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THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

TWO SPRING-TIMES.



CANNOT bear this life any longer. Mother would never have made me promise her, if she had known how bad it was all to be."

The words were spoken aloud, but no human ears heard them, for the speaker was alone.

"Yes," she continued, reading once more an open letter, "I will answer it to-night, and say I will go; whatever comes, it cannot be worse misery than this life is."

I said no human ears heard the outspoken words, but surely they were heard by unseen watchers. Satan, seeking that soul to destroy it, heard them with triumph, for it seemed as though his temptations were to prevail, and a fatal downward step were to be taken by this one, which he well knew would leave her more than ever in his power, in the power of the "strong man armed."

But the words of despair and misery were heard too by the "stronger than he,"—even by the Good Shepherd,—who was seeking that soul, not to de-

stroy, but to save it; who not only had heard the words, but who had read every previous thought of the troubled, tempted heart; and whose high commission had gone forth, "Deliver from going down to the pit, I have found a ransom."

It was a wild March afternoon; a cold east wind blew strongly, and heavy rain beat drearily against the window panes.

Within, all was well nigh as dreary as without—a room, clean indeed, but almost bare of furniture, a few dying embers on the hearth, and nothing with which to rekindle them; a piece of dry bread, and a little cold tea, the sole provisions in the cupboard; and a woman's form, whose clothing, though well mended, and neat, was not warm enough to keep her from shivering, as every fresh blast howled round the dwelling; and within that form a heart, restless, and miserable, and fast becoming reckless, but which thought not as yet of turning to the One who was waiting to receive her, to bear all her burdens for her, and to give her rest, both of conscience and of heart, instead.

It was a young woman who sat in that cheerless room. Not more than twenty-one years had passed over her head. Her mother had died three years before, her dying words to her only daughter being, "Promise me you will meet me with Jesus, Jenny, and that you will not leave your father and brother, but try to bring them too."

During her last illness, which had been a long one, the mother had "tasted that the Lord is

gracious," and she coveted for those she loved, and was leaving, that they should taste it too.

Husband and son had made but poor return for her tender faithful love, but the daughter clung to her, as to her only friend, and, in her agony at losing her, promised everything she asked.

For a time after her mother's death Jenny had no difficulty in keeping the last part of her promise. Shocked and sobered by the solemn event, her father and brother spent less of their time and money in the public-house, and brought home enough to Jenny to provide for their needs.

But as time went on this was all changed. Little by little they went deeper and deeper into sin and folly, till one thing after another, that would bring in money, had been taken from the cottage, and cold and hunger were often enough the poor girl's portion; and as she had never seriously thought of the first part of her promise to her mother, now, in her misery, she felt as though she must break the last part, which hitherto she had faithfully kept.

Strong temptation had come to her once and again; now, it seemed as though it would overcome the soul that had no strength beyond its own to support it.

But a messenger, bearing a message from God—the God of love—to this poor weary, tried, and tempted one, was even at that moment approaching the cottage door.

A knock startled Jenny just after she had spoken

out her decision. Hastily she rose from the wooden stool on which she had long sat crouching over the fast dying-out fire, and opened the door.

The one who had knocked was a missionary whom Jenny knew well, and who had been the means of leading her mother to the feet of Jesus.

Thankful to see a kindly face, Jenny begged him to come in.

"I cannot to-day, my lassie," he answered, "and I will not keep you standing at the door either, for this is a terrible rain; but I've come a mile and more out of my way to leave you these two little books, and to ask you to promise me to read them before you go to bed to-night, and I shall ask the Lord to bless them to your soul. I do not know why I have been sent here with them to-day, for it seemed to me as if I ought to be in quite another direction; but the Master knows why, though I do not, and I am quite sure He sent me, so I could not do anything else but come; it was like a direct command to me to come *at once*, and I could not put it away from me, and that is why I am asking you to read them before you sleep.

"And now," he added, "I must hurry on, and I shall not mind my extra walk and wetting, if the Master has sent me with a message to you, lassie, and you listen to it."

Saying this, the kind old man shook Jenny heartily by the hand, and went his way.

Quite awed by his manner, Jenny closed the door and went back into the room.

"He was mother's friend," she murmured; "it was strange he should come to-day. Well, I cannot do less than read the books since he came so far to bring them; but I do not see what good they will do me."

She sat down again on her low stool, and opened one of them, and by the dim light began to read, and as she read, the arrow of conviction entered her soul. God spoke to her, and she was "sore afraid." She saw herself, in His sight, a sinner in her sins, every thought of her heart laid bare before Him. Verse after verse of Scripture stood out in plain letters, only to condemn her, so she felt.

Father and brother had gone to a neighbouring village, to look for work, and had not returned. She was alone, and alone with God, yet she could not go to a neighbour, as she had often done before, when left alone for the night.

She flung herself upon her bed, but not to sleep, only to hide her face. The eye of God seemed to her to rest on her in the darkness, and she feared to meet it. She had been reading of one who had listened to the voice of Jesus, and had come to Him as a lost sinner, and had got from Him the forgiveness of her sins.

"But," she said aloud, "she was not a sinner like I am. He could save her. O God! I am *such* a sinner," she cried, "how shall I escape?"

Morning broke, and still her agony of soul went on. She felt on the brink of hell. As the daylight streamed in she got up and paced the room. There

was no Bible in the house, her mother's beautiful Bible even had been pawned.

She tried to remember verses that she had learned in days gone by at the Sunday school. The only ones that would come to her were such as "The wicked shall be turned into hell," and "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?"

"I have neglected, and I've broken my promise to mother; and oh! I'm such a sinner, how shall I escape?" the poor girl once more cried out.

Suddenly she remembered the other little book the missionary had left; she had forgotten it in her soul trouble.

She took it up, half fearing it would only make her more miserable; but the first words she read were, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to *save sinners*."

Hope leaped up in her soul. "To save sinners!" that just suited her. No longer fearfully, but eagerly, though tremblingly, she devoured every word from cover to cover. It all seemed to suit her case; she wanted to be saved, and she learned how willing the Lord was to save her. She wanted to get rid of her sins, and she learned that He had taken them all on Himself, and had borne the punishment due to her for them—that "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." To this word specially she clung, "Christ Jesus came into the world to *save sinners*."

In that early March morning this sinner and the Saviour met, and the sinner got the forgiveness of her sins, and the Saviour saw "of the travail of his soul" and was "satisfied."

March had come round once again; not a dreary day of wind and rain this day, for a brilliant sun was making its presence felt everywhere, shining cheerily on the busy city streets, streaming into the abodes of the sick and poor, brightening up too the wards of a large hospital, hailed, alike by patients and nurses, as a common blessing.

Into one of these wards a visitor entered. Most of the patients in the ward were known to her; but having been absent for a week or two, there were two or three strangers; and one in the middle of the ward she specially noticed, as being quite young, and looking very very ill. Her eyes were closed, and her breathing was difficult; but the face was calm, and restful, strikingly so.

She opened her eyes, as a little later on the visitor stood a moment by her bed, and the latter said sympathisingly:

"You are suffering much?"

"Yes, more than usual to-day, but it will not be for long," and she smiled.

"Then you know Jesus?"

Her face literally beamed at the sound of that name, as she answered so simply, "He saved me . . . just a year ago . . . it was a March day too . . . but not like this, it . . ."—a fit of cough-

ing cut short what she was evidently going to say, and her new friend whispered gently :

"Saved *by* Him, satisfied *with* Him, and going to Him, is not that it?" And as a sweet smile answered, she added, "You must not try to talk any more to-day, it is too much for you; when I come in next, it may be one of your better days." And turning to a young woman who sat by the side of the bed, and who had been for some time "almost persuaded," she spoke of how the knowledge of Jesus, the Son of God, could lighten the darkest day, and brighten the brightest, and besought her no longer to let one cloud of unbelief come between her soul and Him. The lips of the dying girl in the bed—for dying she plainly was—moved constantly, as though she were praying during this time, and this was a sweet encouragement to the speaker.

Next day was one of the sick girl's better days, and she said to the one who once more sat in her favourite place by the side of her friend's bed :

"You might read to me, Katie."

Katie read one or two chapters from the Bible, and then said, "Maybe you would like to hear one of the little books the lady left yesterday?"

"Yes, I should so much."

Katie began, but she had not got very far before her friend stopped her quite excitedly, saying, "Katie, do you know the name of the lady who left those?"

"No, I am not very sure of it; but I know there

is a woman at the top of the ward who does know it, and knows where she lives too."

"Then do go and find out for me before you go on reading; I feel as if I must know."

Very much wondering at what could so suddenly have excited her usually quiet friend, Katie went up the ward and soon returned with the desired information. The dying girl burst into tears. "I felt sure it must be," she said. Then, after a little, she explained that it was two little books written by this one, that the Lord had blessed to her soul a year before; and that, ever since she had known who the writer was, she had asked the Lord that, if it were His will, she might meet her on earth. "And to think," she added, "that she was standing by me yesterday, and then sitting so long talking with you and close to me, and I did not know."

"She will be sure to be here next week, but maybe I could write and ask her to come before; I am certain she would, when you want to see her so much," rejoined Katie.

For a moment or two the sick girl was silent, then she said gently, "No, Katie dear, do not write, I will wait. My Father knows, and He will give me just what is best, and when it is best for me."

Two days after, the same visitor had a message to deliver to the woman at the end of the ward, and went in again. She had scarcely taken one step inside the door, when Katie met her, saying, "Please, will you come the very first thing and

“speak to Jenny, she does so want to see you. She is the girl in the middle, on the left, who is so ill, you remember.”

It was a touching meeting, very precious to both. For this was the Jenny to whom the missionary had been constrained to take the books in that far-off village a year before, and to whom the Lord, in His sovereignty, had spoken through them.

Little by little she told her friend the simple facts here recorded, and much more too of the Lord's ways with her.

Her illness had come on her gradually. Through a very hard winter she had not been able to earn enough by her needle for food and clothes and fire, and even part of what she could earn her father demanded and spent in drink. Early in the year the disease from which her mother had died had attacked her, and, without proper care and nourishment, its inroads advanced steadily, and now promised ere long to prove fatal.

This was the human side of the story; but it was sweeter to think that the Good Shepherd saw how very rough the road was, and, in His tender pity, having found His sheep, had taken it on His shoulders, and was carrying it quickly, as well as safely, home.

Her missionary friend had once more come, this time in her hour of bodily need, and had found means to convey her to the hospital in the distant city, and there she found the care and nursing she so much needed, and kindness—nay, more—love such

as she had not known since her mother died, for the gentle patient girl won the hearts of all who had to do with her, and she left a savour of Christ in the ward, when she departed, that was not soon forgotten.

But, as she said, it was "not for long." Before the first week in April had ended, the Master she loved had taken her to be with Him.

Conscious to the very last, and joyful in the hope of soon being "with Christ, which is far better," He Himself put her to sleep.

And that moment of Jenny's departure, which was "not death, but victory," was the deciding moment for Katie.

The touch of the same hand that put the one friend to sleep, awoke in the other the movements of life, and she fell at His feet, and owned Him henceforth *her* Lord and her God.

Reader, is He *your* Lord and *your* God? Do you know that you personally are delivered from going down to the pit because He has found a ransom,—is Himself the ransom? If not, let this solemn verse press on your soul:—

"Because there is wrath, beware lest he take *thee* away with his stroke; then a great ransom cannot deliver thee."

"THE MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION."

"And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech by us: we pray 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. 18-21.



N these verses the word reconcile occurs four times, and I wish to point out in them four things as to Reconciliation,—viz., its source; its basis; its objects; and its features or characteristics.

The very word Reconciliation implies that two have been at variance. If you and I need to be reconciled, it is perfectly plain that we must have fallen out, or reconciliation could not be thought of. Sometimes people talk of God being reconciled, and even say that the Son of God came into the world to reconcile the Father to us. Ah! no; far be the thought! It is not God who needs reconciliation, but man. God has never altered. He was at the beginning what He is to-day,—love, perfect love. It is man who has altered; it is man who, having sinned, needs reconciliation. Man needs to be brought back to God, and therefore it is important to see, and blessed to see it too, that reconciliation comes from God's side; and

that makes all the more beautiful what the apostle says, “God hath committed unto us the ministry of reconciliation.” I do not know anything more wonderful. In chapter third of this epistle Paul has spoken of “the ministration of death” and “the ministration of condemnation.” The ministration connected with Moses was the law; that was death and condemnation. Now the apostle turns round here, to glory in the brilliancy, not of the manner, but the matter of his ministry. The preacher or writer may make a poor hand of it, but the great point is, not the way he preaches, but what he has to preach.

How, then, is your heart to be put right with God? For I have to learn that I am all wrong. It is a wonderful thing to find myself, an enemy, reconciled. “God commends his love to us, that, in while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” “If, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.” That brings out man’s true state. It is always well to know the worst of myself—to know the truth. It is far better, in matters mundane, and in matters eternal, to know the whole truth. Man is brought out in a fourfold character in Rom. v.,—“Without strength;” “ungodly;” “sinners;” “*enemies*.” Not only am I by nature without strength, and an ungodly sinner, I have been worse than that, you have been worse than that. The devil may have cast a veil so before your eyes, that you may never

have thought of it, for "when we were *enemies*, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son." It was His love that did it.

What turns the heart of man toward God? The knowledge that God's heart is towards him. If you reason from your own heart, you say, "Do I love God? Not as I ought to." Another question, "Does the Lord love you?" You say, "I am not sure of it." Why? Because, you argue from yourself, that since you do not love God, He does not love you. That is thoroughly wrong. If you are an enemy of God, I have a message from my God to you. Forgiveness! I am an ambassador for Christ: I glory in my mission. Soon every ambassador will be called back. The Lord is coming. You will never hear the gospel then. You may hear the Scriptures; you may hear the trumpet-note of judgment. I have now a message from the offended One. I would be very glad you had it in your heart to desire "conditions of peace," but God has forestalled you. He has sounded His message,—*"Be ye reconciled to God."* Before you have cried for mercy, or sued for peace, He has proclaimed pardon.

(1.) What, then, is the *source* of this marvellous intervention of grace—this wondrous "ministry of reconciliation"—that came in the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ? God is the source. "All things are of God." Who was the first ambassador? It was the Son. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." God is the source of

this lovely ministry of grace, this matchless ministry of mercy, to lost and ruined man? Yes, God Himself.

The heart of God has never changed, although man's history has been one tissue of deceit, and opposition to God, since the day sin came in, and God drove the man out from the garden. God's heart has been yearning over the sinner—yearning over the lost one. I grant you there were difficulties in the way of God going after man, because the claims of His righteousness, holiness, and majesty, and the truth of His word, must be maintained and vindicated; and man, having been put under the test of law to bring out all, was found and proved to be guilty and lost.

At last the moment came, when, as it were, the Almighty woke up, not to judge and condemn man, utterly lost and undone, but, as you have read, "The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world." Did you ever read that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son,"—oh! mark, God *gave* His Son, "that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life?" There I have the *source* of it,—God *loving*, and *giving*. What is man's side of it? *Believing*, and *having*.

All things are of God, "who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ." Reconciliation is putting man, and things, in their due place, their right relations toward God. In Col. i. we read, "It pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell: and by

him to reconcile all things unto himself." It is God who does it. "And you, that were sometime *alienated*, and *enemies* in your mind by wicked works, yet NOW *hath he reconciled* in the body of his flesh through death" (Col. i. 21). Sin has dislocated everything between man and God. Sin has produced the most violent dislocation that ever was known; it has dislocated man from his right relations with God. Sin has come in, and the state of the heart is, alas! thenceforth one of opposition to God. "Enemies in your mind by wicked works." Mark how strong it is. The necessity of reconciliation Scripture contemplates everywhere. It is God who begins it. It comes entirely from God. The Lord in His wonderful pathway down here, as He went through this world, shows what was the object of His mission. Not to curse, but to bless; to bring the grace and goodness of God to man.

The first heavenly ambassador was God's own Son. As for perfect result in time, it was total failure. He Himself says so in Isa. xlix., "I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain." The world was not reconciled. On the contrary, the world triumphed when they got rid of Him out of this scene. The testimony of Scripture is, "They slew him, and hanged him on a tree." He came to unfold the heart of God, and man crucified Him. His mission absolutely failed in that sense. But God raised Him from the dead, and, in unwearied patience and grace, committed to His servants the "word of reconciliation."

God made Christ to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. The notion has got abroad, that because the Son of God became incarnate—became a man,—that by this He lifted up manhood into nearness to God. This is a great mistake. It is by His death, not His life, we are reconciled to God. Do you not see the greatest difference between His *assuming* flesh, and His *giving* His flesh for the life of the world?—between Christ living, and Christ lifted up? A living Saviour could not save you. He himself said, "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). All your prayers could not wipe out one of your sins. Do you think your prayers or sacrifices are going to prevail? Never. Only one thing can blot out sin,—the blood of Christ. "Without shedding of blood is no remission." Not all the tears, or living agonies, of Jesus could blot out *one* of our sins, but His death, His blood, "cleanseth from *all* (every) sin," God's Word declares.

The last verse of our chapter tells us exactly how sin can be put away:—"He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." He Himself was the holy, blessed, spotless Son of God. You may be respectable and religious, but in God's balances you are not full weight—you are unfit for Him. Only by that wonderful death of Jesus could sin be put away. A wondrous moment

was it indeed when the Saviour died on Calvary. The sun shone its brightest till noon, and then there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour of the day, we read in the gospels. There you get the statement. In those hours of darkness the atonement was effected, when the blessed Son of God offered Himself, as a sacrifice, by the Eternal Spirit, without spot to God. Nothing but His death could reconcile you and me to God.

(2.) The *basis* of reconciliation, then, is laid in the death of the Son of God Himself,—not merely that He has come into the world. The ground of it—the confidence of it—is laid in the Saviour's blood. God has sent forth His messengers of mercy to proclaim the ministry of reconciliation on the basis of that finished work. He loves me; He gave His Son for me. On the cross He said, "It is finished." All is completely done. Not a single thing is left to be done. God made Christ to be what I am—sin,—that I might be made what Christ is—the righteousness of God; and the apostle John could write, "As he is, so are we, in this world." It is a question now of righteousness: "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." If Christ has gone into death for me,—aye, and drunk the cup of wrath that my sins demanded,—it is but righteous of God to give me that which is due to Christ. God is satisfied; more than that, He is glorified. Christ has glorified Him about sin, and He has

taken Christ out of death-and glorified Him. It is not merely that you go to heaven in mercy, and through the love of God, but you go there in righteousness on the ground of Christ's work. Sin has been condemned, atoned for, and God “has committed unto us the word of reconciliation.”

(3.) This brings us to the *objects* of reconciliation,—that is, the world. To whom is God addressing Himself now? “God was in Christ, reconciling *the world* unto himself;” “God so loved *the world*, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” The ambassador of Christ is crying to the whole world, “Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech by us; we pray, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.”

You may say, “I never prayed.” True, but the prayer of the sinner is not in the ministry of reconciliation at all. Here the prayer is on God's side, not on yours. He sends the message to you through human lips, or by human pen, but it is God who beseeches. We are ambassadors for Christ. We come to you from heaven, reader, to win your heart for heaven,—for Christ who is there. What an honour to come as an ambassador from the courts of heaven to call the sons of men to go there! God is beseeching, but, alas! man is refusing. The Lord grant you, dear reader, to give up all your opposition, and heed the call of grace as you read this. By-and-by, when the judgment causes your guilty soul to quake with fear, will you

say, "Lord, thou didst not die for me, thou didst not call me." Never. When you see the hand that holds the sceptre of universal power, that hand will be closed, it is true, but it will bear the marks of death, and too late you will learn that His death could have availed for you. As you go down to hell, you will say, "After all, I see He died for me, but, alas! I refused to believe it." Oh the wail of sorrow that will burst from your lip then! God save you now.

(4.) The *features* of this ministry of reconciliation are lovely indeed, and all divine. Who but God would be found praying and beseeching His enemies? "*Not imputing their trespasses*" is another characteristic. God is not imputing your trespasses to you; nay, they were imputed to Christ. What does He impute instead? Righteousness! "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." More blessed still "is the man to whom God imputeth righteousness without works" (Rom. iv. 6, 8).

Who would not be a Christian? If you have never been a Christian before, oh let this ministry win you. I want your heart for the Lord. I want you for Christ. I want you to be reconciled to God. You may say, "I am sin, nothing but sin; there has been in my heart unbelief, sin, and folly." True, but see the proof of God's love, the gospel comes to you. Faith always says, "Lord, I give in; Lord, I believe." You are broken down by the knowledge that He wants you, that He forgives

you, that He loves you ; and you turn round—the enmity gone, the distance annihilated ; and the prodigal finds, not the Father waiting for him, but running out to meet him. That is the way God meets a believing soul. God give you to taste the sweetness of this ministry of reconciliation, which has its source in the heart of God, its basis in the death of Christ, its objects in the world, and its features, God praying and beseeching man, and not imputing trespasses.

W. T. P. W.

SAM B——'S RECEIPT.



SAM B—— lived on a "scrub" farm on the banks of the Mary, in Queensland.

He had led a wild life, as so many in the early days of the colony had ; working hard and drinking hard ; clearing, farming, butchering, and doing other things by turns. He had made money, and spent it as easily as he had made it. Drink, that moral and social blight, had been his curse, and the publican's hut had seen many a cheque "knocked down" by Sam B——. He had had hairbreadth escapes riding home through the bush ; even good horses cannot guarantee drunken riders from injury from falls, collision with trees, &c. His boy had feared the reckless riding of the one whom he

should have been led to respect in everything, and had hidden himself anywhere rather than be mounted before his father in these bouts. Again and again had that father been thrown and dragged by the stirrup by his frightened beast, at the imminent risk of his life. On one occasion he awoke in the morning lying head downwards on the side of a water-hole, within a foot of the water, where he had been thrown the night before.

But all this had told upon his health, and in later years he had been more steady; had bought a farm, and worked upon the kindly soil, which had repaid his efforts, and he was tolerably comfortable. But, in this world as well as in the next, "what a man soweth, that shall he also reap." His health failed him, and he lay upon his bed, from which he never got up.

Whilst preaching in the neighbourhood, I had been told of him by some neighbours interested in his spiritual welfare, and pulled up the river to his landing-place, and found him slowly dying. Conscience had begun to make itself heard, and his past life, with its iniquities, was all before him; but darkness covered him as to how all was to be blotted out, and dread as to how he should stand in the presence of Him before whom he expected shortly to be summoned. All this he did not attempt to conceal.

Presentations of the gospel in ways that reach some failed in this case, he being quite unable to read; and his darkness remained unbroken. Think-

ing over his case before the Lord, and what he had himself told me, I said one day, "Sam, you know what debt is?"

"Yes," said he.

"And what a receipt is?"

"Yes, I've had plenty of them in my time."

"Well now, if you were in debt, and could not possibly pay, and a friend came forward and paid the debt, handing you a receipt, would you fear the creditor?"

"No, of course not, the receipt would settle it anywhere."

"Your sins, then, may be compared to a debt. You have incurred by them the displeasure of God, who demands satisfaction, and it must be rendered to Him, or you cannot escape hell."

"Ah! but can a receipt be had for *that* debt?"

"Yes," I said, referring to the parable of the two debtors (Luke vii. 41, 42), "but the debt must be owned, and the fact acknowledged that you have *nothing* to pay; give up all attempts at compounding with your Creditor. Your debt is ten thousand talents, and your assets *nothing*, then there is free forgiveness."

"But the receipt, what's that?"

"Well, 'Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.' He undertook to pay the penalty; He endured the wrath, He died the death, and He sustained the judgment you deserved. His blood, His death, was what paid the debt; but God raised Him from the dead, declaring to all that He, the

Creditor, was satisfied with the work of His Son, and He took Him up to heaven, and gave Him a place at His right hand. This is really the receipt, —Jesus risen, ascended, and seated at God's right hand. But the Holy Spirit has come down and declared God's satisfaction in the work of Christ, and caused it to be written in this book (the New Testament), so that this may answer to a written receipt, which any poor sinner, who owns to God his condition and helplessness, may hold in his hand, and have the blessed sense of security which it alone can give,—and it cannot lie, nor can it change."

This he seized upon with the avidity of a soul who needed it, as a drowning man clutches the life-buoy thrown to him, and he was at peace.

Thinking over it afterwards, my fears were aroused lest he had too easily entered into peace, so on the next visit I thought I would test him. He was reminded of his sins and past life; of the inflexible holiness of God, whose purity could not be sullied by sin; of the impossibility of a sinner in his sins ever finding a standing-place before this holy God, and of the hell that awaits all such.

Quiet attention and recognition of the truth of the statements made gradually gave way to a nervous excitement, as he saw his reality was questioned, and raising himself up on his left elbow, with his right forefinger he touched several times the New Testament which lay unopened upon my knee, and said, "Well, I can't read, but if

you read in that book, you'll find that *Jesus Christ died for sinners*," and fell back again upon his bed.

Happy Sam! he had got the receipt, and he clutched it steadily to the end, which was not long now.

His farm and prosperity were left. He had worked hard for it of late years, but now he had become entitled to blessings of another character, that he had not wrought for; and shortly he was divested of that which made care for the one necessary, and entered more fully into the other, though he awaits yet the full enjoyment of those spiritual blessings that were made his, feeble believer as he was, in common with all who rest on Christ for salvation.

His funeral in the bush cemetery was romantic. The horses of the cavalcade, that followed the body, composed of the farmers and settlers for miles up and down the river, were "hung" on the post-and-rail fence of the cemetery, or to the gum trees that grew within and without, and the men stood around as we committed his body to the grave; stalwart and strong they were, though with traces of hardship and endurance that mark ordinarily the conquerors of the soil in new countries, and with marks also of that sympathy that knits men's hearts together who have shared common dangers, and won common victories. Some that stood around that grave had found the peace S. B. had so recently found; others knew it not. Some have passed off the scene, while others still remain. The

day will declare how many really trusted Christ for salvation.

And you, my reader, have you made the receipt your own? This is faith's work.

The value is in the blood.

G. J. S.



ARE YOU FORGIVEN?



HIS is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim. i. 15).

Reader, are you a sinner? For Jesus the Saviour says, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Mark ii. 17). Pardon is for the guilty (Jer. xxxiii. 8). Forgiveness is for sinners (Luke vii. 37, 47). Salvation is for the lost (Luke xix. 10). Justification is for the ungodly (Rom. iv. 5). Blessed news!

Dear friend, are you forgiven? Are you happy?

There was lately a man, over eighty years of age, living in a country place in the north of England, who, being taken ill, began to be anxious about his soul. His sins came up before him like a cloud, and he was unhappy. As he became increasingly so, his wife and friends thought his mind was affected. She advised him to put his head out of

the chamber window, and open his mouth wide, that he might get the air, for she said it was air he wanted. He did so, but was no better. Then she said she would take him round the garden to get the air, and this was tried without effect. His misery increased. His soul was weighed down with the burden of his sins. He felt himself a sinner in the presence of God. But he remembered being told in his youth, that it was written in the Bible, that if we confessed our sins to God, we should be forgiven. And in his distress, with honest simplicity, he knelt down in his room and said, "O God, I cannot read, and my wife cannot read, but I am a great sinner, and I have been a great sinner, and I have been told that it says in Thy Book that if we confess our sins to Thee, we shall be forgiven, and so I have come to be forgiven" (1 John i. 9). And peace flowed into his soul. He was happy in the sense of the forgiveness of his sins.

A few days afterwards he said to his wife: "Wife, God has forgiven me my sins, and I should like to forgive everybody, if thou dost not mind." She agreed. Now they kept a huckster's shop, and mantelpiece and doors were marked in chalk with crosses and strokes indicating sums of money owing to them by customers. So the wife took a wet dishcloth and wiped out all the marks. And the old man says, "I am so happy now, since God has forgiven me, and I have forgiven everybody."

Dear friend, allow me to ask you again in all affection, Are you forgiven? Are you happy?

What about your sins? For God says, "There is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not" (Eccles. vii. 20). God cannot accept your thoughts about yourself. You must accept His. But He is able, He is ready, He is willing to forgive you, if (needy, guilty, helpless as you are) you trust His blessed Son, whose precious blood cleanses from all sin the one who believes on Him (1 John i. 7). "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John iii. 16).

Jesus died! What for? Sins (1 Cor. xv. 3). Where is He now? At the right hand of God in heaven (Mark xvi. 19). And where are the sins which He bare on His own body on the tree? (1 Pet. ii. 24.) Gone for ever! (Heb. ix. 26.) So that God can say of those who believe on Him, "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more" (Heb. x. 17).

After the Lord Jesus had risen from the dead, He said to His disciples, "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations" (Luke xxiv. 46, 47). And since he has ascended up into heaven, the Holy Ghost has come down and testified by His servant Paul, "Through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by him all that believe are justified from all things" (Acts xiii. 38, 39).

THE OFFICER'S CONVERSION ; OR, "DO YOU KNOW THAT FOR CERTAIN ?"



PREACHER of the name of M——, who worked with much blessing for many years as garrison chaplain in Stuttgart, was without doubt prepared of God for intercourse with the often rough and hardened soldiers. Of energetic

disposition, through the grace of God he knew how to wield the Word of God as a sharp two-edged sword, so that many who thought themselves invulnerable were reached. The fear of man he knew not, either in his daily intercourse with the officers or others in high position, or in the midst of the soldiers, when he lifted up his powerful voice, and with unwonted earnestness and energy spoke to them of their souls. For the light-minded and the hard-hearted he was a regular son of thunder.

One day he was sitting reading in his study, when a knock came at the door, and upon his "Come in" a richly liveried servant entered, who begged him to come to his master, who seemed to be approaching death.

"I will come directly," replied M——, and a few minutes later he stood by the bedside of the sick one, a man of high birth, in the midst of all kind of pomp and luxury of this world. He lay on the costly couch, with distinct traces of anxiety and

unrest upon his countenance. He had drunk of the cup of sin to the dregs. He had mocked God and eternity, spending his days in rioting and dissipation, and now, although only thirty-six years of age, was a decrepit old man. No wonder that his eyes did not look up with joy. He had always sought to delude himself that eternity was a fable, and the existence of God a dream, and that heaven and hell only existed in the illusioned imagination of a fanatic. While in the midst of the noisy current of this world and its pleasures he had been tolerably at ease; now, however, it seemed that his fine-spun arguments had left him in an inextricable difficulty. At least he had already for some days felt an inexplicable unrest, and this unrest had induced him to allow the earnest military chaplain to be called to his bedside.

In the meantime M—— was not the only visitor. It appeared that the sick man feared to be alone when he received the Lord's message. Perhaps he still hoped that the preacher of the gospel, and the testimony to unseen things, could be overcome by the arguments of unbelief. He took care that one of his light-hearted boon companions, who, like himself, for a long time had rejected all faith in God and eternity, should be present during the preacher's visit. The sick man's friend was likewise a man of distinguished position, and dressed according to the rank of a staff-officer of the army.

M—— greeted him with all the honour which was due to his position, but, without being further

disturbed by his presence, immediately approached the sick one. Leaning over the dying man in a friendly manner, he commenced to speak to him of the love of the Saviour, inviting him to come to Him while it is called to-day; also, he pictured before him the fearful loss of a soul which passed without Him into eternity.

He seemed, however, resolved not to listen to M——'s words. 'As he had one of his friends by him, he felt himself strong again, and was ashamed to confess in his presence that his rest had left him, and that he was so fainthearted and pusillanimous as to think of eternity.

As soon as M—— perceived that, he began in a more serious tone to speak of hell, and of eternal perdition, to which every impenitent sinner was fast approaching. He spoke of the righteousness of God, which it is impossible to mock, and he pictured the terrible judgment of those who hardened their hearts, and seared their consciences as with a hot iron. The staff-officer listened to this for some moments in silence; and although he showed manifestly his discontent, yet he did not dare at once to interrupt him. However, his patience was soon exhausted.

"You would do better, if you kept your words to yourself and went off home," said he to the preacher angrily. "I don't believe that my friend wants your help. He will perhaps die. What do you want to embitter his last moments for, and fill his mind with your illusions?"

"I shall do what God wishes from me," answered M——, quietly. "He wishes to warn this sinner for the last time; therefore has He sent me here; and woe to me if I am silent! God grant that your friend may yet be truly aroused. It is better now to believe that there is a place of torment than to open the eyes in the midst of it, in the fire that never shall be quenched. . . . It is better . . ."

"Stop! stop!" cried the officer, in an angry tone; "go and display your wisdom where you please; go and make old women and children shudder with your tales. We have happily got rid of such follies long ago. All you have just said is a lot of nonsense and lies, not worth the thought of a sensible man. We live and we die, and that is all; there is *nothing after death.*"

Now M——, rising up in all his strength, silently approached the officer, placed himself before him, and looking him straight in the face, said, in earnest and searching tones, "DO YOU KNOW THAT FOR CERTAIN?"

A thunderclap coming suddenly from a cloudless sky on a sunny day, could not have produced more fright and astonishment than this unexpected query appeared to do in the heart of the startled officer. For a moment he stood as one petrified; then he turned, seized his hat and gloves, and hastened out of the chamber without saying a word.

M—— turned again to the sick one, and spoke anew of repentance and conversion, announced to him forgiveness or eternal destruction, heaven or hell, and then returned home.

The dying man was again alone. And now all his peace had entirely gone. The question, "*Do you know that for certain?*" rang again incessantly in his ears, and all that was in him answered, No! More and more he became assured that he was a lost sinner, and with fear and trembling he thought of God's judgment-throne, which he had so often mocked at, and whose existence he had denied.

Early next morning he sent again for the garrison preacher to come and visit him. M—— came, and found the sick one in the greatest distress of soul, and bordering upon despair.

"Oh how I have longed for you to come," he cried to M—— as he entered. "Pardon me that I should have treated you yesterday in so rude a manner! You are right, your way is better than mine. I am not certain; no, I am lost, lost! You have certainty. I see it in your countenance; I perceive it in your words. Oh tell me, How can I obtain this assurance? where can I find rest?"

"By Jesus, and by Him alone," replied M——, deeply agitated. "'He is the way, the truth, and the life' (John xiv. 6). He assures you also of forgiveness and salvation through faith in His shed blood."

And now began the servant of the Lord to announce to this soul, thirsting after peace, the glad tidings of salvation, the blessed news of Jesus. And God blessed His Word. The fortress was conquered, the hard heart was broken; and the same man who yesterday had still done his best to

harden himself against every word of exhortation and warning, now bowed and called humbly on God to have mercy upon him. He only lived a short time, and then went peacefully and joyfully to meet death. All anxiety had disappeared, for he went to his Saviour in the eternal home above—*that knew he for certain.*

And now, dear reader, may we ask you the question, Are you sure of the salvation of your soul? Can you say also with all certainty that you are reconciled to God? and can you look death in the face with rest and joy? Or perhaps you belong to that class of persons which becomes daily more numerous, and who, like this officer, seek to get rid of every thought of death and eternity from their hearts,—and to convince themselves that the Bible is a good book, but not the Word of God,—and all that it teaches of God and eternity is just to persuade men to set up a wholesome barrier against gross evil, and to strengthen the good of their ways.

Or are you one of the fools the Word of God speaks of, which say, "There is no God"? If so, let us also put to you the question of M——, "*Do you know that for certain?*" Perhaps you will reply, "No, I do not know it for certain, but it is also impossible to know anything for certain. No one can be quite sure of this matter."

Then, friend, we can assure you, that many thousands are sure, thanks be to God, and that He not only gives certainty, but also forgives every

one who comes to Him, and makes him fit for heavenly glory. And how have we obtained this assurance? The Word of God itself shows us the way. Listen to what the Lord Jesus says, "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me" (John vii. 16). "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself" (John vii. 17). And the apostle John writes, "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself; . . . and this is the witness, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (1 John v. 10-12). And in Rom. viii. 16 we read, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."

There are several other passages besides in the Word of God, but these three suffice to show that you may enjoy certainty; and it is our earnest desire that you should not rest, until you are fully sure of your salvation and acceptance before God. God can and will make it clear to you. He is the living God, and He is the God of love, who willeth not the death of the sinner, but that he should be converted and live. Therefore turn to Him from your own way! The eternal welfare of your never-dying soul is at stake. Listen no longer to the suggestions of Satan, for he it is who seeks to blind your mind, lest the light of the gospel should shine into your

heart. His endeavour is always to delude men, and to fill their hearts with unbelief or superstition, that he may ensure their eternal destruction. He is always a subtle foe. Therefore flee from him, and turn with a sincere heart to God, who offers you freely redemption and salvation in Christ Jesus—to God, who is Love, and who gives you time to be warned and admonished ere the day of grace shall have passed by.

Whoever neglects it, for him there remains only a terrible judgment. "It is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment" (Heb. ix. 27). And, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. x. 31). Therefore haste that thy soul may be saved! God is a reality; eternity is a reality; and judgment is a reality. Every mocker and despiser of the Name of Jesus will one day find it out to his eternal and immutable woe. They will be made to bow the knee before Him whom they have despised, and to confess that He "*is Lord*, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. ii. 11). They will, with all who have not obtained forgiveness and peace through the blood of Jesus, find their place in the everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels (Matt. xxv. 41). May you never belong to the number of those unfortunate ones. Hasten to Jesus whilst it is called to-day! He is ready to give the fullest certainty, to deliver you from all judgment, and to fill your heart with peace and joy.

FR. GN.

THE EYE OF GOD.



WE are told that one of the most exquisite tortures to which a criminal can be subjected, is to place him in a room, in the ceiling of which is a small aperture, just large enough to allow a sentinel always to watch him. He cannot stir without being followed by that omnipresent eye, and the sensation is said to be beyond endurance. He has the painful consciousness that his every movement is noted, his every action regarded. He cannot, for one single moment, escape from observation; and the longer he is exposed to this uninterrupted course of detection, the more intolerable it becomes. Relief from the fixity of that all-pursuing glance is impossible, so that the position of the offender is worse than death itself.

This is quite conceivable.

But, my reader, there is an Eye that is ever fixed on you—one that does not sleep nor grow weary.

From morning to night, and from night to morning—during your hours of activity or of slumber—throughout the performance of your business, your pleasure, or your sin, that Eye is faithfully, diligently, taking note of your every movement.

It is the Eye of God!

That Eye is omnipresent. It is unaided by the light; it is unhindered by the dark. "Darkness and light are both alike to God."

Never did shadow follow more untiringly than does that Eye trace your footsteps; for "the eyes of the Lord are in every place beholding the evil and the good" (Prov. xv. 3).

"In every place." At once in palace and hovel; in mansion and prison; in the mart and at home; in the crowd, and on the individual; on the saint and on the sinner.

It is like the light itself, from which nothing can be hid! Nothing hid!—no, "for all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do" (Heb. iv. 13).

Now, dear reader, are you happy beneath the gaze of the eye of God?

You remember that when Adam sinned, he hid himself from God. Ah! he could not then bear the rays of God's eye.

The thief quails beneath the eye of the detective. The guilty conscience dreads, above all things, the inspection of God's eye!

Adam's effort at self-concealment was of short duration; for, ere long, he heard the voice of God—a voice that every ear must hear—calling to him by name, and saying,—“Adam, where art thou?” His retreat, behind the trees of the garden, being no longer safe, he had to come out perforce, and own that he was naked. It was the sense of his degradation, his fearful fall, that had made him ashamed of himself, and led him to avoid exposure.

This was useless.

It is utterly useless to attempt to hide from God. Think of Adam appearing in the light of God's presence, and standing consciously under His eye. What a moment!

Then God sifted, with gracious patience, the whole matter of the Fall to its source. He passed sentence first on the serpent, then on the woman who had been beguiled, and last on the man who had hearkened to the voice of his wife.

And then God clothed them. His government demanded their expulsion from His presence, but His grace considered their need, and covered them. Thus did God deal with the first sinner.

After the lapse of many centuries, there lay, on his face, in a chamber of a house in Damascus, a sinner—the chief—the foremost and most bitter opponent of Christianity. It was Saul of Tarsus!

He had gone thither to break in pieces the witnesses of Jesus. But now he is himself broken in pieces. The foe is conquered, the enemy is crushed. The light he had hated has pierced his own soul, and revealed to him his error. He is converted! He feels his guilt. He is in an agony. Now, list to the words, "Behold," says God, "he prayeth!"

Yes, the Eye of God penetrated the walls of that Damascene chamber, and saw this penitent persecutor, prostrate in the dust, and pouring forth prayers for pardon—a lovely sight of a truth. What could be more grateful? Do not the angels rejoice when one sinner repents? And here we

have the true and deep repentance of the greatest sinner that ever lived.

Behold, "behold, he prayeth!"

Charming fact! God beholds the tears and the sighs and the anguish of the repentant sinner. If His eye beholds the evil, it also sees the anxious, and an "Ananias" (meaning, "a gracious gift of God") is assuredly sent to comfort the troubled one, telling of Jesus the Saviour of such as he, and of a gift of God, surpassing all human conception.

Thank God that His eye fails not to see the bowed and burdened soul, nor His ear to hear his cry. If God be quick to detect evil, He is as quick to acknowledge repentance. The seraph flies with pardon. The truly anxious soul need not fear the gaze of that eye. Self-judgment anticipates and averts the judgment of God, and takes the criminal, morally speaking, out of condemnation.

How important is true repentance! It turns that all-seeing eye from being a constant cause of terror, into a guide, a friend, and a protector!

Thus we read in the history of God's people, whose necks were galled by the yoke of Egypt; of the double activity of His eye in the wonderful statement, "I have seen, I have seen the affliction of my people which is in Egypt, and have heard their groaning, and am come down to deliver them" (Acts vii. 34). God intensifies, as it were, His regard for His people when they are called on to suffer affliction. He sees and hears, and in due time, delivers them.

Now, then we rejoice in that eye; we invite its unintermittent gaze; we would, above all things, have its rays fastened upon us.

"I will guide thee with mine eye," said God to David. "Thou seest me," said poor, thirsty Hagar, whose thirst was seen by God, and her need supplied.

Hezekiah spread the letter of Sennacherib before the Lord, asking Him graciously to read its contents. He did so, and rebuked the bold blasphemy of Assyria's proud monarch. A poor widow was seen casting her all into the treasury, and was remembered of the Lord.

"He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous" (Job xxxvi. 7).

"The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayers, but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil" (1 Pet. iii. 12).

Ah! reader, are His eyes thus upon you, or is His face thus against you? I can conceive nothing more awful than the avoided face of God Almighty, or His countenance withdrawn! It means more than hopeless despair; it is largely the punishment of hell.

I know nothing more blessed than the light of His countenance. His smile, His encouragement, oh, it is better than life! Once I dreaded that face, and shrank away from that eye; sin made me avoid it. But, unable longer to feign concealment, I came from my foolish retreat, confessed my sins

to His gracious ear; received His frank forgiveness, was placed inside His banqueting house, fed on the fatted calf, learned the fulness of His love, and found myself at home in His presence.

Mighty change! wide difference! glorious salvation! And the eye that now looks upon me is the eye of my Father.

In closing, let me once more remind you, dear reader, that you cannot hide yourself from Him. It is a deeply solemn truth, happy for the faithful soul, but full of discomfort and misery to him who goes on in sin, that, at all times, without intermission, his ways are the object of the close, careful, accurate inspection of

THE EYE OF GOD.

J. W. S.

THE SCOPE OF GOD'S EYE.

"Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee."—Ps. cxxxix. 7-12.

"HE IS MY SAVIOUR."



WHILE on my way to a little gospel meeting in the village of C——, I was asked by a Christian lady to visit a young woman who was evidently dying, and whose state of soul she was anxious to assure herself of.

