost and guilty sinner, perishing on destruction's broad road and needing a pardon for your many sins? If so, the scripture is plain, "Who-soever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts x. 43). Are you wanting ETERNAL LIFE? Listen then to the oft-repeated story of God's grace. Ponder over the depths of mercy it contains. 'Tis for thee! 'Tis for thee! "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that WHOSOEVER believeth in him *should not perish*, but HAVE everlasting life." What has God done? "SO LOVED," and "GAVE." What have you to do? BELIEVE! and HAVE! Oh, let that weary heart of yours drink in of the ocean fulness of DIVINE LOVE, and rest this very moment on God's unerring Word. "He that believeth on the Son HATH everlasting life" (John iii. 36).

Perhaps this will meet the eye of one who does truly believe in Jesus—God's Son, but yet is not sure of possessing this eternal life. You would like to be, would you not, but fear to say so? Let

me point out the mistake you are making. God has never asked *you* to say you have it. It is He Himself that SAYS it in His Word, as true of every one that believeth. Like this dear deaf and dumb one, just take Him at His word. "God SAYS so," was what she rested on; and so could add, "I believe Him, I HAVE EVERLASTING LIFE." Look not at your poor changing feelings. Give no heed to Satan's many lies. Rest simply and solely on "the WORD of the LORD that endureth for ever."

Reader, once more we ask, Have you this everlasting life? Remember, "he that *believeth* NOT the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John iii. 36).

W. R. P.

"THAT'S HOW MANY A ONE LOSES CHRIST."



THESE words were spoken to myself and others as I was leaving the city one day coming home for dinner. The train had just started, and, as is often the case, some were coming up late—some, alas! too late—only just in time to see themselves left behind. Two women, a young lad, and myself were the sole occupants of the compartment. The whistle was blown, the train was on the move, when a young man rushed up in breathless haste, only, however, to be caught in the firm grasp of two

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strong and resolute railway officials. One of my fellow-passengers exclaimed, “That’s how many a one loses Christ;” and looking around the compartment, the speaker (one of the women) examined the faces of each of us, evidently expecting a response of some kind. She sat next to me, and I replied, ‘Yes, that’s just how many a one loses his precious soul, which is the result of losing Christ.’ The others said never a word, but *we* understood each other in far less time than it has taken me to write these few sentences, and soon found there was an indissoluble link which bound us together as one.

Do you, my reader, know anything of this link which binds saints of God to one another?

I said to my railway companion, “Then you, I suppose, are one of those strange ‘peculiar people’ who say they are saved?”

“Yes, sir, I thank God I am one of those. I am saved, and I know it.” “Praise God,” said I, “and I’m one of them too,” and we both there and then rejoiced together. By this time we had reached another station, and received another passenger, a gentleman. Our fellow-travellers were eyeing us, and no doubt thought us a most eccentric pair, but we halted not in our conversation as the subject was so interesting.

“Well, tell me all about it,” I continued. And she began thus, “You see, sir, Sam my husband was converted about four years ago. He was a very wild and wicked man—cursing, swearing, and drinking, and everything bad—and I often wondered

what all this would end in. Our children were now growing up, and witnessing all this, which was leaving a very bad impression upon them. I myself went to the church every Sunday that I could get out, but Sam went nowhere. He would assemble with other miners, when the decent people went to church, and there they would play at cards and draughts and other games of amusement. But to shorten my story, Sam S—— got converted, through some evangelist coming to the place, and he there and then began to work for Christ among his fellow-workmen. People young and old used to come and look in at the door to see what like our Sam was, now that he had got converted. But Sam went on as happy as the day was long. I thought this is all very fine if it only lasts, but to my great astonishment it did last. Soon he began to lecture me. I considered that he was a proper subject for conversion, but I who was a regular church-goer, and said my prayers often, had no need of such a change.

“Three and a half years passed away, when one day Old Ann, a dish-hawker, came to the door, and said to me, as she laid down her basket, ‘Well, Mrs S—— are you no saved yet?’ I retorted, ‘Ann, you surely think I’m awfu’ bad when you speak that way to me; you needed to be converted,—every one that knew you knows that,—and our Sam needed it just as much as you, Ann, but I have lived a different life from either of you, and you both know it.’

“THAT’S HOW MANY A ONE LOSES CHRIST.” 111

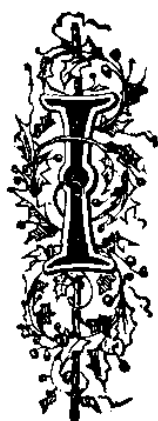
“ ‘Yes, but,’ said Ann, ‘Mrs S——, both you, and Sam, and me were a’ lost to begin wi’; we were bad through an’ through, so bad that there was nae mending o’ us;’ and so she talked to me, till I felt in my soul that Ann had the best of it. I asked her in, and in a very short time Sam came in from his work. I said, ‘Sam, Ann says I’m lost, and I believe she’s correct.’ Sam he looked at both of us, and cried out, ‘Praise God, there’s joy in heaven now.’ I asked them both into the room, and we all three knelt down, and there I gave myself to Christ. Sam prayed, and Ann prayed, and I prayed, and such a happy meeting we had there never was another like it in all the country round.”

By this time I had reached my destination, and, after giving Mrs S—— some little books, we parted, perhaps never to see each other again till the Lord comes to receive us all to be with Himself. Mrs S—— was just like thousands of others all over the land. She was rocked to sleep in one of the devil’s cradles, and had thought herself all safe, till the Spirit of God came and rapped at the door of her heart, and woke her up to the consciousness of her lost condition by nature, and showed her her need of a Saviour. Doubtless you also, my friend—if still unsaved—have been brought face to face with this question as to your soul’s salvation at some time or other in your life’s history. How have you, and how are you still at this moment treating the subject? You will require to have it out with God

either here or hereafter. Many things, by your clever manœuvring, you may manage to clear yourself of, but this you never can. If you refuse and reject Christ as your Saviour, you must meet Him as your judge. If you now despise His mercy and spurn His grace, you will meet with inflexible justice, unmixed with either the one or the other, in the coming judgment, that will seal your doom and consign your never-dying soul to the lake of fire.

No mercy then, no grace then; the gospel sound will be no more heard; the undying worm of memory will carry you back to the day of grace, when the offers of salvation were slighted by you, and the loving invitations of Christ were set at naught by you. But a gracious Saviour lingers still. He waits to save. He has met all the necessities of your case. He, and He alone, can and will deliver you from a burning hell, if you but trust Him. He has met every claim that God had against the sinner, which the sinner never could meet. He has entered the devil's palace, overthrown the strong man, and spoiled his goods. Dear soul, be decided for Christ this very moment; let not Satan cheat you out of blessing to your precious soul any longer. To-morrow may be a day too late. The young man missed the train by being just half a minute too late; he might as well have been half an hour as half a minute, the door was shut, and he was left behind. Just take your place now, make up your mind now; be decided now, and be saved now. "Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor.

THE "COLUMBINE;" OR,
 "MAN'S EXTREMITY GOD'S
 OPPORTUNITY."



T was on the 30th of January that the smart and well-built sloop "Columbine" put to sea on her passage from Grutness to Lerwick. Besides the skipper and the crew of two there sailed in her one passenger, Elizabeth Mouat, an infirm and elderly woman. A strong but favourable breeze augured well for a speedy arrival at their destination, guided by the well-trying skill and long-earned experience of the skipper. But God has written, "Boast not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth;" and never was a more forcible illustration of the truth of those solemn words than in the present instance. The anchor was scarcely weighed when, with a sudden swing of the boom, the skipper and one of the crew were carried overboard. The latter, clinging to a rope, swung himself back on board the sloop, but the skipper dropped helplessly into the sea, and never breathed again. To lower the boat and pull to the spot—now left behind—was the work of but few moments, and their promptitude in doing so reflects credit on the two men, particularly on the one who had himself just escaped so narrowly a watery

grave. But death had claimed its prey; the sea had swallowed up its victim's body, till that day when Divine authority shall command, and Divine power shall enforce, its surrender.

After a careful but fruitless search the two men bethought themselves of returning to the sloop, when, to their horror, they discovered that she was drifting rapidly away, and had already left them far far behind. Every muscle was strained, every effort made, to overtake her, but in vain; and with heavy hearts and weary hands they were compelled to pull for the shore, which after much difficulty and danger they reached.

But now, reader, picture to yourself the situation of the solitary passenger. Imperfectly understanding how the sudden and awful change had occurred (for she was in the cabin), she found herself adrift on the wide and stormy sea; untaught and powerless to navigate the vessel herself, and bereft of crew and pilot, at the mercy of tides, and winds, and waves. Thus it was that the sun set, and the darkness of a wild January night enveloped her helplessness, and cut off all hopes of human aid; for when daylight returned she was far far beyond the reach of human eye. One after another, too, the few resources remaining at her disposal were being taken from her. The ladder, her only means of access to the deck, where at any rate she might watch for any passing vessel, was thrown down by the violent rolling of the sloop, thus making her a prisoner in the narrow cheerless cabin. She needs

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warmth,—what has she to supply it? A box of matches, one of which she burns at intervals that its momentary flame may relieve her benumbed fingers! She needs light during those long nights,—but how soon the little stock of oil is done, and the last flicker leaves her in rayless gloom! She needs food,—but two biscuits and a quart of milk are her entire provisions, and they, too, are soon exhausted, and she is left to starve! She needs water,—where can she obtain it? A few stray drops are trickling down the skylight panes, and with these she moistens her parched lips; but, alas! the drops are salt, and only aggravate her thirst. And thus the weary days and wearier nights roll slowly on, each like an age in length, and each successively bringing fresh suffering and taking away another resource; till, early on the ninth day, the crisis of all is reached, for shock succeeds shock as the vessel strikes one rock after another in her floundering career, till at length the raging surf flings her on the rugged shore. Her mast, with the shreds of the now tattered sails still clinging to it, goes overboard with a terrific crash, and the water begins to rise in hold and cabin.

But *now* it is,—now that every resource is gone, now that the extremity is come,—*now* it is that God finds *His* opportunity to step in with a deliverance truly *His* own; for, guided amid a labyrinth of rocks and shoals only by *His* winds and *His* waves, the vessel has reached the only spot on the coast of a Norwegian island where a landing could be

effected; and just as she reaches it some youths are providentially led to stroll in that direction, and seeing the vessel's position, go off for the more efficient help of the men of a neighbouring hamlet; and a brave man, at imminent peril to his own life, succeeds in carrying a rope on board through the boiling surf; and by this precarious means bridging the space between the vessel and the shore, conveys the half-dead woman safe to land, where the spontaneous kindness and hospitality of the islanders are speedily rewarded by her recovery from her critical condition. Truly, as the Psalmist says, "They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep. For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths; their soul is melted because of trouble. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are AT THEIR WIT'S END. THEN they cry unto THE LORD in their trouble, and HE bringeth them out of their distresses."

But, dear reader, there is another yet deeper and direr human "extremity," that affords a yet more glorious divine "opportunity." It is that of which we read in Romans v. 6-8, "*When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.*" Forty centuries, from creation to the cross, had been spent in testing man's "strength,"—his capacity to work out a righteousness of his own

for God. Every successive test had demonstrated afresh his inability to do so. Tried in innocence, he had fallen; tried without law, he was lawless; tried under law, he transgressed it. Prophet after prophet was rejected, till last of all God said, "I have yet one Son, my well-beloved; perhaps they will reverence my Son." But when they saw Him, they said among themselves, "This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and seize on his inheritance." So they cast Him out and slew Him. That, dear reader, was man's "extremity;—the cross, the scorn, the spitting, the murder of God's Son, were the open exhibition of what man's heart was toward God. Would God seek, would He accept, fruits produced by the rejectors of His Son? Never, even if there were any. All pretension to human righteousness was closed at the cross; it is eighteen centuries too late to pretend to it. "Now," said Christ on the eve of His crucifixion, "*Now* is the judgment of this world." The world sealed its own doom in rejecting the Son of God.

But if the cross was indeed "man's extremity," then it was that God, instead of sweeping the scene with well-deserved judgment, found His "due time," His one grand "opportunity," for the display of Himself in all the depths of His love, by Jesus, for

"The very spear that pierced His side,
Drew forth the blood to save."

There did God make Him who knew no sin to be sin for us; there did He visit on Him His holy

judgment of sin ; there did He forsake that One whose meat and whose drink had been to do His Father's will and to finish His work ; there all the waves and billows of God's wrath rolled over Him, while deep answered unto deep at the noise of His waterspouts ; there, dear reader, at that awful crisis, was the holiness of God fully vindicated, in order that He might be free, without denying His holiness, to dispense to the vilest that boundless love which He had displayed in thus giving His Son. Thus it was that where man came to his moral end, God came out in all His moral glory for the salvation and blessing of the lost.

But, reader, have you applied to *yourself* individually, what is true of man in general historically ? Have you reached your "extremity," your moral end, in the presence of God ? For be assured, till you do, God's "opportunity" to pronounce your forgiveness has not come. We read in Luke vii. of a creditor who had two debtors. When did he forgive them ? Was it when they could pay the whole, or even part of their debts ? No ; it was not till "they had *nothing* to pay ;" as in Rom. v., "when we were *without* strength."

Again, when was the leper pronounced clean ? (Lev. xiii.) Was it when he was only a little leprous ? No, but if "the leprosy cover *all* the skin of him that hath the plague, *from his head even to his foot, wheresoever the priest looketh, . . .* he shall pronounce him clean that hath the plague." Perhaps you say, "I know I am a sinner, but I am

doing the best I can." Then you still set up to have some strength,—still have something to pay with; you are not yet "leprous all over," and therefore not yet a recipient of God's free grace. Now it was not their debts merely, but it was their having "nothing to pay," that made them fitting objects of forgiving grace. The man that says, "Christ has done His part, but I must do mine, else I shall not be saved," has not reached his "extremity" yet. No, reader, if you are justified before God at all, it can only be "*freely by his grace*, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus;" "not of works, lest any man should boast." *Our* only part has been sin. But the finished work of Christ perfectly and alone meets that, and leaves us nothing to do for salvation, but simply to accept it by faith in Him.

Now, dear unsaved reader, what prevents your thus accepting God's salvation? Is it because you think you have something to do? *You could not do it if you had to.* What is it but pride that disdains *free* grace, and would seek to add some doings of our own to the work of Christ? As one once frankly admitted: "I am *too proud to receive mercy*, even at the hands of God." But it is not till we "cast our deadly doings down," and take our true place as sinners helplessly and hopelessly lost,—not till we thus own *our* extremity, that God finds *His* opportunity to pronounce our free pardon through Christ's precious blood. Now, let me beseech my unsaved reader to honestly face the truth of his, or her, condition before a holy God.

You are *lost by nature*. Do you dispute it? Well, then, have you been found,—saved? If not *found*, is it not clear you are still *lost*? And what about *practice*? God declares, “There is no difference; for all have sinned.” Are you “trying to keep the law?” Then you are under the curse (Gal. iii. 10). And clearly you have not believed in Christ, or you would be already saved: you are, therefore, “condemned already” (John iii. 18).

Reader, what an awful condition to be in! Lost by nature, guilty by practice, cursed by a broken law, and condemned by unbelief! Is not the thought enough to bring you, like the Psalmist’s mariners, to your “WIT’S END”? May it indeed have that very effect; for it is just then that deliverance comes. “Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses.” May you indeed be brought to the end of *your* resources, that you may become a recipient of *God’s* free salvation through Him who, not only at the risk of death (like the brave Norwegian), but at the inestimable cost of Calvary’s cross, has stepped in to bridge the gulf between you and God, and to convey you in all the tenderness, yet might, of His unchanging love, safe home

“To Heaven’s eternal shore.”


But it may be this little book has fallen into the hands of one who is indifferent to the question of his salvation,—one who has health and prosperity, and who supposes there is plenty of time to spare yet. He will still enjoy the pleasures of sin, and

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then at "a more convenient season" he will "turn over a new leaf." Reader, beware lest thy next "turn" be "into hell"! (Psa. ix. 17.) Death defeats all calculations, as the "Columbine" incident so solemnly reminds us. The *feeble old woman* was preserved through a hundred perils and sufferings, while one swing of the boom in a moment swept away the *strong man in life's prime*. Reader, had it been you, what of your immortal soul? Quite true, the last minute would be time enough to be saved; but can you tell that *this* is not your last minute, as you read this very line? *Now*, my friend, *now* is the only moment you can be sure of; and "*Now* is the accepted time; *now* is the day of salvation." "Come now." "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

W. H. K.

"HE'S DUNE EVERYTHING FOR ME."

OW do you feel yourself to-day?" asked a Christian visitor, as she sat down by the bedside of a poor woman, upon whose face death was already beginning to set his stamp.

"I'm no ony better," was the reply. "Perhaps," said the visitor gently, "you are not going to get better, and what then?"

"Weel, then, I hae Christ," said the invalid, slowly and thoughtfully.

"And what has He done for you?"

"He's dune everything for me," said she earnestly.

"But has He saved you?"

"Yes."

"I never heard you say this before," said her friend, scarcely knowing whether to give full credit to her words or not. "How did it come about? Will you tell me about it?"

"It was last day you were in," said the sick one, "an' speakin' tae me aboot Christ. After I was my lane, I began tae look back ower the past, an' I saw it was a' black; I lookit intae the future, an' I saw it was a' dark; an' the present was dark tae; so I said tae mysel', I maun hae Christ. Then I began tae speak oot tae Him an' tell Him a' aboot it. My wee lassie heard me speakin', an' cam' up the stair, an' lookin' a' roun' the room, said, 'Wha was ye speakin' tae?' 'Tae Jesus,' I said. 'I dinna see Him,' said the wee thing, lookin' a' roun' again. An' then the thocht cam' tae my ain heart, But He *is* here,—here tae save me, an' I'll just trust Him."

Such was her simple story, and the listener's heart went up in praise to Him who had opened another heart, and drawn another soul to take refuge in Himself from the wrath to come. Life's battle had gone hard with this poor one. With a drunken husband and large family, difficult it had

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been to keep poverty from the door, and "the cares of this life" had been many. And now she had been laid down to die. The doctor had said that he could do no more for her; then it was that she had awakened up to see the blackness of the past, and the darkness of the future, and it had caused her to exclaim, "I maun hae Christ," and Christ she got. During the three weeks that passed after this ere she fell asleep, her friend saw her very frequently, and rejoiced to trace the work of God's Spirit in her soul. Few—few, indeed—were the earthly comforts that were around that deathbed; scant too was the knowledge she possessed of what was written in God's Word; but there was the simple trust of a little child, and therefore the peace of God. Though sometimes lying almost unconscious, taking no notice of anything, the voice of the one who had told her of Jesus always aroused her, and brought the glad look into her eyes, while she would make a feeble effort to turn her poor suffering body so that she might see her.

"Do not move," said her friend to her one day, "when it causes you pain. I can sit beside you and talk to you, and you can hear all the same, although you do not see me."

"Ay, but then I like tae see you," said she; then added, speaking with much difficulty, "but—you—could—dae—me—nae—guid—if—I—hadna—Christ."

"Does the thought ever trouble you of leaving

all your children, with no one to take charge of them?"

"No," she said simply; "I hae just left that wi' Him tae."

Yet she did not know that it was written, "Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you." Those four lines were very precious to her, and she loved to hear them repeated again and again,—

"Death and judgment are behind me,
Grace and glory on before ;
All the billows roll'd o'er Jesus,
There exhausted all their power."

Shortly before she "fell asleep," her friend bent over her and asked, "What of the past now?"

"My sins are a' forgiven,—a' forgiven," she repeated; then added, with almost a wail of sadness, "*But I'm vext I'm sae lang o' kennin'.*"

Unsaved one, is there not a message in this for you? You too have a past. Have you ever looked back over it, and seen its blackness? There is also a future before you, have you ever looked forward to it? And if there is sadness in the wail of regret that comes from this dying bed at being so long in knowing of the blessedness of sins forgiven, what will be the bitterness of your regret if you never know of it at all? Scripture tells us of a place where "there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. xiii. 12). Wailing over rejected gospel messages, neglected opportunities of being saved, and gnashing of teeth in the

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hopelessness of despair. Take heed that you do not find yourself amongst those wailers; your opportunities of accepting God's message of salvation are going past; they will soon be gone. Listen, oh, listen, to Him who says,—yes, says to *you now*, —“Look unto me, and be ye saved.”

Child of God, just a little word to you,—you who, through God's grace, can say, “He has done everything for me;” go further, and be able to say, “He *is* everything to me.” He will be so to you throughout the countless ages of eternity; but just now, in the place where He was despised and rejected, and where His name is still dishonoured, prove by your walk and ways that He is everything to you. May the manifestation of your life here be, “I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.”

Y. Z.

 THREE FAMILIAR VOICES.


DO not know how many witnesses might be called upon to give evidence against the sinner, but I can name three whose testimony is overwhelming. The first leaves him “*without excuse* ;” the second declares him “*guilty before God* ;” and the third pronounces him “*condemned already*.” Now these verdicts are rather the sentences of a judge, after full examination, than the mere evidence of witnesses; yet, whilst this is true, the

judge acts upon the statement of the witnesses, and forms his judgment. Let us listen, then, to the voices.

The first called upon is "*Creation*," and it bears witness to "the eternal power and Godhead" of God (Rom. i. 20).

The prisoner at the bar has said, "There is no God," and is arraigned on that charge. He has denied the existence of God, though admitting of a substitute, which he describes as "*a first cause*." He cannot but own *effects*; and for an effect there must be a cause; for all effects, a *first cause*. But, then, this first cause, whatever it may be, is not God. You see, the idea of God is suggestive of intelligent authority, power, omniscience, and many other qualities, which may fairly be denied to a "*first cause*." This may be a mere germ of life, all-productive, and, perchance, widely beneficent; but *that* is not only a source of life, possessing, necessarily, perfect intelligence and power; but a moral Being, who discriminates between right and wrong, good and evil, and who orders His moral universe according to rules of perfect equity. The idea of God is, therefore, distasteful, intolerable, and it is accordingly abandoned for the splendid substitute — "*first cause*."

But "*creation*" declares "his eternal power and Godhead;" and, in "*first cause*," what is there that is *eternal*, or that can be described as *Godhead*? Nothing, surely! It is only a conception of the mind, that may mean anything, but which at all events aims at getting rid of the obnoxious word *God*.

Creation, then,—the visible universe,—speaks loudly of these two things, and leaves the sinner “without excuse.” What greater miracle need God perform in order to carry the conviction of His being to our minds, than what we see around us by day and night? We live amid miracles; we are miracles; and yet “The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God!” It is true that creation does not tell us all that God is, but it does tell us of His power, design, and Godhead; and with such evidence the unbeliever is well called a “fool.” He is left “without excuse.”

Our second witness is the law. Now the law was given by Moses to Israel, and it contained the measure of human righteousness on earth. God took up that nation as a sample of all others, and made them the world-wide illustration of the fact that man cannot keep his commands. What is true of one, is true of all; as the sample, so the crop; as Israel, so the world. “By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.” This is solemn, for it shows the effect of the law, and the utter impossibility of salvation on that principle. It stops every mouth, and brings in all the world as *guilty before God*.

Did you ever try, my reader, to obtain righteousness by keeping the law? If so, you learned your folly. The law is “holy,” but you are unholy; the law is “just,” but you are unjust; the law is “good,” but you are thoroughly bad, and there is

not the smallest relationship between you. In fact, fire and water would agree more readily than the law and the sinner. There is no compatability. The very best way to learn what you are, is honestly to measure yourself by the law. Your mouth will soon be stopped, and you will plead "*guilty*," for "guilty before God" you certainly are, and all the world along with you!

Ah! this second witness bears a vast evidence, and testifies against many who appear insensible to its voice, yet the world is "guilty before God."

Our third witness is the Gospel. Hearken, "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but *he that believeth not is condemned already*, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (John iii. 18). Here we have discrimination,—some "not condemned," others "condemned already," and the reasons given for these two different states. Faith in the Son of God brings about the perfect acquittal of the one, unbelief condemns the other. The name of the Son of God is the test. In that blessed name is embodied full salvation, and the rejection of it involves condemnation. Now God spoke in one way by creation, in another by the law, and in a third by the Gospel; in the first we see His power, in the second His holiness, and in the last His love,—a three-fold cord!

If people refuse the voice of creation, then, perhaps, they will tremble under the thunders of the law. If they still turn a deaf ear to the law, then, surely, they will yield to the winnings of

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love! Must they pass from court to court? from "being without excuse," to "guilty before God"? then from "guilty before God," to "condemned already"? What a downward course!

Depend upon it, dear reader, God means that you should listen, and He will hold you responsible for all you see, and hear, and know of His works, and ways, and Word. Creation is a distinct witness to the fact that God is. The law makes known His holiness, and that He cannot tolerate sin. The Gospel—the good news—tells of His heart; its love, its care, its sympathy; the gift of His Son, and of that precious blood which cleanseth from all sin; of present acquittal, of eternal life, of "no condemnation;" of all God has done for the guilty who trust in Jesus.

Believe, oh, believe, and live!

J. W. S.



A PROCRASTINATOR'S END.



FEW years ago, in a small village where God, through special Gospel meetings, was working by His Spirit, and arousing many careless sinners through the preaching of the Word, two young men—companions—might have been seen night after night together conversing on some subject which, by the expression of their looks, was to them of the utmost importance. It was no scientific

problem they were trying to solve, nor was it any scheme for advancing their position in life that was giving them such deep concern.

The two young men were miners, and they had no great ambition to secure anything in this world beyond their food and raiment by honest labour. They were respectable young men; had never been guilty of any outward wickedness; drinking and smoking were abhorred by them; indeed, their parents and minister thought they should have "joined the church." What then was the burden that these young men seemed to be carrying about with them? The burden of the one was sin, the consciousness that he was a sinner before God, and that, unless some change was wrought and deliverance secured, the lake of fire would be his eternal dwelling-place. It was not a question with him how few nor how many sins he had committed; he knew and felt that he was a *sinner*, and that God was holy and righteous, and could never have such an one as he was dwelling in His presence. The burden of the other was the concern he had for his dear companion, as he listened, night after night, to his tale of distress. It was not the sense of sin, nor the fear of coming judgment, that was putting him about. If his companion had got deliverance, he would have been quite contented away from God. The famine had not yet arisen in his soul.

Week after week passed by, yet no change was brought, except the continual change that every moment effects, viz., brought nearer to death and

hell, or nearer to Christ and glory. At last the deciding time had come. It was, *now or never; to-day, or not to-morrow*. It was Christ and God's salvation, or procrastinate and perish. Reader, this may be the last sound of God's voice in mercy to you; how will you treat it? On the Sunday evening the preacher had proclaimed, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" (John i. 29.) The sinner burdened with the sense of sin heard the message proclaimed, he was asked to remain to an after-meeting for anxious souls, but he was ashamed to be found on the "penitent form." The enemy of souls whispered in his ear, "You know where the preacher is going to after the meeting, and you can see him there;" and so he left the hall, and loitered about until the Lord's servant had gone into the appointed house. Walking up, he put his hand on the latch of the door to go in; but, before the door was opened, again the successful enemy whispered to him, "You don't know who all may be in the house, perhaps the very ones that you don't wish to know your private and individual concerns." He listened to the tempter, he halted, and at last resolved to go his way for this time, and watch for a more "convenient season." Reader, have you been listening to that God-dishonouring, Christ-rejecting, soul-ruining word of the enemy,—Time enough yet?

Two or three days after this night's experience, the convicted youth told to his companion the tale of his deep distress on this special Sunday

night, adding, "I wish I had gone into that house on Sunday night, and decided for Christ." The companion never having realised the awfulness of being in an unsaved condition, with the wrath of God abiding on him (John iii. 36), could offer him no consolation, but out of pure sympathy advised his friend to make sure work next Sunday night, and get the matter settled then. Alas! alas! both were calculating upon time that God had never promised.

Reader, are you saved? Are your sins all forgiven? You say, I mean to be saved; I expect to get the question of my sins settled before I leave this world. Take care! If hitherto you have lived without God and salvation, He may say to you this very night, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee" (Luke xii. 20). Listen, and take warning from what befell that young man, who arranged to be saved by Christ the following Sunday,—just other three or four days for a healthy young man to live, surely he would not die before then. As the village bell struck ten that night on which the fatal decision—to put off salvation till Sunday—was made, these two fond friends parted, never to meet on earth again. Both got up in health next morning, and went to their daily toil underground. God brought one safely home; but, as the other was wending his way to the bottom of the shaft, he met with a fatal accident, and in about fifteen minutes after he had left his neighbours at the "working face" he was

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found a corpse. No one heard his dying words,—if any,—nor saw him die, and *his* Sunday and God's *now* will stand eternally apart.

God and eternity were brought very near to that other young man who had been spared, and it was now no longer concern about his companion that solemnised his mind, but a downright sense in his soul that if he had been called away hell would have been his portion. Reader, *where will you spend* ETERNITY? Such was his fear of death that for three days he could not be persuaded to go down the pit, lest the fate of his companion should be his own; and when he did go to his work again, he ran in perfect terror from the least appearance of danger. "The wicked flee when no man pursueth" (Prov. xxviii. 1). Day after day only brought deepened distress; vows and resolutions were made, but the most of them were never kept; religious observances were strictly attended to, but still no deliverance came. Sins which he at first thought trifling now appeared heinous, even to him, in the sight of God; and every fresh ray of light that flashed into his soul, only gave him to see his sins as a great mountain between his soul and God. He also came to see that even a strictly religious life in the future could never remove that black lake-of-fire-securing catalogue of guilt that stood against him (Acts xiii. 39). Every resource in himself was now exhausted, without deliverance being secured; he looked to man, but looked in vain, for no "days-man" could be found to bring God

and him together (Job ix. 33). And now, when that poor sinner had been brought to the dust, God said to his soul, "Look unto me, and be ye saved" (Isa. xlv. 22). "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all" (1 Tim. ii. 5, 6). The storm was now calmed, the troubled conscience set at rest, and the eye no longer saw that black catalogue of guilt (it was gone) but Christ,—Christ for God, Christ for his sins, and Christ for his heart! Christ all in all. That happy soul could now sing with assurance,—

"There is life in a look at the crucified One,
There is life at this moment for thee ;"

and,—

"My heart is fixed, eternal God,—Fixed on Thee,
And my eternal choice is made,—Christ for me."

