

Things New and Old,

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FOR THE LAMBS AND SHEEP OF THE FLOCK
OF CHRIST.



"Feed the flock of God."—1 Pet. v. 2.



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Things New and Old.

“GOOD THINGS TO COME.”

(Read Isaiah xlix.)

BOTH in patriarchal narratives, and in prophetic revelations, we get the New Testament, in its great outline, anticipated.*

In Genesis, which is the book of the patriarchs, we travel from Mat. i. to Rev. xxii.; that is, from the opening to the end of the New Testament.

We have the incarnation and birth of Christ in the first promise, the promise of “the seed of the woman,” in chapter iii., and in that promise, too, we have the death and resurrection of that Seed of the woman. “It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel,” involves or conveys those wondrous, blessed facts.

We have the heavenly calling in Enoch, and the restored earth in Noah.

We have the Church in Eve. We have Israel reprobated or cast off for a time, and then received again in Joseph and his brethren.

We have the gathering together of heavenly and earthly

* There are still things “new and old,” as we read in Mat. xiii. The forms of the kingdom of heaven, anticipated by the Lord in that chapter, are among the “new” things—as also the church, as “the body of Christ;” the secret revealed to Paul, but hid from ages and generations.

things, as in the days of the kingdom, in the two families of Joseph in Egypt, that which he had as from the Gentiles, his near kindred, and that which he had by birth or in the flesh, his Jewish, Abrahamic kindred.

Thus we gather up, as in fragments, all the materials of the New Testament in the book of Genesis. And this is wondrous food of faith, for it tells us how He, with whom we have to do, knows the end from the beginning. But if this one patriarchal book, by its narratives, furnishes all this to us, so this one chapter from the prophets, I mean Isaiah xlix., does the same.

It opens as with the first chapter of St. Matthew. The Speaker, Messiah, the Christ of God, who is Jesus of Nazareth, announces that He was called by His name before He was born. And so it was—for it was said to Joseph in that chapter, “Thou shalt call His name Jesus.” v. 21.

Messiah there shews Himself to us in His ministry, as One that is as a drawn sword in the hand, and as a polished arrow in the quiver. And in certain features of it, these symbols strikingly illustrate that ministry—for, as with a drawn sword the Lord was ever exposing all that was around Him, laying bare the springs and principles of human nature. His axe was at the root of the trees. And He also again and again gave warning of a judgment to come; but He did not execute it. He judged everything *morally*, but nothing *retributively*. He refused to judge, saying that He had come to save. And thus He was as a shaft or arrow hid in a quiver, while He was as a sword drawn in the hand. He would stoop down to write on the ground as though He heard not the accuser, and yet He would say, “Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?” v. 2.

But there was another feature in His ministry. As man was thus exposed by it, God was glorified by it. It was the witness of God among men. He who saw Jesus saw the Father. God committed the glorifying of His name to

Jesus—so that now, if we are enlightened with the knowledge of the glory of God, we must have found it in the face of Jesus Christ. Here He Himself announces this, through His servant the prophet. v. 3.

This ministry, however, as far as Israel was concerned, ended in present failure. Israel was not gathered. "Ye would not," is the Lord's word to them at the end of it, after telling them again and again that He would have gathered them, as a hen her chickens. This was so in the New Testament history of the Lord's ministry, and in Isaiah's anticipation of that ministry here. But Messiah's work, if refused and disappointed by Israel, was accepted of God. Jesus was raised from the dead; and His resurrection, among other things, was the justification of all that He had said and done. The voice from heaven when He was beginning His ministry sealed Him then, the resurrection at the close of it seals Him and His work now. And this He here foretells by His prophet, saying, "My judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God." v. 4. And then, being thus accepted for His work-sake, and raised from the dead, He is crowned with glory in heaven, and seated in possession of all power. This is the ascended Christ, as before we had the risen Christ; and His glory and strength, as ascended, He anticipates here. v. 5. Upon this, the present age of the Gentiles is foretold—the mercy which is now visiting, in the Gospel, all the ends of the earth. This verse is cited to that effect by the apostle to the Gentiles in his preaching, in Acts xiii. v. 6.

The kingdom, or millennial age, is next announced. In the verse that follows, Messiah is seen as seated in the dignities of "the world to come," His own world. His title to be there, King of kings, is found in His precious sufferings, or in His rejection by men when He first came among them. Others, however, became connected with the kingdom, as well as He—as these verses also tell us. But they do so on another title altogether—because the accept-

able time or the day of salvation had visited them.* Israel are accordingly represented by this prophecy as prisoners now released, or like those who once sat in darkness now called out into the light. And heaven and earth are summoned to rejoice in this millennial day here anticipated. And I may add, that in the course of this rich and animated prophecy, the things in Rev. vii. are announced, the gathering from all parts of the earth, and the feeding of them at the fountains of water. v. 7—13.

Wondrous all this is, accurate and beautiful. Surely I am warranted in saying, that in this one chapter of Isaiah (nay, in 13 verses of it) we are carried through the New Testament. We have the birth, ministry, resurrection, and ascension of the Lord, His rejection at His first advent by the Jews and the world, the present age of mercy to the ends of the earth, and the coming millennial kingdom.†

At v. 14, Zion is heard complaining. She had not once been named in the progress of this wonderful prophecy, and now she complains that she was forgotten and forsaken. Messiah had been surely remembered, the secrets of grace and glory had been announced, the millennial joy of heaven and earth celebrated, and Israel itself gladdened with hope and promise; but she, Jerusalem, had been passed by. "The Lord has forsaken me, my Lord has forgotten me," she says.

The Lord answers her grief in words of fervent affection. He tells her at once, that it was impossible she could be forgotten. And we may say, "Surely so." Jerusalem had "a gift and calling" of God, as well as Israel. Israel was

* The early part, but that only, of v. 8 is cited by the apostle in 2 Cor. vi. 2—and there is great accuracy in this. The early part of that verse expresses grace *generally*—the latter part expresses grace *to Israel*: it was only grace in *its general application to sinners* that the apostle was teaching in 2 Cor. vi. 2.

† Fully do I grant we have not the Church as the body of Christ. This was the hidden mystery. Still we have this age of mercy to the Gentiles, as we have seen.

Jehovah's *people*, Jerusalem was Jehovah's *city*. His sanctuary and His palace were in her—she was the seat of His government, and the place of his worship. The Lord loved the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. Jerusalem was as the family mansion, where, at stated seasons, the children, settled through the land in their different inheritances, had to come and keep holy-day. All this was so, and all this constituted “a gift and calling,” which we know is never repented of (Rom. xi. 29). It was, therefore, impossible that she should be forgotten.

And having thus pledged to her the constancy of His remembrance of her, the Lord then, in the closing verses of this chapter, goes on to tell her of her coming blessedness and dignities; and gives her good reason to know that her *millennial* beauty and honour will far exceed her *Solomon* distinctions, that she shall be greater and more excellent in the day of Messiah than ever she had been in the days of any of the sons of Jesse. Kings and queens of the earth should wait on her. She should deck herself with ornaments, as a bride doeth. And the Lord promises that He will fill her with her children, and empty her of her destroyers; and then rescue all that belongs to her out of the hand of her oppressors. He speaks this very fervently, and in the style of many other scriptures, in the Psalms and Prophets, which address themselves to Zion. And, among other things, He promises her that she shall stand lost in wonder and amazement at her own condition in those coming days, as one that scarcely knows herself, so excellent and blessed will she be. Her heart, as another scripture has it, “shall fear and be enlarged” at the sight of her prosperity and honour.

What a state for the grace of God to bring the heart into! How He satiates the soul with fatness! The queen of Sheba tasted this, when there was no more spirit in her, and when she said, the half had not been told her. The disciples experienced it in their way and measure, when

their hearts burned within them under the words of the Stranger who had joined them on the road. The sinner knows it betimes, when he is introduced to the grace that saves him—as when the poor Samaritan left her water-pot behind her, forgetting everything but her new-found treasure in Christ; or as when the woman of the city spent, in company with her tears and her kisses, the treasure of her house on the person of her loved and worshipful Redeemer.

Thus *it has been*, beloved, and thus *it will be*. Would that we knew that *it is so*, from our own joys in the Lord! But each heart knows its own humiliations. We can, however, desire it—and surely we can sing, as at times we do, those fervent words of Cowper—

Dear fountain of delights unknown,
No longer sink below the brim;
But overflow, and pour me down
A living and life-giving stream.



THE SYMPATHY AND GRACE OF JESUS.

(Read carefully Mat. xiv. 1—21, and Mark vi. 30—44.)

IN these two parallel scriptures we are presented with two distinct conditions of heart which both find their answer in the sympathy and grace of Jesus. Let us look closely at them; and may the Holy Ghost enable us to gather up and bear away their precious teaching!

It was, no doubt, a moment of deep sorrow to John's disciples when their master had fallen by the sword of Herod; when the one on whom they had been accustomed to lean, and from whose lips they had been wont to drink instruction, was taken from them after such a fashion. This, we may well believe, was indeed a moment of gloom and desolation to the followers of the Baptist.

But there was One to whom they could come, in their sorrow, and into whose ear they could pour their tale of

grief—One of whom their master had spoken, to whom he had pointed, and of whom he had said, “He must increase, but I must decrease.” To Him the bereaved disciples betook themselves, as we read, “They came and took up the body, and buried it, and *went and told Jesus.*” (Matt. xiv. 12.) This was the very best thing they could have done. There was not another heart on earth in which they could have found such a response as in the heart—the tender, loving heart of Jesus. His sympathy was perfect. He knew all about their sorrow. He knew their loss, and how they would be feeling it. Wherefore, they acted wisely when “they went and told Jesus.” His ear was ever open, and His heart ever at leisure to soothe and sympathize. He perfectly exemplified the precept afterwards embodied in the words of the Holy Ghost, “Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.” (Rom. xii. 15.)

And oh! who can tell the worth of genuine sympathy? Who can declare the value of having one who can really make your joys and sorrows his own? Thank God! we have such an one in the blessed Lord Jesus Christ; and although we cannot see Him with the bodily eye, yet can faith use Him in all the preciousness and power of His perfect sympathy. We can, if only our faith is simple and child-like, go from the tomb where we have just deposited the remains of some fondly-cherished object, to the feet of Jesus, and there pour out the anguish of a bereaved and desolate heart. We shall there meet no rude repulse, no heartless reproof for our folly and weakness, in feeling so deeply. No; nor yet any clumsy effort to *say something* suitable, an awkward effort to put on some expression of condolence. Ah! no; Jesus knows how to sympathize with a heart that is crushed and bowed down beneath the heavy weight of sorrow. His is a perfect human heart. What a thought! What a privilege to have access, at all times, in all places, and under all circumstances, to a perfect human heart! We may look in vain for this down

here. Yes; look in vain, not merely in the world, but even in the church. There may, in many cases, be a real desire to sympathize, but a total lack of capacity. I may find myself, in moments of sorrow, in company with one who knows nothing about my sorrow or the source thereof. How could he sympathize? And even though I should tell him, his heart might be so occupied with other things as to have no room and no leisure for me.

Not so with the perfect Man, Christ Jesus. He has both room and leisure for each and for all. No matter when, how, or with what you come, the heart of Jesus is always open. He will never repulse, never fail, never disappoint. If, therefore, we are in sorrow, what should we do? We should just do as the disciples of the Baptist did, "go and tell Jesus." This, assuredly, is the right thing to do. Let us go straight from the tomb to the feet of Jesus. He will dry up our tears, soothe our sorrows, heal our wounds, and fill up our blanks. In this way we shall be able to enter into the truth of Rutherford's words when he says, "I try to lay up all my good things in Christ, and then a little of the creature goes a great way with me." This is an experience which we may well covet. May the blessed Spirit lead us more into it!

We may now contemplate another condition of heart, as furnished by the twelve apostles, on their return from a successful mission. "And the apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and told him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught." (Mark vi. 30.) Here, we have not a case of sorrow and bereavement, but one of rejoicing and encouragement. The twelve make their way to Jesus to tell Him of their *success*, just as the disciples of the Baptist made their way to Him in the moment of their *loss*. Jesus was equal to both. He could meet the heart that was crushed with sorrow, and He could meet the heart that was flushed with success. He knew how to control, to moderate, and to direct both the one and

the other. BLESSINGS FOR EVER BE UPON HIS HONOURED NAME!

“And He said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat.” Here, then, we are conducted to a point at which the moral glories of Christ shine out with uncommon lustre, and correct the selfishness of our poor narrow hearts. Here we are taught, with unmistakable clearness, that to make Jesus the depository of our thoughts and feelings will never produce in us a spirit of haughty self-sufficiency and independence, or a feeling of contempt for others. Quite the reverse. The more we have to do with Jesus, the more will our hearts be opened to meet the varied forms of human need which may present themselves to our view from day to day. It is when we come to Jesus and empty our whole hearts to Him, tell Him of our sorrows and our joys, and cast our whole burden at His feet, that we really learn how to feel for others.

There is great beauty and power in the words, “*come ye yourselves apart.*” He does not say, “Go ye.” This would never do. There is no use in going apart into a desert place, if Jesus be not there to go to. To go into solitude without Jesus is but to make our cold, narrow hearts, colder and narrower still. I may retire from the scene around me in chagrin and disappointment, only to wrap myself up in an impenetrable selfishness. I may fancy that my fellows have not made enough of me, and I may retire in order to make much of myself. I may make myself the centre of my whole being, and thus become a cold-hearted, contracted, miserable creature. But when Jesus says “*come,*” the case is totally different. Our finest moral lessons are learned alone with Jesus. We cannot breathe the atmosphere of His presence without having our hearts expanded. If the apostles had gone into the desert without Jesus, they would, no doubt, have eaten the

loaves and fishes themselves; but having gone with Jesus they learnt differently. He knew how to meet the need of a hungry multitude, as well as that of a company of sorrowing or rejoicing disciples. The sympathy and grace of Jesus are perfect. He can meet all. If one is sorrowful, he can go to Jesus; if he is happy, he can go to Jesus; if he is hungry, he can go to Jesus. We can bring every thing to Jesus, for in Him all fulness dwells, and, blessed be His name, He never sends any one empty away.

Not so, alas! with His poor disciples. How forbidding is their selfishness when viewed in the light of His magnificent grace! "And Jesus, when He came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things." He had gone to a desert place to give His disciples rest; but no sooner does human need present itself than the deep flowing tide of compassion rolls forth from His tender heart.

"And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto Him, and said, This is a desert place, and now the time is far past: *send them away.*" What words to drop from the lips of men who had just returned from preaching the gospel! "Send them away." Ah! it is one thing to *preach* grace, and another thing to *act* it. No doubt, it is well to preach; but it is also well to act. Indeed, the preaching will be little worth if not combined with acting. It is well to instruct the ignorant; but it is also well to feed the hungry. The latter may involve more self-denial than the former. It may cost us nothing to preach; but it may cost us something to feed; and we do not like to have our private store intruded upon. The heart is ready to put forth its ten thousand objections; "What shall I do for myself? What will become of my family? We must act judiciously. We cannot do impossibilities." These, and such-like arguments the selfish heart can urge when a needy object presents itself.