Following her directions I mounted an outside stair, and entered a small attic room, where the signs of deepest poverty were manifest in every direction. The only occupants of the room were a middle-aged woman, on whose face care and toil had left indelible traces, and her daughter, a girl of twenty summers. It was just sunset, and the little window facing in that direction permitted a full stream of golden light to enter the apartment, which only made more visible the squalor and dirt which reigned supreme.

The evening rays fell full on the recess containing the bed whereon lay the one whom I sought. She had evidently been a tall and handsome girl, but now the fell destroyer, consumption, had left nothing but skin and bones. Her hair, jet black, lay in tangled quantities scattered over the pillow, in striking contrast with the pallid pinched face which was turned towards me, the brow covered with a cold dew, while the lips and eyelids were

firmly closed. I saw at a glance that death was near at hand, which a touch of the pulseless wrist confirmed.

Having addressed a few inquiries as to her illness to the mother, who seemed pleased to see me, I turned to the dying one and said, "Are you in pain?" Receiving no reply, I repeated my query in a louder tone. Again there was no response, and then the mother put in, "I don't think she can hear you, sir, she's too far gone now to hear." It almost seemed so, but I determined to try again, so bending over her I said, "Do you know Jesus?" Oh, the power of that Name on the heart that knows its meaning! Immediately the departing spirit seemed to be called back from the border land, the eyelids lifted to permit a lustrous pair of eyes to fix themselves a moment on the stranger who put this simple query, the lips parted, a smile of unutterable sweetness lit up the dying countenance, and then faintly and with an effort she whispered, "He is my Saviour."

"Thank God," I rejoined; "and how long have you known Him as *your* Saviour?" Her eyes filled with tears at the remembrance of His mercy as she replied, "Not long, only since I lay down. I have been a terrible sinner, but Jesus loved me, and died for me, and I know He has washed all my sins away in His precious blood."

"And you are quite ready and happy to go?"

"Quite happy," was her answer, while the smile of joy again brightened up her moistened cheek,

and then, her strength exhausted, she relapsed into the soporous state from which the mention of the Name of Jesus alone could recall her.

I left, and she passed away a few hours after.

Rarely have I seen a more touching instance of the power of the Name of Jesus. “Thou shalt call his name JESUS; for he shall save his people from their sins.” To the believer’s ear that Name is fragrant beyond description. Reader, may I ask, has it any fragrance for your heart? Do you know Jesus? Can you say, “He is my Saviour”?

Rest not merely in saying, He is *a* Saviour. The devils know that. You are not right till you can say, “He is *my* Saviour.”

It is really a most blessed thing to be able to truly say those words. And who can say them? Every poor guilty sinner who trusts in Jesus’ precious Name. He likes to hear the sinner say, “*My* Saviour.” All the world will sooner or later own that He is *a* Saviour; but what He prizes, is the simple confidence of the heart that simply yet boldly says, “He is *my* Saviour.” Would you not like to be able to say it? Well, then, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and *thou shalt be saved.*”

"I AM WAITING FOR THE POWER."



LONG to believe, but I must wait for the power." Times without number have we been met with the foregoing form of speech, when seeking to press upon souls their solemn responsibility to believe the glorious tidings of God's salvation.

"You know," it is argued, "I cannot believe unless God gives me faith. It is His gift, and I must wait till He gives it to me."

In this way many an anxious soul is kept in doubt and darkness on the one hand; and on the other hand, by the same line of argument, careless souls seek to shelve the momentous question of their eternal salvation.

Now, there is a measure of truth in the above statements, but it is one-sided truth, and the one side is turned the wrong way. This is a very common wile of the enemy. It has often been remarked that the devil is never more to be dreaded than when he appears with the Bible in his hand, misquoting and misapplying texts of Scripture. Thus he perverts the precious truth of God, and casts dust in the eyes of men. He does not openly deny the truth, but he hinders its application, and robs it of its force. He says to the anxious soul, "It is no use your worrying yourself. You cannot

be sure that this gospel is for you. It is for the elect, and if you are not one of them it is not for you ; if you are, you must get the power to believe, you must wait." In this way precious souls are well nigh driven to despair.

Then, again, he says to the careless soul, " You need not trouble yourself about this question of salvation. If you are to be saved, you will be saved, but you must wait God's time." Thus the conscience is deadened, the heart hardened, the understanding darkened, and the soul, abandoning itself to its lusts and its pleasures, rushes headlong to eternal perdition.

To all these wily arguments of the devil the Word of God furnishes an answer clear, distinct, and perfectly conclusive. It meets the soul with such a powerful array of most blessed evidence as to hush for ever the fears of the anxious, and sweep away every vestige of a foundation from beneath the feet of the caviller.

And, first of all, I would call the attention of the reader to five grand facts—five infallible proofs of God's love to the sinner, and His most gracious desire that "*all* should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth"—facts and proofs perfectly unanswerable.

1. " 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). Mark the words, " world " and " whosoever." There is no limit, no barrier, no question.

They are so full, so wide, so all-embracing that not a sinner on the face of the earth can refuse their application. There is no preliminary question to be settled by the sinner; no condition to be fulfilled; nothing to wait for; no possible ground for saying, "I must wait till I get the power to believe." The glorious fact stands out before us, in all its mighty, moral power, placing every one who hears it under the most solemn responsibility to believe it. For any one—in view of such a magnificent demonstration of divine love—to say, "I am waiting for the power to believe," is simply to make God a liar (1 John v. 10).

2. But not only did God give His only begotten Son, but we are told in Isaiah liii. "it pleased Jehovah to bruise him." God forsook His beloved Son on the cross, hid His face from Him, caused all the billows and waves of His righteous wrath against sin to roll over His blessed person on Calvary's cursed tree. "He delivered him up for us all." "Made him to be sin for us." "He set him forth to be the propitiation for our sins."

The Son of God might have come into this world to visit us in our ruin and misery. He might have lived and laboured, and gone back to heaven from whence He had come, leaving us in hopeless misery, worse off than ever, by reason of such a light having shone upon our moral gloom.

But, all praise to His precious, peerless name! He did not. He came, not merely to visit sinners,

but to seek and save them. "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which is lost" (Luke xix.). "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners"—even the "chief" (1 Tim. i.). Having come down from heaven, He would not return thither, until, by His precious atoning death, He had made out a title for us to be there with Him.

3. But this leads us to our third substantial proof. Not only did God give His Son, and bruise Him on the cross, but He raised Him from the dead. "The God of peace brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant" (Heb. xiii. 20). The God of judgment met the divine Sin-bearer at the cross, and there settled for ever the great question of sin; and "the God of peace" has given us the unanswerable proof of the settlement by raising Him from the dead. "He was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification" (Rom. iv.).

4. But all these glorious facts of incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection, might have taken place, and the writer and the reader of these lines have heard nothing about them. Thanks and praise to our God, He took care of this. He sent down the Holy Ghost in the name of the risen, ascended, and glorified Saviour, to announce these glad tidings to us. That august witness came down, on the day of Pentecost, to make known, in

every language under heaven, the glad tidings of God's full and free salvation to every creature.*

5. But the stirring events of the day of Pentecost might have taken place, God the Holy Ghost might have come down from heaven and announced His glorious message of pardon and peace, and gone back again. Thanks and praise to our God, He did not. He has been here ever since. He is here still, patiently labouring and testifying, amid all the opposition and enmity of earth and hell, men and devils, to make known to the ends of the earth the salvation of God. He has, in patient grace and tender mercy, caused the four grand facts already adduced to be committed to writing. *He has written a Book!* Wondrous, glorious, precious fact for us!

Yes, reader, we want you to weigh this our fifth infallible proof. What God did, in divine power, on the day of Pentecost, He has, in divine patience, been doing ever since, namely, speaking to men in

* It is very striking and full of deepest interest to mark the contrast between the way in which the law was given in Exodus xx., and the gospel in Acts ii. The former was given in one language and to one people; the latter, in every language under heaven, to all nations. What a soul-stirring fact! When *law* was to be given, setting forth man's duty, it was confined to one language; but when *grace* was to be published, setting forth God's precious salvation, every dialect throughout the whole world must be employed.

Reader, what do we learn from this? We learn *the heart* of God. We learn that He did not want to talk to you and me about law, but to tell to our very hearts the sweet story of His love. Can any one think of all this, and coldly say, "I am waiting for the power to believe" that God loves me? Assuredly God has proved, beyond all question, His love to *man*.

their own dialect wherein they were born. He has caused His blessed Book, originally written in Hebrew and Greek, to be translated into two hundred and eighty dialects, and wafted all over the earth. He has watched with loving, faithful vigilance His precious Book during long dreary centuries, preserving it from all the efforts of the devil to destroy it, and employing various agents to translate it into the different languages, and distribute it all over the earth.

Reader, we would affectionately ask you, Can you any longer say, "I am waiting for power to believe"? Have we not placed before you an array of facts, a body of evidence, sufficient to convince your heart of the truth that God desires your salvation? Why take all this pains—why put into your hands His own peerless revelation—why send you such a message, if He did not mean you to make your own of it? Do you really want salvation? If so, He says, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life *freely*." He is infinitely more willing that you should have it than you can be to get it. Why hesitate? He has given His Son; bruised Him on the cross; raised Him from the dead; sent down the Holy Ghost; put into your hands, or within your reach, the Holy Scriptures; and, in the face of all this, you ~~are~~ looking for some indefinable feeling in yourself without which all that God has done and said goes for nothing.

But you inquire, "Must I not wait God's time?" He replies, "*Now* is the accepted time; and *now* is

the day of salvation." "*To-day*, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." The fact is, all this idea about waiting for power, waiting for faith, waiting God's time, is grounded on misapplied texts, and one-sided theology. Be assured it will not stand before the judgment-seat of Christ; it cannot stand before His word. He says, "If I say the truth, why do ye not *believe me?*" He appeals to the truth of what He says as the ground on which He ought to be believed, to wait for anything to make His word true to you is to make Him a liar. Tremendous consideration for all whom it may concern!

In conclusion, we would most earnestly and affectionately entreat the anxious reader to abandon at once and for ever the false and dangerous ground indicated by the expression, "I'm waiting for power." It is simply a delusion used by the enemy to rob you of the present joy of God's salvation—the sweet sense of His love. There really is nothing to wait for. God has done all that was to be done: and He tells you so in His Word, which is settled for ever in heaven. Do not dishonour God's Word and wrong your own soul by raising objections which have no foundation in the Word of God. Just take Him, at His word. Believe what He says, because He says it. This is faith; and faith is the gift of God, from whom cometh down every good and perfect gift. Think not for a moment that faith is something of your own. Far be the thought! It is simply setting to your seal

that God is true. It is believing with the heart what God says. "If thou shalt confess with the mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Rom. x. 9).

Do you ask, "What is meant by 'believing with the heart'?" We reply by asking you, Are you really interested in the blessed salvation of God? Does your heart desire it? Then accept it in your heart this very moment. Believe it, not merely in the head, as an historical fact in which you have no particular interest, but in your heart as a precious message from the heart of God to you. This is believing with the heart unto righteousness. Oh! dear friend, do not any longer hesitate to set your seal to the truth of God. Accept Christ as God's gift to you, and you will no longer have to say, "*I'm waiting for power.*"

We would, ere parting company with the reader, seek to impress his mind with the solemn fact that the expression which stands at the head of this paper involves the denial of man's responsibility to believe the plain testimony of God, and make God the author of his unbelief. It amounts to this, "I would believe, but God withholds the power." This is the real state of the case. We give, in reply, 2 Thess. ii. 11, 12:—"And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who *believed not the truth*, but had pleasure in unrighteousnes." Mark this. Men will be damned

for not believing. If man is not responsible to believe the truth, can he be judged for rejecting it? "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

C. H. M.



"REMORSE, OR REPENTANCE."



ANY people confound remorse with repentance. Remorse is the sorrow caused by the consequences of sin or folly; while repentance is sorrow caused by a judgment of the spring of the evil actions irrespective of consequences. For instance, a man embezzles his employer's money. He is discovered, and becomes frightened as his imagination conjures up pictures of assize courts, prisons, and warders. He expresses great sorrow for his crime, and makes many promises of future amendment. The affair is perhaps hushed up, and the first opportunity of taking *safely* what is not his own he seizes. This is but a picture of many a case. He has never repented of his crime. On the other hand, a young man who has been carefully brought up falls into the same sin. But in his quieter moments his conscience smites him, and irrespective of consequences he confesses all to his employer, and places himself in his hands to do what he thinks fit. He is perhaps treated as the other young fellow was, and shows

his *repentance* by being the most devoted servant his employer ever had ; and in as short a time as possible refunds his master what he has taken.

Dear readers, we have all sinned against God far more than we imagine. We read a picture of this in Matt. xviii. 24—"And when HE had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him which owed him ten thousand talents" (£1,875,000 at the lowest computation). If you wish to make a ragged urchin ashamed of his rags, you can do it most effectively by placing him in a gorgeous room in a palace. So when the blessed God comes out in the love of His heart, and devises means at a most stupendous cost, and offers mercy, full and free, to poor guilt-burdened, hell-bound sinners, it is enough to produce repentance ; for Scripture says—"The goodness of God leadeth thee (O man) to repentance" (Rom. ii. 4).

Christ said "that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke xxiv. 47). Wonderful goodness ! that the gospel should *first* be sounded in the ears of His murderers at Jerusalem.

My dear reader, repent of your sins and rebellion against God. Trust His written word, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 31). The woman that was a sinner, in Luke vii., was attracted by the grace and love of the Lord Jesus Christ. So strongly was she attracted to Him, that she even followed Him into

the proud Pharisee's house, and there behind Him she wept many precious tears of repentance upon those feet which were soon to be nailed to Calvary's tree for her. Jesus turned round to her and said, "Thy sins are forgiven" (Luke vii. 48). In heaven the tears are for ever wiped away by God Himself; but there are everlasting sobbings in hell. The proud sinner, who in time refused to weep the tears of repentance, is now for ever weeping the hot scalding tears of remorse, which afford no relief. The King said to His servants, as to him who had not the wedding garment, "Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. xxii. 13). Men gnash their teeth when they are in a rage. So in eternity will there be everlasting, remorseful tears, and the impotent gnashing of teeth in rage and misery.

Dear reader, God in His love has made the way to heaven and happiness as open as ever it can be. But on the road to hell he has planted as many obstacles as love could devise. Christ has died upon the cross; the work which satisfies God as to sin has been perfectly done, and now the Holy Ghost is pressing home the message of grace and mercy upon sinners. Ere you finish reading this paper, trust the person and work of Christ. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life" (John iii. 36).

A WORD IN SEASON, HOW GOOD IT IS.

“**N**OW were you first brought to know the Lord?” I asked one day of a young woman, who was in great bodily suffering, and with no prospect of recovery.

“It was a godly man’s prayer for me that first touched my heart, and made me think,” was the answer she made, and then went on to say:—“I was living as servant in a clergyman’s house, and though I went to prayers morning and evening, and thought it quite right and proper, I never thought about my soul or its eternal welfare, never prayed for myself. After a time another clergyman came to stay with my master and mistress, and the first morning he was there, and each morning while he stayed, he took morning prayers, and, before closing, he prayed for my master and mistress, and then for *me*. Many clergymen had stayed there before, and I was used to hearing my master and mistress prayed for, but to my knowledge I had never been prayed for in my life before, and he prayed for me as though he really wanted me to be blessed and saved.

“I went about my work as usual, but I could not forget it. It seemed so strange that any one should do for me what I had never done for myself,

—ask for my salvation. Next morning it was the same; again that man of God prayed for me. How I listened to every word! He seemed to think the Lord was interested even in me, and I wondered if he could be right. It evidently struck my master, for at evening prayers he too prayed for me; he had never done so before, nor did he after that visit of the clergyman's. Three days passed so, and now I was terribly anxious to know how I could be saved. Now I was crying to God to let me see how I might be saved. I did not like to speak to my master or mistress, still less to their stranger-guest, and I longed for Sunday and church-time.

“The strange clergyman occupied my master's pulpit. I listened eagerly for every word of the sermon. The text was, ‘God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.’ He showed our lost condition by nature, God's great love, the work of Christ by which we can be saved, and the simplicity of what our part is,—we have nothing to do but to believe it all, and trust the blood of Jesus. He spoke of salvation as God's gift, which we must have as a gift, or not at all. I saw then how I might be saved, but I was not sure if I trusted enough in Jesus, if I believed aright, and I came home still miserable.

“I was putting the tea on the table, when the clergyman who had preached came into the dining-

room. Perhaps he noticed that I had been crying; I do not know; but he asked me, very kindly, if I understood the sermon. I said, 'Yes.' Then he asked me, 'Have you this gift of everlasting life?' and I said, 'I am afraid I have not.' 'Do you want to have it?' he asked; and now I could not keep back the tears any more. 'I want it more than anything!' I said; 'I would give everything to know I had it. 'Come into the study with me,' he said. I said something about my work, but he said, 'I will speak to your mistress;' and I followed him into the study. He prayed first very earnestly, asking the Lord to open my eyes, to show me how simple a thing it is to trust Jesus. And then he read me two or three scriptures, such as 'Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out;' and showed me it is the One we come to who saves, the One we believe in who *gives* everlasting life, and not the greatness of our faith, the strength of our belief, that gains it for us,—that God delights to give it to every soul who wants it.

"I left the study, knowing that God had given it to me, and ever since then I have never had a doubt. It is five years since, and I have had sickness and sorrow, but the Lord has been with me in it all; and oh! I shall bless Him for ever and ever; that He put into His servant's heart to pray for me, only the servant of the house, whom he had never seen before. But for that I might now be dying without Christ."

"Sow ye beside *all waters*."

HEBREW AND GREEK AND LATIN.



HAVE seen a schoolmaster, in teaching to write, place his hand over the boy's hand, so as to guide the pen, and form the letters. It was somewhat similar one day, hundreds of years ago, when Pilate, the Roman governor, wrote a title to place at the head of a cross upon which One was to be crucified. That One had stood before him for examination, but with his utmost efforts he could gain nothing, and three times he distinctly declared to those who had brought Him, "I find *no fault* in him." But they clamoured the louder for His blood; nothing would content them but His crucifixion; until at length the governor, governed by the people, gave way, and delivered Him to be crucified. Of Pilate's guilt in thus surrendering the guiltless to death we must say nothing; in a day that is coming he must answer for himself before the Judge of all the earth.

But now, according to custom, he must write a title, declaring why the crucified One suffered. What could he write? Thrice, before all, he had pronounced Him faultless, what can he now state as His crime? He wrote in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin,—and God's hand, though unseen, guided his—"THIS IS JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS." Whatever might be Pilate's thoughts, God

had a truthful testimony, so far as it went, in the three great languages of the world.

“Write not,” said the chief priests, dictating to the governor,—“write not, *The King of the Jews*, but that *he said*, I am King of the Jews.” But Pilate would listen to them no more: said he, “What I have written I have written.” So God’s purpose stood, and in the face of those religious men hung the threefold testimony to their guilt, they had crucified their King. Oh, solemn, awful crime! Jehovah was the King of His people; He had come to them in the lowly grace of *Jesus*, but they valued Him at a slave’s price, and craved for Him a malefactor’s death! Much as they disliked the yoke of Rome, they infinitely preferred it to the presence of Jesus; they cried, “We have no king but Cæsar.”

Now, dear reader, have you understood that the world, even by its religious leaders, has rejected God the Lord? Do you wonder at all the difficulty which surrounds even the wisest statesmen as they seek to subdue the evil passions of men, and fill the earth with peace? Wonder no longer. He who alone can rightly rule the world has been rejected and murdered. God will overturn, overturn, overturn, until He shall come whose right it is to reign. But let me ask, while we wait for the rightful king, is your heart loyal to Him, or are you joining hand in hand with His murderers? Oh, the terror of that day when He shall say, “But those mine enemies, which would not that I should

reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me" (Luke xix. 27).

But the title spoke of *grace* as well as of *guilt*. Where lay hidden the grace? In the precious name of Him who hung there—"This is JESUS." By it our minds are carried back to a moment before His birth into this world, when it was said by the angel to Joseph, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matt. i. 21). The name itself means Jehovah the Saviour. What depths of grace are enfolded in that sweet name! His people were wretched and guilty; but in His name He pledged Himself to be their Saviour from sins.

But *how* could He save them? Only by dying as a sacrifice for their sins. Death, judgment, and the eternal lake of fire, were all merited by His poor, sinful people; but in love He offered Himself without spot to God, the sacrificial victim, to take away their sins. Mockingly the chief priests said, "He saved others, himself he cannot save" (Matt. xxvii. 42). How little did they think of the deep truth underlying their impious words! If He would save others from their sins, thus being true to His precious name, Jesus, He could not save Himself from the awful agonies of the cross. He endured them all; bore the judgment due to His people's sins; finished His blessed work; and now, having been raised from the dead, is seated at God's right hand, the proof of the acceptance of His sacrifice. Never was more awful consummation of

guilt than in the cross of Calvary ; never was such wondrous manifestation of grace. The title testified to both guilt and grace.

And it was written so as to appeal to the whole world in its distinct classes. The religious Jew, boastful of his privileges, saw, in his familiar Hebrew characters, the name of the One who hung upon the cross, and that the only true reason for His hanging there was, "*This is Jesus.*" The Greek, proud of his philosophy, was appealed to in the letters of his own refined language, "*This is Jesus.*" The Roman, master of the world, with warlike courage, military skill, and clever politics, found there an answer to his sinful state, written in his Latin tongue—" *This is Jesus.*"

Those who gazed upon that cross have passed away long ago ; but in this nineteenth century representatives exist of those three classes. The Jews still exist, carrying on their religion. And along with them are many thousands of others who are equally zealous for their religion. But learn, dear reader, that church-going, baptism-trusting, sacrament-taking, prayer-saying, sermon-reading, alms-giving, sick-visiting, work-doing, nor any forms of an empty religion can ever save thee. The title that spoke to the Jew of old speaks now to thee, "*This is Jesus.*" See thy Saviour upon Calvary's cross, bearing judgment for thee ; and now at God's right hand, the " same Jesus " ; and put thy trust in Him. " If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy

heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Rom. x. 9).

Many are there, also, in this day, who follow in the steps of the ancient Greek, and boast of their great scientific knowledge, their deep philosophy. But such wisdom can never save the soul. "This is Jesus," said the title of the cross to the Greeks. Some years afterwards Paul, the great Apostle of the Gentiles, preached amongst them "in weakness, and fear, and much trembling," his one theme being "Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (1 Cor. ii.). The gospel by which they were saved was this: "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor. xv. 1-4). Thus wholly apart from all their wisdom, they were saved as poor sinners, through the death and resurrection of Jesus. O wisdom-loving reader, when thou hast learned the vanity of philosophy, as regards the salvation of the soul, remember that it pleases God "by the foolishness of (the) preaching to save them that believe" (1 Cor. i. 21).

The third class is formed of politicians, and how numerous are they! Men have their schemes of government, which they toil to establish. Though nations have risen and fallen, and the ebb and flow of the tide continues, yet men deem the glory of all nations transient except that of their own. Yet is the doom of every nation fixed. The Word of God tells of days when "shall the God of heaven set up

a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever" (Dan. ii. 44). GOD'S KING has hung upon this world's cross, a rejected man. God has replied, "Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool" (Ps. cx. 1; Heb. i. 13). He shall soon be manifested as "King of kings and Lord of lords" (Rev. xix.). Now He is set forth as the Saviour of sinners; "This is Jesus." O busy politician, no longer be linked as a traitor with His murderers, but bow at His feet owning Him as *thy* Saviour and Lord! "Be wise *now*, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. *Blessed are all they that put their trust in him*" (Ps. ii.).

In Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin, the writing ran, embracing in its testimony religious Jew, philosophical Greek, and political Roman. O reader, whatever *thou* art, sinful but loved, is it yet written upon *thy* heart—

"THIS IS JESUS"?

“BID THEM NOT PUT IT OFF.”



HAD been for some weeks attending on Mrs H——. An incurable disease slowly, but certainly, was shortening her days, but, God be thanked, as the outer man grew weaker, and more attenuated, the inner man developed in vigour and power. She had known the Lord many years, her heart was in the enjoyment of His love, and, as she felt the chill hand of death each day more firmly settling on her, her spirit brightened, as the prospect of soon beholding Him, who had loved her and died for her, became more distinct before her soul. Two or three days before she passed away I said to her, “I am going to speak this evening at a cottage meeting in a village; there will be many young people there, have you any message for them?” She looked surprised at my question, and replied,

“I do not know them; how can I have any message for them?”

“True,” I said; “but you are on the very verge of eternity, on the border land, within sight of the gates of glory; have you no word to send back to those that are young and careless?”

For a minute she fixed her eyes on me in silence, and then, deeply feeling the words she uttered, and which came with great power and solemnity, she replied, “Tell them to come to Jesus, and bid

them come *now*, and warn them not to put it off till a death-bed, for it takes it all——" Here her strength and breath failed, and she could not finish the sentence.

I gathered her meaning, and responded, "By 'It takes it all,' I suppose you mean, that, when the death-bed is reached, the body is so racked with pain, and the mind so feeble, that the affairs of the soul, if not previously settled, are neglected then, as the body claims such attention." She nodded her head in full assent, merely adding,

"Yes, bid them not put it off."

I then said "Good-bye! I will take your message. We shall not meet down here perhaps any more, but we shall meet by-and-by, shall we not?"

Slowly she withdrew her emaciated hand from beneath the bed clothes, and, pointing with one finger upwards, softly replied—"Up yonder!"

They were her last intelligible words to me, I have never forgotten them, though years have rolled by since they fell upon my ear, and sure am I that "up yonder" I shall meet her.

And now, dear reader, permit me to ask, shall I meet you "up yonder"? Will you form one of the ransomed throng that will gather round the Lamb, and swell the chorus of redeeming love "up yonder"? I hear you say, I hope so. This will not do, it must be more than hope. With you hope means uncertainty. In Scripture it never does; there, it is the heart's bright anticipation of

things not seen as yet, but which it *knows* it possesses. The personal knowledge of Jesus alone can give this. Have you come to Him? If not—oh! I beseech you to give heed to the pointed word of warning above related. If unconverted, the enemy knows well how to whisper in your ear, “There’s time enough.” God’s saint replies, “Warn them not to put it off till a death-bed.”

Friend, this is a true witness, beware lest thou shouldest despise her testimony, and find at length that instead of being “up yonder,” as you vainly “*hope*,” your portion is in “outer darkness,” and your bed in hell for ever. This is the inevitable issue, and final condition of all procrastinators. If you would be “up yonder” you must respond to the words, “Tell them to come to Jesus, and bid them come *now*.” Yes, *now*, even NOW, while this paper is in your hand. Come, simply as you are, to Jesus. Your sins are no hindrance. For sins and sinners Jesus came—to purge away the former, to deliver and save the latter. If you come to Him by simple faith, He will not put you away, but He will give you to know, that, by His death and blood-shedding, He once and for ever put your sins away from God’s sight, so that they can never rise again; and, further, that in His own death a foundation is laid in righteousness on which you can stand before God “clean every whit,” your heart also now possessing the blessed assurance that through His love, and finished work, you will shortly be with Himself “up yonder.”

CAIN'S WORLD.

"For as in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah 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."—MATT. xxiv. 37, 38.



we go back to the fourth chapter of Genesis, we find Cain the murderer going out from the presence of the Lord, settling down in the land of Nod, surrounding himself with all that the natural man delights in, away from God. "They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage." They had the art of building cities, and they gave them names; they were acquainted with the arts and sciences, and able to embellish their abodes with great skill (Tubal-Cain being an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron); in fact, they lived in an atmosphere of human delight, luxury, and ease; solaced by the soft strains of music. They bought, they sold, they planted, they builded.

What a picture of the natural man as we see him in this nineteenth century! How comfortable he has made himself! How anxious is he in the interests of his family, and careful that his name shall not be lost sight of by others! He is interested in politics: every measure calculated to improve the town, or locality, in which he resides has his earnest consideration. The first city that Cain built was no doubt a model one in every

respect, for it was called Enoch, which means "well regulated." It is not difficult to trace this vast godless system called the world. It is that which has grown up since the fall, since man forsook God and placed himself under the dominion of Satan. It is that which interests, absorbs, flatters, and fascinates man apart from God. It is the use man makes of all the abilities God has given him, *after having left His presence*. Man uses all his powers (of course under the guidance and influence of Satan) to make himself happy and comfortable on this earth without God. He desires not the knowledge of His ways.

We see this exemplified in Matthew's Gospel, for after Jesus had cast out the devils in the country of the Gergesenes, we read that the whole city came out and besought Him that He would depart out of their coasts. The devil, after showing Jesus all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, said, "All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine" (Luke iv. 6, 7). There is no question, then, but that all the power, and the glory, that this world can offer, is of the devil. He is the prince of this world: "The god of this world who hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

Dear reader, if you are one whose whole life is a round of these things, "What shall we eat? or,

What shall we drink ? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed ?" pause, I pray you, and consider that "now is the judgment of this world," that the whole world is brought in guilty before God. That it is rushing along, hoary with age, stained with the blood of prophets and of saints, "reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men," What an awful fate will be yours when the Lord comes as a thief in the night,—for when they shall say, "Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape." You may not have committed any very great sins, or lived an immoral life,—that is not the point. You are going on from day to day, and from year to year, quietly it may be, and respectably it may be, but you are going on WITHOUT GOD, and such the Scripture saith hath NO HOPE.

The destroying angel will soon pass through this scene, and nothing but death, and judgment, will be your doom ? What is it, then, that can shelter you from the coming storm ? What is there that you can avail yourself of, ere that awful day—the day of the Lord—bursts with all its terrors upon this guilty scene ? Will thy prayers protect thee ? (There will be a great prayer-meeting then, Rev. vi. 14-17.) Will thy reformation avail thee ? Will thy works stand thee in stead ?

No, dear friend, none of these things, blessed and important as they are, can shelter you from coming wrath. Nothing but the blood of the Lamb of God's own providing will avail in danger's hour. R. M. H.

A MAN OVERBOARD!



T was at the Sailors' Rest, or Bethel, as it was called, that I first made the acquaintance of Sandberg.

He was a Norwegian, and was engaged as a seaman and lamp-trimmer on board the ship "Loch Katrine," bound for London with a cargo of wool and grain.

Of a quiet and reserved disposition, he had few companions among the lively sailor lads and landsmen who attended the "social meetings," where they were invited to spend their evenings, and have a chat over a cup of cocoa, or give recitations, and sing songs, of a nature consistent with the place, and so keep out of the public-houses, and bad company, which abounded on every side.

I had decided on returning to England, and had lost one vessel, but was on the look-out for another, when I came across Sandberg. He told me the captain of his vessel wanted some hands to complete his crew, so I sought and obtained a berth for home.

Sandberg was a Christian, and a diligent student of his Bible, so that, as he moved in and out among the men in his quiet manner, he was dubbed "religious and stupid."

Religious and stupid or not—I speak it to my own shame—he *lived* his Christianity, and bore out, as far as in him lay, the words of the Lord

Jesus, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (John xvii. 16), while I was "hail fellow, well met," with them all, and my religion was not noticed.

We had a severe time of it, right down to Cape Horn; gale upon gale, with snow and hailstorms—fifty long days and nights before the Cape was rounded, and still no fairer wind or better weather.

"All hands" were more or less in low spirits, longing for warmer weather, and trade winds; some, with bitter cursing, declaring we should never reach home, cursing the ship, the captain, the weather, and (awful wickedness!) God Himself, who alone could save, or send them to the bottom, lost for eternity; but amidst it all Sandberg remained tranquil and quiet, and why? Because he was resting on the only source of quietness for the soul—the Lord Jesus Christ.

One night when the gale raged with unabated fury, the ship was head reaching under close canvas, and "the watch," wet and cold, turned in at midnight, after making fast sail, and Sandberg's watch remained on deck.

At a quarter to four in the morning "all hands" were called to reef the foretopsail, and went aloft.

It was pitch dark, and hailing fast. We were all benumbed with cold, struggling with the sail, when a startling cry was heard above the roar of the storm, followed by a crack as of something falling on deck. My first impression was that a block had fallen from aloft, but the loud cry of

"Man fell off the yard, sir!" undeceived me. In my bewilderment I called out, "Who is it?" There was a pause to find who was missing, and then came the loud cry, "Sandberg has fallen off the yard, sir!"

Poor fellow! he had fallen backward from the yard on to the fore-castle rail—nearly ninety feet—breaking his back, and then had gone overboard. There was no chance of saving him, for no boat could live in such a sea.

In the midst of life we are in death, one moment alive, the next in *eternity*. But, thank God, Sandberg was ready, the only one of the crew, perhaps, of the ship's company, numbering fifty souls.

Oh! the mercy of God in sparing those who were not ready to meet Him.

Reader, are you ready?

Can you go as suddenly into the presence of your Creator?

Have you had to do with God about your sins?

If you have not, I tell you solemnly you cannot count on *a to-morrow*. Not another five minutes ahead can you call your own.

"In the midst of life we are in death."

"It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb. ix. 27). Have you stopped to consider this? Hear the words of the Lord Jesus Christ, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my words, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall *not* come into judgment, but is passed from death unto life" (John v. 24). Is judgment before you or behind

you? If before you, while you have the chance, grasp the offer of salvation. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 31).

"Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all" (Jas. ii. 10).

There is no chance for you, whether your sins be few or many, unless, realising your lost condition, you rest your guilty soul upon the work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

"Christ died for our sins." Will you not say, Christ died for my sins?

Oh! listen to His words—"Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out."

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life."

Come to him *now*, for "*now* is the accepted time, *now* is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2).

May the Lord lead you, dear reader, if still unsaved, to know your need of Him, and to now secure the salvation of your precious soul. H. W. S.



THREE SCENES.



CENE I.—A little village in the north of England. A middle-aged man in deep and earnest conversation with two boys, whom we will call No. 1 and No. 2. The theme—Christ and His salvation. Affectionately he pleads, urging immediate decision for Christ, while their

hearts were young and tender ; showing the danger of delay, the many devices of Satan to which they were constantly exposed, and telling them of the joy and blessedness of being linked to Christ by a living faith, knowing God as their Father, and Christ as their own precious Saviour, with a prospect of being for ever with Him in His home above. His words were not without their effect on his young hearers, who wept, as, out of a full heart, he spoke of the One who was everything to him.

Scene II. — Fourteen years later. The same village. No. 1, after an absence of many years, visits the home of his boyhood ; finds out his old companion, No. 2. Let us hear what they have to say to each other, after a little conversation on ordinary topics.

No. 1. Do you remember, many years ago, when Willy Young, the mason, was working here ?

No. 2. Yes, quite well.

No. 1. And do you remember when he used to take you and me down the ——— Lane, and speak to us about our souls ?

No. 2. Indeed, I do ; I can never forget that as long as I live.

No. 1. Well, do you know, I never forgot his words ; wherever I have been, they have followed me. Many and many a time my heart has longed to know the joy and peace he used to speak of, and which he was so anxious that you and I should know and possess ; but what seemed to cling to me

more than anything else was the memory of that dear man's holy, consistent life. I could never forget him, so like what a Christian ought to be,—so separate, so quiet, and yet so full of joy, so kind to all, yet never mingling with the throng.

No. 2. You have just expressed my own thoughts of dear Willy, for I never met another like him. You could not be long in his presence without finding out that his home was not here, and that very influence made you long to be like him.

No. 1. I have some good news to tell you, dear —, and that is, that dear Willy's testimony has not been lost on me, through God's grace, although it was after many years, yet thankful I am to say that his Saviour is mine, his joys are mine. I, too, know what it is to have that peace which passeth all understanding, and not only so, but the present knowledge of forgiveness of all my sins, and a *certainty* of a home with Jesus. Can you say this, dear —? Simple faith in Jesus puts you into immediate possession of it all.

No. 2. I wish I could. I only wish I could. How often these things have come before me, and how clearly I see the hollowness of all this weary round of religious machinery, and I really have longed for something solid under my feet; but somehow or other the impressions would wear off, and things are still as they were,—an empty routine, a lifeless profession, yielding no joy or happiness.

No. 1. It's a dangerous line you are travelling on, dear friend. You may reach the terminus any

moment, and then eternity—eternity—with all its solemn realities, lies before you. Is it not an appalling thought that every moment you are running the risk of losing your precious soul, while at the same time you can be saved at once, by casting yourself unreservedly on Jesus—just as you are?

No. 2. I know you are quite right; every word you are saying is the solemn truth; I know it, I feel it, and I wish I could see things as you do.

No. 1. Well, you see, I was deceived a long time myself. I thought it was necessary for me to go through a long course of repentance, and to show, by my genuine sorrow for all the sins I had committed, that I was a worthy subject for God's mercy, and that He would, when He saw I had repented enough, cause me to feel some sweet, happy influences in my soul, and thereby I would know I was all right. Such was the gospel as I heard it preached on every hand; but it is not the gospel of the New Testament, for when, as a hopeless case, I left off striving after repentance, and ceased struggling to make myself fit for God, and as a lost and helpless sinner laid myself at Jesus' feet, *just as I was*, in all my *guilt and misery*, it was then He raised me up, filled my heart with joy and gladness, saying to my soul, in unmistakable language, "Thy sins *are* forgiven thee: go in peace." Dear —, don't wait till you are better, for that you will never be. If you know your need, that's your fitness. If you are a sinner, and know it, you are

just the one for whom salvation is provided. Put in your claim as such; and on the authority of God's Word, you can put out the hand of faith, and *take* the "water of life freely" (Rev. xxii. 17). These are God's terms to a needy sinner. *He gives*, and it is yours to take. How simple, and yet what oceans of blessing you are thereby brought into. Dear —, I leave to-morrow, but do let me press the reality of these things upon you; think of the issues at stake; think of the awful results of putting off till it is too late; it must either be the glory with Jesus, or the place of eternal weeping. The choice is in your own hands to-day, but it may not be so to-morrow. You and I may never meet again on earth, but how glad I would be to see you decided at once about this most important matter.

After a little more conversation, the two friends parted.

Scene III.—The same village a few months later. No. 2 lies on his dying bed. A sudden attack of illness had laid him low. A few days of terrible suffering, and the end approaches. A little respite from pain is granted,—a time of quietness. Loved ones are bending over him, thankful for the calm his pain-racked body had not known for days. Listen, his lips move; no need to strain the ear to catch the sounds. Clearly and distinctly the words come from his dying lips:—

"The Lord's my Shepherd, I'll not want.
He makes me down to lie
In pastures green: he leadeth me
The quiet waters by.

My soul he doth restore again ;
And me to walk doth make
Within the paths of righteousness,
Even for his own name's sake.

Yea, though I walk in death's dark vale,
Yet will I fear none ill :
For thou art with me ; and thy rod
And staff me comfort still.

My table thou hast furnished
In presence of my foes ;
My head thou dost with oil anoint,
And my cup overflows.

Goodness and mercy all my life
Shall surely follow me :
And in God's house for evermore
My dwelling-place shall be."

A good many years have passed away since Scene III. took place. No. 1 still treads the narrow path that leads to everlasting life. He looks forward to a moment of reunion with his dear companion, when all the redeemed shall meet the Lord in the air (1 Thess. iv. 17), and together share with Him, in those sunny plains of glory, the results of that which *He* accomplished on Calvary's cross.

Dear reader, these are no myths, no mere phantoms of a disordered brain, or dreamy speculations of enthusiasts, but blessed, solid realities, to be

known and enjoyed now. The feeblest believer in the Lord Jesus Christ stands in the full, unclouded favour of God, and all the varied treasures, the unlimited blessings, the boundless resources, spoken of in the Scriptures of truth, are placed at his disposal. Slight not such magnificent grace. Remember each moment speeds you on to your eternal destination. Where is it to be? Awful will be your remorse if you linger until the door is shut. But regrets will not avail you then; no voice of mercy will ever reach those caverns of the lost.

Dear unsaved friend, do you long for happiness? Do you want solid rest and peace for your weary heart? You may have some vague thought as to what true happiness is; you have thought of heaven, with all its unsullied glories, and you have pictured to yourself the joy of those who dwell there; but all your thoughts and conceptions of happiness on earth or in heaven fall infinitely short, for no unconverted soul can grasp in the smallest degree the pure joys and blessings to which a poor sinner becomes heir the moment he believes in Jesus. The blessed occupation of a child of God, according to the Scriptures, is to be ever finding out new fields of glory, and, basking in the full sunshine of His Father's face, he waits the moment of his Lord's return to usher him into the full, unclouded glory of His presence for ever. This is the portion of *every* believer. Is it to be yours, dear reader?

PAGES FOR THE YOUNG.

CURLY'S CALL.



SHORT time since I was invited to address a party of bright children who had met to celebrate the birthday of a little friend. Hearing them boisterous in their merriment in the parlour, I remarked to mine host that I feared

the "new wine" would not be received well after their drinking of "the old," for they naturally would say, "The old is better." (See Luke v. 39.) However, seizing a chance, as they sat hot and tired after a game, I proposed that we should sing.

Reminding them that there would be an end to their pleasure party, and some might be cross next morning, I asked them to listen while I said a few words to them, and they sat as quiet as mice,—even the babies were wonderfully good.

The word given me was one taught me by my dear mother, when quite a little fellow. As you may never have read it before, you will find it in Jer. iii. 4 —"Wilt thou not from this time say, My Father, thou art the guide of my youth?" The scripture was addressed by the Lord to "backsliding Israel." I wish, however, to take it as a question from God to each one of you young readers to encourage you to make a fresh start with Him "from this time."

God knows all about you, what you think, what you do, and what your name is. Yet, as one who knows your "deceitful" heart, and all the evil of your nature, He proposes that you should call Him "My Father," and take Him for your "guide." Feeling your badness need not keep you back, for if you read the next verse He says, "Behold! thou hast *spoken and done evil* as thou couldest." Oh! how true of you. Yet because "Christ died for the ungodly," "suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, to *bring us to God*," He can bid you even in His holiness turn to Him and cry, "My Father, thou art the guide of my youth," for He wishes you to become His dear child "from this time."

Merely to know your sinful self will never save you, but to know God is eternal life. You need a guide, and never can a surer one be found than in God Himself through His Word.

A little girl was early dressed to go to a tea meeting. Getting impatient she set off for the hall upon her own account. It was a dark winter night, so she missed her way. In fact, Miss Seven-year-old lost herself. There was great consternation at home, and after a search she was found in the police-office. Now she thought she knew her way alone without a guide, but she was wrong. You too will miss your way to heaven, and find yourself in the prison-house of hell unless you from the heart can say, "My Father, thou art the guide of my youth." Oh, listen to Him to-day.

Till you know God as your Father, you are a wanderer from home. Love makes home on earth. Love makes heaven home for the heart that believes that "God is love," and, by the gift of Jesus, proves His love to you. God would by love draw you to Himself.

There was a sharp-witted young girl who had a dog. One day she missed him, and thought he might be off to the city with her father. There was a telephone between the house and the office, so she rung up her father and asked, "Is Curly there?" He replied he was.

"Lift him in your arms, and put his ear to the receiver," said the little maiden. The father did so, when she cried,

"Come home, Curly, come home."

Doggie looked astonished, for he heard his mistress' voice, but saw her not. However, he *understood* what was wanted, and instantly *obeyed*, bolting out at the door and making tracks for home. Curly was a wise and obedient dog. Will you from this time be a *wise* and *obedient* child? One calls to you from the Father's house, "*Come!*" "Arise, he calleth thee." Wilt thou not from this time say, "My Father, thou art the guide of my youth"?