Go back with me now, dear reader, and "consider your ways." Perhaps you have been taught since your childhood that you are a sinner; you have felt, too, at times what a pity it is you are what you are; you have tried to improve yourself, and perhaps your ways may bear favourable comparison with the ways of many who say they are going to heaven. Saul of Tarsus, *while* he was a persecutor and blasphemer, was, as touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless (Phil. iii. 6; 1 Tim. i. 13). His righteousnesses were as filthy rags (Isa. lxiv. 6), and so are yours; and deep down in your soul, if you are not born again, as you consider these divine realities in the light of God and

eternity, you feel that you have not "peace with God." If this is your condition, remain in it no longer; come out in your true character, and say, "Father, I have sinned against Heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son," and God the Father will have compassion on you, and give you the kiss of reconciliation, and far more (Luke xv. 20-24). Perhaps you have taken up this *Gospel Messenger* to read because you are alarmed about your lost condition before God. If so, don't lay it down until you are saved. By all the free and loving messages of salvation in God's Word, I beseech you to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and be saved *now* (Acts xvi. 32). By all the terror of coming judgment (2 Cor. v. 11), I would persuade you not to be like that young man who put salvation off till "next Sunday,"—a day he never saw. Receive and believe *now* that soul-saving word. "Look unto me and be ye *saved*? . . . for I am God and there is none else."

It is the writer of this article who was left, while his friend was taken, and who looked to Jesus and lives; and, after these years of "looking off unto Jesus," through grace he still prays and sings,—

"O, fix my earnest gaze,
So wholly, Lord, on Thee,
That, with Thy beauty occupied,
I elsewhere none may see."

G.

“WHAT A FOOL I’VE BEEN!”



“T is too late now, and I wish you to talk no more to me on the subject.”

These words were spoken by an aged relative, on whom I had been pressing the importance of accepting God’s offer of pardon, through the finished work of Christ.

G—— was learned in the wisdom of this world, he had studied nearly every science; but to him that word might have been applied, “The world by wisdom knew not God.” He had read numerous sceptical works, and their false arguments had taken hold of his mind, and led him to reject God’s word. Now, however, he knew that this life must soon close for him; and, as he saw others resting happily in the love of a well-known Saviour, and looking forward with certainty to a joyous eternity, he felt, by contrast, the sad uncertainty of his own future, and longed for peace like theirs. But though he tried hard to believe the story of God’s great love to us sinners, doubts of its truth would constantly arise to hinder him. He fought against these doubts, argued against them, in his own mind, but all in vain; they are more easily acquired than got rid of.

O you who are trifling with scepticism, letting in the thin end of the wedge of infidelity, beware!

You think yourself safe, you trust in your reason to keep you from going too far, but so have many others, who, ere they knew how far they had wandered, had gone over the terrible precipice, and awoke to find all solid ground gone from under their feet, and nothing but doubts and uncertainty left. There is nothing so insidious as rationalism so-called, and, let me add, there is nothing so irrational. What would not dear G—— have given now never to have read those books.

On this occasion I had been speaking to him about his soul, and he had told me that he *could not* believe the Bible; that he expected, and desired, nothing but annihilation at his death, and that he would even prefer that to heaven; he had added, "I may be mistaken, I cannot tell, but I hope and believe that that will be my end; I may be wrong, but it is too late now, and I wish you to speak no more to me on the subject." Sadly I replied, "I shall do as you wish, but, dear G——, you will understand why I have been urgent upon the subject? What is all uncertainty to you, is to me a terrible certainty; to you it is a leap in the dark, but I see the awful misery you are leaping into; and what can I do but urge you to beware, before it be too late, and the fatal leap be taken?"

But as long as he was in the land of the living it was not "too late," as he had said, and many were the prayers which the Lord's people sent up, that he might be saved. And God does answer prayer, whatever infidels may say to the contrary.

A week passed, and the subject of our conversation had not been alluded to by either of us, when, during the night, G—— got an attack of difficulty in breathing, to which he was subject of late, and in the midst of it he gasped out to his daughter, who stood near, “I can’t think, and I can’t talk, nor pray, but——”

“You need not talk or pray, but only believe,” she replied.

“I do believe, thank God,” was his answer.

A few minutes later I stood by his bedside, and he said, “I was sure, C——, you would wish to hear it’s all over, and that I have accepted——”

Breath failed him, so I asked what Christ did for him on the cross.

“Yes,” he replied; and then after a pause, “What a fool I’ve been; I wonder how I could not see before what now is so clear.” Ah! how I rejoiced, as he thus spoke, that it was here, on earth, that he awoke to the folly of rejecting Christ, and not where it will be too late, in “the blackness of darkness for ever.” Others will exclaim, amid “weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth,” “What a fool I’ve been! what a fool I’ve been!” but then, indeed, it *will* be “too late;” there will be no place for repentance, and they must endure for evermore the consequences of their folly. Thank God, G—— found it out whilst it was still “the day of salvation;” and, looking at himself from God’s point of view, all his learning, and everything of man, sank into insignificance, and only the folly of rejecting Christ remained.

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After a while he spoke of the joy of meeting all his Christian relatives above; for now that he had found Christ, annihilation was no longer preferred to heaven, the joys of which can only be really appreciated by those whom the Lord has redeemed. for to the man of this world heaven would be misery. He then whispered to me to speak of Christ, as it might be blessed to the Roman Catholic servant, who was present. How soon does the new-born soul seek that others also might be saved!

A few months later G—— had gone home to Him who had loved him, and given Himself for him, and was tasting the joys of a blessed eternity, instead of having for ever ceased to exist, as he had once hoped would be the case.

Reader, where will your eternity be spent?

C. R. B.



“HE GIVETH SONGS IN THE NIGHT.”



EVERYTHING that is of nature must give place to Christ, that He may have His true and proper place in our hearts. Not one scrap of the old creation is fit for, nor could find a place or corner in, the new. Old things *are* passed, all things *are* new there, in the sphere where He has formed everything to meet His own heart's need.

We often speak of "suitability to Christ" in a very light way here. He has everything suitable to Himself there; it could not be otherwise, in a sphere where He is everything,—the Light, the Glory; He is the centre of it, and fills every corner. If your heart is not satisfied with Christ now, you have not yet learned, nor even thought of, what the new creation is to be. He fills it. Are you at all prepared for that? Have you tried to have nothing but Christ here for one day? for one week? What was the result? You found perhaps that you were incapable of enjoying Him thus; it was too much for you, and so you tried to fill up the little corners with something,—your husband, your children, your comforts, your refinements, your tastes. None of these will be taken into the new creation; it will be the perfection of everything; and you will be perfectly suited for it, and suitable to the One who has formed you for His own heart. There is no love without *disappointment* here; it is the very character of the old creation; but in the new the word knows no place. Satisfaction in every detail, and perfect occupation with the One who fills it and takes me up to enjoy it with Himself.

It is all so simple, when one gets a sight of it, one has nothing to say but accept it and rejoice. It is God's portion for me. K.

THE SERPENT'S POISON AND ITS REMEDY.



FGENTLEMAN said to me the other day,—
 “During the twenty-six years I lived in Australia, I lost five cows, one horse, four dogs, and twelve cats through the bites of serpents; and I knew a young lady residing there who received a similar bite from a viper, that came out of a piece of wood and fastened on her hand. She was then fourteen miles from the doctor who kept the antidote, and as soon as a horse could be saddled for her, she galloped off at full speed to the place. On her arrival the doctor gave her the required bottle of powerful liquid, which she took to counteract the poison in the blood. When the lady was cured and on her way home, I met her, when she remarked to me,—‘Some time before I reached the doctor I began to feel considerable dizziness in my head, which caused me to use my whip and speed on in my increasing anxiety; and if the distance had been much longer, it must have been all over with me before I reached the remedy.’”

“Well, Mr S——,” I said, “what occurred to that young lady physically, is just like what has happened to every one of us spiritually. Though this may not be an over-pleasant subject to turn

to, I believe it is always the wisest way to be safe and at once to face the worst. The old serpent, the devil, inserted his deadly poison into our first parents in Eden, and what a terrible devastation was that to the whole human race! We are *all bitten* by sin. ‘*All have sinned, and come short*’ (Rom. iii. 23). The Australian viper’s poison only affected *one* person, bad enough was that; but the venom of Satan has poisoned *all* mankind. ‘*As in Adam all die*’ (1 Cor. xv. 22); ‘*The wages of sin is death*’ (Rom. vi. 23); ‘*The poison of asps is under their lips*’ (Rom. iii. 13). This is what God, in His Word, says of *all*, without exception, and it is true. Do you believe it, Mr S——?”

“Well,” he replied, “I often have serious thoughts about these things.”

“That’s right,” I said, “as far as it goes, but it does not go far enough. Had that young lady settled down with merely having ‘*serious thoughts*,’ she would very soon have been beyond the reach of remedy, and the consequences were inevitable. But just look for a moment at one or two things that specially marked her.

“She was real, and *knew* she was bitten. She was *certain* of the consequences, and was anxious. She *knew* of the remedy, and was responsible. She *believed* in the remedy, *accepted* it, and *received* the benefit.”

“Very true, sir,” answered Mr S——; “we *are* all bitten.”

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"Thank God," I said, "I am glad to hear you say so. Man has sinned, but God, in His love, has provided the Remedy for all who will receive it; and knowing this, we are responsible. Those, and only those, get the blessing who know they are bitten, and who are really anxious and accept Christ, God's Remedy for man's sin. 'It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul' (Lev. xvii. 11); 'and without shedding of blood is no remission' (Heb. ix. 22). It is the blood alone that shelters from judgment and brings the soul nigh to God. For example:—When God's people, Israel, were in Egypt, they were oppressed by the Egyptians, and God therefore brought judgments upon Egypt. God sent the destroying angel to destroy the first-born, but told the Israelites to kill a lamb and sprinkle the blood on the door-posts and lintels of their houses where they were, and He said, 'When I see the blood, I will pass over you' (Exod. xii. 13); and it was so, that those who believed God and acted upon what God said, were sheltered.

"What mercy! Afterwards, when the same people were in the wilderness, they sinned against God in murmuring about the manna He gave them daily from heaven, and, in His holiness, God sent fiery serpents amongst them which bit them, and many of the people died of their bites. But when they became conscious of their sin, and confessed it, God showed them a remedy, namely, a brazen serpent raised upon a pole, *for the bitten ones* to

look at, and as many as believed God, *looked and lived*. What grace! Jesus has been lifted up on Calvary's cross for bitten sinners to look at. Do *you* accept His finished work, and trust His precious blood, Mr S——?"

"Yes, I do," he said.

"Then God says you are saved. Praise His name!

"There is life in a look at the crucified One ;

There is life at this moment for thee ;

Then look, sinner,—look unto Him and be saved,

And know thyself spotless as He.'"

Stop, dear unsaved soul, two or three lines for *thee*! God says *thou* art bitten. Dost *thou* believe it? Art *thou* anxious? Wilt *thou* receive God's Remedy? Wilt *thou* take the divine Antidote, and live,—yea, more than live, have ETERNAL LIFE AND GLORY!

Adopt, for your soul's salvation, the principles acted upon by the Australian young lady for the cure of her body. Oh, think of what it cost Christ, in His love to us, to become our Antidote. He bore the wrath and the shame. He paid the debt, and drank the bitter cup to the dregs, on Calvary's cross. And think of what must be the consequences of delay, and the benefits of receiving! "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. x. 31).

It was no use that young lady trying to extract the poison from the blood, or to doctor her finger; she must have nothing short of *the remedy*.

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Neither is it of any use your attempting to get rid of your sins by any efforts of your own, or by "doing your best," as people so often say. You *must* have *God's Remedy* alone. "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from *all* sin" (1 John i. 7). "Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. ii. 9).

"There is a stream of precious blood
Which flowed from Jesus' veins ;
And sinners, washed in that blest flood,
Lose all their guilty stains."

For your soul's salvation no horse has to be saddled, no distance to be travelled. "It is finished" (John xix. 30). Make no delay then, my friend, I beseech you. Time is short ; eternity is near. The Lord is at hand, and very soon you will be either in eternal joy or eternal woe. Speed on to the Great Physician of your perishing soul, or soon it will be "all over with you" for ever. "They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick : I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Mark ii. 17). The loving heart of Jesus is still waiting to bless. He is still willing, and His own invitation is as true as ever, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. xi. 28).

The door of heaven and eternal glory, which now stands wide open for *you*, will soon be shut for ever ; and are you going to be outside *then*, and

left to perish in your sins in the eternal lake of fire prepared for the devil and his angels?

Oh, think of it, and be *real*. God is real, heaven is real, death is real, judgment is real, hell is real, and Satan is real; and will you alone be unreal? Surely not! Do not let that old serpent, the devil, deceive you any longer with his tinselled wiles; but may God, by His Spirit, beloved soul, give you to feel your deep need of a Saviour, and accept Him as your only Remedy while it is called to-day. Then you may go on your way rejoicing to your home in glory (where Satan's trail can never enter), to dwell for ever with the Blessed One, who has conquered everything and purchased every blessing for all who receive Him as their Antidote; and then you can tell your friends what a narrow escape you had, and what great things the Lord has done for you, and has had compassion on you.

“Of Satan's deadly poison
 There'll be no traces *there*;
 The gates of pearl once entered,
 Farewell to every care!
 With stainless footsteps gliding,
 Along the golden street,
 How pure will be the praises
 Our blameless lips repeat!”

J. N.

WARNED OF GOD.

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



HE wise man said, “A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself; but the simple pass on, and are punished” (Prov. xxvii. 12). This saying is most forcibly illustrated in the case of Noah entering the ark, and the drowning of the world outside. Noah was a prudent man. Being *warned of God* of things not seen as yet, and moved with fear, he prepared an ark. The margin reads, “He was wary.” His prudence foresaw the threatened evil. By faith he obeyed God. He took Him at His word, and was safely hidden when the judgment came. The simple (or foolish) people passed on careless and heedless, and were punished. The word of God is always true, so how could it be otherwise? Impossible. God always means what He says. Hence the prudence of Noah on the one hand, and the folly of the world on the other, for he was a preacher of righteousness, so that they were *without excuse*.

But what was it that brought about God's strange work, for such judgment is? (Isa. xxviii. 21.) It was the wickedness of men. “God saw

that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and *it grieved him at his heart*. And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created. . . . but Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord" (Gen. vi. 5-8).

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

Smooth-tongued prophets, who cry, "Peace, peace, and there is no peace," arrest the ears of thousands. Masses heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears, and turn away their ears from the truth, and are turned unto fables (2 Tim. iv. 4). Scarcely a doctrine of Christianity but what is undermined in some quarter. Men boast of the advance of civilisation, and the spread of education and the sciences. International congresses and exhibitions draw nations together in closer bonds. But yet *the heart* of man is unchanged, and every

few months the world itself is startled by some awful outbreak, war, or revolution, or riot, and is astonished at its own instability. Satan gilds the scene. Man vainly thinks he can bind Legion with unbreakable fetters and bands, only to find again and again the utter futility of his efforts. And yet, sanguine as ever, he renews his energies to improve that *flesh* which spat in the face of the Son of God, and crucified the Lord of glory.

“Man looketh upon the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh upon the heart” (1 Sam. xvi. 7); and “that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God” (Luke xvi. 15). As the eyes of the Lord look down from His holy dwelling-place, what does He behold? A world guilty of the blood of Christ, enslaved and deceived by the wicked one, with its back towards God, and its face towards the lake of fire. Here and there a few hearts seeking His glory, and filled with love to His Son, but the mass without God, without Christ, and having no hope in the world. Tens of thousands, in enlightened Christendom, resting content with the form of godliness, deny the power; and hundreds of thousands are following a false prophet, with doctrines of abominable wickedness, or worshipping stocks and stones, only fit for the company of moles without eyes, and bats, when the light is shining.

Moreover, “God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them: and, behold, I will destroy

them with the earth. Make thee an ark of gopher wood. . . . And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh. . . . And thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee" (Gen. vi. 13-18).

Here we find God telling Noah of the character of the judgment that was coming, and pointing out the only means of escape. He would overwhelm the world with a flood, but says to Noah, "Make thee an ark." He believed God, and without a question obeyed. "Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he" (Gen. vi. 22). He set to work to build the ark. The world's cup of wickedness was full, and it was ripe for judgment, but the long-suffering of God waited *while the ark was a preparing* (1 Pet. iii. 20). Noah meanwhile, in the power of the spirit of Christ, became a preacher of righteousness to the ungodly. Year after year rolled by, and the work of building went steadily on. The Lord had said, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years" (Gen. vi. 3). No sign whatever of the judgment appeared during that long period. The world of the ungodly went upon its way, further still from God. Noah built the ark, and condemned the world; preached righteousness, and condemned unrighteousness. He saw no sign, but he believed the word of God. The world saw no sign, and they disbelieved His word at the lips of Noah.

It is not difficult to picture in our minds the thoughts and conduct of an ungodly people at that day, with such important evidence before our very eyes of the treatment of the gospel at the present time. Doubtless Noah was but a fool and madman in their eyes. Who else would build the largest ship that the world had ever seen, without any water to float it in? If he had built it on the sea-shore, and divulged to them some new scheme of trade whereby he would enrich himself and others, maybe he would have been reckoned a wise man. How could a world that lived to eat and drink, to marry and give in marriage, appreciate anything else? (Matt. xxiv. 38.) But to indulge in such fancies as the world being drowned, and build a ship in the midst of dry land! and, worse than all, to come forcing his views and preaching his rubbish to them,—whoever heard of such folly and impertinence? 'Tis easy to picture the curled lip, the undisguised sneer, the bitter gibe of the fast men and worldly women of Noah's day.

But "by faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house" (Heb. xi. 7). He had the word of God for what he said, and what he did, and that was enough for him. Faith went on amidst all, and the ark was prepared. And God was prepared. And judgment was prepared; sure, swift, unmitigated judgment. But, alas! the world of the ungodly, what of them? They had heard the preaching, but their hearts and

ears were closed. *Unprepared!* Yes, unprepared, and *willingly* so. They had heard the warning of righteousness, temperance, and *judgment to come*, but their consciences were seared. Deluded, duped, and deceived by Satan, they loved the world, wallowed in sin, and rushed one and all to a common doom.

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

Having entered the ark, the seven days run on. One can fancy men saying, “We shall see what will become of the shipbuilder’s dreams now. Poor fellow! we are glad we are clear of such delusions; what fun we shall have at his expense in about a week’s time.” The days roll slowly by. One, two, three, four, five, six are gone. The seventh is entered. Twelve hours are passed, fifteen, twenty, twenty-three,—oh! what is that? What a sudden gust of wind! Another! How dark and lowering that cloud looks on the horizon! Why, it is getting darker and darker every minute. The sun has disappeared; we are going to have rain. The heavens grow blacker, and blacker still.

The twenty-fourth hour of the seventh day is all but past. A few minutes more. A few seconds only now. THE TIME IS UP. The hundred and twenty years are past. The seven days are gone, the day of long-suffering is over. The hour of judgment is come. *What's that?*

A drop of water falls from the clouds. Another. Many. Ah! and what is that strange noise? what that rushing sound? "Don't be alarmed," says one to another, "it's all right; it's only a heavy passing storm." But the heavens grow darker yet, and as they gather blackness, pallor is depicted on every countenance. The busy hum of life ceases. A strange and unwonted stillness for the moment pervades the scene. Voices are hushed, and men's hearts fail them for fear, and for those things that *are come* upon the earth. The drops become showers, the showers a downpour, the downpour a deluge. The windows of heaven are opened. *It is the judgment of God!*

And alas! alas! that strange rushing sound that made men start, that caused the strongest to tremble, the weak to blanch with fear,—what is it? Nearer and nearer it comes. Louder and louder is the roaring sound. 'Tis as the sound of mighty waters overflowing. 'Tis the fountains of the great deep broken up. The sea is overwhelming the land; the angry billows of the wrath of God. Up every valley and nook it comes. Waters above, waters beneath, waters around, waters everywhere. What, can it be true after

all? Are the words of Noah indeed coming to pass? Is this the deluge that he foretold? Is this the judgment that we ridiculed? Are we the fools and madmen, and he the wise man after all? Ah! yes, poor ungodly world, your time of grace is passed; and now, where will you seek a refuge in your dire distress, in the hour of your calamity and fear?

Well, let us not despair; while there is life there is hope. Recovering from the first panic, each seeks a refuge on the highest point of vantage to be found. Methinks I see the frightened mass rushing hither and thither, as sheep from a destroying wolf. One flies to his housetop, another climbs to the highest tree; a third runs to the hill-top; a fourth clambers the mountain side. Husbands and wives, fathers, mothers, children, rich and poor, high and low; *all* are exposed to one common doom; but each with lingering hope that the waters will yet assuage, and that the rain will soon cease. But still the fountains of the great deep play, and the dark and rushing waters flow. Still the heavens, clothed with thickest clouds, discharge their ever increasing torrents. Fields, vineyards, houses, trees, on all hands disappear, and with them despairing thousands, *the world of the ungodly*. Cries for mercy, groans of anguish, screams of terror, shrieks of fear rend the air, but all in vain. The day of long-suffering is past; *'tis too late now!*

Yet still the waters flow; yet still it rains. See

yon terror-stricken mass collected on the highest hill around. Is there no hope? Is there no escape? Where is the ark? Where is Noah? Is it too late to enter in? Ah! yes, ye rejecters and neglecters of the preaching of righteousness, ye livers *without God*. When mercy entreated, ye would not; and now ye would, no mercy can be found. The wages of sin is death. Soon the mighty billows engulf the struggling mass; and still it rains. Higher and higher yet the waters climb. Forty days and forty nights the deluge falls. Hill after hill disappears beneath the mighty deep, till all in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, *died*. Fifteen cubits and upwards did the waters prevail, and the mountains were covered. God *said it*, and it came to pass.

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

And now, dear reader, have these awful scenes,

and God's signal mercy to Noah, no voice to you? Listen to the word of the Lord at a later day. Listen to the warning of Him, who was God manifest in the flesh, concerning wrath to come,—wrath that is nigh, even at our very doors; and ere it be too late, flee, flee at once for refuge to the only ark of safety from the coming woe. “As the days of Noe were,” said Jesus, the faithful and true Witness, “so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and *knew not* until the flood came, and *took them all away*; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Watch therefore; for *ye know not what hour* your Lord doth come” (Matt. xxiv. 37-42).

Face the dread reality, poor Christless soul, and flee at once to the everlasting arms of a loving Saviour-God. He bids you come. He forewarned of the coming deluge. It came. Again He forewarns of judgment, unparalleled in the history of this poor world, ending in the sudden manifestation in glory and judgment of the Son of Man (Luke xxi. 27; 2 Thess. i. 7-9). Are you delivered from it? The day of grace runs rapidly by. God is long-suffering to usward (as of old), not willing that any should perish, &c. (2 Pet. iii. 9). But

take care you do not trifle too long. Grace will cease, and judgment will flow, swift, irrevocable, and sure. There is but one means of safety from the impending doom. The world's death-knell has long sounded. Grace alone holds back God's vengeance-sword. Christ, and Christ alone, is the ark of safety now. "I, even I, am he, and beside me there is no saviour." To Christ, to Christ, poor sinner, flee. "I am the door; *by me* if any man enter in, he shall be saved." Oh! enter now.

In Noah's day men *knew not*. Think of that. Knew not till the flood came, and took them *all* away. As it was, so it shall be. As in Noah's day, so in the days of the Son of Man. He that shall come, *will come* (Heb. x. 27). "Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him," &c. (Rev. i. 7). "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their *ungodly deeds* which they have ungodly committed, and of all their *hard speeches* which ungodly sinners have spoken against him" (Jude 14, 15). One shall be taken away in judgment, as the flood took all away in Noah's day, and another left in mercy for His glorious reign. But where will *you* be? Enter now into the ark of God's providing, and judgment shall never overtake you. All that are Christ's now shall be *caught up* to meet Him on that day (1 Thess. iv. 15-18). Yes, Noah was safe in the ark on Mount Ararat; but all who know Christ and are in Him now, shall

be safe *with* Him at that day in the Father's house in the glory of God.

Again we appeal to you, dear reader, and beseech you, by the mercies of God, enter the ark while you may. You have not to build like Noah. No, *the Ark is prepared*. "For God *so loved* the world, that *he gave* his only begotten Son," &c. (John iii. 16). And *Jesus died*; yes, died for the glory of God, and to deliver sinners from the wrath to come. *There*, upon that cross, upon the Holy Lamb of God, the stroke of Divine justice fell (2 Cor. v. 21). *There* the waves and billows of the judgment of God passed over the soul of His own Beloved One. He drank the bitter, bitter cup; He bowed His head; He died. *His blood was shed*. Buried in the sepulchre, *God raised Him from the dead*. "*Hear this, all ye people; give ear, all ye inhabitants of the world: both low and high, rich and poor together*" (Psa. xlix. 1, 2). God raised Him; raised Him from the dead, and *gave Him glory at His own right hand*. *There now is found the only Ark of safety* from the coming storm. Flee to Him; flee to Him now. With heart of love, with look of pity, with words of mercy, with arms outstretched in grace, He bids you come. Daily, hourly, momentarily, the day of judgment draweth nigh. Still the voice of mercy pleads with you, sinner, Come to Me. Deep, deep indeed is your need, whoever you may be, but He can meet it. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall

be as wool" (Isa. i. 18). "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin (1 John i. 7). Come to Jesus, and your sins are all forgiven (1 John ii. 12). Come to Jesus, and you have everlasting life (John vi. 47). Come to Jesus, and you are saved. All are invited; will you come?

The day of grace is all but past. Soon the heavens again shall gather blackness, and judgment fall. But then, instead of a flood, seal upon seal shall be broken, trumpet upon trumpet sound, and bowl upon bowl of the wrath of God fall upon the world of the ungodly, closing with the manifestation of the Son of Man Himself, to judge His foes. Despisers, rejecters, scoffers, mockers, neglecters, professors, *beware!* The flood came, and took them all away. So shall it be in the days of the Son of Man. Not a soul of man escaped outside the ark. How shall *you?* *Christ is the Ark. In Him alone* is salvation to be found. "They shall not escape," God says to all outside. Once more, then, poor perishing sinner, we would plead with you, will you *enter now?*

Oh, the blank despair, the awful remorse, the utter woe, the endless misery of the Christless soul, when once the door of mercy shall be closed! Listen to the voice of wisdom ere it cease to cry, or surely that voice shall say to you, "I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer;

they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me" (Prov. i. 26-28). Wisdom pleads with you. Be reconciled to God. Oh! *the wondrous love, the boundless grace*, that await the repentant sinner's return. Will you come? The justice of the living God is arrayed *on your behalf*. It is not against you, but *for you*. God is just, and the justifier of him which *believeth in Jesus*. Come, oh come, to Him *now*!

Noah, being *warned of God* of things not seen as yet, *prepared and entered the ark*. You too are warned. There was no sign then; there is no sign now. But the Word of God tells again of coming woe; of things (terrible things) *not seen as yet*. The door of the ark is open wide. *Christ is that door*. All who believe are safe within. 'Tis everlasting security, for they are shut in by the Lord Himself. All outside will surely reap the fruit of their folly and sin in endless woe. You may lull yourself to sleep in carnal security, but the awful hour of judgment will arouse you. Alas! alas! it will be too late to flee. But now, by faith in Him, the salvation of God, present and eternal, full and free, shall be yours. And the wondrous grace that brings it will teach you godliness, as you await your Lord's return.

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

E. H. C.

FATE OF THE CHRISTLESS SOUL.

ONLY as Judge to see His face ! Rev. xx. 12.
 Never to share His wond'rous place John xiv. 3.
 Beside Him on His Father's throne, Rev. iii. 21.
 His Bride ! His loved one ! yes, His own ! Rev. xxi. 2.
 Never to taste of endless bliss,— Ps. xxxvi. 8.
 O sinner ! hast thou thought of this ?

Never His likeness sweet to bear ! Ps. xvii. 15.
 None of His glory bright to share, John xvii. 24.
 Never His joyous voice to hear, Rev. xiv. 2.
 Nor know His hand wipe off the tear, Rev. xxi. 4.
 Never to feel the Father's kiss,— Luke xv. 20.
 O sinner ! hast thou thought of this ?

Never to hear how His praises ring Rev. xiv. 3.
 Through heaven as saints rejoice and sing, Rev. v. 9.
 Never to thank Him for all His love, Luke xvii. 16.
 Never to dwell in the home above, John xiv. 2.
 Pleasures at His right hand to miss,— Ps. xvi. 11.
 O sinner ! hast thou thought of this ?

Never to be invited more, Rev. xxii. 17.
 To enter by the open door, Rev. iii. 8.
 Never to hear the Saviour say, Matt. xi. 28.
 "Come unto me," "I am the way," John xiv. 6.
 The only way to realms of bliss !— Heb. x. 20.
 O sinner ! hast thou thought of this ?

Hast thought how time is fleeting fast ? James iv. 14.
 Never canst thou recall the past ! Luke xvi. 25, 26.
 To-day is thine—this hour alone 2 Cor. vi. 2.
 Canst claim salvation as thine own ; Luke xii. 20.
 To-morrow—many a home may miss Prov. xxvii. 1.
 The sinner who never thought of this !

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

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

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

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

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

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

H.

“A VERSE, OR SOMETHING.”