"Send them away." What made the disciples say this? What was the real source of this selfish request? Simply *unbelief*. Had they only remembered that they had in their midst the One who of old had fed "six hundred thousand footmen," for forty years in the wilderness, they would have known that He would not send a hungry multitude away. Surely the same hand that had nourished such a host for so long a time could easily furnish a single meal for five thousand. Thus faith would reason; but alas! unbelief darkens the understanding and contracts the heart. There is nothing so absurd as unbelief, and nothing which so shuts up the bowels of compassion. Faith and charity always go together, and in proportion to the growth of the one is the growth of the other. Faith opens the flood-gates of the heart and lets the tide of charity flow forth. Thus the apostle could say to the Thessalonians, "Your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth." This is the divine rule. A heart that is full of faith can afford to be charitable; an unbelieving heart can afford nothing. Faith places the heart in immediate contact with God's exhaustless treasury, and fills it with the most benevolent affections. Unbelief throws the heart in upon itself, and fills it with all manner of selfish fears. Faith conducts us into the soul-expanding atmosphere of heaven. Unbelief leaves us enwrapped in the withering atmosphere of this heartless world. Faith enables us to hearken to Christ's gracious accents, "Give ye them to eat." Unbelief makes us utter our own heartless words, "Send the multitude away." In a word, there is nothing enlarges the heart like simple faith; and nothing so contracting as unbelief. Oh! that our faith may grow exceedingly, so that our charity may abound more and more! May we reap much permanent profit from the contemplation of the sympathy and grace of Jesus!

What a striking contrast between "Send the multitude

away," and, "Give ye them to eat." Thus it is ever. God's ways are not as our ways; and it is by looking at His ways that we learn to judge our ways—by looking at Him that we learn to judge ourselves. Jesus, in this lovely scene, corrects the selfishness of the disciples, first, by making them the channels through which His grace may flow to the multitude, and secondly, by making them gather up "twelve baskets full of the fragments" for themselves.

Nor is this all. Not merely is selfishness rebuked, but the heart is most blessedly instructed. Nature might say, "What need is there of the five loaves and two fishes, at all? Surely, the One who can feed such a multitude with, can as easily feed them without, such an instrumentality." Nature might argue thus; but Jesus teaches us that we are not to despise God's creatures. We are to use what we have with God's blessing. This is a fine moral lesson for the heart. "What hast thou in the house?" is the question. It is just that and nothing else that God will use. It is easy to be liberal with what we have not; but the thing is to bring out what we have, and, with God's blessing, apply it to the present need.

So also in the gathering up of the fragments. The foolish heart might say, "What need of gathering up those scattered crumbs? Surely the one who has wrought such a miracle can have no need of fragments." Yes; but we are not to waste God's creatures. If in the using of the loaves and fishes we are taught not to *despise* any creature of God, in the gathering up of the fragments we are taught not to *waste* it. Let human need be liberally met, but let not a single crumb be wasted. How divinely perfect! How unlike us! Sometimes we are penurious; at other times prodigal. Jesus was never either the one or the other. "Give ye them to eat." But, "Let nothing be *lost*." Perfect grace! Perfect wisdom! May we adore it, and learn from it! May we rejoice in the assurance that the blessed One who manifested all this wisdom and grace

is our life. Christ is our life, and it is the manifestation of this life that constitutes practical christianity. It is not living by rules and regulations, but simply having Christ dwelling in the heart by faith—Christ the source of perfect sympathy and perfect grace.



“COMPEL THEM TO COME IN.”

(Read Luke xiv. 15—24.)

THE grace of God may be compared to a stream gushing from the mountain side; which, though frequently meeting with opposition, flows on. The force of the current manifests the fulness of the fountain. It has many obstacles to overcome; but the stream being fed by an exhaustless spring, it acquires strength in its progress; and rushing past or over every hindrance, it runs on, refreshing the region of its course, until it reaches the meeting place of kindred streams.

The believer, looking up to God his Father, can say, “All my springs are in thee.” The stream of life-giving grace which has reached his soul, flows from the heart of God. “God is love.” “Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.” (1 John iv. Rom. v.) From this everlasting spring the stream of saving grace has been flowing on, through our sin-blighted and barren world, ever since the lost condition of man called it forth. It was always there; the shed blood of a spotless victim opened up a channel for its righteous flow, “that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Rom. v. 21.) Faith’s eye will always see the pure grace of God, deeply tinged with the blood of Jesus.

But oh! with what opposition, from all quarters, has

grace had to contend! How often, for a moment, has its course been interrupted, and violently forced into another channel! The nature of God's grace is entirely contrary to man's selfishness. He is angry with God, and hates his brother, because the highest favours of heaven are bestowed on the most unworthy of the children of men. Hence Cain was angry, and killed Abel; and the elder brother was angry, and would not go into the house where grace reigned. (Gen. iv.; Luke xv.) It has ever been so. Naturally, man dislikes it—speaks against it—seeks to turn it aside and get rid of it altogether, like Israel at Sinai, or, failing in this, he seeks to pollute the pure stream of heaven, by mingling with it the fancied worthiness of his own feelings and doings. In all ages of the world, from every human heart, grace has met with determined opposition; but such is the depth, fulness, and energy of the love of God, the native source of all grace, that nothing can effectually stay its course, or even hinder its progress. The fountain can never fail, the channel can never be choked, and grace, *free grace*, in spite of every obstacle, must flow on through this desert world, until it has visited, refreshed, and blessed its most distant nations.

These thoughts have been suggested in reading Luke xiv. 15—24. Here, our Lord points out the onward course of the pure grace of God, and the spring from whence it flows. In reply to the one who said, while he sat at meat with Him, "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God," the Lord immediately assured him that the supper was ready, that grace had provided and prepared every thing, and that he had a free invitation to come and eat of that heavenly bread. "Then said he unto him, a certain man made a great supper, and bade many; and sent his servants at supper-time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready." They had been previously invited, but now they are entreated to come,

for it was "supper-time" and all things were ready. But, alas! "they all with one consent began to make excuse." None of them said, in plain terms, "I will not come," but they were full of excuses. How like the reception that the full, free, and hearty invitations of grace still meet with from many. Few will say plainly, I shall have nothing to do with Christ or His salvation, yet how often are both neglected, nay, despised, for a worldly pleasure—a self-gratification—a shadow—a nothing.

From the beginning God had acted in grace, and saved them that believed His word. But the full expression of His grace was reserved until Christ came. He was "full of grace and truth." (John i. 14, 16, 17.) "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." (2 Cor. v. 19.) Grace reigned. None, observe, were unfit or unwelcome guests for the feast on account of their sins. God was not imputing their trespasses unto them. He was acting in grace—pure grace—grace without rebuke. So that there was full forgiveness to the chief of sinners, according to the riches of grace. The guest that was cast out, according to the account given by Matthew (chap. xxii.), was condemned by the king, not on account of what he had done, but on account of what he had refused. Grace had provided everything. But he despised the robe that was suited to the feast. He was a rejecter of the free grace of God in Christ Jesus. "And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment, and he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having on a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Here, observe, nothing is said to the man about what we may call his sins in general, but simply that of having

come hither without the wedding garment. And having refused the grace of God, which alone could meet his need, all his other sins, of heart and life, remained, and sank with him into the place of outer darkness. This is deeply solemn. Every remembrance of the ground of condemnation must prove an awful pang of agony in the depths of woe.

Christ alone is the sinner's salvation. He alone meets all our need. "God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son." Clearly, then, the Son must be received, or we can never receive eternal life, for the life is in Him. The one question then is, Have I received the Son as my eternal life—my eternal all? When Christ is received by faith, all is received—life—righteousness—pardon—peace, and acceptance.

"My strength, my shield, my safe abode,
My robe before the throne of God."

We have all in Him. "He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life." (1 John v. 10, 11.) Until Christ is received, nothing is received. The sinner remains in all his guilt, and under the awful weight of his unpardoned sins. Oh! how marvellous that any should be found refusing to be saved—refusing to be clothed in the king's raiment—decked with the king's jewels, and made happy for ever in the King's royal favour. Oh, then, destitute sinner, come! Christless—graceless—homeless sinner, come! Thy God calleth thee, the Saviour inviteth thee, the Holy Spirit entreateth thee, "for all things are *now* ready." A home, a robe, a welcome, a royal feast, all await thee. Why not come? Why not come now? Remember, O, remember, that ere long, it must either be the king's banqueting house, or the deep, dark pit of eternal despair.

Our blessed Lord, in the parable before us, refers to three classes in connection with the stream of grace.

1. To those who were much engaged with their own earthly interests, and so had little relish for a heavenly feast. A piece of ground, five yoke of oxen, domestic duties, were more to them than the rich provisions of grace. These things, though right and lawful in themselves, so filled their hearts as to lead them to slight and neglect heavenly things, and thereby proved their eternal ruin. The king at last most solemnly declares of all such, "that none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper." They were not condemned, observe, for having, or for attending to these things, but because they were satisfied with them, cared nothing for the provisions of grace, and so refused the invitation to the "great supper." But grace, though disregarded by such, flows on to others.

2. The second class, to whom the Master sent the invitation, were those who were poor and helpless, in the streets and lanes of the city—the right class to value kindness from others. When brought to see, and feel our need, and our utter helplessness, such as is here pictured before us, the kindness that offers to meet all our need, will be welcomed and appreciated. And what a picture the Lord here draws of man's spiritual condition! Poor, maimed, halt, blind. In poverty, and without hands to work, or feet to walk, or eyes to see. Oh! what a condition! What but the pure grace of God in the Gospel of His Son can meet such a state of things? It is not enough merely to open a place in a locality, and announce that there will be preaching. If grace be at work, it will do much more, knowing the soul's deep necessities. The neighbourhood must be visited, the streets and the lanes searched, that the spiritually destitute may be found out, an invitation given with beseeching earnestness, and, if possible, brought, it may be, in the first place, to where the Gospel is preached, but with the one object of their being brought to Christ, that they may, ere long, fill the house of the Lord, and

dwell with Him for ever. "Go out QUICKLY into the streets and lanes of the city," is the Master's own most urgent command.

3. The third class are found in the extreme outer circles, "the highways and hedges." The nations of the Gentiles, which, when compared with the city of Jerusalem, God's earthly centre, are the distant places of the earth. But grace flows on, its energy and power manifestly increasing, notwithstanding the world-wide circle of its course, and the opposition it has had to overcome in every inch of its progress. Its source is in the nature of God.

Two things seem to characterize the scene of Gospel labour before the banqueting-house is filled, and the door closed.

1. The Master's longsuffering, and patient perseverance in grace. To the first class, He "sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, *Come; for all things are now ready.*" To the second class, He says, "GO OUT QUICKLY . . . AND BRING IN HITHER THE POOR," &c. But to the third, He says, "GO OUT . . . AND COMPEL THEM TO COME IN."

2. The energy of the servant, as one who has caught his Master's spirit. He can return from his preaching mission and say, "Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room." Blessed is that servant who can give in such an account, "Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded," and still be as fresh for work as ever. "Yet there is room;" as if he had said, May I go out again, and find some more to fill up that room? O, what a happy state of things, in any sphere of worthy service, when the servant enters into the Master's spirit, but surely, most of all, in such a sphere as this.

"I think I see the meaning of that text, now, Compel them to come in," said an earnest preacher to the writer a few days ago, and gave in substance the following explanation.

"If I meet a friend in the street that I am anxious to see in my own house, I do not merely say to him, The door is open, come in, we will be glad to see you. No; I entreat him, I urge him, I take him by the hand, and so cause him to feel the earnestness of my heart, that he is compelled to come in. Well, so should we cause unconverted sinners to feel assured of our love for their precious souls, as to compel them to come to Him who loves them infinitely more than we do. I was so convinced that this is the spirit of that text, that last Lord's day evening I was constrained to adopt a new line of action. I felt great earnestness for the conversion of souls in preaching. At the close of the discourse I stated to the people that I should be happy to remain for prayer and conversation, as the Lord might lead, after the usual service was over. I gave a hearty invitation to all, but especially to those who were anxious. Very few left. And, for the first time in my life, in place of remaining near to my desk until the people had removed, I went straight in amongst them. Some of the brethren prayed most earnestly. I began to speak to some who were in deep concern. Others followed my example. So that in a short time, we had quite a scene of deep interest, and rich blessing. Indeed, such as we have never had before on any occasion. Several were brought into peace, others were passing through deep exercise of soul. One man was so pressed in spirit that he stood up, and in a few simple words, declared what God had done for his soul. The effect was most blessed. We have had special meetings for prayer, that the work may go on. The brethren are all stirred up."

Thus the stream of God's rich, full, unwearied, persevering grace flows on, and thus it must flow on, ever deepening, widening, and extending, until it has reached the utmost limits of God's purposes of love, and gathered from the nations of the earth as many precious souls as shall fill the house, which is as large as the heart of God.

May the Lord, the heavenly Master, so teach, guide, and lead all His dear servants now in the gospel-field, so fully to carry out the true meaning of the text, in the divine power of the Holy Spirit, as that many around us may be morally compelled to come in, and that His house may soon be filled.

Give me the faith which can remove
And sink the mountain to a plain ;
Give me the child-like praying love,
Which longs to build Thy house again ;
Thy love let it my heart o'erpower,
And all my simple soul devour.

I want an even strong desire,
I want a calmly fervent zeal,
To pull poor souls out of the fire,
To snatch them from the verge of hell,
And turn them to a pardoning God,
And quench the brands in Jesu's blood.

I would the precious time redeem,
And longer live for this alone,
To spend, and to be spent, for them
Who have not yet my Saviour known :
Fully on these my mission prove,
And only breathe, to breathe Thy love.

Enlarge, inflame, and fill my heart
With boundless charity divine !
So shall I all my strength exert,
And love them with a zeal like Thine,
And lead them to Thy open side,
The sheep for whom the Shepherd died.

JESUS GIRDED.

(John xiii. 1—10.)

THE attitude in which our blessed Lord Jesus appears in this scripture is one of infinite grace. We behold Him furnished with a bason, girded with a towel, and stooping down to wash and wipe his disciples' feet. Yes; Jesus, the Son of God, the Creator and Sustainer of the universe, is here seen laying His holy hands upon the defiled feet of His followers, in order to wash away every soil which, even unknown to themselves, they might have contracted. The dignity and glory of the Person magnify the grace of the act. There could be nothing higher than the place from which Christ had come; and there could be nothing on earth lower than the defiled feet of a sinner; but such is the glory of Christ's Person that He fills up all the space between. He can lay one hand on the throne of God, and the other on the feet of His saints, and form, in Himself, the mysterious precious link between the two. "Jesus knowing that the Father had given *all things* into his hands, and that he was come from God and went to God; he riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded."

Observe this. Jesus, knowing that all things were in His hands—knowing whence He had come and whither He was going, enters upon the deeply significant work of washing His disciples' feet. What marvellous grace! What full provision is here! How true it is that Jesus meets us, at every stage of our spiritual history, with the very thing we need. He meets us at the first, when bowed down beneath the crushing load of guilt, and, by His precious blood, removes the load and casts it into the mighty waters of

divine forgetfulness. He meets us day by day, as we pass along through a defiling scene, and with the bason and towel removes the defilement which we unavoidably contract, so that we may ever appear before God "clean every whit," and tread the courts of the sanctuary with feet as clean as Jesus can make them. He cleanses our conscience by His blood, and He cleanses our ways by His word.