"Come!" the 'Father's house' stands open

With its love, and light, and song;

And returning to that Father,

All to you may now belong!

Come! for night is gathering quickly

O'er this world's fast-fleeting day;

If you linger till the darkness

You will surely miss your way."

T. R. D.

GOD OUR SAVIOUR.

“ . . . God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.”—1 TIM. ii. 3-6.



IN this short passage we have seven precious truths.

1. “GOD OUR SAVIOUR.”—Blessed title! What a wondrous fulness! Our God is a *Saviour-God*! Genesis to Revelation witness to this truth. Type, shadow, figure, promise, in the Old Testament; and the revelation of His love in the gift of His Son in the New,—bear an imperishable testimony to the blessed fact that our God is a Saviour-God.

Do people read their Bibles? Strange that so many look upon God as an arbitrary Judge, with such precious words before their eyes as the above, “God our Saviour.” Alas, how thoroughly has Satan blinded men to His true character! God an arbitrary Judge! when He has said that judgment is *His strange work* (Isa. xxviii. 21); that He is not willing that any should perish (2 Peter iii. 9); that He is a Saviour-God, who will have all men to be saved (1 Tim. ii. 3, 4); and that He has no pleasure in the death of a sinner (Ezek. xviii. 23-32). True that, for His own glory, He must judge the impenitent and unbelieving, but the desire of His heart of love is

that *His house may be filled* (Luke xiv. 23). Think of what follows.

2. "WHO WILL HAVE ALL MEN TO BE SAVED."—Precious soul-encouraging words! Sin is here. Man's heart is full of it; and all are lost. But God our Saviour wants all to be saved. No question of the privileged Jew here. God's salvation is for *all*,—every tribe, tongue, people, nation under the sun. High, low, rich, poor, young, old, all are included. Sinners of few or many sins, God will have *all*. This does not mean that He will exercise His absolute will, and force men to be saved, but that His will is for the blessing of all; that He wishes all to share the great salvation that He has provided. This is the desire of the loving heart of a Saviour-God. But men are responsible beings, not mere machines; and the sad thing is, that God wants us to be saved, but we don't want to be. Perhaps some one says in his heart, "Oh, I can't believe that, I should think all want to be." There is not a natural heart upon earth, friend, that does not love darkness better than light, earth better than heaven, and self better than God. If men could be saved their own way, and have this world and the next too, doubtless many would like it. But to be saved in God's way, and, through faith in that which is unseen and eternal, to let go that which is visible and temporal, is far from the compass of the heart without God. Yet notwithstanding man's inimical and rebellious state against Him,

God our Saviour is Love, and will have all to be saved. And not only saved, for we read,

3. "AND TO COME UNTO THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH."—Here is something more. Many speak of *salvation* as though it embraced everything, calling it *the truth*. It is part of the truth, no doubt, and a very precious and important part for poor sinners. It is a grand thing when a guilty lost one gets his soul saved. Eternal praise is due to Him who saves him from an everlasting hell, to spend an eternity of bliss with Himself in glory. But God is very rich, and the blessings He prepares are many. We are very apt to curtail what He has revealed, but it is a false humility that asks God to stay His bountiful hand, and true wisdom to accept all that He so graciously gives. We must not, then, be satisfied with *salvation*, blessed as that is, for God wants us also to come to a knowledge of *the truth*. It is impossible here to unfold all that *the truth* embraces. Paul, who wrote these words, goes on to say in verse 7, that he is *a teacher* of the Gentiles in faith and verity, and in his teachings you will find a very extensive and important range. In Colossians i. he treats of his *two ministries*, the gospel and the church. If you are saved, you will find it very profitable to search into both.

4. "FOR THERE IS ONE GOD."—It was especially needful to establish souls in that day in this all-important fact, for the Jews had refused Him in the Person of Christ, and the Gentiles worshipped

many false gods. The condition of millions to-day is the same, and in enlightened Christendom men have fallen into gross superstitions on all hands. Masses of people either bow down before graven images, and worship the creature instead of the Creator, or falsify the true character of the only true God. He is Light and He is Love; the Holy One, Omniscient, Omnipotent, Omnipresent; the Creator, and the Saviour-God. His ways are perfect. Infinite wisdom shines out in all. Unsullied holiness, infinite love, perfect righteousness, matchless grace, unwearying patience, characterise the gospel, and witness that God is One, and a Saviour-God. God who created, the Lord God in Eden, the God of glory, Jehovah, the Most High, Emmanuel, the God of all grace, are all One and the same God.

But sin has put men at a distance from Him, and His infinite holiness forbids the entrance of sin in His presence. Hence the need of a mediator, and the precious words which follow.

5. "AND ONE MEDIATOR BETWEEN GOD AND MEN, THE MAN CHRIST JESUS."—One God, and *one Mediator*. Man in his blindness and unbelief has proposed many, the Virgin, saints, &c. But God says *one*. And not between men and God, but between God and men. It was God Himself that provided a Mediator; God that sent Him into the world. Man far from God through sin, had totally lost his way. But God, in perfect love, gave His Son, a Mediator, one to come in between, to bring him

to Himself. And this blessed Mediator was a *man*, "the man Christ Jesus." The Son of God became the Son of man. He came into the midst of men, Himself a man in every sense of the term (sin apart), a perfect holy man, the man Christ Jesus, who can enter into our case most fully and perfectly. Wondrous mystery! God manifest in flesh (1 Tim. iii. 16), the babe of Bethlehem, the Mighty God, the Son of Man who came to seek and to save that which was lost (Luke xix. 10)! How blessed to know that there is a Mediator! Without Him all are eternally lost. But His life on the earth will not put sin away. The Mediator must die. Hence we read:—

6. "WHO GAVE HIMSELF A RANSOM FOR ALL."—Blessed Lord Jesus! *Who gave Himself*. Yes, our God is a Saviour-God. Nought else could glorify God, and save sinners, but the death of Christ. God was dishonoured through sin, and man guilty and utterly lost. But Jesus gave Himself, the lamb without blemish and without spot (1 Peter i. 19). The ransom price to free the slaves of sin and Satan, was Jesus' precious blood. "Without the shedding of blood is *no remission*." But the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin (1 John i. 7). Christ's propitiation was sufficient. God forsook His Son on Calvary as the sin-bearer. Jesus *finished the work* (John xix. 30). God is glorified. No other offering is needed. Your best works are mixed with sin. One work only was needed. One

Person only could do that work. The work is the work of redemption. The redeemer is Christ. *Who gave Himself.* The infinite claims of the infinite God were infinitely satisfied by the infinite sacrifice of the infinite Son, the man Christ Jesus, "*who gave himself a ransom for all.*" Yes, FOR ALL! Our Saviour-God wanted all to be saved, and so He provided *a ransom for all.* Blessed, joyful news, the ransom price is paid. We are not redeemed with silver and gold, but with *the precious blood of Christ*, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot (1 Peter i. 18, 19). The Son of Man gave His life a ransom not only for many (Matt. xx. 28), but "for all." And now that the price is paid, the work done, God wants everybody everywhere to know it, and to believe it. Hence we also read:—

7. TO BE TESTIFIED IN DUE TIME.—For nearly nineteen centuries of grace, the testimony has gone out, the joyful news of salvation for the guilty and the lost. God raised Christ from the dead, and gave Him glory, and sent down the Holy Ghost, and in due time (or, as it may be read, in its own times) the testimony was sounded out in all countries (Col. i. 23). Still from the glory the joyful sound is heard. Still the Holy Ghost, through thousands of tongues and pens, as well as through the written Word of God direct, points perishing sinners to a Saviour in glory, the man Christ Jesus, the Son of God, the mediator, the ransom. Reader, WHAT THINK YOU OF CHRIST?

We oft read in histories of kings and nobles taken prisoner in wars, and of a ransom demanded for their release. What would men think of a king, who was prisoner in a foreign land, and who hears the joyful news that the king whom he had made war against, has accepted the ransom furnished of his nation for his release, and yet refuses to believe it? His prison door is open; he may go free and return to his kingdom if he will, but he neglects the message, despises the messengers, and refuses the permit of the conqueror to depart. The whole world would think that he must be mad. No such case ever was.

But how about the sinner, who has rebelled and sinned against God? How about the captive of Satan, who hears the joyful tidings that God Himself has given His Son, and that He has paid the ransom price, and yet neglects so great salvation, despises the heralds of it, and refuses the grace of a Saviour-God! This is madness indeed! How shall such escape the just judgment of a holy God?

Reader, once again, what think ye of the one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all? Have you trusted Him? This very paper is a witness to the truth of His Person and work. We testify in due time to the Saviour of sinners, and if you neglect the testimony, it will turn to your eternal confusion and condemnation at that day. May God in His boundless grace break you down, and

give you to believe on Him, that you may have the joy and certainty now, that you are *ransomed* for ever by *His most precious blood*. E. H. C.



“THAT’S DELIGHTFUL.”



WO servants of the Lord had been together proclaiming the sweet tidings of grace, and the audience had mostly scattered, when our attention was drawn to a middle-aged person, evidently deeply affected by the “good news” she had been hearing. Taking a seat by her side, I said, “Well, is it all settled?”

“No, I can’t say that; I wish I could.”

“What is the difficulty?”

“I don’t see things clearly. You know I have been a kirk-member all my days, but that goes for nothing, I see, and I don’t feel as I should like to.”

“It is not what you *feel* that is important, but what you *believe*. Are you anxious to be saved?”

“Indeed I am most anxious.”

“And when do you wish to get salvation?”

“Oh, at once. To-night, surely, if I can,” was her eager reply, as she burst into tears.

“Well, you can have it now, if you like to. Listen to the Word of God,—‘The word is *nigh* thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is,

the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt *confess* with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt *believe* in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, THOU SHALT BE SAVED' (Rom. x. 8, 9). Do you understand that? Do you *confess* with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and *believe* in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead?"

"I do indeed."

"What do you believe? For whom did He die?"

"For all."

"Tell me one for whom He died."

"He died for *me*."

"You believe that?"

"Indeed I do."

"And did He die for your sins?"

"I believe He did."

"And has He done all that was necessary for your salvation?"

"I believe He has."

"Yes, and God has raised Him from the dead, because all is done. Do you believe that also?"

"I do. I really believe in Him."

"And are you prepared to confess,—yea, do you confess, the Lord Jesus with your mouth?"

"Yes, I gladly do."

"Good; then God says, 'Thou shalt be saved!' Will you be saved, do you think?"

"I should like to be."

"Listen to what God says,—'Thou shalt be saved.'"

"That's delightful!" she exclaimed, with a fresh flow of tears.

"Yes, indeed it is; but if any one asked you, 'Are you saved?' what would you say?"

"I don't feel sure that I could say that I am."

"The point is not what you *feel*, but what does God say about the one who believes, and confesses with the mouth. He says to such, 'Thou *shalt* be saved;' and if He says, 'Thou shalt be saved,' is that not tantamount to saying, 'Thou art saved'?" She did not quite see through this, so I went on,—

"Would you rather have a £1 note, or a sovereign?"

"They are both alike in value."

"True, but one is gold, and the other is only 'I promise to pay one pound.' Now, God's note is, 'Thou *shalt* be saved,' whereas the gold might stand for 'Thou art saved.' This is just what Eph. ii. 8 says, 'For by *grace are ye saved, through faith.*' Again in Luke vii., the Lord gave a weeping woman, like you, the knowledge of pardon, salvation, and peace, in twelve words. It was a short sermon, but what a full one! 'Thy sins are forgiven. Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace' (vv. 48-50). What wondrous words, 'Thy sins are forgiven'! Are you the woman He is speaking to now?"

"I am. I believe He forgives me."

"Go on. What next does He say?"

"'Thy faith hath saved thee.' I believe it. I see it clearly. I see it distinctly. It is so plain. *I am saved.* Thank God." And the tears of joy fell faster than ever.

"How did you come into this hall to-night—in peace?"

"Oh, no; unhappy, unsaved."

"And, now, how will you go?"

"He says, 'Go in peace.' I shall go home forgiven, saved, and at peace."

"Yes, you have a living, glorified Saviour, and all that is left you to do, is to bless and praise Him. He has saved you, and you have just to live for Him, who died for you. Do you think He will let you drop?"

"I think not; I'm sure not if——"

"If what?"

"If I continue faithful and hold on to Him."

"Stop, I'll give you a text with no 'if' in it. 'My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I *give* unto them *eternal life*; and they shall never perish, neither shall any (angel, man, or devil) pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one' (John x. 27-30). Now, with that before you, do you think He will let you drop?"

"No, never, I am sure He will not. It all depends on Him;" and she entered into rest, and we bowed the knee, and thanked God together.

Reader, cannot you similarly thank God?

THE RENT VEIL; AND ROMANISM, OR RITUALISM.



It is impossible to exaggerate the significance of the veil as characterising an order and system which was God's, up to the moment when He, who alone could do so, entirely set it aside. It is of great importance to see that God, who had set up and appointed that veil, rends it from the top to the bottom. The meaning of the veil was, that God could not, in consistency with His own character, *then* come out, and man could not go in; the meaning of the rent veil is that *now* God can righteously come out, and man can righteously go in. But let us see how all this is brought about.

It was even on the ground of the death of His own Son; the cross is the meritorious ground on which God can act in the fullest grace, through righteousness, towards sinners; yea, more, could establish for all who believe, an entrance within the veil into His own immediate presence, as well as lay the foundation in His death of a peace with God, which nothing could disturb. Think of what a blessed and significant change was this to all that had gone before. Man had, to the utmost of his power, perpetrated his worst, and consummated his sin. Jesus, the Son of God, hanging on the cross between two robbers, and dead, was the great witness of

this. Man's wicked hands had been stained with the blood of the Holy One and the Just, the only true and faithful witness of God upon the earth.

It seemed as if it were beyond all, the moment for man, instigated by Satan, to show himself in his true character as a hater and rejecter of God. All this came out plainly at the cross. Man's wish was there gratified, and Satan's plan was there carried out; and the Lord Jesus, the Father's only and beloved Son, consigned to a death of both agony and ignominy on man's part, is the solemn witness of it. But man could go no further in the prosecution of his guilt and hatred towards the Son of God. Death closed the door to anything else on man's part, save, indeed, it be the manifested hatred of the Jews, as evidenced by the sealed stone and watch set upon the tomb of Jesus, along with the plotted lie and bribe of the priests. If this be excepted, man's little power, creature power, could go no further; having put forth all its strength, death is its terminus. Now here it is where God begins to work, His own special work. He rent the veil which His own word had erected; the moment had arrived for God to display both Himself and His power. It is not without significance that it is *three* times related in the Scripture that the veil was rent. Mark it well, *not removed*, *not rolled up*, but *rent in twain* from the top to the bottom, and the result as well as meaning of it, is thus described in the words of Scripture, "A new and living way."

This rent veil is the evidence of the termination, by God Himself, of the Jewish system, and that which synchronised with it, even the death of our Lord Jesus Christ, is the righteous ground of the opening of this "new and living way." Now a new and living way, in contrast with a veil, which barred all approach to God previously, is the death-knell of all that false order of things now becoming so widespread and popular. It is impossible for any true believer in the authority of God's own word, as it is written in Hebrews ix. and x., to be either Romanist or Ritualist; the attempt to either continue or reconstitute that system which the veil characterised, is rebellion against the truth of God, a solemn denial of the great truth of Christianity, and a degrading of the souls of those who become the slaves of the "doctrines and commandments of men."

There is another great fact in connection with Christ's death, which is of deep moment, and to which Scripture bears distinct witness. When we speak of the Jewish system, with its characteristic veil, it must not be forgotten that under it man, as under law, was on his trial, and in responsibility before God. But this needs a little fuller and more detailed unfolding.

At the beginning God made man upright; that is, he was created innocent, having neither malice, nor corruption, nor lust. Man was also bound to obey, and this was put to the proof by his being forbidden to eat of one tree alone, which was

in the midst of the garden. Further, observe that the fruit of this tree was not itself evil, but the eating of it was evil, *because it had been forbidden*. Now we are met with the solemn fact that responsible man, when tempted, falls. He listens to the suggestions of the enemy; receives into his mind distrust of God; becomes thereby separated from God in his heart and affections; sets up his own will, and lust, in pride; and hence now it is the distinguishing feature of man fallen to exhibit all these,—*self-will, lust, and pride*.

The end of innocence had thus arrived, and God drove out the man, and barred his access to the tree of life, as well as the possibility of his ever returning to innocence again. It is then from this we commence the trial of man, extending over a period of about four thousand years. During the first part of this period the trial of *government* followed upon innocence, until the time came when the world was entirely given up to idolatry. Then it was that God called out one man, and in him a nation, and in due time God separated this nation to Himself, through the redemption out of Egypt.

This people, at the first, stood on the ground of pure grace before God, but were tested by the law under which they elected to place themselves. This law represented the claim of God as well as His authority; their accepting it as the term of their blessing, and the condition of their relationship with God, manifested their entire blindness of heart, as well as ignorance as to themselves. Here

then man was tried and tested in a new way, and on a new ground, and this runs on during the history of Israel until we reach the period known as the carrying captive into Babylon. During all that time God pleaded by His messengers in long-suffering goodness with a guilty nation, who refused, notwithstanding, to hear His voice. Then it was He removed His throne and government from the midst of Israel, and transferred the supreme power to Gentiles, of which the kingdom of Babylon was the commencement. (See Dan. ii. 37, 38.) Now we have come to man on his trial in the Gentile, as he had been previously in the Jew; and it is well to note the order of government found here,—even the despotic,—the very form which men think the best, as affording them the power to carry out all that is good and wise. What is the result of this fresh trial of man? The history of Nebuchadnezzar is a full answer to this question, and the records of Scripture are full as to it. It is very evident that Gentile power is *corrupt, ambitious, and violent*,—that it cannot stay at home, which the Word of God means when it describes them as ravening beasts.

But there was another trial of man, very different from all that preceded it, both in its nature and consequences. Under the previous testings man's failure had been amply and fully demonstrated, and that, too, in the manifold patience of God, yet *the state of his heart in regard to God and good* had not been exposed. But when Christ came, God

manifest in flesh, manifesting in Himself as man, and amongst men, such blessed patience, grace, gentleness, and goodness, men hated and rejected Him. "Now they have both seen and hated both me and my Father." This blessed manifestation of God in grace was, in very truth, *the revelation of God*, and it had its own blessed character in this, that it was in contrast with the *government of man*, as in God's previous dealings with him under law, as the expression of the claim of God upon man.

This revelation of God in grace brought out the utter darkness and alienation of heart in which man was as regards God. The manifestation of goodness and grace, in perfection in Christ, was met by hatred, violence, and death on the part of man, as far as he was concerned. So far as it depended upon man, he drove from the earth God revealed in perfect goodness and love. The history of man, morally, is now closed, and for faith the death of our Lord Jesus Christ is the end of man in the flesh. The doctrine of Christianity declares that the question of man's responsibility is fully and entirely disposed of. It is not that responsibility on the part of man is in any way denied; it is, on the contrary, fully recognised; but man is declared lost, and the blessed announcement of grace now is, that "the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." In the death, then, of our Lord Jesus Christ, faith recognises the termination of the history of man responsible before God; and in His glorious resurrection from

among the dead, faith sees the history of man according to God, beginning anew. Thus it is that man, in the Person of the Saviour triumphant, has been set in an entirely new place, alike worthy of the victory which He, the blessed One, alone has won, and of God, who was therein glorified. Of this, too, His glorious resurrection is the manifestation and display. Further, therein faith sees death left behind a conquered foe, and the grave spoiled of its victory. How wondrous the glories that meet in His triumph and exaltation! It is not necessary, nor would it be possible, in a brief statement like this, to develop all the consequences and results of this blessed work of our Lord Jesus Christ. Suffice it to say, that as His death was for faith, the end of the first man, so it was the finish of all that connected itself with him *in that position*.

May the Lord give you, reader, to enter into these great realities which now surround the second Man and last Adam, for therein stands forth the essential difference between Christianity and all that went before. Promises, prophecies of the One who was to come, no access to God, as witnessed by the veil, responsible man under government and testing, no object without, or power within, all belong to that which went before. But now, since the cross, the heavenly things have been revealed, and faith and love find their delights and joys in them. Man, in the Person of the Christ, is glorified in heaven. The veil is rent. The Holy Ghost has come down here, and dwells in the Christian, and in the Church.

W. T. T.

“HO!” or, TWICE WARNED.



FEW years ago, the writer, with some friends, was staying at Ilfracombe for a short time. Those who have visited the place will be able to travel in thought to the rugged rocks and surging sea, and the many attractions which

beguile the unwary one for so long a time that he allows the ever-treacherous tide to surprise him, and force him to make a hasty retreat.

On one of the rocks near to the cliff, several of us might have been found sitting, late one evening. After a time, two of us rose to go towards the sea, to watch the dashing waves and enjoy the beautiful air. The tide was swiftly coming in, and we had to be constantly on guard against surprise.

While proceeding on our way, we were astonished to see a human form sitting on a rock already almost cut off by the rapidly advancing tide. We at once perceived his danger, and quick as thought called to him with all our might, but without effect, and it seemed vain even to try to make our voices heard above the roaring waves. Again and again we endeavoured to do so, but as often as we tried we were thwarted. But an instant, and the man's return might be prevented! Should we succeed in making him hear? It was a critical moment, increasing in danger as wave after wave rushed in

between him and us, drowning our voices, and lessening the chances of attracting his attention.

Once more we made an effort, and shouted "Ho!" as if our lives depended on it. Successful at last! The man rose, at once perceived his danger, and, waiting for the receding wave, gave a tremendous leap, and stood safely on our rock. To us it was a breathless moment, as we watched him jump, as one false step, or slip, would have buried him in the chasm below.

How profuse were his thanks, and how warm his expressions of gratitude, as he accompanied us to the rest of our party. As he lingered, talking, my friend put some pointed questions to him as to his soul's salvation. On hearing our shout he had manifested great eagerness to save himself, but would he show as great interest in the welfare of his immortal soul? He had thankfully accepted our warning, would he be warned of the immeasurably greater danger in which all who have not found a Saviour stand? These questions, however, only drew from the man the fact that he was a sceptic.

Yes! he was quite ready to heed a friendly voice of warning when in temporal danger, but he would not be aroused by any voice, equally friendly, desiring to point out the awful fate towards which he was carelessly allowing himself to be borne.

My reader, what answer would you give if I were to address such questions to you? Do you still stand among those "condemned already"?

(John iii. 8.) Are you still standing with the sentence of “Guilty” hanging over you, and your mouth stopped from saying anything in your own defence in the presence of a holy God? (Rom. iii. 19.) If so, I would sound an alarm in your ears to-day. “Ho, traveller to eternity, see you not that chasm before you? another step, and you may be over!”

When our voices reached the heedless man on the rocks, do you think, my reader, that he sat still and began to philosophise, and bring up his sceptical arguments? Did he begin to reason, “Am I *really* in danger”? No; he saw his need of safety, and availed himself of the only way of escape.

But perhaps you say—“I do not see that I am in any danger.” Shall I tell you why that is? It is because the god of this world, Satan, has blinded the eyes of all that believe not (2 Cor. iv. 4); and you, unsaved reader, are among that number.

Yes, I admit fully that you cannot see your danger. Blind eyes cannot see. But have you *ears* to hear? If so, hear the testimony of God to the fact that you ARE in danger. Set speculations, reasonings, and the like, aside, and get you from your present place of insecurity unto Christ, who has died to provide a place of safety for such as you. Own that you are lost, the Shepherd will find you (Luke xv.), and then you will realise the blessedness of knowing that His sheep (of which you will then be one) shall *never* perish (John x. 28).

But to return to my narrative. On parting from our friend, we invited him to a gospel meeting to be held the next Lord's Day afternoon, in a public hall in the town. He came, and a second time was earnestly begged, in common with all present, to think of the eternity that is before all. But he heard more; for the preacher, besides pressing the importance of escaping from present danger, sought to show his hearers, from God's Word, *how* they might avail themselves of the one and only means of safety.

If this little paper should ever meet the eye of the man whom my narrative concerns, I would like to remind him of that gospel meeting, and to ask him if he has yet accepted the warning of his second and greater danger; and if not, I would give him hereby this third warning (for the door of grace is not yet closed):—"A prudent man foreseeth the evil and hideth himself; but the simple pass on, and are punished" (Prov. xxvii. 12).

The last that we saw of him was at the close of the meeting referred to, when, recognising in the preacher the one who had warned him of temporal danger, he came forwards, and shaking hands, bade him farewell.

Twice have I written the above story, and twice have I withheld it from publication, but this third time, I feel compelled to write it, hoping that some one, who until now has disregarded all warnings, may read it, and be led by it to look into the

Scriptures to ascertain the one way of salvation which God has provided. Will *you*, my reader, be the one to get the blessing?

M. J. R.



THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF JESUS.



BELOVED reader, your eternal destiny hangs upon your knowledge of the great blood-doctrine of Holy Scripture. Without it, you are lost; with it, you escape the outer darkness, and, cleansed from sin, you ascend to scenes of bliss and purity. Without it, though years may be yours to live on earth, yet it is as a stranger to God, in the darkness and uncleanness of fallen nature; be it cultivated or uncultivated, moral or immoral, learned or unlearned, it is all one; it is a nature sinful and away from God, a stranger to Him, and a servant of its own lusts.

God is holy—infinitely holy, and inflexibly just. Man is a sinner, with a heart deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. A distance exists between God and man; sin has caused that distance. Man is estranged from God; sin has caused the estrangement. Man is afraid of God; sin has implanted the fear. Man is on the broad road which leads to destruction; sin has put him there.

Oh, the awful ravages of sin! It has placed God upon the judgment-seat, and man at His righteous bar as a guilty creature.

It is just here that the gospel administers its divine consolation to any one who believes it.

Divine justice proclaimed, "Without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. ix. 22); and Divine love, responding, said, "The life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar, to make an atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul" (Lev. xvii. 11).

But "an atonement" means the glorifying of God about sin, and the meeting of the sinner's need, so that God and he may be righteously together. This only could be by the shedding of blood,—*but the blood of a spotless victim.*

In vain we search God's earth,—in vain we seek an untainted being among the sons of the fallen Adam. Not one is found; for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. Sin has blighted all. The fairest specimen, the one nearest to the original stock, ere sin were known, has but to bow his head and own himself *a sinner.*

Above this scene of sin and defilement we must look for an untainted being. God must provide Himself a lamb. Blessed be His name, this He has done. He has turned to His own bosom, and given His own Son. And in giving His own Son, He has thought of two things,—1st, His own glory; 2nd, Our salvation. God's Lamb was able

to meet the whole question of sin, whether we think of God's holiness or man's condition.

But God's Lamb must die, for blood must flow. "Without shedding of blood is no remission." God had said, "The life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar, to make an atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." The myriads of sacrifices offered up on Jewish altars pointed to the Lamb of God slain on Calvary. On the cross, then, we see infinite love providing what infinite justice demanded. When the life-blood of Jesus, the Son of God, was shed, an atonement for the soul was made,—an atonement which is as lasting as the efficacy of the blood that made it.

Blessed news this, dear reader, for you and for me, and all who stand in need of it. Do you know the blessedness of it in your own soul? Have you, like the Israelite (Exod. xii.), appropriated it? Can you in faith say, *He died for me, His blood was shed for me, it has made an atonement for my soul?*

God has accepted the sacrifice, the satisfaction rendered to Him in the death of His Son. He has raised up Jesus from the dead, and given Him glory. On the cross, the Son glorified God; God, in return, has glorified His Son (John xiii. 31, 32). We now see Jesus crowned with glory and honour, after having made an atonement for our souls. "He was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification" (Rom. v. 1).

Now God can fully and righteously bless. From the very throne of God the wave of divine blessing flows forth, and rolls on until it sweeps the wide earth, and millions are saved thereby. They have but to stoop down and drink and live. All hindrance is removed; the vilest can be saved.

The same God who said, "Without shedding of blood is no remission," now says, "Be it known unto you therefore, that through this man [the risen and ascended Jesus] 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). How great the change! The demand has been met; Jesus has died; now the blessing flows. A full and eternal forgiveness is preached through Him, and in His name. "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts iv. 12). It is proclaimed to all, of every race, land, and clime. The proclamation is as wide as the blessing. *It is to every creature.* All the ends of the earth are invited to receive the blood-purchased salvation. God makes no exceptions. "Whosoever will" may come, and take of the water of life freely (Rev. xxii. 17). "Look unto me, and be ye sayed, all the ends of the earth" (Isa. xlv. 22).

Marvellous is the efficacy of the blood of Jesus. By it God's throne is vindicated, and the sinner's need met. He is vile, polluted, unfit for God's

presence, and His heaven of purity and love. But his case is met. "*The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin*" (1 John i. 7). What soul-cheering news! Convicted soul, let your heart be cheered, it is God who says, "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). You may yet be fit for the paradise of God. The Father is able to make you "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light," through the blood of His Son. The eye of God rests upon the blood of His Son. He sets forth Christ a mercy-seat, through faith in His blood. *Have you faith in His blood?* If so, "it cleanseth from all sin." Not one sin remains to be imputed to you. God says, "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin;" and the believer in the Lord Jesus Christ is that man.

Is it pardon that I need? I have remission of sins through His blood" (Eph. i. 7).

Is it cleansing? I am cleansed by His blood (Rev. i. 4, 5).

Is it peace? "Having made peace through the blood of his cross," and "being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Col. i. 20; Rom. v. 1).

Is it redemption? "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph. i. 7). "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold; but with the precious blood of

Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter i. 18, 19).

Do I need to be brought nigh? "But now in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace" (Eph. ii. 13, 14).

Is it fear of coming wrath that troubles me? "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him" (Rom. v. 9). "How ye turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come" (1 Thess. i. 9, 10).

And when in the bright glory of God, our everlasting song will be, "Thou art worthy, . . . for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation," &c. (Rev. v. 9, 10).

Beloved reader, in conclusion, let me ask, Do you know the value of the precious blood of Jesus for yourself? If so, with all God's people you can join in saying with heartfelt gratitude, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father: to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen" (Rev. i. 5, 6).

WRONGLY BOOKED.



WE were in the train together, a stranger and myself. Our conversation had turned first on the state of the weather, and then on the way of salvation.

I had quoted that lovely verse:—

“I have a home above,
From sin and sorrow free ;
A mansion which eternal love
Designed and formed for me.”

To which quotation my fellow-passenger replied—

“So have I.”

“Indeed,” I rejoined; “have you a home in heaven? Are you really a converted man?”

“Oh! no; I have never thought much of these things,” said he; “but I hope, of course, to go to heaven.”

“But that is impossible,” I replied, “unless you are converted; for Christ said that ‘except ye be converted, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven’ (Matt. xviii. 3); and it is in vain to say that you have a home, or that you hope to go there, except on the conditions laid down.”

“Well, I have not given much thought as yet to these things,” he said.

And yet he had given no little thought to the things of time. He had travelled in various foreign countries, and had seen much of the

world for one who was still young. But the interests of the soul lay neglected! Oh the criminality of such neglect! the downright folly of leaving for to-morrow, and to-morrow, the matter of salvation! Nothing can demonstrate more absolutely the stultifying effects of sin.

Who would not escape from danger when he sees it? who, but the sinner?

Dear reader, if you have never thought of the salvation of your soul, let me urge you to do so *at once*. To-morrow has wrecked multitudes!

"I was listening to a long sermon," said my companion, "and the thought struck me, that if I felt an hour in church wearisome, what would heaven be for ever!"

"Fearful!" I replied. "Heaven would be a positive hell to a man who had not a nature capable of enjoying it. It would be no home to him. What could he do there? He would find himself a stranger to God, and to all the surroundings of heaven; he would be positively miserable there. If you find no pleasure in the things of God on earth, how could you enjoy them hereafter?"

"Quite true," he said; "that has passed through my mind. I fully admit the truth of it."

"And therefore you must have a nature that loves God. You must, in fact, 'be born again,' as the Lord said to Nicodemus, in order to be happy there," I rejoined.

For evidently, dear reader, whilst sin cannot

come into God's ever-holy presence, but must be expiated by blood, so also must a change as radical as the "new birth" be effected by God ere the sinner is fit for that place.

Yes, I repeat, heaven—God's own blessed home—would be a perfect hell to an unconverted man, and it is the height of folly to hope you may go there, with the view of being happy, unless you are a child of God. Of course, none but such can go there, that is certain; and no efforts on your own part, or on that of others on your behalf, can do for you what faith in the name of the Lord Jesus alone can accomplish. The legerdemain of a clever priestcraft can never make you a child of God. See John i. 12, 13.

"But now," I asked my companion, "if you feel that you would not be happy in heaven, would you be better off in hell?"

"No indeed," said he.

"But that is the other alternative," I remarked. "Hereafter we must be in either of these two places, for the Word of God alludes to no other. Live for ever we must, in one or other; and let me beg of you to turn to the Lord, in order to your salvation."

I gave him a book explaining the way, and then we had to part company.

Reader, ask yourself this question, "*Would I be happy in the presence of God for all eternity?*"

If you are obliged to admit that you would not, then ask yourself, "*Am I resolved to sink in the*

lake of fire, and be tormented day and night for ever and ever?"

One or other, friend, it must be.

People don't like the truth of eternal judgment, and therefore they are doing all they can to deny the existence of a place of future punishment; but why do they not deny also the existence of heaven?

Hell is no less real than heaven; for God is no less "Light" than "Love," and everything is based on that which God is.

"God is Love." Blessed fact, proved at Calvary, where Jesus, His Son, died.

"God is Light." Solemn truth, and soon forgotten, but shown at the same place, when the Holy One underwent the judgment of sin; and to be declared for ever, when that same judgment falls on the guilty who have refused the open door, and the words of welcome, and the Saviour's blood.

J. W. S.



"I MEAN TO MAKE A FRESH START."



N visiting A—— H——, I found him, as is usual with those suffering from consumption, ill enough, but full of anticipation of an early recovery. I was quite a stranger to him, but having won my way into his confidence by sympathetic concern for his wearied frame, racked by pain and a ghastly cough, I approached him

with a question regarding his eternal prospects. Readily came the reply, "I mean to make a fresh start."

Reader, if you looked upon a man swimming in dangerous waters, and saw him suddenly fling up his arms, you would be convinced he was drowning; and, although he had a will to reach land, if you heard him say, "I mean to make a fresh start," you would not be more surprised than, for the moment, I was.

To what an extent the human heart deceives itself this instance is witness, confirming the divine record that "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked" (Jer. xvii. 9).

However, speedily recovering my surprise, I asked, "Have you ever when in robust health made a fresh start?"

"Oh, yes," said he, "several."

"And did you not break down in each instance?"

With a painfully feverish reply, that told of mental and, happily, conscious conviction, came the affirmation, "Oh, yes."

"Well," I asked, "if so in health, what prospect of success in a dying state?"

"None," said he, with a look that spoke of dread at his own conclusion.

I then said, "You and God do *not* agree, for it is recorded, 'When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly' (Rom. v. 6). If 'without strength' and dying, what ability have you to reach God's holy heaven? Nay, God's heaven is bolted to you."

I shall not readily forget the effect of this reply, nor the display of soul-horror that played on the features of my interesting, and now awakened acquaintance. His rolling eyes then asked more anxiously than words, "What then must I do?"

I said, "God waits to draw back the bolt. He has ability to bring in, in holiness, those who yield to Him."

Self-confidence, however, dies hard, and again the awful delusion crept over his mind to the effect that he would get well, and go to church; evidently this being his only idea of satisfying the insulted Majesty, and meeting the inexorable claims of Him before whom the seraphim dare not uncover their faces (Isa. vi. 1-4). Alas! for the want of moral perception on the part of the mass as to the claims on each man, woman, and child of Him who is holy, holy, holy. Reader, what about His claim on you?

Well, to deliver myself from his blood, I had again to tell him plainly he was in a dying state. This was a last resort to arouse him from his spiritual torpor, but, to any acquainted with his disease, the fact was only too evident.

I left him, promising to call the following evening, expressing a hope that a deeper exercise of inquiry and concern would lead to an assurance of faith that would fully free him from the law of sin and death.

A stratagem of Satan utterly failed at this crisis. On calling as promised, A—— H—— did not

desire to see me until the following Wednesday, *i.e.*, three days later. Are you, dear reader, equal to the wiliness of him who is no novice in the arts of seduction? Ask yourself by what sophistry you have been wiled into indécision with regard to that most important of all steps, even the confession of Christ, as Lord, unto present, and eternal salvation (Rom. x. 9).

The pleading of a devoted sister was the instrument in God's hand of defeating Satan's device; and again I found myself in the presence of A—— H——, not at all conscious of what had taken place until a week later. God, who is rich in mercy, had designs of eternal good towards this erring one. It was not that he did not want salvation, but rather that Satan did not want to lose him, hence the procrastination.

When face to face I saw a load of anxiety pressed his soul, and asked, "Do you believe in sudden conversion?" He said, "No." I replied, "If a man was helplessly and hopelessly involved in debt, for which the judge had sentenced him to be imprisoned, and just as the officer was about to convey him to the cells, a friend paid down the whole of the debt and costs, could any prevent the late bankrupt there and then walking out of court a free man?" He mentally followed me, and said, "No." Continuing, I said, "You have run up an account against God all your life. You are indebted to Him for every act, word, and thought not done to His glory."

This brought out the fact that he had been particularly interested in divine things all his life,—twenty-eight years,—but at this point he admitted to having come short of God's glory (Rom. iii. 23) through guiltiness of conduct described in Rom. iii. 2-18.

"Now," I said, "let me show you your friend in 1 Peter ii. 21-24, and the appropriating principle in Rom. iii. 24-26. These scriptures describe the fact of guilt, of guilt expiated, and of exemption from punishment, beside also becoming free consequent on faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Was the debtor free immediately his friend had satisfied the judge?" "Yes," he replied. "Is the sinner saved as soon as he learns God has been satisfied by His sin-bearing Son, and trusts in His blood?" "Saved," he answered. "Are you saved?" I then asked. "Saved," he gladly said, both with voice and countenance; and one seemed to see the veil lifted off that darkened soul in his passage from the domain of darkness into light.

Did the prince of darkness anticipate the loss of another subject that Lord's Day evening that he enticed him to defer my visit? Verily, it would appear so, for twice twenty-four hours before the time A—— H—— proposed to see me he was absent from the body, and, I believe, present with the Lord. He died on the Monday.

Reader, let me entreat you, don't risk such a narrow escape.

CHRIST'S THREE APPEARINGS.

"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."—HEB. ix. 27, 28.

"Herein is love with us made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world."—1 JOHN iv. 17.



THE verse in 1 John iv. brings out most distinctly and clearly what the new place is that the believer has before God. It is this: *Christ's place*. "As he is, so are we in this world." In the most marvellous way does the Holy Ghost condense the present position of the believer, to the joy of our hearts—we who are Christ's. But some may say, "Impossible! Does the gospel unfold to a poor guilty sinner on earth a standing before God in the perfection of Christ?" Yes. "How can this be?" The passage in Heb. ix. tells you how; you have there the grand foundation on which this blessed truth is built—"Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." The effect of the once-offered sacrifice of Himself to put away sin—the fruit of the corn of wheat which fell into the ground and died, so that it might not abide alone, is, that of the children of God it can be truly said: "As he is, so are we." And mark, it is not, "So we *shall be*," but "*so are we in this world*." How

wonderful is this word of the Holy Spirit! Truly man could never have penned it of himself.

Look at Christ in all His love and grace while here on earth. Look at Him in all His perfection now in glory, and then consider for a moment this most wonderful passage: "Herein is love with us (God's love, not ours) made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world." But let us look for a little at what was first required in order to bring about this grand result. In Heb. ix. it is all beautifully unfolded. "Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

There are three periods in the history of Christ brought before us in these verses. In verse 24, He does appear; verse 26, "He has appeared;" and in verse 28, "He shall appear." I will take them up briefly in their chronological

order; and may the Holy Spirit lead you, my beloved reader, to search more fully into these wondrous truths, the outlines of which I now present to you.

I.—HIS PAST APPEARING.

"Now once in the end of the world hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."

Why was this needed? The following verse tells us: "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." As it belonged to man to die and be judged, so Christ was offered up in death; and bore God's wrath and judgment in man's stead.

I can understand the "*as*" and "*so*" in John iv. 17 when I have grasped the mercy of the "*as*" and "*so*" of Hebrews ix. 27, 28. *As* I was a ruined, guilty sinner, only fit to be judged and condemned to death, *so* He went down into death for me; He suffered that I might never suffer; He bore my judgment and the wrath of an offended God, which was my due; He completed the work of my salvation; He has done all that is needed to bring me to Himself in glory; and now the Holy Spirit can give out this grand truth to the believer, to say with joyful boldness, that in the sight of God, "As he (God's Son) is, so are we, in this world."

Oh, beloved fellow-believer, what is this? What

is the force of these words, "As he is, so are we"? It is not merely substitution, grand as that work is, but it is transmutation—the taking of us into identity and association with Himself.

"He has appeared" to do a work we never could have done. In all the councils of God one thing alone was found that could save ruined man; and in His great love for us, the Lord Himself came down to perform the work. *As* we deserved, so He received; He bore the judgment of God upon sin, so that there is now no condemnation to them who believe. Now "we may have boldness in the day of judgment." Well may the Holy Spirit preface this wondrous truth with these words: "Herein is love with us made perfect." Yes, this indeed was love, perfect love on His part; love sufficiently perfect to cast out all our fear. "There is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear."

"No man of greater love can boast
Than for his friend to die.
Thou for Thine enemies wast slain!
What love with Thine can vie?"

This is the Friend the believer has—the Friend and Saviour, God wishes you to have. Will you not have Him? See what He has done for you. "He was once offered to bear the sins of many." You may be one of the *many* whom Christ died to save. God is now beseeching you to be one of the blessed number. Oh! refuse Him not; for if you will not have this Christ now, while

He is willing and waiting to receive you, it will be this same Christ and Lord, to whom all judgment is given, who when this long day of grace is over, will say unto you: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire." And you shall then be one of the *many*—ah! how many—to whom the words will apply: "These shall go away into everlasting punishment." With which will you have to do—God in grace, or God in judgment?

He wants you to know Him in grace, to know Him *now*. He is seeking you, yearning for you, waiting to receive you with outstretched arms of welcome. Oh, come to His loving embrace. You must either come to those outstretched arms of love and mercy, or sink for ever beneath His uplifted arm of judgment. Can you for a moment delay in your decision? Which shall it be, God or Mammon? Is there aught on earth that can lure you from His arms?—aught that can blindly lure you on to death? Jesus is calling you to come to Him. "Come unto me" are His words to you. Oh, come and taste the blessedness of belonging to Him, of being loved by Him, of having Him as the "friend that sticketh closer than a brother."

II.—HIS PRESENT APPEARING.

In Heb. ix. 24 we read, that Christ has gone into heaven, "Now to appear in the presence of God for us."

While telling you of the first blessed truth,

"He has appeared," I made no restriction. I tell it to you, my reader; I would it were told to ALL. But now I have to confine myself to the BELIEVER when I say, "in the presence of God *for us*." But my prayer is, that He may stand as the Representative of all who may read these pages, and of thousands more.

Believers in the Lord, Christ represents you in the presence of God, and soon there will be the lovely sequel which verse 28 gives: "Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." But again, I would turn to *all*, and say, Look at Jesus there in the glory of heaven itself; gaze on Him by faith at God's right hand, and remember that place may be yours. Earnestly I would entreat you not to let haunting memory have the task of echoing in your ear, through an endless eternity, "That place *might* have been yours."