“S.—Send me a verse, or something.”

Over and over again I read these words at the end of a letter from my brother, and deeply did I feel reproved by them.

I had been converted some years previous to this, and earnestly desired that my brothers and sisters might be too, so my letters to

them generally contained a “verse or something,” written with prayer that the Lord would, in this way, awaken them. As no notice was ever taken of these, I began to be discouraged; and, thinking to please them, had written several letters filled entirely with things of the world. How gently the Lord reproved me!

I at once wrote to my brother, asked him about his difficulties, and requested him to open his heart freely to me.

His reply was, he believed the Lord Jesus died for his sins, but he could not see that his sins were really put away. He was in darkness, and was praying for light.

As simply as I could I pointed out to him how God had so loved the world, that He gave His only Son for it (John iii. 16); that He laid all our sins on Him (Isa. liii. 6); that He bore them in His own body on the tree (1 Pet. ii. 4); how God is satisfied that they are put away, and has raised Him from the dead (Acts iii. 15).

Several letters passed between us, all bearing on this momentous subject, but still John remained in darkness. The New-Year holidays were approaching, and I looked forward with almost feverish hope to the time when I would speak face to face with this anxious soul. The time seemed to pass slowly, but at last it arrived. My brother stayed three miles from our paternal roof. During my stay he came home every night for a couple of hours. Amongst the stir of home associations we

had no room for serious conversation, but I walked back with him, and those moonlight talks we had will never be erased from my memory.

The first night, we talked on Proverbs i. 22, "How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge?" Three classes,—simpletons, scorers, and fools.

"Are you a fool?" I asked. "Do you hate the knowledge of God?"

"No, no," he said, "I don't hate it."

"Are you a scorer; do you laugh at it?"

Again there came an emphatic "No."

"Then," I asked, "are you one of the 'simple ones,' who stumble at the simplicity of the Gospel?"

There was a pause; then, in a tremulous voice, and with a look bordering on despair, he said, "I'm a simpleton."

Next night, as we set out for our walk, I repeated that precious verse—John v. 24—where Christ says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that *heareth* my word, and *believeth* on him that sent me, *hath* everlasting life."

Heareth,—believeth,—hath; how simple!

"But have I not to *feel*?" he asked.

"No," I replied, "you have only to believe."

Slowly he repeated the verse himself, till he came to "*hath*." Then he cried, "I have it; I believe; I have everlasting life!"

Joy filled his heart. That New Year was the beginning of years to him, and time has deepened

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in his soul the reality of what then took place. It also encouraged me very much. While I was thinking my words were as "idle tales," the Lord was making the seed sink, in what afterwards proved to be "good ground." It gave me a fresh impetus "not to be weary in well-doing," and enkindled a desire to "sow bountifully."

M. R.

 "GOD SAYS I AM SAVED."



NOT long since, I was asked to visit a young girl, about seventeen years of age, who had injured herself, and was thought to be dying. I had known her for some time, and was aware she was very delicate, but, on calling, learned she had fallen out of bed, and received an injury to the back of her head, which would eventually prove fatal, it was judged. Being under the care of another surgeon, I had nothing to do with her treatment; so, after making a few inquiries as to her bodily suffering, which was great (specially when moved by others, for she was almost completely paralysed), I began to speak to her about the state of her soul.

"Are you quite happy?" I said.

"No, Sir."

"Why? Are you not saved?"

"I am not sure."

"But why are you not sure? Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ?"

"Yes, but I don't *feel* saved."

"Do you feel *lost*?"

"Yes, I do;" and she now began to weep.

"Why do you know you are lost?"

"Because I am a sinner, and God's Word says so."

"Then you believe His Word, do you?"

"Oh yes, Sir; indeed I do."

"Well, then, His Word says, 'Look unto me, and be ye saved.' Do you believe that?"

"Yes."

"But are you looking to Jesus?"

"Yes, Sir; but I don't *feel* as I should like to."

"Granted; but does it say, 'Look unto me, and *feel* saved?'"

"No."

"What then?"

"Be ye saved."

"What?"

"Be ye saved."

"When is that, to-day or to-morrow?"

"When I *look*."

"But are you looking?"

"Yes, I am really looking to Jesus."

"Then, are you saved?"

She paused a moment, and then firmly replied, "I don't *feel* it, but *God says I am saved*. I see it now." The next moment her eye lit up, and her pallid face told the tale of a new spring of joy having been opened to her.

"Well," I said, "if any one were to come in, and ask you now if you were saved, what would you say?"

"I would say Yes."

"And if they asked you how you knew it and were sure of it, what would you say?"

"I would say that I do believe in Jesus, and God says in His Word that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but *have* everlasting life; and though I don't *feel* it, I do believe what God says."

"Then you rest your soul on Jesus and on God's Word?"

"Yes, Sir, I do; and I could die happy now. I'd like to go at once to Jesus."

"You have no fears?"

"No, none."

"No doubts?"

"No; why should I? I see it all clearly. I'm only a poor sinner—and *Jesus died for me*—and *I believe in Him*—and *God says I'm saved*—and so *I know I am*."

I had a little more conversation, and called two days after to find her truly filled with joy and peace in believing. Her face shone with the joy the knowledge of God alone can impart. Leaving town for a few weeks, I found, on my return, that she had lingered about a month, giving a constant bright testimony of Christ to all about her, and, full of quiet, calm rest and joy in Christ until the end, had at length passed to be for ever with Him.

And now, dear reader, a word with you about the

state of *your* soul. Are you *saved*—or *lost*? Which? Don't shirk the question. It must be answered soon. The longest life has its end. Who has given you a lease of long life? A long eternity you shall have. Where will you spend it? Another day may find you in it—gone for ever from earth, where Christ died, “suffered for sins once, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God.” Gone where? With Christ? Or without Him? You tremble to say “Yes.” Stop—listen. Your future is awful. *Forgotten* by man—*forsaken* by God—for ever in hell. Oh, pause a moment in your downward course! List the voice of love speaking to *you*—speaking from heaven—“Come unto me.”—“Look unto me.”—“I am Jesus.”—“By me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved.”

You have nought to do but take your true place as a *lost* sinner *now* before God. Acknowledge *your sin*. Justify Him—He'll justify you. It is all summed up in the sweet confession of the dying girl. May you this day be able to say like her, “*I'm only a poor sinner—Jesus died for me—I believe in Him—God says I am saved, and so I know I am.*”

“Rise, my soul! behold 'tis *Jesus*,
Jesus fills my wondering eyes;
 See Him now, in glory seated,
 Where thy sins no more can rise.”

W. T. P. W

IS IT SPRINKLED ?

“And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you when I smite the land of Egypt. . . . And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two side-posts with the blood that is in the basin; and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning.”—EXOD. xii. 13, 22.



THESE verses show us God's way of salvation, and the way man must act in order to avail himself of God's rich and wondrous provision for his need. Judgment was about to fall on man. Egypt and all its households were exposed to this sure and certain judgment, the Israelite as much as the Egyptian—true figure of the world's present condition, with God's eternal judgment of sin looming in the distance. Death is at the very threshold. The Judge is passing by. Can His righteous wrath be averted? Can His entrance in this terrible character be arrested? These were the momentous questions of that night, and are not less urgent at the present moment. Reader, can you answer them? Unless you know in reality the meaning of the two verses I have quoted you cannot do so; and if still in nature's darkness, may God in His infinite mercy open your eyes, ere it be too late.

There are a great many people who would tell you without hesitation that they fully believe the Word of God as to the death of Christ being the

only ground of a sinner's hope before God, that they had given up all idea of self-righteousness as a means of staving off the coming judgment—and yet they are not saved. Why is this? They believe Jesus died, and yet they are not saved. Why is this? “Oh,” you say, “they have not faith.” I suppose that is at the root of it. No sensible man—no honest man, no man who has a notion of what God is, but must come to this conclusion, “I stand in danger.” And then too he must believe as an historical fact the death of Jesus. Still such are not saved. The reason is not far to seek. Historically they believe everything. Really they believe nothing. There is no saving link of divinely given faith between their souls and Christ. To use my illustration, the blood is still in the basin, and not sprinkled on the lintel and two side-posts.

It is as though you had gone into the house of an Israelite that night and put the question to him, “Do you believe judgment is coming? Nine woes are past, but do you believe the last, worst woe is coming?”

“Oh yes, I believe it, and I have done as the Lord commanded: the lamb is slain, the blood is shed.”

“But where is the blood?”

“Oh! it is in the basin.”

“Is it not on the lintel and side-posts?”

“No, not yet.”

“Why have you not put it on the lintel and side-posts?”

“Well there are a good many reasons. First of

all, it seems to me only a small matter of detail the putting it on the lintel. Surely if the lamb be slain—the blood shed—that is enough. The sprinkling of the blood *outside*, where everybody will see it, cannot surely be necessary to safety. Besides, I don't care to be a marked person in this way. There is no need to make oneself conspicuous to every eye—it seems rather like calling attention to one's house to sprinkle the blood without. It seems to me that to have the blood in the basin within is quite enough."

"But with the blood only in the basin you are not safe from the destroyer."

"Well, I *hope* I shall be at any rate, though of course I am not *sure*."

Now, this, dear reader, is just your case perhaps. You believe the blood of the Lamb has been shed; you know Jesus died. You know there is only shelter beneath His precious blood, but there has been no real application of the death of Christ to your own soul. Why is this? There has been no taking the bunch of hyssop and sprinkling the blood with it. The bunch of hyssop is a very insignificant thing—a poor contemptible thing—and people are not readily willing to go down in the confession of absolute need and nothingness.

Mere knowledge of facts will not save, and will certainly ruin your soul if there be not the application of the thing known to the heart. Remember you may go down to hell with the Bible at your fingers' ends, for knowledge is not faith nor re-

pentance. But the bunch of hyssop, though a very poor, insignificant thing, is a Divine necessity. Solomon spake of all things "from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall."

The hyssop is a little scrubby thing that does not take root in a decent fashion even, but springs out from between two stones! The cedar and the hyssop represent the two extremes in nature, the highest and the lowest. You must take the blood up with a bunch of hyssop; that is, you must go and shelter yourself under Christ's precious blood with the full consciousness that you are a *lost* soul, without a particle of innate worthiness or goodness.

In many parts of Scripture we read of the use of the hyssop. When the leper was to be cleansed in Lev. xiv. the hyssop was buried out of sight; in Numbers xix., when the defiled man was to be cleansed it was burned out of sight. David says in Psalm li. "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean." There is no mistake about that man; he wants cleansing. "I will take hyssop," says David. "Oh, cast me where you will, treat me as you will, only cleanse me. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."

But further, it was on the end of a bunch of hyssop, that spake of the lowest and most degrading thing in nature, they gave the Lord Jesus a sponge of vinegar in the day of His death, when He was suffering to put away sins. Yes, they

could taunt Him with the bunch of hyssop in the hour of His agony, His deep untold suffering—His suffering for us; and Jesus in the grace of His heart received it, and said, “*It is finished.*” What does that mean? It means He there was undergoing from the hand of God the wrath, the dark, bitter agony that was due to you and me. *He died for us that we might live with Him.*

Are you prepared, dear reader, to accept the bunch of hyssop yourself; in other words, to take the place of repentance and self-judgment before God? Mark! there never entered an unrepentant soul within the doors of heaven. Faith and repentance go together. Using the bunch of hyssop is a man going down before God in the acknowledgment of his true lost and ungodly state; not resting content with saying, “I know Jesus died, but I must *wait* till I go through some edifying experience, as I have heard of others having done, before I can know I am saved.” The one who uses the hyssop, is the sinner who shelters himself as a lost man under cover of that precious blood—applying it to his own heart. “But,” you say, “I never saw the blood of Christ.” Nor did I! I never saw the blood of Christ, and never shall see it, but I believe what God has told me about it. It is not when *you* see the blood, but God says, “When *I* see the blood I will pass over.”

But you ask, “Why sprinkle it only on the lintel and on the two side-posts? Why not on the ground, why not on the threshold?” I will tell you why.

Because it is left for a careless soul like you to trample the blood of Jesus beneath the feet—to despise and scorn it. What does faith do? Faith sprinkles it, shelters beneath it, and says, I stand beneath a blood-stained lintel. There was but one eye saw the blood that night in Egypt. No Israelites saw the blood. They simply obeyed the Word of God, they put the blood on the *outside* of their houses in *faith*, and they remained *inside* in *peace*, secure under its shelter; and if God has told you that on the cross His blessed Son died to put away your sins, what have you to do? Simply to repose on the truth of what God has told you. God bids us shelter ourselves beneath that blood, that precious blood which has been shed (Heb. ix. 11, 12). Christ's blood has been shed on the cross, and He having there suffered in our stead, once, and only once—having borne the judgment—has entered in once into the Holy Place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. On the ground of what He is, and what He has done and endured, we can enter in also.

Christ having borne sins, having taken them upon Him, having been on the cross made sin, put Himself in grace as a substitute in a place, out of which He could not extricate Himself save by putting away those sins. He was there on the cross with sins upon Him. He was on that tree under the judgment of sin, not His own, blessed be God, but *ours*! *OURS*! On the cross, in the deepest grace, He hung in the sinner's place. He endured the

wrath for the sinner, He died for the sinner. He was *sacrificed for us*. "Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us." "*Sacrificed for us!*" Charming word! It might charm the heart of the most hardened sinner. He *sacrificed Himself*. Yes, He SACRIFICED HIMSELF FOR US, and yet *you* have never sacrificed a single half-hour for Christ. You never sacrificed a bit of pleasure for Christ, you never sacrificed your own will or your own way a single moment for Christ. You have sacrificed many a thing, everything, for your own pleasure, but nothing for Him. Is this not so?

Pause, think for a moment. He *sacrificed Himself* for us, and then passed into the Holy Place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. And the apostle then adds: "How much more shall the blood of Christ purge your conscience from dead works, to serve the living God?" If, in Exodus xii., the blood of the lamb could preserve the greatest sinner through that solemn night, so that no death or destruction could enter in there, "*How much more,*" O anxious soul, "How much more shall the blood of Christ purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" The blood that has met the claims of God—the precious blood that has silenced the accuser—how much more shall it bring a defiled, guilty sinner into God's presence pardoned, blessed, forgiven, saved, to serve *Him!* Magnificent word, "*How much more!*" Scripture all through speaks of the blood of Christ, and points the sinner to the blood of

Christ that has met God, and satisfied His claims, and now there is nothing for you to do but trust it. If you despise it you must perish; if you shelter beneath it you receive eternal life.

It is an awful thing to despise the blood of Christ. Mark well the word in Exod. xi. which God whispers as it were in the ear of Moses to tell to Pharaoh. "Yet will I bring one plague more." Mark it, you who care not to be ranked among the despised followers of Jesus, who have trampled under foot His precious blood, there remains for you one plague more—one *plague more*—and oh! tell me, what will you do when this plague overtakes you? Will you try and escape it? Impossible! Will you try to put it off? Impossible! impossible! Will you say as a dying man, a rich man, once said to his physician when he told him the plain truth that he could not live much longer? "Oh! doctor, I will give you all I possess if you can only give me one day more of life." Impossible! impossible! that day he died. And, sinner, what will you do the day that plague overtakes you, the day the iron hand of death seizes you in its relentless grasp? "It is appointed unto men once to die, but *after this the judgment.*"

God had only "one plague more" for Pharaoh, but, O Christless soul, God has two plagues more for you! "After this the judgment!" Death first, and then the judgment! How will you meet them? Oh! if you have never decided for Christ before, will you not decide for Him now? Will

you not come to Him now? Will you not put yourself under the shelter of His precious blood before this coming judgment day arrives? I put my queries to you specially who have been moved under the Word of God before, but are still undecided for Christ, still unsettled. Oh! I appeal to you, risk no longer meeting these two awful plagues. No longer let the god of this world blind your eyes to the coming danger, or harden your heart. Let not procrastination lead you astray.

I would you knew my Saviour! my Jesus! the Saviour I know, the Jesus I know—my blessed, precious Saviour. Now just tell me, would not you like to know Him? Does not your heart sometimes long to know rest and peace? You will find it nowhere else; but you will find rest in knowing Him. Do you tremble as you think of meeting these two plagues more—these two coming plagues, from which there is no escape? Then listen to this. “*So Christ* was once offered to bear the sins of many.” “*So Christ.*” If my sins demand death and judgment—so Christ was once offered, bearing sins, and enduring judgment from the hand of God to bring me salvation! “I am content,” I say—“I am content.” Beneath the shelter of that precious blood I will crouch—I am safe, I am happy. I am to stay in the house until the morning peaceful and happy, keeping the feast within—feeding on Christ, enjoying Christ—feasting on Him each day.

“None of you shall go out at the door of his

house until the morning," was the word of counsel to Israel. Outside there is only death and destruction. The long dark time of Jesus' absence He calls the night. In the morning Jesus will come and take us right out of the scene, and until then we are to remain in the house. Safely resting beneath the shelter of that blood, done with the world, we only wait till the morning, that bright and sunny morning, when He shall come to take us into the Father's house—when we shall hear His own voice calling us: "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away, for, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land."

"Ah!" you say, "I would like to be there in that morning." Well, if you would be there *then*, decide for Jesus *now*. Who can say you will get another opportunity? And mark! mark well! there are two plagues more. *Two plagues more!* but not for me. Christ has taken those two plagues for me, and now what is a Christian looking for? Looking for Him! "To them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." An unconverted man is looking for two plagues more—he may shut his eyes to the fact—but there they are before him. Do you ask me, "What about the two plagues for you?" I answer, "They are behind me; Jesus has taken them for me, and I am looking for Him!"

May the Lord bless this appeal to you, dear

reader, and give you strength and courage to come clean out of the world, and to live only to please and serve and follow Him. Do you think that is hard work and dreadful bondage? That is because you know nothing about it. It is hard work and dreadful bondage to labour in the brick-kilns of the world, and then go down into the depths of hell at the end. I call that dreadful bondage to go on serving Satan now, and then to go down with him where no drop of water shall ever cool your tongue—where the voice of God is never heard—into the darkness of an eternal night, which no ray of light shall ever penetrate. Shut out from Jesus? Yes, shut out from Him for ever then! Oh! decide for Him now. You must decide for yourself; no one can decide for you. What a difference! Shut out from Him for ever in the depths of hell, or going to be for ever with Him! Oh! will you not decide? I made my choice long ago; so now I know that death and judgment are behind me, and only Jesus before me. Will you not make your choice and choose Him just now? The Lord grant it. God has provided the “Blood,” do you use the “Hyssop,” and sprinkle it in faith on the “Lintel” of your heart, and you will have present and eternal peace, for God says:—

“WHEN I SEE THE BLOOD I WILL PASS OVER.”

W. T. P. W.

“ETERNITY’S BELL.”



“TELL you I’ll drink till eternity’s bell rings,” so said Andrew Wilson, a stout-looking, and, what the world would call, well-to-do farmer. So he said and so he did, for assuredly it did ring for him one day, when he little expected to hear it. One Whit-Monday, while sitting drinking in the public-house of the little village near which he lived, he suddenly expired. His loud laugh, coarse jest, and profane tongue, were silenced at last.

Time for him was now no longer, and eternity was begun. Eternity—that he had talked of, scoffed about, yet all the while believed in; yes, he was now in eternity. His body was put into a cart, covered over with a little straw, and taken home to the farmhouse; then, in a few days, there was the funeral. But the soul; ah, the soul! People around were awe-stricken — spoke in hushed whispers of him for a short time, and then he began to be forgotten, till God spoke again.

A younger brother, named John, who was following hard on in the same course of ungodliness and profanity, while away one day with his horse and cart for coals, was seized with a sudden illness, and with difficulty was got home. It soon became evident that the hand of death was upon him, and an aged neighbour was sent for “to speak to him,”—one who

was well known to all around as a simple-hearted and true Christian. He came, but found the dying man hardened and careless as ever. What was God's love to him? He was blind to it. What was the Saviour's call to him? He was deaf to it.

The good old man, in distress, knelt to pray for him, but found that he could not. Speaking of it afterwards, he said—"I never felt anything like it in all my life; I wanted to pray, but I couldn't pray; the very room seemed filled with the presence of the evil one, and I was glad to get away." Shortly afterwards poor John Wilson died.

Unsaved one, why do I tell you this? In order that *you* may beware of being "hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." Every day that you stay away from Christ the hardening process goes on, and there is less likelihood of your ever being saved at all. For remember, that what I have told you did not occur on the gay Continent, the far backwoods, or the wild prairie, but in Scotland, that has been termed the "land of Bibles," and at a place, too, where the Gospel had been faithfully preached.

Do you think that those brothers were always so hardened? Indeed they were not, and would probably at one time have recoiled with horror at the prospect; but they *became* so. In Rom. i. 21 we read of some who "*became* vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart *was* darkened;" and again, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth that

shall he also reap" (Gal. vi. 7). People speak about "turning to God when they like"—of "repenting on their deathbed;" but in those two you have now been reading of, in the one case there was no deathbed, and, in the other, although there was, yet there was no repentance. Listen no longer to Satan's lie; linger no longer on the wrong side, but haste to Christ. Think what a dreadful thing it is to be under the hardening process.

"Oh, but," you say, "these are extreme cases, and do not at all apply to me. I am not a drunkard, or a swearer; indeed, my life has not been a bad one, but quite the opposite. I am looked up to, and respected by all." But God's Word says, "*All* are under sin;" "*all* are gone out of the way;" "*all* are become guilty before God;" "*all* have sinned and come short of the glory of God." (Read Rom. iii.) And again: "Cursed is *every one* that continueth not in *all* things which are written in the book of the law to do them" (Gal. iii. 10). Have you ever stood and watched workmen building a wall? Is it enough for them to *think* that it is straight, or to *hope* so? Do they content themselves by saying, "*It seems straight; it looks straight*"? No; they apply the plumb. And if you let the plumb-line of God's Word be applied to you, you will have no more to say about being "not very bad."

But if the Word tells you that you are "condemned already," it also tells you of the way of escape. Yes, it tells of One who took the place

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of the guilty—went under the condemnation—bore the curse, suffered the Just for the unjust, “that he might bring us to God.” I ask you to ponder over those blessed yet solemn words in John iii. 36—“He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.” Remember it is not “he that is a drunkard, —a swearer—a profligate,” but “he that *believeth not the Son* shall not see life, but the wrath of God *abideth* on him.” Which is it to be with you? Under the wrath, or under the Refuge?

“No wrath God’s heart retaineth
To usward who believe;
No dread in ours remaineth
As we His love receive.”

Y. Z.

THREE GREAT EXHIBITIONS.



AD you been in Liverpool on that memorable 11th of May 1886, when Her Majesty Queen Victoria opened the International Exhibition there, great sights of gaiety might have been witnessed by you. The principal streets lined, and in some instances densely thronged, with huge masses of people, eagerly hurrying to that one grand centre of attraction.

Yet spite of the blocking of the thoroughfares of that great city (especially for vehicle traffic) was to be seen a solitary lady, threading her way with none the less eagerness through those multitudes from the Mersey Ferry to a house in Everton, there to visit a dying woman to whom she had been summoned that very morning by a relative of the suffering one, whose life was fast ebbing away, and the limit of whose course on earth would evidently be now only that of a few hours. Met downstairs by the two daughters who were attending upon Mrs B——, the first question to them, after learning that she still lived, was, "Is your mother saved?" "Well," replied one of them, "we fear not, for we have never had any proof of her conversion; but a neighbouring clergyman has been to see her twice to-day, and has read to her 'the prayers for the sick,' but did not address himself to her personally, probably because he thought she was too far gone, for she is, we fear, rapidly sinking, and only at times conscious."

When our friend was led to the room of the departing one, in the future of whose soul she was so interested, realising the awful situation of an immortal soul being ushered Christless into the presence of God, she quoted very slowly and distinctly that beautiful and well-known scripture, first uttered by the apostle Paul to the jailer at Philippi with such blessing, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 31), to which the dying listener responded earnestly,

and with a clear and raised voice, "*I do!*" there being distinct consciousness for a few moments. If this short utterance was in reality the true confession of this woman's heart, there is no reason to doubt, through the grace of God, that she received the same blessing as was bestowed upon that jailer over eighteen hundred years ago. But, of course, the issues of this must be left till the coming great day when the secrets of all hearts will be made manifest, for she passed away a day or two afterwards, leaving no other testimony, so far as we can learn.

The solemn deathbed scene brings vividly before us how awful a thing it is to put off the salvation of the never-dying soul until the "eleventh hour," and to run the dreadful risk of *losing it for ever*. There is but one instance recorded in Scripture, so far as we know, of a soul being saved at such a crisis, and that is the thief on the cross. No encouragement for presumption to put off till a deathbed, surely! Were the same scripture, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," quoted to you, my reader, would the answer of your heart be, "*I do*"? If so, *you*, too, are saved, for the word of the living God will never fail you.

Oh! do not put it off until your friends in alarm are around you, it may be, saying, they fear "you are too far gone," and lest you might not be permitted to regain your consciousness, for "God is not mocked" (Gal. vi. 7).

Numerous, and from various parts of the world,

are the specimens exposed at the city of Liverpool Exhibition, and no doubt great have been the pains taken and ingenuity displayed in order to the obtaining of prizes at the close. But think of that infinitely greater and grander exhibition which the "KING OF KINGS" is soon to open on the plains of glory. Specimens of measureless grace, which have been gathered from every country and clime since Adam's fall to the present day, and henceforth till the last invitation has been accepted, will be there, for "God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he has loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved), and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might SHOW THE EXCEEDING RICHES OF HIS GRACE IN HIS KINDNESS TOWARD US BY CHRIST JESUS" (Eph. ii. 4-7). Have you, dear reader, been saved by God from amongst the vilest of the vile of this sinful world to be exhibited there as one of the blessed specimens "to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; . . . that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: in whom also we have obtained an inheritance"? (Eph. i. 6, 7, 10, 11.)

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Or, may I ask, are you going to be one of the specimens ere long to be exhibited at the devil's exhibition, and be amongst the duped of Satan amid the horrors of hell?—specimens of eternal misery, remorse, and woe. Yes, specimens of those the devil has so effectually deluded in this the day of God's grace and long-suffering mercy? Nay, friend, God forbid! He, in the riches of His grace, is still calling in specimens for His wonderful exhibition. Will you bow to His grace, and accept His call to be one? It is written, "I am not come to call the righteous but *sinner*s to repentance" (Matt. ix. 13). "Him that cometh to me I will in *no wise* cast out" (John vi. 37). "Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled" (Luke xiv. 23).

The city of Liverpool was gay and joyous on the day referred to, and so quickly passed, but what *eternal* joy and gladness will characterise those in "that great city the holy Jerusalem" (Rev. xxi.).

Reader, will *you* be in that city? "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

"We know there's a bright and a glorious home,
 Away in the heavens high,
 Where all the redeemed shall with Jesus dwell,—
 But will you be there and I?"

If you take the loving Saviour *now*,
 Who for *sinner*s once did die,
 When He gathers His own in that bright home—
 THEN YOU'LL BE THERE AND I."

The Lord Jesus Christ died to purchase poor unworthy, hell-deserving specimens, such as we are by nature, and God by His Spirit to-day, is graciously inviting such to accept Christ, and find a place in His exhibition, and He lets it be widely and well known that there are still a few unoccupied places. Soon the last will be taken, and the door will be shut for ever. Where will *you* then be?

Do not, beloved soul, I beseech you, let Satan, who is keenly soliciting souls with the ever-varying attractions of these last days for his great exhibition, rob you of this your opportunity of blessing.

Then, when you *have* been saved, be sure you gain a good prize by unreserved surrender of yourself to Christ, and so serve and follow Him here that you will for ever shine brightly to the honour, praise, and glory of Him who called you with such a calling, and bought you with such a price as His own most precious blood, and who, to the joy of His own heart, is so soon coming to take all who have accepted His invitation into the eternal joy of that scene, where "he shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied." While those who refuse God's offers in this His day of grace will be left behind for the (lake-of-fire) exhibition of damnation. Oh! be warned of Satan's exhibition, and be encouraged for God's exhibition.

"Behold now is the accepted time; behold now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2). J. N.

"PEACE BY JESUS CHRIST."



HERE were seven things which might have been said of Cornelius, the Roman centurion:—

1. He was *nobly born*—a scion of the noble Roman house of Cornelia (Acts x. 1, &c.).
2. He was of *exalted rank* in the world—a commander of a hundred men—the "centurion of that band called the Italian band."
3. He was a "*devout man*."
4. He was *God-fearing*—"one that feared God, with all his house."
5. He was *prayerful*—"praying to God always."
6. He was *almsgiving*—"which gave much alms."
7. But he was *unsaved*!

I do not suppose for a moment that he was *unconverted*; but he was, let me repeat, *unsaved*. His heart was turned to God; it was yearning after the things of God, but he did not know the work of Christ for his soul, and consequently he was not what Scripture calls "saved." We learn in Acts xi. 14, how he was desired by the angel to send for Peter, who would tell him words "whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved."

Now this is no uncommon case. Not that we could point out many who would answer to such a beautiful character as that by which Cornelius is described in Scripture.

But there are not many—and thank God that

even this is so—whose hearts are longing after God ; who are willing to serve and to please Him, and all the time are without the knowledge of what Christ has done for their souls ?

How lovely would such a description be if his soul was producing these things as those which “*accompany* salvation” (see Heb. vi.). *They* are the fruits which are the sure indication of life ; and not only so, but life in the enjoyment of God’s salvation in Christ.

We find therefore very sweetly and blessedly a whole chapter devoted to this one man’s case, and we behold the varied ways, the many instrumentalities set in motion by the gracious hand of God, to lead him to the knowledge of Christ.

Angelic visits are seen ; visions and trances ; messengers going and returning ; household gatherings, and the preparation of expectant hearts to hear this message from God.