This gives immense relief to the heart. Jesus has made us clean ; and Jesus keeps us clean. There is not a soil on the conscience, not a soil on the feet of the very weakest member of the household of faith. Both the one and the other are cleansed according to the lofty demands of the sanctuary. All that God saw on my conscience has been washed away by the blood ; and all that He sees in my ways is washed away by the word, so that I am "clean every whit." This is what Christ declares ; it is founded upon His perfect work ; and it maintains the heart in unruffled repose. The action of the bason and the towel never ceases for one moment. As we pass from the bath to the robing-room—from the fountain where our sins were washed away to the place where we shall put on our robes of immortality, our feet necessarily contract defilement ; and if we did not know upon divine authority, that all that defilement was removed by a divine action continually going on, what should we do ? We should either be in a most wretched state of soul, fearing all was not right, or else we should have a very low apprehension of the holiness of our position and path. But when, by the eye of faith, we see Jesus girded—when we gaze upon that mysterious bason—when, in the light of divine revelation, we interpret the whole mystic scene in John xiii. 1—10, then, while we have the most elevated view of the purity of that position in which the blood of Jesus has set us, our hearts enjoy profound peace, because we know that the One who was nailed to the cross to bring us thereinto, is girded for the gracious purpose of keeping us therein.

Nor need we, for one moment question the full application of all this to our own souls, for as surely as Christ washed the feet of those who sat around Him at the last supper, so surely is He washing our feet, yea, and will continue to wash the feet of His saints until we all stand upon the golden pavement of the upper sanctuary. "Having loved His own which were in the world, he loved them *unto the end.*" Yes, right through and through to the very end of time, through all the changes of this ever changing scene, His love endures. The love of Jesus is not a love for a day, a month, or a year; it is a love for eternity. What He did over eighteen hundred years ago, He is doing now, and He will continue to do until we shall no longer need to have it done, and then "He will gird Himself, and come forth and serve us" in the glory of the kingdom. We are bound to Him for ever, not only by our deep necessities, but by the powerful attractions of His Person.

Yes, my beloved christian reader, you are as surely included in the mystic action of John xiii. as you are in the powerful intercession of John xvii. Of the latter, you are assured by His own words of thoughtful, tender love, when He said, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;" and of the former you are assured by the comprehensive expression, "His own....unto the end." Wherefore remember, for the abiding peace and consolation of your heart, Jesus is ever washing your feet. He has washed you already, so that *you* need not be washed over again; but your feet, your *ways*, need to be cleansed, and that He is doing for you, without any interruption, morning, noon, eventide, and midnight. He is always doing it, because you always need it to be done. It is not merely when you have committed some sin of which your conscience takes cognizance, but at all times your feet need to be washed, and this Jesus is doing for you, else you would have no part in Him.

Peter, like many in our day, did not quite understand the

meaning or object of Christ's gracious act. He evidently thought it demeaning for His blessed Master to perform such an office, whereas it was but a beauteous outshining of His moral glory. In one sense, the mount of transfiguration itself had not yielded a brighter testimony to the glory of Christ, than that afforded by the bason and towel in John xiii. But the ardent Peter did not apprehend this, and hence he refused to allow Jesus to wash his feet; and when told of the terrible consequences of such a refusal, he said, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head." This, as we know, was another mistake, for poor Peter was often mis taken, though his heart was right after all. The grand truth is this—the moment a person believes in Jesus, he is as clean as the blood of Jesus can make him—"clean every whit;" and, as a consequence, he does not need to come again and again and be washed. "The worshippers *once purged*, should have *no more conscience* of sin." (Heb. x.) The idea of repeated washing would lower the blood of Christ to the level of "the blood of bulls and goats." To be washed in the blood of Jesus is to be rendered perfectly and eternally clean—clean enough for God. What more is needed? Jesus replies, nothing more, "save to wash his feet." And what makes this needful? Because the believer is, in himself, a poor, feeble, failing creature; and, moreover, he is passing through a defiled and defiling place; and hence the unspeakable blessedness of knowing that the Lord Jesus is ever girded on his behalf, in order to wash away every soil which he contracts in his daily walk, so that he may ever be maintained practically in the integrity of the position into which the blood has introduced him. The Lord be praised for such ample provision! Well may we say, "Thou, O, Christ, art all I want."

May we enter into the truth and value of all this, and thus be able to follow the blessed example set before us in this chapter. "I have given you," says our Lord, "an example that ye should do as I have done to you." How

are we to do this? By walking in communion with Christ, we shall be able to cleanse each other's ways through the action of the word of God. If I see a brother pursuing a wrong course, adopting a wrong habit, or standing in an unclean association, I should bring the word to bear upon him so that he may be fully delivered from the evil thing.



A LETTER ON HEBREWS VI. 1—10.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I HAVE been thinking much of the perplexities of your young friend, as you described them to me a week or two ago. I know not that anything I can say on the passage in Hebrews vi. will meet the difficulties under which she labours; but God is able, even by the feeblest means, to speak peace, comfort, and deliverance to souls. May He speak to your friend.

Few serious people who read the Scriptures escape exercise of soul on the passage above referred to. Many suppose that it treats of true Christians, converted persons—and that it affirms the impossibility of such persons being restored from wilful sins into which they may fall after conversion.

This is not, as it seems to me, the meaning of the passage. Nor am I aware whether your friend believes herself to have been converted.

If not, the erroneous view I have described, even if it were true, need not be a trouble to her. In that case, another question altogether demands her attention. In the gospel God has fully revealed his rich, free, spontaneous love to those who had nothing but sin to present to his all-seeing eye. Such was his love to us, sinners as we are, that he gave his only-begotten Son, to bear the sufferings and death without which we could not have been justly or holily forgiven. God loved us, and desired our salvation;

but His holy hatred to sin, and the justice of His character and government, required that sin should be punished. How could sin be punished, and the sinner at the same time be saved? Christ's death upon the cross is the all-satisfying answer to this inquiry. He bore the punishment due to sin, that any sinner, hearing of this fact, and relying on it as the sole basis of his hope, might have free, and full, and everlasting forgiveness. God raised from the dead the blessed Saviour, and having placed Him at His own right hand, He sent down the Holy Ghost, who witnesses in the gospel that all who trust in Jesus—all who believe God's record of His Son—have forgiveness, and not that only, but eternal life. It is for your young friend to say, in the secret of her soul before God, whether she has thus trusted in Jesus—whether she has thus committed to Him her soul, with its vast, momentous, eternal concerns. If she has, God's word declares, in passages too numerous to cite here, that she is justified, has passed from death unto life, that she shall never perish, but be kept by the power of God, through faith, unto final and everlasting salvation. And as no one passage of scripture can contradict the rest, we may be quite sure that Hebrews vi. contains nothing contradictory to the numerous declarations of God's word; that all who have really, as lost sinners, believed in Christ as their only and all-sufficient Saviour, become thus the children of God, and are preserved by His power for mansions of blessedness on high.

Still, Hebrews vi. 4—6, forms a part, and doubtless a needed part, of God's word, and it behoves us to understand and ponder the warning it contains. It is connected with the close of chapter v., in which the apostle upbraids the Hebrew professing Christians with their dulness of hearing, in that, when they ought to have been teachers, it was needful that some one should again teach them the first principles of the oracles of God. He exhorts them, therefore, to leave "the principles of the doctrine of Christ," or, as in

the margin, "the word of the beginning of Christ." These expressions denote the glimmerings of truth as to Christ, contained in the doctrines and shadows of the bygone dispensation. In these the Hebrews had been reared from infancy, not knowing their import till visited by the full light of the gospel, here called "perfection." The special danger to which these Hebrews were exposed was that of receding from the ground where the full light of the gospel had placed them, and of relapsing into Judaism, which, at best, did but contain "the word of the beginning of Christ." The principles enumerated in verses 1 and 2 all formed a part of Judaism, and do not embrace one feature of Christianity as distinct from Judaism. The word "baptisms" is in the plural, and refers not to Christian baptism, but to Jewish washings. They were not, by relapsing into Judaism, to lay again these principles as a foundation, but leaving these, were to "go on to perfection"—the full revelation of God in Christ, as made known in the gospel. "And this will we do," says the apostle, "if God permit."

To understand the next verses, we have not only to remember thus the context, but must also bear in mind that these Hebrews were not all necessarily true converts, because for a time they had appeared and professed to be such. There might be among them those who, when put to the trial, shewed they had never really known the grace of Christ, or heartily embraced His gospel. They might be outwardly enlightened, as surely all are who are favoured with the full light of the gospel as compared with the darkness of heathenism, or the glimmering light of Judaism. They might have had their affections stirred, and tasted of the heavenly gift and of the good word of God. The stony ground hearers, in the parable of the Sower, had some such "tastes." seeing that they heard the word, and anon *with joy* received it. Yet had they no root in themselves, but in time of temptation fell away. They might still further be either witnesses, subjects, or possessors of those miraculous

powers so common in apostolic times, being made partakers of the Holy Ghost and of the powers of the world to come. Judas wrought miracles as well as the other eleven apostles. There will be many to say, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name have cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works?" The reply to such will not be, "I once knew you, but you fell away." No; "then will I profess unto them I *never* knew you: depart from me, ye workers of iniquity."

The falling away, then, here treated of, is not any of those ordinary falls from which scripture and experience alike shew the grace of Christ to be sufficient to restore us, but a total apostacy from Christ and return to Judaism. It is such an apostacy, moreover, on the part of those who, in addition to the ordinary privileges of professing christians, had the gospel of Christ confirmed to them by miracles of which they themselves were witnesses or performers. Evidently any one apostatizing under those circumstances would have to account for these miracles; and the way in which they were accounted for in early times by those who could not deny the facts, was by attributing them to magic, or the power of Satan. Now this would render the apostacy in question *virtually*, if not *formally*, the sin against the Holy Ghost. It consisted in attributing to Satan the miracles which Christ wrought by the power of the Holy Ghost. "Because they said, he hath an unclean spirit." (Mark iii. 30.) This sin it is impossible to commit now that the miraculous powers of the Spirit have ceased to be manifested. How nearly any may approach to committing it, it is impossible to define. Every tendency to turn away from Christ points in that direction; and hence the solemn need to guard against all such tendencies. But the sin itself, of such apostacy as is here supposed, could only be committed in those days; and any who then committed it had never really passed from death unto life.

Having discharged his duty in warning thus against apostacy from Christ, the apostle instantly turns to the better hopes he had of most, if not all, to whom he wrote. "But beloved, we are persuaded better things of you and things that accompany salvation though we thus speak." He comforts himself as to them, by recalling to mind, not their gifts, or miraculous powers, or knowledge, but the proofs they had given of love to the saints. "Hereby we know," says John, "that we are passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." To believe in Christ and love one another are the two great gospel commandments; and no one ever obeyed these two, without possessing a life which cannot be forfeited—eternal life.

May your young friend have the happy certainty of this life, and be enabled to manifest it in following Christ, in whom, that is, in union with whom this life is enjoyed. "Because I live, ye shall live also." "When Christ *who is our life* shall appear, we also shall appear with him in glory."

Wishing you and your friend every blessing, believe me, dear friend,

Yours truly, in Christ.

* * *



WORDS FOR THE NEWLY CONVERTED.

You have lately believed in Jesus, beloved friends, and have "passed from death unto life." A new peace fills your heart, and new motives control your actions. Old sins have lost their power, and old pleasures their charm. You find delight in reading and prayer, and in assembling with the people of God. "And now," say you, "the work is all done; I believe in Jesus, and I have 'everlasting life.'"

Not so, my brother, my sister. You *have* believed on Jesus, but that is only the *beginning* of a new and endless

life. Although the work of the Son of God on the cross *for* you is infinitely perfect and complete, the work of the Holy Spirit *in* you is only just begun.

Has He implanted in your soul the "incorruptible seed" only that it may lie hidden there? Nay, it must push aside "every weight," and rise above the surface a young green shoot; then the tender "blade, then the ear, and after that the full corn in the ear."

Again, having passed through the "strait gate" and entered on the narrow way "that leadeth unto life," the world is behind you, and your Father's house is before you; and, although the road leads up hill and down hill, sometimes over rough and thorny places, and there are foes on either hand, yet there is a palace, a crown, and the King Himself at the far end of it. But you must ever run the race, and fight the good fight of faith, if you would wear the victor's crown.

Listen, then, to a few words from one whom God has led by a dark and stormy way. "For when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away." But "He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still."

As in the natural, so in the spiritual world, it is in the "great waters" that we see the works of the Lord, and "his wonders in the deep." He has given life from the dead, and speaks to you now in these feeble lines. Read them prayerfully, ponder them well. May God the Spirit write them on each heart and conscience in indelible lines!

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?" "Desperately wicked!" Do we *all* believe this? Many who read these pages are moral, upright, and amiable, and have been shielded, perhaps, by parental love from every sight and sound of evil. They have received the Saviour, and this, as a topstone of excellence, seems to perfect the already blameless cha-

racter. Well, God says to *you* (for “there is no respect of persons with Him”) that “the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.” Man seeks to discover some redeeming quality in the blackest character, for indirectly he shrinks from the terrible truth. But every now and then a rent in the veil discovers the corruption within. God says of *every* heart “desperately wicked,” and “deceitful above all things”—trying to deceive God, deceiving its fellow, but most of all *itself*. “I the Lord search the heart, and try the reins, of the children of men.”

It is best, dear friends, to accept God’s sentence about ourselves. We *must* learn the lesson. Some learn it in deep exercise of soul at the time of conversion, and others by bitter experience afterwards; but it is better to receive this solemn truth about ourselves as we receive the Lord Jesus, namely, *in the way of faith*. Through God’s grace, you have received Jesus; but, if you have not learnt this truth about yourself, you do not yet know all that He is for you, nor can you rightly value all that He has done.

For if we are vile, guilty, and helpless in ourselves, what can we do but cast ourselves at the feet of Him who “receiveth sinners,” trusting only in His precious blood, which cleanseth from all sin. Oh! that precious name, *Jesus*, mighty to save.

“Without one thought that’s good to plead,” *Jesus must be—will be—all in all* to us. “Lord, glorify Thyself in me,” will rise from the depths of our whole being, and we shall say with Paul, “not *I*, but *Christ* . . . Christ liveth in me, and the life that I live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.” He lived down here for us. He “died for our sins, and rose again for our justification,” and now at God’s right hand He pleads for us.

“He who washed us in His blood
Safe will bring us home to God.”

But now we are passing onwards along the path *Jesus*

once trod, and He has given us His name, His Spirit, His presence to be with us all the way through, for He is a loving, gracious Friend as well as a glorious Saviour. Can we think on these things, and our hearts not "burn" with grateful love to Him. "For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead. And that he died for all, that they which live should not live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them and rose again." *Love and obedience go together.* Our Lord Himself has said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments," and "He that keepeth my commandments, he it is that loveth me."

To be continued.

"LOOK UNTO ME."

WE have frequently had submitted to us, in substance, the following question and remarks, namely, "Why is it that so many sincere christians never get rid of doubts, fears, and questionings, as to the full assurance of their salvation? Sometimes they seem sure, and are bright and happy, but in a little while they seem depressed, doubt their interest in Christ, and are most unhappy. We know of some who are every now and then on the borders of despair, and even when they do find something like peace, they are in constant terror that it will not last long; so that it can never be said of such that they have true peace or rest."