Who is the One who stands in the presence of God for us? It is Christ, the same Christ who was here on earth, and who died on Calvary's cross. He is the only one who can represent us there, and He does it. Michael the Archangel would fail to do it. Angels know not the extent of our need; but Christ is there. Dwell on the thought, REPRESENTATIVE OF HIS PEOPLE. Oh, how much it includes! Christ is there in the presence of His Father-God, not only to represent you, but also as your Advocate and High Priest. As Aaron the high priest bore the

names of the twelve tribes of Israel on his shoulder and breast, so that they might be presented to the Lord Jehovah; so Christ bears our names on His bosom before His Father's throne—your name and mine graven on His heart! Amazing thought! Yes, our names indelibly carved there with the graving-tool of love. The love and power of Christ combined bear us before God continually.

What a place of security the believer in Jesus has! How could he have a doubt or fear as long as he looks at Christ in glory? and knows from God's Word that "as he is, so are we." Look at Christ and His finished work, and believe on Him, and the question of salvation and security is settled. I see in Him the One who has espoused my cause—the One who has so merged me in Himself, that God, while looking upon me, sees me in Jesus—He sees me in "*Jesus only*."

III.—HIS FUTURE APPEARING.

"Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." The first time He appeared, it was to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. He bared his bosom to Jehovah's wrath, and the uplifted sword of justice fell on Him. The storm-cloud of wrath burst upon His head; but the second time He shall appear, it shall be without sin unto salvation.

The question of sin was all settled the first time; and now He has to do with salvation

alone. Has not this a voice for you, O careless one? You who are not looking for Him; you to whom it would not be glad tidings were you told, "The Bridegroom cometh;" pause, I beseech you, and consider your situation. You, as an unbeliever, are going on to meet two things—DEATH and JUDGMENT. The believer also is going to meet two things, but oh! how different are they—CHRIST and GLORY. Death and judgment are behind him, not before; he looks back to the cross, and knows that for him they were ended there. He is on the other side of judgment; and now the bright prospect before him, and for which he looks, is the time when the Lord shall again appear unto salvation, *i.e.*, the deliverance of the body from this evil world.

The manner of His future appearing is two-fold—First, as the Bridegroom He will come into the air only, and catch up His Bride, *i.e.*, those who are His own. The 4th of 1st Thessalonians, and 15th of 1st Corinthians, describe this moment. "The dead in Christ" are raised, and those alive on earth changed, and both are caught up together to the Lord, and thus are with the Lord for ever. What a bright hope for the believer, instead of looking for death.

Later on the Lord will appear manifestly in glory to the world, as Son of Man. Then His saints will all be *with* Him. His second advent thus has the two stages. Into the air when His saints go to Him, and on to the Mount of Olives when His saints all come *with* Him.

The first Adam brought death into this world by sin; but, for the believer, the death of the last Adam has put away sin, and delivered him from death and judgment.

To you who care not to look for Him, I would give this solemn warning: "If thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee." "Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought 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. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer. They shall seek me early, but they shall not find me. For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord." "When they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, and *they shall not escape.*"

But unto you, who look for Him, are these blessed words written: "They shall see his face." Delight yourselves therefore in the Lord; be ye ever on the watch-towers looking for His appearing the second time without sin unto salvation. Wait patiently for Him though He should tarry. "He that shall come will come." Meanwhile, beloved Christians, let us rejoice in the blessed truth that "as he is, so are we in this world." W. T. P. W.

THE THREE APPEARINGS.

HEBREWS ix. 24-28.

JESUS, the Son of God,
On earth did once appear,
To make atonement for our sin,
To God to bring us near.
Oh! love beyond compare,
Its depth what tongue can tell,
That brought the Saviour down to earth,
To save our souls from hell.

In heaven He now appears,
Our great High Priest on high,
He bears our names upon His breast,
Upon His heart we lie.
He ever lives to plead
For those for whom He died,
He prays for us, He succours us,
When tempted, harassed, tried.

Again He will appear—
What joy! apart from sin,
The former things all passed away—
No curse without, within.
Lord, haste that blissful day;
Come, Jesus, quickly come,
And take Thy blood-bought people hence,
To Thine eternal home.

A MINER'S CONVERSION.



WAS brought up at a mining village in the county of Stirling. My father died when I was very young, and being poor I was put to work in the mine when about twelve years of age, and there continued until I reached the age of sixteen. At that time I felt a strong desire to leave my home and seek employment elsewhere. This desire I carried out, and went off, resolved, as the saying is, to see the world. Shortly after this I went to the mining town of D——, in the west of Ayrshire; and, when still very young, I there threw off all restraint, and, in the place of distance from God where sin had put me, and with my mind blinded by the god of this world, I went on drinking deep into all the pleasures of sin that surrounded me on every hand. The Word of God declares the wicked to be “like the troubled sea,” and for the next nine years it was so with me.

Being in the grasp and under the power of Satan, I roamed about in a restless condition from place to place throughout Scotland and England. Oh! how I can now look back and trace the mercy of God in all my wanderings in sin, rescuing me in the midst of danger and death. On two occasions in the mine, it was the work of a moment to escape being crushed to death; but still, in the midst of such warnings, I remained impenitent, rushing on

still in the midst of danger, with no fear of God before my eyes.

Again returning to the town of D——, and now married to a young woman, who, like myself, was a stranger to Christ, I rather settled down. For the next three years we went on together wrapped up in nature's darkness, not one ray of light having penetrated our souls, and without one thought of eternity. About this time many were somewhat startled by the sudden death of a fellow-workman in the mine. Pay-day came round every month, and generally all the workmen went down into the mine on that particular morning at a very early hour. This poor fellow went with the others, as he had often done before, with little thought, I fear, that before the rays of the rising sun would have dispelled the darkness of night, his soul would be required of him. But it was so, for scarcely had he begun the labour of the day when the tool dropped from his hand, and in a moment he lay in the cold grasp of death. This solemn event had no effect on me at the moment it occurred. I went on unchecked in my career of sin, until the next pay-morning came round, when, as usual, I went down into the mine at a very early hour, and, proceeding to my work with a light heart, I little dreamed that I had reached the moment when I was to discover my lost condition as a sinner before God.

It was so, however, for scarcely had I begun my work when suddenly the thought of that

poor fellow's death, which had taken place just a month previous to this morning, came rushing into my mind. I endeavoured to turn it off, and fix my thoughts on some subject more pleasing to my soul. But no, I felt powerless to resist the thought of death. A voice seemed to say, "Is it not as possible for you to die this morning as it was for that poor man a month ago?" I believed it was; and again another silent voice whispered in my soul, "And if you die this morning, what then?" Oh! that was a solemn moment for my soul when death stared me in the face. For twenty-eight years I had kept the thought of death, and of meeting God, entirely shut out from my thoughts; but now, death was to me a solemn reality, and the thought of being launched into the presence of a God I had so long and so often sinned against made me tremble.

My physical powers gave way, my pick dropped from my hand, and with a beating heart I realised, for the first time in my life, that I was lost, and were I to die I would be lost for ever. My soul was overwhelmed with fear, and in my distress I called upon God to have mercy on me. Oh! that was a time of deep distress, a morning I never shall forget, when moral darkness shrouded my soul, and in the dismal darkness of the mine I feared that every breath I drew would be my last. Oh! how little knew I that morning that the pitying eyes of a loving tender-hearted Saviour, that had wept over poor sinners down here, were looking down

through one hundred and twenty fathoms of rock upon me, a poor lost sheep that had wandered far from Him.

After being some time in this condition, my fears began to subside a little; and I resolved to turn over a new leaf, and live a different life than my previous one had been. And so I at once sought to give up all my bad habits, and, like many more in this state of mind, I thought by attending church, reading my Bible, and prayer, there would be some chance for me reaching heaven at last. For some months I went on in this self-righteous manner, with a very fair estimation of myself.

And now the time of our summer holidays having come, I went to spend a few days in my native place. While there I met with some of my old companions in sin, and along with them I again plunged into my old habit of intemperance, giving full proof that my new leaf had been but part of my old book, and so I returned home with all my past goodness blotted out. For many months from this time I went on in my old ways of sin, seeking, by doing so, to drive the serious thoughts of death and eternity from my mind. But again in the mine one morning God spoke to me, in a manner more stern than ever He had done, through my unsaved mate telling me about a friend of his who died in the midst of health and strength in a moment. That was an arrow of conviction that pierced my soul, leaving a wound that nothing but the blood of Jesus could heal.

For some months again I was a most miserable man. When I passed a news-agent's shop, "Sudden death" was sure to meet my gaze. The sound of a funeral bell made me wretched, and often, when trying to appear merry with my companions, my heart was breaking. In this sad state I sat one Lord's Day afternoon alone in my home, with scarcely one ray of hope within my breast of ever being saved, when my eye caught a little book my wife had got from a little boy. I lifted it, and began to read a letter an old man had sent to a young friend. I saw from that letter that the writer, when a young man, had been in this same anxious state about his soul that I was in at the present time. No one having spoken to me about my soul, I thought no one had ever been in the state that I was in. I said to myself while reading, "If that old man will only reveal to me how he found peace, I will at once embrace it." I read a few lines more from that dear old man, and heard words whereby I was saved. While telling this young friend he was addressing how he found peace, he said, "The moment through grace I believed in the wondrous love of God, and in the atoning blood of Christ, that moment I found peace and joy." I saw through these words; to have peace there must first be decision for Christ; and that moment I believed that the work was done, that Christ had shed His precious blood for me on the cross, and in an instant my misery was gone, and peace and joy unspeakable filled my soul.

Twenty years have nearly run their course since then, I am now getting old, but to-day I am still rejoicing in His love to me, and without one fear or one doubt. And oh! the many blessings He has given me since that day. Salvation came to my house. Ten months after I was saved, my dear wife was rejoicing with me, and saying, "Your dear loving Saviour is my Saviour too." The Lord gave us six sons, of whom four are saved, and, along with their mother and myself, come together on the first day of the week with a few of God's dear saints, gathered out to the name of the Lord Jesus, to remember Him, and show His death till He comes.

And now, dear reader, if still unsaved, I would most affectionately warn you of your danger. There is no time to lose. The Lord may come at any moment. Then the Church will be gone from this scene, the day of grace will be closed, the day of judgment will then overtake you, and oh!

"What horrors shall roll o'er thy Christless soul,
Waked from its death-like sleep ;
Of all hope bereft, and to judgment left,
For ever to wail and weep."

But you may be saved before you drop this paper. Believe in Christ now, God's free gift to you, a sinner, and then, but not till then, will you be able to say, "He loved me, and gave Himself for me" (Gal. ii. 20).

THREE SUDDEN CALLS—WHO NEXT?



THREE weeks ago a dear young girl of seventeen years was buried. On the Sunday before she had been at the Bible-class she usually attended. At 3.30 p.m. the same day she was taken ill. In twenty-four hours she was gone—in her case, thank God—to be with Christ, which is far better. “Absent from the body, present with the Lord.” Her testimony to Him had been clear and bright.

He who had been her teacher for some years was one of those who carried her to the grave. As they passed along he was recognised by the wife of an old servant of his, who had come to the cemetery on that Friday to place some flowers on the grave of her daughter. On the following Tuesday she was summoned into another world! O how unexpectedly! But there was satisfactory evidence that she was one who had come as a poor, lost, and undone sinner, to Christ for salvation. He had received her and forgiven her all her sins; and she passed away into the presence of the One who loved her and gave Himself for her.

On Monday last I spoke to a number of women at an afternoon meeting, and told them of the above-mentioned circumstances—pressing upon them the uncertainty of life here, and asking who

out of that company would *first* be called away, and *where*? It was urged upon them that (as unlikely as it appeared) there might be some one present who was hearing the word preached for the *last* time, and who would be gone, *for eternity*, before the next Monday's meeting, either to heaven or to hell. They were entreated to come to Christ as the alone refuge and hope of poor undone sinners.

On Wednesday morning a lady who is interested in these meetings, called to tell me that one of the women who had been present on Monday, and had heard the address (which in *her* case she thought prophetic) had died suddenly the next day, *i.e.*, in less than twenty-four hours after listening to that solemn appeal. I have to-day (Saturday) preached the gospel at her funeral.

We have happy assurance that she had found Christ as her Saviour, at those Monday meetings, and that she *knew* through Him the forgiveness of her sins. For her then this sudden removal was a blessed one. Christ saved her—marked her as His own—and called her without pain or pang, without lingering illness or tearful farewells, to be with Himself on high. What a bright and joyous change for her, to close her eyes upon all here, and to find herself at home, for ever, with the Lord.

On Monday next I hope once again to address the many women who usually assemble to hear the Word of God. What a solemn occasion it will be when so many will hear that one who was

sitting among them a week before has been called away from this world, *to meet God*.

Will it not be a fitting opportunity to press once more upon those souls the dread realities, for the Christless sinner, of death, and judgment, and the lake of fire? Surely it will be so.

But, my reader, have not these solemn events a voice from God for you? Many persons will probably read these lines who have been warned again and again, and have not heeded the warning. To such I would say, You are still without Christ, unsaved and in your sins—surely and certainly on the way to hell—so that if you should be summoned hence at a moment's notice, it would be to meet Christ, not as your Saviour, but as your Judge, to be condemned by Him to a lost eternity. It never could be said of you that you were "*called away without a moment's warning*." The fact is you have had the warning, but you did not profit by it.

Noah was warned of God (Heb. xi. 7). He believed what he heard, and acted upon it. The result was that, when the flood came upon the world of the ungodly, he was saved, and his house. On the other hand, many must have heard the warning voice (for Noah was "*a preacher of righteousness*," 2 Peter ii. 5), but they disregarded it, and so "*the flood came and took them all away*."

In like manner Lot was warned of the impending doom of the cities of the plain. To him it was

said, "Escape for thy life!" He acted upon what he heard, and was thus outside the scene of judgment when the judgment came. But his sons-in-law, to whom he had said, "Up, get you out of this place; for the Lord will destroy this city," disregarded the warning, and so perished in the overthrow of the condemned place. .

Hear God the Holy Ghost speaking to you in the following solemn passages of Scripture:—

"A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself; but the foolish pass on and are punished" (Prov. xxii. 3, xxvii. 12. Surely God must mean these words to have peculiar weight with you when He *repeats* them in His holy Word.

"Because there is wrath, beware lest he take thee away with his stroke: then a great ransom cannot deliver thee" (Job xxxvi. 18).

"He that being often reprov'd, hardeneth his neck, shall *suddenly* be destroyed, and that without remedy" (Prov. xxix. 1).

"To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts" (Heb. iii. 15).

"Haste! haste! haste!

Delay not from wrath to flee;

Oh, wherefore the moments in madness waste,

When Jesus is calling for thee?

Now! now! now!

To-morrow too late may be;

O sinner, with tears of contrition bow,

Confessing, He died for me."

THE GREAT STRONG MAN; OR,
GRANNIE'S PRAYER.

SEVERAL years ago there lived in the city of Edinburgh a family,—decent, in fair circumstances, religious, and members of the kirk. It consisted of the father, three daughters, his wife their mother, and old Grannie, the

wife's mother, who had come to end her days in the house of her son-in-law, or "guid-son," as he is called in Scotch.

Grannie was an old Highland woman, who could not read a single line, and spoke but little of the English tongue; but she was converted very early in life, and had an ample store of Scripture in her memory; so much so, that when a well-known minister and Gaelic scholar visited her, he was wont to say, "There is no use in coming to see you, you can preach *to me*, Grannie."

Her piety was very fervent, her love for the Lord was real, and prayer seemed to be the habit and joy of her soul. Touching it was, to stand at her room door, and listen to the fervent effectual prayer, in the Gaelic tongue, for every member of the family. The father of the house would stand and listen, and then turn to his wife and children, and say, "Now she has prayed for you all."

For one she prayed constantly—a son of hers, who went to America forty years ago. His name would be laid again and again before the God that heareth and answereth prayer.

The mother of the family—Grannie's daughter—was a very religious woman, a member of an evangelical body, diligent in attending the means of grace, regular at the kirk, never missing a Sacrament Sunday. When great preachers came to the city, and if there were stirring times, and earnest addresses on gospel subjects, there she was sure to be found.

Besides, she was kind-hearted to the poor. Many a widow and orphan received of her hidden charity, and blessed her name. But *nevertheless*, with all her prudence, piety, and charity, she was *unsaved*,—a stranger to the true knowledge of God and His grace. *Uncertainty* and *doubt* and *fear* filled her bosom.

In process of time she fell sick, and her sickness was indeed unto death. The doctor said the disease was cancer, and naturally gloom and sorrow filled the home once so bright and cheerful. This was a sore blow to dear old Grannie; but God, who had been her resource, was still the stay of her soul. To the bedside of her dying child she would come, and prayer, silent prayer, ascended to her Father and God that He would save, in mercy, the daughter of her love, and now more than ever the subject of her cries and groans to God,—that now He would show to her His sal-

vation, ere she left this world, and entered the domain of eternity.

One night long and earnestly she prayed by the bedside of the dying one. Her whole soul poured itself out in supplication and entreaty, and at length she seemed assured that she had won the ear of God by her importunity. All of a sudden she started from her knees, repeating the words of Psalm cxviii. 21, 22,—

“This is the gate of God, by it
The just shall enter in ;
Thee will I praise, for Thou *me heard'st*,
And hast my safety been.”

Grannie quoted the metrical Scotch version, but in prose they are exceedingly beautiful: “This [is the] gate of the Lord, into which the righteous shall enter ; Thee will I praise, for Thou hast *heard me*, and art become my salvation.”

She retired to her little chamber with a look of satisfied desire on her face. Her God was to answer her cry.

That night the sick daughter fell into a soft light slumber. She awoke from her sleep, and called to a friend who waited on her, and said,—

“I have had such a dream. I had a great dark river to cross. It was far to the other side, and I must cross it, or perish for ever. I saw a beautiful boat, but it had left the shore on which I stood. I called to them to come back and take me, but the boatmen heeded not my cries. I screamed again in my agony, ‘Oh, save ! oh, save

me!’ And all at once, a *great strong man* lifted me in his arms so powerfully and gently, and placed me, in a moment, in the centre of the boat, and at once I was borne across the wide, deep, dark river, and landed safe and sound on the far-away shore. Then, somehow, I knew the great strong man was Jesus. Oh! I am saved! I never was saved before; not my works, but His; not my deeds but His. I never could cross that river of death, but He can carry me safe to the other side.”

That morning brought the welcome news to the old grandame that her prayers were answered. Her daughter was saved! saved by *the great strong Man*. Death was no longer the king of terrors, but only the ferry-boat to the other side. It was but the valley of the *shadow* of death.

The few remaining days of the dying one were bright with the sunshine of God’s favour, and the conscious salvation of God. Grannie’s prayers were answered, and praise, only praise, filled her soul to her Saviour-God.

Now both Grannie and her saved daughter sleep in Jesus, and the grass grows over their graves, but, *with the Lord*, they wait for His coming.

Reader, and friend, do you tremble at the deep dark river that you *must cross*? Has the great strong Man, the God-man, put His arms around you, and saved you for ever?

THOSE "THAT FORGET GOD."



HO is it speaks of these? It is God, my reader. He speaks of them in His Word, both of the paths and the end of those who forget God. If you will turn to Job viii. 13, you will find they are spoken of with the hypocrite; and in Ps. ix. 17, with the wicked. But I think I hear you say, as you read the heading of this paper, "I am not one of these; I have always regularly attended church, or chapel."

Yes, dear reader, you may say this, and much more of yourself; but whoever you are, high or low, rich or poor, this is your state by nature,—as a child of Adam you are one of those who forget God. I make this statement on the authority of God's Word; for is it not written, "There is *none* that seeketh after God;" and again, "There is *no* fear of God before their eyes"? (Rom. iii. 11, 18.) What is this but forgetting God? You have sin in you by nature. It is not only what you have done, or what you have not done, but what you *are*. You were born in sin,—born a child of Adam, with a forfeited life. One verse of Scripture speaks alike both of you and me. "Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Ps. li. 5). Hence we get the Lord saying in John iii., "Ye *must* be born again;" and also, that "the Son of

man *must* be lifted up." Yes, the death of the Son of God—the cross of Christ—puts away not only my sins, but my sin also from God's sight. The believer in Christ has died with Christ, and is risen with Christ, and is joined to the Lord by one spirit where He is (1 Cor. vi. 17). "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature;" or, as more rightly rendered, "there is a new creation."

I will now narrate to you two illustrations showing how helpless the sinner by nature is to think of God. He must be born of God before he can know God. Still we must never overlook the fact that man is a responsible being. For though "all we like sheep have gone astray" (have gone astray from the birth); "we have turned every one to *his own way*," yet God has given to man a conscience, and He speaks in living power both to the conscience and heart of man through His written Word, which tells us not only that we are enemies to God, and ungodly, but refusers of a Saviour who died in our stead, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God.

Mrs J——, in speaking to a Christian who visited her, said, "I used to be an attender at chapel, but felt no interest in what I heard; I counted the small panes in the windows to pass away the time. I was doing this as usual one day, when the preacher suddenly paused in his discourse, and said, 'The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God' (Ps. ix. 17). The Spirit of God used this scripture to

awaken me to a sense of my real condition before God, and from that time I knew no rest until I found it in Christ." "

Truly she had forgotten God, but He had not forgotten her; for His own blessed Word tells us, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John iv. 10). It was not God that needed to be reconciled to her, or to you or me, dear reader. Oh, no! It was she and we who had forgotten Him, and sinned against Him, and that needed reconciliation. We read, "When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son" (Rom. v. 10; Col. i. 21).

Mrs J—— asked her visitor to go upstairs to see her daughter, who was ill in bed. She was a most self-satisfied person, and had too good an opinion of herself to have admitted she was one of those who forgot God, yet this was nevertheless true of her. A few words soon made all this evident. There was no cordial welcome for the Lord's servant. The subject upon his heart to speak of, was the Lord's coming and the first resurrection. She very soon stopped him, by refusing to believe what he said, saying, "I am as well acquainted with the Bible as you are." He turned to several scriptures to prove what God's Word says, and finished with reading Rev. xx. and then left.

But God has said of His Word, "Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a

hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" (Jer. xxiii. 29.) The scriptures read in this young woman's hearing began their work, she could not get away from them. She now sought them out, and read them herself. Yes, it was all just there as it had been pointed out. But oh! to think the Lord might come at any moment, and to be unsaved! There was no longer any smothering of the reality that she was not one of those "in Christ." In deep earnestness she cried unto the Lord to save her. It is written, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Rom. x. 13). She called, and He delighted to answer. Now her eyes were off herself, and her expectation from the Lord, who opened her eyes to see "that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us" (Titus iii. 4, 5). Forgiveness of sins, and peace with God, through the blood of Christ, were now known and rejoiced in. Health again was restored, and employment found. The desire of her heart now, was to live to show forth the praises of Him who had called her out of darkness into His marvellous light.

The one who had spoken to her of the Lord's coming was some years after preaching in the town where she lived, and she was present. He took for his subject 1 Cor. xv. and Rev. xx. She afterwards went up to him, and said, "I have so often thought of that time when I was so rude to

you, and told you I knew my Bible as well as you." She now not only believed the Word, but was herself ready and waiting to meet the Lord.

Dear reader, are you indifferent about your soul's salvation like Mrs J——? or well satisfied with yourself, and your own thoughts of divine things, like her daughter? You may go the round of religious duties, but until you are reconciled to God you cannot have right thoughts of Him. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. ii. 14). The outward profession of belonging to Christ will not do for God. Dear reader, we may deceive one another, we may and do deceive ourselves, but we can never deceive God! The inmost and deepest recesses of your heart are all manifest to Him. He knows everything about you, even to your "downsitting and uprising" (Ps. cxxxix. 2). And as to the thoughts of man, and the ways of man. God says they are not His thoughts or His ways. They are as widely different as the heavens are higher than the earth (Isa. lv. 8, 9).

O Christless professor, there is a day coming when your hope will be like the hypocrite's spoken of in Job viii. 13, a hope that perisheth! "When *once* the Master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand *without*, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, *I know you not*

whence ye are. Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. *But* he shall say, I tell you I know you not whence ye are: depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity" (Luke xiii. 25-27).

But oh, careless and Christless one, the door of mercy still stands wide open, and He who will by-and-by say "Depart," is now saying "Come." Oh, refuse Him not. He is *outside* of that which professes His name, but is characterised by self-sufficiency and self-satisfaction. He is *outside* of all this, and saying, "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). Dear reader, let me entreat you now to "hear His voice," whilst He still pleads with you in grace, and then it shall be yours, even now, to know what it is to have Him sup with you, and you with Him.

L.

ETERNITY! ETERNITY!



PREACHER of the gospel sat one day in his room, resting a little after a long journey. He had scarcely settled down, however, before there came a knock at the door, and upon his "Come in," Mr G——, a well-known acquaintance, but a determined infidel, entered. There soon arose

between them a lively conversation upon the things of God. Eternity formed the principal subject of their discourse. Suddenly Mr G—— said,—

“You know, my dear A——, that I have often heard you preach, and that I have examined everything that is to be said upon the subject. Now all I can say is, that you are a Christian ; and I am an atheist, and neither believe in a God, or a heaven, or a hell.”

“Very well,” rejoined A——, “and I have heard you, and examined all that you have to say. Now allow me to ask you a question, Will you do something for me ?”

“Certainly, my friend, if it lies in my power.”

“Then promise me, that on three successive nights, when you are in bed and the light extinguished, you will say—‘Eternity ! Eternity ! I must meet it ! Where ? God I will not accept ; in heaven I do not believe ; hell I deny ; where am I going ?’”

Mr G—— promised, and left. The first night he undoubtedly put out the light, placed himself in the middle of his bedroom, and repeated loudly the words—“Eternity ! Eternity ! I must meet it ! Where ? God I will not accept ; in heaven I do not believe ; hell I deny ; where am I going ?”

The next night Mr G—— felt—he didn’t himself know why—that he must leave the light burning whilst he repeated the words. The third night it was no better. An extraordinary feeling came over him. Strange thoughts rushed into his

mind. A choking sensation seemed to seize his throat. Taking courage at last, however, he began in a low voice—"Eternity! Eternity! I must meet it! Where? . . . in heaven I do not believe"—He faltered suddenly; he found it impossible to say, "God I will not accept." He felt the presence of a holy, righteous God, who in His wondrous grace and love had caused a light to spring up in his darkened soul. After a long pause he stuttered out, "Where am I going?" His conscience gave him the answer, "*You are going into hell.*" It resounded in his innermost soul. Restless and troubled he got into bed. Sleepless, he tossed to and fro, and longed earnestly for the day, hoping then to find more rest. The day came, but it did not bring it; on the contrary, his anxiety increased every hour. Gladly would he have hastened to his friend, to pour out his trouble and need, only his pride held him back.

The following night his soul-anxiety reached its highest point; he could no longer remain in bed, but wandered restlessly to and fro in his room. As soon as the day broke, he went off to his friend's house. He told him in a few words that his wish had come to pass, and that he was almost in despair; then asked anxiously—

"What shall I do, then? or rather, what can you do for me?"

"Nothing," rejoined A—— quietly, without raising his eyes off the floor, "*nothing.*"

"What have I to do then?"

"Nothing," was the answer, "*nothing at all.*"

"What! *nothing*? although I am in the greatest anxiety, and bordering on despair."

"No, *nothing*," said A——, in a gentle but firm tone, as he stood inflexible before his friend. In his heart he thanked God; but outwardly he remained motionless as a statue. He wanted him to perceive and understand his utter helplessness, and therefore would not anticipate the work that God had unmistakably begun in his soul. He knew that God was the best teacher.

Astonished, Mr G—— gazed at him for a moment, and then broke out,—

"Can you, in the presence of my terrible anxiety, stand quietly before me, and say that you can do nothing for me? You a Christian,—and I an immortal soul on the road to hell! Can you remain so quiet with the thought that you are the one that has plunged me into this state of misery and despair? Can you say nothing else than 'I can do nothing for you'?"

"Yes," answered A——, in the same quiet tone as before, "I can do nothing for you; I am only a poor, helpless, weak creature like yourself. You can do nothing, and I can do nothing—absolutely nothing. But"—he continued, whilst he lifted his eyes, and pointed his finger upwards—"I can tell you of One that *can* do something, and this One is God. He can do everything,—yea, *He has done everything!* He has sent His only-begotten Son into this world to die for such miserable, sinful

creatures as you and me. He has judged Him on the cross in our stead, and now the joyful news is announced to every sinner, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.'"

At this moment the light of God shone with living power in the poor, dark heart of the God-despiser. He remembered suddenly all that he had heard before, but had not received. Quick as the lightning flash his thoughts were turned to *Him who had done the whole work*. He apprehended for the first time in his life the blessed Person of the One who gave to that work its eternal and infinite worth. He believed, and became a new creature in Christ Jesus (2 Cor. v. 17). God had said, "Let there be light!" and there was light.

The God-despiser was changed into a sincere believer. And just as Paul, as soon as "it pleased God . . . to reveal his Son in him," immediately went and announced Jesus, as the Son of God, in the synagogue of Damascus, so also Mr G——, within a few days of his conversion, began to seek to bring before others the joyful news of Jesus, the Saviour of sinners, and to lead them to the blessed Lord. Soon was he able to say with the apostle, "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; . . . for God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. iv. 5, 6).

My reader, where will *you* spend eternity?

FR. GN.

HOW GOD GETS RID OF OUR SINS.



VISITING one day in the large city of N——, we saw, amongst others, a lady, who professed to believe all that God said in His Word, and to wish to be saved, and hoped that some day He would save her, but at the same time candidly admitted that she loved the world, its theatres, balls, &c. She was one of the large class of procrastinators, who listen daily to Satan's lullaby, "Time enough yet." To decide for Christ meant to give up the world. For this she was not yet prepared. Like thousands more, she would like to go to heaven, if she could escape the cross and enjoy the world on the road.

We spoke earnestly to her about the solemnity of her state, pressing upon her the importance of *the present moment*, as God had said *now* is the day of salvation, and all was uncertain as to the future. The Lord might return at any moment, or death overtake her in her sins, when it would be too late for ever to get this momentous question settled.

We were forcibly reminded in the course of the afternoon of the importance of our own words. We were told that some children, playing in the street, had somehow set a large wagon running down a steep incline. A woman happened to be passing with her young family, to visit the grave of their little brother who had died a few weeks

before. Seeing they were in danger, her first thought was their safety; but in saving them she was too late to escape herself. The pole, with iron end, struck her with tremendous force, and passing right through her chest killed her on the spot!

In a few seconds she was summoned from time into eternity. We know nothing of her spiritual state, but we do know that she was suddenly called away, without a moment to consider the question of her soul's salvation. Surely, when God in His inscrutable wisdom and providence allows such a thing, it is meant as a warning to others that, ere it be too late, they may consider their latter end (Deut. xxxii. 29).

Dear reader, how is it with you? Maybe you too are a procrastinator. Maybe you too admit that all is true, but, lured by the world, go on day after day, and year after year, without decision for Christ. Take heed lest He spare not thee. Once again we warn you of the importance of the present moment. Delays are dangerous. God offers you forgiveness now. Confess your sin and guilt in the light of His holy presence. Bow in the judgment of self before Him, and believe on His Son. "Through this man is preached unto you *the forgiveness of sins*: and by him all that believe are justified from all things" (Acts xiii. 38, 39).

The gospel is wondrously simple. God is glorified as to sin in the death of His Son. The work of the cross is *a finished work*. A glorified Saviour, at the right hand of God, is a proof it. God freely

forgives the sins of all who believe, and has taken the greatest pains in His Word to show how completely our sins are got rid of before Him, by employing figure after figure, that a child may understand, to convince us of the truth of it.

In Psalm ciii. 12, we read, "*As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.*" Who can tell us how far that is? Where is the east? where is the west? Man may travel to any part of the globe he likes, there is still an east, and still a west. Or, if two birds could fly off east and west, and keep on flying in a straight line, the farther they flew the farther they would be from one another, and who can tell when or where they would reach the east or west? *So far*, saith the Word of Him who cannot lie, hath He removed our transgressions from us, when we believe.

In Isaiah xxxviii. 17, "*Thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.*" Precious passage to assure us that God sees them not. Who can see behind his back? No one. And this is the simple and homely figure that God uses to show us that His eyes no more behold our sins. He Himself cast them behind His back. And not some, but *all*. *All my sins*; every sin in thought, word, or deed. Every secret sin. Every presumptuous sin. *All*. Has He cast all yours there?

In Micah vii. 19, "*Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.*" Again, we find it is His own work. He Himself cast them there. Not

simply into the sea, but into *the depths*. Let any one on board a ship in the open sea just empty his purse over the ship's side, and see how much of it he will get back again. Not a farthing. All would go down, we well know, into the depths, every pound, shilling, and penny. So also with our sins. God casts all our sins, great or small, into the depths of the sea, never to be brought back again.

In Isaiah xlv. 22, "*I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins.*" We are all accustomed to observe the clouds of heaven, but who can trace their path? Where to-day is yonder cloud which yesterday, perhaps, darkened the whole heaven, and deluged the earth with rain? Who has not gazed upon the sky, and beheld it all covered with clouds to the horizon? And then perhaps, an hour or two later, before a brilliant sun, all have disappeared, and the sky everywhere is one deep blue. And so with our sins. One day they rise up as a thick cloud between us and God, but the moment we believe on the blessed name of the Son, all are blotted out by His precious blood. God Himself blots them out, as He blotteth out the thick cloud that covereth the heaven. Has He so done with yours?

Again, in Isaiah i. 18, "*Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.*" Once more, a striking figure given us in God's wondrous grace to fill our hearts with joy and peace. Though our sins be as scarlet and crimson, the most difficult

of colours to destroy, God Himself can make them white as snow, or as wool. We are all familiar with these things. 'Who has ever seen anything that ever approaches the spotless whiteness of the fresh fallen snow? Even so white are your sins, reader, the moment you bow to God's testimony concerning His Son, and believe. "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." And it is our privilege to know with David, that we are *whiter than snow* (Ps. li. 7).

In all this we see, as remarked above, what pains our Saviour-God takes to assure us of the complete riddance of all our sins from before Him. And we might multiply passages which confirm this blessed truth. Amongst others we read:—

"Their sins and iniquities will I remember NO MORE" (Heb. x. 17).

"In whom (Christ) we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, ACCORDING TO THE RICHES OF HIS GRACE" (Eph. i. 7).

"Blessed are they whose iniquities ARE FORGIVEN, and whose sins ARE COVERED. Blessed is the man to whom THE LORD WILL NOT IMPUTE SIN" (Rom. iv. 7, 8).

What precious verses! God assures us He will remember our sins no more. He forgives us according to the riches of His grace. Who can compute these? And twice over He pronounces as blessed those who know and believe it.

Look, then, this momentous matter in the face, ere it be too late. There is no forgiveness after

this life. If you miss the blessing now, you must miss it for ever. In hell there is *no forgiveness, no hope*. Come to the Saviour now. Believe on the Son of God and be reconciled. We become God's children by faith in Christ Jesus. And to such the apostle John writes, "*Little children, . . . your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake*" (1 John ii. 12).

Maybe some voice asks, "But are all our sins forgiven when we believe on the Son of God?" Assuredly. But suppose we sin again? That we ought not to do. But *if* we do, God in His grace has made a blessed provision for it. If we sin after we are forgiven, and are become the children of God, it is as His children, and against a loving Father, and this is even worse. But saith the Scripture, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John ii. 1). And, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful, and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John i. 9).

Reader, DOST THOU BELIEVE?

E. H. C.



In Hebrews x. we get the will of God (v. 7), the work of Christ (v. 10), and the witness of the Holy Ghost (v. 17). How simple is the gospel! God wants us to be saved, so Christ died to save us, and the Holy Ghost comes and tells us we are saved. The whole thing is of God. Man's only part is to believe, and receive, and enjoy this wondrous out-flow of Divine love.

W. T. P. W.

A MIGHTY CHANGE.



It was Sunday night, and in a seaport town a congregation was just dispersing, when the preacher took note of a little girl, who seemed to be lingering behind, and kept her eyes upon him with a wistful expression. He spoke to her.

"How old are you, my dear?"

"I am just seven."

She turned as if to go away; then, making a sudden effort, said earnestly,—

"Oh, sir, every one says my father is dying, and I am sure he is very ill, and no one tells him about his soul."

"Do you think he would let me come and see him, my child?" said the aged evangelist, deeply touched.

"No, sir," replied the child, in a mournful but decided tone; "I am sure he would not see you."

"Well, my dear, you must go home and pray to God, who hears every word you say, and knows every wish of your heart; ask God, our Father, with whom nothing is impossible, to make your dear father willing to see me."

The little girl's face brightened as she said good-bye, adding, "I won't forget."

In the course of the evening word came to Mr S—— that if he would call at ten o'clock the next morning, Mr E—— would be happy to see

him. He afterwards learned that when his little daughter, in her simple loving way, had said, "Papa, there was a gentleman preaching in the great hall to-night, and he was so sorry when I told him you were ill, and he said he wished he might come and see you. *May* he come, papa?" the father had at once answered, "Oh, yes, by all means, let him come if he likes."

Next morning, at the appointed time, Mr S—— called, but was asked to wait in the drawing-room as the doctor was paying his visit. Presently he heard a sound of laughter, broken by a hollow cough, and saw the patient accompanying his physician to the top of the stairs, and wishing him good-morning. Through the open door Mr S—— could see the worn tottering figure, and could even hear the rapid painful breathing of the sick man; and as he turned to enter the drawing-room, his face wore a haggard, lifeless look, which, accompanied by the terrible cough, told its own tale.

Laughing loudly, and rubbing his hands, Mr E—— came to greet his visitor. "The doctor tells me my lungs are as strong as his own," he said. "There's nothing the matter with me but what a little time and change will soon set right." But, even as he spoke, his voice was broken by the relentless cough, and he sank breathless upon a chair.

"My dear sir," said Mr S——, too much shocked to wait for chosen words in which to set his case before him, "I implore you, let no one deceive you. You are a dying man; time will indeed bring a

change for you, but it will be the great change of death."

"I believe you are right, sir," said Mr E——, burying his face in his hands; "those are terrible words—startling words—a mighty change indeed, from life to death; but you have had the courage to tell me the truth, and I thank you."

"Let me read you a few verses from God's Word," said Mr S——. Taking his Bible from his pocket, he read the well-known verse, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "The love of God——"

Mr E—— looked up. "I know nothing of these things," he said hurriedly; "I never went to church but twice in my life. They took me there when I was a baby to be christened, and I went to be married. I know nothing of religion."

Not noticing this sad interruption, Mr S—— continued in simple earnest words to speak of God's love in the gift of His Son. Then, fearful of exhausting the little strength of the sick man, he took his leave, not without permission, readily granted, to renew his visit.

Each morning during the week found the aged evangelist at Mr E——'s door, glad in the thought that he was about to speak the life-giving word to ears which God Himself had opened to receive them. Day by day, as simply as a little child would receive the word of its father, did Mr E—— drink in the message of the love of God, even to

him, who until this last hour of his mortal life had never thought of Him. Monday morning came, and at the usual time the invalid came to greet his visitor. Tottering into the room, he fell upon the couch, and had just strength to whisper, "I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ—and I am going—to be with Him—for ever." And he was gone! the mighty change had come, but it was a change, not from life to death, but from death to life, a "stepping out upon the platform of eternal life."

C. C. S.

"OH, DON'T LET ME DIE!"



ONE evening a person came hurriedly to my house to say a dying woman wished to see me at once. On reaching the sick-room, soon afterwards, I saw she was near her earthly end. She said she wished me to speak to her about

her soul, as she was *afraid to die*. I spoke to her solemnly about judgment following death, and warned her to "flee from the wrath to come," encouraged her, with several scriptures, to accept God's free gift—the Lord Jesus Christ—as her Saviour, and to take shelter under His precious blood, and prayed with her, but was not sure that she saw herself *sinner* enough to need the sinner's Saviour. Before leaving I told the women who stood round her bed to send for me in the night

if Mrs W—— asked for me. Not hearing anything further I went the next morning, but found the blinds were down, and, that her spirit had passed away into eternity.

I asked one of the women, who saw Mrs W—— die, if she remembered her last words, and she told me Mrs W—— said, "*Oh, don't let me die; I can't get through the gate, it is too narrow for me!*" Whether or not she did, at the very eleventh hour, know her load of sins removed, and pass through the strait gate for heaven, we would not presume to say, but must leave that, and many another case, till God's great reckoning day. But mark, when death made its claim, ready or not ready, those kind women could not grant the woman's request.

"*Oh, don't let me die!*" How solemn! and how unlike another young person I visited, dying in the adjoining street to Mrs W——'s, who had for years trusted the blood of Christ and known that God, according to His word, would "remember her sins and her iniquities *no more.*" Shortly before she passed away, waking out of a sleep, she, as it were with disappointment, said to her relatives around her, "*Oh, why does He not take me?*" She was free from pain and delighting in the prospect of being soon with the Blessed One who had loved her, and washed her from her sins: who had risen again and gone to prepare a place for her. To the last this happy soul delighted to join in the hymn, a verse of which is—

“Green pastures are before me,
Which yet I have not seen,
Bright skies will soon be o’er me,
Where the dark clouds have been.
My hope I cannot measure,
My path to LIFE is free,
My Saviour has my treasure,
And He will walk with me.”

Reader, what the Lord said is still true:—
“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). You can only enter that strait gate *without* your sins.

It is too narrow for both *you and your sins*! There is plenty of room on the broad road for any amount of sins upon you of the vilest kind. Which road then are *you* on, friend—the broad or the narrow—on your way to *destruction* or to *life*? Which? Ere you can enter the strait gate of *life*, you must not only know yourself sinner enough to *need* a Saviour, but you must actually *receive* Him, and get clear of your sins through His precious blood. But if you would remain on the broad way, you have only to keep your sins, though remember the end thereof is *eternal destruction*. “And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment, so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many: and unto them that look for him shall he appear the

second time without sin unto salvation" (Heb. ix. 27, 28). Perhaps like the woman first referred to, you are *afraid to die*, or even to think about it. Bear in mind when your summons comes, your friends who may be around you, cannot hold you back, ready or not ready.

"Yet there is room ! still open stands the gate,
The gate of love ; it is not yet too late.

Room, room, still room !

Oh, enter, enter NOW !

"Ere night that gate may close and seal thy doom,
Then the last low long cry : 'No room, no room !'

No room, no room !

Oh, woeful cry, 'NO ROOM' !"

We pray you let not your last words on earth be : "Oh, don't let me die ; I can't get through the gate, it is too narrow for me !" Nay, but rather, in true desire to be with the Lord who bought you, may your dying words be : "Oh, why does He not take me ?"

J. N.



"SURELY I COME QUICKLY."

Rev. xxii. 20.



CHRIST is coming, quickly coming,
Art thou ready, sinner, say—
Are thy crimson sins forgiven,
In His blood all washed away ?

Once on Calvary's cross He suffered
Died in grace to set thee free,

Now believe the joyful tidings,
And to Christ for pardon flee.

Jesus waiteth to be gracious,
Waiteth even now for thee;
Listen to His tender pleading,—
“Come, poor sinner, come to Me.”

Come and gaze, by faith, upon Him;
Sinner, come, and look and live;
See He waiteth to receive thee,
That He may thy sins forgive.

Oh! the bliss, the rest of knowing
Jesus as thy dearest Friend,
As thy Guide, thy Guard, thy Shepherd,
Who will love thee to the end.

Knowing God as thine own Father,
And His heaven thy glorious home,—
This thy portion if thou heark’nest,
And to Jesus now dost come.