Four days elapse from the beginning to the end of the chapter, but what a change has taken place within that time ! An earnest, devout, God-fearing, prayerful, almsgiving man, religiously seeking to draw near to God, and find His favour and acceptance, in the opening of the chapter ; and in the end this same man, leaving the ground of the religious unsaved man—and in heart and conscience taking the ground of the sinner—and *at once* finding peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ !

What a change was wrought by a few short words—sealed home to his heart by the Spirit of

God—from the lips of a servant of Christ; one just a little while ago, and within those four days, most unwilling to speak to a Gentile, or to share that full free grace which is the very essence of the Gospel of Christ!

We have only the record of three short sermons of the Apostle Peter. His first was a very fruitful sermon, and three thousand souls were won to Christ (Acts ii.). The second was absolutely fruitless, and resulted in the speaker of it having himself with his companions placed in the common prison. (Acts iii. and iv.). This, his third sermon, opened up for God the wide and far-reaching Gentile fields, from which such an abundant harvest has since then been gathered to the name of Jesus. What joy and astonishment must have filled his heart when he saw the result in this man and in all his house.

The sermon was short, but teeming with eternal blessing. Peter had unfolded in Acts ii. the *glory* of Jesus—now "made Lord and Christ." He presented that One who had been known in Israel by "signs and wonders and mighty deeds, which God had done by him"—whom they had crucified and slain, and God had raised from the dead—making Him Lord and Christ—and who had set Him in glory until His enemies were made His footstool, but in whose name salvation was now proclaimed.

Then in Acts iii. he speaks not of His *glory* but of His *grace* to His guilty nation. All would now be pardoned if they would receive Him whom they

had crucified. He would return with His hands full of blessing, and would turn away every one of them from their iniquities.

But all was refused. Then to this little expectant company—the household and kinsmen and friends of Cornelius—he brings forth His *peace*. The *glory* had convicted and converted thousands, the *grace* had failed to touch one heart amongst them. But “*peace* through Jesus” for exercised souls was just the message to meet their need—to calm their troubles of conscience—to lead them gently to the place of “sinners” needing such a message, as the result fully shows us.

We will now look at his message shortly. First, we find “*God with us*.” “God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power; who went about doing good, and healing all that were possessed of the devil, for God was with him,” but “whom they slew and hanged on a tree.” This was the grand and final proof that man’s heart was wholly alienated from God—that he was hopelessly lost, for when God in goodness came to this world, he did what you, my reader, if still unsaved, and every unbeliever is doing even to this day—he rejected Him.

But now we find “*God for us*” in the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Evil hearts had cast Him out and slain Him. The power of God raised Him up again.

This resurrection of the Lord Jesus is the great witness that God’s righteous claims were fully

satisfied as to sin. He offered Himself without spot to God, and God accepted what He presented to Him—proving His full satisfaction in Him by raising Him from the dead, who was "delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification."

It is the triumph of God in Christ over all the power of Satan. His power is broken. He who had the power of death, even the devil, who kept his victims, through fear of death, all their life in bondage,—his power is annulled by the resurrection of Christ, who thus broke the bars of the tomb, and came forth the Conqueror of the enemy. It is the witness of future glory to the believer in Christ, the witness to the sinner of his salvation, fully accomplished by the Lord, and it is also the witness of the judgment of the world.

But now, beloved reader, if you are still a sinner in your sins, mark the blessed consequences to you. First of all, hear the words of Scripture pronounced by Peter, and receive them by the hearing of faith: "To him (said he) give all the prophets witness that whosoever believeth in him shall receive the remission of sins."

Now, mark how complete is the testimony to your soul. "All the prophets"—all the Word of God. Doubt it, and you stand convicted of being opposed to the whole Word of God. Receive it with child-like faith, and you enter at once, as did Peter's hearers that day, into all the blessing which follows. Do you doubt your personal interest in it? Then listen to the "whosoever" of the Gospel,

that word which describes its universality on the one hand, and yet which excludes every help and every merit of man. High birth won't do, nor worldly rank, nor devoutness, nor even the fear of God, nor will almsgiving, nor prayer. All are set aside as meritorious in procuring this salvation. "Whosoever believeth in him," whosoever confides his soul to Jesus, the Accomplisher of this great salvation, "shall receive the forgiveness of sins." All are blotted out for ever.

And now mark how fully God proves it is so. He proved His acceptancy of the work of Christ by raising Him from the dead. He now approves the faith of him who believes He has done so, and that He has forgiven his sins by the third thing presented to us in this precious, blessed Word of God. He becomes "*God in us*." The Spirit of God comes to dwell in the pardoned, cleansed, and renewed vessel. God seals His approval of Christ's work by raising Him up from the dead. He seals the soul that believes in this with His Holy Spirit until the day of final redemption.

How is it, then, reader, with you? You may have been like Cornelius, feeling after Him, if, haply, you might find Him; but this is past now. Is it not? The days of earnest seeking of this devout man were over, and he enters the household of God no more a stranger as he had been. The true place for the soul's acceptance is found—the convicted sinner's place; and all is rest in that happy household for ever.

F. G. P.

“JESUS IS MINE.”

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“JESUS IS MINE.”



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WAS passing through the streets of one of our large northern manufacturing cities, and my steps were arrested by the sound of singing. I advanced to the crowd, and heard the following lines sung—

“Farewell mortality,
Welcome eternity,
Jesus is mine.”

The thought struck me as I heard the two first lines sung, How is it that any one can say truthfully,

“Farewell mortality,
Welcome eternity”?

How can any one calmly look forward to the time when they will exchange time for eternity, things fleeting and changing for things invisible and eternal? But the key to the whole thing was in the last line, which was sung with evident joy—

“Jesus is mine.”

Dear reader, let me ask you the searching question, can you say truthfully, *Farewell mortality, welcome eternity*? If you can answer with the last line, *Jesus is mine*, it will be but a bright exchange.

You will leave this dark, dark world, with all its cares, vexations, disappointments, and trials, for the presence of the One who *first* loved you, and gave Himself for you. It will be, as one old divine said, "exchanging a moment of toil, for an eternity of rest." But, on the other hand, if you are still without Christ, it will be an unwelcome change for you. It will be to leave "this Egypt of your lusts," where you have perhaps rolled sin as a sweet morsel under your tongue, and where you have spurned the offers of mercy so freely offered by God, for the lake of fire, where there is wailing and weeping and gnashing of teeth, where you will never exhaust the wrath of God for your many sins, for mercy spurned, for grace rejected.

Dear reader, if such be your case, let me entreat you to think of God's remedy, God's love to such as you. *Nothing* but the blood of Jesus can screen you from God's judgment for sin. Your own good doings, your moral living, your philanthropic deeds, your ceaseless efforts to please God, will not avail you in that day when "God shall judge every man according to their works" (Rev. xx. 13).

Dear reader, I would say to you from God's Word, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts xvi. 30). Refuse this message of mercy at your peril. "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" (Heb. ii. 3.)

A. J. P.

"OFT REPROVED—SUDDENLY DESTROYED." 197

"OFT REPROVED—SUDDENLY
DESTROYED."



JAMES F—— used to call at my place of business. We did a little business together, and I often had an opportunity of speaking to him about his soul; many a time I have held the office door, and pled with him to decide now and accept of Christ, and often have I observed the tear start in the corner of that old man's eye, and steal down his cheek, but a sudden thought would seize him, and, brushing the tear aside, in a few moments he was as stoical and indifferent as ever.

I remember saying to him one day, "Jamie, I have an impression that, if the Lord tarry, I'll come in here some morning, and the first news that will greet my ear will be this, 'Jamie F—— is dead;' and I will not be surprised to hear that it has been very sudden, and perhaps the result of an accident arising from one of your drunken bouts." He listened to me very attentively till I had finished, and with a careless and indifferent air he said, "No, no, there's nae fear o' Jamie."

Not long after this took place I went in to my business one morning, and some one said to me, "Have you heard the news this morning?"

"What news?" I asked.

"Poor Jamie F—— is dead."

"Indeed," I said, "has any accident happened?"

H

"Yes," was the reply, "he fell over his own window yesterday (Sunday), and broke his neck, and was taken up dead."

Poor Jamie, I thought, you know all about it now; many a warning I gave you, and many an exhortation to give yourself to Christ, and often I thought you were about to yield to Him, but it's all over now; you are now on the other side, the Lord only knows where you are. I thought of the day I spoke to him of what might happen one day, and did happen, and I also remembered a verse which that day I quoted to him, "He that, being often reprov'd, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy" (Prov. xxix. 1).

Dear reader, how often have you been remonstrated with? How often have you been brought face to face with this most momentous of all subjects? He of whom I have written was a clever intelligent man, but he knew not Christ. You may be the same; you may be clever, intelligent, shrewd, wise, capable of giving a reason for everything you do; to all intents and purposes honest, upright, straight in your dealings, and square in all your actions, with the good of mankind at heart, as you are pleased to put it—and yet after all unsaved; and the mischief of the whole thing is, you are pleased to go on in this condition, careless and indifferent, the devil deluding you and cheating you out of your precious soul! Oh, my friend, in worldly things you would not allow this to take place. Your own interest would be the first thing considered.

“OFT REPROVED—SUDDENLY DESTROYED.” 199

Were it a matter of money interest, you would look into it, and not a stone would be left unturned till you had the whole matter satisfactorily gone into and settled. But this is still more weighty, yea, infinitely more so, and still you rush on blindly to your fate! Like James F——, you may think and say, “There is no fear, all will come right in the end;” but the next moment may seal your doom. Mercy slighted, grace spurned, salvation neglected, and the blood despised, what can you look for but the sentence—upon you as a sinner—to be carried out? “Bind him, hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth” (Matt. xxi. 13).

But again, “if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?” (Heb. ii. 2,3.) Or you may be saying in your heart, as the rich man in Luke xii., “Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee.”

“Oh, be saved, His grace is free;
Now be saved, Christ died for thee.”

“Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.”

What a salvation! not only from hell, but from everything that opposeth and exalteth itself against God; saved from sin, its power and its consequences, self and its vile corruptions, the world and its vain

delusions, its snares and pitfalls, God's grace sufficient for every trial, for every temptation, for every adverse circumstance. He has promised to be with us in them all, and "faithful is he which hath promised." Can you trust Him, sinner? If He saves from the lake of fire, is He not sufficient to save from the power of sin and Satan in this life? "He can save to the uttermost." Could you be wooed by His love? Would you venture His grace? He does not want you to give Him a trial. Oh no, not for a moment would He respond to such an act; that is the world's way of doing things ("one trial solicited"); but God's invitation is, "Come, for all things are now ready." Yea, it is a command as well as an invitation, it is absolute; it is unconditional, it is free; nothing is compromised in the accepting of it, but there is everything involved in the rejecting of it.

"Soon as my all I ventured
On the atoning blood,
The Holy Spirit entered,
And I was born of God."


May this be the language of your heart now, and know once for all the saving power of God's grace.

Oh, you say, is there not something to do? Yes, after you are saved there is plenty to do; but this not in order to be, but because you are saved. The word for the sinner is, "Done;" the word for the saint, "Do." "Christ has done it all." Do you believe it? Believing it, means your accepting His atoning work as quite sufficient to meet the demands of

God and the need of your poor soul. You honour God and His beloved Son when you believe this, and God justifies the soul that honours Him. He breaks his bonds, He sets him free. The Lord enable you just now to trust Him, and enter into the full enjoyment of His peace.

J. G.

A BOOK ON THE EXISTENCE OF CHRIST.

OT long since, while looking round the bookcases in a depot for the sale of Bibles, tracts, &c., the door opened and a respectable-looking, well-dressed man came in. He forthwith addressed himself to the young man who had charge of the depot, and put to him the following somewhat startling question, "Have you a book on the existence of Christ?"

Greatly amazed, I looked up to see what answer was forthcoming, feeling at the same time not a little inclined to hand the stranger a Bible, which was lying on the shelf, as being the surest, safest, and most reliable guide on that all-important subject.

However, after a pause of a few minutes, I ventured to inquire for what purpose the book was

required, possessed with a grave suspicion that I should find the man tinged by some form of infidelity. Yes, INFIDELITY. Let us call things by their right names; for however much our modern rationalists may dislike the name of "infidel" (and no wonder), yet, most assuredly, that man is an infidel who calls in question what God has said. If the Bible be the Word of God, the man who dares to question it, be he learned or ignorant, is upon uncommonly dangerous ground.

"Oh!" said he, "I am in the habit of meeting for public discussion men of very different opinions—some who do not believe that Christ exists at all; others who hold that He is merely a spirit; while others again believe in His material existence; and I just wanted to read a work which might present your view of the subject."

"Sir," I replied, "with whom, may I ask, do you hold these discussions, for it appears to me that you are putting yourself into a position of extreme danger. A true Christian would have no question whatever upon the point, and to argue about it with an infidel would not only be useless to him, but most pernicious to yourself."

"Well," said he, "I often meet with —— (naming a sect) and others, but——"

"Sir," I interrupted, "let me advise you at once to desist from any such thing, as these very people, plausible as their efforts may appear to base all their arguments upon the Bible, are nevertheless unsound upon almost all that it teaches. They

deny the atoning value of the blood of Christ, the immortality of the soul, the eternal punishment of the wicked, and——”

“Ah! then, perhaps, you will call me unsound?”

“I hope, for your own sake, that I shall not need to,” was my answer.

“Well, I do not believe,” said the man, “that God created man to burn him. Since reading ~~ME~~—’s book on the subject, I have quite given up the orthodox view of the matter.”

“Ah!” said I, “you have caricatured the truth, and that is the weakest of all arguments—indeed, it is no argument at all. I do not feel inclined, even if I were able, to discuss the question with you, but I would earnestly ^{seek to} warn you of your danger by stating that you will invariably find that all those who imbibe those views *begin* by a lowered and enfeebled sense of the enormity of *sin* in the sight of God, and *end* by denying the need or the value of the *atonement*.”

“You are quite mistaken,” he replied. “If you read ~~ME~~—’s book, you will see that he holds both.”

“No, sir, he does not” (for it so happened that only a few days before that very book came into my hands, and the perusal of a few pages convinced me of the truth of my remark). “The writer bases one argument upon this, that eternal punishment is altogether too severe for mere *ordinary offenders*! Who are they, I should like to know? By what standard was the writer measuring *sin* when he

penned those terrible words? A human one or a divine? *God cannot look at sin*, be that sin in man's reckoning great or small. And, again, speaking of the death of Christ, while admitting that He died for sinners, we are not long left in the dark as to the abominable infidelity that underlies this, at first sight, plausible but deceptive statement. He goes on to say that the 'sentence on Adam was, 'Thou shalt surely *die*;' that further, the New Testament confirms this by saying that 'the wages of sin is *death*;' and that Christ bore the penalty, and paid the wages, when He died on the cross. In other words, '*physical death*' is all that the author sees in that 'wondrous cross on which the Lord of glory died.' Do *you* see nothing more in the death of Christ than that?"

Reader, do not you? What means that agonising cry, wrung from the deepest depths of the Saviour's heart, "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?"

Scorned and cast out by the world, betrayed and denied and forsaken by all, even His disciples—all this was terrible; but to be *forsaken of God*! Who could conceive, far less declare, what that was to Him who had all His life long lived in the sunshine of His very presence! Again, I ask, was it mere physical death that pressed those words from His heart? If such were the case, the death of Christ would be reduced infinitely below the level even of a Christian's. How many a child of God has died triumphantly! How many a one has left this

world, and entered the haven of eternal rest, with a shout of victory and praise, and that amidst the most excruciating sufferings of the body!

But Christ, in that supreme moment, was forsaken of God. Reader, can *you* tell me why? May the eternal heaven of His blessed presence be your answer to that question! He spotless and holy, sinless without and within, was "made sin" that we guilty, lost, and rebel sinners "might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor. v. 21). But, reader, mark, when "made sin" at the cross, He was *treated as sin*, and He endured at that terrible moment all that God was in His holiness, righteousness, and hatred against sin. But, blessed be His name, the work which He willingly undertook He has perfectly accomplished.

"The storm that bowed Thy blessed head
Is hushed for ever now ;
And rest divine is ours instead,
Whilst glory crowns Thy brow.

Within the Father's house on high,
We soon shall sing Thy praise,
But here, where Thou didst bleed and die,
We learn that song to raise."

Away with the base ingratitude that would rob the Saviour of His glory! Away with the blind infidelity that would thus, too, rob the sinner of his Saviour!

A. H. B.

“I’M ALL RIGHT, UNLESS THE BLOOD FAILS.”

“**N**OW is it with you as to the future?” said a mother to her daughter, who was rapidly passing away from this world, and who for some time previous had confessed Christ as her Saviour.

“I’m all right, *unless the blood fails*,” was the daughter’s reply.

Unless the blood fails! Beloved reader, *that can never be*. If the blood of Christ could fail, Christianity is a myth; man’s case is utterly and irretrievably hopeless; the world itself could not stand, and there is no alternative but the lake of fire for the whole human race. No, it cannot fail, because it is *the blood of Christ*. Then, have you trusted therein? If death were at your door this hour—and it may be for aught you know—could you say, “I’m all right, unless the blood fails”?

“Trusting in that precious blood,
There is perfect peace with God.”

Nothing but the blood of Jesus can do helpless sinners good. “It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul” (Lev. xvii. 11).

What was it that sheltered Israel on the night of the destruction of the Egyptian first-born? *Blood*. They were told to sprinkle the blood of the lamb upon the doorposts and lintel of their houses out-

side, and the Lord said, "*When I see the blood, I will pass over you*" (Exod. xii. 13). Not when *they* saw it, for it was night, and they were under its shelter inside; no, but when *I* see it. They sprinkled it in the obedience of faith, and were passed over. Have you taken shelter, so to speak, under the blood, even the precious blood of Christ? There is no shelter elsewhere. God's eye is on *the blood of Christ*, and the moment you, the sinner, trust therein, His eye is on it for you. And you are all right, unless the blood fails!

Careless, sceptical souls often cry, Can you show us anything? Show anything! No, indeed; nor do we want to. Sight would not be faith. And we are justified by faith, not sight. To show anything now is virtually to deny faith. Scripture says, "*Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory*" (1 Peter i. 8). "Blessed are they that have *not seen*, and *yet have believed*" (John xx. 29). "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things *not seen*" (Heb. xi. 1).

"No one ever came back to tell us," said a clever dying man to a Christian, who was seeking the salvation of his soul. "Oh! yes, *there was One*," was the reply. "Who?" "Why, Christ, to be sure." He came back from the dead, showed Himself by many infallible proofs; Himself proclaimed peace, the result of His own death and bloodshedding. But His prophetic words are only too

true, as seen in the answer of Abraham to the rich man in hell, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, *neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead*" (Luke xvi. 31).

Ah! poor sinner, you may neglect or despise now, but rest assured, if once your ruthless enemy *death* should overtake you, hell, even hell for ever, will be your sad and awful doom, and even the blood of Christ will nought avail you then. "Beware lest he take thee away with his stroke; *then a great ransom cannot deliver thee*" (Job xxxvi. 18).

But God hath set forth Christ as "a propitiation (or mercy seat) through *faith in his blood*" (Rom. iii. 25). What was it that made the dying thief a fit companion for God's Beloved One in paradise? Was it his works, his righteousness, his religion? He had none. He was an ungodly Jew; so bad that his life was forfeited at the hand of man in this world. But yet his spirit passed from that cross to the presence of Christ. Why was it? 'Twas the death and bloodshedding of the One who was crucified at his side. *His precious blood* washed him *whiter than snow* (Psa. li. 7). "The blood of Jesus Christ his (God's) Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7). Are *you* cleansed thereby? If not, how is it? Are you vainly thinking to stand before God on the ground of your works, your religion, &c.? What is that but the way of Cain? Woe to them, is the solemn statement of the Word of God (Jude 11).

A poor dying woman, who had led a careless,

ungodly life, said to one who visited her, "I'm going to heaven." "You going to heaven; such a sinner as you?" was his surprised reply. "I know I've been a great sinner, sir, but oh! it's the blood, it's the blood, it's the blood."

Yes, my reader, *it's the blood*. "It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul" (Lev. xvii. 11). It is the blood that alone can cleanse you from your sin. It is the blood that alone can give a title to glory. The redeemed in glory sing, "Thou art worthy, . . . for thou hast redeemed us to God *by thy blood*" (Rev. v. 9). John strikes a chord on earth, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins *in his own blood*" (Rev. i. 5). Mark, dear reader, *His own blood*. Have you an interest therein? Are you among the *us*?

Tens of thousands of sheep, goats, bullocks, &c., were offered in days of old, but their blood could never take away sins (Heb. x. 4). Nothing but the blood of Jesus could do that. "Lebanon," we read, "is not sufficient to burn; nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt-offering" (Isa. xl. 16). But when the fulness of time was come Christ was manifested. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," said John. And again, "Behold the Lamb of God" (John i. 29, 36). He was both a burnt-offering and a sin-offering also. God gave; God sent Him. He offered Himself through the eternal Spirit without spot to God (Heb. ix. 14). Peace was made by *the blood* of His cross (Col. i. 20). God raised Him from the dead.

And all who *believe* are redeemed, not by silver and gold, but with *the precious blood of Christ*, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot (1 Peter i. 19).

“*Without shedding of blood is no remission*” (Heb. ix. 22). *His blood* was “shed for many for the remission of sins” (Matt. xxvi. 28). Mark it well—without it *no remission*. But the blood of Christ *was shed*; and *with it* there is full, free, complete remission. Trust therein, and your sins are pardoned, remitted, blotted out, gone completely and for ever from before the eye of God. “Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more” (Heb. x. 17).

“Christ’s blood *will not fail*,
Nought else *can* avail.”

His blood was shed for many. Have you put in your claim? Can you say, “Yes, thank God, it was *shed for me*.” Some reply, “Oh! I know He died for all; I know His blood was shed for many; but I am not sure whether it was for me.” Why not? It is simply unbelief. You do not take the word as it stands. All means *everybody*; *you*, to be sure. Rest there, and you may join in singing—

“Not all the blood of beasts,
On Jewish altars slain,
Could give the guilty conscience peace,
Or wash away its stain.
But Christ, the Lamb of God,
Took all our guilt away,
A sacrifice of nobler name
And *richer blood* than they.”

A dying youth was rejoicing in Christ. A visitor said to him, "'The blood of Jesus Christ his (God's) Son cleanseth us from all sin,'" so that not a spot or stain remains. "*Not a speck*," he gasped out, and in a few hours fell peacefully asleep through Jesus. Not a speck! Oh, how blessed! Sin still in us, till we leave this world, but *not a speck upon us in the sight of God* through the infinite value, the marvellous efficacy, the all-cleansing virtue of the blood of Christ. Well may God in His own Word call it *precious blood*. Precious it is in His sight, for it is the blood of His beloved Son; precious to every one who is washed therein; precious, indeed, it will be to you, my reader, if you will but believe therein. It will never, never fail you.

And when are we to be justified by the blood of Jesus? Now. "Being *now* justified," says the apostle, "by *his blood*, we shall be saved from wrath through him" (Rom. v. 9). Again, "In whom we have (not hope to have) redemption *through his blood*, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph. i. 7). What wondrous fulness! Oh! who will dare despise that precious crimson stream? Where will you find a refuge in the day of His wrath, if you fail to get an interest in His precious blood now? Where will you obtain redemption but in Him whom God raised from the dead? *In Him*, and in Him alone, is it to be found; and now is the time to find it. The last grain of sand in the hour-glass of the day of grace will soon run through. Woe, woe, woe to all who

are outside the then closed door. Come then, poor sinner, to the Saviour now. His blood will make you meet for the holy presence of God; nought else can avail.

“None can, without the blood
Of Jesus, be forgiven;
'Tis resting on *the blood alone*
That fits the soul for heaven.”

E. H. C.

“ALL WELL, ALL WELL.”



HE heart of our God is set on saving sinners. His blessed work goes on, on land and sea, in peace and war; amid the fury of the elements; and when the gentle breezes blow. His heart has gone out to all, and the circle of His love takes in all. “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John iii. 16). Unutterably blessed is it to know, for oneself, in one’s own soul, the giving, dying, pardoning, redeeming, and saving power of this love; but who can tell out the blackness, the vileness, the heinousness of the sin that would spurn it all, and reject the One who came to reveal God as love, and, in dying for sinners, manifested His love towards us. “God is love;” “God commendeth his love towards us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (1 John iv. 8; Rom. v. 8).

God is working still, and the foundation of His working is in the death of His Son. God is just in justifying, and righteous in saving (Rom. iii. 26); for in the cross "mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other" (Psa. lxxxv. 10). Now God, in divine consistency, can justify and save the vilest sinner who turns in repentance to Him. "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out" (John vi. 37).

God uses various instrumentalities in His work of saving. How often does He use the words of a mother in the conversion of her children!

During the Crimean War, there was a young officer who in the night was taken sick; his Turkish servant was too soundly asleep to be awakened, and there he was in his tent, with a high fever, all alone, unsaved, unforgiven, and, as it appeared to him then, with death, the grim inexorable king of terrors, at his side. What a moment in the history of that young man was that! A moment, I am bold to say, that, as long as eternity lasts, will never be forgotten.

What was to be done? He expected to die ere another sun broke upon that scene of carnage and death. Alone, in that supremely solemn moment, as he lay unsaved, without Christ, without God, without hope in the world, who can tell the feelings of his soul, or describe the repentant look of that self-judged prodigal, as he looked up to God, whose delight it is to receive, and whose prerogative it is to pardon and save all such?

As he thus lay, the passage of the Word that his beloved mother had taught him was brought to his mind by the Spirit of God—“*Christ died for our sins;*” and, as he himself said, when relating it to a dying man, “*I laid hold of that and was saved.*”

And what a scene of peace and joy the death of such an one is. Some two years ago, it was the privilege of the writer to visit a very sick man, who was reached by the Word, and converted to God. Though he lingered on for two more years, yet it was only to experience the further development of his malady, and eventually succumb to death. But death to him meant release from a diseased, pain-stricken, emaciated body, to be in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. It was *victory* to him—the open door into paradise. “Death is ours,” was with him realised in a full blessed sense.

When asked by a Christian lady, a short time before his departure, “If you were called away from earth this evening, how would it be with you for eternity?”

With a look brightened with heaven’s light, and which told of the peace and joy within, he said, “*All well, all well!*”

“On what are you resting?”

“On Jesus my Saviour,” he replied.

“Is there nothing of your own on which you are resting?”

“Oh, no, Jesus has washed away my sins,” and tears rolled down his cheeks. “I would so like to

talk," he said, "but can't;" and fell back almost unconscious from exhaustion.

Not many hours later, the race of the ransomed saint was run, the happy moment of release came, his spirit was freed from its house of clay, and with untold and unmingled delight found itself in the presence of "him who loved us, and gave himself for us."

An old saint, a widow of many years, who has reared her children from her own hard earnings at the wash-tub, and knows what the rugged side of life is, on conversing with me the other day, said, "*There is no happiness in this world out of Christ. To have a crust of bread, and have Him with you, is above rubies.*"

This was no drawing-room Christianity, nor glibly talking of things as we recline on "flowery beds of ease;" but after many years of toil and struggling along the pathway of life, with apparently all against her, she had learnt that, "There is no happiness in this world out of Christ. To have a crust of bread, and have Him with you, is above rubies."

Come now, Mr Infidel, what say you to all this? Here are three witnesses to the love of God, the saving virtues of the blood of Jesus, the sufficiency of Christ to sustain the heart throughout a life of trial, and in the solemn hour of death to enable me triumphantly to say, "All well, all well!" Refuse not, I beseech you, this threefold witness.

Beloved reader, is this God your God? this

Saviour your Saviour? And in the hour of death, can you say, "All well, all well"?

Unconverted reader, remember, that by to-morrow, you may be *dead*! And then! *What then?*

E. A.

MY CONVERSION.



HAD been anxious about my soul for some months. The meeting-room was adjoining our house, and I used to attend the meetings regularly. Evangelists, servants of the Lord, came and preached the Gospel of the grace of God. I used to listen, but the simplicity of it puzzled me. If I could have done something, or had it been not so simple, it would have suited me better. Ah! I, like many others, did not like to leave self out altogether. I well remember upon several occasions trying to get out of the room without being spoken to about my soul.

One night a brother in the Lord, named Mr R——, a dear servant of God, had been preaching. It was the last night of the year in 1882, and it was Sunday. In the course of the meeting the preacher had been pleading earnestly with the people to accept the Saviour ere it was *too late*, and he said: "Do begin the new year with Christ; don't let this year go without accepting Him as

your Saviour." Well, I thought I would wait until I got to my room, and was alone. The Spirit was striving with me, and I was very anxious. I knew I was lost. I was not very old—between fourteen and fifteen—but I knew that if I died without accepting Christ as my Saviour, that if I died a rejecter of Him, God would judge me for it, and that hell would surely be my doom.

The meeting ended. I felt miserable; I went to my room as soon as possible. My parents were both Christians, and they would have tried to have helped me if I had told them, but I could not speak of it to any one. When I reached my room I dropped on my knees and asked the Lord to save me. I told Him I was a sinner, perfectly helpless, but that He had sent His Son to die for me, and thereby had provided a way of escape. I simply cast myself on Him in all my guilt, and He did not cast me out. No, the Lord does not cast any out who come to Him, owning themselves *lost* and *guilty*. His mercy and love is too great to do that.

I undressed and got into bed. In a few moments such a ray of light seemed to pervade my soul, and I seemed to hear a voice say, "Thy sins are forgiven thee, go in peace." I *knew* that I had passed from death unto life. I knew that there was joy in the presence of the angels of God. I got out of bed and fell on my knees again, but, oh, how different to the first time! This was not to seek for forgiveness; it was to thank the Lord for saving me. I could now call Him *my* Saviour, *my* Lord.

I got into bed again, and slept peacefully till morning, and then the first thing that came to my mind was the words, "Thy sins are forgiven thee."