Such a state of things we know to be very common, and believe it proceeds from different causes in different persons, and in most cases the real cause seems hidden from the person's own mind. In many cases, perhaps more than we suspect, a dark, fluctuating state of soul is the result of its faint and feeble desires after the knowledge of the Person of Christ. If the soul really desire the knowledge of Jesus, valuing Him above all other things, we may rest assured

that He will reveal Himself to that soul. And, as a happy consequence, light, peace, joy, and stability would characterize its condition. Is not the Holy Spirit grieved because we value so little, and breathe so faintly after, the knowledge and fellowship of the Lord Jesus? The grand object of His mission and presence in the Church is to reveal Christ to the soul. "He shall glorify me, for He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you." John xvi. 14.

How often, alas, are some almost entirely occupied with themselves, in one way or another, in place of Christ—their faith, their interest, their feelings, their clouds, or their gleams of sunshine. Still it is all and only self. The Person of the Lord Jesus, and His wondrous love, are but little dwelt upon, either in heart or in conversation; and, consequently, He is but little known, loved, and valued. Hence the Spirit is grieved, Christ is not revealed to the soul, and darkness and feebleness necessarily follow. Could self be only set aside as good for nothing, and Christ become all in all to the heart, the soul would rapidly grow, and speedily manifest the features of the Divine nature, and become more like unto Christ Himself. Oh to prize more what He is in Himself, and in all His wondrous love to us; and to pant after a fuller, deeper character of communion with Him, as our living Head in glory! Then would our souls enjoy the happy liberty of His love.

Again, there are others who, though they may not be occupied with self in that particular way, and may even have an assurance that they are saved, still, they know little of the true peace of the gospel, and less of communion with the Person of Christ. They are taken up with something that is lower than Him. Service pre-occupies the mind. What we may call the things of Christ, or rather the *things of Christianity*, occupy them; and though in themselves right and praiseworthy things, they

are allowed to come between the heart and the Person of their Lord and Master. This will prove sad work for the soul, and must lead to dryness, leanness, and unfruitfulness in love, joy, and peace. Oh! for more of the spirit of him who said, "For me to live is Christ." (Phil. i. 21, 22.) When Christ Himself is the object and centre of the heart, its peace and joy will abound, and thereby be strengthened for happy and abundant labours. The third of the Philippians is a practical chapter on this point. The servant need not labour less, but keep it in its own place, that Christ may have fully and entirely His.

But there is another class, and one to which we would more especially direct our attention. We refer to those who may, or may not, have been recently awakened, but who are earnestly seeking peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. This is now a numerous class, blessed be the name of the Lord. May it be increased a hundredfold. Many are brought into peace, it may be, the same evening that they are awakened, but their enjoyment of it, in some instances, is interrupted at a very early stage of their new course. Here the enemy will seek to persuade the young converts, that what was called conversion is all a delusion, and that they have neither part nor lot in the matter. Such fiery darts can only be quenched by the shield of faith. Not by reasoning, or even by referring to the date of conversion, but only by looking to Jesus, and trusting in Him. When the eye is kept fixed on Christ, Satan's darts fall powerless to the ground. Others, again, in place of being brought into peace at once, continue for some time in distress, and pass through deep exercise of soul. "But why is this?" our enquirer may ask. "Is this experience necessary to genuine conversion?" Certainly not. It may accompany it, but the Scriptures teach us that a soul is converted when it is truly turned to God. The expression of the change may be very feeble, and connected with much that hinders it, but when it is real, conversion has taken place; the soul

has a new life and new desires. Acts xi. 21; xv. 19; 1 Thes. i. 9.

But surely it is no marvellous thing for a soul to be deeply agitated when first it sees its condition under sin, in the light of God's presence; nor that it should be easily disturbed, until it be more deeply rooted in the truth of God, although it has got a glimpse of the ground of peace. The main source, we believe, of all such distress and changeableness, is the soul looking at things which concern it, from a wrong point of view. The constant tendency of an anxious soul is to judge of God, and what He is to it, from its own feelings. Hence, its conclusions are entirely wrong. In place of thinking of God according to the revelation which He has given us of Himself in Christ, it reasons about Him from what it feels within. This wrong way of looking at divine things must necessarily lead to great misapprehension, confusion, and perplexity. And while the soul continues so to look at things, its distress must remain. No relief can be found until it looks outside of itself. God in Christ, the Saviour-God, is the true object of faith. (Isaiah xlv., John iv.) In place of reasoning from its own feelings up to God, it must learn to reason from God down to its feelings. This is the only right point of view for a soul at all times, whether it be in the condition of a babe, a young man, or a father.

The all-important questions for an anxious soul are not what it feels and what it thinks, but, such as the following :

1. What is God to me a guilty sinner?
2. What has God done to save me a lost sinner?
3. What will God do for me an awakened, seeking sinner?
4. What will God be to me a believing sinner?

To some of our readers, and especially our youthful readers, these questions may be subjects of interesting Scriptural enquiry. And when the first is understood, the doubts and fears will be all gone, and the second, third, and fourth will be quite plain. So we will leave them,

and give, in illustration of our subject, the substance of a recent conversation with a young man in deep concern about his soul. He introduced himself by saying,

"I would like to speak to you by yourself. I am very anxious, very unhappy, cannot rest. I cannot see my way clear at all."

"Well, what a mercy! what a mercy it is to have the conscience touched about sin, and the heart in any measure turned to God. Can you believe that He is doing all this in love? Are you satisfied that God loves you notwithstanding all your sins?"

"That is what I want to feel, but I can't feel it. I feel that I am a great sinner; you don't know what I have been, but I can't feel as if I would be forgiven."

"Do you really believe that God regards you as a great sinner?"

"O yes, indeed I do; I am sure of that."

"But now, tell me, how are you so sure of that?"

"Because I know it—I feel it; I have been a very great sinner."

"But is there no other way that we may know it besides feeling it? Has not God told us in His word that we are all sinners?"

"Yes, I know He has, and I would give the world to know that I am pardoned."

"O, you need not speak about giving; God is not asking anything; neither is he seeking to condemn you because of your sins, but to turn your heart to Jesus. But now, take the ground of faith as a sinner. You can only have to do with God now by faith. Know and believe that you are a sinner, not because you feel it, but because God says it. And then comes the important question, What is God to me a sinner? Now, don't look within—look to Himself—hear His word. What does it say? 'But God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.' (Rom. v. 8.)

Can you receive the truth here so plainly stated, namely, that God is love to you a sinner?"

"The word says it, and we should believe it; I know that."

"But should not *you* believe it now? Will it be truer to-morrow? Does not God say He loves the sinner? and you say that's what you are. Therefore He says plainly that He loves you."

"That's what I want to believe, but I can't feel that He loves me; my sins seem so great.

"Well, that's true, but in place of looking at your sins, as you know them in yourself, look at them in the light of this verse, and you will see that it is by means of these that you know how much God loves you. It was your sins that drew forth this wondrous love, in the gift of Jesus. God loved us, Christ died for us, 'while we were yet sinners'—while we were as black and vile as sin could make us. Righteousness judged the sins, and love saves the sinner, through the sufferings and death of the blessed Lord Jesus. O, wondrous, wondrous love! But mark, this is not all. Not only has God manifested His love in giving Jesus to die for you a sinner, but the same love has followed you in all your wanderings, and followed you to this room to night, and now He has laid His hand of love upon you, and is drawing you to His beloved Son. O, yield your heart to the drawings of His love. Look up! only look to Jesus! Hear Him saying to you, 'Look unto me, . . . and be ye saved,' and 'Come unto me, . . . and I will give you rest.' Be done, then, with your feelings and reasonings about yourself. Dwell on the love of God as it has been manifested in the death of Christ for you, and let your whole soul rest on the truth of that word, 'The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin.' The moment you take your place among the '*us*' who believe, your sins are all cleansed away. The answer of Jesus to your every anxious look and earnest desire, is, 'Thy sins

which were many are all forgiven. Go in peace.' 1 John i. 7; Luke vii. 36, 50."

"Well, I think I believe all that; I see it quite differently now. But I thought that I ought to feel it all in myself, before I could believe it was true to me. I now see I must not look to myself, but only to Jesus."

"Yes, my dear young man, the only sure way of keeping our eyes off ourselves, is to keep them fixed on Jesus."

Before closing this paper, we desire to say a plain word on the perplexing subject of "feeling." We meet with it everywhere. The mistake into which so many fall, is that of confounding the enjoyment of truth, when believed, with the mere feelings or impressions of their own minds. When persons say, "I can't feel that God loves me—that Christ died for me—that my sins are forgiven," we believe they simply mean, "I do not enjoy or feel the power of these blessed truths." But how can these or any other truths be enjoyed, or their power felt, until they are believed? Faith never refers to self, but always to the word of God. We meet with many who want to *feel* that they are believers, before they have believed the truth, and to *feel* that they are safe before they trust in Jesus.

Now, this is all confusion. The *truth* to be believed, mark, is *outside* of self—the *enjoyment* of it is *within*. "The Lord direct your hearts," says the apostle, "into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ." (2 Thess. iii. 5.) These blessed central truths are ever the same—unchangeable, outside, and independent of the believer; nevertheless, they are to be enjoyed in the heart. But if we at times fail to realize their power, and to enjoy them in our hearts, they remain unchangeably the same. The object of faith is ever *outside* of self—the enjoyment of it *within*. Our failing to enjoy the object, can never lessen its value, or change its character.

The truth as to pardon, peace, and acceptance must be received in faith before it can be enjoyed, or its power

felt. The same moment that the sinner is brought to Jesus in faith, the whole need of the soul is met—fully, perfectly, and for ever met. When this is believed, the soul has rest; not, observe, in its own feelings, but in the word of Christ believed. He never says to one who comes to Him, “I will forgive.” No, blessed be His name; but, in plainest terms, He says, “Son, daughter, thy sins *are* forgiven, thy faith *hath* saved thee; *go in peace.*” Mark ii. 5.

The only question now is, Can the troubled one receive it as the truth of God? If so, the voice of Jesus has spoken peace to that soul. And if the ear be kept open only for Him, its peace will be as complete and settled as the word of Christ can make it. Did Jesus ever send away a seeking soul from His presence in a state of uncertainty? No! never! and He never will. His word is pledged. “Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.” When He says, “Thy sins *are* forgiven,” should the soul have another doubt as to the blessed fact? When He says, “Thy faith *hath* saved thee,” should the slightest feeling of uncertainty remain? When He says, “Go in *peace*,” should the soul go in trouble? Assuredly not! And assuredly it will not, if only it looks to Him, and not within—if only it hears His word, and listens not to the voice of its own feelings. Oh! that anxious, troubled souls, would only cease from looking within, and from judging of their state before God from their own feelings. The blessed consequences of faith in Christ are fully and plainly revealed in God’s word. Let the eye of faith rest on it, and let the heart of faith count it most surely, and for ever, true, and then peace, like a river, will flow into your soul. The character of your own mind, the nature of your religious education, or your present opportunities, can in nowise affect the heart of God, or the word and work of Christ. Faith’s blessed, and never-ending consequences, the Spirit of truth declares to be, 1. *Being justified.* 2. *Having peace.* 3. *Standing in favour.* 4. *Waiting for glory.*

"Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." Rom. v. 1, 2.

O EYES that are weary, and hearts that are sore,
Look off unto Jesus, and sorrow no more :
The light of His countenance shineth so bright,
That on earth, as in heaven, there need be no night.

"Looking off unto Jesus," my eyes cannot see
The troubles and dangers that throng around me :
They cannot be blinded with sorrowful tears,
They cannot be shadowed with unbelief-fears.

"Looking off unto Jesus," my spirit is blest,—
In the world I have turmoil—in Him I have rest :
The sea of my life all about me may roar,—
When I look unto Jesus, I hear it no more.

"Looking off unto Jesus," I go not astray ;
My eyes are on Him, and He shows me the way ;
The path may seem dark, as He leads me along,
But following Jesus, I cannot go wrong.

"Looking off unto Jesus," my heart cannot fear,—
Its trembling is still, when I see Jesus near .
For, "Why are ye troubled?" He saith unto me.
I know that His power my safeguard will be.

"Looking off unto Jesus," oh ! may I be found,
Should the waters of Jordan encompass me round :
Let them bear me away in His presence to be :—
'Tis but seeing Him nearer, whom always I see.

Then, then I shall know the full beauty and grace
Of Jesus my Lord, when I stand face to face :
I shall know how His love went before me each day,
And wonder that ever my eyes turned away !



THE THRONE AND THE ALTAR.

(Isaiah vi. 1—8.)

IN this very sublime passage of scripture, we notice two prominent objects, namely, the throne and the altar; and, moreover, we perceive the action of these two objects upon the soul of the prophet. The entire scene is full of interest and instruction. May we gaze upon it aright!

“In the year that king Uzziah died, I saw also the Lord sitting upon a *throne*, *high*, and *lifted up*, and his train filled the temple.” This was a solemn and a soul-subduing sight. It is ever a serious matter for a sinner to find himself standing before the throne of God, with the unanswered claims of that throne bearing down upon his conscience. Isaiah found it to be so. The light of the throne revealed to him his true condition. And what was that light? It was the moral glory of Christ, as we read in the gospel of John, “These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory and spake of him.” (Chap. xii. 41.) Christ is the perfect standard by which every one must be measured. It matters not what I may think of myself; nor yet what others may think about me. The question is, what am I as viewed in the presence of Christ? The law may tell me what I ought to be; conscience may tell me I am not that; but it is only when the bright beams of Christ’s glory pour themselves around me that I am enabled to form a just estimate of what I am. Then it is that the hidden chambers of my heart are flung open, the secret springs of action revealed, the deep foundations of character laid bare.

But, perhaps my reader may feel disposed to ask, “What do you mean by the moral glory of Christ?” I mean the light which shone forth from Him in all His ways when He was down here in this dark world. It was

this light that detected *man*, that disclosed what he was, that brought to light *all* that was in him. It was impossible for any one to escape the action of that light. It was a perfect blaze of divine purity, in view of which the seraphim could only cry out, "Holy, holy, holy!"

Need we marvel, then, if, when Isaiah saw himself in the light of that glory, he cried out, "Woe is me! for I am undone?" Nay; this was the proper utterance of one whose heart had been penetrated to its very centre by a light which makes all things perfectly manifest. We have no reason to suppose that Isaiah was, in any respect, worse than his neighbours. We are not told that the catalogue of his sins was heavier or darker than that of thousands around him. He may have been, to all human appearance, just like others. But ah! my reader, only remember, I pray you, where the prophet stood, when he exclaimed, "Woe is me!" It was not at the foot of the burning mount where "the ministration of death and condemnation" was given forth amid thunderings and lightnings, blackness, darkness, and tempest. It was not there he stood; though even there, a Moses had to say, "I exceedingly fear and quake." But it was in the presence of the glory of Christ, the Lord God of Israel, that our prophet stood, when he saw himself to be "Unclean and undone." Such was his condition when seen in the light which reveals men and things just as they are.