Then thou wilt not fear His coming,
Thou wilt hail with joy that day
When He’ll come and take His ransomed
To His Father’s house away.

THE SKIPPER'S KEG OF BRANDY.



AMONGST the motley crowd of many nationalities that stood on Bridge Wharf, Glasgow, on the morning of 9th April 1888, awaiting the signal for the passengers to go on board the emigrant ship "Siberian," was a countryman, rather past the prime of life. His clear intelligent eye was now and then dimmed by a tear, as he gazed on a tall stalwart youth of twenty-six, his eldest son, by his side, and thought how soon he would have to part with him, perhaps never to meet again.

"Tom," he said, "Tom."

He meant to give fatherly counsel to his son, but the surcharged heart refused to admit of words being articulated, and as they again lapsed into silence, his heart was lifted in fervent prayer to God to bless the lad. The loading of the ship completed, and the expected signal given, the passengers began to cross the gangway. After warmly shaking his father's hand, and receiving his parting blessing,—spoken with tremulous voice,—Tom stepped on deck. Theirs was but one of many similar partings, and sobs mingled plentifully with the waving of hats, caps, and handkerchiefs, as the great ship, loosed from her moorings, set out on her voyage.

Following our friend Tom a little further, we find him standing on deck intensely gazing on the fast receding hills of his native land. This was not the first time he was bidding adieu to its rugged shores. Five years before, in a spirit of youthful adventure, he had journeyed to the Far West. While there the memory of his boyhood's home lingered fresh in his mind, and to satisfy his longing heart he recrossed the Atlantic main, and paid a surprise visit to his father and mother. The joy of meeting them seemed now to be swallowed up in the pain of parting; but the parting, keenly though he felt it, was not the only thing that grieved him. With a deep-drawn sigh, he said to himself, "I thought I might be saved when at home."

The son of godly parents, a child of many prayers, he evinced in early manhood an antipathy to the gospel, and it was with no small joy his parents read in a letter from him a few months previous to the opening of our narrative, "We had a visit from Mr Moody this fall. Thousands attended his meetings, and many received salvation, but somehow or other, I don't know how, I cannot get the matter settled." They rejoiced that now his conscience had been reached, and his eyes opened to see his deep need of a Saviour; and in their letters to him, showed, by many infallible proofs from Scripture, that the great question of sin had been for ever settled with God by the atoning death of Christ, and all he had to do was to own his lost guilty condition, and God could then,

righteously, blot out his transgressions. His visit home increased their anticipations that speedily he would be delivered from the bondage of sin into the glorious liberty of the children of God, but their hopes were blighted. He spoke eagerly on the subject, and was very desirous of having imparted to him the gift of eternal life, but no peace came to allay the turmoil of his distracted heart; and now the bitterest pang of parting was, that he was returning to the bustle of American life—unblest.

Evening found the "Siberian" ploughing the rough waters of the North Channel, and, all trace of his native land shrouded in gloom, Tom repaired to his allotted cabin. Seated in it was a young man, Bible in hand.

"I guess we have seen the last of the old country for many a day," said Tom, assuming a careless tone.

"I doubt it," returned the other, scarcely looking up. There was a pause; presently Tom took his Bible from his pocket, and somewhat listlessly began turning over the leaves. At once the other's manner changed.

"Oh," he said brightly, "are we members of the household of faith?"

"Can't say I am," said Tom, in a downhearted tone; "but one's feelings get torn when saying farewell, and it seems natural to turn to this book for comfort."

"I am glad you find comfort from God's Word," replied the other calmly; "but I would have liked

if you could have said you had found salvation there, for it is the one grand truth which permeates the whole."

"No one longs for that more than myself," said Tom; "I have read the Word diligently, and prayed and done all I can, but I can't get peace."

"It is simply through believing in the finished work of Christ we get peace," said George, "and not by any doing or praying on our part. The Lord Jesus *finished* the work the Father gave Him to do,—the work of putting away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. None of our puny efforts are needed to give efficacy to so wondrous an oblation as the body of Jesus Christ offered once for all. That offering perfects for ever all who by faith accept it, and "through his name whosoever believeth shall receive remission of sins" (Acts x. 43).

It was a deep joy to George to meet with a really anxious soul, and he reiterated to him the sweet tale of the Saviour's love. Tom was glad to come in contact with one who so faithfully spoke to him, for he secretly feared that if he resisted much longer the strivings of the Spirit, his conscience might become seared, and he be left a careless unbeliever. Day by day the conversations were renewed; more earnest did George become in his desire that his newly-made friend might be loosed from the fetters of Satan, but the deeper Tom seemed to get into the mire of indecision. When half-way across, a severe storm was encountered, but the ship was a steady sailer, and

was manned by a skilful captain and gallant crew, and she weathered the tempest bravely. Next morning they came on a ship which had not been so fortunate. In answer to her signals of distress they bore down on her, and found her to be a Russian barque, in a sinking condition.

Fastening on their cork-jackets, a dozen sailors quickly got into a boat, rowed through the heavy swell, boarded the disabled ship, assisted the crew to lower such of their own boats as were required to hold them, and all pulled back again to the "Siberian." Coming alongside, the mate of the shipwrecked crew informed the captain of the rescuing vessel that their skipper was intoxicated, and refused to leave his ship, saying she was all right. The captain directed them to go back and bring him by force. Again they rowed through the boisterous waves, and with considerable difficulty executed his order. As the poor inebriate skipper was hoisted on board the vessel which was saving him from a watery grave, he was found to be hugging a keg of brandy. The worthy captain of the "Siberian" at once ordered it to be thrown overboard. The work of rescue had been eagerly watched by the passengers on deck. Tom and George were standing together, and as the obnoxious keg floundered for a little in the surging tide, and then sank beneath the billows, George said aloud, half to himself, "Thou hast cast all my sins into the depths of the sea."

"And mine too!" cried Tom excitedly, as with

lightning rapidity the words that had fallen on his ear lifted the scales from his eyes, and set his ransomed soul free to bask in the great sunshine of the love of God. There, on the crowded deck of a steamer, in mid-ocean, he was "born again," and grasping each other's hands, the two young men unitedly praised God. Then with irrepressible tears in his eyes, Tom said, "Oh! how glad my father and mother will be when they hear I am no longer outside the fold."

Parents, cease not to pray day and night for your children. Though the Lord bear long, yet in His own time and manner He will grant you your petitions; and some day when they taste of the heavenly gift, and become partakers of the Holy Ghost, another drop will be added to their cup of happiness, to think of the joy their turning from darkness to light affords your hearts.

An interesting circumstance in connection with this we are loth to keep from our Christian readers, showing as it does the gracious ways the Lord of the vineyard has of encouraging His labourers.

Writing of his voyage to his friend Mr R——, an earnest evangelist, George made mention of the Lord's goodness in using him for blessing to an anxious soul on board, giving a few of the details we have just narrated. Mr R—— read his letter at a gospel meeting that evening, and the Christians present praised God to hear of another sinner having passed from "death unto life."

Mr R—— had arranged, at the request of some recently converted youths who belonged to the district, to preach the gospel at a village some forty miles distant, a few nights later. Previous to the meeting he and another were having tea in a cottage close by. After the good woman of the house had got them comfortably seated to an ample repast, she, by way of entertaining them, began reading a letter she had recently received from her son. As the reading proceeded, Mr R——'s attention became riveted. The letter told of a storm on the sea, and a tempest-tossed sin-stricken heart,—of the brave rescue of a shipwrecked crew from an almost inevitable death, and of the redemption of a soul from everlasting destruction. There was no mistaking it. The account was the same as that his emigrant brother had given him, and this time he heard it in a little mountain hamlet from the lips of the young man's mother. The meeting itself was not a very encouraging one, but the coincidence he had just met with awakened his interest in the place. A tent was shortly after pitched on the village green, and night after night, under its canopy, the life-giving gospel was faithfully proclaimed. The effect of it on the hearers was the same as in days of yore, "some believed the things that were spoken, and some believed not,"—one of Tom's sisters being among the former.

M. M.

NAAMAN; OR, THE OBEDIENCE OF
FAITH.

(Read 2 Kings v.)



NAAMAN was a leper. He was afflicted with one of the most loathsome diseases that could be the lot of fallen man to have. It was loathsome, and as far as man was concerned, incurable. Most miserable, indeed, was the condition of the poor leper.

When we consider the greatness of Naaman, and the exalted position he occupied in relation to his king and country, we cannot but suppose that he had tried every resource, short of the God of Israel, in the fond hope of getting cured of the disease with which he was afflicted. "He was a great man with his master (the king), and honourable, because by him the Lord had given deliverance unto Syria; he was also a mighty man in valour; but he was a leper" (2 Kings v. 1). Occupying such a position, a favourite with the king, and the idol of his country, every human resource was at his disposal. And without doubt they were all tried. But with what result? Naaman was a leper still; no change was brought about, no cure effected.

His case was that of misery, helplessness, and hopelessness, as far as man was concerned.

But God, the God of Israel, had purposes of

grace towards poor leprous Naaman. In all his attempts at cleansing he had left God out; but God had not left him out.

Naaman's case is but a typical case, and his disease typical of a far more dreadful disease, a disease that afflicts the whole human family—the *disease of sin*. Sin has poisoned the very springs of man's moral being, and all that flows from it partakes of the same nature. "Out of the heart of men proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness" (Mark vii. 21, 22). This corrupt fountain can only send forth corrupted and corrupting streams.

As Naaman too was helpless in effecting a cure for himself, or being acted on by his fellows so as to be cured from leprosy, so it is with man, though he, like Naaman, try every resource under heaven. It is not within man's power to heal and save himself. Thousands are trying to do so. Prayers are said, penances are performed, resolutions are made, ordinances are submitted to; yea, every conceivable human resource is looked to, but to no purpose; they remain sinners still, as Naaman remained a leper.

God often uses insignificant instruments to lead to a knowledge of His way of saving. In Naaman's case it was a little Israelitish maid, who had been carried away captive, and who waited on Naaman's wife. She it was who communicated to Naaman's wife the glad tidings of how a poor

Gentile leper could be cleansed. *"Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy."*

The news soon reaches Naaman and the king, and all are interested in the cleansing of the mighty Naaman. A letter is written by the King of Syria to the King of Israel; ten talents of silver, six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment, were placed in the chariot, and Naaman and his company depart for the land of Israel. But the maid had said nothing about the King of Israel, nor the silver and gold, and changes of raiment. She had spoken of the prophet that was in Samaria, not the king, and that *he* would recover him of his leprosy. It was to be an act of pure grace on the part of Jehovah, through his prophet, Elisha. Not of works, lest Naaman should boast.

What an important lesson for man to learn; how few learn it, and then, how slowly is it learnt! Bales of good works would not remove one atom of sin, or propitiate the majesty of Heaven with regard to the least of man's iniquities. "Not of works, lest any man should boast. Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us" (Eph. ii. 9; Tit. iii. 5).

Finally, Naaman reaches the house of the prophet of Jehovah. How simply runs the message, as it came from the lips of God's servant from within, who remains inside, unmoved by the pomp and show without! *"Go, wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and*

thou shalt be clean." How simple, how concise, how plain! There was no mistaking it. For a moment Naaman's proud heart rebelled against it. Was he not a great person? and had he not come a great way? and was he not able to *reward* the prophet? Ah! Naaman, it is with God you have to do. He turns away in a rage, and, in the light of the beautiful rivers of his own country, treats Jehovah's river with contempt. "Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them and be clean?"

Poor Naaman! how like the sinner of our day he is, when told that "when we were yet without strength, in due time, Christ died for the ungodly," and that he has only to "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved" (Rom. v. 6; Acts xvi. 31).

Man's heart, like Naaman's, rebels, and says, "Am I ungodly and without strength? and is no credit to be given to my works of self-culture, my acts of benevolence, my attempts to do right? Am I to be classed with the vilest, and be saved by what you call grace, through faith in what another has done for me?"

That is exactly how the matter stands between him and God, and the sooner he yields to the force of truth, and as a *sinner confessed* avails himself of the Lord Jesus Christ, who died for the ungodly, trusting Him for salvation, the sooner will he be cleansed and saved for eternity.

Naaman's pride gives way before the entreaty of his servants, who said to him, "My father, if the prophet had bid me do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash and be clean?"

Mark well what follows; *he believes and obeys the word of God, and gets the blessing.* "Then went he down and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God, and his flesh came again like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean." *It was the obedience of faith.* He heard, he believed, he obeyed, and was healed. How beautiful are the words, "*And his flesh came again like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.*"

Jordan prefigured death—the death of Christ,—where judgment was executed upon sin in the person of our Substitute, and where the purification of our sins was accomplished. The moment the sinner ceases from himself, and his supposed good works, and trusts in Christ alone, he is pardoned, cleansed, justified, and accepted with God. He can appropriate such a scripture as the following to himself: "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered: blessed is the man to whom the Lord *will not impute sin*" (Rom. iv. 4-8). Of believers, the Holy Ghost is constantly witnessing, "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more" (Heb. x. 17); "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7); "Unto him that loveth us, and

washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen" (Rev. i. 5, 6).

Naaman returns to the prophet's house full of gratitude and praise, and there confesses the name of the God of Israel: "Behold, now I know that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel."

The prophet refuses a gift, and Naaman returns to Syria a cleansed man, with a deep sense of Jehovah's grace in his heart, and as a monument of divine mercy.

Thus it ever is; the knowledge of God's love and grace, and the possession of His great salvation, changes the whole condition of things within. The heart believes, the lips confess, and the soul o'erflows with praise.

Beloved reader, is it so with you? Have you felt your need? have you judged yourself a sinner? and have you heard, believed, and obeyed the gospel? And now, with an overflowing heart, are you confessing Christ as your Saviour and Lord, and praising the God of all grace who has saved you?

E. A.



GOD'S way of salvation is simple in the extreme. The lost sinner looks in simple faith to the living Saviour. He trusts to Him only. He relies on His work only. God justifies that man.

W. T. P. W.

"A VOICE OF WARNING."



THEY were two brothers, respectably connected, sons of a bank manager in the south of England. Outward circumstances were *used*, not as God's mercies, but *abused*, and made only a means of gratifying their desires. Pleasure was

their goddess, and in pursuit of her they were wrecked. Habits, once as airy as gossamer threads, had, insensibly to them, grown into heavy chains. Throwing aside all the outward restraints of polite society, they soon became confirmed drunkards. All the pleadings of friends, the shame of being branded with a drunkard's name, did not deter them. Drink had destroyed their true manliness. Their power of will paralysed, their sole object was to satisfy the horrible craving that was now their master. The sin which once had been a servant of their pleasure, as they thought, had at last grown into the devil's very taskmaster, grinding his besotted slave's body and soul into perdition.

The elder brother was laid on a bed of sickness. Brought face to face with death, it sobered him. He made many promises that if God would restore him to health, he would reform his ways. He needed not reformation, but transformation. He needed not a patching up, but to become a new creature in Christ Jesus.

His condition was very much like the people of

Charleston, U.S.A., a year or two ago, when the earthquake half destroyed their town. As the ground shook, and the awful majesty of the Creator was felt, amid the falling ruins and the rumbling and the crashing, many were the scoffers and libertines found on their knees in prayer. "Conscience makes cowards of us all." Shakespeare spoke truly, and his *dictum* applies to the proud infidel as well as to the poor widow. But no sooner was the visitation withdrawn than fear left them, and they ran riot in the old channels of lust and pleasure. "There is no fear of God before their eyes" (Rom. iii. 18).

So with this young man. Restored to health, he used his newly gained strength in the old ways. "The dog is turned to his own vomit again, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire" (2 Peter ii. 22). So say the Scriptures, and how true in his case, like thousands of others.

A second time he knew the weariness of a sick bed. The body, worn out by its sins, is laid down to die. Nature could not stand such a strain, and eternity and the young man were brought face to face. His fear was appalling.

A nurse ministered to the poor sufferer.

"Ann," he said, "pray for me, pray."

"I cannot, sir," she replied.

"But you must," was the almost fierce rejoinder.

The attendant, seeing his soul-anguish, and thinking to quiet him, said, "Repeat after me the Lord's Prayer."

"Our Father which art in heaven."

Feebly the dying man repeated the beautiful words—words foreign to the drunkard's lips, little known or understood by him.

"Hallowed be thy name."

Again an almost whispered response. The eyes were fast glazing in death,—the death-sweat breaking out upon the drunkard's brow.

A sentence or two more were repeated by the nurse, and feebly followed by the dying man, but only one or two more.

He faltered in his response. The nurse became alarmed. His speech failed him. Eagerly she scrutinised the features. They were fixed in death. He was gone. The soul had winged its unwilling flight into eternity.

"Where will he spend it?" is the almost heart-sickening inquiry. We cannot tell. His repentance the second time may have been worth no more than the first time,—the unwilling repentance of one who has neither strength nor time to pursue his evil course any longer.

The young men had been blessed with a God-fearing aunt. When the news of the elder nephew's death reached her, she lost no time in seeing her remaining nephew.

"Alfred," said she, "let your brother's end be a voice of warning to you."

She told him of a Saviour and a Saviour's love. The same old Book which told that no drunkard should inherit the kingdom of God, also told of a

Saviour who had come from peerless heights of glory "to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke xix. 10). Surely he was lost. "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth (us) from *all* sin" (1 John i. 7). Surely he needed cleansing.

Shocked no doubt by his brother's end, uttering, it might be, an impotent cry of distress, as he felt himself the hopeless slave of a cruel master, he heeded not his aunt's loving warning, but swept on in his reckless journey to hell.

"It's no good now, aunt," were the words which escaped his lips, sounding more like a death-knell than aught else.

The green grass was soon to wave over another sinner's grave. The poor body was soon to sleep the long slumber of death, till the voice of the Son of Man should be heard ringing into the grave, thrilling the earthly clay with fresh life, and bringing it forth reunited to the soul before His judgment seat—the great white throne—to answer for the deeds done in the body (John v. 28, 29).

But, oh! dear reader, the stern Judge of that dread day is now a loving Saviour, seeking to win thy confidence in tones of melting tenderness. Constraining love led Him to the cross with its untold sufferings, and now, in the brightest glory, with redemption and resurrection glories adorning the once thorn-clad brow, He sends thee this message of mercy through the gospel, which "is the power of God unto salvation to *every one* that believeth" (Rom. i. 16).

Alfred's course was not long continued. One day as he was entering his house, the end of these things came. He was seen to drop down to the ground. The power of speech gone, he lingered but a few hours and then passed into eternity, with its solemn issues.

"There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death; and *there is no discharge in that war*; neither shall wickedness deliver those that are given to it" (Eccles. viii. 8). So wrote the wisest man that ever lived.

Not a single word passed his dying lips to express his last thoughts. His death was like a blank. Gone into eternity. But HOW?

My dear reader, you may not be the outward slave to sin these two young men were, but let me ask you a pointed question,—"*Are you saved?*" "*Without shedding of blood is no remission*" (Heb. ix. 22).

You have a little world of your own, greater or smaller as the case may be. Is Christ in it? Are your companions and friends followers of the crucified Jesus? Is Christ in the books you read? The centre of your world and the regulator of it is your heart. Is Christ filling the citadel—the heart? If not, you are guilty of crucifying the Lord of glory—taking sides with a world guilty of His blood.

Time is flying fast. Eternity is drawing nigh.

Take heed to this voice of warning then. List to the loving call of the Saviour of sinners: "Come unto *me*, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. xi. 28). Hear the gracious invitation of a pardoning God: "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" (Isa. i. 18).

If in mad folly you put aside this message of warning and invitation, let me ask you, in the solemn silence of the midnight hour, to ask yourself these two questions:—

1. "How shall we (I) escape if we (I) neglect so great salvation?" (Heb. ii. 3.)

2. "What shall it profit a man (me) if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mark viii. 37, 38.)

But if, through the grace of God, you are led to ask, "What must I do to be saved?" we make answer according to the unchanging and unchangeable Word of God, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 31).

A. J. P.



FAITH is the soul's upward, not its inward, or its outward look. If you want to be *miserable*, look *in*. If you want to be *distracted*, look *out*. If you want to be *happy*, look *up*, and see Jesus only.

W. T. P. W.

Pages for the Young.

HARRY: A TRUE STORY FOR BOYS.



HARRY was a stirring lad, with a strong will of his own, but he got a red New Testament for regular attendance at Sunday school. Still he was a restless fellow, full of tricks, but he was very straightforward, and hated hypocrisy.

I hope you do so too. He caused no small care to his teacher, but she had faith in the seed she was sowing,—even the Word of God,—that it would take root some day. The summer treat had been announced, to the great joy of all, as you may suppose, and Harry in particular. He was always talking of it. But the weather had been very wet, so a neighbour said he might be disappointed. To this he replied, “No, for Mr D—— (the superintendent) prayed for a fine day, and he was sure of it.” Dear Harry! God honoured his simple trust; it was a day without a cloud,—the best of the whole season.

..

Summer gave place to autumn, and our young friend was run over by a van, and his leg sorely injured, so he had to be taken to the Royal Infirmary. He bore up manfully; he was a plucky

fellow. Some lads would have got low spirited over it, but not he. His teacher felt glad when she saw him lying in his crib reading his little red Testament. There is mighty help in the Scriptures. You try them. Harry recovered, but greater suffering was in store for him. Nobody likes to suffer, especially boys, who like best to romp about,

In the succeeding spring God graciously wrought, by His Holy Spirit, amongst the children. Week after week found anxious seekers, and willing workers, earnestly speaking about the things of God. Both girls and boys confessed Christ as their own personal Saviour. Of course, there was opposition, especially, I am sorry to say, by the boys of the district, who were very noisy, even upsetting forms, and putting out the lights. But then Satan knew God was saving sinners, so, being the enemy of souls, he sought to hinder the work. But the Lord is the stronger. One night Harry went home and said, "Mother, I am converted; I will be a better boy now." She replied that she was glad of it. For a few days he was very quiet. But, as I said before, he was a stirring boy, Habits are not conquered all at once. He confessed the Lord amongst the boys in the class. Have you ever confessed Christ? I advise you strongly to do so; it will turn to your salvation. One Sunday he left his red Testament in his teacher's box, saying he would get it next week;

but he never handled it again. It now lies where his parents can see it, with many a sad thought. This world is full of sorrow.

The observance of the Queen's Birthday is an event of much importance to young folk. The boys can scarcely sleep for thinking of crackers, squibs, cannons, and bonfires. So Harry was full of it. With a light heart and a bright face he joined his companions, but by night he passed into eternity. A group of lads had a brass cannon. They loaded and primed it, applied the match, and stood back, listening for the report. But it did not go off. Impatient of waiting, Harry and others went near to see the cause, when it suddenly exploded with a loud bang. There was a cheer; then the fun was exchanged for grief, for poor Harry lay bleeding on the ground. The charge had entered his bowels, and, in spite of the best professional skill, he died, after a few hours' intense suffering. A happy company of young converts gathered for tea that evening, and Harry's sister was amongst them. But a messenger came to call her to see her dying brother. How sad, dear boys! Are you ready to die? You know not how soon your soul may be required, and what then? Harry bore his sufferings with marked patience. He kissed his mother, bidding her good-bye, only asking for more water, for his thirst was very great.

A large group of his schoolmates gathered round his grave; and after the solemn burial service of the English Church, they joined in singing the well-known hymn:—

“Around the throne of God in heaven
Thousands of children stand,
Children whose sins are all forgiven,
A holy, happy band.
Singing glory, glory, glory!”

Will Harry be there? Will you? Life is short; eternity long. Oh! make Christ your choice to-day. The future stands before each one of us, with its two issues,—either glory for the ransomed,—“For ever with the Lord,”—or judgment for “the fearful and the unbelieving . . . and all liars in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.” Oh, be wise in time, my dear boys. “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.”

T. R. D.

THE THREE PICTURES.



“WISH you would come and see my husband, sir,” said a young woman to one who had grown old in his Master’s service, and was ever ready to carry the word of life to the bedside of the sick and dying. “The doctor says he has not got a week to live, sir,” she repeated earnestly, “and I want to know that his soul is saved.”

"Are you saved?" he asked gently.

"No, sir," she replied, "I cannot say I am; but God may give me time; there is no time for him, sir, no time, and he never had any religion."

The old man felt deeply interested in the young wife, who in her unselfish love was so full of concern for her dying husband. He promised to visit the sick man, and soon found himself beside him. As his wife had said, he had "no religion"; there was nothing to unlearn, and day by day as the aged Christian sat by his bed and spoke of the Saviour, once dead, a spotless victim for sins not His own, now alive for evermore at God's right hand in heaven, the eyes of the dying man were fixed upon him, and his ears, soon to be closed to all earthly sounds, were attentive to catch every word. Thus three or four days passed; the sufferer became weaker, but spoke little, until one morning, when his visitor had been again reading to him, he suddenly said, pointing to some pictures which hung against the wall, at the foot of his bed, "Do you think, sir, such things as those are fit for a dying man's eyes to look upon!"

"I do not," replied his friend. "Those pictures of proud beauties, decked in all the glittering pomp of this world's glory, may have pleased you once, but now you are learning that 'the fashion of this world passeth away.'"

"You are right," he murmured, "'passeth away;' yes, that is the word. Will you take them down; I cannot bear to see them hang there?"

After vainly attempting to remove the pictures, the visitor succeeded in turning their faces to the wall.

"Will that do?" he asked.

"No," replied the invalid. "I will tell you what to do. Take a piece of chalk, and write on the back of those three pictures what I tell you to write. On the one to the left write, 'God be merciful to me a sinner.'" The text was written. "Now, on the middle one, 'Lord, save me, I perish!' and on the last, 'Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.'"

With a smile of satisfaction the sick man lay back upon his pillows, ever and anon opening his eyes to look upon the words which had just been written. They were words of life and peace and victory to him. In the last moments of his life on earth the words, "Lord, I believe!" were upon his lips; then "faith was lost in sight," and he passed into the presence of his Saviour. His widow, now the happy possessor of the same precious faith, still keeps the three pictures with their chalked inscriptions.

C. C. S.



NOTHING can exceed the peace-giving power of true testimony. If God says a thing, it is sure. If He says, "Thy faith hath saved thee," I need no other warrant for knowing that I am saved. Feelings and experiences are good, but they are not God's testimony.

W. T. P. W.

ONE MOMENT.



OME years ago, in one of the manufacturing towns of the north of England, a large factory was destroyed by fire, and several lives were lost.

The fire was caused by an explosion of gas whilst the workpeople were engaged in their daily employment. All was apparently going on as usual, when suddenly the whole scene became one of indescribable terror, and the workpeople saw that their lives were in danger, and rushed in frantic excitement to the nearest place of exit. Some were driven back by the fury of the flames and clouds of smoke which filled every corner of the building. Cries for help were heard from various parts, and willing hands were near, and rendered assistance in providing means of escape.

One poor girl was heard shouting for help from one of the windows above, which was about four storeys high, and at intervals through the clouds of smoke her face could be seen looking towards the crowd below; her mother was amongst the crowd, and she recognised her child, and shouted, "Jump, Lizzie;" but the girl was afraid to do so from that great height, she preferred to stay there a few moments longer, expecting that some help would come; but the mother became more terrified every moment, and again cried out excitedly,

"Jump, Lizzie, or you will be lost." Lizzie was still afraid, and several strong navvies who were near, seeing that she could not possibly be saved unless she leaped, *held out their arms* to catch her, but she refused their help. The mother then became more excited than ever, calling upon her child to leap, and expressing her confidence in the men who promised to catch her, when ultimately she cried out, "I will come then," and no sooner had these words escaped her lips when a terrible crash was heard and she instantly disappeared. The beams of the floor on which she had been standing had become charred with the flames, and crumbled under the heavy weight of the machinery which was upon them, and the girl had fallen, with some of her companions, to the bottom of the building.

She had delayed her salvation only a moment too long. She intended to be saved, and at the very moment she was preparing for the leap, the fatal beams gave way beneath her! If they had stood firm another moment, she would have been saved!

What a solemn warning this is! one which should not fail to awaken in the heart of every unconverted person, the fact that it is folly to reject the beseechings of God to flee to Him, which is the only place of safety. You may, like the girl, have said, "*I will come*," but have not done so yet; you may intend to have the question of your sins settled with God soon, perhaps next month, or next week, yea, even perhaps to-morrow, but God says

NOW. "*Now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2). "*Come*, for all things are *now* ready" (Luke xiv. 17). Not in a moment from now,—no, just now, in the very spot where you are, for you have not a moment's lease of your life. It may be that the Lord Jesus Christ will come, or grim death may lay his cold hand upon your heart, before you have read this paper, and then you will be brought before Him as a Judge (Rom. xiv. 12), and be hurled from His presence into "eternal fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. xxv. 21). God is waiting, *with open arms*, to receive you now. You cannot afford to wait; this moment may be your last, and what an awful thing it will be for you to enter eternity unsaved, with the gospel of God's grace upon your lips!

J. M.



REALISATION is all good enough, but it is worth nothing as an evidence of salvation. Christ's *work* is the ground, and God's *word* the assurance of that. "When *I* see the blood, I will pass over," was the word in Egypt. Not "When *you* see the blood and *feel* its value," No soul ever fully sees the value of that blood. God does, however, and His estimate of it is applied to the believing soul. Not my feelings, but God's estimate of Christ's blood, is the ground of my peace before Him.

W. T. P. W.

"ESCAPE FOR THY LIFE."



FIFTEEN thousand souls, in one brief moment, from one small spot of the earth, swept into eternity. Such was the appalling news that came from the ill-fated valley in Pennsylvania.

"It was late in the afternoon, says the report, "when the Conemaugh Lake

burst through its restraint, and swept through the valley in a resistless torrent." Populous towns and thriving villages were in a moment overwhelmed by the irresistible flood. Nothing could withstand the force of the raging mass of waters. "Locomotives were swept along like pebbles; bridges, whether of wood or stone, did not totter or fall, they instantly became a floating mass of shapeless debris." Fire added to the horror of the scene, many of the floating masses of wreckage bursting into flames. Thus, while hundreds of human beings were drowned in the flood, hundreds who escaped the waters perished in the flames; others, too, were crushed to death in the fall of their own homes.

The water and the flames were merciless; rich and poor, tender women and strong men, boys and girls, and old men and women, the new-born and the grey-headed, alike were overwhelmed in the floods, or perished in the flames. Just as they were, saved or lost; believers in the Lord Jesus Christ,

or unbelievers; acceptors or rejectors of the gospel; ready or not ready—they passed into eternity. Death claimed them, life closed upon them, time finished with them, eternity opened to them, heaven or hell received each soul of them. They have done with the passing things of time; they have entered the fixed realities of eternity. As they entered, so will they spend eternity. “In the *place* where the tree falleth, there it shall lie” (Eccles. xi. 3). How many ways can men fall? Only two, either saved or lost. How many places can men fall into? Only two, either heaven or hell; either the place Christ has gone to prepare (John xiv. 4), or the place “prepared for the devil and his angels.” Death for the believer is merely absent from the body, “present with the Lord”; for the unbeliever it is “everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord.”

Some of the victims of this terrible disaster have, thank God, entered upon a bright eternity with Christ in glory; others, alas, have passed from a lost life into a lost eternity. “The Lord knoweth them that are his,” and the day alone will declare the sum of the lost.

But was there no *place* of safety from the flood of waters? Was there no *time* for escape from the rushing tide? Was there no *warning voice* raised ere the torrent of waters burst on the unfortunate people? Yes, high lands on either side of the valley offered a refuge from the flood.

Time, also, was given the inhabitants to flee from the ill-fated valley to the safety of the hills. Many a warning voice, too, was raised ere they were overwhelmed. We read, "It seems strange, but it is quite true, that *ample warning* of the coming disaster was given." And again, "Early in the morning the people were told that the embankment showed signs of giving way." How did they receive the ominous news? Alas, the report continues, "not much attention was paid to the warning." Later on we hear of an unknown horseman "who rode madly to save the people," and as he rode frantically through villages and towns he raised the warning cry, "To the hills!" How did they receive the message of the horseman? Did they awaken at last to a sense of their critical position, and immediately flee from the doomed valley? Was there a rush for their one hope—the hills? Alas, no! we are told, "They *laughed* at his warning cry, 'To the hills!' and replied, 'We will wait till we see the water.'"

Then the horseman passed on with his solemn warning unheeded, and the people who laughed and mocked were left behind. Was this their last warning? No! once again they were warned; and this time—the last time—it was their very doom—the flood of waters—that raised the warning. "A confused noise," says the report, "accompanied the advance of the water." How was the last warning received? Were the people terrified by the distant roar of the on-coming waters as they

burst through their restraint, and poured in a mighty torrent into the valley below? Did they at last realise their impending doom? Did they, at the eleventh hour, seek the refuge of the hills? Alas! we can scarce credit the report that tells us of the last warning—"no one heeded it."

Thus the day wore on; and while the people laughed and mocked at the repeated warnings, their awful doom was drawing nearer and nearer, until at last—the warnings all unheeded, and time passed away—the on-coming torrent burst with resistless fury on the doomed city. "The waters rushed into the streets several feet deep, and rocked the houses from side to side with the power of an earthquake. Finally, the current carried the buildings across the streets and vacant lots, dashing them together and breaking them into fragments, while the people inside, many of whom had shortly before *laughed at the cry of danger*, were unable to do anything to help themselves." Thus it came to pass that nearly fifteen thousand lives were lost in the calamity of May 31st, 1889.

More than three thousand five hundred years ago, Abraham, from the heights of Mamre, beheld the awful doom of Sodom and Gomorrah. "These cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground," were overthrown and destroyed by sheets of living fire "rained down from the Lord out of

heaven." This was the awful sight that met the gaze of Abraham when on that solemn morning he "got up early . . . and looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah." The great plain that lay at his feet, and stretched far away into the distance, was one vast smoking furnace. "He looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and beheld, and lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace" (Gen. xix. 24-28).

But were the guilty inhabitants of the plain not *warned* ere judgment overtook them? Was there no *place of refuge* to which they could flee from the righteous wrath of God? Was there no *time* to reach the place of safety? Yes; they were warned of judgment to come; they were told of the place of safety; they had time to flee from the doomed cities. The night preceding the solemn day of their visitation, we read, "There went two angels to Sodom at even." They entered into the house of Lot. Outside "the men of Sodom compassed the house round, both old and young, all the people from every quarter." The angels warn Lot of their solemn mission. Then in the night-time Lot "went out and spake unto his sons-in-law"—men of Sodom. He warns them of coming judgment, and pleads earnestly with them to escape for their lives. "Up," says he, "get you out of this place, for the Lord will destroy this city." What effect did Lot's preaching have upon the men of Sodom? Did they flee that very moment from the place of judgment? Alas, no! They made

light of Lot's preaching. "He seemed as one that mocked."

So the night wore on,—Lot pleading, his sons refusing,—until at last the morning breaks. Then the angels speak again to Lot, this time telling him to "arise," lest he be consumed. No longer now telling him to warn others, but to escape himself. The last warning has been heard and refused; the interval of grace has passed; and the day of judgment has at last dawned upon the guilty cities of the plain.

Lot still lingers, until he, his wife, and two daughters are dragged out by the hand, and told to "escape to the mountain." The heights above the plain become the alone place of safety. Lot escapes first to Zoar, but finally has to flee to the "mountain" (ver. 20).

But what of the cities of the plain? Lot has gone, his preaching done. The Sodomites are left alone, and the moment of their doom is closing in upon them. How do they spend the last few moments ere judgment overtakes them. We read, "they ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded" (Luke xvii. 28). The sun had risen as usual, the sky is cloudless; there is not the slightest appearance of anything unusual about to take place; so they go on with their business, their pleasure, and their sin, until at length, the warning to escape rejected, the plan of escape refused, and the time for escape frittered away, the moment of judgment has

come. The cloudless sky is suddenly lit up with an unearthly glare, the dazzling splendour of the sun is changed to blood-red, and the cities of the plain are wrapt about in flames of lurid fire, rained down from the living God. The fire of judgment does its awful work. The godless inhabitants are overwhelmed. Not one escapes; the fire and brimstone "destroyed them all." Never again will there be any more eating and drinking, buying and selling, or building and planting, in the cities of the plain. Their "small day" is done; they have entered God's eternity. Their once fair plain is now an arid desert, and over the very site of Sodom and Gomorrah there flows the water of death.

Has not the doom of Sodom and Gomorrah spoken with solemn voice of warning to all succeeding generations for nearly four thousand years? Does it not yet speak in these the last closing days? Again are we not reminded afresh, by the recent awful catastrophe, of the terrible judgment that hangs like a thunder-cloud, ready to burst, over this Christless scene? Reader, has it no voice for thee? Is thy heart still in this poor world, and art thou yet a stranger to Christ? Remember the world in which you live, and which you love so well,—for the love of which you are bartering away your precious soul,—is under the sentence of judgment far more awful than that of Sodom and Gomorrah. Says Paul, writing to the Hebrews, "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after

this the judgment." Death, then, and after death the judgment, is thine "appointed" lot, Christless soul. And, moreover, not only is judgment "appointed," but this same apostle tells us that the very day is "appointed." And not only is the day appointed, but the judge is ordained. Think then of thine awful position, unsaved soul,—“dead in trespasses and sins;” “*in the flesh* ;” “*in the world* ;” “*without Christ* ;” “*having no hope, and without God*” (Eph. ii. 1, 11, 12),—appointed for death and judgment, and the day of judgment appointed for thee, and thy judge ordained!

But, stop; is thy case hopeless? Is there no *place* of refuge to which thou canst flee from coming judgment? Is there no *time* for thee to escape? Is there not one clear voice, above all the babel of discordant sounds, warning thee of judgment to come and the way of escape? Thank God, there is one warning voice, the Word of God, that tells thee of *one* place of refuge—Christ in the glory; and holds out to thee, the only time for escape—*now*! “Now is the day of salvation” (2 Cor. vi. 2). How does the world treat the voice of warning? How have you treated it, reader? How did the people of Paul’s day treat the warning of judgment to come? We read, “Some *mocked*, and others said, *We will hear thee again* of this matter; . . . howbeit certain men *clave* unto him, and *believed*” (Acts xvii. 30-34). Reader, which are you, a “*mock*er,” a “*procrastinator*,” or a “*believer*”?

Art thou a mocker? Then may God in His grace stop thy mouth now, in this day of grace, and lead thee to "confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus." Be assured of this, mocker, thine impudent mouth will be stopped, either *now* in the day of grace, or *then* in the coming day of judgment. For God has said,—and God's word will stand good in spite of all the mockers and their mockings,—
 "Every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Art thou a procrastinator? Remember, then, that thou art in a world of death, and Christ is coming. Death may overtake thee any moment, and cut thee off from salvation; or Christ—the master of the house—may rise up and "shut to the door," and thus cut salvation off from thee. Procrastinator, put off no longer the question of thy soul's salvation. Time presses; death is coming; judgment is coming; eternity, with its heaven and hell, is coming; Christ is coming; the world is passing; time is passing; and thou art passing on—but *where*?

Art thou one of the third, the blessed class—a believer—every moment taking thee nearer to thine eternal rest with Christ in glory? or art thou an unbeliever, every moment speeding thee on to the judgment and the lake of fire? Soon the day of grace will be finished; the preaching all done; the warnings all passed; the time gone; the believers caught away, like Lot from Sodom; and then the awful day of judgment will fall upon a Christless world.

Reader, once again we entreat you to "neglect" no longer this "great salvation." Turn no longer a deaf ear to God's solemn warnings and loving entreaties, but come, just as thou art,—*now*, this very moment. Flee from the wrath to come; "escape for thy life," escape to the mountain—Christ in the glory.

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 31). God says it. Now come, dear reader, you believe it? We do not ask you to accept the words of a fellow-mortal, but the words of the living God, who cannot lie, "with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." To reject them, will be your eternal ruin. "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" (Heb. ii. 3.)

H. S.

NO HOPE IN HELL.



POPULAR doctrine, published of late years by sundry learned divines, is that of a larger hope for the lost than that they should be punished eternally for their sins.

How long the period of punishment may be cannot, of course, be fixed by man. It may be hundreds, thousands, or even millions of years; but, anyhow, it is terminable, and the

wicked will be eventually delivered from their doom, and obtain a place in heaven along with the saints.

This is the doctrine of this "*Larger Hope*," and truly this title sounds pleasant enough! Hope is always cheery, and carries light to the darkest breast. But "hope" is not certainty, just as the best of wishes are not truth. We may hope for a thousand things that are altogether impossible; therefore it is important that we discover what is true, what is revealed, in order to test our grounds of hope. If these are not based on truth, they must be false and delusive.

Now, if God punish *in time*, that punishment is necessarily limited in duration. Thus the flood continued for some months; the captivity of Israel in Babylon for some years; its present dispersion for some centuries,—and so on. But in eternity the state is fixed and unalterable. Thus we read, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; he that is filthy, let him be filthy still; he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still" (Rev. xxi. 11). Here the condition is determined and abiding.

Again, "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 upon him" (John iii. 36). Here too the state is sealed,—wrath abides.

Hence, when you touch eternity, all change is precluded; everything bears the eternal stamp.

There is no kind of change, either in heaven or in hell.

Consider the condition of the rich man (Luke xvi.), who after death lifted up his eyes in torment and saw Lazarus in Abraham's bosom, whilst he himself was in hell. Had this man,—whose history is given us by the Lord, figuratively perhaps, but with awful depth of meaning and solemn warning,—had he the comfort derived from this larger hope doctrine?

Well, he did indulge hope—and that in hell. There was a ray of hope for this miserable man, not indeed large, but still he hoped.

For what did he hope? escape from his punishment? No! For a limit being placed on its duration? No! That hope, observe, appears never to have entered his mind; he seemed to have accepted its eternity. But he hoped for relief, a little mitigation of his agony; he hoped for as much comfort as is contained in *one drop of water!* Small hope that! He desired that Lazarus should be sent with water on the tip of his finger, to cool his tormented tongue.

This gives no evidence of the larger hope being accredited in hell. No, its fallacy is realised there. As a satanic delusion it succeeds on earth, and blinds its victims. On earth, it is welcome where sin is sweet, and its eternal judgment hateful. But beyond the grave, and the great white throne, from whence eternity's irrevocable verdict is issued, hope of every kind, large or

small, is banished for ever. There is no hope in heaven, for the simple reason that there

"Hope has changed to glad fruition,
Faith to sight, and prayer to praise."

There is no hope in hell, for the reason that unbelief and sin sink to their proper level, and the tree lies for ever as it falls. Hope has her sphere on earth alone, and even then only for the Christian. He enjoys the blessed hope of the coming of the Lord; whilst, alas, the sinner, being "without God," is also "without hope."

There is no hope for the sinner on earth, but through God's grace, and none whatever in hell.

J. W. S.

"REMEMBER LOT'S WIFE."

(Read Gen. xix.)



REMEMBER Lot's wife," is the pointed and solemn commentary, which our Lord Jesus Christ has made on this scene in the 17th of Luke's Gospel, and I have no doubt why, in speaking to His disciples, He thus addresses them. He does not say, "Think on the sin of Sodom—ponder the iniquity of Gomorrah." No, but He says, "Remember Lot's wife." And why? The reason is on the face of it. When the Lord comes, by-and-by, there will be thousands of people who will

have no sympathy with the outward ungodliness of the world, but who are really as unprepared to meet Him, as the most ungodly sinner in Sodom or Gomorrah, for there was no safety but in the spot the Lord had marked out for Lot and his family, and his wife did not reach it.

She comes before us as the illustration of the terribleness of unbelief in the heart, while seemingly believing the gospel.