But I made one great mistake. Although my heart was full of praise and thanksgiving to my Saviour, I did not confess Him. No, I was ashamed—ashamed of being laughed at and ridiculed. After a few days Satan began to attack me. Although I had received such a full assurance, yet I began to doubt. I was troubled with a hasty temper. I was not passionate, but hasty. A little thing would soon provoke me, and, before I was aware of it, I would give way to temper. Oh! how this troubled me. If I was really saved, and a new creature in Christ Jesus, why did not my temper leave me? Ah! I had not learnt that the old nature was still there, and that I needed to be constantly watchful. Satan made use of this, and filled me with doubts and fears. But it was only for a few days. I took it all to the Lord, and He removed the doubts. He showed me in His Word, "My grace is sufficient for thee." He bade me be watchful.

About a fortnight after the brother that was preaching the night that I found peace came again. Another brother was with him, named Mr T——, and he was going to preach that evening. It was about an hour before meeting-time, and these two dear children of God were in the drawing-room. My three youngest sisters were in the room, and I went in for them. Mr T—— began to speak to

MY CONVERSION.

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me about the Lord, and asked me if I was saved. I said, "Yes, I am." He asked me how I knew it. I replied, "I am trusting in the blood of Jesus, and I knew He had washed me from all my sins." Mr R—— was surprised, for the last time I had seen him he knew I was not; but his face seemed full of joy when he heard it. He is a dear man, and I have cause to love him. The Lord has blessed him much to the salvation of souls. I had been happy before in the knowledge of my forgiveness, but I was much happier when I had confessed my Saviour. Oh! how dreadful it is to be ashamed of owning the One who has done so much for us.

The Lord has enabled me to go quietly on since, learning more of Him, and proving His boundless love to me. But, oh! how very little I do know of Him. May He show me more of His hidden beauties day by day, and may I be kept waiting for Him. The time will soon come, and we (all those who believe) shall be caught up to be with Him for ever. What a prospect for His people. It is indeed something to glory in, and cheer our hearts in this scene.

Unconverted reader, the time is short. Are you ready? The day of grace will soon be over. Won't you accept Christ before it is *too late*? "Oh!" you say, "there is plenty of time; I shall enjoy myself; I intend to see something of the world first." Take care; God will not be trifled with. Listen to His advice:—"Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in

the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment" (Eccles. xi. 9). He is now beseeching thee to come, and are you deaf to His entreaty?

Listen again: "Because I have called and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded, . . . I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh" (Prov. i. 24-26). These are God's own words. Can you think of Him laughing and mocking? But He will, dear reader, unless you accept what He offers, viz., the gift of His dear Son.

I have written this simple story, praying that the Lord may use it in blessing some poor lost one. We can do nothing. The Lord can do all, and will, too, dear reader, if you only ask Him.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation."


"Jesus sought me when a stranger,
Wandering from the fold of God:
He, to rescue me from danger,
Interposed His precious blood.
Oh! to grace how great a debtor,
Daily I'm constrained to be;
Let that grace, Lord, like a fetter,
Bind my wandering heart to Thee."

R.

"GONE ASTRAY."

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"GONE ASTRAY."

OW think ye? If a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?" (Matt. xviii. 12.)

Several times over that Scripture had been read in a class of little ones, and then the teacher asked them,—

"What made Him seek for that lost sheep?"

"Because He loved it," answered a chorus of young voices.

"Because it was lost," added another.

As the teacher waited a moment or two for any more answers, a little girl said sweetly,—

"And because—because He knew it would never come back its own self."

The children were right, were they not, dear readers? And now, let me ask you, does "sought and found" make up the brief story of your life?

"Found by Him before I sought,
Unto Him in mercy brought."

But perhaps you do not yet know that you are lost. Sad state! God's Word says, "*All we like sheep have gone astray*" (Isa. liii. 6); "They

are *all* gone out of the way" (Rom. iii. 12); "The Son of man is come to seek and to save *that which was lost*" (Luke xix. 10). Will you not give Him the joy of saying of *you*, "I have found my sheep which was lost?"

Y. Z.



BROUGHT OUT AND BROUGHT IN.*

"He brought us out . . . that he might bring us in."

—DEUT. vi. 23.



OUT of the distance and darkness so deep,
 Out of the settled and perilous sleep;
 Out of the region and shadow of death,
 Out of its foul and pestilent breath;
 Out of the bondage and wearying chains,
 Out of companionship ever with stains;
 Into the light and glory of God,
 Into the holiest, made clean by blood;
 Into His arms—the embrace and the kiss—
 Into the scene of ineffable bliss;
 Into the quiet, the infinite calm,
 Into the place of the song and the psalm!

* The outburst of a saved soul, on being brought out of depths of sin and darkness into God's marvellous light, through redemption apprehended by faith in Christ Jesus.

BROUGHT OUT AND BROUGHT IN.

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Wonderful love, that has wrought all for me
 Wonderful work, that has thus set me free!
 Wonderful ground upon which I have come!
 Wonderful tenderness, welcoming home!

Out of disaster and ruin complete,
 Out of the struggle and dreary defeat;
 Out of my sorrow and burden and shame,
 Out of the evils too fearful to name;
 Out of my guilt, and the criminal's doom,
 Out of the dreading, the terror, the gloom;
 Into the sense of forgiveness and rest,
 Into inheritance with all the blest;
 Into a righteous and permanent peace,
 Into the grandest and fullest release,
 Into the comfort without an alloy,
 Into a perfect and confident joy;
 Wonderful holiness, bringing to light!
 Wonderful grace, putting all out of sight!
 Wonderful wisdom, devising the way!
 Wonderful power, that nothing could stay.

Out of the horror at being alone,
 Out, and for ever, of being my own;
 Out of the hardness of heart and of will,
 Out of the longings which nothing could fill;
 Out of the bitterness, madness, and strife,
 Out of myself, and of all I called life;
 Into communion with Father and Son,
 Into the sharing of all that Christ won;
 Into the ecstasies full to the brim,
 Into the having of all things with Him,

Into Christ Jesus there ever to dwell,
Into more blessings than words e'er can tell;
Wonderful lowliness, draining my cup!
Wonderful purpose, that ne'er gave me up!
Wonderful patience, that waited so long!
Wonderful glory, to which I belong!

Out of my poverty, into His wealth,
Out of my sickness, into pure health;
Out of the false and into the true,
Out of the old man into the new;
Out of what measures the full depth of "lost!"
Out of it all, and at infinite cost!

• Into what must with that cost correspond;
Into that which there is nothing beyond;
Into the union which nothing can part,
Into what satisfies His and my heart!
Into the deepest of joys ever had—
Into the gladness of making God glad!
Wonderful Person, whose face I'll behold!
Wonderful story, then all to be told!
Wonderful all the dread way that He trod!
Wonderful end, He has brought me to God!

ANON.

OFTEN WARNED, SAVED AT LAST.



THE subject of the following narrative, A. M'C——, was taught the plan of salvation from his earliest years, although it was not until the age of twenty-seven that he was brought to a knowledge of Christ. During his early days he had many narrow escapes of his life, but the gracious providence of God preserved him, and eventually brought him to know the blessed liberty of grace, and to follow in *the way*.

At the age of twelve A—— was engaged with some other boys in helping to blast some stone, and whilst pouring out some gunpowder from a flask, a mischievous companion suddenly put a lighted paper to it, causing the whole of it to explode. Several were badly burned and cut, and A—— having the flask in his hand was knocked down, and remained insensible for some moments. The flask had struck him on his breast, but with the exception of the shock caused by the blow and the explosion, he was not much hurt; so that, having regained consciousness, and finding that the police were coming to inquire into the matter, he took to his heels.

Deep exercise of soul ensued, and the inquiry was raised in the secret of his own heart, as to where he would have been had he been suddenly called into eternity. He was conscious that he was unfit for the presence of God, but as time went on, the

temporary impression passed away until again brought face to face with a probable violent death. How often this is the case! When death stares men in the face, they cry to God. For the moment folly and vanity are forgotten, and the solemn realities of death, judgment, and eternity fill the mind. But when the danger is past, Satan's lures again attract the soul, and only too often they are dragged deeper and deeper down in the mire of sin.

Taking to a sea-faring life at the age of sixteen, A—— started on a long voyage; and when sailing in the western ocean, the vessel was overtaken by a tremendous gale of wind, which was so violent that the whole company on board gave themselves up for lost, as it seemed impossible for her to weather the storm. But suddenly at the greatest extremity, God caused the wind to abate, reminding us of the words of the Psalmist, "They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep. For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths; their soul is melted because of trouble. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit's end. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then they are glad because they are quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven. Oh that men would praise

the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men?"

A year later he met with a similar experience on a voyage to the East Indies. The ship was caught in a tremendous hurricane off the Cape of Good Hope, and for three days and three nights it was thought that every moment would be the last in this world for all on board. The fear of death brought A—— again face to face with the solemnities of eternity, and he made vows to God that if He would only spare him, he would henceforth serve Him. Calm succeeded the storm, and A—— propped himself up with a false peace; but his merciful escape was soon forgotten, and with it his good resolutions, like thousands more similarly circumstanced.

Yes, souls on all hands are deluding themselves with a false peace. Wherever we turn we hear the cry of Peace, peace; but there is no peace. Good resolutions, reformation, professions to serve God are all vanity. God is a God of reality. He knows the heart, and no sham will pass with Him. The soul must be thoroughly broken down in His blessed presence, and be led to believe on His Son and be saved, before any can render acceptable service to Him. Remember reader, these solemn words of the apostle, "When they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, . . . and they shall not escape" (1 Thes. v. 3).

The vessel having been unloaded at Burmah, and a fresh cargo taken on board, she started upon her

return journey. In the middle of the Bay of Bengal they were suddenly overtaken by a terrific cyclone, which carried away every sail then spread to the wind. The chief officer giving an order, A—— and another sprang forward to obey, when at that very moment the ship gave a fearful lurch, and reeling on one side, both were buried underneath the waves. All his past life flashed through his memory in an instant, as he thought his hour was come to face eternity and God. But the ship righting herself, he found to his inexpressible relief and joy, that he was not overboard in the ocean, but, through the mercy of God, fast locked between two pieces of the woodwork of the vessel. But his companion was nowhere to be seen, and he at once shouted "Man overboard," for the moment forgetting the danger he had just passed through.

Orders were immediately given to lower a boat and look for the drowning man. Every heart trembled as they glanced at the boiling, surging waves lashed by the furious gale. But it was only the hesitation of a moment; a life was at stake, and in a brief space, A—— and three others following the second officer, were off in a lifeboat upon the surging billows. The sea was running so high that they thought every moment they would be swamped and launched into eternity. But God in His grace preserved them, and after a fruitless search for the poor fellow, his cap being the only trace they could discover, they were again hoisted back upon the ship.

Recovered from the shock, A—— had time to reflect on what had occurred, and felt most thankful to God for his escape, unprepared, from a sudden and violent death. He resolved to be better, and began to read the Bible more, and to pray, but being laughed at by some of his careless shipmates, lacked courage, and gave it all up again. He went on for a long time after this in a state of indifference and cold neglect of God and the salvation of his soul. But still mercy followed him, and being thrown in the company of a Christian, the latter earnestly persuaded him to be reconciled to God (2 Cor. v. 20), telling him, that through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ his own sins were forgiven, and warning him that as long as he pursued his course without God, he was rapidly approaching an eternity of woe. Again and again he pointed him to Christ and His finished work, continuing so faithfully to plead with him, that at last he concluded that he must either be the same as his companion, or break off from his company altogether. This he felt very hard, as a deep friendship had sprung up between them, and so to avoid his constantly pressing the subject upon him, he professed that his sins were forgiven also, but still his soul lacked peace with God.

How often is it the case that sinners desiring to flee from the wrath to come, and alive to the necessity of something different to what they have hitherto been, make a false profession of conversion! Satan, ever on the alert, deludes the soul, and leads

men to build upon a foundation of shifting sand,—to make a profession of Christ and salvation, whilst all the while their foundation is utterly rotten, the ever-shifting ground of their own feelings, good intentions, endeavours to please God, and attention to religious ordinances. Satan does not care, not he, what you rest upon, so long as it is not Christ. You may have as much religion as you please, so long as you do not build your house upon the Rock of Ages, and are kept from closing with Christ about your precious never-dying soul, and believing on His name. Beware, dear reader, of his subtle wiles, and trust alone in Christ.

His profession was soon put to the proof. A few Christians proposed to have some preaching in the open air, and one of them suggested that A—— should tell the people what the Lord had done for his soul. His conscience was immediately charged with the guilt of his deceit, and when they started he kept out of the way, more miserable than ever. Thoroughly broken down, he now found himself in the presence of God, guilty, ruined, lost. He saw the utter vanity of all his vain efforts to cling to anything in self, but found in Christ one who met all the deep need of his soul. The confession of Peter in Matt. xvi. 16, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," and the Lord's reply, were used by the Spirit of God to bring him into peace and liberty of soul. Taught of the Father, he too confessed Him, and knew that he was saved. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is

born of God" (1 John v. 1). "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God" (1 John iv. 15). Joy filled his soul, his peace flowed as a river. He knew that the finished work of Christ had met every claim of God against him, and could say with Paul, "Who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal. ii. 20), as though there was not another sinner in the whole world. Wondrous grace! a weary heart and a bad conscience exchanged for a conscience purged by the blood of Christ, and a heart happy and free in the enjoyment of the love of God.

And now, dear reader, having read the narrative of God's abounding grace towards A——, let me ask you, Is your soul saved? Are you at peace with God? Does joy fill your heart? Can you say in truth that He "loved me and gave himself for me"? If not, why not? The work is done. Christ did it. God's claims are met. Christ met them. Salvation is free. His precious blood paid for it. You may be saved. God says so. Cease from your vain efforts to please Him in the flesh (Rom. viii. 8). Come out in your true colours. Be honest with yourself, and have to do with God about it all. "Acquaint now thyself with Him, and be at peace." There is no time to be lost. God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. Maybe He has already spoken twice to you. Beware. If death claimed you as its prey this moment, how would it be with you? Would you depart to be with Christ, washed from your sins in His precious

blood, or would it be the portal for you to everlasting woe? It must be one or the other. Consider it, ere it be too late. God offers you Christ. Will you receive Him? You *must* be born again. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God" (1 John v. 1). Confess Him as the Son of God, and God will dwell in you (1 John iv. 15). His Word declares it. The days run rapidly by. Death is claiming its victims on all hands. Sinner, your turn will come. Oh, flee, flee now from the wrath to come! Flee while you may. Flee to Christ. Mark, *to Christ*. "Come unto me," says the gracious Saviour. *To Me*. "Him that cometh unto *me*, I will in no wise cast out." "Come unto *me*, . . . and I will give you rest." It cannot be had elsewhere. Come, then, while you may. Be decided. You have already halted too long. Another step, and it may be too late. Sinner, heed the gracious warning. Mercy waits for you; love lingers over you; grace intreats you; Christ died and rose; God beseeches you; will you come?

"Come to the Saviour now!
 He ready stands to bless,
 He bids thee nothing bring,
 Only thy guilt confess;
 No anger fills His heart,
 No frown is on His brow,
 His mien is perfect grace,
 He bids thee trust Him now.
Come! Come! Come!"

E. H. C.

THE BAPTIZED BUDDHIST.



HERE are many people who most firmly believe in the doctrines of Christianity, and whose hearts, either in childhood's days, or even in the years of matured life, have been deeply moved by the story of the love of God and the death of Jesus, but who, nevertheless, have never been troubled about the all-important question of their soul's salvation, and whose consciences have never been burdened with the weight of their own sins. But soul-trouble *must* be endured either in this world or the next; the pricking of conscience *must* be experienced either now or in eternity; and the heavy burden of our sins *must* be felt either in the day of grace or in the day of judgment. If these things be realised *now*, eternal salvation, peace, and forgiveness may be enjoyed; but if, *for the first time*, in eternity, everlasting damnation and never-ending woe will be the fearful consequences.

In the early part of 1885, the writer, in company with a Christian friend, was travelling by rail from the coast to the interior of the little island of Ceylon. In the same compartment were a young Indian rajah of considerable wealth and his travelling companion, a man of great intelligence and education. Our two friends were most agreeable and polite, and very soon we found ourselves conversing on a variety of subjects. The latter of

these two was the chief speaker, and, though an Indian, had no little command of the English language. Religiously, they both were Buddhists, and our friend was able to give us some interesting details in connection with Buddhism, proving what an influence the Scriptures have upon the mind of a man, even while inventing a form of heathen worship, though all unconsciously to himself.

Soon the question was broached as to the truth of Christianity, and judge of our surprise when our friend informed us that he had been baptized as a believer in Christ.

"Baptized as a Christian!" I exclaimed, "and yet remain a Buddhist! Why then were you baptized?"

"It was some years ago while in Calcutta, I went to hear a sermon by Mr —, a well-known missionary. With great earnestness, eloquence, and feeling, the preacher told us the story of the crucifixion of Christ. He described His life of gentleness and goodness, His trial before unjust and cruel judges, His agonising sufferings on the cross without murmur or complaint, His death of shame and ignominy, forsaken and abandoned by all. As I sat and listened to all this, I wept like a child, and the tears rolled down my cheeks ~~in torrents~~. The service being ended, Mr — urged upon me the importance of being baptized, the deep emotions of my mind being to him a sufficient proof of my faith in Christianity. After some hesitation I yielded to his request."

As I heard the Indian's touching story, I could

not help thinking, if such were the effect produced by the simple description of the sufferings of Christ, "what must it have been to be there" and to have been an eye-witness of those very sufferings?

But, reader, mere emotions of the mind and stirrings of the heart are valueless, when it is a question of our guilt as sinners before the face of a holy God. When they led Jesus away to be crucified, "there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him" (Luke xxiii. 27), and no doubt they shed tears of genuine grief, and no doubt heart-felt sorrow filled their breasts.

But listen. "Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but WEEP FOR YOURSELVES." Reader, do you understand the bearing of these words? The women that followed the blessed Saviour as He toiled on to Calvary, weeping as they went, were heart-broken at the sight of such suffering, they were filled with feelings of human pity and sympathy, because a man, and such a man, was about to be put to such a cruel death. *They were weeping for Him instead of weeping for themselves*; all the while forgetting that their very sins were about to nail Him to the cross.

"Like tears from the daughters of Zion that roll,
I wept when the waters went over His soul,
Yet thought not that MY SINS had nailed to the tree
Jehovah Tsidkenu,—'twas nothing to me."

Beloved reader, doubtless you believe in the facts

of Christianity. The birth and death of Jesus are in all probability a part of your very creed. But allow me, in all affection and earnestness, to ask you, if your conscience has ever been burdened with a sense of *your sins*? Have you ever trembled at the thought of dying unpardoned and unforgiven? Have you ever realised that YOUR VERY SINS made it necessary for the blessed Son of God to shed His precious blood? If not, it is because Satan, the god of this world, has deceived and deluded you, and has so blinded your eyes as to make you think that your sins are a mere trifle, whereas in God's sight they were so terrible that nothing but the death of His own Son could avail to put them away.

May your eyes be opened before it is too late.

A. H. B.

MUTUAL AGREEMENT.



“WELL, is it all settled?”

“No, indeed; I wish with all my heart that it were,” was the sad reply I got to my query. The speaker was a tall well-dressed young man, of some five and twenty years, who was coming out of the door of a large and crowded hall in the south of London, where I had been, one Monday evening some years ago, preaching the

Gospel, and speaking of the Lord's second coming. His grave intelligent face was marked by deep emotion, and denoted the soul-exercise he had passed through as he had been listening to the tale of grace which the Spirit of God had unfolded that night, followed by solemn appeals to the unconverted, in view of the possibility of the Lord's immediate return, and the certain eternal woe that must be the fate of the unprepared, and hence unsaved, soul.

Arrested by my question, he stood still, as if inviting further converse; so I went on, "But if you wish the matter settled, why is it not settled?"

"I really don't know; but I fancy I don't understand it."

"Tell me, now, do you take your place as a really lost sinner before God, and are you anxious to be saved?"

"Indeed I do. I am most anxious to be saved."

"Are you willing to receive Jesus as your Saviour, just where you stand?"

"I am most willing. I wish heartily I could say He were my Saviour. I am quite prepared to receive Him."

"Do you think He is willing to receive you?"

"Ah! that is just the question. If I were only sure of that, I should be at rest."

"Oh, my dear fellow, rest assured on that score; I can answer for Him as to that. Have you never read, 'This man receiveth sinners,' " was my rejoinder. More followed, but still he saw not the

truth; so, fancying that he might be in business, and that an illustration might help him, I said, "Are you in business?"

"Yes."

"What line?"

"Woollen goods—wholesale," he replied, rather astonished at this sudden turn from things eternal to earthly matters.

"Suppose I turned up at your warehouse to-morrow, would you be prepared to do business with me?"

"Certainly."

"Well, suppose that I come wanting so many bales of cloth of a certain quality and price, you would be prepared to sell them?"

"Most decidedly."

"And when I have agreed to take and pay for, and you to sell and deliver these goods, what would you say about the matter?"

"I should call it settled."

"And settled, what by?"

"Mutual agreement," was his reply.

"Exactly so! I agree to take, and you to deliver. Now, see: here you stand and tell me you are willing to receive the Lord Jesus as your Saviour, and God's Word says He is willing to receive you, a 'sinner.' What do you call that?"

"I should call that mutual agreement also," was his slow but firm reply.

"Yes; Christ is agreed to receive you, and you are agreed to receive Him. Are you not at one in

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this matter? Are you not both of the same mind?"

"Dear me, how simple it is! I see it all clearly now, thank God. I just receive Christ simply by faith, and He receives me?"

"That is just it, and exactly as it is put in John i. 11, 12—'He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as *received* him, to them gave he power to become the children of God, even to them that *believe on his name*, which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.' You believe on His name, don't you?"

"Yes, I most sincerely believe in the name of the Lord Jesus?"

"Then God says that is how you receive Him and receiving Jesus you become a child of God; for, again, it is written, 'Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus' (Gal. iii. 26). The moment you believe in Him really, you receive Him, and become a child of God."

The cloud disappeared from his **face**, the anxiety departed, his eye was lit up with a new-born joy; and, seizing and wringing my hand most warmly, he went on his way, saying, "Thank God. Thank you too. I see it all. It's so simple. It's mutual agreement. He receives me, I receive Him, and now I'm a child of God. Good-bye, and God bless you!"

Reader, can you say it is settled? If not, why not? It must be that you are not willing, because

Jesus is. He said to some who listened to Him once, "Ye search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me, and *ye will not come to me* that ye might have life" (John v. 39, 40).

W. T. P. W.

CONTRASTS.



N working out a design upon canvas the worker puts a dark background as a contrast to the pattern, but in such an idea there may be a variety of shades in working it out. So with most things that we, as men and women, have to do with day by day. We have our ups and downs, as people say, our joys and sorrows,—the very many and various vicissitudes as we pass along this earth. In the history of some the path has been sunny and smooth,—very little to trouble or depress; others have sorrow, sickness, losses, with scarcely a ray of brightness to cheer.

But I am thinking of God's divine contrasts, and more especially of the dark background—hell. My reader, is your journey down here to end in that place of darkness, misery, remorse, anguish, and despair? No hope,—not a ray! No variety in its pattern! how gladly would the occupants of that awful place welcome it. Not a drop of water

to cool the tongue there,—not a possibility of relief. You don't like to think about such a place, dear unsaved one, do you? You shudder, and try to banish the thought of it from your mind. So did I once. I tried not to think of death, but I could not get rid of the fact that it might overtake me at any time. I wished to forget the great white throne, but it haunted me sleeping and waking. I sought for more pleasure to drown my thoughts, but in vain. In the theatre or dancing saloon visions of hell would come before me. But thanks and praises be to the God of all grace, my very wretchedness brought me to the Saviour. I needed just such a Saviour as God's dear Son. He met me in my need. He not only saved me from hell, but He has brought me to God. No longer a child of the devil, but a child of God!

Now, dear reader, you had far better think of hell now, than to wake up in its fearful torment by-and-by. Put a child of the devil side by side with a child of God; notice the contrast,—there is no relationship between them. Whose are you? If the devil's, hell is your home; if God's, heaven is yours. I beseech you, do not delay thinking about it, for the next moment may settle your future destiny.

The Lord Jesus Christ is about to rise up from the right hand of the Majesty on high, to descend in the air to wake up His sleeping saints, and catch up all who believe in Him, to be for ever with Himself. Not one of those who have taken

shelter beneath His precious blood will be left behind; but not a child of the devil will be taken by mistake.

Now for another contrast: the broad way,—the narrow way (Matt. vii. 13, 14). Scripture says, one leads to destruction, the other to life,—no path between. Where are you going? "Bless the Lord," said a poor woman to me the other day, "that He showed me that my feet were in the broad road. I was going down a court when I saw in a window a paper called 'The Two Roads.' I just stopped a little to look at it, and then I passed on. But something kept saying, 'Where are you going? which road are you on?' I couldn't keep back my tears, so I went up to a quiet part of the court, and told God I was on the broad road. For three days I was very wretched, for I knew my sins must take me to hell. Then the Saviour told me, He had died for me. I was so glad to believe Him. He has put my feet in the narrow way, which will lead me to heaven bless His Name!"

Dear reader, be as simple as that dear woman. Believe what God says about you, take your true place before Him as one under the power of darkness. He will translate you into the kingdom of His dear Son, and you will be able to say what is true of all believers, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins" (Col. i. 13, 14).

E. E. S.

“THEY THOUGHT I HAD MURDHERED SOMEBODY.”



NEAR the ancient village of Ribchester, in a picturesque part of Lancashire, I met one summer morning an elderly man, who proved to be an Irish labourer seeking work, not a common “harvest-man,” but a fine intelligent-looking old man, who held himself erect, in spite of years and a bundle on his shoulder.

I handed him a leaflet as I passed, and he thanked me with no ordinary civility; and as soon as he had observed the heading he called me back.

Thinking he meant begging, and not wishing to be detained, I threw him a “copper.” But the old man said, “It was not that I wanted. This tract says, ‘We are all miserable sinners,’ and I wanted to tell you I was once a *miserable* sinner, but I am now a *happy* sinner.”

Having been more than once taken in by tramps I cautiously replied, “Indeed, how did that come about?”

“Through a little girl,” said the old man.

“Oh, she opened your eyes, did she?”

“No, sir, she was the instrument God used to open my poor blind eyes. I thought her a little angel, but she told me she was more like a devil.”

Having still some misgivings about the man, I simply asked him, "What part of Ireland do you come from?"

"From Westmeath," he replied; "but it is many years since I was there."

"Were you a Catholic?"

"No, my people were High Church, but that is pure Romanism. Are you a preacher of the Gospel, sir?"

"Not by profession; that is to say, I am not paid for it. The salvation of God is free."

"And I believe," said the Irishman, "that the Gospel ought to be free;" and on this he proceeded to enlarge with some degree of spiritual intelligence.

By this time we were seated at the roadside, and the old man related, with extreme rapidity and native eloquence, what, I could not question, was the true account of his conversion.

The effect of the little girl's words, under the hand of God, was to show him that he was a *lost sinner*. "Ah," said he, "how few of these religious folks have found out that they are *lost sinners*! I turned to them for instruction, for I was a poor scholar and could hardly read, but I found most of them to be nothing but *whitewashed hypocrites*! I was in such a state, man; I thought I was too bad to be saved, there could be no mercy for me. I went from one to another, but could get no one to understand me. They thought I had *murdthered* somebody, and so I had—it was the Son of God

I had murdered—and I came to the conclusion that God had made me to damn me.

“At last I bethought me of a Cornish gentleman who might help me. So I went to him. I was in such a state of wild despair that my eyes appeared to be almost starting out of my head. When he saw me he said, ‘There’s something wrong with you, William.’ ‘Yes, there *is* something wrong with me, sir,’ said I, and I told him my state of despair. But oh, he did nothing for me. He treated it laughingly and said, ‘Have you read the life of Mr So-and-so?’ ‘No, sir,’ said I, and he asked me if I had read the life of this one and that one, and said they would soon put me right.

“Well, I went away more confirmed than ever in the thought that there was no hope for me. God had made me to damn me.”

“How did you get peace at last?” I said.

“GOD REVEALED HIMSELF TO ME,” was his reply; and he continued, “I never knew anything more wonderful except the conversion of Paul. When I left the Cornish gentleman, I threw myself down in a field in sheer exhaustion and utter despair, and presently I fell into a sort of trance. In the far, far distance heaven seemed to open, and I could see *Him*, and could faintly catch the music of heaven. Then He said to me, ‘Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man *the things which God hath prepared* for them that love him’ (1 Cor. ii. 9,

and read the following verse). I saw He had *not* made me to damn me. I knew He loved me, and I was saved.

"I at once thought every one would feel as I felt; but oh, my good man, I could get nobody to understand me. So many are just nothing better than *whitewashed hypocrites*, who have never felt themselves lost.

"You can soon find out," said he, "where a person is who begins to talk religiously. Just ask them, 'How were you brought to see yourself a lost sinner?'"

My friend spoke so rapidly and yet so correctly that I said, "I wish I could speak as fast as you do."

"Ah," said he, "I have often had to thank God that I was no scholar, for I know if I had been I should just have been puffed up. It took me three hours the first time I tried to read the 3rd chapter of John, and I only got as far as the 16th verse and then fell asleep, with a mould candle in my hand, which burned down into the socket, caught the curtain, burned a hole in the pillow, and awoke me by singeing my hair. I had to pay my landlady a sovereign next morning before she would be satisfied."

I cannot recall everything the dear old man said; but it was a rare treat to listen to such words from one to whom God had revealed Himself, and the things He had prepared (on the ground of the precious blood of Christ) for a man

who knew he only deserved damnation at His hands.