"*I am undone.*" He does not say, "Woe is me! I am not what I ought to be." No; he saw deeper than this. He stood revealed in the power of a light which reaches to the most profound depths of the soul, and discloses "the thoughts and intents of the heart." Isaiah had never before seen himself in such a light—measured himself by such a rule—weighed himself in such a balance. He now saw himself standing in the presence of Jehovah's throne, without any ability whatever to meet the claims of that

throne. He "saw Jehovah sitting upon a throne, *high*, and *lifted up*." He saw himself a helpless, ruined, guilty sinner, at an immeasurable distance from that throne, and from the blessed One who sat thereon. He heard the cry of the seraphim, "Holy, holy, holy;" and the only response which he could send back from the depths of a broken heart was, "Unclean, uclean, unclean." He beheld a gulf of guilt and uncleanness separating him from Jehovah which no effort of his could ever bridge. Thus it was with him, in that solemn moment, when he gave forth that cry of a truly convicted soul, "Woe is me!" He was wholly engrossed with one thought, namely, his own utter ruin. He felt himself *a lost man*. He thought not of comparing himself with others, or of seeking out some fellow-sinner worse than he. Ah! no; a divinely convicted soul never thinks of such things. There is one grand, all-pervading idea, and that idea is embodied in the words, "I am undone."

And be it carefully noted by the reader, that the prophet, when under the convicting light of the throne, is not occupied with what he had done or left undone. The question before his soul was not as to the evil he had done or the good he had left undone. No; it was something far deeper than this. In a word, he was occupied, not with his *acts*, but with his *condition*. He says, "*I am*"—what? Defective in many things? Far behind in my duty? Deplorably short of what I ought to be? No. These and such like confessions could never embody the experience of a heart on which the bright beams of Jehovah's throne had fallen in convicting power. True it is, "We have done that which we ought not to have done, and left undone that which we ought to have done." But all this is merely the fruit of a nature which is radically corrupt; and when divine light breaks in upon us, it will always lead us to the *root*. It will not merely conduct us from

leaf to leaf, or from branch to branch; but, passing down along the trunk, it will lay bare the hidden roots and thinnest fibres of that nature which we inherit, by birth, from our first parents, and cause us to see that the whole thing is irremediably ruined. Then it is we are constrained to cry out, "Woe is me!" Not because my *conduct* has been defective, but my *nature* is undone.

Thus it was that Isaiah stood before Jehovah's throne. And oh! what a place for a sinner to stand in! There are no excuses there—no palliating circumstances there—no qualifying clauses there—no blaming of men or things there. There is but one object seen there—seen in its guilt, its wretchedness, and its ruin, and that object is SELF; and as to that object, the tale is easily told. It is all summed up in that most solemn, weighty, suggestive word, "UNDONE." Yes; self is undone. That is all that can be said about it. Do what you will with it, and you cannot make it out to be aught but a hopelessly undone thing; and the more speedily and thoroughly this is understood, the better. Many take a long time to learn this foundation truth. They have not, as it were, stood in the full blaze of the throne, and, as a consequence, they have not been led to cry out with sufficient depth, emphasis, or intensity, "I am undone." It is the glory that shines from the throne which evokes the cry from the very depths of the soul. All who have ever stood before that throne have given utterance to the same confession; and it will ever be found that just in proportion to our experience of the *light* of the throne, will be our experience of the *grace* of the altar. The two things invariably go together. In this day of *grace*, the throne and the altar are connected. In the day of *judgment*, "The great white throne" will be seen without any altar. There will be no grace then. The *ruin* will then be seen without the *remedy*; and as for the *result*, it will be eternal perdition. Awful reality!

Oh! reader, beware of having to meet the light of the throne without the provision of the altar!

This conducts us, naturally, to the second object in the interesting scene before us, namely, the altar. The very moment Isaiah gave utterance to the deep conviction of what he was, he was introduced to the divine provisions of God's altar. "Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar; and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, lo, this hath touched thy lips, and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged."

Here, then, we have the rich provisions of Jehovah's altar, which, be it well remembered, is seen in immediate connexion with Jehovah's throne. The two things are intimately connected in the history and experience of every convicted and converted soul. The guilt which the throne detects, the altar removes. If, in the light of the throne one object is seen, namely, a ruined, guilty, undone self; then, in the light of the altar, one object is seen, namely, a full, precious, all-sufficient Christ. The remedy reaches to the full extent of the ruin, and the same light that reveals the one reveals the other likewise. This gives settled repose to the conscience. God Himself has provided a remedy for all the ruin which the light of His throne has revealed. "*This hath touched thy lips, and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.*" Isaiah was brought into personal contact with the sacrifice, and the immediate result was the perfect removal of *all* his iniquity—the perfect purgation of *all* his sin. Not a single spot remained. He could now stand in the light of that throne which had just detected and exposed his uncleanness, and know assuredly by that self-same light, that not a speck of uncleanness remained. The very same light which manifested his sin, made manifest also the purging efficacy of the blood.

Such, then, is the precious and beautiful connexion between the throne and the altar—a connexion which may be easily traced through the inspired volume, from Genesis to Revelation, and through the history of God's redeemed, from Adam down to the present moment. All who have been really brought to Jesus, have experienced the convicting light of the throne and the peace-giving virtues of the altar. All have been made to feel the ruin, and cry out, "I am undone;" and all have been brought into personal contact with the sacrifice and had their sin purged.

God's work is perfect. He convicts perfectly, and He purges perfectly. There is nothing superficial when He is allowed to carry on His mighty work. The arrow of conviction penetrates to the very centre of the soul, only to be followed by the divine application of that blood which leaves not a stain upon the conscience; and the more deeply we are penetrated by the arrow, the deeper and more settled is our experience of the power of the blood. It is well to be thoroughly searched at the first—well to let the chambers of the heart be fully thrown open to the convicting action of the throne; for then we are sure to get a bolder grasp of that precious atoning blood that speaks peace to every believing heart.

And, my reader, let me ask you to pause here, for a moment, and mark the peculiar *style* of the divine action in the case of the prophet. We all know how much depends upon the way in which a thing is done. A person may do me a favour, but he may do it in such a style as to do away with all the good of it. Now, in the scene before us, we not only see a marvellous favour conferred, but conferred after such a fashion as to let us into the very secrets of the bosom of God. The divine remedy was not only applied to Isaiah's felt ruin, but applied in such a way as to let him know, assuredly, that the whole heart of God

was in the application. "Then *flew* one of the seraphims unto me." The rapidity of the movement speaks volumes. It tells us, distinctly, of heaven's intense desire to tranquillize the convicted conscience, bind up the broken heart, and heal the wounded spirit. The energy of divine love gave swiftness to the seraphic messenger, as he winged his way down from Jehovah's throne to where a convicted sinner stood confessing himself "undone." What a scene! One of those very seraphim that, with veiled face, stood above Jehovah's throne, crying, "Holy, holy, holy," passes from that throne to the altar, and from the altar away down to the deep depths of a convicted sinner's ruin, there to apply the balmy virtues of a divine sacrifice. No sooner had the arrow from the throne wounded the heart, than the seraph from the altar "flew" to heal the wound. No sooner had the throne poured forth its flood of living light to reveal to the prophet the blackness of his guilt, than a tide of love rolled down upon him from the altar, and bore away upon its bosom every trace of that guilt. Such is the style—such the manner of the love of God to sinners! Who would not trust Him?

Beloved reader, whoever you are, I feel there is a sacred link connecting us, and in the power of that link, and in earnest desire for the welfare of your immortal soul, permit me to ask you if you have experienced the action of the throne and the altar? Have you ever retired from all that false light which the enemy of your precious soul would fling around you in order to prevent your getting a true insight into your total ruin? Have you ever stood where Isaiah found himself, when he cried out, "Woe is me! for I am undone?" Have you ever been brought to own from your heart, "I have sinned?" (Job xxxiii.) If so, it is your privilege to enter, this moment, into the rich enjoyment of all that Christ has done for you on the cross. You do not need to see any vision. You do not require to see

a throne, an altar, a flying seraph. You have got the word of God to assure you that "Christ suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God." (1 Pet. iii. 18.) That same word also assures you that "All that believe *are* justified from *all* things." (Acts xiii. 39.) And is not this far better than ten thousand visions, or than ten thousand seraphim? Isaiah believed that his "iniquity was taken away, and his sin purged" when the angelic messenger told him so. And should you not believe that Jesus died for you when the word of God tells you so?

But, perhaps, you say, "How can I know that Jesus died for *me*?" I reply, how can any one know it? Simply by the word of God. There is no other way of knowing anything. But you still object, "I do not see my name in the word of God." No; and even though your name were mentioned, this would in no wise satisfy you, inasmuch as there might be hundreds bearing your name. But you see your state, your character, your condition. You see your photograph flung, with divine precision, upon the page of inspiration, by the action of that light which makes all things manifest. Do you not own yourself to be a lost sinner? If so, the death of Christ applies itself as perfectly to you as the "live coal" did to Isaiah when the seraph declared to him, "This hath touched thy lips." The word is, "If any say, I have sinned." What then? He will send him to hell? No; but "He will deliver him." The very moment you take your true place, and cry out, "Undone!" all that Christ has done, and all that He is becomes yours—yours now—yours for ever. You need not make any effort to improve your condition. Do what you will, and you cannot make yourself any thing but undone. A single effort at improvement is but the evidence that you know not yet how bad—how incorrigibly and incurably bad you are. You are "undone," and, as such, you have but to stand still and see the salvation of God—a salva-

tion, the foundation of which was wrought out over eighteen hundred years ago—a salvation which the Holy Ghost reveals on the authority of that word which is settled for ever in heaven, and which God “has magnified above all his name.” May the blessed Spirit lead you, *now*, to put your trust in the name of Jesus, that so, ere you lay down this paper, you may know that your “iniquity is taken away, and your sin purged.” Then you will be able to follow me, while, in a few closing words, I seek to unfold the practical result of all that has been engaging our attention.

We have seen the complete *ruin* of the sinner; we have seen the complete *remedy* in Christ; let us now look at the *result* as exhibited in whole-hearted consecration to the service of God. Isaiah had nothing to do for salvation, but he had plenty to do for his Saviour. He had nothing to do to get his sins purged, but plenty to do for the One who had purged them. Now, he gave unmistakable expression to his readiness to act for God, when, on hearing that a messenger was needed, he exclaimed, “Here am I; send me.” This puts works in their proper place. The order is absolutely perfect. No one can do good works until he has experienced, in some degree, the action of “the throne and the altar.” The light of the former must show him what he is; and the provisions of the latter must show him what Christ is, ere he can say, “Here am I; send me.” This is a settled, universal truth, established in every section of inspiration, and illustrated in the biography of the saints of God, and the servants of Christ, in every age, in every clime, in every condition. All have been brought to see their *ruin*, in the light of the throne; to see the *remedy*, in the provisions of the altar, ere they could exhibit the *result*, in a life of practical devotedness. All this is from God the Father, through God the Son, by God the Holy Ghost, to whom be all the glory, world without end! Amen, and Amen!

THE BAD HALF-CROWN.

A FEW months ago, while waiting for my ticket in a country railway office, I observed a half-crown nailed to the counter. The young man who was giving out the tickets, also attracted my attention. He seemed a sharp youth, and had an air of importance about him, becoming the responsibilities of his office. With his hand raised to the ticket department, and the finger ready to pounce upon the right one, he shouted, "First or second, sir?"

Being the last one that was then waiting, I thought I should like to have a few words with our young friend about the half-crown, so I said to him as I was picking up my change, "What is this you have got nailed to the counter, my boy?"

"A half-crown, sir."

"But why have you it nailed to the counter?"

"Because it is a bad one, sir."

"So you were determined it should go no further. But now, tell me, does it remind you of anything very serious?"

"I don't know," (looking very straight at me and paying great attention.)

"Well, I'll tell you, my boy, what it has brought to my mind,—that will be the end of all hypocrites, they will at last be nailed down under the awful judgment of God. And they will never be able to get away from it. Now, *you* look at that half-crown. A nail driven through it,—fixed to the one spot, and exposed to public condemnation, Every one sees that it is a detected hypocrite, and exhibited there as a warning to others.

"Now, mark, such will be the end of all who make a profession of religion, but who have not Christ in their hearts. Like that half-crown, they may deceive many for a time, but they cannot deceive God. Can they? O, no! that half-crown may have passed through a good many

hands before it was detected, but at last it fell into the hands of a judge who knew that it was not real, and so condemned it, and would let it go no further. And now, *you* remember this, God will, at last, ring, as it were, every professor on His counter—His judgment-seat; and every one that is counterfeit, not real, will then be detected, condemned, and nailed to the place of judgment for ever; so that every time you throw down a ticket, and look on this bad half-crown, you are reminded of the awful end of those *who are not right in heart with God.*"

This last sentence was evidently more than our young friend could comfortably bear, for he immediately exclaimed, with his usual sharpness, "I'LL HAVE IT TAKEN UP." After a few words of warning as to the certainty of coming judgment, we parted.

Finding we had to wait a little for the train, a friend who was with me, and who had listened to the conversation, returned to the office for a platform ticket; and without saying a word to the lad, he merely gave him a playful look, pointing to the half-crown, when the youth again said in a very determined tone, "I'll have it taken up."

How like, thought I, to the natural heart. "I'll have it taken up." It had been nailed there for the purpose of warning others against passing bad money, lest they might be detected and brought to judgment. But as soon as it was made to bear as a warning for his own conscience before God, he immediately declared that he would have it removed. Rather than be reminded of the fearful end of those who have not Christ as their righteousness, he would silence the testimony by removing the witness. But ah! what a poor, self-deceiving way this is of getting rid of a present difficulty. The future trouble remains. Yet, alas! how constantly this is done, both by young and old.

The natural mind soon manifests its dislike to the most affectionate warnings of truest friendship. The witness, if not removed, will be unheeded or avoided. How often the

lips of wisdom are silent, while the heart burns with the most yearning anxiety to say a faithful word in sweetest, tenderest love, to the object of its deep solicitude. But in vain. Guessing at what is coming, the warning voice is rudely hushed, by a heartless, "I have heard all that before, many a time—what's the good of always coming out with the same thing. I know it quite as well as you can tell me." Under such circumstances the heart must seek relief in pouring out its burning, pent-up love into the bosom of God. The icy indifference of the deceived, perishing sinner, forms a wonderful contrast to the genial, sustaining presence of God. "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee." "Let your requests be made known unto God, and the peace of God which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." *Psa. lv. 22. Phil. iv. 6—9.*

Most in our day, and perhaps all who read this magazine, know, that no man can stand approved before God in his own righteousness. He may have been, touching the outward letter of the law blameless, but when tried by God's standard, he will surely be found deficient, disapproved, and rejected. "Enter not into judgment with thy servant," said David, "for in thy sight shall no man living be justified." "All our righteousnesses," says Isaiah, "are as filthy rags." (*Psa. cxliii. 2; Isa. lxiv. 6.*) These truths are absolute. We have not to wait till we reach the judgment-seat to know God's estimate of man's righteousness.

It is something peculiarly offensive to Him. Not only is it as "rags," compared with a perfect garment, but as "filthy rags," compared with the robe of spotless white. Such a condition of soul is most loathsome to the holiness of God, and must be judged by His righteousness. Woe, woe, eternal woe, must be the sinner's portion who appears before the judgment-seat in such a state.