It might have been said, "Did she not leave the city?" Yes, but she had no faith in what was coming, and though dragged out of the world, her heart was in it. God had said, "The men of Sodom were wicked, and sinners before the Lord exceedingly" (Gen. xiii. 13), and intimated to Abraham (Gen. xviii) that He was about to judge them. But that is true of every one of us, by nature. There is not a man that the Holy Ghost would not describe as a wicked person. In Col. i. 21 we read, "And you that were sometimes alienated, and enemies in your mind by *wicked works*, yet now hath he reconciled;" and in Jer. xvii. 9 we are told, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and *desperately wicked*." It is no use, my reader, for you or me to think we can elude this statement of the Lord. You have a conscience, and I am sure in your conscience there is the sense that, sometime or other, God will judge wickedness. Still judgment is His "strange work," and it is blessed to think, that if God has to judge, it is a "strange act" (Isa. xxviii. 21) to Him, and therefore He lets His

people know about it ere it take place, that they may feel with, and witness for Him, and warn the world while mercy lingers.

Lot was the example of a thoroughly worldly Christian, but Abraham knew that deep down in his heart the light of God had shone in, and in the New Testament he is called "just Lot," and a "righteous man" (2 Pet. ii. 8, 9). In point of fact, he was trying to whitewash Sodom, and utterly failed, at length slowly learning that God was not going to purge Sodom, but judge and destroy it; and if you, my reader, think that God is going to improve the world, you would do well to get hold of this truth, the rather, that He is going to judge it; and therefore, unconverted soul, the next thing before you is judgment. The character of the world's coming judgment is identical with that of Sodom. "The earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up" (2 Pet. iii. 10). Faith can see "Reserved unto fire" (2 Pet. iii. 7), engraved in the most indelible letters, on the finest monuments to human skill, energy, or glory, that man can erect.

In Luke xvii. the Lord tells His disciples that "as it was in the days of Noah," and "as it was in the days of Lot," even "thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man shall be revealed." And how was that? It was in a moment. As the lightning flash has taken you by surprise many a day, though you may have watched the gathering storm, so shall it be in the day when the Son of

Man deals with this world. What were men in Noah's day? Heedless, careless. And in Lot's day? Corrupt, and the judgment came suddenly. And what is the world now? Will you deny that it is heedless, careless, and must I not add corrupt? True is this witness, and judgment is the next thing for this poor world.

But before judgment comes, salvation is provided and preached, and I want to show you, in Lot's wife, how near a soul may be to salvation, and yet not possess it; how near to safety and yet not be saved. If Jesus were to come just now into the air, every soul that had received Him, by faith, would rise to meet Him. But what of those who meant to get ready, who were thinking of it? Left behind, they will have missed their chance of salvation, and missed it for ever. Oh, believe it, this judgment of God is real, but there is something else real, and that is the present grace of Christ, that saves the vilest and the worst. In Sodom God offered mercy to those who never tasted it. Will you, reader, let history thus sadly repeat itself in your case?

It was a calm even-tide the day before the judgment fell, and no doubt many in Sodom thought they had done well that day, but they knew not what was coming on the morrow. But God knew, and that evening there appeared in the gates of the doomed city two angels, two messengers. They came to Lot, and he brought them to his house. They were rather chary of going in, chary

to associate with a man whose ways had been so little to the Lord's liking as Lot's had been, but "mercy rejoiceth over judgment," and they went in, seeking to save, intent on giving Lot the message. The wickedness of the place was thoroughly made manifest. Opposition first to the messengers, and then indifference to the message. But divine power baffled opposition, and they delivered their message. They said to Lot, "Whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring out of this place, for we will destroy this place" (ver. 12). A way of escape was marked out before the tale of coming judgment was told even, and is there no type of the gospel in this?

Have you, reader, never heard how God loved the world, and sent His Son to be the Saviour thereof? And that Son did a work on the cross, whereby God can now righteously send out His message of mercy to guilty sinners? And the message is this, God has a way of salvation, and that way of salvation is only through Jesus Christ, His Son. Oh, wake up from your heedlessness and carelessness! "Escape for thy life." Think how you can meet God. There is only one spot where you can meet Him, without judgment, and that is the cross of His own Son.

God never judges without giving a warning note first. He did it in Sodom, and Lot believed, and acted on it. Profoundly impressed himself, Lot tells others, but alas, he seemed to them "as one that mocked." He told his sons-in-law that judgment

was coming, but judgment seemed far off. His words had no effect on them, and he leaves them. They are left behind to the judgment they dared, perhaps even denied. Oh, my young friend, be warned now, turn to God now. God is calling, God is blessing, let Him bless you. Give Him your young life.

Heed His word. Do not let Satan deceive you. Be not like these young men. Is it true that you must meet God? It is true. Is it true that God will judge sin? It is true. Is it true that you must give an account of yourself to God? It is true; and this is true also, that He sent His Son into this world to be a Saviour,—your Saviour if you will have Him. Oh, receive Him now, lest judgment fall and overtake you, lest the Lord come and find you unprepared.

Procrastination is a terrible snare to souls. It is the devil's most potent agent in hindering salvation. Lot was not free from it, for we read, "While he lingered the men laid hold upon his hand and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters, the Lord being merciful unto him, and they brought him forth and set him without the city." It is all of grace; salvation is of the Lord. Every believing heart knows that. How God's heart lingers over souls! As those six went through the gate of the city that day, no doubt many laughed at them, but I would rather be laughed at by man, than be damned by God. Don't you be hindered or deceived by the devil, reader;

don't refuse or resist the gospel because you may be laughed at to-morrow. Many a man has lost heaven for ever because afraid of a comrade's sneer.

"Escape for thy life," say these angels to Lot. "Escape for thy life," cry I. Do you say where? To Christ,—to Christ, the sinner's friend,—to Him who bore the judgment of God upon the cross, that you and I might never bear. There is no way of escape but by getting to Him. There is a heavenly Christ now, and the Spirit of God has come down to turn your heart to Him, and there is no safety for you until you reach Him. You may be baptized, be a Sunday-school teacher, a so-called church member, and yet be lost. You must be assuredly lost for ever if you have not Christ.

Lot and his family all made a good start, but the start is not the end of the course. The word of instruction was, "*Escape for thy life, look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed.*" Three of the four made good their escape, and none too soon. Sodom might be reflecting on the folly of the fugitives, and Lot's sons-in-law narrating to godless companions how their father-in-law had that night aroused them from sleep, and told them such a monstrous and foolish story of coming judgment, that they thought him demented, for "he seemed as one that mocked to his sons-in-law." All seemed going on as usual. "*The sun was risen;*" his rays illumed and cheered the scene; there was no warning, all seemed bright and fair;

"but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and *destroyed them all.*" Such is ever the end of unbelief.

But look at Lot's wife. Was she overwhelmed in the city? No; she had been dragged out of the city; but she is the picture of a mere professor of Christianity, without any living faith in the heart. Reader, if you are only half-hearted, "remember Lot's wife;" and if you are only thinking about your soul's salvation, and meaning some day to be ready, "remember Lot's wife." She is God's beacon to every half-hearted soul. You be ready, be really prepared, be real, be out and out. The gospel is preached for the obedience of faith; and in her heart there was no faith in the certainty of the judgment God's word had warned of. She was within sight of the mountain, but she never touched it,—within sight of safety, but not saved. Let her be a beacon to you. The only place of safety is to reach the side of Christ. It was not her ungodliness invoked God's judgment on her; it was her unbelief in declared truth, which she had an "if" about in her heart. She turned back to see "if" it were true. God will judge every sin, but there is, in this day, one sin that caps all others,—it is the sin of unbelief.

There are multitudes of souls like Lot's wife in this day,—influenced by surroundings, but not convicted of the truth as given of God. Impressed, but not decidedly converted, they follow in her

steps, and eventually must share her fate. Let me beseech you, my reader, if yet undecided and consequently unsaved, turn to the Lord, and get from Him salvation first, and let this word come to you as a warning from Himself,

“REMEMBER LOT’S WIFE.”

W. T. P. W.

STRAIGHT UP TO JESUS.



It was eleven o'clock on Saturday night, in the town of B——, in the west of England, 1878, when I heard of a young woman who was very ill.

I went early the next morning to find her out, and never did I look upon a more pitiable object. She was only eighteen, and the mother of a babe a month old. Her mother and her husband were in the room.

On nearing the bed I said, “My dear young woman, you are very ill.”

“Yes,” she said, “but the doctor says he will pull me through.”

“Oh, don’t be deceived,” said I; “you are on the borders of eternity. Do you know yourself to be a lost sinner?”

“Yes, indeed I do,” and she shook her head despairingly, while the tears rolled down her cheeks.

“Well now, I am come to tell you that you have a Friend in heaven, Jesus the Friend of sinners,

and He is looking down very pitifully upon you now, and He will in no wise cast out any that come to God by Him" (John vi. 37). We prayed, and I left her to the Lord until the morning.

The old old story of the grace of Jesus and His love was repeated day by day to the poor sinking one, and on the Thursday of the next week the doctor said he must give her up, as he could do no more for her.

She looked straight in his face, and said, "I knew that before; and if I had died last week I should have been lost, but now I am going straight up from this bed to be with Jesus for ever."

All that night she was singing:—

"Rock of Ages! cleft for me,
Grace hath hid me safe in Thee!
Where the water and the blood,
From Thy wounded side which flow'd,
Are of sin the double cure,
Cleansing from its grace and power."

At twelve o'clock the next day she called her mother to her, and said, "Give me the last kiss; I am going to Jesus now, and that babe will be with me in three months; ask the old gentleman to bury it in my grave." She then laid her head back, and peacefully passed away.

The gospel was preached at her grave to a weeping company; and three months after we laid the body of the babe by her side, and spoke again to the people of the grace of Him who came to seek and to save that which was lost (Luke xix. 10).

ENCOURAGEMENT AND WARNING.

ECCLES. xi. 6 ; PROV. xxix. 1.



HE long-suffering mercy of God, and His patient and tender grace, in what might appear to be a hopeless case, may be seen in the following little narrative, now put forth in the hope that it may prove an encouragement to those labouring in any way to bring the gospel of the grace of God home to the individual sinner.

To please himself had been the one object for thirty-three years of S—— G——.

Although carefully trained in his youth, the desires after the (so-called) pleasures of life soon broke through the hedge which had been cultivated around him, with the result that, at the age of twenty-eight, consumption had set in, and he found himself a complete wreck. If, however, he had forgotten God, God in His tender love for the poor sinner had not forgotten him.

During this first illness, which lasted several weeks, the writer, a relative, put before him, by letters and little books, God's way of salvation; and these, though not acknowledged at the time, were read by him, as he owned on his deathbed.

He recovered, but alas! still unbroken, unrepentant, unsaved; and another season of wilfulness and sin served but to display the tender patience of God towards the rebellious sinner.

Each succeeding attack was made the occasion for renewed appeals, and earnest prayer on his behalf, and these were followed by a personal visit in August 1886, when God's grace was pressed upon him, and he was implored to lay hold on God's salvation, through the perfect work of His Son the Lord Jesus Christ. His only answer was, with tears, "I know you are right." At this interview a little book, "The Two Alexanders," was given to him, and this he carried about in his pocket, and was often seen to read.

About the end of March, as he was walking in the street, he burst a blood-vessel, and was led home a dying man. To his mother he said, "God has spoken to me to-day. If they had laid me down, *I should have died directly.*"

Again he was pressed to look to Him who alone could save, and his reply was a proof that God had not only spoken to him that day, but that he had heard His voice. "Yes," he said, "salvation is not bought with money, God has taught me that."

From that moment he took the place of a lost sinner, and accepted the Lord Jesus as the Saviour of the lost, never after doubting His power or His love.

"His love is as great as His power,
And knows neither measure nor end."

He said little, being very quickly exhausted, but he liked others to speak and read to him.

Almost his last words were, "God is love"; and on his mother adding, "And God is light," he said, "Yes, and I know that as well."

He had known the light to penetrate his dark heart, and reveal to him his awful position; and now that light was known to him as revealing the full value and the preciousness of the blood which "cleanseth from all sin:"

Is this paper being read by one on a bed of sickness? one who, looking back on the past, can only say, "Yes, God has spoken to me many times, but there has been no response." God has undoubtedly spoken to you many times, but the point we would press upon you is, Have you heard? The last time will come,—a moment when He will call for the last time! Think of the words above referred to, "If they had laid me down, *I should have died directly.*" When dead where will you spend your eternity?

A. H. P. W.



Pages for the Young.



"DO YOU READ YOUR BIBLE?"



THE college boys dispersed as usual one Thursday afternoon at three o'clock, to their homes, their visits, or recreations; the boarders to return at the accustomed hour for tea. One of the latter was a youth of about seventeen, in the fifth form, who, on this occasion, spent the little interval

of leisure in calling at various places, in one or two instances expressing his intention of coming again before long; and a special holiday was in prospect for the morrow. When he returned at tea time, he was too unwell to take his place at the table; and such serious symptoms were soon developed, that medical aid was sought, but sought in vain; for about half-past seven that evening he expired; and a subsequent examination proved that his sudden death had been caused by his having taken strychnia. How this came to pass was a mystery. There was, however, near the college, a shop in two compartments, combining thus the goods of a grocer and a chemist, but inadequately attended, and poisons were left within reach of the careless or inquisitive. This shop was a favourite resort of the boys for sweets or sherbet, and various were the conjectures as to how the poison could have reached poor W. M.'s lips. A very small taste would, of course, prove fatal; and no efforts availed to spare that young life so suddenly snatched from amongst his fellows.

A friend who had been conversing with W. M. not many days before, and who had asked him whether he read his Bible, greatly shocked to think that that had been her last opportunity of speaking with him, now asked to see that Bible, and carefully was it searched to find if there were any indication of what he had read or marked in that blessed Book. Yes, there was one page on which the candle grease had dropped, and where it

had been evidently laid open; and there the eye caught these solemn words:—"Boast not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."


We will not dwell 'on the agony of the bereaved parents, both of whom have now followed their son out of this earthly scene; nor on the funeral, attended by so many of his school companions; while we earnestly hope that to some of them God may have graciously used the occurrence as a message of warning, leading to everlasting salvation. But rather I would press on my young friends this one question,—“Do you read your Bible?” that book from God which contains words not only of warning, but of eternal life—of all you need to make you happy, both here and for ever. Perhaps you are placed where you cannot hear the public preaching of the gospel; perhaps you are at school, away from your parents or Christian friends, who have spoken to you of Jesus and of the need of your undying souls. It may be that your studies are very engrossing, and that you are anxiously preparing for an examination, or hoping for a prize or a scholarship. I would be far from discouraging you from diligence as to any duty for this life, but would remind you of what the Lord Himself so solemnly uttered when on earth: “What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul, or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” (Matt. xvi. 26); and to His disciples He says, “Seek ye first the kingdom of God and

his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you " (Matt. vi. 33).

Let me then earnestly advise you, however pressing your work may be, never to pass a day—never, indeed, to enter on the work of a day—without listening to the voice of God in His own holy and blessed Word. Will you look through the Gospel of John, and see how often the Lord Jesus says, " Verily, verily, I say unto you " ? Is He not worth listening to ? Is He not seeking your blessing when He thus speaks to you ? Do you not want to hear His " verily, verily " in a world where there is so much to deceive and disappoint—where Satan, the god of this world, seeks to lead captive the young, promising them all that is fair in this life, and deluding them with hopes of many years to come ; whereas, you know well that in every graveyard there are numbers of tombstones which record the early death of those who were as likely as yourselves to have a long life on the earth. Do you not want to hear the truth from One who is your true friend ? How often you ask, when you hear something wonderful, " Is it true ? " Well, if you want something both wonderful and true, I commend to you the third chapter of the Gospel of John, and may you, receiving in simple faith the testimony of Jesus, be enabled to set to your seal that God is true (John iii. 33).

C. G.

"HE'S NOT PUT THEM BACK ON ME."

"E'S above seventy, and unsaved, and getting feeble, and I've got him to come through from Glasgow to stay a day or two, and I'm going to bring him to the gospel meeting to-morrow night, and I'm real anxious about his salvation, and you will pray for him, won't you?" The speaker was a real earnest Christian woman, and the subject of her fervent wishes her uncle. How natural that we should wish our loved ones to be blessed of God! And how right, too!

Many years have rolled by, but I well remember seeing the prayerful niece and the aged relative sitting side by side where I was preaching the gospel the next evening. The subject before us that night was found in Heb. ix. 27, 28, "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment; so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many: and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation."

There passed before us the two solemn appointments that the unsaved man has before him, viz., death, and judgment, which simply mean *death* and *damnation*, for no one can rise out of judgment. Well did David know this, and hence his cry, "*Enter not into judgment* with thy servant; for in thy sight shall no man living be justified" (Ps. cxliii. 2). To die and be damned is the sure and

certain lot of the sinner as such. He cannot evade these appointments. They are all divinely fixed. Sin has its sure penalties. These are they. "The wages of sin is death." But "all have sinned," hence death and judgment claim all rightly. Then will all be lost? No! Why? Our verses told us this too. The "*as*" and the "*so*" were examined. "*As*"—"so."

"*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." How wondrous! how divine! "*As*" to die and be judged was once the lot of man, because of sin, "*so* Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." In love He went to the cross, "bare our sins in his own body on the tree," bared His bosom to the stroke of Divine and righteous judgment. Yes, He who "knew no sin," "appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Wondrous sacrifice! magnificent grace! Did sin entail death and judgment on the sinner? He "who did no sin," "was made sin," endured the judgment of sin, and died the death that was sin's wage. He made atonement for sin. "*As*"—"so." "*As*" death and judgment belonged to me, "*so*" Christ tasted and endured them both, and I am free. He took our place in death and judgment, that we, who believe, might get His place in life and glory. Never was love like this. In the days of His flesh they said, "Never man spake like this man" (John vii. 46). We can surely say, Never man loved like this Man.

The face of my aged listener betokened much interest, and ere long the tell-tale tears coursed quickly down the wrinkled cheeks as his heart was softened by the tale of the Saviour's dying love. The meeting closed with Bonar's lovely hymn—

"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 ?"

Inviting any anxious inquirers to speak with me in the side-room, I was soon joined by the old man, still weeping profusely.

"Well, my friend," said I, "what is the matter?"

"I don't know exactly what it is, but I never felt as I do to-night," was his reply.

"Never mind your feelings; the great point is, Have you believed the gospel?"

"Yes, sir, I do believe it. Of course, I have always believed it, in a certain sense, but I believe it to-night as I never did before, and I certainly do feel as I never felt before," and as he spoke he stroked his broad chest with his brawny toil-marked hand. "It was just when we were singing that hymn, it seemed to get all clear to me."

"What part of the hymn?"

"Oh, that bit where it says

"Jesus put all my sins away
When bruised to make me whole !

"And do you now believe that Jesus has put *all your sins* away?"

"Indeed I do to-night, though I never believed this way before."

"You believe that Jesus bare your sins in His own body on the tree?"

"I believe that now."

"How many of your sins did He bare?"

"All of them."

"And where are all your sins now?"

A pause of some moments followed, while the old man pondered this query, and then slowly replied, "I don't feel quite sure as to that."

"Has He taken them to heaven with Him, do you think?"

"No, no; there's no sin in heaven, I'm sure of that."

"Well, then, what has Jesus done with them? You are sure He bore them all on the cross?"

"Yes, I feel sure of that to-night."

"And you are sure He has not taken them with Him into heaven?"

"Yes, I'm certain about that too."

"Well, then, what has He done with them?"

"That's just the bit that I'd like to be clear about, but *I'm sure He's not put them back on me.*"

"Quite right; that is true. But if He did once bear them all on the cross, and He has not taken them into heaven, nor put them back on you, what must He have done with them?"

With a deep sigh of relief, as the truth flashed

on his soul, and a fresh burst of tears, the old man replied, with deepest emphasis, "Why, He must have put them away for ever."

"Exactly so. That is just what Scripture so blessedly states, and what I have been preaching, and the hymn sweetly corroborates,—

'Jesus put all my sins away

When bruised to make me whole.'

If ever your sins could be found, they must be found on Jesus, since He once bore them; and if they can't be found on Him, they are gone for ever from God's sight."

Peace, deep and real, entered his soul, and he left for home next day, rejoicing in his newly found Saviour.

Reader, are you yet able to truthfully say,

"Jesus put all my sins away

When bruised to make me whole"?

W. T. P. W.



"IT WAS GOD'S APPOINTED TIME."



SUCH were the words of a woman who was lying very ill. God's word had found entrance, and light had dawned in her soul.

The change from darkness to light was great, and the exhibition of God's grace most wonderful and blessed.

When I first visited her, a year before, she was

an *infidel*. She said she did not believe in God, nor in the Bible. She had once, she told me, believed in the reality of God and eternity; but so many different beliefs had been presented to her, both through conversations with persons, and through reading matter that had been put in her hands, such as Roman Catholicism, Spiritualism, the Jewish religion, Seventh Day Adventism, &c., that she had come to believe there was no reality in anything; and she had seen so much in professing Christians to stumble her, that she had lost confidence in Christians. I asked her if she did not think there was such a thing as a genuine Christian. The question seemed to touch a tender chord; it carried her back, in memory, to a loved sister, whom she had not seen for years, the reality of whose conversion and Christianity she could not question. I saw that she was not thoroughly hardened,—there was a tender spot there,—and I lifted up my heart to God that He would reach and save the poor woman.

After seeking to put before her the importance of eternal things, I gave her a tract and left.

In the course of a few weeks I called again to see her. She received me kindly, and soon we were speaking of that which was nearest my heart.

But not in two visits, nor yet in a score of visits, did the blessed truth do its work. The harvest does not follow immediately the sowing of the seed. The ground has first to be prepared, then the seed sown, then time must be given for the seed to spring up and grow, *after* that the harvest.

In the case of this dear woman, God had, I believe, been preparing the ground, for, as came out later on, I found that for some three or four years there had been uneasiness and a state of unrest, and an inmost conviction that there was a God,—although she was resisting the truth,—and that she was not fit to meet that God.

And now God, in His great mercy, was about to lead her on. The ground had been prepared, and now the seed was being sown.

After frequent visits had been made, in all of which I sought to set the truth before her, she told me one day there had been a change.

"Now," said she, "I believe there is a God, and I believe the Bible is God's Word. When you first came I did not believe that, but I do not see that these things are for me." I could thank God for that. It filled my heart with fresh hope that the Lord would yet bring her to Himself; but I was first made to realise that the "sowing in tears" comes before the "reaping in joy." I tried to show her that these things *were* for her.

When I asked her if she did not *want* to be saved, she replied, "Yes, I would give *all the world* to be a *real Christian*."

Then, when I put before her the gospel in its broadness, its fulness, its simplicity,—“Whosoever;” “Ho, every one that thirsteth;” “He that heareth;”—she would meet me with, “Does not God say, ‘He will have mercy on whom he will have mercy.’ If God is going to save me, He will save me any

way; *I* can do nothing. And does it not say, 'Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated,' and was not this spoken of the children before they were born?" There was evidently a mixture of cavil and real difficulty in her mind. I turned to Obadiah and to Malachi, and showed her that Esau's course—foreknown to God—had been *so bad* that God could only visit judgment upon him; and that in Romans ix. the result simply is mentioned, and neither is it there said He hated him before he was born.

Again and again did she meet me with these words, "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." All this but served to show out the unbelief of the human heart. Thus I found her as I visited her from time to time. Sometimes she was softened and would even weep; she recognised that she was a sinner, deserving only of hell. Many times did she say to me, "I know that I deserve to go to hell; and if I die now, God will send me there." At times she listened as one who heard not; and again she hardened herself, till it seemed as if her heart was like the nether millstone. But the Word of God is able to break the flinty rock in pieces, and it was doing its work in her soul. The Lord had marked her as His own, and in faithfulness He was dealing with her. Her health was poor during most of the year; finally, she was taken down with a severe illness.

The last two times I saw her before her conver-

sion, I spoke specially of the need of giving up *all* to follow Him, saying to her that to "believe in the Lord Jesus Christ" is to *own Him* as *Lord*, in heart to bow in submission to Him. If we *submit* to Him, we will follow Him; and *true following* involves the giving up *all* for Him. The last of these two times was one Saturday afternoon. I had been speaking of these things; she said suddenly, "Do you think that is what hinders me?" I said, "No, Mrs L——, I think in you it is *want of faith*; you harden your heart against God." She soon after became much distressed, covered her face with her hands, and turned away.

I said a little more to her, and then left her. But God was dealing mightily with her soul; the darkness was soon to give place to light. She told me afterwards, that as I talked with her, and after I left her, she was "wretched, oh, *so wretched!*" She said she felt herself to be "the wickedest human being in the world." From that time until nearly nine in the evening—some five or six hours—her heart was calling on God, "Lord, help me. O Lord, lead me into the light, that I may know where the difficulty is. Lord, save me, save me *now*, if ever." Thus it was the struggle went on, but it was not until her heart bowed in submission, and she could say, "Lord, I give up all for Thee," that the light broke in upon her.

Then it was that "the voice of the Son of God" was heard in her soul, and it seemed as if the words "Be at rest" were spoken to her. At first she

could hardly take it in; then *joy* took possession of her, such a joy as filled her soul, and scarce knew bounds. So intense was it, that sleep did not visit her eyes that night,—it was one happy night of praise and thanksgiving, the welling up and overflowing of a heart delivered from the shackles of sin and unbelief, brought into blessed light and liberty, and now free to praise God. Oh, if such be the joy of a new-born soul down here, surrounded by circumstances of sorrow and trial, what will the "*fulness of joy*" in *His presence* be! Surely the courts of heaven will resound with the hallelujahs of praise that will burst from the lips of the redeemed "unto him who has loved us."

Next morning she sent her little girl with a message for me to come to her. When I got there she at once began to tell me of the wonderful change that had taken place, and truly she was a changed woman. She was so weak and sick that it was with difficulty she spoke at all, but in broken sentences she made known what God had done for her soul.

"*I am saved. . . . Saved eternally and for ever. . . . No person, nothing can take it from me. . . . But God's appointed time had come; yea, it was God's appointed time. . . . I told you I had given up everything; but I hadn't, I was clinging to the world. . . . I was a wretched sinner. . . . I'm not afraid to die; but even when such a wretched sinner I was not afraid to die, for I had the thought that in some way God would bring me into light and enjoyment of His blessing.*"

"I *know* the Lord has forgiven me. He died a long time ago, and I've done a heap against Him, but I know it's all put away; I know He has redeemed my soul from hell. What does that hymn say?—'I was blind, but now I see.'"

Yes, God had indeed opened her eyes and made her to see. Wondrously had He wrought in her in His marvellous grace, and now praise and thanksgiving filled her soul. And the fruit too of the soul that has tasted of the love of God was manifest, for at once she began to tell what great things God had done for her, and to preach Christ to others.

Satan had lost his prey; but while he could not succeed in disturbing her peace, he did not leave her without troublers. Of those who went in to see her, there were some who told her *that* was not *religion*, she was not converted, and like things; but such talk did not move her,—her feet had been planted on the *Rock*.

She was not taken away, as we feared she might be, the Lord in mercy sparing her to her family.

As she grew stronger, I visited and talked with her. It was her delight to recount God's dealings with her soul. She told me she believed she would have gone on sinning had I not visited her and continued to go. As I talked with her she desired to "really feel and know the true love of God," but argued in her heart, "God knows I want it, and He does not give it, so I don't believe there is a God!" How this shows out the deceitfulness of the human heart! It seems quite a number of different persons

had been interested in her,—ministers, teachers, and others having talked with her, but she usually led them into argument, and, as she told me, nearly always gained her point. She would insist that the Bible was made by man, was only a law book, &c.

When I visited her I usually left a tract for her to read,—this was before her conversion. She told me afterwards she longed to understand and be made sensible of what was in those tracts, and she would wait until the children were off to school, and would then kneel down and pray earnestly that God would make her realise and feel what was in the book as *I* felt it. And God in His sovereign goodness and grace was pleased to hear, and to make her realise in her soul the blessed power of the truth.

Is there not encouragement in all this for the one in whose breast there is a longing for better things?

Is there a desire to know the love of God, to know Christ, to know salvation? Press on, dear soul; God Himself has implanted the desire, and He will meet the need. “He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness.”

And is there not encouragement here also, for those who are seeking to win souls to Christ, to persevere with earnest prayer to God and travail of soul in their endeavour to turn the lost “from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God?”

“In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand, for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good.”

"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

R. E.

TIME—ETERNITY.



TIME can be measured; Eternity cannot. Time comes to an end; Eternity is unending and eternal. Time is but a moment, and like a drop in the ocean, compared with Eternity.

"Time is short," saith the Spirit of God (1 Cor. vii. 29); our life "a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away" (James iv. 14); "our days upon earth are a shadow" (Job viii. 9); and "all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away; but the word of the Lord endureth for ever" (1 Peter i. 24, 25).

Beloved reader, think over these solemn facts. They are well worth giving heed to, for to-day you are in Time, but to-morrow you may be in Eternity. And does not the inquiry spontaneously rise in the mind, "*Where shall I spend Eternity?*"

Two steamers were going in different directions on the river Thames, at the time of a dense fog, and as the knife-like bow of one of the steamers came

plunging into the sides of the other, the captain of the doomed ship cried out, "*Where are you going?*"

Reader, you are going somewhere; but "*Where are you going?*" If time is so short, your life a vapour, your days a shadow, and all flesh as grass, and the glory of man as the flower of grass, is it not of the utmost importance that you should know where you are going? You are going on to a grand terminus—*Eternity*. But there are two parts in that *Eternity*—a deep impassable gulf divides the two, and no means of access from one to the other exist. Heaven is on one side, and hell on the other. "*Where are you going?*"

Two roads lead to this grand terminus. One is called the "broad road," with its "wide gate"; the other the "narrow way," with its "strait gate." Many go in at the wide gate, and multitudes throng the broad road; while, says the Son of God, speaking of the "strait gate," "few there be that find it." Read Matt. vii. 13, 14.

One road goes down, down, down to destruction; the other, up to life and glory. *Eternity* is the terminus, it receives all; but how vastly different are the estates of the two classes,—the one "comforted," and the other "tormented." Read Luke xvi. 19, 13. My reader, "*Where are you going?*"

Eternity is an overwhelming thought,—eternal glory, or eternal woe! The length, to use a word that can only apply to Time, how blessed on the one hand, but how fearfully solemn on the other. It often rises before the mind in all its immensity.

Supposing we could divide the ocean into drops, and count a hundred years for every drop; and take the sand upon the ocean's shores, and count a thousand years for every grain; and every ray of light, and count a million years for every ray; and all the minute particles of air in infinite space, and count a billion years for every particle,—then, when these years have run their course and come to an end, it would be, as it were, but the morning of eternity!

Then think of your soul; you are a being endowed with immortality, a being accountable to God. "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).

There is only one place in which we can see the full value of the soul, and it is there we get God's estimate of it. It is at the cross. There we find how God values one immortal soul; and He values it by what He gave, and by what was done to redeem it. God gave His Son, and the Son of God laid down His precious life, to redeem us. God was bereft of His Son, and the Son endured the unutterable agonies and woes of being forsaken of God, and brought down to the dust of death, to save us from eternal woe, and bring us to eternal joy and glory with Himself. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone;" but, thanks to His blessed name, He would not reign alone; He would die, and lift us up from our misery, and associate us with Himself for ever.

On the ground of his death, salvation is offered to all, pardon is proclaimed to all. Conversion—a soul turning to God—gets us through the strait gate into the narrow way; then what a future is before us—life and glory! Faith in Jesus and His blood gets us pardon, justification, peace—yea, that which is the fruit of His atoning death on Calvary. We rejoice in hope of the glory of God. We find a present home in the presence of God; and because we are sons, He has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying “Abba, Father.” Precious relationship, and happy cry!

Christ bids you, beloved reader, to turn to Him, assuring you that “Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.” “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.”

Unsaved reader, “Where are you going?” I will answer, “*Out of Time into Eternity!*” E. A.



MAN'S WISDOM AND GOD'S JUSTICE.



ERY few are living now who saw the birth of the nineteenth century, and soon we shall see its close. It has certainly proved a very eventful period in the history of man. Science has taken rapid strides. Old-time history has been unearthed, whilst other worlds

have been opened up to the wondering gaze of man. Scientists have even come to talk of the production of life by the combination of certain chemicals.

How much of the science of the present day would fall under the catalogue of what the apostle Paul terms "science falsely so-called"! Science means knowledge, yet how much so-called science is merely speculation, and has been proved so.

What has been the result of all this wonderful advancement?

Many thought that its influence would bring about a millennial state of things. Man would rapidly improve. Wickedness would be less rampant as man got more knowledge.

But what has been the result?

Certainly man has become more polished; but society is as rotten as ever it was,—the heart left untouched,—man as far away from God as ever he was. We admit thieves are more polished; sin gilded over, so as not to offend the æsthetic eye and ear by its unsightliness. But once break beneath the thin crust of polite society, and you find yourself in a vortex of unblushing sin and shame. Science, unlike Christianity, has not produced better fathers, mothers, and children.

Nor are the relations of nations changed to each other for the better. The old state of things is rather intensified. Europe, as has often been said, is an armed camp. Her frontiers are glittering with bayonets, and massed with troops. Millions

of money are being spent on navies. Science is the handmaiden to the passions of the nations; she is lending her aid to invent terrible instruments of destruction and cruelty.

Knowledge is no doubt good in its place, but man's heart being unchanged, he has only used it to gratify his desires and passions.

Saddest of all is the way they are beginning to speak of the good old book. These *savants* tell us the Bible was all very well for the barbarous and unenlightened people of by-gone ages. *They* have got beyond it; *they* have proved it wrong(?). The story of creation, as told in Genesis, is a very pretty story, and suited for the olden times, but it is not strictly true. They prefer to believe the speculations of science before the revelation of God. They forget the conditions of things which obtained six thousand years ago may be so totally different, that speculations based upon conditions of to-day may be worse than useless. Darwin, *without his missing link*, is received with respect. The revelation of the Creator is placed on one side; evolution, is the cry!

The keenest of modern thinkers has lately taken up a very pitiable condition, with all his erudition and learning. He deliberately calls himself "*an Agnostic*," or know-nothing. He may understand a vast deal about the seen and temporal, but as to the unseen and eternal, he knows nothing,—as to eternity and his soul, it is all dark! Such is man in his best estate.

How conclusively these things prove the words of Scripture: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. ii. 14). "The world by wisdom knew not God" (1 Cor. i. 21). Such is man's wisdom. But what is God's justice? We turn with relief from man's theories to God's facts,—to what is steadfast and stable.

"We preach *Christ crucified*, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and *the wisdom of God*." Righteousness is satisfied, love is set free to act, wisdom is exemplified, through Christ crucified.

Let us see how man, even in the full blaze of gospel light, is treating Christ crucified.

Surely it is to the Greeks foolishness.

No person, who professes to think at all, nowadays denies the existence of a God. The time has gone by when thinking men deliberately state "There is no God." They may call Him by the name of "First Cause." They may not be able to define His person. How can they?

But once the existence of a God is admitted, it naturally follows that He is the personification of all that is good. They reason that He is righteous; for whenever the laws of nature are violated, there is more or less a punishment following, like a *Nemesis*, the transgressor. They argue

that He is beneficent; the rain, the sunshine, the wonderful provisions made for man and beast, in every way attest this. The heathen, without any revelation from God save that which is seen in creation, in the mighty handiwork of God, creates a god according to his own lusts and passions. He oftentimes is the impersonification of all that is evil. They set up their gods,—hideous in shape, and frightful in aspect. Satan is behind it all. They worship him. No doubt this is to quiet their consciences, dim and dull as they are. Thus sin is made a religious duty—even to murder.

But we, who live in the full blaze of gospel light, cannot do so. Our spirits, that part of man higher than the brute creation, to which God addresses Himself, tell us that the God of the Bible is the God of creation. We may not like it. We must admit His essentials—light and love; His attributes—wisdom, holiness, and righteousness.

But men, even in enlightened England, in spite of the God-given knowledge, will make a god according to their own wishes,—not the rude idea of a savage, but the polished idea of the faithless scientist or Christless professor. They deny the necessity of a vicarious sacrifice to put away sin,—the “substitution” of the Scriptures,—though the blood of thousands of bulls and goats, from Abel downwards, is the type, and the blood shedding of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross is the blessed antitype!

They say, “All we have to do is to confess our

sins, and take refuge in the great fatherhood and love of God." A very pretty sentiment on the surface, but nothing less than an insidious lie of the devil, damning thousands. They thus deny the *sine quâ non* of the scripture—"Without the shedding of blood there is NO remission."

Let us give you an illustration. Would you like to live in a country where culprits had only to confess their sins to be forgiven? The thief would steal, then confess; steal again, confess, &c. The murderer would express sorrow for his blood-guiltiness, the prison gates would be opened, and he would be free to repeat his crime. Nay, no necessity for prisons. In such a state of things life and liberty would not be worth the keeping. The weakest would go to the wall much more rapidly than now. This, then, is the kind of simpering justice that man would ascribe to the everlasting God.

If a monarch pardons a murderer, he does it at the expense of justice. While we all rejoice at acts of clemency, still, strict justice is not, and cannot be, satisfied.

But God is just in His mercy, hence the necessity of a substitute. Earth might be ransacked, yet no sacrifice is found worthy enough. Heaven could not furnish one,—not even an archangel would do. It takes God to meet God; *hence the punishment of man is eternal. A finite creature can never exhaust the wrath of an infinite God.*

How then can that beautiful verse in Ps. lxxxv.

be fulfilled: "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other"?

Oh! mystery of mysteries—perfection of wisdom—perfection of love!

God manifest in flesh, in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, is born into this poor sin-blighted world, lives a perfect life of devotedness to God and man, dies upon the cross, is buried and raised again the third day according to the Scriptures, is ascended into heaven; and now, with redemption and resurrection glories crowning His once thorn-bound brow, can dispense untold blessings, not at the expense of righteousness, but in consonance therewith!

"The river of His grace,
Through righteousness supplied,
Is flowing o'er the barren place
Where Jesus died."

Thus in the cross is magnificently seen God's wisdom. The atheists may tell us, "There never was such a life," as they do; but I want you to say, "There never was such a death; it has brought me untold blessings!"

God can now be "*just*, and the *justifier* of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. iii. 26).

"If we confess our sins, he is *faithful* and *just* to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John i. 9).

Oh! beloved reader, let not the cold breath of criticism disturb your trust in God's Word. Bow in grateful adoration and praise, and thank Him for the great, grand, and God-like plan of salvation.

Justice satisfied, righteousness vindicated,—love, deep and boundless, is free to flow forth in life-giving streams! And all by the cross!

Man's wisdom brings doubt and difficulties. Infidelity is a cold, cold winding-sheet. Man-made theology brings neither joy to the soul, nor peace to the conscience. But God's love, known and enjoyed, will bring sweet peace for the present, and fulness of joy for the future.

Well may the apostle ask, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?"

Then neglect no longer, dear reader, but on the authority of God's unchanging and unchangeable word, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be SAVED" (Acts xvi. 31). Heaven will be set a-ringing with joy. May God grant it, for Christ's sake. Amen.

A. J. P.

THE LOVE OF JESUS.

I.

"Who LOVED me."—GAL. ii. 20.



PRECIOUS love! Having its source in eternity, it led Him, the Lord Jesus, into this world of wretchedness and sin, right onward to the cross.

It was there, at the cross, He took the sinner's place, and endured, in all its terror, the awful consequences of that place,—even the sinner's distance and the sinner's stroke.

It was there, too, He drained to the very dregs the bitter cup; exhausted for His people, the power of death and judgment; bare their sins in His own body on the tree, washing them away in His own blood; and died, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God.

Contemplating all this, how truly may the believer exclaim, "*Who LOVED me, and gave himself for me!*"

"That bitter cup, He drank it up,
Left but *the Love for me.*"

II.

"*Him that LOVETH us.*"—REV. i. 5 (R.V.).

The love that led Him to the Cross is a *present*, as well as a *past* love; and the knowledge of this sustains His people, however tried, in their journeyings through this poor world.

It was this character of His love that sustained the sorrowing family of Bethany, when they sent to Jesus, saying—"Lord, behold, *he whom thou LOVEST is sick.*"

"Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus. When he heard *therefore* that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was." How strange the need for such a "*therefore*" must have appeared, in connection with such a love! But these sisters had yet to learn that delays, with Him, are not denials. "The glory of God" necessitated His delay in responding

to their call, and it became a means of exhibiting to them the fact that—

“HIS LOVE *is as great as* HIS Power,
And knows neither measure nor end.”

Oh, sweet the rest it gives to know, deep down in the soul, that Jesus loves us; loves us *now*; loves us every day, every hour, every moment, has His heart set upon us, and loves with an unceasing, and an unchanging love.

“We know it, by a sweet experience, now;
Yet shall explore
Its breadth and length, its depth and height of grace
For evermore.”

III.

“*Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.*”—HEB. xiii. 8.
“*Who shall SEPARATE us from the love of Christ?*”—ROM. iii. 35.

Having very briefly glanced at some of the *past* and *present* aspects of His love, we here come to the fact of its *eternal durability*.

What a glorious moment will that be, when “tribulation or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword,” and all other wilderness sorrows, shall have for ever ceased; and when, too, in its widest and fullest sense, will be learnt, that we are more than conquerors through Him that *loved* us; for the love that sought and found, will know no rest until it has us in its own glorious presence eternally!

What a Saviour! What a salvation!

“Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me *where I am.*”

"I will come again and receive you unto myself, that *where I am* there ye may be also."

"And so shall we ever be *with the Lord*,

"Through God's eternal day."

Dear reader, will *you* be there?

N. L. N.

A WORD TO THE UNCONVERTED.



T was a wonderful day in the history of this world when the Son of God entered into it as the lowly Son of man. It was a still more wonderful day when that same Son of God laid down His life, suffering the judgment of God against sin. Ours was the debt, and we deserved the judgment, but that holy One bore it in our stead. Man's extremity was then God's opportunity; sin and death reigned in the world, and was the portion of all; but the Son of God came into it, bringing life, eternal life, to all who should receive Him. Eighteen hundred years have elapsed since then, and Jesus has long ago returned into heaven, but from thence He offers salvation to all who believe in Him. In infinite love He came into this world, to redeem poor wretched, ruined man; and in infinite love He is still holding out that glorious gift, everlasting life through faith in Him. "God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter iii. 9).

The Word of God declares that "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God," and that "there is none righteous." None are excluded from this declaration; *all* have sinned, there is *none* righteous. You may be rich or poor, old or young, religious or irreligious, but no matter who or what you are, if you have not trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour, you are lost—*lost*. Think of it,—lost, and in danger of the lake of fire! The Scripture hath concluded all under sin (Gal. iii. 22), and all the world is guilty before God (Rom. iii.); but oh! wondrous grace, the same God against whom we have sinned, He has provided a ransom in the person of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ; and if you just simply believe on Him, and own him as your Saviour, the Word of God declares that you have everlasting life (John iii. 16). It is to rich and poor alike, and none are beyond its reach. Do not put it off, either till a "more convenient season," or until you are called upon to die; but come *now*, while you have life and health. The salvation of your precious soul is too important a question to be trifled with. "*To-day*, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts" (Heb. iii. 7). "*Now* is the accepted time, *now* is the day of salvation." Why linger one moment, when God not only invites you to come, but waits with open arms to receive you?

But you may say, "How can I know that God loves me?" Let Scripture answer: "God so loved the world"—are you not of the world, my reader?