He carried credentials in his coat pockets in the shape of a Testament and daily text-book, and though he could not read writing, he had learned to read the Bible so as to quote it with accuracy; and he certainly understood it better than many "divines."

It was a pleasure to tell him of "that blessed hope," and he seemed readily to grasp the truth of the Lord's coming for His saints.

I could not help thinking, as we parted, "None teacheth like Him," and it was most cheering to reflect that God has doubtless many a gem hidden now to all eyes but His, save as His Spirit causes them to shine in some humble sphere, as in the case of this itinerant labourer, who considered *fivepence* an hour a tempting sum, to be refused because it would throw him into the company of fellow-countrymen who would not put up with one that was not a co-religionist.

May all who read this story know the heart of God and the things "which he hath prepared for them that love him," through the precious blood of the Man *we* had murdered.

"The very spear that pierced His side
Drew forth the blood to save,"

and "God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified both Lord and Christ" (Acts ii. 36).

E. B. G.

"IS YOUR HOME IN HEAVEN?"



FRIEND of the writer's was visiting a dying woman who was happy in the Lord, and in the thought of being with Him for ever when the tenderest ties of earth would be snapped and she had fallen asleep. The Christian friend was an honoured preacher of the Gospel, and doubtless was speaking to the sick one of Christ in heaven, and it may be His coming again; of His having accomplished redemption, and gone to prepare a place for us in the Father's house. But whatever were the exact words he uttered, the impression conveyed to the mind of a little child who was present, was that the speaker came from heaven; and after a while she looked up in the gentleman's face and said, "Is your home in heaven?"

What a question? But surely if we heard one speaking of France, and of the wonderful things in it with which he seemed familiar, it would not be unreasonable to inquire if his home were in France. The truth is that the believer, though bodily on earth, is a "partaker of the heavenly calling," is "not in the flesh," though the flesh is in him, but "in the spirit; not in Adam," as he once was, but "in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." He is a heavenly person, for "as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly." By divine grace, and divine power, and according to divine righteousness,

he is in a new place before God. He is sitting in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. He is complete, or filled full in Him, so that he has no other position before God than in Christ Jesus. His place is inside the veil, and the favour of God rests upon him in the Beloved; in whom he has redemption through His blood, and is blessed with all spiritual blessings. Christ is his life, Christ is also the measure of his acceptance and sanctification and nearness to the Father, so that he is enjoined to have his affection or mind set on things above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

He is bound up with Christ Jesus in life, righteousness, and peace, as well as relationships and offices. He is born from above, and his inheritance, relationships, possessions, resources for strength, wisdom, and fruit-bearing are all there; so that "our citizenship is in heaven." And, in sweet accordance with these wonders of divine grace, after our Lord had atoned for our sins on the cross, and was raised again for our justification, He made known to His disciples that they were not only to enjoy the peace He had made, but they were also to know the new relationships they were now brought into as His "brethren" and as children of God—"My Father and your Father, my God and your God." Being this brought into these new and unchanging relationships, He added, "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." When our Lord made this gracious announcement He was risen from among the dead, but after that He ascended, and as

man went into the glory that He had from the Father before the world was. From thence He has sent down the Holy Ghost, not only to announce the glad tidings of divine grace, but to unite all believers on earth to Himself in heaven. Having led captivity captive, He also received gifts for men ; and all our endowments, ministries, gifts, and grace for service flow from Him *there*, so that our mission into this world day by day is from there. "To every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ."

Thus every believer has a mission ; he is sent into the world as God's child to do the will of Him that sent him. His life, resources, and inheritance being in heaven, and his new position there in Christ, he is sent from thence into this world day by day to do the will of our Lord. And surely there is all the difference between looking at ourselves as on earth and going to heaven (though great here in some respects), and the taking of our place and abiding in it continually as there now in Christ Jesus, and coming down here as sent out to do the will of another. We are then not of the world. "If ye were of the world," said our Lord, "the world would love his own ; but because ye are not of the world, but *I have chosen you out of the world*, therefore the world hateth you" (John xv. 19 xx. 19-21).

We can then understand what another meant when he said, "During my pilgrimage I have met with a great many who were going to heaven, but

I have met with very few who have come from heaven." Oh, that we might have our minds on things above, and not on things on the earth, for we have died, and our life is hid with Christ in God! When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory. Precious prospect! But we are persuaded that the point of such moment for the present time is, whether heaven is our home, whether the coming of the Lord Himself for us, the Father's home, the reign with Christ, and sharing glory with Him outweigh with us the value of all the *best* things of this earth; then surely our minds will be set on things above and not on things on the earth. What we have to fear is, lest, like the two tribes and a half, we should be showing interest in the land of promise, and help others to enter into the inheritance, while like them we deliberately choose to settle down on this side of Jordan. May God awaken our consciences as to this; so that heavenly ways and heavenly-mindedness may manifest, without our speaking of it, that we are "partakers of the heavenly calling," and enjoy the unspeakably precious truth that "our citizenship is in heaven," and that we are therefore looking for the Saviour to take us bodily there in a changed body of glory like His own (Phil. iii. 20, 21).

H. H. S.

CHRIST'S WORK AND ITS FRUITS.



ESUS left the throne on high,
Came to suffer here and die—
Came to where in death we lay,
Thus our fearful debt to pay;
Now that blessed work is done.
God hath glorified His Son.

Now the Father's boundless love
Flows unhindered from above—
Flows, in streams of richest grace,
Forth to earth's most distant place,
Bringing life and peace to all
Who upon the Saviour call.

Now the door stands open wide,
Christ is forming here His bride;
One by one we hear His voice,
And in His deep love rejoice;
One by one we take our place
In the circle of His grace.

Soon the Master will arise,
And take hence his blood-bought prize;
Such as now on Him believe
Shall His glory then receive;
Such as now refuse His call,
On their head must judgment fall.

G. W. F.

THE CONVERTED CONVICT.



“**T**HE grace of God that bringeth salvation to all men hath appeared” (Titus ii. 11, see margin). What wondrous words! GRACE . . . TO ALL MEN. And what is *grace* but the *undeserved kindness*, or *unmerited favour* of God. And if you, beloved reader, desire salvation, it can be yours *only* on these conditions, “that in the ages to come he (God) might show the EXCEEDING RICHES OF HIS GRACE, in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by GRACE are ye saved through faith; and not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: NOT OF WORKS, lest any man should boast” (Eph. ii. 7-9). Ah! how humbling to the pride of man to be told that heaven can only be entered on the ground of God’s free, sovereign, undeserved, and unmerited favour and kindness! What! are there none worthy in themselves? No, for there is “none righteous, no, not one” (Rom. iii. 10). But are there any *too unworthy*? No, thank God, for “the grace of God bringeth salvation to ALL MEN.”

In the spring of 1884, during a visit to the colony of Tasmania, for the purpose of preaching the glad tidings of salvation, the writer came across an instance that might well be called a trophy of

divine grace, in the person of one whose voice will not be silent whilst

“Rich, eternal bursts of praise
Shall fill yon courts through endless days.”

C. B. was an old man of over eighty years of age. As a young man he had been “sent out” to the Colonies with a prohibition to return; in other words, he was *a convict*. His early life had been dark indeed, as he himself said with a heart melted at the thought of God’s goodness to him. “*I’ve seen the rope twice, sir; you can understand that I’ve been a bad ’un.*”

It was an unspeakable privilege just to go and sit with him, and listen to him pouring out his heart in thanksgiving, and to hear his simple testimony to the love of God, and the value of the precious blood of Christ. He seemed so at home with his Saviour, and nothing filled him with greater delight than the thought that he must soon be *with Him*, and then he would *see Him* face to face. And truly it is in proportion as we realise the enormity of our sins, and the vastness of divine forgiveness, that we shall appreciate the immensity of divine grace.

Never shall I forget the day of our departure from the island. A company of Christians had gathered on the wharf to bid farewell, possibly for ever, to two who had spent a few weeks in their midst. The dear old man hobbled down to the wharf, and just as I was about to step on to the

steamer he drew me back to say "good-bye." "We shall never meet in this world again," said he, "I am an old man, and you are going back to England; but there is one thing I wish to say to you before you leave," and then, his eyes filled with tears, his lips trembling with emotion, and with a depth of feeling I shall ever remember, he slowly repeated the lines—

"Law and terror do but harden
All the while they work alone,
But a sense of blood-bought pardon
Will dissolve a heart of stone."

I need hardly say what burning power these words possessed coming from the lips of such a man. "Law and terror" he tasted something, if not much of. He had known what it was to stand and tremble beneath the deserved and threatened terror of the law; but all this, as he said, had merely hardened his heart. Oh! how different the effect of grace! this had subdued his stubborn will, and broken his hard heart to pieces.

Beloved reader, have you ever felt *your* need of this self-same grace? Think not that because he was a convict, and was guiltier in the sight of men than you, that therefore you are less guilty in the sight of a holy God than he was, or that you stand less in need than he did of God's free and sovereign grace. By no means; for in His sight "all have sinned" (Rom. iii. 22), and sin cannot abide in His holy presence.

You need not be a murderer, a thief, or such like, in order to be unfit for heaven—all you need is to be a sinner. The smallest sin just as much as the greatest crime would shut you out from heaven for eternity; and if shut out from heaven, you must be shut up in hell for ever. Let not Satan, then, make you believe that your sins are not great or many enough to keep you out of heaven—"there shall in no wise enter into it ANYTHING that defileth" (Rev. xxi. 27).

But on the other hand let him not make you think that they are *too* great or *too* many to be forgiven.

"The grace of God bringeth salvation to ALL MEN,"—then, however bad you may feel yourself to be, salvation is possible for you.

"The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from ALL sin" (1 John i. 7),—then, however great a sinner you may be, cleansing and forgiveness are possible for you. Though deserving of condemnation, God offers you a free pardon through Jesus Christ; though worthy of nothing but hell, God invites you to share the eternal heaven of His presence.

Then delay no longer, but yield yourself this very hour, "a captive in the chains of love!"

A. H. B.

PHILIP AND THE EUNUCH.

(Read Acts viii. 26-40.)



THESE verses are exceedingly interesting, as showing the way the Lord watches what goes on on earth. Yes, the eyes of the Lord traverse this scene, to see if there is a heart seeking the truth, seeking for Christ. Now who but God would have called away Philip at that moment? He had gone down to Samaria when persecution arose against the Church at Jerusalem, after the death of Stephen. He had gone down filled with the Holy Ghost, and had preached Christ to the Samaritans. It was not the first time they had heard of Jesus. A woman who had been a sad sinner had gone into the middle of the city and preached Jesus, and many went out of the city and came unto Him, and "many more believed because of his own word" (John iv. 41). But that did not satisfy God's heart, so He sent His messenger, after the death and resurrection of His Son, after the work of the cross was over, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, according to Luke xxiv. 47, "That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." Yes, beginning at the guiltiest spot of all, the spot stained with Christ's blood, the Gospel went to Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the earth.

The devil raised a fearful persecution. He had thought to stamp the whole thing out, poor blind being that he is. He only sent the Gospel faster and farther. Opposition always sends the truth farther. Philip goes down to Samaria, and preaches Christ; so that not merely a few come out of the city to the Lord, as in John iv., but the Holy Ghost now enters into the very citadel of the enemy, into the very centre of the town, and "the people *with one accord* gave heed unto those things which Philip spoke," and "there was great joy in that city." Christ, the living, risen, victorious Saviour, was proclaimed, and many believed on His name, and there is always great joy where Christ gets in; and if you, my reader, have not great joy, the reason is not far to seek. If you have Christ, you will have great joy. It is impossible to have Christ in your heart without there being great joy. You say, "I am a believer, but I have not much joy." I will tell you the reason, you have so much of the world in your heart, you cannot enjoy Christ. You are playing a very foolish game. When Christ is known there is great joy, and a great change in the life, as the soul gets under the influence of what the late Dr Chalmers called "the expulsive power of a new affection."

From a person who is full of Christ the world drops off like autumn leaves. You have a most miserable existence if you are not in the enjoyment of Christ. Many a believer has too much of Christ to enjoy the world, and a great deal too much of

the world to enjoy Christ. Am I addressing one whose history is this? I go back then to the beginning of things. "There was great joy." Oh, you say, it was perhaps excitement. Not so. It is the Holy Ghost who says, "There was great joy in that city." It had divine origin.

Now Philip was having a wonderful time in Samaria, a wonderful work was going on, and he did not know how nearly Satan had got the thing spoilt by means of Simon. If God makes one convert, Satan will make another straight off. An unreal one. It is no use the devil denying the work of Christ and the person of Christ. He says, "I will bring in corruption. I will bring in a false confessor of Christ, and meet it that way." If I met with a false bank note I should not infer there were no real ones, but that there are rogues in the world. A false bank note proves to me there are thousands of good ones. Are you a counterfeit confessor of Christ? See before God where you are at this moment. Simon was detected, and so will you be. Philip was a true man, hearty and real, and he goes on with his work not discouraged. He had earned for himself this lovely title, "the Evangelist," the man whose heart is crammed full of the Gospel, and who will carry the Gospel wherever he goes. Well, when he was full of the work the angel of the Lord said to him, "Arise, go toward the south, unto the way that goes down from Jerusalem, unto Gaza, which is desert." Philip might say, "What shall I do in the desert? What

can an evangelist do in the desert?" Whatever the inquiry of his mind, he arose and went. A very blessed lesson; there was implicit and unhesitating obedience on the part of this servant.

The Spirit of God now brings before us a man God has marked out for blessing. "And, behold, a man of Ethiopia," a man in whose position hundreds and thousands would be glad to stand. He was of "great authority" under the queen. I never knew a man of the world who did not like authority, who would not rather be master than man. This man was Chancellor of Ethiopia's Exchequer. He had "come to Jerusalem for to worship." His heart longed for that spot where the Lord had made Himself known. He was in thorough earnest. The hope of his heart was to get to the truth of God. He was a most earnest man. I find him "returning." Happy? Certainly not. Rejoicing? Distinctly not. Understanding the truth? Manifestly not. Earnest, inquiring, but I believe, disappointed too. He had gone where he believed he would be sure to get the truth, and had come away disappointed. Have you not sometimes gone hither and thither where you thought you would get the truth and you have been disappointed, but you had your eye on earth instead of an object in heaven. *The Holy Ghost turns your eye from earth to heaven.* The time the eunuch goes up we are not told. Very likely one of the three annual feasts of the Jews. The beauty of the temple, the magnificence of the temple service, had done nothing for his soul. Neither, my

friend, can any pompous ritual or public religious ceremonial ever meet the need of your soul. This inquirer is *alone*, alone in the desert. Oh, it is a great thing for a man to be alone. But he has got hold of the Word of God, and returning, he read Esaias the Prophet. What were you reading on your last journey? A newspaper? a novel? the last book of history or science? The eunuch had his eye on the Word of God, and God had His eye on the eunuch. It is a wonderful moment in your history when you find out that the eye of God is upon you.

The Spirit now says to Philip, "Go near," and a really anxious inquirer and the heart of the evangelist are brought together. Have you needs in your soul you do not know how to meet, my friend? What a wonderful thing God's eye is upon you. He has the very same words for you that the eunuch got hold of as he went down into the desert. You have exactly the same scripture and the same question, "Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?"

Well, he reads on his journey, and the Spirit said to Philip, "Go near and join thyself to this chariot; and Philip ran thither." Ah! he is all earnest too. There are souls thirsting for Christ, and we Christians often hold our peace because we "have not been introduced." Philip needed no introduction to this stranger. It is the state of our souls we have to look at as Christians. So intent was the eunuch on what he was doing, he had no thought of any

person within earshot, and as Philip ran alongside he heard him read Esaias the Prophet. "Understandest thou what thou readest?" was his introduction. Do you, my reader, understand Isa. liii. and its wonderful meaning, the blessed story of the Saviour? Listen, and may God give you to understand. The eunuch did not, for he said, "How can I, except some man guide me?" He feels his ignorance, his insufficiency, while God saw the longings, the deep-toned earnestness of his soul, and longed to put him in possession of that which would satisfy his unfilled heart. The traveller with eagerness "desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him." Would you like me to come and sit by your side, and talk to you plainly and quietly? That shows where you are. Look at this man. What did he know about Philip? Some person interested in me, who perhaps can tell me what I want to know, was his thought, and "he desired Philip to come up and sit with him." He is the very expression of a downright earnest soul, that wants the truth at all costs. He does not mind being spoken to personally about his soul. Do you want the truth at all costs, no matter what the consequences may be?

The place of the scripture which he read was this—"He was led as a sheep to the slaughter, and like a lamb dumb before her shearers, so opened he not his mouth." He reads of One who, in presence of opposition, and scorn, and contumely, and shame, is patient, is silent, is uncomplaining, uncomplaining. He came down low in grace. "He was taken away

by distress and judgment, and who shall declare his generation, for his life is taken from the earth ? ”

I can well understand this man's perplexity and his desire to understand the scripture. A soul in downright earnest is simple and transparent as light, and he says, “I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man ?” That soul is ready for blessing, “and Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached to him Jesus.” What more blessed scripture could he possibly begin at than this 53rd chapter of Isaiah,—a scripture that tells us of the Saviour's death, the Saviour's sorrow and shame, and His suffering for us.

Let me ask you to ponder that scripture. Philip speaks to him of Jesus. Isaiah liii. is the Spirit of God, long before the birth or the death of Jesus, explaining, in a wonderful way, what He passed through for sinners. It was this blessed scripture that engaged the eunuch's eager attention at that moment, and he was reading aloud those verses when the servant of the Lord drew near. Out of this dry, barren earth, subject to Satan's power, has come One unlike to any other, the blessed, holy, spotless Jesus. Oh ! what a solemn thing to see no beauty in Him. “Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and we hid as it were our faces from him. He was despised, and we esteemed him not.” Every one of us has to make

the same confession. It is the Spirit of God telling us the truth about Christ and about ourselves. "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows." Oh! what sorrows, what a Saviour, what grace and love! "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him and with his stripes we are healed." When the soul gets healed by that One, it sees what a Saviour He is.

Thus Philip tells the eunuch of *Jesus*. Every believer has part in this truth, "He, his own self, bore our sins, in his own body, on the tree" (1 Peter ii. 24). He has sustained the judgment of God for sins. He has won the victory; we share all the spoils. Go and be a witness for Him. Your life will tell, and actions speak louder than words. I heard lately of the departure of a beloved brother, long on a bed of sickness, with intolerable bodily suffering and agony. In the midst of it all his soul was not only peaceful, but joyous, in the thought of seeing the Lord, and he was pouring forth praise and thanksgivings to God. What did it mean? It was the power of Christ, the grace of Christ in the poor earthen vessel. He was leaning on Christ.

Not only does the Gospel bring us forgiveness of sins and everlasting life, but it gives us the present privilege of being witnesses for Christ in a scene where Christ is not. We are not alone to enjoy the Gospel, but to stand for it.

We are too apt to forget that the earth has been

stained with the blood of Christ, that He has been murdered and rejected here. The world will refuse, and the world will oppose to the end. You cannot have the world and Christ: that is very plain. It is well to have this distinct and clear.

“He shall divide the spoil with the strong.” “He was numbered with the transgressors.” The wickedness of man treats Christ as if He had been a transgressor. He is crucified between two malefactors. One of these men comes boldly out as a witness of the perfection of Christ saying—“This man hath done nothing amiss.”

“He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.” He bare the sins of that poor man expiring by His side, and enabled him to bear that beautiful testimony, vindicating Him. When every one was against Him, this man by faith discerns the glory of His Person, and “Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom!” is his prayer. He had the sense that He was coming in His kingdom.

“He bore the sins of many.” Cannot you find your place among the “many”? The eunuch did. “They came to a certain water, and the eunuch said, See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized? And he commanded the chariot to stand still, and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him.” He wanted to put on Christ; in that sense to identify himself with Christ. I want to be identified with Him. He puts on Christ, accepts death with Christ;

he comes up out of the water, and now Philip is taken away. "The Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip." Everything is gone as to earth. The man is left alone in the desert with the Saviour he had found, and he goes on his way rejoicing. What follows? His soul has heard of Jesus; he knows Jesus. He goes on his way rejoicing; he confesses Christ, the Saviour he has found. Will you go on your way rejoicing? If not, I say it is because you have not believed on His name; your heart has not found Him where He is.

The Lord help you to go on your way rejoicing.

W. T. P. W.



"O GOD! THAT I MIGHT KNOW MY SINS FORGIVEN."



SOME time ago there lived in the north of Ireland, in the town of B——, a servant of the Lord well known to the writer. While living there, he was visited by a young friend of his who was gay and light-hearted, and, like many others—or as the reader of these lines may be—thoughtless and careless about her precious soul. But the Lord's eye was upon her in all her thoughtlessness and carelessness, as it is upon you, my reader. His thought was to bless her before she returned home. This servant of the Lord and

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his wife, being deeply interested in her, made her the subject of earnest prayer, and, as she had only a few days to stop, they became intensely earnest that she might be converted before she returned home again. God graciously answered their prayers.

One evening they persuaded her to go with them to a Gospel meeting, at which she was awakened to a real sense of her position as a sinner before God. She restrained her feelings, however, until she got home, and said nothing to any one about it. She retired to bed, but could not sleep, for God was working with her. She became terribly alarmed, thinking that, if she died before morning, she would be eternally lost. Filled with despair, she arose quickly and dressed herself. All the other members of the house had retired to rest, but there was no rest for Mary Anne. She fell down on her knees and cried to the Lord, her only cry being, “O God! that I might know my sins forgiven.” Her cries awoke this servant of the Lord and his wife. He, wondering if it could be the one in whom they had taken such interest, went downstairs, and, to his great joy, found the awakened girl in the terrible agony of soul already described, still crying, “O God! that I might know my sins forgiven.” He got down beside her, and opened his Bible at the well-known 38th and 39th verses of Acts xiii., and kept whispering into her ear, “‘Be it known unto you, therefore,’ Mary Anne” (for so he put it, leaving out “men and brethren”), “‘that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of

sins, and by him all that believe are justified from all things.'” For hours this went on, until at length light burst in upon her soul, and she arose and exclaimed, “I do believe that Jesus died for me.” Peace filled her soul. Peace with God was now her portion through believing God’s testimony about the work of the Lord Jesus.

How simple God has made it, when He declares, “To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith—(mark it well, my reader, not his works)—is counted for righteousness” (Rom iv. 5). But perhaps you will say, “I always believed—I have been taught to believe from childhood—and yet I cannot say my sins are forgiven.” I have often met people in this state. Do you believe God, my reader? You say you believe on the Lord Jesus; but do you not see that God has connected forgiveness with believing? “Whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins” (Acts x. 43). Let me ask you, dear reader, in all affection, do you know your sins forgiven? Are you resting your soul on the authority of God’s Word, which assures you they are, if you simply believe? or are you, like the one already described, gay and light-hearted, careless and unconcerned? If so, I pray God that your eyes may be opened, as hers were, to see your true state as a sinner in His presence, both by nature and practice, and that you are a “child of wrath.”

Do you know and own this, my reader? Do you feel the burden of your sins? If so, then

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listen to what God says about the sins of all those who believe. “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree; . . . by whose stripes ye were healed” (1 Peter ii. 24). And again, “Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. iv. 25, v. 1). God wants you to see that in the death of Christ all His glory has been made good, and your sins fully and for ever answered for. So much so, that Christ has been “raised from the dead by the glory of the Father” (Rom. vi. 4), and is now in the glory on the ground of the perfection of the work which He accomplished in the putting away of sin. God has come out in the fulness of His grace beseeching you to be reconciled to Him. The moment you believe that Christ on the cross bore all your sins, and is now in heaven without one of them, having put them all away, that moment you will have, like Mary Anne, the forgiveness of your sins, and “peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

P. W.

It is important to perceive that peace with God depends on what is done *for* us, not *in* us. It is Christ's work *for* us, not the Spirit's work *in* us, that blots out our sins, and meets all the righteous claims of God against us.

W. T. P. W.

"IF ANY MAN."



ANY man! How blessed to find that this term alone expresses the breadth of the invitations of the Gospel of God. We have it from the lips of the Son of God Himself. Jesus stood and cried, saying, "*If any man thirst*, let him come unto me, and drink" (John vii. 37).

Any man! Dear reader, whoever you are, that means *you*. Jew or Gentile, barbarian, Scythian, bond or free, European, Asiatic, African, American, Australasian, Englishman, Scotchman, Irishman, Frenchman, German, or any other man. King or peasant, noble or servant, high-born or low-born, all are included. Clergyman or layman, gentleman or boor, clever man or illiterate, rich man or poor, business man or man of leisure, old man or young, good, bad, or indifferent. God says *any*, and means what He says. "*If any man.*" Not if some man, or some particular kind of man, but *any*; whosoever, wheresoever, or whatsoever you may be.

Many are in such trouble to know whether the glad tidings are for them. For you! Yes, of course they are. Does *any* leave you out? "But I'm not worthy," said one. Worthy! No, indeed you are not, and never will be. Did Jesus say, *If any worthy man thirst*? Nay, if *any man*; any

thirsty sinner anywhere. Are you thirsty? Do you know what soul-thirst is? Whatever kind of man you are, we do not for a moment expect that you will come unless you are thirsty. But if you are thirsty, the wonder is that you can stay away. Of course, as long as you are thirsting for the world, its wealth, its vanities, its pleasures, or any other of the devil's baits, your ear will be deaf to the precious and pressing invitations of Jesus. But deeply as you may drink of the world's streams, it will only be to thirst again. But if any reader of these lines thirsts for something better, respond at once to His call, and you shall be surely satisfied. “If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.” Come, oh come to Jesus! come to Jesus just now! Then shall you drink of water that shall satisfy,—*living water*. Much more is added in the following verses, but we do not go into them here. But come now to the Blessed One who so freely invites you! Believe on Him, and you shall never, never thirst (John vi. 35).

“Jesus the water of life *will* give,
 Freely, freely, freely.
 Jesus the water of life will give,
 Freely to those who trust Him.”

“*I will give,*” saith the Lord, in Rev. xxi. 6, “unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.” Again, “whosoever will, let him *take* the water of life freely” (Rev. xxii. 17). But oh, poor sinner, if you still delay, take care

that you are not cut off in your sins to find yourself with the rich man in hell, where not one drop of water could be obtained to quench his endless thirst (Luke xvi. 19).

But there is more still in the blessed Gospel of God. In John x., Jesus said, "I am the door: by me *if any man enter in*, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." It is blessed to come to Jesus and have the thirst of our souls quenched; but here these are additional blessings. He presents Himself as the door,—an open door, wide open,—wide as His own heart of love can throw it. No gate ajar, to be pushed open by the anxious soul; but ever kept open wide, till the last moment of the day of grace shall have come, and then for ever closed on all poor Christless professors (Matt. xxv. 1–13).

And note again the breadth of the invitation, "By me *if any man enter in*." How blessedly simple the Gospel is! By *Me!* Christ, Christ only. Not by works and Christ, or religion and Christ; or Christ and works, or Christ and religion; but by Christ, and *Christ alone*. "If any man enter in." "Any man" again. But you must *enter in*. Oh, enter, enter now: "To-morrow may be too late." Too late! *too late!* How sad the sound for anxious human ears! Only quite recently a young fisherman, clad with high leather boots, stepped on the side of his boat, when his foot slipped, and—*he was gone*. In a moment he passed from time into eternity. He meant to step into the boat, but

he stepped into the sea, and was *never seen again*. He *only* slipped, and that slip cost him his life, and, if not prepared (the Lord knoweth), his never-dying soul! Oh, sinner, with earnest desire for your eternal welfare, we beseech you, be warned! Have *you* entered? What! you cannot say "yes"? Do you say, "I hope so"? That's no good whatever, not a bit. If you are not beyond that, you are outside. You must enter. *Come in*, right inside, *now*, at once and for ever! Will you come? Do you still linger at the door? Take care! The open door may be closed this moment. And, alas! how fearful the doom of all who are shut outside! Still the loving Saviour pleads with you. Oh, enter while you may! "By me if any man enter in, he shall be saved." Think of it. *Saved! shall be saved!* Saved *from* Satan, sin, death, judgment, hell; and saved *for* Christ, righteousness, life, glory, heaven! Which is it to be, *salvation* or *damnation*? Christ or hell? God's full, free, present, great eternal salvation; or the great gulf fixed, the blackness of darkness, weeping, wailing, the never-dying worm, and the fire that never shall be quenched? One or the other is the sure portion of all.

Moreover, the Lord added, "And shall go in and out, and find pasture." He delights to heap up the blessing. To go in and out, is to enjoy perfect liberty; and pasture sets forth the rich food which is the portion of the saved. Eternal salvation, perfect liberty, and ever-satisfying food, are the three-fold blessed portions of *any man* who enters in. And why not yours?

But some may say, "How about our works? Can we be saved by simply coming to Jesus without doing anything?" Ah, dear friend, time enough to talk about doing when you have come. As long as you are on the ground of doing anything first, you are busy enough outside the door, and there you will remain for ever if you fail to enter in. You must come inside first, and then begin to do. We have not to do or to serve to *be* saved; but, being saved, service then begins. We read of sinners who turned to God *from* idols to serve, &c. Mark the order. We come to God *through* Christ. What is that but entering the door? And we, so to speak, leave the idols *outside*, and begin to serve *inside*.

And what is true service? This is beautifully answered in the words of the Lord: "*If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be*" (John xii. 26). Many fail to understand the force of this passage, and are busy enough seeking to serve, but forget that the path of true service is following Christ where He leads, tracing His steps, having Him as our example, walking as He walked. There is often a great deal of activity, which is simply the fruit of the restlessness of the flesh, the energy of mere nature and legality of spirit. Many, we fear, serve, more or less, as though their final arrival in glory partly depended upon it. Such service is not acceptable to Him. Christ saves, and sets the soul at perfect liberty first, and then constrains by His

love. Having become His freedmen, His love constrains us to be His willing bondsmen. And the great qualification of a true servant is, to do as his Master bids him. And His word to His servant in this passage is, "*If any man serve me, let him follow me.*" Following Him, He will use us for His own glory in His own way.