Had scripture said "all our *wickednesses* are as filthy rags," there might have been some hope for the righteous-

nesses, but when it says, "all our *righteousnesses* are as filthy rags," all hope is cut off. The best things we have, or can produce, are totally rejected as utterly unfit for God, and for the place of His holiness. Fair appearances there may be, and that which will pass among men as genuine enough for any one. But God looks on the heart. He has but one standard. He looks for Christ. He tests the heart's estimate of Him. If that dear name be found engraven on its tablets as its all in all, it will surely pass as the genuine, current coin of the realm of heaven. But, oh! where Christ is not the stamp of the heart, all is utterly worthless to God. If He fills it not, it must be empty indeed, whatever else may be in it. If there be no Christ in the heart, there can be no pardon, no peace, no salvation, no eternal life. Sin remains, and all its direful and never-ending consequences. What will—what can—God say to a Christless soul at the judgment seat? "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared (not for you, but) for the devil and his angels." (Matt. xxv. 41.) This must be the fearful and inevitable doom of all who live and die without a personal interest in Christ, whatever their appearances, or professions, may have been in this world. Nothing but the blood of Christ can save a soul from the lake of fire. Nothing but the preciousness of Christ can stamp a soul for the rank of heaven. His precious blood alone cleanseth from all sin, and He, *Himself*, is the *righteousness of God to every one that believeth*. Eph. i. 7; Rom. x. 1—13.

I observed that the bad half-crown had a shining face like the good ones, and, outwardly, it had the same stamp upon it. But at heart it was bad, there was no silver there. Only base metal. It was a hypocrite—a mere professor. It pretended to be what it was not. It had a fair outward appearance, but no reality in heart. I observed, further, that the nail of judgment pierced both the head and the heart. Mournful illustration of the seat of the thoughts—

the understanding—the will—the desires—the affections and passions, being penetrated with the iron rod of God's sore displeasure. Oh! is such, in very deed, the end of the mere formalist? Unquestionably; and of all Christless, graceless, souls. The righteousness of God must judge evil. But I also further thought, will the wicked at last be fixed to one place? The doomed half-crown could not move an hair's breadth. How monotonous—how ignominious! Affixed to one spot, a public spectacle. Labelled, "A once shining professor, but now a detected, dishonoured, doomed, deceiver." But oh! thought I, shall it be thus at last with all who have no true interest in Christ, professors or not professors? Most assuredly. The word of truth has gone forth from the lips of Him who cannot change. It stands recorded in the statute book of heaven. And thus it runs, and may my reader mark it well. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." John iii. 36.

My mind now turned to a case in point. To one who made a great profession. I mean the man who had not on the wedding garment. (Matt. xxii.) It does not appear from the parable that any of the guests thought that he was different to themselves, so thoroughly had the reality been imitated. And so it is now. Immense numbers in the present day make a profession of religion, of whom, no man on earth could feel quite certain as to whether they were, real, or merely formal christians. Their lives are strictly moral, they regularly attend some place of worship, they give of their money for church, mission, and benevolent purposes; they sing psalms and hymns as sweetly as any one. They read the scriptures, pray and preach, it may be, in public, and yet when the unmistakable signs of divine life in the soul are looked for, the search is in vain. We have to leave such cases, thankful that we are not their judges, until the Lord come.

Such seems to have been the case in the parable. He may have occupied a high place amongst professors. But there was no cleaving of the heart to Christ, and trusting in Him alone. Oh, no! for the full promise of God is sure to all who trust in Jesus. "Blessed are all they that put their trust in him." (Ps. ii. 12.) He was a stranger to the love and grace of God in Christ Jesus. He was a rejecter of grace, and man is saved by grace alone, through faith, without works of law.

But though he had succeeded in deceiving the guests, he could not deceive the king. "And when the king came in to see the guests he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment; and he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having on a wedding garment? and he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Alas, alas! what a close to a long life of high-sounding profession! What an end for one who has had a high place in the church on earth. And, alas, for all who have not Christ. Bound hand and foot, and cast into the place of judgment. Now, he must lie where he falls. He must abide in the place wherein he is cast. There was a time when he was determined to have his own will, and to enjoy his own way, in spite of every warning. But now, he is nailed to the one spot. He can have his own will and his own way no longer. Wrapped in the vile and worthless rags of his own evil and hypocritical ways, he is cast outside the presence chamber of the king, and has no means of resisting the righteous, but fearful judgment that he has brought upon himself. Oh! that careless, thoughtless sinners, and mere nominal professors would think on these awful realities now, and take warning. The time is fast coming when it may be too late. Soon shall all who now dwell on the earth have to take their respective places,

either in the bright and sunny regions of eternal glory, or in the dark dungeon of eternal woe.

The scriptures are plain and absolute. God is righteous, and He can approve of nothing less righteous than Himself. He is the only true God, and can accept of nothing less true than Himself. He has but one standard, and Christ alone is up to His measure. Nothing will pass as current at the judgment-seat that has not the name of Christ stamped upon it. The sinner can only be received, approved, and justified in the worthiness of Christ. He is the way, the truth, and the life. No man can come unto the Father but by Him. He is the door, the only way of entrance into the Father's house.

When the sinner draws near to God *now*, in the faith of his own worthlessness, and the worthiness of Christ, he is accepted. "Accepted in the beloved." And Christ is ready to receive all that come to Him. He casts out none. Oh! then, unpardoned, unsaved sinners, whether you have made a profession or not, at once, with your whole heart, turn to Jesus, in the full assurance of His pardoning love. Be assured that He is waiting, ready to receive you. Oh! doubt Him not—believe him—trust Him. He is able—He is willing—to save the chief of sinners. Oh! at once, without delay, flee to the arms of Jesus. Flee from your evil habits, and from the awful doom of outer darkness. As a lost sinner, take refuge in Him who was *nailed* to the cross for sinners—for you—and yet, as another has said,

"Sins they were, not *nails*, which held Him,
Sinner, there He died for thee."

He wore a crown of thorns, emblem of the curse of sin, that you might wear a crown of glory—fruit of grace divine. His side was pierced with a soldier's spear, that you might find a resting place in His heart for ever. He bore the judgment of God against sin, that you might enjoy an eternal weight of glory. Oh! then, be careless no longer

—slight the Saviour of sinners no longer. Believe in Him, according to the word of God. But, oh! see that you believe *now*. Can you lie down to sleep another night, with all your sins upon your soul? Surely not. Look to Jesus, and your eyes shall be enlightened, your burden removed. "To him give all the prophets witness, that *through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.*" Acts. x. 43.



THE JUBILEE HYMN.

I never shall forget the day,
When Jesus took my sins away;
Oh! it was a day of gladness:
Will you go along with me?
Oh! it was a day of gladness:
Come, sound the Jubilee.

We're happy here, our hearts can say,
But what will it be to the op'ning day!
Oh! we see the day approaching:
Will you go along with me?
Oh! we see the day approaching:
Come, sound the Jubilee.

A little longer here below,
And then to Jesus we shall go;
Oh! then we'll shout in glory:
Will you go along with me?
Oh! then we'll shout in glory:
Come, sound the Jubilee.

Farewell, dear friends, we're going home;
'Tis Jesus calls, and bids us come;
Oh! the joys of endless glory:
Will you go along with me?
Oh! the joys of endless glory:
Come, sound the Jubilee.

EXHORTATION.

THERE are few things less understood than the real nature of exhortation. We are apt to attach an idea of legal effort to that word which is quite foreign to it. Divine exhortation, always assumes that a certain relationship exists, that a certain standing is enjoyed, that certain privileges are apprehended. The Spirit never exhorts save on a divine basis. For example. "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, *by the mercies of God.*" (Rom. xii. 1.) Here we have a fine instance of divine exhortation. "The mercies of God" are first put before us, in all their fulness, brightness, and preciousness, ere we are called to hear the voice of exhortation.

Again, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God *whereby ye are sealed* unto the day of redemption." (Eph. iv. 30.) Here we are exhorted on the settled ground of our being "sealed." He does not say, "Grieve not the Spirit, lest ye be eternally lost." Such would not be in keeping with the true character of divine exhortation. We "*are sealed,*" not so long as we behave ourselves, but "until the day of redemption." It is absolutely done, and this is the powerful reason why we are not to grieve the Holy Spirit. If that which is the eternal seal of God, set upon us until the day of redemption, be the *Holy Spirit*, how careful should we be not to grieve Him.

Again, "Since ye then are risen with Christ, seek those things which are above." (Col. iii. 1.) As those who *are* risen, what should we seek but "things above?" We do not seek these things in order to be risen, but because we are. In other words, the solid basis of our standing is laid down, by the Spirit of grace, before ever the voice of exhortation falls on the ear. This is divine. Aught else would be mere legality. To call upon a man to set his affections upon things above, before he knows, upon divine authority, that he is "risen with Christ," is to begin at the wrong end,

and to lose your labour. It is only when I believe that precious emancipating truth that when Christ died, I died ; when He was buried, I was buried ; when He rose, I rose ; it is only when this grand reality takes possession of my soul that I can lend an open ear, and an understanding heart to exhortation's heavenly voice.

It is well for my reader to understand this thoroughly. There is no need whatever for a multitude of words. Let him simply take his New Testament, and beginning with the epistle to the Romans, trace, throughout, the exhortations of the Spirit of God ; and he will find, without a single exception, that they are as completely divested of the legal element as are the promises which glitter like gems on the page of inspiration. This subject is not fully understood. Exhortation in the hands of man is widely different from what it is in the hands of the Holy Ghost. How often do we hear men exhorting us to a certain line of action *in order that we may* reach certain privileges. The way of the Spirit is the reverse of this. He sets before us our *standing* in Christ, in the first place, and then He unfolds the *walk*. He first speaks of privilege—free, unconditional, inalienable privilege, and then He sets forth the holy responsibility connected therewith. He first presents the settled and unalterable relationship in which free grace has set us, and then dwells upon the affections belonging thereto.

There is nothing so hateful to the Spirit of God as legality, that hateful system which casts us as *doers* back upon *self*, instead of casting us as lost *sinner*s over upon Christ. Man would fain *do* something ; but he must be brought to the end of himself, and to the end of all beside, and then as a lost sinner, find his rest in Christ—a full, precious, all-sufficient Christ. In this way alone can he ever expect solid peace and true happiness ; and only then will he ever be able to yield an intelligent response to the Spirit's " word of exhortation."

TRUST IN GOD.

Roll on, roll on, ye waves of trouble, roll,
 A Father's hand supports my fainting head,
 Each heavy tide brings nearer to the goal,
 And known to God is every tear I shed :
 Calmly on Jesus' bosom I recline,
 All heaven and earth are mine !

Smile on, smile on, thou vain deceitful world,
 Ah, what to me is thine unhallowed mirth ?
 I've seen the banner of the cross unfurl'd,
 Weighed in its scales the precious things of earth,
 Farewell, vain world, I love the Crucified :
 'Twas here he groaned and died !

Whirl on, whirl on, ye giddy glittering sounds—
 Wealth, honor, pleasure, what are ye to me ?
 Far beyond all that mortal vision bounds,
 The Lamb of God upon the throne I see :
 Ah, to an eye lit up by glory's beams,
 Things here are fading dreams !

Frown on, frown on, thou bitter, bitter foe,
 I do not fear thy power or hellish art,
 Thou canst not break the oath of God ! oh, no !
 Nor canst thou tear me from a Saviour's heart :
 Safe in his arms the Shepherd bears me home ;
 And I must overcome !

Glide on, glide on, ye days, and months, and years ;
 Father, I ask but to be spent for thee !
 What though I sojourn in a vale of tears,
 To live is Christ, to die is gain to me.
 O God, at what a price thou hast purchased this,
 Full cup of endless bliss !



IMPOSSIBLE AND POSSIBLE.

(Read Luke xviii. 18—27, and xix. 1—10.)

THESE two scriptures present a striking and instructive contrast between a rich ruler and a rich publican—a contrast between man's *impossible* and God's *possible*—a contrast illustrating, most forcibly, the truth that, though man is neither willing nor able to get up to God, yet God is both willing and able to come down to man—a contrast proving, most clearly, that, though the sinner is unable to do the necessary work, and unwilling to pay the necessary price for "eternal life," yet God can *give* that life without price and without labour. Such is the interesting lesson set before us in these two narratives. Let us ponder it for a few moments.

I. In the person of the rich ruler, we have a member of a very numerous class. He was evidently one who would fain "make the best of both worlds." He stood on legal ground, and was governed by a worldly principle. His history suggests and answers two questions which have been put and answered thousands of times over, in the history of the human family, namely, "What must I *do*?" and "What must I *give*?" These questions are very simply answered, inasmuch as it is evidently man's duty to do *the whole law*; and as to the price which should be given for eternal life, what less could God possibly demand than *all* that a man has? God could not accept of anything less than a perfect obedience; and if eternal life is worth anything, it is worth all. The whole law must be fulfilled, if heaven is to be reached by *doing*; and we could never expect to get heaven at a lower price than the full surrender of earth. If the question be, "What am I to *do*?" the answer is, "All that God requires." If the question is, "How much am I to *give*?" the answer is, "All that you have." Nothing less will ever do. Not a tittle less than

the whole law—not a fraction less than all your possessions. It would be the very height of absurdity to expect eternal life upon any lower terms. If you want to *work* your way to heaven, you must do “all that is written in the book of the law.” And if you want to pay your way to heaven, how could you possibly expect to get there for less than all that you possess on earth?

This will explain Christ’s remarkable method of answering the rich ruler. He answers the *man*, not his *question*. He answers with His penetrating gaze upon the moral condition of the inquirer. He lays out the work for a legalist; and He lays down the price for a bargainer. And, be it noted, there is an intimate connexion between the two things. If the ruler had really been able to do the work, as he vainly imagined, he would have been willing to pay the price. The two things would, most assuredly, go together. But inasmuch as there has never been a single member of Adam’s fallen family who was able to do the prescribed work, so neither has there ever been one who was willing to pay the stipulated price. And, moreover, when once a man becomes convinced, by God’s Holy Spirit, of his natural unwillingness and inability, he never thinks of asking such a question as, “What must I *do* to inherit eternal life,” for he knows quite well that unless eternal life be a free gift, he can never have it at all.

However, the ruler had not reached the ground of divine conviction when he stood in the presence of Christ with his legal inquiry. And if my reader would clearly understand this entire scene, he must bear in mind that our blessed Lord is dealing, not with a convicted sinner, or an anxious inquirer, but with a legalist and bargainer—not with one whose all-engrossing desire was to reach heaven, but with one who wanted to hold heaven and earth at the same time—that is, “to make the best of both worlds.” This simplifies the matter amazingly. It makes it all clear. Christ did not mean to teach that heaven could be reached

by works, or bought with money ; but He did, most strikingly, make manifest that even though it could be so, yet man would neither do the work nor pay the price. He proved, in the case of the ruler, that when heaven was offered to the human heart, on the reasonable terms of some earthly possessions, the human heart deliberately refused to pay the price. We are not taught that heaven is to be sold ; but we are taught that even though it were to be sold for a few thousands, man would not pay the amount.

And do we not see the truth of this every day ? Men think far more of money than they do of heaven. True, they would like to get to heaven when they die. No marvel they should. But then they want to hold this world as long as they can. They would be glad to "inherit eternal life," and yet cling to their earthly possessions. This is a vain thought, and it is as contemptible as it is vain. It is utterly impossible to hold the two worlds. This should be distinctly understood. You might just as well endeavour to hold heaven and hell, Christ and Satan, light and darkness, as to combine this present evil world with that bright and blessed world to come, for which the redeemed are waiting. The two are diametrically opposed, in every possible way. Satan is the god of this world. Christ is Lord of the world to come. How could you make the best of these two ? Impossible. The attempt can only be regarded as a piece of consecrated selfishness all the more dangerous because sanctioned by many from whom we might expect a measure of faithfulness to Christ.