—"that he gave his only begotten Son, that *whosoever*"—that excludes nobody—"believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John iii. 16).

Think of that Blessed One laying aside His glory, and coming down into this world to take upon Himself the sin of the world, in order to save from hell and judgment all who believe in Him, and to give them a place with Himself in glory! Oh, what love! and yet how lightly treated. Truly we can say:—

"'Twas *love*, that love that knows no end,
That brought Him from on high;
God's judgment in our stead to bear,
For us to bleed and die."

And now let me ask you, dear reader, how have you treated this love? Have you accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour? or are you still despising Him, and setting Him at naught?

The day of judgment, when God's long-suffering and grace will give place to unmingled wrath and indignation against all who reject the Saviour, is fast approaching. We know not how soon—indeed, it may be this night!—the Lord Jesus Christ will descend from heaven, to call away from this world all those who through faith in His blood have been cleansed from all their sins; and if you are not one of those redeemed ones, you will be left behind. For what? For judgment, the righteous judgment of a holy God. Read Luke xiii. 25-27, and beware of putting off salvation. G. R. C.

THE MYSTERY SOLVED.



“YOU are near the top of the hill,” was a remark I made to an old man, bowed with age, and carrying a load, whom I overtook on his way home.

“Yes, I am,” he replied.

“And when you reach the top of the long hill you have climbed for such a length of years, what then?” said I.

“Ah, *that is a mystery*. There have been many dictators in the world who have each given their own opinion of the hereafter, and which of them can you believe?” he rejoined.

“But how do you know there is any hereafter?” I asked of him.

“Because I learn from the decay of creation that it had a beginning; but if it had a beginning He who formed it had none, and if He had no beginning He has no end. He is supreme.”

“Quite right,” I said; “creation is the witness to the eternal power and Godhead of God (Rom. i. 20). It teaches us what He can do, for it is His work; but, though it teaches much, it does not tell me all I want to know. I feel that I am a sinner, and the knowledge of His eternal power and Godhead, His infinite holiness too, only terrify and drive me from Him. What am I to do in such a case?”

"You have to come to Him, for He never wastes any part of His creation," he replied.

That, I thought, was a remarkable answer. It gave the denial to the common dream of "annihilation," or the coming-to-nothing of that which God has made.

"But," I said, "what about my *sins*? They are not a part of God's creation. I alone am personally responsible for them, and am guilty on account of them. How can I meet God with my sins?"

Now, dear reader, this is a most profoundly important question, and I do beg your deepest attention to it. It is of comparative insignificance how you regard creation. You will not be damned because you are poorly instructed in its details. This matter is not one of the head but of the heart; it deals with your spiritual relation to God. How can you meet God in your sins? In reply to this, it is necessary to leave the sphere of creation and enter another, that of redemption—leave that of "eternal power," and enter one of full and perfect grace—leave that which bears witness to the incomprehensible majesty of God, and enter one in which He has deigned to make Himself comprehensible and knowable—so that we, sinners, can attain to Him, and find Him, and love Him who has first loved us. Great was my pleasure to hear from the lip of my aged friend the answer, "*You need a Saviour for that!*"

"Just so," I said, "but here the mystery is

solved; here the light breaks in, and the darkness is dispelled. A Saviour is the full answer. The blood of the God-given Saviour, our Lord Jesus Christ, is that which washes me from all my sins, and fits me to meet, in perfect righteousness, and to know, in perfect grace, that God, who, in creation, is so far beyond me. Redemption supplies what my sinful soul requires."

Let me quote one little passage from a chapter which is, I may say, devoted to the solution of this now mis-named "mystery." "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus . . . that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus" (Rom. iii.).

Oh! how is it we so frequently hear the word "mystery" in this connection? "It is all mysterious"—"No one can tell"—"How can any one be sure," and such like words ring in our ears daily. And they would all be true if God had not spoken. The whole thing would have been a mystery if Christ had not died and risen, and the word of God had never been written.

But now this mystery is solved, and the believer may enter on the ground of divine, and, therefore, positive certainty. God "is just and the justifier of him that believeth on Jesus." Only think of that! Grace forms the spring, redemption the ground, and a free justification the blessed result, so that he that believeth in Jesus is, here and now, justified, and, what is so unspeakably blessed to know, God is just in so doing. Could words be

more plain? Could revelation be more explicit? Could mystery be more completely removed? Impossible! It is "all plain to him that understandeth."

All I wish you to do, reader, whatever your difficulties may have been,—scientific, moral, or spiritual,—is that you should quietly consider the passage to which I have drawn your attention. It is a revelation of God's righteousness, and shows how He, the Supreme, infinite in power, majesty, and holiness, is, at the same time, infinite in grace, and that, whilst creation, itself so complex and profound, is the witness of His power, skill, design, breadth of reach, and minuteness of touch, yet redemption—alas, so little regarded—declares what the splendours of creation never can, the full depths of His love, truth, grace, and holiness; and believe me, what you and I need is not a God outside of us, as in creation; nor a God against us, as in the law; nor a God beyond our ken, as in providence; but a God who, as in redemption, has given for us His own and only Son, that by His death, and faith in it, we might live, and by whose resurrection we might have confidence and a sure title; and by whose word we might know, for a bright and positive certainty, that we are justified, and made His children,—this, I repeat, is what we need, and it is, thank God, the very provision He has made. The mystery is gone! All is plain! The truth is fully revealed! Creation may speak and bear its testimony, but sounding louder and sweeter

are the silver notes of redemption, and a full and perfect salvation for lost sinners through its mighty work. "The darkness is past, the true light now shineth."

J. W. S.

"WISE UNTO SALVATION."



ANY years ago, the following was related by a servant of Christ:—

"In some of the wild, uncivilised parts of Cheshire there is a class of persons living—agricultural labourers or petty farmers—who are, many of

them, removed far from any means of grace, and, indeed, the greater part only go to church three times in their lives,—when they are presented by their parents for baptism, when they go to be married, and when their bodies are carried there for burial. It was in some such region as this that I was wandering, when, as it *seemed* by accident, I lost my way, and entered a cottage, where I found a man sitting by the fire in a very dreadful state of suffering. I found it was a surgical case, and that there was no chance of his recovery, unless he submitted to a very painful and hazardous operation. When I proposed this to him, he quite refused, and said he would rather not hazard it; he would die as he was.

“ ‘My friend,’ said I, ‘it is a very awful thing to die.’

“To my astonishment he replied, “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.””

“I asked him how he, so far removed from all the ordinary means of grace, had been enabled to acquire so much knowledge.

“He seemed delighted to meet with one who understood him, and said he had never met with a Christian before. He had had no one to sympathise with his feelings; and when he told his wife and children of what he had learned, they called him a madman. At last he had been obliged to give up speaking on the subject, excepting to tell them, that if that were really the case, then he would far rather live and die as they said—a madman.

“I was, of course, much interested in this account, and asked him more particulars of his history, when he narrated the following:—

“He was one of the ordinary sort of his class, employing himself in agriculture and farming, until he was laid low by disease. He then found that time began to hang heavily on his hands. A weekly newspaper came; but when that was read through, he was again at a loss. At length one day he asked some one to reach him down an old family Bible from a high shelf, where it had been gathering dust and cobwebs, since it was taken down the last time, to enter the birth of his youngest child,

then twenty years of age. Well, he opened the Bible at the Gospel of St John, and when he came to the third chapter, he was struck with these words: 'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God' (John iii. 3). He began to think there was something more in religion than he had been accustomed to consider, and he longed for some Christian friend who could teach him, and explain what seemed so mysterious. However, he looked a little further into the Bible, and his eye caught these words: 'If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not.' He did ask, and he obtained from God that teaching of His Holy Spirit, which led him to Jesus as his Saviour, and taught him to rejoice amid all his sufferings, in the prospect of a future blessed life.

"I was obliged soon after to leave the house; and at parting he grasped my hand, and, with tears in his eyes, said, 'Farewell, then, sir, till we meet again in heaven.'"

Oh! are there not many like this man, who, called from remote parts of the earth, where it seems to us that the gospel truth could scarcely have penetrated, will rise in the judgment against those who hear the gospel preached, and call themselves Christians without any saving faith in the name of Jesus?

"Behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last" (Luke xiii. 30).

W. T.

THE DANCE AND ITS DANGER.

A WORD TO BACKSLIDERS.



HERE had been a work of grace in a quiet country district several years ago in one of our Scotch counties. A good many confessed the saving power of Jesus' name, and owned Him as the God of their salvation.

God wrought in mercy in the Laird's house, and several there took the part of the rejected Jesus, and this gave great joy to the housekeeper, who was a *fervent Christ-lover* and a *diligent soul-winner*. A new dairymaid came to the Hall. She was a bright-eyed, wild, Scotch maiden, who had left her father's house, not only to be a servant to earn her living, but to be more free to follow the vain pleasures of this poor world.

The keen eye of the soul-loving housekeeper soon detected that she was unconverted and very careless, but the opportunity was watched, and the housekeeper took her aside, and warned her plainly and lovingly of the lost sinner's doom, and clearly pointed the girl to the lost sinner's Saviour, who in mercy and love came down to seek and save the lost. The effect was wonderful. The maid confessed the Lord, and the housekeeper rejoiced that another witness to God's grace was raised up in the scene of worldliness and sin where they both dwelt.

No sooner did the housekeeper get the girl to own Jesus as her Lord, than she at once wrote to her father, who was a godly man. Both he and his wife rejoiced that their child was now one of God's family,—she who had cost them many a pang, and evoked many a prayer from their pious hearts. They rejoiced that God answers prayer. Time wore on, and brought a great trial to the young convert. There was great rejoicing in the mansion, for the son and heir was coming of age, and a great ball was to take place, at which all the servants and tenants were to dance in honour of the young laird.

It was the constant subject of conversation, and the question was asked the young converted maid, "Are you going to *dance* at the ball?" The housekeeper decided at once. "I shall not be *there*," she said; "I shall fill my place at the supper-table, but into the ballroom I shall not enter." But the young converted dairymaid began to look at man; and, to distract her still more, there were several who had not made a clean cut with the world, and she said, "I shall see how the L——s do." These were lukewarm souls, who had professed conversion, but about whom the faithful housekeeper had her doubts. So the ball came on. The supper was over. The housekeeper discharged her *duties* as a servant cheerfully and courteously, and when the others made their way to the dance she said "No," and, with one or two more, betook herself to her own room, and knelt down in fervent prayer for the gay worldlings in their passing pleasure.

The L——s went with the unconverted over to the ballroom, and the dairymaid, with her eye on these professors, and not on the Master, nor listening to His word, *entered into temptation*, where she was sought out by the young men of the company, and hence soon found herself joining in the merry dance—Christ forgotten, conscience asleep, and all the old tastes of her past life revived again. Thus the night passed. A Satanic victory was gained. The girl was praised for her yieldingness. While the faithful housekeeper kept a good conscience and the fellowship of the Lord, the poor dairymaid gained the praise of men, but lost her good conscience, her sense of salvation, and for the whole next week avoided her faithful friend, and sought in song and worldly mirth to drown the reproaches of an uneasy conscience. The housekeeper then reasoned with her, but her entreaties were answered rudely. However, she was a woman who knew “God is God,” and so she prayed, and said little to the poor backslider, but felt it keenly, as jeers and smiles were on the face of the ungodly. They had reconquered a lost companion.

The week was ended, and the blessed Lord’s Day came, so long the day of blessing to Scotland. The dairymaid dressed herself that day, and with others in that rural district, wended her way to the parish church. Over that congregation a godly, converted minister presided, and ceased not to warn the ungodly in the congregation about the wrath to come. He believed the testimony of God’s Word

about the great white throne, and the lost sinner's final doom; while he pointed to the living Saviour, as a Saviour waiting and willing to save the guilty and lost. The dairymaid took her seat; the people assembled; the minister prayed, gave out the psalm, and took for his text the warning words of the Lord Jesus,—“Remember Lot's wife!” (Luke xvii. 32.) It was a powerful sermon, especially to the dairymaid. Every one around her was forgotten, as the godly man enlarged, with thrilling words, on the world's doom. Sodom's apparent safety ended in sudden and overwhelming ruin,—in one brief day. The world is saying now *peace* and *safety*, while the Judge stands before the door ready to pour down more awful and eternal judgment than that which befell that city of *pride* and *plenty* and unparalleled wickedness. *Then* stood the holy angels, come down from glory to warn and drag a man and his family from the city of Sodom. *Now* the Son of God has come down and died on the cross, and God warns of judgment to come, and waits, in long-suffering grace, to rescue men from the devouring fire and the everlasting burning (Isa. xxxiii. 14).

The minister pictured a soul awakened and aroused like Lot's wife, urged by earnest friends to flee to Jesus, the “refuge from the storm, and the covert from the tempest, the river of waters in the dry place, and the shadow of a great rock in a weary land” (Isa. xxxii. 2). Then he described a heart that was in the world, how the heart followed

the eye, and the home of the soul was in the place where its affections were set.

In words of intense warmth he depicted the final end of a soul so nearly saved, and yet eternally lost. "She looked back" (Gen. xix. 26), disobeyed God, and was finally damned.

The poor backslider sat, spell-bound; every word seemed to be for *her*, and *her* alone. She was the awakened sinner; she was the lost soul; the history of Lot's wife was the history of her base denial of her Lord. The world, she felt, had filled her heart; she had loved it, gone back to its mis-named pleasures, and now she was lost for ever. So she felt, and so she thought.

The minister gave out the parting psalm; she sang not one single note. How could a lost soul sing the praises of God? The minister prayed; he was fervent and real, but not a word was for her. He could not express the awful feeling of that soul's thoughts, or cries, in the sense of its conviction by the Divine Spirit.

The parting blessing was given, and the congregation dispersed. Of them I can say nothing. But the dairymaid passed through the crowd of loiterers and talkers; she noticed none; she spoke to none. It was a bright day of summer beauty, and the glorious sun shone brightly on mountain and meadow. But there was no sunlight in her darkened spirit. The calm of nature was all around, and the fields and forests were dressed in their beautiful summer robes of pleasing green.

In her soul there was nothing but storm and misery—utter hopeless despairing misery. The birds might sing their mingled melodies of innocent song. In the silent depths of a broken spirit she wailed, "I am lost! I am lost! I am Lot's wife!" Without speaking a word she sped home. Ah, there was only one she could speak to in the lordly mansion. So without doing a bit of work, not even waiting to take off her bonnet, she hastened to the housekeeper's room, where she found that faithful friend. Then the long pent-up agony of a convicted soul burst out in the words—

"I am lost! I am lost! I am Lot's wife!"

"What is the matter with you now?" said the Christian woman, glad indeed to see the penitent soul bowed before her, for she knew "that godly sorrow worketh repentance that needeth not to be repented of" (2 Cor. vii. 10).

But the only answer that the girl gave to her query, was the woeful wail, accompanied now with tears, "I am lost! I am lost! I am Lot's wife!"

However, she waited patiently until the paroxysm of sorrow was quieted, and then she learned what the dairymaid heard from the minister, and like a wise and faithful servant she put before the girl the God of pardoning mercy. He who pardoned a David so guilty, or a Peter who denied his Lord, could pardon the vilest man and woman who turned to Him in God's day of grace, and trusted the living Lord, whose blood cleanseth from all sin. She showed her that He had not changed in His

love for her, that the blood of God's Son had not lost its efficacy, that His words were still the same—"Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out."

It was a wonderful hour; peace founded on the work of Christ, and based on the sure word of God,—now filled the convicted backsliding soul. She learned her weakness and wickedness, the pardoning pity and rich full grace of her Saviour-God, and oh, what a change! The world and its vanities she fled from with utter loathing. From that day the housekeeper was her chief and best friend; but above all, if there was a ball or a dance, or anything that would cloud her soul, she avoided it as a moral pest. Those who watched her for years affirm she walked in the fear and presence of the Lord, a devoted separate soul giving a simple testimony to the grace of her Lord and Saviour, and to His faithful pardoning love.

And now, reader, a parting word with thee. Perhaps thou too hast been awakened, and gone back to that doomed world, or may be thou art a wanderer from a godly father's home. It is time to bethink thyself and *return*.

Remember the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation. For had He not suffered long with thee, thou wouldst ere now have been in the company of the rich but lost sinner in hell (Luke xvi.). He too had that awful word "Remember," but it was the "Remember" of damnation. The text that recovered the dairymaid is the "Remember" of a *waiting*

and *warning* Saviour. Wilt thou yield to this loving call? *Return*, ye backsliding children.

Listen to the sweet earnest words of the Christian poet—

"It may not linger long,
Salvation's blissful day ;
Now IS the time to seek the Lord,
'Tis madness to delay."

J. M'C.



"I WILL TRY AND TRUST HIM."



THESE words closed a conversation between a servant of Christ and a young lady, in whose soul he was greatly interested. Whether they were the true expressions of her heart, or an excuse for not trusting Him there and then, I have never been able to decide. But I greatly suspect that love of the world and its pleasures was, alas! the great hindrance to her decision for Christ.

Sad and sorrowful is it to witness an immortal soul coolly and deliberately choosing the world before Christ,—its pleasures and vanities before that "peace of God" which "passeth all understanding,"—when they know that the awful end of such a course must be the "outer darkness" for ever. For if people do not want Christ now, do not want to know Him, and walk with Him, and serve Him now, they will not enjoy His presence

in eternity. They, like Judas, must go to their "own place."

They have had their "own place" on the earth; they have refused the Saviour, refused Him a place in their hearts, gone on in their "own way," thinking their "own thoughts" (Isa. lv. 7), doing their own will, closing every avenue to the soul against the light and word of God; and now, being removed by death, they go to their "own place." Solemn reflection!

Now as to the words of this young lady. Let us look at them. "I will try and trust Him."

I said to her, "If your mother told you something, would you say to her, 'Mother, I will try and trust you'? No," I said, "you would trust her; and that is the way to do with the Saviour, and with the blessed invitations of the gospel. *Lord, I will trust Thee*, is the only word that is proper when we think of Him."

There are many things that should lead to a full, complete, and unreserved trust in the blessed Saviour. Let us name a few.

1st. His worthiness. Who so worthy of our trust as He! God and man in one Person. The mighty Creator and Sustainer of the universe, and yet One who became a man, among men, in wondrous grace to us, and obedience to the Father's will. Who would not trust him?

2nd. Think of His life so holy, so perfect, so good; every act and word ministered blessing to those about Him. "I came to do the will of him

that sent me," and that will was the blessing of His creatures. He went about doing good; it characterised Him. Never did a needy soul come to Him that was turned empty away. Think of the women of John iv., and Luke vii., and John viii. Think of those three jewels for the Saviour's crown, taken from the depths of sin and iniquity, and saved by His matchless grace.

3rd. Let Gethsemane's garden speak. Witness the groaning, praying, agonising Sufferer there! Why those groans, those prayers, those agonies, those drops of bloody sweat? What is the meaning of it all? The dark shadow of the cross is passing across His soul. And, oh! my reader, if the shadow only caused such woe, what must the substance have been? And if anticipation of the cup was so deep and awful, what must have been the cup itself?

4th. Look at Him in Pilate's judgment hall. It was man's verdict that He must die. And why? Let them answer. "Let him be crucified," came from man's heart; and poor man, led on by Satan, was not content until the deed was accomplished. The Saviour, in the majesty of His love, submitted. "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth" (Isa. liii. 7).

5th. On the cross behold Him. Man and devil have joined hands in insulting and murdering the Son of God. But, wonder of wonders, there upon

that cross, in those hours of darkness and woe, He becomes the *sinner's Substitute*; His soul is made an offering for sin; our sins were laid upon Him; the sword of eternal justice awoke against Him; God forsook Him; the deep and awful cup was drained of its dreadful contents; and ere He bowed His sacred head in death, He cried, "It is finished!"

"O groundless deep! O love beyond degree!
The Offended dies, to set the offender free!"

6th. God raised Him up from the dead, and showed Him openly. Having glorified God about sin, having accomplished our redemption by the shedding of His blood, and made it possible for God, in righteousness, to justify the sinner who believes in Jesus (Rom. iii. 26), He is raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father. The angels said to the women, "He is risen; he is not here; behold the place where they laid him" (Mark xvi. 6).

7th. But where is He to-day? and where has He been for nearly nineteen hundred years? Enthroned in majesty at the right hand of God. He, "when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high" (Heb. i. 3). The throne of heaven to-day is adorned with the man who bowed in Gethsemane, and expired on the cross. There He is crowned with glory and honour, with all power and judgment committed to His hands.

Beloved reader, now let me ask you, Is He not worthy of your most complete and unreserved trust? Shall it be said still, "I will try and trust Him"? Nay, the rather, let all that He is personally, and all that He has suffered and accomplished to save us, rebuke the thought, and lead, if you have never done so before, to a surrender of heart to Him, and the fullest confidence in Him as the Saviour of sinners. Is it possible to keep back any longer? Shall not the remembrance of who and what He is, and of that life of voluntary sorrow, and that death of infinite woe, endured for us, and of His present place of acceptance and glory at the right hand of God, serve to quicken our hearts, lead to the breaking through of all restraints, and to the fullest confidence of heart in Himself? And shall we not exclaim, "*Lord, Thou art worthy, I will trust Thee!*"

The blessed Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, says, "*Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life*" (John vi. 4-7).

"Trust, O Saviour, Lord, I trust Thee,
Is the answering word of faith
Of my soul,—till now so weary,—
To Thy matchless perfect grace.
And thus trusting, simply trusting,
Joy and peace my heart possess;
Waiting now for Thine own coming,
Then to shine in endless bliss."

P E A C E.



“HE wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked” (Isa. lvii. 20, 21).

The prophet here gives us, in a few words, a graphic picture of an unsaved person; like the troubled sea, when it *cannot* rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. Like the tempestuous sea, which lashes our shores after a storm, always in motion, its surface does not present the same aspect for one moment. Men run after the various pleasures and pursuits of society, always changing, and intended to offer some new feature of enjoyment to fill up the unsatisfied cravings of the human heart. But these waters cast up mire and dirt,—out of the heart proceed all kinds of evil,—evil thoughts leading on to evil acts. There is the eager pursuit of wealth, position, pleasure, and ever-changing politics, but no peace; real peace is foreign to this world. How could there be peace, since there is nothing within to give it, and without all is changing and uncertain, and the unconverted man is like the chaff before the wind, driven about by every breeze.

As for the ungodly, even the way of peace they have not known. But then nothing is more dangerous than false peace. Thousands around us in this world are resting in a false peace, based on an

unsound foundation. Like a man trying to cross a huge chasm on a rotten plank, they are passing from time into eternity, trusting to their own works or doings, while Satan is quietly whispering into their ear, "Peace, peace," but there is no peace. "They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace" (Jer. vi. 14, and viii. 11). "Because they have seduced my people, saying, Peace, and there was no peace; and one built up a wall, and lo! others daubed it with untempered mortar" (Ezek. xiii. 10).

Have you had your wound of sin "slightly healed"? Just as though a physician came to a patient suffering from a severe wound, and simply covered it over with ointment, which gave a temporary relief from the pain, instead of probing the wound deeply, going to the root of the disease, and supplying the true remedy. The sufferer would thus be deceived, and only awake up to the terrible character of his mistake when too late. Are you like a wall built up for the eye of men, and daubed over with untempered mortar?

The forms and ceremonies of religion are like the salve covering the wound, or the untempered mortar, they cover over the unsound parts below, serve to smother the appeals of conscience where it is at all aroused, and to lull the victim to a sleep, only to wake up in a lost eternity, to find out he was deluded by an empty sham. The first blast of judgment will shatter to pieces all such refuges of lies, and all man's righteousnesses will then be shown to be, in God's sight, only a covering of filthy rags.

But is there no true peace? Is there no resting-place for the weary, sin-burdened soul? Let us see what God has said about this. His word is settled for ever in heaven. "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" (Isa. liii. 5). Here we see One who was *wounded* for our transgressions, *bruised* for our iniquities, and on whom the chastisement of our peace was laid, for "the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all." It is not here, "healed slightly"; no, Christ has stood in the sinner's place, borne the judgment due to him; nothing is covered up, but God has laid all his sins on this blessed Substitute who was "smitten" in his stead on Calvary's cross, and thus by *His stripes* I am "healed," fully, effectually healed, according to all God's holy requirements. Now, we can understand how it is that what appeared so opposite before, can be together. "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other" (Ps. lxxxv. 10). All have found their meeting-place in the person of a crucified Christ. God is righteous, and yet He can, on the ground of this accomplished work, bring the believer into perfect peace in His presence, and this in the most absolute consistency with His righteousness too.

The Lord Jesus has "made peace by the blood of his cross" (Col. i. 20). And if He *has made* this peace, why should you strive or try to make your peace

with God? It would be simply to deny that the work is finished. No, God has accepted that blood as a full, complete settlement of every question; and you have only to *accept*, not to *earn*, the peace which He is now offering. It cost Him His life-blood, it costs us nothing, but as lost and guilty sinners we accept it. When He had finished the atoning work of the cross, had burst asunder the chains of death, and had risen as the victor from the grave, what is the first word with which He greets His disciples? "Peace unto you" (John xx. 19). This was the peace which a risen and victorious Christ, who had met and overcome Satan, death, and judgment, borne the awful wrath of God against sin, and was now risen clear of it all, could bring others into. The work has been *done*, the basis has been laid in the blood of His cross, death and judgment have been overcome; the cup of God's holy wrath against sin drained to the dregs, and now the believer is justified by simple faith in Him, and has perfect peace with God. Have you got this peace? It is not to be had by efforts, or to be assured to our souls by looking within for feelings, but by simple faith in a crucified and risen Christ. This peace never changes, inasmuch as the ground on which it rests never varies, it is entirely outside of ourselves, our feelings, &c. God's full satisfaction has been proved by the fact that the One who "made peace" on the cross is now on the throne. He Himself is our peace (Eph. ii. 14).

But there is another peace on which we must say

a word before closing, to any who have got the peace above referred to. "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you" (John xiv. 27). Here the Lord Jesus Christ, just on the eve of His departure out of this world, addresses these words to His disciples. He leaves us "peace," and brings us into the enjoyment of *His* "peace,"—that peace which flowed from perfect obedience, carrying out His Father's will in everything, and taking everything from Him. What rest it would give, in a world of strife and unrest, to have God thus before us in everything, bringing Him in between us and our troubles and troublers. He does not hide from us the path of tribulation in the world, but He is with us in it, and encourages by His word,—*"Take courage, I have overcome the world."* And now to look forward for a moment into eternity. For the lost it will be an ETERNITY of unrest,—no rest, no peace in hell. Hear the words spoken by the Saviour Himself, as the utterances of the rich man: "Send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame" (Luke xvi. 24). And again, "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched" (Mark ix. 48).

For the saved ones, what an eternity to be spent in the unclouded rest and peace of His presence for ever! (Rev. xxi. 4.) Which will be your portion?

"BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD!"



ON my way to a meeting room, in which the gospel has often been preached, and many precious souls saved, I met an old countryman, one afternoon, this summer, leading a pet lamb by a string. At the side of the road there was a wide strip of grass, on which the lamb was feeding. An irresistible desire took hold of me to go to the old man, and to ask him if he had beheld the Lamb of God. I did go, and after addressing a few words to him about the little lamb he was leading, I inquired—"Have you beheld the Lamb of God? It says in the Bible, 'Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.'"

"*I have*," he replied with emphasis, as tears filled the dear old fellow's eyes.

"What," I asked, "have you looked upon Jesus as *your* Saviour?"

"Yes," he replied, "I believe, and I've shed many a tear, sir."

"But He shed His *blood*," I answered, "and that's much better, isn't it?"

"It is," he said, and then with sudden abruptness, as if a thought had just struck him, he pointed to the meeting room, which was close at hand, "Be you the man that comes there to preach?" he asked, and then began to fumble in his breeches pocket.

"I am one of them," I replied; "but why do you ask?"

"Because I've got a sixpence here."

"Oh, thank you, my dear old man," I answered, "keep your sixpence, or give it to some poor soul in need; the Lord has provided for me for time and for eternity."

I then gave him a little gospel book, which he accepted with thanks, and said, "I love to read those little books *and the Bible*."

On subsequent inquiry from some of the Lord's people who lived in the place, I learned that the dear old man had come for some time to the gospel meetings, and that they believed he was saved.

And now, dear reader, if you were asked if *you* had beheld the Lamb of God, what should you reply? Could you answer "Yes" as simply as the old man? The Scripture says,—"*Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world*" (John i. 29). The question is not whether you have *heard about Him, read about Him*, nor even whether you have *preached about Him*. Many have done these things, yet never *beheld Him* by faith, never looked upon Him in faith as their own Saviour, who bore the condemnation of sin for them on the cross (Rom. viii. 3).

How many when asked as to the ground of their hope of happiness for eternity will reply that they are church members, or chapel members, or local preachers. Or that they are no worse than their neighbours (as if they could be, when we see that

a man's neighbour is in as desperate a case as can be). So thought the blessed Saviour who came to save him (Luke x. 29-37). And perhaps, if pressed, the people who give such answers, will say a word or two at last about the work of Christ, as if it were a kind of make-weight, thrown into the scale in case their own works or their own goodness were not quite sufficient. And one receives the sad impression that the majority of professing Christians are building on the sand (Matt. vii. 26, 27). What will be the result when *God* tests the foundations of such? What are *you* building on for your hope of eternity?

I would have you notice what the old man said.

"I *believe*, and I've shed many a tear." He went to the point *at once*. "Without *faith* it is *impossible* to please God" (Heb. xi. 6). *Believing*, which is faith, is the way always given for receiving and enjoying the salvation which God offers. *Repentance* always goes with true believing.

The Apostle "shewed, and taught publicly and from house to house, testifying . . . repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts xx. 20, 21). It is due to God against whom we have all sinned, and I take it that this dear old man's tears were the result of his repentance. Not that tears *are* repentance, but "godly sorrow worketh repentance." Repentance is a double change of mind. Whereas we thought God hard, and ourselves all right, we think ourselves all wrong, and we own that the judgment of God

against us as sinners is just, while His goodness leads us to repentance. Reader, have you repented towards God? and have you believed on the Lord Jesus Christ? Have you beheld "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world"?

W. G. B.



"As many as touched were made perfectly whole" (Matt. xiv. 36). As many as *touched*. Oh! let *that* word rest upon your mind. *Your* case is not hopeless. It may be bad enough; it is bad enough,—the case of each one of us is bad enough,—but there is a value in the Saviour's blood, a power in His grace, to go to the very bottom of our necessity, whatever it may be. "As many as touched were made *perfectly* whole." Whatever may be the soul-disease with which you are infected, remember that there is a perfect Saviour, an almighty Saviour,—One who, if He heals at all, heals entirely, who, if in faith you touch even the hem of His garment, makes you perfectly whole. Jesus does not save by halves; He is a whole Saviour; and if He saves me at all, He saves me wholly; it must be a perfect cure. Oh! may the Lord draw some heart to Himself while reading this. Life on earth may soon be over, the opportunity for touching Him may soon have gone! "Wherefore, to-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts" (Heb. iv. 7).

W. T.

"I AM GOING HOME."



It is a wonderful thing to find that God's salvation is—

"Salvation without money,
Salvation without price,
Salvation without labour,
Believing doth suffice."

More, it is salvation now—this moment; yes, reader, you may have it *now*. I would have it, were I in your place, without any further delay, and be recorded in God's book as saved. Just look at your watch a moment. Do you note the time? Well, NOW means just this identical moment, so you can have no difficulty in grasping the meaning of that precious word, "Behold, NOW is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2). There is no folly like that of putting off the salvation of the soul.

But if it, then, be true that by believing in Jesus there is for you—

"Salvation now—this moment;
Then why, oh! why delay?
You may not see to-morrow;
Now is salvation's day."

No! you may not see to-morrow—to-morrow may be too late!

As I was about to finish my day's work one

Saturday, not long ago, I rang the bell of a house where one had long been ill. The door was opened by a relative, whom I scarcely recognised, as it was nearly dark. I said, "How is A——?"

"Oh! have you not heard? she is gone."

"What, dead?"

"Yes, dead!"

Gone! she was gone from earth for ever. Was she old? No. Middle-aged? No. Young? Yes; not quite twenty-one years of age. I had seen her three days before, and I expected to have seen her again in life; but I did not.

Perhaps, my reader, you would like to know how she died? It was a long illness; consumption the fatal malady that cut short her days. She knew perfectly well that she could not recover, but thought some little time would elapse ere the "golden cord" would be loosed. That morning, however, as her watchful relative was giving her some needed assistance, which brought her to the bedside of the feeble girl, there happened that which had not been before. Without any warning a large blood-vessel in the lung gave way, and the life-blood poured forth. Lifting her eyes towards heaven, she said very calmly, "Auntie, I am going home! I am going HOME!" and passed away to be with Jesus.

Reader, could you die like that? Her whole face brightened up; no fear was pictured thereon. She could say, quietly, calmly, "I am going home;" and the next moment found herself there. Sinner, you

could not say that. You, who are on the broad road, could you call hell a home? Describe not the eternal abode of the lost, that region of speechless woe, by such a charming, sacred name. Oh, unsaved man! unsaved woman! have salvation! have it now! Flee to Jesus as you read this, for "*now* is salvation's day!" and He has said He will not cast you out if you come to Him.

Many a time this dying girl grasped my hand as I was leaving her after a medical visit, and said, "Doctor, will it be long?" I could not tell her how long; consumption is often a lingering disease. The last time I saw her before her death she said to me, as we parted, "Doctor, it will not be long, will it, before I am with Jesus?" These were her last words to me, full of peace and assurance of a present and eternal salvation. She longed to be with Jesus.

Dear unsaved one, open your heart to him! Just where you are, open your heart and let Jesus enter in! He will fill your heart. Be converted now. Decide for Christ, I pray you. Turn to the Lord while you may. "*Now* is salvation's day." Just now—*now*. If you want to be saved, it must be now.

How shall I get salvation? Do I hear you ask this? You have nothing to do, and nothing to be, except to be and own what you are, an utterly lost sinner. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Come to Him in your sins, just where you are and as you are, this very moment, and Jesus will save you.

What will He do?

Come and see !

Oh, but I am such a sinner ; He must, He will put me from Him.

No ! He will put your sins away, but you He will receive. The prodigal came as he was, and was kissed while in his want and misery. Then he got the best robe which fitted him for the father's house. Just so the sinner must come to Jesus by faith, without seeking in the slightest degree to fit himself for Christ. Your fitness for Christ is that you are a lost sinner, and need a Saviour ; and, on the other hand, He is a Saviour looking ever about for the sinner whose heart He can reach and touch, in order that He may save him. Come as you are to Him, and He will save you on the spot.

Always remember this, that Christ does not *help* sinners ; He *saves* them. When I talk of some one *helping* me, I imply that I have a little strength ; when I say another *saved* me, I mean that my own power was gone utterly, and I were lost without recovery but for the act of another. Now this is just the gospel in a nutshell. As says the apostle, " For when we were yet *without strength*, in due time *Christ died for the ungodly*" (Rom. v. 6). How simple and how blessed ! When " without strength " (not trying to show I had a little, by good works and reforming my life) and " ungodly," *i.e.*, not having a single thing to commend me to God—then Christ died for me, and by His death I am cleansed from my sin and guilt, and made fit for the presence of God.

Reader, may God grant to you repentance unto life, faith towards the Lord Jesus Christ, a daily walk that tells louder than words that your heart is Christ's; and, should you be called to die suddenly, to be able to say, "I am going home."

W. T. P. W.

"I HINNA ONY ITHAR GAIT T' GANG."



N a dingy dismal garret, on a bed in perfect keeping with the apartment, lay a boy of tender years. His parents had to go out to their work, and so poor paralysed Jamie had to be left alone every day. And there he lay helpless, with his scanty dinner beside him on the bed, alone, —yet not alone, for light had entered that dark dwelling, and irradiated the yet darker heart of poor Jamie. Oh, the wonders of the grace of God! It can reach the most out-of-the-way places, and give peace to the saddest heart, and so this poor paralytic had peace, for he had Christ. The door opened, and one of the neighbours came in, as was her occasional wont, to render him what assistance she could. She knew as little as Jamie did, but they both knew Christ, so in simple language they spake together of Him. "Jamie," said the visitor, "d'ye jist gang to Jesus when ye're lyin' there alane?" "Oh, Annie woman," was the reply, "*I hinna ony ither gait t' gang.*"

But what a blessing it was for Jamie that he had that "gait tae gang." The wealthy, educated, and great, were they paralysed, could doubtless find many sources of amusement, and many friends to sympathise with them in their affliction; but take away the consolation of Christ from Jamie, and what had *he* left? And yet there are not a few professedly philanthropic and highly educated men, who are doing their utmost, with tongue and pen, to deprive him, and all such as him, of that consolation.

The "gait"—*i.e.*, the way—is there, whether they believe it or not; but oh! how hard-hearted it seems to try to deprive your poor Jamies and Annies of the comfort of knowing it. I imagine Jamie, lying on his bed of languishing and pain, listening eagerly to the slowly advancing footsteps of Annie as she toils up the creaking stair to do some kindly office, and to tell him in simple language "the old, old story of Jesus and His love." What an amount of moral pathos there is in such a spectacle, and what an act of cruelty it would be to deprive Jamie of the consolation of hearing again and again, and yet again, that tale which never grows old, and Annie of the happiness of telling it for the thousand and first time!

Slightly, but materially, altering a couplet that made some noise many years ago, I say, and I say it emphatically,

"Let ships and commerce, laws and learning die,
But give me still that hope that is on high."

"The things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are unseen are eternal." The rags, the wretchedness, the poverty, the dirt, the poor diet of Jamie, were all temporal, and will pass away like a horrible dream; but the bright and glorious home in heaven, the fellowship in praise of saints and angels, the presence of God and of the Lamb, the joy unspeakable and full of glory, when death will have passed away, and there will be no more sorrow nor sighing nor pain, oh! they are all eternal, and so will continue through the ages of ages. "There remaineth a rest for the people of God." I would not give up the prospect of that blissful and eternal rest for all the wealth of the Indies, for all the gold of Australia and California, for all the kingdoms of the world and the glories of them.

"Unto the poor the gospel is preached." What a blessed thing to stand beside Jamie's lowly bed and to remind him that his Redeemer liveth, and that in the latter day He will stand upon the earth, and he, Jamie, will see Him. Wouldn't it lighten up his wee wizened face, and cause it to wrinkle into smiles? Wouldn't it glorify his garret? But suppose Jamie had no faith in the glad tidings; suppose that one of these learned men of whom I spake had (not a very likely circumstance) found his way into his garret, and had taken pains to convince him that the whole story of the love of God in sending His Son to die for sinners was a delusion; suppose Jamie had believed him instead

of God, even as Eve believed Satan,—of what avail would it have been to endeavour to give him the consolations of the gospel? Alas, his hope and his happiness would have been gone. Where could he turn to? To the world? Poverty and paralysis had shut him out from every worldly hope; and now that he had given up Christ, he “had nae ither gait to gang.” Well might he exclaim, in the words of the man of Uz regarding all such teachers, “Miserable comforters are ye all.”

“I hinna ony ither gait t’ gang,” which being interpreted means, “I have nowhere else to go.” Do not these touchingly simple words put one in mind of the words of Simon Peter to the Lord, when He said to the twelve, “Will ye also go away?” “Lord,” said Peter, “to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.” The paralytic boy and the apostle were in complete accord. Jamie, in his lonely garret, had “nae ither gait t’ gang,” if he wanted eternal life and peace of heart, except to Jesus. He was shut up to Jesus. To him it was “Jesus only.” Take away Jesus, and everything became a blank. To him the world, with all its glitter, with all its bustling activities, was nothing; his world was limited to a dismal, dingy, lonely garret, and a crust, with a pauper’s grave for an outlet, into which modern “advanced thought,” and its self-satisfied teachers, would bid him take a leap in the dark forsooth!

It was much the same with the energetic apostle.

It is true he might have returned to the Lake of Galilee and his fishing-boat, but if he wanted "the words of eternal life," he could only find them by remaining with Him who had them. And where can you or I, dear reader, find them? Have they changed places since the days of the Galilean fisherman? Jesus Himself has indeed done so, for instead of frequenting the shores of the Lake of Galilee He is now seated at the right hand of God, but has He on that account ceased to be "the Way, the Truth, and the Life"? On the contrary, His now exalted position affords the most decisive proof that He is so. Then to whom can you go but to Him, if you desire to reach the Father's house? There is none other name given among men whereby we can be saved, but the name of Jesus. Pay no regard then to the reasonings of men without faith, however learned they may be. Peter the illiterate fisherman of Galilee, and Jamie the paralytic laddie, both of whom knew Christ,—and to know Him is life eternal (John xvii. 3),—are more to be relied upon in such a matter than all the learned unbelievers that ever set themselves against the truth of God.

H. M.

THE truth is the exact description of what is. God is. Christ is the truth. He, and He only, therefore, can reveal God. Hence to avoid Him, is to remain ever in ignorance of God.

W. T. P. W.

THE KINDNESS AND LOVE OF A SAVIOUR-GOD.



N Titus iii. 5-8 we get six things:—

1. The condition of man before God.
2. What God is for us.
3. How we *cannot* be saved.
4. How we *can* be saved.
5. Blessings pertaining to the believer.
6. Our responsibility as saved ones.

Let us look at them in some detail; and may the Lord guide the writer's thoughts, and open the reader's heart to believe the precious teaching of His grace therein.

1. The apostle says, "*For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.*" This was his and his fellow-labourers' condition before God until they were converted. And this is the condition of the whole human race, without exception, more or less manifested. The heart is the same in all, "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked" (Jer. xvii. 9).

"*Foolish.*" We read, "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child" (Prov. xxii. 15). And is it not the height of folly to live for time, sense, and the world, with the Word of God in our hands telling of eternity and all the glories of the unseen world, and the awful and eternal consequences of sin unrepented of? And yet how many millions

are living as though there were no future, no responsibility, &c. And, alas! how many there are who profess to believe these things, whose lives are a practical denial of it. Reader, it is the height of folly to live another moment without Christ; and if you have received Him, the height of folly to live for yourself.

"Disobedient." From end to end of the Word of God we find the same testimony to man's disobedience. Adam was disobedient in Paradise. Israel was disobedient to God's holy law. The Jews and others were disobedient to the grace and truth that came by Jesus Christ. The world at large is disobedient to the testimony of the Holy Ghost. Millions take the Word of God in their hand, and say, "We'll do Thy will," but do not. All by nature are "children of disobedience."

"Deceived." Yes, by Satan, sin, and self. Satan "*deceiveth* the whole world" (Rev. xii. 9). "The heart is *deceitful* above all things," &c. (Jer. xvii. 9). We read, too, of "the *deceitfulness* of sin" (Heb. iii. 13); of a man "*deceiving* his own heart" (Jas. i. 26); and "*deceiving* himself" (Gal. vi. 3). What an awful mass of deceit! You didn't think matters were quite so bad, did you? No! Then that is because *you* were deceived. Are your eyes open now? Deceived you are, if unsaved; and to remain so, is to be deceived and duped by the devil till you are lost for ever.

"Serving divers lusts and pleasures." "Fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind," says

another scripture (Eph. ii. 3). "Lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof" (2 Tim. iii. 4, 5). This is Christendom without Christ. Do you need proof? Which does your heart like best, and which do you more readily follow:—The Word of God, the assembly of His people, the prayer-meeting, the company of His children? or the theatre, the concert-hall, the banquet, the race-course, the flower-show, and the whole round of vanity fair?