And to encourage our hearts, He adds, "*and where I am, there shall also my servant be.*" Where *I am*! This is His new position, His place in the Father's house, having accomplished redemption. And it is there that every one of His servants shall be in the day nigh at hand. He is coming for His own. Nothing short of having them with Him there will satisfy His heart of love. Blessed provision! May every reader of these lines who has drunk of the water of life, and has entered in by the open door, be found following His blessed steps, waiting His glory to share!

Lastly, there is one more passage to which we would call the attention of our readers,—one of most solemn import: "*If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha*" (1 Cor. xvi. 22),—that is, "accursed at the coming of the Lord." Oh, sinner, think of this awful threat, and beware lest He come and find you outside the door in your sins, and the curse of God fall upon you! Already that curse has fallen upon the Christ of God on Calvary, for "cursed is every one that hangeth upon a tree." Any man who loves Him who died, the Saviour now in

glory, shall never come under the curse of God. But if any man love Him not, oh, awful doom "let him be," says the apostle by the Holy Ghost, "Anathema Maran-atha." Sinner, this is no idle threat. You can ill afford to despise or neglect it. God *will* avenge Himself on all who make light of His Son. "Vengeance is mine, I will repay," saith the Lord. At any moment the Lord Himself may come. Do *you* love Him? Is He precious to you? Do you know the love of Christ in your own soul? It is this that begets love. "We love him, because he first loved us" (1 John iv. 19). And any man who loves Him, can invite His return, and rejoice in hope of seeing His face, and sharing the coming glories.

But if any man love Him not. Mark again, "*any man.*" Are you one *who loves Him not?* You may profess to serve Him; you may call yourself a Christian; you may be an estimable person in the eyes of all around; you may be distinguished for your religious observances; but if any man *love Him not.* Do you *love Him, Christ?* Is He the delight of your heart? You cannot honestly say so? Then, sinner, once again and finally, we warn you, in love to your precious soul (knowing that it is not yet too late, but that *another moment* and it may be), if He came as you read these words, "Anathema Maran-atha" would be your sure and irrevocable doom.

E. H. C.

"NOW."

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"NOW."



OW much is comprehended in this little word of three letters—"Now"! The minutes pass by us rapidly—never to be recalled. The atom of time represented by that word may seal the destiny of your soul, reader, for ever. "Now is the accepted time." A moment longer and the turning-point of your soul's history has been reached, and you may have lost it for good and for eternity. Why not gain it for good *"now"*?

How many trifle with the word, with the moment, and the opportunity never returns. I have met such persons, who have calmly told me that they had resisted the striving of the Spirit of God, and all was over for them. The soul had entered upon a sleep-like stupor, and they seemed careless as to the end which they themselves foretold. Some one has said that "there is hope for every sinner out of hell; but fear for every saint out of heaven." I believe the statement is true.

"*Now* once in the end of the world has he (Christ) appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (Heb. ix. 26). Here then is God's "*now*." The world's history was closed; sinners—as all admit and cannot but admit that they are—are not only such, but sinners who have been tested. A race which has been tried—"weighed in

the balances and found wanting." Sinners too, for whom Christ died—whose extremity has been God's opportunity to reveal Himself as a Saviour-God, and as such He is perhaps unknown to you. Is it so? Has all been expended that He could devise, and your heart is not yet won to Him? Your conscience not yet cleansed of sin?

He proclaims to you, sinner, that "all things are *now* ready." "Come." Jesus has been here; He has trodden this world for thirty-three years; He has been refused here by sinners; He has been crucified, dead, buried, raised again the third day, according to the Scriptures. He has ascended to heaven, has been greeted in that glory, and crowned with glory and honour. He has received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost. He has shed forth the Spirit, and His voice proclaims from heaven, "Come, for all things are *now* ready."

We are told, when royal guests are invited to a wedding in the Eastern lands, that with the invitation is sent the garment in which to appear. This garment cannot be purchased; it is furnished from and by the king. It hangs ready in the palace, and could not be procured. It accompanies the royal command. Into the hands of him who receives the invitation is placed, at the same moment, the robe in which to appear; while his ears hear the king's command—"Come!" This word *includes* the fitness to appear before God of him whose ears are open to hear.

Again we read: "Behold *now* is the accepted

time; behold *now* is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 1). Man would say, To-morrow I will come. Can he count on to-morrow? "Go to *now*, ye that say, To-day or to-morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain; whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow" (James iv. 13). "To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts" (Heb. iii. 7, 8).

Job was a perfect and an upright man, one that feared God and eschewed evil. Yet his conscience had never awaked under the sense of the presence of the living God. Trials came; fortune fled in a moment. Family were taken away. Health broke down. Friends accused him of living a secret sinner, but God loved him and desired to bless him fully. Therefore he must be taught to measure himself in the presence of God. The candle of God must shine into the secret chambers of his heart, that he might be enabled to say, "In thy light I see light," yet also that he might see the dark hidden chambers of his soul. At the end he says—for God's controversy is over then—"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" (Job xiii. 6). Then all is ended; Job knows himself because he knows God, as a convicted sinner alone can know Him, but he *does* know God, and as a Saviour. Then we read, "and the Lord accepted Job"—just as he was. Well, "*now* once in the end of the world hath he

appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself?" and that work is done for faith as for God too. And "all things are *now* ready." "Come." And again, "*now* is the accepted time, behold *now* is the day of salvation."

Reader, have you ever said to God—"Now mine eye seeth thee, wherefore I abhor myself"? This is your fitness, and this alone your title—to confess you have none!

But there is another side to this. The solemn cry of a heart—the vessel too of the Spirit of God for a moment, who sees with the vision of the Almighty the beauty and order and fruitfulness of God's elect—who describes them with language of His Spirit, hardly surpassed in Scripture. The apostate Balaam can say to his own eternal ruin, "I shall see him, but *not now*; I shall behold him, but *not nigh*" (Num. xxiv.), and that too in the day anticipated, yet revealed by the Spirit of God—that awful crisis, soon coming on the world—"Behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him; and they also which pierced him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him" (Rev. i. 7, 8). Can you say to this, "Even so, amen. Come, Lord Jesus"? (Rev. xxii. 21.) Or will it be for you as for Balaam, a coming that will be the death-knell of hope, when you will see Him there, but *not nigh*? "*Now* we see through a glass darkly, but *then* face to face; *now* we know in part, but *then* shall we know even as we are known" (1 Cor. xiii.).

F. C. P.

"WE PERSUADE MEN."

"For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men ; but we are made manifest unto God. . . . For the love of Christ constraineth us ; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead ; and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again. . . . Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us ; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For 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. 10-21.



DISTINGUISHED theologian is reported to have once asked a noted stage actor, "How is it, when you act, you can move your audience, almost at your will, either to laughter or tears, whereas when I preach they are unmoved ?" To this, quoth he, "My lord, the answer is easily given. I **PLAY FICTION** as though it were **FACT**, whereas you **PREACH FACT** as though it were **FICTION**." Pointed, though doubtless unpalatable words which all who preach or write to souls may well give heed to. Paul needed them not. **FACTS** pressed heavily on his spirit, and made him most urgent in dealing with precious souls. If you doubt it, my reader, afresh peruse the solemn, most solemn, yet blessed verses at the head of this paper, and then ask yourself, Do I believe this fervent ambassador ?

I shall briefly draw your attention to two facts in this passage which were the mighty springs in the apostle's soul of earnest and affectionate appeal to men. They were—1, "*The terror of the Lord*" (v. 11); 2, "*The love of Christ*" (v. 14).

The verses I have quoted give a wonderful picture of the whole family of man. Christ is the central object. His wondrous love to ruined man evinced in His death is the theme. His love, and His atoning work for sinners, blessed, and reconciled to God by His death, are in bright relief in the forefront of the picture, if I may so say, while the background (for every picture has its background) is the judgment-seat of Christ, with "the terror of the Lord" for all those who know not His love.

Let us look at the picture a little more closely, and, first, we will examine the background.

1.—"THE TERROR OF THE LORD."

Remember this is a fact, not a myth. "*Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.*" What will produce this "terror"? "We must ALL appear (be manifested) before the judgment-seat of Christ." Does Paul fear it for himself? Certainly not. He says, "*We ARE made manifest, unto God,*" *i.e.*, even now. He has had all out now with God, sins, sin, guilt, ruin, everything he has had fully exposed to God's eye, and he knows how all has been fully met, by that death of which he speaks in a moment. He does not wait for the

judgment-seat to detect anything ; grace has led him into God's presence in the full acknowledgment and confession of all even now, and *that all* has been fully met by Christ's death. He is very clear on this. “ *We ARE made manifest unto God.*” Reader, are you ? But what a terrible moment will that be for the sin-screening, guilt-hiding, iniquity-covering, transgression-veiling, Gospel-neglecting sinner, when, compelled to stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, ALL will be exposed, manifested, and brought to light. “ The things done in the body ” are in view. Of things “ good ” there are none ; of “ bad,” abundance. The Christless soul, having “ done evil ” only, comes forth “ unto the resurrection of damnation ” (John v. 29). What can be the only issue ? The lake of fire. “ Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire ” (Rev. xx. 15).

Unsaved reader, do you believe this ? God *says* it. Paul *knew* it. I believe it. The devil believes it. And you doubt it. You—who are most concerned in the matter ! Can it be ? What madness ! what utter folly ! Be persuaded. “ Knowing the terror of the Lord, we *persuade* men.” Yes, beloved reader, I would persuade you to flee from the wrath to come. It is a fact. It is no use your denying it. God has said, “ Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power ” (2 Thess. i. 9). Paul was so impressed with the terror which that moment must bring to unsaved

souls that his whole heart longed for their salvation, hence his words, "we persuade men." The last account the Holy Ghost gives of his preaching is in Acts xxviii., and then he spent "from morning till evening" "*persuading* them concerning Jesus." It is a mighty, solemn fact, there is judgment coming most surely. Sinner! I warn you, flee!

Do I hear you saying—I am persuaded, I see my danger, my sin, it's certain judgment, my inevitable destruction, if I go on as I am going; how am I to escape? Oh! you have seen the background of my picture and like it not. It is well. Fix now, therefore, your undivided attention on the lovely One who is found in the front, and all your terror shall vanish, and your fears flee away, as you ponder.

2.—"THE LOVE OF CHRIST."

"For the love of Christ constraineth us." Charming words! Earnest as this blessed ambassador might be, urged by the sense of the "terror" of the day when the majesty of God will be maintained by the final and eternal judgment of sin, personally, in those who are there found in their sins, he was only the more urgent because he had discovered that, in order to save men from that day of judgment, He who will then be the Judge had Himself died to deliver the guilty.

Love was the spring of this marvellous act. Sin had come in. This, God must judge in mainten-

ance of His own character. But sin brought death, and, viewed in this light, "ALL were dead." Further, "ALL must appear before the judgment-seat of Christ." To appear there with a single sin is certain and everlasting condemnation. What is to be done? He who knows the extent of man's offence alone can meet or atone for it. After the offence, but before the day when He will judge it, Christ (who will be the Judge) enters the scene and becomes a man that, as a man, He might die and bear the judgment resting on man. This indeed is love! What was man's condition in God's sight because of sin? "*Then were all dead.*" But oh! what news! "*One died for ALL.*" Magnificent grace! Unparalleled love! Uncalled, unasked by one, He "DIED FOR ALL." This is a new kind of love. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John xv. 13). Mark the words "no man." Here, however, dear reader, is love which exceeds that. The love of Jesus, the God-man, far exceeds this limit, for He died for all—for *His enemies* certainly, not the less for His friends, if He had any. Blessed Jesus! It is this love manifested in death—love stronger than death, and which many waters could not quench—which wins the heart to Him. Does He love me? Yes. Does He love you? Yes, without a doubt. Are you sure? Positive. Why? Because He died. For whom? "FOR ALL." Now get out of that number if you can.

But how can I be sure that Christ loves *me*? Be-

cause He died for me. Why did He die? Because He loved me. Well, if this be so, I ought to live unto Him who died for me. Quite so; and that is just what Paul judged. So wonderful is His love in dying for such guilty sinners as we have all been, that, the moment the heart discovers it, the judgment is formed—I ought to be for Him who is so thoroughly for me. The soul that gets hold of this is “a new creature” truly, and has the sweet sense of being “reconciled” to God. Enmity is cast out and annihilated by such overwhelming love as the cross displays. All is of God. The desire to have us near Himself, and the love that effects this blessed result by the cross are both divine. Further, He sends out the message of reconciliation first by Christ, next by ambassadors, who, standing in the very stead of Christ, proclaim the heavenly tidings in the ears of all who will listen. It is suited to ALL, it is designed for ALL, it is proclaimed to ALL, that “One died for ALL,” and if “ALL” do not believe, it is their own fault and to their own eternal loss. Reader, beware lest you slight heaven’s message. Hear it!

“Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though GOD DID BESEECH you by us; WE PRAY YOU in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God. FOR he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.” What a message! God now beseeching you to be reconciled to Himself, because He once on the cross took up with Christ the question of

sin. There and then His judgment of it fell upon Christ, so that now whoever believes in Him stands before God in all the value of that work by which God has been glorified and sin put away. God's righteousness, and His estimate of that work are seen not only in His taking Christ out of the grave into glory, but by His putting the believer in Christ in the very same place before Him that Christ now has. In death on the cross He took our place, in life now before God He gives us His place. What righteousness and what love!

My reader, can you find it in your heart once more to refuse God's appeal to you? Say not like Agrippa, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian"—but, receiving the word simply, may your response be in the words of this fervent ambassador recorded elsewhere, "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. 38, 39), "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. 12).

W. T. P. W.

SEED SPRINGING UP AFTER MANY DAYS.



WE were living in the outskirts of a country town in one of the Midland counties, when we first became acquainted with Maggie S——. She made her home with a widowed aunt whilst attending school as a day pupil, her father having died suddenly, leaving a large family.

I had been asked to visit the aunt by one who had known her husband. I felt some hesitation as to this, not knowing how far I might be welcome; for how could I visit the widow and fatherless, without speaking of Him who is the God of the widow and the Father of the fatherless? and telling of the love that had been made known to and believed in by our own hearts, in that “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” In His strength I made the call, and, whilst speaking words of kindness and sympathy, I told of the grace that had called us “out of darkness into his marvellous light.” This at once brought a dulness over the conversation, and not only at that time, but as further occasions opened up, there was the merest assent to anything said on this subject.

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I hoped that Maggie might hear and receive the glad tidings of a Saviour's love, if only spoken to alone and personally, so invited her to our house at various times, talked with her, and gave her little books; but alas! the natural heart in Maggie declared its hopelessly lost condition, in marked indifference to, and rejection of, the dying love of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In course of time the aunt married again, and both left the neighbourhood and were lost sight of. Some time afterwards I was one morning leaving home by train, when who should accost me at the station but Maggie. She had grown almost into womanhood, and I did not at first recognise her. She and a cousin had been staying a day or two with some old friends. They entered the same carriage as myself, and we found ourselves the only occupants. It was not long before I gave them some Gospel books, and once again spoke earnestly of the blessedness and importance of being saved, and entreated them now to receive Christ as their Saviour. Just then a station was reached where we had to part, and without any apparent interest being evinced in what had been said.

More than a year after this I was staying from home in a large town, when a letter was forwarded to me in a strange writing. It was long, and I at once turned to see the signature, and to my surprise I found it was from Maggie. It ran thus:—"I have thought many times of writing to you, but one thing and another has prevented me. I rejoice

to tell you, and I am sure you will be pleased to hear, that I have received the Lord Jesus as my Saviour and Redeemer. I was convicted of sin about fourteen months ago. I felt very anxious for a long time, until I read a little book, 'Christ Jesus only,'* which showed me so plainly the precious blood of Jesus to wash away my sins. I came to Jesus as I was, and my sins were washed away, and He freely forgave me all, and gave me the precious gift of His Holy Spirit, and peace and joy in believing. I had been very ill before. Now I can thank God for it, since then I have known nothing but love. Many times I have been sadly tempted by the evil one, but God has given me grace to withstand him. My earnest desire now is to grow in grace, and to bring other weary souls to the feet of my blessed Saviour and Master. I see my own weakness, but we are like the branches, we cannot grow unless we abide in the vine. My younger sister and brother are converted. We have had a great loss in the death of our dear mother. She passed away after years of extreme and patient suffering. She rejoiced in finding peace through the blood of Jesus a few weeks before she left us. Our home has been broken up, and now we are all scattered. God has been indeed a Father to us orphans. He has never left us. I shall anxiously wait for a letter from you. I thank you very much for speaking to me about my soul. You

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are the only one who ever did so; be not discouraged to speak to every one. I ask your prayers that I may daily grow in grace."

The letter also gave the address of the house where she was in a situation, and a request was added for some books to be sent her like those I used to give her. The situation proved to be in the very town where I was then staying. I called to see her the same day, to our mutual pleasure, and during my visit I had many little seasons of fellowship with herself and sister.

And now, dear reader, is Maggie's Saviour yours? May the Lord Himself open your eyes, if unsaved, to see your need, and your ears to hear His voice, and your heart to believe in Christ as your Saviour, and the One to satisfy its deepest longings.

L.

"WHAT IS YOUR RELIGION?"



A GENTLEMAN once asked a friend of mine, "What is your religion?" and he replied, "Death and resurrection." "Death and resurrection," the gentleman said; "that is a strange way of putting it; what do you mean by it?" So my friend explained what was meant.

This death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, my reader, is the very groundwork of all

our blessing. Man can have no blessing apart from it. In God's Word there are two deaths and two resurrections mentioned, as well as two lives and two judgments.

Let us, with God's help, examine them a little, to see how we stand with regard to them. But before seeking to raise any conscience or heart question, it may be well to state, in short, what they are.

The first life, is what every one has as born into this world. The second life, is what all get who receive the full benefit of the death and resurrection of Christ (John vi. 47 ; 1 John v. 12).

The first death, is that which is the first consequence of sin. "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. vi. 23). The second death, is "the lake of fire" (Rev. xx. 14, 15).

The first resurrection, is the raising of all true believers when the Lord comes to take them to be for ever with Himself (1 Thess. iv. 16; Rev. xx. 6). The second resurrection, is the raising of all unbelievers for eternal punishment (Rev. xx. 5).

The first judgment, is what is called in Scripture "the judgment seat of Christ," before which all saints will have to appear to be manifested, but not judged (2 Cor. v. 10 ; John v. 24). The second judgment, is "the great white throne," before which all the unsaved must stand to hear their eternal doom and enter into it (Rev. xx. 11-13).

A little now as to detail, but not for the mere intelligence, nor to gratify the curiosity, but, let us trust, for eternal blessing.

God breathed into man's nostrils and he became a living soul, to live for ever. This was never done to the beasts of the field. But, alas! sin entered, as we know to our sorrow; "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. iii. 23). "As in Adam all die" (1 Cor. xv. 22). Do you believe it, my dear, unsaved reader? All need the second life. How is it to be possessed? is the simple question. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done" (Titus iii. 5). None could reach the tree of life; it was too well guarded by that flaming sword (Gen. iii. 24). "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. ii. 8). When Nicodemus came to Jesus, He said to him, "*Ye must be born again*" (John iii. 7); even to a man of the Pharisees, ruler of the Jews, and teacher of Israel, the unchangeable word was, "YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN." Nicodemus could not understand it, of course not, because he began to apply his reason and intelligence, which only hindered him, and this is not unfrequently the case in our day. Then proceeded, with such grace, from the mouth of the Blessed Lord, that most magnificent scripture for faith to rest upon, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John iii. 14, 15); and from what we read of him afterwards in the same gospel, there is no doubt Nicodemus got this

eternal life. Having taken his place as a perishing sinner, he believed upon his Saviour, and passed from death unto life. Have *you*, my friend? Oh, do not evade the point! Have you been *born again*? Have you received *life number two*? "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (1 John v. 12). Jesus said, "He that believeth on me *hath* everlasting life" (John vi. 47); and, "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish" (John x. 28). Think, dear soul, of what it cost the Lord Jesus Christ to procure this life. He had to go down into death to where the sinner is. "The wages of sin is death." Who can say he has not earned those wages. But who can further say, "Christ, on the cross (He who was *made* sin, who *knew* no sin, 2 Cor. v. 21), received those wages due to *me*"? "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (John xii. 24). This leads to the two deaths. What is called death to a believer, is simply "to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better" (Philip. i. 23); "To be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord" (2 Cor. v. 8); and the body put into the grave till the first resurrection. To all who have the second life, death has lost its sting,—"*the sting of death is sin*" (1 Cor. xv. 56); and sin having been judged at the cross, is condemned; and the believer has nothing to fear (Rom. viii. 3, 15).

But what about unbelievers? those who shall die

in their sins (John viii. 24), refusing grace, neglecting the great salvation, and not accepting the gift of God, which is eternal life,—the second life. Were you to die unsaved, your soul would go to the place of departed spirits, to await the second resurrection, the second judgment, and the second death.

The second death is the lake of fire, which believers are free from, and which unbelievers only receive,—a place, mind, prepared for the devil and his angels, and not for man. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power" (Rev. xx. 6). The second death has only power over those who have part in the second resurrection, which takes place over a thousand years after the first resurrection.

The judgment seat of Christ is the place where all *believers* will have to side with God about all that takes place on earth.

How careful, therefore, the Lord's people should be as to how they walk through the scene where they are left as His witnesses, so as to have as few regrets as possible when manifested before that judgment seat! The judgment of the great white throne is quite another thing, and not at the same time. It is there the unsaved sinner, with all his awful sins upon him, will have to stand, without a friend, to hear the dread knell, "*Depart*;" when, for the first time, perhaps, he sees how holy God is—a holiness so much despised in this day of His grace and long-suffering mercy.

“As it is appointed unto men* once to die, but after this the judgment” (Heb. ix. 27), then how is it to be, friend? “The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation” (Rom. x. 8-10). Jesus it is who said, “I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth, and believeth in me, shall never die. Believest thou this?” (John xi. 25, 26.) If you believe Him, dear soul, you can say, with my friend, “Death and resurrection is *my* religion.”

Be encouraged to make sure of eternal life in this the day of salvation; to get part in the first resurrection, to get out of the power of the second death, to get judgment for ever behind your back, and to dwell in eternal glory. Be warned against trifling with these golden opportunities, the last of which may be close upon your heels; against leaving this world with only one life; against letting the second death have power over you; against being in the second resurrection and the second judgment.

Think, once more, of the love that has provided

* *Note.*—Men as men, not as believers, who in the next verse look for Christ.

such a salvation; and do not forget the holiness that will never permit you to escape damnation if you reject it. Then, do be encouraged, and do be warned, for Christ's sake.

J. N.

THE THREE PILLOWS; OR, JUDGMENT PASSED.



OW often one meets with what illustrates the truth contained in Matt. xxi. 16: "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise." And again, in Matt. xi. 25, where the Lord thanks the Father, "because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." The reason for this we find in 1 Cor. i. 27-29, "But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: *that no flesh should glory in his presence.*"

In 1 Cor. iii. 18-20, there is a word of advice for the wise of this world they would do well to take: "If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may

be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God: for it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness. And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain." What is needed in the things of God, is the simplicity of a little child.

I heard lately of a dear boy, now with the Lord, who spoke as one taught by God (John vi. 45). He suffered much during a lingering illness of more than a year, and some time before his death he was visited by a friend, one who loves the Lord. She read Revelation xx. 11-15 to him, that wonderful chapter that tells of the time when Satan will be bound one thousand years in the bottomless pit,—his present activity for evil restrained; of how he will be loosed afterwards for a little season, and will be finally cast into the lake of fire, and tormented day and night for ever and ever. Instead of tormenting the lost, he will be tormented himself. It is important, too, to see that he has never yet been in hell, for once he goes to that place of punishment he will never get out. It also tells of the two resurrections, with one thousand years at least between them; and of the great white throne and the judgment of the wicked dead, raised when time is ended and the earth and the heaven have fled away. It also tells how the books are opened, and the dead are judged out of the things which are written in the books, according to their works, and that whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the


lake of fire. Simple and plain as all this is to babes, it puzzles the wise of this world amazingly. The two resurrections are beyond their "ken," and consequently how it is that *only* the wicked dead will stand before the great white throne and be judged there. When the friend had read the seven verses of this chapter, she asked the sick lad (he was about fifteen), "R——, will you stand before the great white throne?" Very touching was the reply as he answered, "No." And when further asked, "Why not?" he continued, "Because I was judged at the cross." How simple, and how true! giving effect, too, to John v. 24, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation [or judgment]; but is passed from death unto life."

Since the dear boy went to the Lord, among his treasures, written by himself, was found the following memorandum: "My three pillows are—(1) Infinite love, (2) Infinite wisdom, (3) Infinite power." What downy resting-places for faith! Unbelief knows no such repose. Reader, what do you know of these three pillows? Is the judgment passed, or to come, for you? Can you say?—

"I rest in Christ the Son of God,
Who took the servant's form;
By faith I flee to Jesus' cross,
My covert from the storm.
Jesus put all my sins away,
When bruised, to make me whole;
Who shall accuse, or who condemn,
My blameless, ransomed soul."

M.

"CHRIST THE WAY."

“HUS saith the Lord, Behold, I set before you *the way of life, and the way of death*” (Jer. xxi. 8). Again, “*Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it*” (Matt. vii. 13, 14).

Reader, which way are you travelling? Are you among the many, or the few? Are you on the broad way, or the narrow? Are you on the downward, or the upward road? In plain language, Are you bound to heaven, or to hell? Probably many who read these lines would say in reply, To heaven, I hope. Well, friends, when men want to go to any given place, they usually make sure of the road. And if you wish to be in heaven, you will do well to make sure that you are on the right way. The Word of God is the only guide-post that can direct you rightly. Read on, therefore, and we will endeavour to point you clearly to what it says.

First of all, nothing could be plainer than that all men in the natural state are on the broad way, with their backs towards God, and Christ, and

glory, and their faces towards death and judgment and hell. "*All* we, like sheep, have *gone astray*," says the prophet to Israel; "we have turned *every one to his own way*," &c. (Isa. liii. 6). And this is true in principle of all now. Paul confirms it, saying, "There is *none* righteous, *no, not one*: there is *none* that understandeth, there is *none* that seek after God. They are *all gone out of the way*," &c. (Rom. iii. 10-12). And again, "*The way of peace* have they not known" (Rom. iii. 17). Think of it; gone out of *the way*,—the way of peace, God's way,—and gone *every one* to his own way.

And what are God's thoughts about it all? "The way of the wicked is as *darkness*" (Prov. iv. 19); and "The way of the wicked is an *abomination* unto the Lord" (Prov. xv. 9). Darkness! abomination! How awful is man's condition! How terrible his fall! Passing swiftly onward down the broad road, without a ray of light from God; his way an abomination in His sight, and nothing but the lake of fire before him. Sinner, arouse thee from thy delusions! Stop! stop! another step may launch thee in eternal woe. Listen to the voice of Scripture, "Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls" (Jer. vi. 16).

Well, is your ear open to the voice of warning? Do you inquire for the good way? Would you leave the way of death for the way of life? Then

let me put you on your guard. If a man found himself upon a road that led to danger, and would leave it for a path of safety, it is all-important that he should have reliable information. If he simply turned into a path which *he thought* right, or listened to a *deceitful guide*, he might still find himself in the danger which he sought to avoid. So is it with many a precious soul. Thousands wake up in some measure to their danger through the solemn warnings of the Word of God, and desire to flee from the wrath to come; but instead of listening to the voice of the Son of God, they follow a path that they think right, or listen to the deceitful voice of Satan, who whispers, "Try all you can; do your best, and all will be well." Liar! murderer! soul-destroyer! Sinner, beware! It is written, "*Not of works*, lest any man should boast" (Eph. ii. 9); "*Not by works* of righteousness which we have done" (Titus iii. 5); "*Not according to our works*" (2 Tim. i. 9). What could be plainer?

"But surely I must be better, and do all I can to please God before I can be saved?" say many. "They that are in the flesh cannot please God," says the Word of God in reply (Rom. viii. 8). "But I'm so sinful, and I've been treading the broad road so long, surely I must alter my ways, and seek to do what is right, before I can expect to be forgiven?" "There is a way which seemeth right to a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." Yes, it seems right, but it is all wrong.

Human righteousness will not do for God. It is vain to think that your reformation will make up for your sins. "God requireth that which is past" (Eccles. iii. 15). If from this day forth for fifty years you could live without sin, yet every sin of your past long account would stand against you in all its enormity before God. And one of your sins, the smallest in your account, is far more horrible in the sight of Him, who is infinitely holy, than all the sins of all mankind are to you. Your case is utterly hopeless on that ground. It is *your way, not God's*.

"Far better, surely, to live morally here than in open wickedness; and God will judge each according to their works" (Rev. xx. 2). But morality is not the Saviour, and human religiousness is not Christ. God says, "Not of works." Then it is no good thinking that your works will do. The day for doing is long past. It is just repeating what others have done before you,—climbing up *some other way*. Jesus said of such, they are thieves and robbers (John x. 1).

Where then is the good way? Jesus said, "I am the way." How blessedly simple! Would you leave the broad way, and enter the strait gate and tread the narrow way? Come to Jesus. He, and He alone, is *the way*. Not a way, or one of the ways, or part of the way, but *the way*. As another has blessedly said, "The way to the Father, the truth of the whole thing, and the life to enjoy it." Sinner, will you hearken to His voice? "*The*

way of a fool," we read, "is right in his own eyes: but he that *hearkeneth unto counsel* is wise" (Prov. xii. 15); and, "*The way of life* is above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath" (Prov. xv. 24). Yes, if you will persist in doing that which is right in your own eyes, and refuse counsel from the Word of God, you will surely reap the fruit of your folly in hell. But should your ear be opened to the voice of the Son of God, this day eternal life is yours. "*The way of life* is above to the wise;" Christ is now in glory. The Scriptures are able to make you wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John xiv. 6). "*I am the way.*"

"The new and living Way
 Stands open now to heaven;
 There, where the blood is seen alway,
 God's gift is given.
 The river of His grace,
 Through righteousness supplied,
 Is flowing o'er the barren place
 Where Jesus died."