However, if those who practise and defend this Godless, Christless, soul-destroying principle, would only ponder the narrative of the rich ruler, they might gather up some wholesome instruction. See him with the balance in his hand ; eternal life is in the one scale, and some perishable goods in the other. What is the result ? The scale that holds a priceless and enduring substance flies rapidly upward and lifts the beam, while that which holds a fleeting

shadow sinks to the ground: and the poor infatuated creature gathers up his goods, and turns his back upon Christ—upon heaven—upon eternal life. He prefers an inheritance which death will wrest from his grasp, to one which is “incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven” for all those who simply put their trust in the name of Jesus. He moves away in sorrow, no doubt; but sorrow for what? Because he could not make the best of both worlds. His heart had been detected, though his conscience was not reached; and his history proves to all who will weigh the proof, that it is morally impossible to hold Christ in one hand, and the world in the other; and, further, that it is impossible for man to get to God by aught that he can *do* or *give*. Eternal life cannot be earned by works, or bought with money. It can only be had as “the gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

II. This conducts us, in the second place, to the consideration of the case of Zacchæus, the rich publican of Jericho, whose history so strikingly proves that “the things which are impossible with men, are possible with God.” The rich ruler was told to *do* and to *give*: the rich publican was saved without being told to do or give anything. Why was this? Because the ruler took the ground of a legalist; whereas the publican took the ground of a lost sinner, looking for Jesus. Now, while it is utterly impossible for a legalist to get to God, it is quite possible for God to get to a lost sinner. This is beautifully exemplified in the narrative of Zacchæus.

“And Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. And, behold, there was a man named Zacchæus, which was chief among the publicans, and he was rich. And he sought to see Jesus, who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature. And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, for he was to pass that way.”

Here, then, we have before us, God's "possible." Zacchæus, as he took his place in the sycamore tree, stood before the eye of Jesus as one of those whom the Father was drawing to Him; and it mattered not, in the smallest degree, what he was—rich or poor, publican or sinner—Christ fixed his eye upon him, and said, "Zacchæus, make haste and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house." "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." (John vi. 37.)* True, Zacchæus was "rich." He belonged

* This entire passage in John vi. is much misunderstood. It is frequently used to perplex and repulse *anxious* souls, while, at the same time, it is made to minister to the indifference and indolence of *careless* souls. When rightly understood, it will do neither the one nor the other. In the first place, as to the anxious, we should ever bear in mind, that every real desire after Christ is the result of the gentle, though resistless, drawings of the Father's hand; and Christ assures us that He will, in no wise, cast out any one coming to him as the fruit of the Father's drawing. He came down from heaven, not to do His own will, but the will of His Father; and hence, quite irrespective of His own personal love for souls, He would save as the Servant of the divine counsels. This makes the salvation of the believer to depend upon the question of Christ's ability and willingness to do the Father's will. "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." If, therefore, there be in any one a true desire after Christ, that desire may be viewed as a precious token that the Father is drawing that soul to Jesus, and, blessed be His name, Jesus makes Himself responsible for the eternal salvation of all such.

Then again, as to the careless, we often hear persons say, "I know I cannot come unless I am drawn, and I must therefore wait God's time." This is a complete fallacy. It is a plea for continuing in worldliness and sin. It has no foundation whatever in John vi., or any where else in scripture. Christ says He will save all who come to Him, inasmuch as all who come are drawn of the Father, and He delights to do the Father's will. Can anything be more monstrous than to use such a passage as a plea for refusing the touching and powerful appeals of the gospel? Will such a plea avail in the day of judgment? Ah! no, it will not be urged then. Why should it be urged now?

to that class of whom Christ said, "How hardly shall they enter the kingdom." But what of that? The Lord Jesus beheld in him an object of God's eternal counsels, and a subject of the Father's drawings. He connected the act of climbing the sycamore tree with the divine purpose which was formed before the foundation of the world, and He proceeded to act in pursuance thereof by publishing the glad tidings of a free salvation in the ears of the wealthy publican of Jericho. Beholders might "murmur;" Zacchæus, too, might recount his honest and earnest efforts in the way of alms-giving and restitution; but Christ was true to the object which had brought Him from the bosom of the Father, and that object was "salvation." "This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

Here, then, we have God's "possible." If Zacchæus had been called upon to keep the commandments or sell all that he had in order to inherit eternal life, he would have found it as hard as the rich ruler. It is impossible for any one, ruler, publican, or else, to get to heaven by a pathway of works. There is but one way to heaven and that way is marked from the throne of God down to the lost sinner by the footprints of love divine; and it is marked upward from the lost sinner to the throne of God by the sprinkled blood of the Lamb. It is all well enough, and very beautiful, to give to the poor, and make restitution for any injury done one's neighbour; but these things can never purchase salvation, for it is not to be purchased by any thing; and even though it were, the case of the ruler proves that man would not pay the price. The fact is, salvation is as free as the air we breathe, for this simple reason, that it has been *brought* to all by "the grace of God." "This day is salvation come to this house."

These precious words present three features in the salvation which the grace of God brings. It is a present

salvation ; a perfect salvation ; a personal salvation. "*This day.*" Here we see it to be a *present* salvation. My reader, if unsaved, now, needs not to wait till to-morrow to be saved. The great fact on which salvation depends was accomplished, over eighteen hundred years ago on the cross.

" 'Tis done—the great transaction's done."

All is finished. Jesus has "put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." "He suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God." The soul that believes this grand fact is saved on the spot—saved now—saved for ever. He has no need to go hither or thither, to do this or that ; he has just to believe what God has said about Jesus, and be saved.

But, further, it is a *perfect* salvation. "This day is salvation *come.*" It is not coming ; it is not on the way ; it is actually "*come.*" It was wrought out by Christ, for us, and is as perfect as He could make it. It demands nothing from the sinner. It is brought, in all its divine fulness and completeness, to his door, and his only title to it is that he is "*lost.*" It is only a lost sinner that needs salvation, and nothing but a perfect salvation would do for one who is utterly lost. It is not merely *help* I want, but full salvation. Many will say they hope to be saved "*by the help of God.*" This is a mistake. There is a wide difference between God's helping me to be saved and His saving me altogether. In the former case, I co-operate ; but in the latter case, God does all.

Finally, it is a *personal* salvation. "This day is salvation come to *this* house." It is important to see this clearly. We are very apt to generalize in reference to the matter of salvation. Many there are who say, "We are all sinners ; and we know that Jesus died for *all* ;" but yet they have never made it a personal matter. They have never been brought to say from the depth of a broken heart "*I am lost ; but Jesus loved me, and gave himself for me.*" The devils believe that Jesus died for sinners, and it avails them

nothing. The thing is to believe that Jesus died for me—that a full, free, eternal salvation has come to *me*—that *my* sins were laid on Jesus, and that He bore them in His own body on the tree, and put them away out of God's view for ever. Of what value is salvation if it be not for me? If I cannot make my own of it, it avails me nothing. But, blessed be God, it is for me, because I am a lost sinner. "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

Hence we see that the sinner has not to wait till to-morrow in order to be saved; he has not to add anything to the salvation which grace brings him; and he is not to raise so much as a single question as to the fact that salvation applies to him, for the very moment he takes the ground of a lost sinner, the salvation of God applies itself to him as truly as the air is intended for all who have lungs to breathe, or the sunbeams for all who have eyes to see. Does any one ever think of questioning whether the atmosphere and sunlight are intended for him? Surely not, while reason holds her seat. Well, then, neither should the poor conscience-smitten sinner entertain a single doubt as to the precious truth that God's salvation is not only a present, and a perfect, but also a personal salvation.

And why? Is it because he has kept all the commandments from his youth? Nay. Is it because he has sold all and given to the poor? By no means. Why, then? Simply because "The Son of man has come to seek and to save that which was lost." "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God." Ask a man to give up some ruling lust, some darling pleasure, in order to be saved. He will tell you, it is "impossible." But let that man be brought to see himself as lost—let him take his place as a ruined, guilty, hell-deserving sinner, and all he has to do is to accept a full, an unconditional, and an eternal salvation through the blood of the Lamb. Let a man come as a doer, and what less could he be told to do

than "the whole law?" Let a man come as a buyer, and what less could he be told to give, than "all that he has?" But let a man come as a lost sinner, and he gets eternal life as a *gift*, and eternal salvation without money and without price. Thus it was with Zacchæus. The Lord Jesus fixed His loving gaze upon him and said, in effect, "I shall have that man in heaven, though all the powers of earth and hell were set in array against him."

And, now, one word in conclusion. Are we to suppose, for a moment, that Zacchæus ceased to give alms when he had gotten salvation? Nay, it was only then he learnt to give them upon the true ground. It is only as *saved* that a man can do anything right. Till he finds Christ he is but ploughing the rock. He may be very earnest; he may do many things in order to be saved; but it is only when a full and all-sufficient Christ is laid hold of by faith, that good works can be performed or good fruit produced. When a man knows and loves his master he can use his talent aright, whereas the legalist, who regards Christ as "an austere man," will go and hide his talent in the earth.



A NARRATIVE OF THE REMARKABLE WORK OF GOD'S SPIRIT IN THE ORPHAN HOUSE AT ELBERFELD.

(Translated from the German.)

IN consequence of a report of disorder in the Orphan House, I went there, desirous of investigating personally the management of the Establishment. The result has been as follows. During the second week in January of this year, from the 6th to the 13th, the Evangelical Alliance in England, as you know, had prayer-meetings, at which the Lord was besought for a fresh "pouring out of the Holy Ghost."* These special prayer-meetings have been and

* "A fresh manifestation of the Holy Spirit's power," would, we think, be a form of expression more in accordance with the teaching of the New Testament. *Ed.*

are still held at different places in Elberfeld, and numbers attend them. At the beginning of this week, four men met in a fellow-workman's apartment, some young women followed their example, and at last begged Herr Klügh, the superintendent, to have a prayer-meeting under his direction for all the inmates of the house. Herr Klügh immediately granted their request, and they had accordingly throughout the week, every evening, from nine till ten o'clock, a prayer-meeting in the large hall of the building, when earnest prayer was offered to God that He would pour out His Spirit on the orphan children. The children themselves did not take part at these meetings.

On January 13th, a girl, seventeen years of age, came to Herr Klügh, saying that she was in agony of soul about her sins, earnestly desiring mercy, and asking Herr Klügh to pray with her. Soon after came another girl, eighteen years of age, in the same state, and such cases came before him frequently for the next fourteen days. Seven of the number were children.

Monday, 28th. Herr Klügh found a boy sitting on the stairs and crying for the pardon of his sins. He turned to the other boys standing around him, saying, "Would you were all as this boy, and thus humbled before the Lord." Four boys, crying to God for mercy, were found on the same day in the cellar.

Tuesday, 29th. Seven boys remained out of their beds all night, praying aloud to God; frequently since the same boys have met for prayer.

Wednesday, 30th. Thirty boys begged of Herr Klügh the grant of a particular room, where they could meet together for prayer. This he granted. One boy read a chapter in Isaiah, asking Herr Klügh to speak to them from it, which he readily did—then leaving them; but much later he found them still on their knees praying aloud.

Thursday, 31st. The same eager desire for the Word of God and prayer was expressed by twenty boys. This time

Herr Klügh prayed, kneeling with them. The work has been of this nature until now. Great exercise of conscience among the children especially, prayer for mercy, the forgiveness of their sins, and an earnest desire to cry aloud to God on their knees, and shut up in different rooms. On the evening of this day a new phase of the work was seen. Herr Klügh again held a general prayer-meeting, at which now, even the children, of whom there were about sixty, ventured to take part. When the prayer-meeting was over, a boy named Boller, who had before scoffed at the praying children and said "he did not wish to be saved," was seized with violent convulsions; he went to the cellar, and found there some children already assembled, kneeling and praying aloud to God that He would turn poor Boller's heart. When Boller heard this he was filled with deep emotion and distress about his soul which continued for some days. During these attacks he was quite conscious, but speechless; he pointed to the Bible, and when Herr Klügh read and prayed with him, he was, for some time, quiet.

On Friday, 1st February, the special movement began among the girls. Herr Klügh found them in all the corners of the room and on the floor, praying.

On Saturday, 2nd February, Herr Klügh had another general prayer-meeting, at which 120 children were present, and which continued until ten o'clock. Herr Klügh specially thanked the Lord in his prayer, for what He had wrought in the house during the past week. At this meeting one boy was seized with convulsions, crying aloud in prayer; this was repeated by seven or eight children, one after another, calling upon God for themselves, for their play-fellows, then for the Syrian Christians, for the Mussulmen, for the poor inundated inhabitants of Holland. Boller was again deeply affected; soon after, however, he found peace and rest, and sang a song of praise. Two adults (one, the superintendent of the little ones, Htte Lamotte;

the other, the housekeeper, Prümers) experienced, as Klügh expressed it, "such violent distress of soul about their sins," that they were obliged to be carried out.

Sunday, 3rd February. Again an extraordinary prayer-meeting. After Klügh had spoken, the very little girls were also seized. They tossed about in their beds, praying and crying aloud. One, seven years of age, prayed that God would convert the Under-master; another girl lay, as Herr Klügh expressed it, "cold and stiff," which was an exception, few being unconscious. Generally, those who were seized with convulsions were perfectly conscious. On the same evening the movement took hold of all the girls, some were kneeling in their beds, others standing on the floor praying and screaming, alone and together, in the rooms, in the passages, on the stairs, and this until late in the night. Until midnight girls were sitting on the stairs, singing sweet hymns.

Monday, 4th February. At the earnest request of the children, Herr Klügh had another prayer-meeting. Four children were seized and taken out of the room. One, Peter Meyer, cried, says Klügh, for whole days, in agony of soul.

Tuesday, 5th February. Many children came crying about their sins. Twenty girls besought Klügh that he would pray with them; he did this, and was followed by twenty boys. These earnest prayers are sometimes sudden and without immediate effect; often, however, the result is immediate. For example, one child prays to God to convert one of his companions, naming him; the boy named is instantly seized with anguish of soul about his sins. Mr. Grafe gave me an account of one such scene—the boy praying would say, "Lord lay hold on him—cast him down—strike him low," naming one of his companions, who would be immediately seized with convulsions. The children have lain, conscious, but speechless; they have shrieked and wailed, yet understanding everything—as an

eye-witness says, "The head is so violently moved that they were in danger of hurting themselves." These cases are of different duration. It is said of one boy, that he was only able to speak one hour in two days. Many children only once stricken; others, for two or three days are seized again and again. The last fourteen days have been marked by such cases, with a great number of children.

Sunday, 17th. There were twelve cases known. As I went over the house, yesterday evening, I found no child in distress of soul; the girls were in the large hall, quiet, but singing at their work. Of the boys I found twenty, some of them pale and wan-looking, assembled in a room with the first master. They were those who had been stricken during the past week. Four boys, whom I met on the stairs, answered, to my question, "What had they been-doing?" "They had been praying together." A Sub-inspector then passing, remarked, that this had happened in a back room. One of the boys, in an unnaturally excited tone, said he had been praying "that the Lord would give him the shield of faith, wherewith to quench the fiery darts of Satan."