"Living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another." Perhaps some reader will think, "Well, I do not live like that.*" Have you read the newspapers lately? How much love do you find there? Does not every number contain records of the truth of the above solemn statement of God the Holy Ghost? And although you may not have indulged your evil nature so much as many others, dare you say in the presence of God that your heart is one whit better? If love reigns in the world, what mean these vast armies and fleets of millions of men, armed to the teeth to destroy each other the moment war breaks out? What mean these thousands of police, and all these prisons? Ah! 'tis enough. The record is true, and the facts incontestable,—malice, envy, and hate reign.

Well, the above is a sad picture, but drawn by a master-hand, and drawn to the very life. The one who wrote it was in the eyes of his fellows a pattern man. Deceived like the rest, he was zealous

for God, and thought he was everything he should be. But once a ray from the excellent glory pierced his dark heart, the above is what he says about himself. Will you lay claim to be a better man than "a Pharisee of the Pharisees"?

With such a record, one would expect to find the next verse full of judgment. But oh! how blessed to find, side by side with this dark picture,—

2. "*But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared.*" This is what God is *for* us. Not a syllable about judgment, His strange work, but all about what *He* is. *A Saviour-God*, not a Judge. This *He will be* in the ever-nearing future. But here, full of kindness and love! And what *appeared*,—was manifested in the person of Christ upon the earth, in the midst of the wickedness! A Saviour-God walked as Man among men. "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved" (John iii. 17). Like David to Mephibosheth, He shows the kindness of God to poor lame sinners (2 Sam. ix. 3). How blessed to know that God is *for* us, a kind God! Not against us, as Satan has led so many to believe, but *for* us. He is *for* us; but we are *against* Him. And He is *for* us, but *against* our sins. And therefore came Christ into the world, the fruit of the kindness and love, the philanthropy of God, to save. All appeared, and shone to perfection in the person of Jesus. In the Old Testament all was on the ground of promise. Now we have to do

with blessed facts. It is a fact that the Saviour appeared, and that God's kindness and love appeared in Him. What is the consequence?

3. "*Not by works of righteousness which we have done.*" This is how we *cannot* be saved. So the first thing to learn, according to this scripture, if you want to be saved, is the utter worthlessness of all our wretched doings. We are sinners, and we have no righteousness. "There is none righteous, *no, not one.*" Saul tried that road, and far outran all of us, but had to learn that all his righteousnesses were *as filthy rags* (Isa. lxiv. 6). Are you a religious sinner? Are you indulging the vain thought that church and chapel going, almsdeeds, &c., will stand you in good stead? Learn now, ere it be too late, that the Word of God says, "*Not by works of righteousness which we have done.*" This is unmistakably plain. "Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. ii. 9). "Not according to our own works" (2 Tim. i. 9). Oh, when will men take God at His word? Do you think He means something else than what He says? Then why are you always religiously striving to climb to heaven by the ladder of your own self-righteousness? Your ladder, so to speak, is too short. *Not of works.* Not by works of righteousness which *we* have done. Why? For the simple reason, that salvation is by *the work* of righteousness which *He* has done. The only work whereby you can be saved was done on Calvary, and the One who did it is raised and glorified in righteous-

ness at God's right hand, and now God's righteousness is revealed from heaven *unto all and upon all them that believe*. So that all we have done, or ever hope to do, as the ground of our salvation is out of the question. Then follows the blessed statement:—

4. "*But according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour.*" This is how we are to be saved, and how Paul and others *were* saved and knew it. According to His mercy *He saved us*. Not *will* save us. Not we *hope* to be saved *if*. Not we *think* or *trust* we are saved, but "*He saved us.*" It was the mercy of God. "I obtained *mercy*," he says elsewhere (1 Tim. i. 16). Yes, our God is a God ready to pardon, gracious and *merciful* (Neh. ix. 17). Zacharias spoke of John as sent "to give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of sins, through *the tender mercy of our God*," &c. (Luke i. 77, 78). And now it is mercy for all, the fruit of Christ's death.

"See mercy, mercy from on high,
Descend to rebels doomed to die."

Are you saved through His mercy? God judged His Son that He might show mercy to us. The whole blessing is through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Believe on Him and you are saved; saved *now* and *evermore*.

"Salvation, oh! salvation!
Endearing precious sound;
Sound, sound the word salvation
To earth's remotest bound."

Yes, the moment you judge yourself before a Saviour-God, and believe on Him, you are saved with a full, free, and everlasting salvation. When we believe His word, and it enters with power in our souls, we are washed with the washing of regeneration. With this there is the renewing of the Holy Spirit; and He is also *abundantly* shed upon us. All the blessing is *abundant*. We read elsewhere that believers receive "*abundance of grace*" (Rom. v. 17); that we have *life* and that *more abundantly*, and have the Holy Ghost shed on us *abundantly*. Verily can we say with the apostle, "Where sin abounded, grace did *much more abound*" (Rom. v. 20).

5. "*That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs, according to the hope of eternal life.*" Here we find some of the blessings pertaining to the believer. Not only are we saved through *His mercy*, but *justified by His grace*. And grace reigns through *righteousness* (Rom. v. 21). It is recorded of a poor old dying saint, that when asked what she trusted in, she replied to the effect, that she "believed in the mercy of God, but trusted in the justice of God." Blessed answer! Do *you*? Mercy, indeed, it is. Mercy from first to last; but there is more. God is righteous. God is "just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. iii. 26). His grace is boundless, but flows through righteousness. How solid and stable is the whole fabric of God's everlasting salvation! And who could accumulate together such a rich

heap of blessing as we find in these precious verses. Are *you* justified by His grace? Not only forgiven, but reckoned as a righteous man before God, and that by God Himself, *our Saviour-God*. It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth? No answer. Not a voice raised. Don't you think Satan would question it if he could? Not a voice raised, do we say? This is scarcely true. But, blessed be God, it is a voice *for* and *not* against. The one who puts the question answers it. "*It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us*" (Rom. viii. 34).

There, doubter, find a flaw if you can. Not a single loophole for the foe. Christ died, and rose, and lives, and intercedes. He died to put away our sins. He rose for our justification. He lives for us in the presence of God. He intercedes for us until He receives us up in glory.

We are *justified by God's grace*, and that *freely*, now and for ever; "*that we should be made heirs, according to the hope of eternal life.*" God's justified ones are His children, and His children are His heirs. "If children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Rom. viii. 17). Christ is heir of all things, and we are bound up with Him, when we believe in all that God has given to Him as the Man of His eternal counsels, who glorified Him at the cross. Hence, we read in 1 Cor. iii. 21, 23, "*All things are*

yours," &c. Soon the Heir shall appear, and we shall appear with Him in glory. Already are we made heirs, and it is our privilege to enjoy the hope of eternal life. In the natural state there is "no hope" (Eph. ii. 12). Our case is utterly hopeless, and we are without strength to help ourselves (Rom. v. 6). But *saved*, we have a hope, a sure, abiding, everlasting hope. *We hope in God*, the God of hope, who cannot lie. We wait with confidence to enjoy eternal life in the glory with Christ Himself. In John's writings we *have* eternal life in the Son. In Paul's we are justified in Christ, and we abound in hope of eternal life with Him in the glory. We rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Both are true. We have it, and we are going to have it. We have it *in Him*, and we wait to enjoy it *with Him*. Christ Himself will come and take us up to glory, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye (1 Cor. xv. 51, 52). Are you ready? Are you justified? Are you in Him? Is this blessed hope *yours*? All, all is yours, when as a poor guilty, lost one, you believe on Him.

"6. *This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God, might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.*" Here we find our responsibility after we are saved. The Word of God is perfect. Not a syllable about *our works*, except to reject them, until we have *believed in God*. "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness"

(Rom. iv. 3). And then he showed his faith by his works (Jas. ii. 21, 22). He is a pattern for us to do the same. This is "*a faithful saying*, and these I will that thou affirm constantly," says the apostle in the words of the Holy Ghost, "that they which have believed in God *may be careful to maintain good works.*" Yes, the faith that saves produces fruit. In this day of loud and light profession, tens of thousands are talking flippantly about believing and being saved. But where are the good works? The good work of Christ is the alone ground of our salvation, but the good works of the believer are the evidence of the reality of my faith. If the tree is good, the fruit will be good. Where there is fire, there is also smoke. When there is life in the soul, there are works to show it. God alone can read the heart, but the world is very sharp to read the actions. "*Be careful.*" Are we careful? "*Careful to maintain good works.*" The same epistle says, "They profess that they know God, but *in works they deny him*, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" (Titus i. 16). Ah! reader, profession without practice is utterly worthless. "These things are good and profitable unto men."

May you, dear reader of these lines, learn what your condition before God is, find that God is for you, to save you now and for ever in a manner worthy of Himself, without a single work of yours.

"I WAS SO FIDGETY."



INNIE F—— was, this time last year, a bright, good-looking young girl, with every appearance of health and strength. One of her relatives but recently remarked, "To look at her, you might have taken a lease on

her life."

A situation being obtained for her, she was found daily, and consequently in all weathers, going to and from her work, but with no complaint, only proud that her hands could help in keeping herself and her two sisters, who, alone in London, without parents, were dependent on their own exertions for a livelihood. After a walk in heavy rain, and sitting in damp clothes, a cold, thought nothing of at first, kept Minnie at home, but getting no better, it was decided she should go to hospital, with the hope that she might be more quickly restored to health. No such results attended the means thus used. Disease had surely and certainly commenced its dread work, and she returned to her sisters, with the doctor's word that there was little hope of recovery.

About this time I was asked to see her; and one day, when London was at its busiest, in preparation for all the gay scenes of the year, and "Jubilee" was the word that passed from mouth to mouth, I found my way to the lodgings which Minnie and her sisters called their home.

I was greatly struck by the sweetness of the young invalid. She seemed the pet of her sisters, and repaid their affection by her loving amiable ways.

She took the flowers I brought her with great delight, and, as she picked them from the basket, told me how she loved flowers, how she loved the country, and sometimes wished to be there again, as then she was sure she would soon be quite well, and return to her work.

No one had told her how serious was the illness. We talked together of the love of God in sending His Son; of that precious blood which alone can make the sinner fit to stand without fear in the presence of that Holy One, who loves the sinner, but hates sin. She listened, but saw not her need. She thought the world was a beautiful place where she could be quite happy without these things, and the "old old story" had no charm for her.

The two sisters were there, one of whom had recently been brought to know the Lord as her Saviour, and was now very anxious about Minnie's salvation.

Shortly after, she was invited to stay with some of the Lord's people in the country, with the hope that change from London might strengthen her; but above all, that she might hear and receive the glad tidings, and learn for herself of the Saviour and His love.

Minnie came full of simple, childish delight at being in the country among the flowers and trees,

but something better than these good gifts awaited her. All in that house felt drawn to her, even the little ones loved her; but it was plainly seen, that she was fast nearing the end of her earthly journey, and a feeling of deep solemnity used to fill our hearts as we watched her through those days. She was just able to go to the gospel-preaching on the Lord's Day evening, and now her interest in divine things seemed to be awakened, and rapidly to deepen. Her large brown eyes would glisten with intense earnestness, as her need, as a sinner, and God's way of salvation was put before her. She began to be unhappy, and could not rest, and would not be left alone. "I was so fidgety," she said, when describing to me afterwards the dealings of God with her soul.

If there is one, who reads this, who knows what it is to be, as she described it, "fidgety," that is, who feels all is not quite right, do not drown the voice that is speaking to you, telling you you are *lost*. It is the "lost" Jesus came to save. If you turn away now and refuse to listen, there will come a day when you will awake to the terrible reality of being *lost*, but too late, lost for eternity!

"*Now* is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation."

Months passed by, and from various reasons I was prevented seeing Minnie. Constantly we heard of her increasing weakness, and how change after change had failed to do aught towards recovery. At last she was brought back to London from

Bournemouth, almost too ill to travel, and then it was I again saw her.

Sadly altered was that little face. One could hardly recognise the Minnie of a few months ago; she had become so wasted, and the distressing cough gave her no rest day or night. So much for the poor body, but how now about her state of soul, her state before God? She was no longer trying to be happy without Christ, she was no longer uneasy either, she had no fears. She had learnt she was by nature a lost, ruined sinner, but she had also learnt that the "Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke xix. 10). He had sought and found Minnie F——, and she was rejoicing that she was "redeemed, not with corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ" (1 Peter i. 18, 19), and now who can tell her quiet joy and peace?

I told her gently she could never get better. Did it disturb her? no, she cared not now for this poor world, or to stay in it. She wanted to see the One who had died for her; but one wish remained, for after telling me of all the Lord had done for her, and of her rest in His great love, she said,—and with considerable difficulty she had spoken, between the paroxysms of coughing,—“Ask for J——,” a sister who was still unsaved. Having Christ herself, she longed for others to know Him too.

From week to week her sufferings increased, and she became almost helpless, but her trust and joy increased, and she loved to be read to from God's

Word, and to listen to those who would speak of the Lord and the joy that awaited her. She especially loved the four lines of a hymn,—

“ Ah, this is what I’m wanting,
His lovely face to see ;
And I’m not afraid to say it,
I know He’s wanting me.”

Only a day or two since, and she sent one last request to see me. On arriving I found her partly unconscious, but after sitting some time beside her, she roused and knew me. I bent over and asked if she was longing to go to Jesus, and the expression on that wan little face, told of such joy, such rest and peace.

“ Any fears, Minnie?” and for answer again came that sweet smile, and an effort to shake her head; her voice had gone, but by signs she made me understand her joy was in the Lord. I spoke of the bright home she was going to, and the Blessed One she was so soon to see, and as I whispered softly in her ear, “ Jesus only, Jesus only,” the satisfaction she could not give utterance to was expressed by the intense look of joy and perfect peace, and the almost painful efforts she made to assent.

Together we thanked Him who had done such great things for her, and asked that she might soon be taken, if it were His will, and I said good-bye till we should meet in His presence.

A few short hours, and she was absent from the body, present with the Lord.

That farewell spoken by her bedside will ever

be remembered by me. How near it brought eternity, how real it made that great love, that seeks, saves, and will not rest till "his own" are with Him where He is.

I long to convey to the reader who has not tasted this love, what that scene was, as I seemed to stand with that dear girl on the brink of eternity, she just about to enter into the very presence of her Lord, while I returned to the busy scenes and duties that awaited me; but often has the desire been impressed on me, that I must tell others this simple story. If any should read this, who think they could be happy without Christ, let them ask themselves what would be their case if brought to face eternity. What would anything this world could give avail them? Rather may you learn as did Minnie F——, that there is no happiness out of Christ. She would not have exchanged, even with all her sufferings, with you, unsaved reader, who may have health and even wealth. Christ Jesus was all in all to her. May He be all in all to you. Listen to His gracious invitation, "Come unto me" (Matt. xi. 28), and "him that cometh unto me, I will in *nowise* cast out" (John vi. 37).

M. T.

UNBELIEF is like a bat, at home and bold in darkness, whereas in the light it flounders against all objects. On the contrary, faith moves not when there is no light, but quietly waits for that which it knows will surely come. God speaks, faith hears His voice, and sees all things plainly. W. T. P. W.

THE DYING INFIDEL'S WIFE.



It is now a little more than a year ago that the wife of an avowed infidel lay dying. Along with her husband, she had imbibed those soul-destroying doctrines so rife in the present day. But the approach of death had awakened fears that infidelity could not allay, and she became alarmed as the sins of her life rose up before her.

About this time a servant of God was passing through the town, and some Christians who knew of the case asked him to call upon her. He did so, and, on reaching the house, the door was opened by the sister of the infidel. He inquired for Mr S——, who was not at home; then asked to see his wife, adding, "Can I speak to her about the Lord Jesus Christ?" The request was met by a point-blank refusal, and he was about to retrace his steps with a heavy heart, when another woman appeared and said, "Just wait a moment, I'll ask Mrs S—— if she wouldn't like to see you."

This dear woman had overheard the previous conversation from the sick-room adjoining, and, being a true believer in the Lord Jesus, felt anxious for the welfare of her dying neighbour. So saying, she quickly disappeared, returning in another moment with an answer in the affirmative. Unheeding the dark look of displeasure that now crossed the countenance of the first woman, the

preacher stepped in, and stood at the bedside of the poor sufferer. "She's very *very* low," whispered the kind-hearted friend, "and can't bear more than a few words."

Bending down close to her ear, slowly he repeated the following well-known lines:—

"God in mercy sent His Son,
To a world by sin undone ;
Jesus Christ was crucified,
'Twas for *sinner*s Jesus died."

A nod of assent, and a faint smile that lit up her pallid features, told that the speaker's words had been heard and understood ; whilst the latter, with heart uplifted to God to bless the message, took his departure and went on his way.

The truth contained in the little verse quoted was just what that dying soul wanted, and God was pleased to bless it to her. The love of God, and the death of His Son for poor sinners, was indeed welcome news to her. Her dying faith laid hold of it, and at once her conscience found rest. A few days after she passed away, having given evidence of the peace that filled her soul.

My reader, has the arch-enemy of souls succeeded in leading you too to accept (outwardly, at least) these doctrines of infidelity ? Infidelity, you know, can question anything and everything, but is able to prove nothing. It cannot get rid of the solemn fact that DEATH you will have to face, and GOD you must meet. What comfort could it im-

part to that troubled soul in the dark hour of death? None! What will it give you? NONE!!

But let me ask you, friend, a simple question. Amidst the whirl of pleasure, the vices of sin, the rush of business, or it may be the cold speculations of reason, does not the still small voice of conscience whisper within, "Perhaps it's true after all"? As you read these lines, stop and consider.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that WHOSOEVER believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John iii. 16). The love of God has given His Son to die for sinners on the cross, and if you only believe (*i.e.*, put your trust as a poor sinner in Him as your Saviour), everlasting life is yours.

"All who in His name believe,
Everlasting life receive;
Lord of all is Jesus now,
Every knee to Him must bow."

W. R. P.



BACON gave grand advice when he said, "Never let what you don't understand upset what you do. What you do understand is based on knowledge, whereas what you don't understand is connected with ignorance." Forgetfulness of this principle has led many a soul to shipwreck of faith. Meeting with difficulty in Scripture is no reason for rejecting it all. Reason is no help or guide, but faith in God will always keep the soul steady, and, in time, God will make all clear.

W. T. P. W.

SUDDEN DEATH—SUDDEN BLISS!



ORD A. P. C——, the well-known evangelist, was drowned near Adolphustown, Lennox, Western Canada, the evening before last, while out alone in a small boat. The body of the deceased was found yesterday, and taken to Napanee, where it was embalmed.

“His lordship was crossing the bay of Quinto, in the lake of Ontario, going from Belleville to Adolphustown, in order to hold a series of meetings at the latter place. He stood up in his boat to adjust the sail, when he lost his hold, and fell headlong into the lake. The accident was seen from the shore, and boats were sent out at once to his rescue, but he had sunk before help could reach him.”

Such was the brief account of the departure of a beloved and devoted servant of the Lord in a daily newspaper. Suddenly, unexpectedly, in the midst of active service, he was summoned home. One moment in active life in this world, seeking the salvation and blessing of precious souls; the next, in the unseen world, in the presence of his Lord. Who can tell how vast the change! How mysterious are the ways of God; surely they are past finding out! How little those who knew him thought to hear that he was so suddenly taken away! And yet it is sweet to know it was in the

way he himself desired, for he had once said, on hearing of another being drowned, "That is the way I should like to go to the Lord, if He does not come for us, and we all meet Him in the air." The gracious Master thus granted His dear servant his desire, and his work done, he passed on to hear from His lips, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

It is written of one, that "*he was not*, for God took him" (Gen. v. 24). In a moment he was translated to heaven, without seeing death, having walked with God for three hundred years. Truly the same words can be used of this one, though in another sense. "*He was not*, for God took him," but it was by the way to man appointed—by death. But what is death to the believer, who has passed from death unto life, and possesses eternal life in the Son? It is a solemn matter, but there is nought to fear. 'Tis but the short, quick, momentary passage out of *the body* of sin and death into the blessed presence of the Lord for ever. With the sting of death removed by the death of Christ, death is but falling asleep for the Christian. One moment closing the eyes in sleep in time, and to the things of time and sense; the next, opening them in the presence of the Lord of all. Blessed transition! *Sudden death — sudden bliss!* As another has remarked, "Who would fear a swarm of bees without stings; and who should fear death, who knows, through grace, that the blessed Son of God has taken the sting away?"

But, beloved reader, this is not all,—this is not *our* hope. We wait for *the coming* of the Lord; not to go to Him by the way of death, but for Him to come and take us to Himself by the way of life. The hope of the Christian is, not to go down into death and the grave, but to go up in life into the eternal glory of God (2 Cor. v. 4; John xiv. 3). Blessedly true is it for all believers, “Absent from the body, present with the Lord” (2 Cor. v. 8), and “to depart to be with Christ, which is far better” (Philip. i. 23). The beloved departed one, of whom we have spoken, has found it so. But there must he, with all others who have fallen asleep through Jesus, wait in the unclothed state (2 Cor. v. 4), whilst we (who believe) must still with patience wait upon the earth until the Lord come (1 Thess. i. 10).

Come He will, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye (1 Cor. xv. 52). With triumphant assembling shout shall the Lord Himself descend into the air. All His own shall hear His blessed voice. Millions in a moment shall awake and arise (John v. 28, 29). Millions in a moment shall be changed (1 Cor. xv. 51, 52). Millions together shall be caught up to meet Him (1 Thess. iv. 16, 17). No sign, no signal, need we await. No prophecy need we explore. His own word is enough; His own promise is eternally sure, “Surely I come quickly.” Much will take place after on the earth. But between our souls and His coming for His own is there nothing. “Let your loins be girded about,

and your lights burning, and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord" (Luke xii. 35, 36). Yes, in the twinkling of an eye shall every saint of God, whose body lies in the earth or in the sea, and every living saint upon the earth, be glorified in the image of the Lord for ever. Reader, how is it with you? Maybe, as you read these lines, the unrevealed moment may arrive, and the eternal counsel of God be fulfilled. Maybe, this moment, that the earth shall be bereft of every saint of God. Are you one? Are you a careless worldling, a lifeless professor, or a happy Christian? Are you ready to meet the Lord?

For twenty years and more has the servant of God, of whom we have spoken, sounded out far and wide the gospel of peace, and the glad tidings of good things. Tens of thousands have heard his voice. Many have heard the voice of the Son of God through him, in God's unbounded grace. Have you heard *that voice* in your soul? "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that *heareth my voice, and believeth on him that sent me, hath* everlasting life, and *shall not* come into condemnation, but *is* passed from death unto life" (John v. 24). All who hear His voice now *live*, and will gladly hear His voice when He comes. But all who remain deaf now will surely hear His voice with terror in the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men (2 Peter iii. 7). Oh, "incline your ear, and come unto me," saith the Lord; "*hear, and your soul shall live.*" Time is rapidly fleeting by. As the

fowls of the air hover over the carrion, so death hovers over this corrupt world. Death, ruthless death, that spares neither pauper nor prince, is summoning its thousands away. But, alas! how true it is, as one has said, "Men think all men mortal but themselves."

O sinner! arouse thyself, ere it be too late. Thou slumberest on the brink of hell. Thou knowest not but what a sudden summons may come for thee. Art thou ready to meet it? As surely as sudden death means sudden bliss for the believer, so surely does sudden death mean sudden woe for the unbeliever. To live carelessly, is to die in your sins, and be eternally damned. To live a lifeless profession without Christ, is to die without Him, and to be lost for ever. To believe on Christ, and to live Christ, is to spend eternity with Him in glory.

"He fell headlong into the lake," and he sank "before help could reach him." Ah! reader, this is man's side of the matter. The Lord allowed that fall. He *was not*, for so God took him, is His side of it. It was *sudden death—sudden bliss!*

Oh may his departure, through the Lord's grace, be the means of arousing many to weigh seriously the all-momentous question of their eternal salvation, and lead them to find in Christ and His finished work an unfailing and eternal refuge for their souls! And may his earnest and devoted testimony stir up the hearts of many of the Lord's people to be increasingly consecrated to the interests of Christ!

THE SHELTERING BLOOD.

(Exod. xi. 4-7, xii. 3, 5-7, 12, 13, 28-30).



N these scriptures God is revealed in His characters of Judge and Saviour. The great questions of His judgment of sin, and the means of deliverance therefrom, are raised, and answered, by Jehovah Himself. He speaks to us here in infinite wisdom and mercy, laying down, for the blessing of a lost world, the way in which humanity can escape the judgment to which all are liable through sin.

Many voices have been heard during the course of time, suggesting means by which the creature can escape the penalty of guilt. Above them all is heard the voice of God announcing the *only* means. Before *that* voice, all other must be silent; before *His* way, every other must disappear.

Two peoples are brought before us here, Egyptians and Israelites. Differing as to nationality, they are alike as to nature and condition before God,—*all are sinners*.

In chapter xi., Jehovah decrees judgment upon the Egyptians; in chapter xii., He proclaims the means whereby Israel may escape it (for righteousness demands that all found there deserving judgment shall be judged, unless righteous grounds are discovered for saving some).

And this is His command, that every family in

Israel shall take a lamb, and, after keeping it for four days, shall slay it, and sprinkle its blood upon the outside of their habitations. The result of this is wonderful.

In verse 12, God announces His passage through Egypt as the executor of judgment; in verse 13, He says, "*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.*"

The sequel proves the truth of Jehovah's words. Our readers will observe, in the scriptures which head this paper, that at midnight the house of every Egyptian was visited in judgment, while Israel dwelt in their houses in perfect security.

With the utmost clearness, then, the fact is demonstrated that what saved Israel from the judgment on that awful night was the blood of the lamb sprinkled on the doors of their houses. Nothing more than this—nothing less.

What lessons are *we* to learn from this? Scripture itself shall answer us.

The Holy Ghost, in the Epistle to the Romans, unfolds the gospel of God. From it two things (amongst others) are learned:—First, that the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of man (i. 18); secondly, the means devised by God whereby men may escape this wrath.

It is now no secret that God will judge men for

their guilt. He will not wink at their misdeeds. His *wrath* against them is already revealed. *He* will be revealed presently as their Judge. In Romans iii., *all* mankind are shown to be the objects of that wrath, for *all* are proved to be unrighteous. There is none that doeth good, no, not one; there is none righteous, no, not one; every mouth is stopped, and all the world is brought in guilty before God (vv. 10, 12, 19).

But, as we have before remarked, the gospel reveals not only this wrath of God against sin, and that all being sinners are consequently the objects of it, but it reveals also the salvation of God and the ground of it. This is found in verses 24 and 25 of chapter iii.:—“*Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood.*”

What a striking correspondence with Exod. xi. and xii. There, three thousand three hundred years ago, God saved a people from His judgment through the sprinkled blood of the slain lamb. Here, in the gospel, we find that the sinner's way of escape from the revealed wrath of God is through the blood of Christ, whom God Himself hath set forth to be a propitiation. Nothing but the lamb's blood could shield the Israelite from the judgment of Egypt. Nothing but Christ's precious blood can shield a sinner from that wrath which will presently overwhelm this lost world.

This is the truth of God. He Himself speaks here. He Himself has devised the means. All others will fail.

If my reader is unsaved, I urge him to give instant and earnest heed to this most solemn truth. As a sinner, he is the object of Divine wrath, that will most surely overtake him, and engulf him in eternal ruin, unless he is saved from it in God's way,—*i.e., through faith in the blood of Christ.*

It was a most singular spectacle that presented itself in Egypt on the passover night. On the outside of the house of every Israelitish family appeared the sprinkled blood. It was there for three reasons,—1st, Because of the threatened judgment; 2nd, because Jehovah had commanded it; 3rd, because all Israel were obedient. To the natural mind those blood marks signified nothing. To the eye of faith they meant everything; for the Judge had said, "When I see the blood, I will pass over you."

At midnight the test came. Jehovah visited the doomed nation. Upon every house, unsprinkled with the blood, judgment was executed, while He passed by every house that bore the token. Why did Jehovah pass over Israel? Because the judgment had already been executed upon them in the person of their substitute—the slain lamb. The blood upon the lintel was the sign of this.

It mattered not that some amongst the Egyptians were moral and upright. God looked for the blood, and finding it not, executed His fatal decree. It mattered not that every firstborn of the Israel-

itish nation was a sinner. God saw outside the sprinkled blood, and then passed them by. The blood, or the absence of it, made all the difference, and guided the Lord in His acts that night. The time of judgment had come, and wherever the blood was not, the judgment was outpoured.

These are solemn realities, recorded in the book of God for the warning and instruction of sinners in this world now. God's principles do not change; the ground on which He saves a sinner from judgment to-day, is the same as that on which He saved the sinner of Exodus xii.

Salvation by blood is no new doctrine; it is almost as old as time itself. Even our fallen first parents, ere they quitted Paradise, were clothed by Jehovah with garments (type of the righteousness of God) made from the skins of animals which He Himself had slain. And the first sinner who sought and found acceptance with God, did so through the blood of the firstlings of his flock (Gen. iv.). Again, the Holy Ghost, when describing the infinite sacrifice of Jesus, and the results that flow therefrom, silences every questioning voice with the solemn statement, that "without the shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. ix.).

The truth is, man has brought God's wrath upon himself, and the only way of deliverance from it is by a sinless and competent substitute bearing it for him. For such a substitute we go to Calvary's awful tree, where Christ once suffered for sins;—the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to

God. This offering suffices for all who avail themselves of it; for He whose blood flowed in atonement there, was a holy sinless man, and at the same time God over all, blessed for ever.

It is very charming to observe that every Israelite obeyed Jehovah's command, and sprinkled the blood. None raised a question either as to its necessity or efficacy. Faith and obedience marked them all; and this is the sinner's way to blessing to-day. "Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood,"—that is, God Himself has provided the Lamb; the sinner is responsible to avail himself of the Lamb's atoning death—to have faith in His blood.

It would not have availed an Israelite to have relied on his good works for salvation from judgment. Suppose one amongst them, having a good opinion of himself, and a poor opinion of the blood, had affixed to the outside of his front-door a statement of his character in something like the following terms:—"I am a law-abiding subject of the king, a kind and affectionate husband and father; moral, upright, and respectable in all my dealings. I have done, or at least have endeavoured to do, my duty to my Maker. I have considered the poor. Men hold me in high esteem on account of my rectitude and uprightness of conduct. On these grounds, I claim exemption from the general judgment." Of what avail would this have been? Simply none. When the Judge reached the door, His eye would have scanned the record of human

merit, *and then He would have looked for the sheltering blood*, and finding it not, would have entered the house of the self-righteous Israelite to execute the judgment He had threatened. God did not say, "When I find human righteousness I will pass over," but "*when I see the blood.*"

READER, ARE YOU SHELTERED BENEATH THE BLOOD OF CHRIST?

This alone will avail you. You may be able to plead as much and more than our imaginary Israelite, but good works will never shield a creature from the threatened wrath of God. He has said, "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight" (Rom. iii. 20). And you are thus shut up to the blood of Christ. *Nothing less* will shelter you from the coming judgment,—*nothing more* is needed.

How simple is all this. God has not commanded His fallen creatures to provide a shelter from the coming tempest, but in wonderful mercy has Himself provided one, and then bids them take refuge beneath it. This shelter is the atoning, soul-saving, all-sufficient blood of His beloved Son.

Not one Egyptian availed himself of the lamb's blood, and not one firstborn escaped the judgment; not one Israelite neglected the lamb's blood, and not one Israelite was touched by the judgment. No sinner who refuses or neglects the refuge of Christ's precious blood, will escape eternal damnation,—the wrath revealed from heaven; no sinner who flees in faith to that blood, will be touched by that same wrath.

Social position makes no difference when God's judgments are abroad. On this solemn night death entered the palace and the prison, and passed not by the cottage of the servant. All suffered alike, for all had sinned, and all were unsheltered by the blood. The blood was the test that night. It is the test to-day; it will be the test in a fast approaching day. In Rev. v., a glorified host in heaven sing that new and never-ending song, the refrain of which is, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and has redeemed us to God by his blood." In chapter vi. the scene is shifted, and we see not a blood-sheltered host in heaven, but a blood-rejecting host on earth. These do not sing; no sound of joy escapes *their* lips; only a wail of utter despair, that forms itself into a vain prayer to deaf rocks and mountains to fall upon them, and hide them from the face of Him that sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of His wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?

Friend, this fast approaching judgment is no vain dream of fools, but the solemn awful truth of the living God, announced throughout His Book from Genesis to Revelation. But, clear as the noonday sun, shines forth the way—the *only way*—of escape from it. Before God's eye, this moment, the blood of Christ appears in all its infinite, soul-atoning value. If you would escape the wrath, flee *while there is time*, and place yourself, by faith, beneath this perfect shelter.

“WHERE ARE THE NINE?”

(Luke xvii.)



TEN lepers, of different nationalities, but made by adversity brothers, met the Lord on the occasion of His coming, through the midst of Samaria and Galilee, to Jerusalem.

They stood afar off, as became such diseased men, and lifted up their voices, in a common wail, saying, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.”

Their poignant sense of need made them in earnest, and caused their cries to blend. Theirs was no religion of caste. They could not afford to say, “Stand by, for I am holier than thou.” The Jew and the despised Samaritan had to make common cause, and to accept a universal dead-level. Oh, what a grand obliteration of self-righteous distinctions does the sense of personal need and ruin produce! The neighbour is no longer saddled with the crime of which you are guilty; the charge is no longer thrown from off your shoulders and laid on his. No, the consciousness of personal need leads you to lift up your own voice and cry for “mercy.” •

And a most important exercise is this!

Well, these ten lepers cried for mercy, nor cried in vain. For truly wrote the poet:—

*“None shall seek that shall not find,
Mercy called whom grace inclined.”*

"And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go, shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed." Yes, in the alacrity of grace, Jesus made that the "day of their cleansing" (Lev. xiv. 2), and bade them, in accordance with the law of Moses, go to the priests. They went! The faith that made them cry to Jesus for mercy, now led them to obey His word; and, mark, *as they went* they were cleansed. How many yards they had gone *priestward* we are not told; doubtless not many, but at a certain point, on their way from Jesus to the priests, they were cleansed!

An unfelt touch of omnipotent grace rebuked the foul disease, and cleansed them all.

Each felt the electric throb of new life and health; the flesh of each became like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean!

Nine of them went on to the priests, according to the law of Moses and to the word of Jesus.

"One of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks; and he was a Samaritan." One of them, only one, consciously healed, first turned back, and, with the voice that had just cried for mercy, glorified God; and, secondly, fell on his face at Jesus's feet, giving Him thanks (how becoming), and he was a Samaritan!

Yes, but this one Samaritan discerned in his blessed Healer the true representative of God.

What virtue could there be in the priests, now that such a Physician was present? His faith made the distinction that should ever be drawn between form and power. He put to shame the others.

Hence Jesus said, "Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?" Sure all the ten had been equally cleansed; but nine had passed on to the priests, and to the decaying order of religion which Jesus had come to supersede.

But did He not bid them go? Certainly He did, before, but *not after, they had been cleansed! As they went* they were cleansed. The moment of cleansing made all the difference. In view of it the rites of Judaism were appropriate, but *afterwards* they had no meaning. It was an anachronism, a thing out of date. A system like that of Judaism suits lepers who feel their need of cleansing, but for lepers who by grace have been cleansed it is absolutely unprofitable.

Therefore Jesus said, "Where are the nine?" "Where?" They had swamped themselves in an effete order of religion, in which "glorifying God" and "giving thanks" to the Lord Jesus were really unknown. "There are not found," again said Jesus, "that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger."

Alas, ten lepers, all cleansed, but only one a true worshipper! But how common to-day to see His grace practically ignored by the want of a hearty return to give glory to God and thanks to the Lord Jesus. How easy it is to become swamped

and irretrievably lost in the wide profession around, and thus to lose the sense of cleansing and to abandon the voice of praise.

Ten got all they needed from Jesus; only one gave to Him what He wanted!

Where are the nine?

Think, dear reader, of the mighty cure effected by the Lord on these ten lepers! The number was nothing. Had it been multiplied tenfold, His grace were the same! The incurability of the disease was nothing. Had it been still more incurable (like sin itself), His grace were still sufficient! What the priests could not, cannot do, Jesus can! Only come to Him—the Sin-bearer; trust His atoning blood; rely on His faithful word; and return to give glory to God, as a saved and happy worshipper.

J. W. S.

JESUS IN THE MIDST.

(Matt. xviii. 20; John xx. 19; Rev. v. 6.)



THOU art here, Lord Jesus, in our very
midst,
We are gathered, Saviour—gathered as
Thou bid'st;
Gathered to remember Thee in all Thy
woe,
When for us, in mercy, Thou didst stoop
so low.

In Thy love to sinners Thou didst leave Thy throne,
And, from heaven's bright glory, down to earth
didst come ;

Bore our sins and sorrows, suffered on the tree,
Made a full atonement, set Thy people free.

Thou hast sought and found us, on the downward
road ;

And in grace exceeding, brought us back to God :
Now we are His children, share the Father's love,
And in Thee, blest Saviour, all His favour prove.

Jesus, we adore Thee, magnify Thy name,
Worthy Thou of homage, everlasting fame :
Thee, O Lord, we worship, firstborn from the dead,
Glorious, mighty Victor, our exalted Head.

Soon, Lord, we shall gather round Thy throne
above,

Worship and adore Thee, for Thy wondrous love ;
Then we shall behold Thee, hear Thy heavenly
voice,

Cast our crowns before Thee, evermore rejoice.

M. S. S.




WITH the coming of the Lord, the silvery notes
of the gospel trumpet will for ever cease. All
will be changed. Grace and mercy will abdicate
the throne of God, and justice and retributive
judgment take their place, and wield the sword of
inflexible righteousness. That will be an awful
day for unsaved sinners.

W. T. P. W.

WHAT LACK I YET?

(Matt. xix. 16-30.)



HERE are four most important questions in this scripture. We hear the first questioner described as a "young man." Another scripture says he was a "ruler" (Luke xviii. 18), and yet another says that "Jesus beholding him, loved him" (Mark x. 21). There was something in him which drew out the Lord's love in a special way, but, nevertheless, all that he had of mere nature, the Lord shows us, was as nothing when weighed in the balances of the sanctuary.

He comes to Jesus saying, "What good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?" Are you, my reader, in that same line of things, desiring to regulate your life so that you may win eternal life? But when you think of what is eternal, perhaps you have some misgivings as to whether you can get it. This young ruler wanted eternal life, and what a wonderful thing that is. "This is life eternal, that they may know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (John xvii.). It is all that is connected with Christ, and to have it is to put the soul into a new place, in relationship with, and knowledge of God. The object of the visit of the Son of God to this earth was to put us in possession of eternal life. I do not think this young man meant what was

heavenly by eternal life. To this Jew it was continuance of life on earth, but he came to Him who was Himself eternal life, and did not know either Him or it. Peter knew better when he said, "Lord, to whom shall we go? *Thou* hast the words of eternal life" (John vi. 68). He had the consciousness in his heart that in this One was wrapped up eternal life.

The Lord's reply to this young man was, "There is none good but one, that is God; but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." The point is, the Lord always took up men on the ground they came on. The man came to Him on the ground of his own *good* doings, his own righteousness. The Lord took him up on that ground, and put him to the test as to his reality. Now, I ask you, Do you want eternal life? Are you in real earnest about it? If so, you will get it. Why did not this young man get it? He was not really in earnest,—if he had been, he would have attached himself to Christ; and if you too would get it, you must attach yourself to Christ.

The Lord takes up, in His answer, not the first table of the law—his duty to God—but the second table, his duty to his neighbour. The young man replies, "All these things have I kept from my youth up; what lack I yet?" A bold statement, and a momentous question truly! Do you think he had loved his neighbour as himself? I don't think so, and if any of us are trying to get into heaven by loving our neighbours as ourselves, not

one will ever get there, we may accept as an assured fact.

Now, ponder his second query,—“What lack I yet?” He lacked everything, for he had not Christ. Have you? You may have everything that commends you in the eyes of men; you may be rich, polished, educated, refined, but if you have not Christ, that which you have is utterly worthless. “What lack I yet?” You lack Christ if you have never been born of God, if you have never come to Him for salvation.

Really what the Lord says to this religious young ruler is, You have not yet begun. “Yet lackest thou one thing,” and that one thing is everything. He had not Christ, and to lack Him was to lack all. Just as if I were to tell you that estates, money, everything this world could afford, belonged to a person, and you say, “Oh, how happy he must be.” No, the man is dead; it is all worthless to him. He lacks one thing—life, to enjoy it; and, lacking that, lacks everything. And this young man lacked one thing—Christ. What was between his soul and Christ. His riches; for Jesus said unto him, “If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come and follow me.” What follows? “But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.” Eternal life and treasure in heaven were not to him what his earthly possessions were. “I have,” he as it were says, “a place in the

world, and money gives it to me. If I were poor, I should lose it to-morrow;" and he made his choice—treasure on earth, rather than Christ, and treasure in heaven. A poor choice indeed!

The Lord thereon turns to His disciples and says, "Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven;" and again, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God," because there are a thousand things in the heart of a man which hinder him. It really needs Divine interposition for a man to get saved. It is very simple. You and I have the flesh in us, and the flesh will hinder and oppose a man, and the devil will use it to this end. This young man's flesh worked through his riches. You may say, "I am not rich." True, but Satan knows how to use your flesh as a hindrance in some other way.

Now comes the third question. "Who then can be saved?" the disciples ask of the Lord. Ah! that's a grand question. You cannot be saved on legal lines. If you look at Galatians ii. 16, you will see this, "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."

Righteousness comes on the principle of faith, not doing. Wherever there is faith there is blessing.

This young man was under the curse, and did not know it. The Lord proposed to him to get rid of the thing that was a hindrance to him, and he could not bear the test. Salvation is the fruit of God's grace, it is all by faith, grace working by faith. To be saved, you must drop all works of your own, and turn to Christ. Well may the disciples ask, "Who then can be saved?" If a man cannot be saved by his own works, and his riches are a hindrance to him, who then can be saved? "With man this is impossible; but with God all things are possible." How do men get saved then? They are saved by the grace of God,—by accepting the gift His sovereign grace gives, and then following the Lord Jesus.

Now comes the fourth query. "Then answered Peter, and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all and followed thee: what shall we have therefore?" The Lord replies, as it were, "You have followed me in my rejection during my earthly pathway; you shall share, therefore, with me in my earthly glory, when that day comes;" and the principle is the same for us in this day, "for every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundred-fold, and shall inherit everlasting life," is part of the Lord's answer. I maintain that the Christian has the best of it, both here and hereafter. There may be persecution. All the better if there be, and we are told of the early Christians "rejoicing that

they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name" (Acts v. 41). If you come to Christ, you will lose your sins, get your soul saved, get eternal life, and get into relationship with God. Oh, think of it,—of all that you get,—and don't let this question of loss or shame, dear reader, delay your decision for another moment.

Possibly to this late hour in 1889, you have not been fully on the Lord's side. Now, as the year fades away, let me most earnestly urge you to get this matter of your eternal destiny once and for ever finally settled. A simple apprehension of the four questions that have been before us will settle the matter if you only are simple. Let me then recapitulate them:—

1. "What good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?" *Answer*—Nothing; for "not of works" is God's verdict (Eph. ii. 9).

2. "What lack I yet?" *Answer*—Everything, if you have not Christ.

3. "Who, then, can be saved?" *Answer*—You, for God says, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and *thou* shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 31).

4. "What shall we have therefore?" *Answer*—All that God's love and wisdom can furnish us with for time, and for eternity—"life everlasting," for "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things" (Rom. viii. 32).

Reader, decide for Christ, I pray you.