Again, therefore, we appeal to you, "Come unto Him." "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John vi. 37). John spake of Him, "Behold the Lamb of God." Two heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. Have you heard? Do you believe? Will you follow? It is wisdom's way, and wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. God has provided

Himself a Lamb, and has found perfect satisfaction in Him. In mercy He guarded the way of the tree of life in Eden, when man had fallen; and now in infinite mercy He has opened the way to the tree of life in the midst of the paradise of God in glory, through the death of His Son. On Calvary the cherubic judgment fell on Christ, the spotless Lamb. There, in His own bosom, Jesus received the awful stroke of the sword of Divine justice. God hath made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin. *Jesus died.* God rent the veil, and God raised His Son from the dead, and glorified Him (Matt. xxvii. 51; Acts ii. 24; John xiii. 32). The way into the holiest is now made manifest. Would you enter there? The only way is through Christ. Believe on Him, and you have left the broad road for ever. Believe on Him, and you have entered the strait gate, and your feet are on the narrow way.

This is *the way of righteousness*,—God's way. And "in the way of righteousness is life; and in the pathway thereof there is no death" (Prov. xii. 28). It is "*The way of holiness*; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but *the redeemed shall walk there*" (Isa. xxxv. 8, 9).

Blessed path! And blessed indeed are they who walk therein. Righteousness and life are there,

and no death. Believers are made the righteousness of God, and have eternal life *in Him* (2 Cor. v. 21; 1 John v. 11). They have "passed from death unto life" (John v. 24). It is *life in Christ risen*, beyond death. Death and hell are closed behind them for ever. They *may* fall asleep through Jesus; but this is not what they await. They look for His coming, the Lord of life and glory, who has robbed death of its sting and the grave of its victory. The second death, which is the lake of fire, they shall never see. Christ will come; mortality shall be swallowed up of life, and death in victory. He may come this moment. Would He claim you?

"Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I set before you *the way of life, and the way of death*" (Jer. xxi. 8). Which are *you* travelling? You must be on one or the other. Either you have believed on Him, and entered the way of life,—the narrow way; or you have not believed, and you are travelling with swift steps the broad way to hell. Few travel the former; many the latter. Are *you one* of the few?

"Passing onward, quickly passing;

Yes, but whither, whither bound?

Is it to the many mansions,

Where eternal rest is found?

Passing onward—

Yes, but whither, whither bound?"

E. H. C.

BEHOLD THE LAMB.



BEHOLD the Lamb for sinners slain,
To cleanse them from each guilty stain
His precious blood was shed ;
He took their place upon the tree,
Made sin for sinners there to be,
To set the guilty captives free
By dying in their stead.

He lay beneath that righteous stroke,
O'er Him the waves and billows broke,
He bowed His head and died ;
God there forsook His only Son,
That holy, true, obedient One !
By whom alone His will was done,
When He was crucified.

Behold Him now upon the throne,
The source of life and peace alone,
No longer in the grave ;
Dispensing blessing full and free
To such as lost and ruined be.
O sinner, there for refuge flee !
Whilst yet He's free to save.

Soon He will rise and close the door,
Glad tidings then thou'lt hear no more,
The day of grace be past ;
Then such as would not bow the knee,
Unto the rocks and dens shall flee,
Thus hidden from His eye to be,
Who comes as Judge at last.

G. W. F.

CHRIST'S WELCOME.



OUR right to come to Jesus is full and clear. It is irrespective of aught in us. It presupposes want and sin—nothing more. The invitation is wide and free, annexing no restriction, and enjoining no prerequisite. It does not fence itself round with conditions, as if fearful lest too many might avail themselves of it, or as if desirous to keep off the unqualified and unworthy. It makes no exceptions as to previous life or present character. It welcomes the unworthiest. It forbids none. It leaves no room for suspicion on the part of any. “Come, and come at once; come, and boldly,” is its message to all; for “him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.” His free love beckons and beseeches you. It does not stand on ceremony or insist on terms. It does not say, Whosoever comes in this manner, or that manner, according to this rule or that rule, but “Him that cometh I will in no wise cast out.” “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”

P.

"READY."

309

"READY."

A WORD FOR ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

"They that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut."—MATT. xxv. 10.



WE want the reader to dwell for a few moments on the little word which forms the heading of this paper. If we mistake not, he will find it to be a word of immense depth and suggestive power, as used by the Holy Ghost in Scripture. We shall, just now, refer to four passages in which our word occurs; and may the One who penned these passages be pleased to open and apply them, in divine power and freshness, to the heart of both writer and reader.

1. And first we shall turn to 1 Peter i. 5, where it is used in connection with the word "*salvation*." Believers are said to be "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, *ready* to be revealed in the last time."

Here, then, we are taught that salvation is ready to be revealed at this moment, for we are, as John tells us, in "the last times." And be it noted that salvation, as here used, is not to be confined to the mere matter of the *soul's* deliverance from hell and perdition. It refers rather to the deliverance of the *body* of the believer from the power of death and corruption. In short, it takes in all that

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stands in any wise connected with the glorious appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We already possess the salvation of our souls, as we are told in the very context from which our text is taken. "Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls; . . . wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you *at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*"

Thus we learn, in the clearest way, that the "salvation ready to be revealed" is linked on to "the revelation of Jesus Christ." This is confirmed, were confirmation needful, by Hebrews ix. 28, where we read, "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, apart from sin, unto *salvation.*"

From all this, the reader may learn that the salvation which is *ready* to be revealed is the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. For this we are taught, as Christians, to look, at any moment. There is literally nothing, so far as God is concerned,—nothing so far as the work of Christ is concerned,—nothing so far as the testimony of the Holy Ghost is concerned, to hinder our hearing the shout of the archangel and the trump of God this very day, this very hour. All is done that needed to be done. Atonement is made, redemption is accomplished, God has been glorified by the work of Christ, as is proved by the fact of Christ's present place on the throne of the majesty in the

heavens. From the moment that our Lord Christ took His seat upon that throne, it could always be said that "salvation is *ready* to be revealed."

But it could not have been said before. Salvation could not be said to be ready until the divine groundwork thereof was laid in the death and resurrection of the Saviour. But, when once that most glorious work of all works was accomplished, it could, at any moment, be said that "salvation is ready to be revealed." "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool" (Psa. cx. 1).

2. But the apostle Peter gives us another instance and application of our word, in chapter iv. 5, where he refers to some "who shall give account to him that is *ready to judge* the quick and the dead."

Here the word stands before us in a form of awful solemnity. If, on the one hand, it be true that *salvation* is ready to be revealed for the everlasting joy of God's redeemed: it is equally true, on the other hand, that *judgment* is ready to take its course, for the everlasting misery of those who neglect God's proffered salvation.* The one is as true, and as pointed, and as forcible as the other. There is nothing to wait for in respect to the judgment, any more than there is in respect to the sal-

* As regards the solemn subject of eternal punishment, we shall just refer the reader to three passages of Scripture which establish the truth of it beyond all question. Mark ix. 43-48, The fire is *unquenchable*; and the worm *never dies*. Luke xvi. 26, The great gulf is *fixed*. John iii. 36, The wrath of God *abideth*.

vation. The one is as "*ready*" as the other. God has gone to the utmost in demonstrating His grace; and man has gone to the utmost in demonstrating his guilt. Both have reached their climax in the death of Christ; and when we see Him crowned with glory, and seated on the throne, we have the most powerful evidence that could possibly be afforded that nothing remains but for salvation to be revealed on the one hand, and for judgment to take its course on the other.

Hence it follows that man is no longer under probation. It is a grand mistake for any one to think so. It is a fatal delusion. It falsifies man's entire position and state. If I am under probation,—if God is still testing me,—if He is, even now, occupied in testing whether I am good for aught,—if I am capable of producing any fruit for Him,—if this be indeed the case, then it is not, and cannot be, true that "he is ready to judge."

Nature is not ripe for judgment so long as a probationary process is pending,—if there is yet something to wait for ere judgment can take its course.

But no, reader; we feel bound to press upon you the fact that the period of your probation is over for ever, and the period of God's long-suffering is nearly run out. It is of the utmost importance to seize this truth. It lies at the very foundation of the sinner's position. Judgment is actually impending. It is "*ready*" at this moment to fall upon the head of the unrepentant reader of these

lines. The entire history of human nature,—of man, of the world,—has been wound up and closed for ever. The cross of Christ has made perfectly manifest the guilt and ruin of the human race. It has put an end to man's probationary season; and from that solemn hour until now, the true position of the world as a whole, and of each individual sinner, man, woman, and child, has been that of a culprit, tried, found guilty, and condemned, but the sentence not executed. This is the present awful position of the unconverted, unbelieving reader.

Dear friend, wilt thou not think of this? Fellow immortal, wilt thou not, even this very moment, bend the undivided attention of thy soul to this eternal question? We must speak plainly and pointedly. We cannot do otherwise. We feel, in some small degree, the awfulness of the sinner's state and prospect, in view of these weighty words, “*ready to judge.*” We are convinced that the present is a moment which calls for serious and faithful dealing with the souls of our readers. We do not, as God is our witness, want to write essays or sermons; we want to reach souls. We want the reader to be assured of this, that he is not now reading a dry article on a religious subject, prepared merely for the purpose of making a tract; but a solemn appeal made to his heart and conscience, in the immediate presence of “him who is ready to judge the quick and the dead.”

3. But this leads us to the third passage of Holy

Scripture in which our weighty motto occurs. The reader will find it in Luke xii. 40. "Be ye therefore *ready* also; for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not."

If salvation is "ready" to be revealed, and if judgment is "ready" to be executed, what becomes us but to be "ready" also?

And in what does this readiness consist? How are we to be ready? It strikes us that there are two things included in the answer.

First, we must be "ready" in *title*; and, secondly, we must be "ready" in our moral *state*,—ready in conscience, and ready in heart. The one is founded upon the work of Christ *for* us; the other is connected with the work of the Spirit *in* us. If we are simply resting by faith on the finished work of Christ, if we are leaning exclusively on what He has done and what He is, then are we, in very truth, ready in title, and we may rest assured of being with Him when He comes.

But, on the other hand, if we are leaning upon our fancied goodness; upon any righteousness which we think we possess; upon not having done any harm to any one; upon our not being worse than some of our neighbours; upon our church membership; upon our attention to the ordinances of religion; if we are leaning upon any or all of these things, or if we are adding these things to Christ, then we may be assured we are not ready in title,—not ready in conscience. God can accept nothing,—absolutely nothing,—as a title, but

Christ. To bring aught else is to declare that Christ is not needful. To bring aught beside is to affirm that He is not enough. But God has borne ten thousand testimonies to the fact that we can do with nothing less, and that we want nothing more, than Christ. Hence, therefore, Christ is our all-essential and all-sufficient title.

But then, there is such a thing as professing to be ready in title, while, at the same time, we are not ready in our moral condition or practical state. This demands our gravest attention. There is a vast amount of easy-going evangelical profession abroad at the present moment. The atmosphere is permeated by the rays of Gospel light. The darkness of the Middle Ages has been chased away by the brightness of a free Gospel and an open Bible.

We are thankful for a free Gospel and an open Bible. But we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that there is a fearful amount of laxity, unsubduedness, and self-indulgence going hand-in-hand with the evangelical profession of the day. We notice, with the deepest anxiety, many young professors who have, or seem to have, a very clear insight, so far as the intellect goes, into the truth of the sinner's title, who, if we are to judge from their style, deportment, and habits, are not "ready" in their moral condition,—in the real state of their hearts. We are at times, we must confess, sadly cast down when we see our young friends decking their persons in the vain fashions of a lost and sinful world; feeding upon the vile literature that

issues in such frightful profusion from the press; and actually singing vain songs, and engaging in light and frivolous conversation. It is impossible to reconcile such with "Be ye also ready."

We may perhaps be told that these things are externals, and that the grand point is to be occupied with Christ. It may be said,—it has been said,—“Provided we have Christ in our hearts, it does not matter what we have on our heads or in our hands.” We reply, “If we really have Christ in our hearts, it will regulate what we put on our heads and take into our hands; yea, it will exert a *manifest* influence upon our whole deportment and character.”

We should like to ask some of our young friends this question, “Would you like the Lord Christ to come and find you reading a love story, or singing a song?” We feel assured you would not. Well, then, let us, in the name of the Lord, see to it that we do not engage in anything which does not comport with our being “ready.”

We specially urge this upon the young Christian reader. Let this question be ever before us, “Am I ready? ready in title, ready in state? ready in conscience, ready in heart?” The times are really very solemn, and it behoves us to think seriously of our true state. We feel persuaded that there is a lack of real godly heart exercise amongst us. There are, we fear, many,—God only knows how many,—who are not ready; many who would be taken aback and terribly surprised by death or the

coming of the Lord. There are things said and done by those who occupy the very highest platform of profession, which we dare not indulge in if we are really *looking* for the Lord.

God grant that the reader may know what it is to be ready in title, and ready in state; that he may have a purged conscience and a truly exercised heart. Then he will be able to enter into the meaning of the fourth and last passage to which we call his attention. It occurs in Matthew xxv. 10.

4. "And while they [the foolish virgins] went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were *ready* went in with him to the marriage; and the door was shut."

How solemn! How awfully solemn! Those who were *ready* went in, and those who were not ready were shut out. Those who have life in Christ, and are indwelt by the Holy Ghost, will be ready. But the mere professor,—the one who has truth in the head and on the lip, but not in the heart,—who has the lamp of profession, but not the spirit of life in Christ,—he will be shut out into outer darkness,—in everlasting misery and gloom,—the eternal monotony of hell.

Oh! beloved reader, let us, as we take a solemn leave of you, put this question home to your very inmost soul, "ART THOU READY?"

C. H. M.

“ESCAPING INTO HELL.”



“WANT you both to go to the meeting to-night,” said a Christian mother to her son and daughter, the former a young man about eighteen, the other some four years younger. Both looked a little disconcerted, and then the latter said, “But, mother, we have been to a great many meetings already, and were not counting on going to-night.”

“Yes, but this is the last of Mr H——’s meetings, at this time, and I should like you both to go to-night,” repeated the mother; and, accustomed as they were to obey, with the obedience of love, their beloved and only parent (for their father had been some years dead), they consented, and getting themselves ready, set off together to the village at some little distance, where the meetings were held. It had recently been a time of blessing there. Many had been awakened to the knowledge that they were perishing, had accepted of God’s salvation, and had now joy and peace in Christ Jesus. But that brother and sister had no desire to be amongst the number, and only went to the meetings to please their mother, who had long been a child of God. As they neared the hall, the young girl whispered, “Try and get a seat near the door, mind you, so as we can get out easy.” “All right,” said her brother, “I’ll try anyhow.”

And a seat near the door they did get, though as people came crowding in they had to sit up a little further than they cared to do.

The address was a soul-stirring one, on God's love to the perishing. The preacher was earnest, and pressed home the truth to his hearers. Many were affected even to tears, but the brother and sister sat unmoved. It was no new story to them. From their earliest childhood they had been familiar with it, and at most it was but in their ears as a lovely song.

At the close an after-meeting was intimated, and the anxious were invited to remain; but the only anxiety that those two felt was how to get out quick enough and not "be spoken to," and this was intensified as the preacher left his place and came walking down toward the door. Before they could get out he had already reached the end of the seat where they were, but by a little skilful manœuvring on their part, they got past him unnoticed, and were once more in the open air. "What a narrow escape," said the young man, drawing a long breath. "Yes," said his sister, laughing, "it is the narrowest we've had; I quite brushed clothes with him." And talking jestingly with each other they walked home.

"Here we are, mother, and we've escaped once more." It was the young girl who spoke as they entered the house, and her light words fell heavily on the mother's ear, and also on her heart. She had long prayed for these dear ones,—specially so to-

night,—and had hoped that one, or perhaps both, would have come home anxious, or, it might be, saved. But their careless looks, and light words, told her too plainly that it was not so. She looked up, and said mournfully, “*It will be a sad thing if you get escaping into hell.*” It was an arrow that shot home down into the girl’s soul. There was no more jesting for her. She quietly took off her things, and shortly after went to bed, but not to sleep.

“Escaping into hell,” rung in her ears. “I never heard mother say anything so dreadful before,” she said to herself, as she lay awake. Conscience whispered, “Still, it’s true. And, after all, what was it that you escaped from to-night? Was it not from accepting the message of God’s salvation, and from being brought to the living Saviour? And then where are you escaping to? Escaping to hell?”

“I know,” now reflected the awakened girl, “that Christ is an all-sufficient Saviour, and that His work is a finished work, but I don’t want to be a Christian—to become His—*just yet*. I am only fourteen, and surely it will do in a few years after this.” Louder than ever the words seemed to ring, “It will be a sad thing if you get escaping into hell.” “Oh! those dreadful words, if I could only get rid of them, if I could only forget them.” But they were not to be got rid of or forgotten, till the poor troubled one had found both a refuge and resting-place in Christ. How glad that mother’s

heart was, when, not long after this, that same young girl stood beside her, with a face lighted up with joy, and a voice trembling with emotion, said, "Mother, I am Christ's *now*."

Perhaps this meets the eye of some careless one, whose only anxiety has been to keep out of the way of God's messengers. But pause a moment, and ask yourself, "Why should I do so? How will it end?" Oh! if you only knew your danger. If you only knew too what real joy you are losing even here, for no one *out of Christ* knows what joy or true gladness is. Any pleasure or merriment you may have had, was but as the crackling of thorns under a pot, lasting a short time and leaving only ashes behind. If you take your Bible and read the 11th chapter of 1st Samuel, you will find a striking picture of danger and deliverance. A little company is seen at Jabesh-Gilead, with a cruel foe encamped against them, and the prospect before them that unless deliverance came in seven days, they would all have their right eyes thrust out. What think you were they doing? Getting up soirees, concerts, balls, horse-races? or even reading novels "to pass the time"? Ah, no! they realised their position; they were awake to their danger.

And oh! careless one,—for it is to *you* I now write, — how *can* you be careless, with eternal issues at stake? A greater danger hangs over you. Not the loss of your right eye, but of your precious, priceless soul. Nor are you even sure of seven

days' respite. Oh, arouse thee, and haste to be saved! be careless no longer, why will ye die? Another thing the men of Jabesh knew was, that if deliverance came, it must be outside of themselves. And when the message of their distress was made known at Gibeah, "the people lifted up their voice and wept." And have we not more cause to weep over you," not only because of your danger, but of your indifference to it? Read Luke xix. 41-42, "And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, "*If thou hadst known*, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes." Ask yourself, "Who was it that wept? and what made Him weep?" Again, when the men of Jabesh get back the message, "To-morrow, by that time the sun be hot, ye shall have help," when they heard it, *they were glad*. And why were they glad? Simply because they believed it. But God has a brighter and better message for you. He does not say, "To-morrow," but "To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." "Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation." Surely you will no longer harden your heart, but hear *His* voice speaking to *you*. Remember that now is God's time, let it also be yours. Y. Z.

"IMPOSING ON HIM."



ONE evening last winter a poor woman came to our door to ask for assistance. Giving her a trifle, I also offered her a small Testament, asking her if she would read it. She took it, and said that she would, remarking, "I daresay now that this is a religious book, miss?" I said, "It is the Book of books, for it is God's Word, and it is 'able to make you wise unto salvation.'"

"Somebody gave me a tract the other day," she then said, "and it told me to be good and do my duty, and if I could it would be all right."

"Well," I said, "and what can you do? I daresay you have tried, and found to your cost that you could not think a good thought?"

"That I have," was her quick response.

"Yes, and you have only an evil nature that can bring forth nothing but sin; but God does not expect you to do good until you have received the gift of His dear Son. 'God so loved the world that he *gave* his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting *life*' (John iii. 16). You must have *life* before you can *work*."

"Oh! but it seems too much to expect God to give salvation without our doing anything for it; it looks like imposing upon Him."

"Let me tell you what God says about it," I replied; and taking the Testament out of her hand, I turned to the 4th of Romans, and read the 5th verse, "'But to him that worketh *not*, but *believeth* on him that justifieth the *ungodly*, his faith is counted for righteousness.' Now that is very simple, is it not?" I asked,—"'to him that worketh *not*.'"

"Yes," she said, "it is simple." Taking a pen, I drew it under the words I had read, and gave her back the book, saying, "You can read it for yourself. God does not want your works, but He does want you to *believe*."

Just then I was interrupted, and being on business I was obliged to leave her. Her words as I turned away were, "Thank you very much, miss; you don't know what you've done for me to-night." I have not seen her again, but the Lord knows whether she has accepted His terms.

Now, dear reader, I would ask you if you have been resting on the hope that some day (you do not know exactly when or how) you may be able to *do* something to pay for salvation? If so, let me tell you, as "God is true," and on the authority of His unchangeable word, that it is entirely beyond your power. It is "without money and without price" (Isa. lv. 1). "The *gift* of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. vi. 23) "to him that worketh *not*, but *believeth*." There were those who asked the Lord Jesus the question, "What shall we *do*, that we might work the works

of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, *This is the work* of God, that ye *believe* on him whom he hath sent" (John vi. 28, 29). Dear reader, if you are a worker *for* salvation, do leave your fruitless efforts, and believe what God says about you, that you are "without strength" (Rom. vii. 6).

"Till to *Jesus' work* you cling
By a simple faith,
Doing is a deadly thing,—
Doing ends in death."

But, reader, it may be that you are one who has been saved by simply trusting in the finished work of the Lord Jesus, yet still going on in careless indifference as to His claim as Lord. If so, let me tell you that you are losing a great deal of joy and blessing. "To OBEY is better than sacrifice" (1 Sam. xv. 22); and the path of obedience is the path of blessing, and the path of power. Hear His words, disobedient Christian,—“He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me” (John xiv. 21); and again, “Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?” (Luke vi. 46). Do you say, “I cannot see the *right* path”? Hear His word again, “If any man *will* do his will, he *shall* know of the doctrine” (John vii. 17). “If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.”

E. L. C.

WARNINGS.



“**D**ON'T bother me about your Bible,” said a fine young man of twenty; “I want to enjoy myself; I’ll be religious when I come to a dying bed.” How often does one hear such words. Alas! how solemn, for if they who say such do have a dying bed, they more often than not say they are too ill to think about their souls; or their friends, with false kindness, will not allow them to be disturbed. Reader, procrastination is the devil’s prime minister; and though you may have heard it thousands of times, I record it again and yet again, that God’s word is *Now*. “*Now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation” (2 Cor. vi. 2).

One Lord’s Day afternoon, about twenty-five years ago, three men went out for a row in a boat up the river Thames. They were all in good health, and were jolly fellows as the world would call them.

They had had a pleasant trip, and were returning home. When just within sight of their landing-place, the eldest man arose, saying he felt rather cramped. He stretches out his arms, falls backward, head downward into the river, never to rise again. His friends search for him in vain. They had to go home with the sorrowful news to his wife and family. Two days after his body was

discovered in a mud-hole. He was a man who ridiculed the Bible, and looked for a dying bed,—for him it never came!

Will my readers be as little affected at this solemn summons as were his two companions? They sorrowed for the loss of his jovial society, his merry songs, a good hand at cards, &c., but the warning seemed despised. They went on still deeper in sins. One at length died without any evidence of repentance; the other, after years of debauchery, took away his own life!

These are real facts, dear people; let them speak to you. You surely must have met with similar ones if you know anything of the world.

Almost next door to one of those in the boat, and also employed by him, lived a drunkard. One night, in a drunken fit, he used impious words of God and death. In the morning he was found in his bed a corpse!

Shortly after a young woman of twenty-one, who lived within sight of all their homes, in an angry fit jumped into the canal at the back of the house, and was drowned!

Close by lived a youth of seventeen, known to all I have named. He cared little for his eternal welfare, and looked for a dying bed. One night he parted from a friend, promising to call for him by seven the following morning, but before that hour came he was found dead in his bed.

Dear reader, do not refuse as your Saviour God's beloved Son, or judgment—"his strange

work"—will surely overtake you. His face is toward you to-day, and His voice of grace is saying, "Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die?" and "Him that cometh to me (Christ) I will in no wise cast out" (John vi. 37). E. E. S.

THREE CLASSES.

"He preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection. . . . And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter. So Paul departed from among them. Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed: among the which was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them. . . . After these things Paul departed from Athens" (Acts xvii. 18, 32-34; xviii. 1).



WHEN Paul preached at Athens his audience was split into three sections at the close:—*Mockers*,—"some mocked;" *Procrastinators*,—"others said, We will hear thee again of this matter;" and *Believers*,—"howbeit certain men clave unto him, and *believed*."

What a solemn effect of hearing the Word of God! But as it was then, so often is it now. How many times, my reader, have you heard the Word of God this year? How has it left you? Have you heard of Jesus and the resurrection only to mock? What profound folly! It is written that "fools make a mock at sin" (Prov. xiv. 9), which indicates terrible levity of heart, but to mock at grace, the Son of God, the blessed Saviour Jesus,

and the wondrous tale that His resurrection involves, reveals the deep, irreparable ruin of man, and the profound moral darkness of his soul. Reader, are a mocker? Let me add that you are not the only one who can mock. Terribly solemn, and equally true, is the testimony of God to you, as to a moment in your future history. Listen to it, O mocker, I beseech you—"Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at naught all my counsel, and would none of my reproof; I also will laugh at your calamity; *I will mock* when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you" (Prov. i. 24-27). What a turning of the tables! What a moment for the mocker! No pen can describe it. God forbid that any reader of *The Gospel Messenger* should ever know its meaning.

But let us turn to the Procrastinator. What better is his fate? This is a man who believes everything in his head, and nothing with his heart. "We will hear thee again" is his motto. He hears, is impressed, perhaps weeps, gets uncomfortable, feels the Gospel is true, knows he is not right, not ready to die, or meet the Lord if He came; but loving the world, and the things that are in it, he defers decision for Christ to some future day. Thus did some of the Athenians. "We will hear thee again," said they, but they did not, for "after these things Paul departed from Athens," and they lost

their golden opportunity of salvation. So said Felix,—“*Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.*” Poor man! It never came that we know. True, he sent for Paul again and again, but only because “he hoped also that money should have been given him of Paul.” Fancy being the imitator of such a man! His *faith* is in “*a convenient season*” that never came; his *hope* in money which he never got. But just such is the Procrastinator of to-day. False faith and fruitless hopes mark him. Of course, Procrastinator, you *hope* to be saved. So did every man that is now in hell for eternity. Some one has said it is paved with hopes; but you see hope is not faith, simple, real faith in Christ, which always brings immediate blessing. Oh! my friend, if you have been procrastinating, let me urge you to do so no longer. “Now is the day of salvation, now is the accepted time.” God’s Gospel is always “to-day.” The devil’s is always “to-morrow.” “We will hear thee again,” say you. Are you sure? Have you a lease of life? No. To-morrow may find you in eternity. Where will you spend it?

But Paul preached not in vain, for “certain men clave unto him, and believed,” and fain would I hope—in fact, thank God, I know—that *The Gospel Messenger* has not been going out this year in vain. Certain have believed. Are you among the number? If so, make no secret of it. Hoist your colours, confess the Lord simply. Dionysius and

Damaris will not blush in eternity, or ever regret that they boldly came out for Christ in a day of opposition to His name.

They believed the Gospel, and identified themselves fully with the Lord's servant. To them "Jesus and the resurrection" were life-giving sounds. To those who heard and believed they meant that Jesus had died, His death had blotted out their sins, and delivered them from coming judgment, and His resurrection was the divine and certain proof that Satan's power was broken, and every claim of God against them surely and eternally settled.

They believed. It is a very simple testimony. They believed God, they believed His Word, His love, His Son, and they were not ashamed to take their place boldly with the believers.

No sweeter name could man on earth have than that he is a believer in Jesus. It involves everything, comprehends all the blessings of the Gospel. The believer may not know all at once what these blessings are, but they are his nevertheless. He is forgiven, he is pardoned, he is saved, he is ransomed, he is sheltered from judgment, and secured from wrath. He is a child of God, an heir of God, and a joint-heir with Christ. He receives the Holy Ghost, becomes a member of Christ's body, and will soon share in all His exaltation and glory.

And now, my reader, which of these three classes are you in? As you drop this paper you must

be in one or other of them. Oh ! let it be the third, the believers. Let not 1886 pass away, and leave you as it found you, an unbeliever. Be persuaded. Come to Jesus now. He will receive, and bless you. His blood has been shed. It cleanses from all sin. None are too bad, too guilty for Him. Only trust Him. Cast yourself simply on Him, and then you will for ever escape the possibility of dying in your sins, and being cast into hell for eternity. Nay, more, the moment you simply confide in Him, bow to His blessed name, and believe in Him, and Him alone, you will be saved, will receive the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, and will be entitled to say, and say with joy and assurance, *I am a believer.*

And what is the prospect of the believer ? It is the coming of the Lord for His people. "Unto them that look for him, shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation." Glorious prospect ! We shall see the Saviour face to face. We shall be with Him, and like Him for ever. His heart of love will be deeply and eternally satisfied, when He has His loved and ransomed ones with Him. Will not our hearts be satisfied ? Ay, and that for ever. Sin, sorrow, care, trial, toil, tears, every fruit of the first man's fall will be for ever left behind, and in the unhindered enjoyment of Jesus' love, our eternity will roll along in ceaseless worship of, and happiest fellowship with God. Who then would not like to be A BELIEVER ?

W. T. P. W.