These are the particulars of the matter, as I learned them from Herr Klügh himself, at the Orphan House. I noted down, immediately, all the essential points, while the details I have expressly left. All that Klügh stated was at once confirmed by the President Grafe, on the other hand, what Klügh omitted, the President at once completed.

Elberfeld, 23rd February.

The following extracts from a letter which appeared in the *Patriot* of Feb. 21, give some interesting details, immediately connected with the foregoing narrative.

"They then asked for a room to meet in, where they might not be disturbed, which was granted to them. The next meeting numbered not eight but sixteen boys, and

when they came into the room set apart for them they all simultaneously fell down on their knees, and began to cry out with awful vehemence and floods of tears for pardon, 'Lord have mercy on me! Jesus, O Jesus, forgive my sins!' There was no order, no leader, in this strange meeting: but each, with incredible ardour, and as if he were alone, confessed his sins, and cried for mercy. This made a great noise, and the overseer heard it in a distant part of the house. He came directly, feeling somewhat irritated at such disorder, intending at once to put a stop to it. He entered, but there his interference ended! He was astonished; he was overwhelmed with awe and wonder. He had never seen such earnestness, such agony, depicted on the human countenance. He felt he could do nothing, and that God alone could still the tumults of the terrified conscience. He remained, however, and gradually the tempest calmed; but not till they had made a full confession of all their sins, even the most secret. This they did in the sight of God, unasked, and as if no ear but God heard them. And it is not unlikely that this was really the case: each was too earnest for himself to think of the confessions of others. However this may be, these confessions of sin form one of the most extraordinary features of this strange movement.

"They appointed another meeting for prayer. When the time came round, one of the awakened said to his companion Boller, 'Won't you come with us to the meeting?' 'No I won't,' said Boller, 'I don't wish to be saved! go you, if you like, but I shall go to bed!' And to bed he did go, but he became uneasy and restless, and when he heard the sound of prayer in the distance he rose and crept away to the meeting. As he entered they were just praying for him by name. This acted like electricity upon him, and he fell to the earth as if struck with a thunderbolt, in terrible agonies and also frightful convulsions. He remained speechless for many days; his face was dark and diabolical;

his fingers bent together ; his arms smote the ground with frightful vehemence, and his entire body writhed as in mortal agonies. After five or six days he obtained perfect peace and full conviction of the Saviour's love. This case of Boller made a prodigious impression on the inmates of the Orphan House. It wrought like electricity on the whole of the 300 orphans ; the prayer-meetings became full, and now came the marvellous power of God among them in such strength and vehemence, that in one night twenty-eight boys were carried into one room where they lay in the most awful bodily and mental agonies. They were all for a time perfectly speechless ; they were stricken down to the ground by some invisible power ; they were all crying out for pardon of their sins as long as voice remained with them. They all made the fullest confession of their sins, even the most secret, as if none but God were present ; and finally, in all their agonies and dumbness they were perfectly conscious of what was going on about them. Many of them signed for slates, and wrote their wishes on them while unable to speak. While all this took place among the boys, the girls rushed up to the large sleeping apartment and fell down in the agonies of conviction,—some in their beds, some before their beds, some flat on their faces on the floor, some in the corners of the room, but all with many tears and bitter cries, confessing their sins and crying to Jesus for mercy. It was a night of wonders ! There was, indeed, much searching of hearts, and many precious souls were brought to the Lord. The whole house rang with strange voices, and the whole 300 were bent before the presence of the Lord like the trees of the forest before the storm.

“They knelt for prayer in the secret corners and under the stairs ; they formed themselves into groups in the halls and alleys to sing psalms. Some wept with joy over sins forgiven, and some roared in agony under the terrors of the wrath of God ; the faces of the orphans, according to their states of mind and body, assumed all varieties of colour

and expression ; some were dark and fallen ; some awfully contorted as if in deadly pain ; some overflowing with bitter tears ; some changing gradually into calm repose ; some shewing the dawning smile of immortal hope, and not a few beaming with ecstasy of indwelling peace and joy. It is said of Stephen that 'the people looked upon his face as if it had been the face of an angel;' and certainly some of these orphan faces might, without much straining of the fancy, suggest the peace and brightness and the beauty of angels.

"To-day, Feb. 11, I visited the orphans in company with Mr. Grafe and two others, one an Englisman, the other a German. We were astonished and delighted at what we saw, and could say nothing else but that God was among them of a truth. There lay thirty-three orphan boys in their beds in the consciousness of utter weakness. There were no symptoms of disease of any kind, for they all had the appearance of robust frames and vigorous health. Most of them were speechless, but all perfectly conscious, and could write down their wants : a few still in great pain of body, but yet manifested quite clearly that peace reigned within. Among these thirty-three boys there were some still mourning under the heavy weight of unforgiven sins, while many were rejoicing in the sunshine of Divine love. The English gentleman observed to me, when we came out, that the air of the place seemed holy ; for that verily God was there.

"Let us pass through among these beds, and note down a few particulars. You see that big boy on the first bed there ; he is, indeed, a young man rather than a boy ; he is in deep distress, moving his hands in agony, but yet confessing that the storms are past and he has peace with God. A boy much smaller and younger than himself has his arm round his neck, and is telling him of the power of the gospel and the freeness of redeeming love. You see that little boy lying quietly in the fourth bed ; it was he who brought his

reluctant companion to the prayer-meeting, and then cried out with the greatest earnestness, 'There he is! Jesus, seize him! he will run away!' There in the corner is a fine lad nearly quite well and rejoicing in the love of God. It was he, opening his eyes and seeing a former companion standing near him, cried out, with indescribable earnestness, 'Pray! he'll certainly get you,' meaning the devil; and then, exhausted by the effort, fell back into his bed, and became speechless as before. Here, too, is Boller, who did not wish to be saved. He is a stout resolute boy; but to all appearance, fully subdued and peaceful. He spoke very freely both of his former wickedness and of his present love to the Saviour. Before leaving the place, I told them that we had similar scenes in Ireland, and that when I wrote home what I had seen in that room many of the children of God in Ireland, England, and Scotland, would pray for the orphans of Elberfeld. Then those who could rise came round to me to shake hands, those in bed who could speak called me, and those who were speechless waved their hands for me, and thus I pressed the hands of all those dear orphans, and solemnly blessed them in the name of the Lord. I never visited a more solemn scene in my life, and I never felt a parting more tender. May God bless these orphans, and extend this great work all over the whole world."

I'VE found the Pearl of greatest price!
My heart doth sing for joy;
And sing I must, for Christ I have;
A precious Christ have I!

Christ Jesus is the Lord of lords,
He is the King of kings;
He is the Sun of Righteousness,
With healing in His wings.

Christ Jesus is the heaven of heaven:
My Christ, what shall I call?
Christ is the first, Christ is the last,
And Christ is All in all.

“THE HIDDEN MANNA.”

FIRST of all, look at the words, separately. “Hidden,” and “manna.” The manna was rained down from heaven to earth to meet the need of the hosts of Israel. It was bread from heaven. (Ex. xvi.) Christ Jesus, the Son of God, in love and grace to us, came down from heaven to earth to give life to our souls, and to become, as God manifest in the flesh, the food of our souls for ever. (John vi.) To feed upon Christ now, as the manna, is to have fellowship with Him in His path of humiliation, suffering, and rejection down here, as the “man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.” Fellowship with Him as the once lowly Jesus, will be to us as our manna from heaven, our living stream from the smitten rock, and our cloudy and fiery pillar during our journey through this wilderness world.

But why is it called “*hidden* manna?” When it came down from heaven it was spread around the camp, open to all, and the people gathered it early in the morning. But the Lord commanded Moses to “take a pot and put an omer full of manna therein, and lay it up before the Lord, to be kept for your generations. “The golden pot that had manna” was kept in “the Holiest of all,” as a memorial for the children, when in the land, of their fathers’ wilderness fare. But it had a deeper meaning to the heart of Israel’s God. It shadowed forth the lowly Jesus ministering to the need of the people, in and around Jerusalem, and openly before all, yet despised and rejected of men; but owned of God, and honoured of Him with the highest place in heaven. To eat of the *hidden* manna is to find our joy, our delight, our strength, in communion with the once lowly, suffering Jesus, but now exalted, glorified Christ, at God’s right hand in heaven. If we walk in faithfulness to Him, in the midst of such scenes of unfaithfulness as we have to pass through, in these days of worldliness, and

open, unblushing infidelity, we shall need the sustaining power of the *hidden manna*, the true and living bread. He is the only true wilderness fare for God's strangers and pilgrims in this desert world. The remembrance of what Jesus was as the obedient, patient, subject man on earth, is well fitted to nourish our hearts, amidst the many trials and difficulties of the way. "He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself so to walk, even as Christ walked." 1 John ii. 6.

Closely connected with "the hidden manna," we have the "white stone." This is the secret, but real, expression of the Lord's good pleasure, in our path of service for Him amidst general unfaithfulness. And so expressed as that none, save those to whom it is expressed, can ever understand it. He assures the heart of the overcomer, *now*, of the divine approval. But oh! what will the "white stone" be in heaven? To have the full, intimate, personal, expression of the Master's approbation! To have it now, in the secret of communion, is peace to the conscience, joy to the heart, and strength in service. Communion with Himself must always be the first thing, if we would go on happily and steadily. When you know the Master's mind as to your line of service, you can be calm and tranquil, even amidst the conflicting opinions of others. A servant out of communion, and not knowing the Master's mind, must fall under the power of circumstances, and be unstable in all his ways.

The "white stone," I believe, is the only remedy for such a state of things. It is the secret link of communion between the heart and Christ Himself. In the light of His presence, the path is cleared, and the heart is assured.

"In thy presence we are happy ; in thy presence we 're secure ;
 In thy presence all afflictions we can easily endure ;
 In thy presence we can conquer, we can suffer, we can die :
 Wand'ring from thee we are feeble ; let thy love then keep us
 nigh."

And, oh ! what need there is for such communion in such times ! The professing church, long ago, having left her first love, is now far away indeed from Christ. To follow her would be to go back to the depths of the world, "even where Satan's seat is," and where the doctrine of Balaam (type of ecclesiastical covetousness, and of seducing the people of God. Num. xxii.—xxv.), and of the Nicolaitanes (type of the abuse of grace in the most hateful form), are taught.

There is, then, but the one thing left for us, namely, to follow Christ according to His word. To keep the eye of faith fixed on that "hidden" one, and the heart filled and occupied with Him. So shall we have, even now, in the midst of a general apostacy, the "white stone"—the secret pledge of His presence and approbation as to our path, and of His delight in ourselves. "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." Rev. ii. 12-17.

Thou hidden Source of calm repose !

Thou all-sufficient Love divine !

My help and refuge from my foes,

Secure I am, for I am Thine ;

And, lo ! from guilt, and grief, and shame,

I'm hidden, Saviour, by Thy name.

Jesus, my All in all Thou art,

My rest in toil, my ease in pain ;

The medicine of my broken heart ;

'Mid storms, my peace ; in loss, my gain ;

My smile beneath the tyrant's frown ;

In shame, my glory and my crown.

In want, my plentiful supply ;

In weakness, my almighty power ;

In bonds, my perfect liberty ;

My refuge, in temptation's hour ;

My comfort 'midst all grief and thrall,

My life in death, my All in all.

THE GERMAN SQUIRE.

WE have, within the last few days, heard of a case which has interested us exceedingly, and we are anxious to lay it before our readers, and to secure for it a permanent corner in our magazine. May God the Holy Ghost use it in the conversion of some precious soul! It is for this end we narrate it, for we may be permitted to say that each month that rolls past only deepens our interest in the salvation of souls; nor should we care much to issue another number of this periodical, had we not the confident hope that our God would be pleased to use it in the accomplishment of this grand end. There is great value, and not unfrequently, great power in the record of God's dealings with a soul; nor have we, during the entire progress of the revival, heard of any thing that has interested us more deeply than the case of the German squire. We can merely undertake to give the substance of the narrative, without vouching for the perfect accuracy of details.

This squire seems to have belonged to a class of persons who affect to despise the word of God, and, as a consequence, to hate the name of Jesus. Being visited, on one occasion, by a christian pastor, he charged him, on no account, to name the name of *Jesus* while under his roof. The pastor assented, and spoke only of *God*, as displayed in creation. He dwelt upon the exhibition of power and wisdom in the works of God, and having done so he took his leave.

Being invited by the squire to repeat his visit, the pastor did so, and spoke of God in His righteousness; in His holiness; in His majesty; in His hatred of sin, and again took his leave. Here the squire's conscience was reached. The arrow of the Almighty penetrated the joints of the harness in which his infidel system had encased him. He was a convicted sinner. The flimsy cobwebs of rationalism gave way before the stern realities of his personal guilt and

the holiness of God. The proud, self-sufficient sceptic became an humble, broken-hearted penitent.

When the pastor called again, he found the squire in a state of intense mental anguish. He felt the weight of God's claims bearing down upon his conscience, and his own utter incompetency to meet them. God, as seen in creation and providence, was at a vast distance from him. There was a great gulf between, which he could not bridge. He was wretched, and in the depth of his wretchedness he asked the pastor if he could not give him any relief. "No," said he, "I can do nothing for you; you have strictly forbidden me to name the only one who can do you any good, or afford you any comfort."

This was a moment of profound interest in the spiritual history of the squire. The entire superstructure of rationalism, scepticism, and infidelity had given way. He beheld it all as a mass of ruins, and himself a ruin in the midst of ruins. Neither creation nor providence could furnish a resting place for his poor burdened heart and guilty conscience. He had, under the blinding power of a senseless infidelity, sedulously excluded from his thoughts "the only name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved," even the precious, peerless, powerful name of Jesus, the only medium through which the beams of divine light can pour themselves, in beauteous harmony and consistency, upon the soul of the sinner—the only ground whereon "God can be just and the justifier" of the most ungodly sinner that believeth. He had built up a system for himself in which the name of Christ had no place. The materials of this system had been furnished, not by revelation, but by rationalism, the most dreary of all *isms*. He had, under the ensnaring influence of a proud intellectualism, entrenched himself behind what he vainly imagined to be the impregnable bulwarks of infidelity. He had tried to erect a platform of his own whereon to meet God; but now he found out his grand mistake. Christ is the *only* platform

on which a holy God and a guilty sinner can meet; but he had shut out Christ. He would not have Him. His motto in reference to Christ was, "O, breathe not His name."

What a moment! The poor squire was really miserable. He knew not what to do. There was a link missing, and he knew not where to find it. An object was needed which his infidel system could not supply. A holy God! How could he meet Him? A righteous God! How could he stand before Him? A sin-hating God! How could he ever approach Him? What was to be done? It was indeed a moment of intense interest—a solemn crisis—a season never to be forgotten. He earnestly begged the pastor to *go on, to tell him all, to keep nothing back*. The door of his heart which had, for so long a time, been secured by the strong bolts of infidelity, was now flung open. His conscience was fully reached. The plough had done its work, and the pastor had but to enter with the seed-basket and sow the seeds of a full and free gospel in the deep furrows of a convicted soul. In a word, he preached Christ—that long rejected, much hated name. He shewed the squire that the atoning sacrifice of the Son of God was the only thing that could put away sin, and justify God in receiving the sinner. He shewed him that in the cross of Christ, "mercy and truth had met together, righteousness and peace had kissed each other;" that all the divine attributes were gloriously harmonized, that sin was put away and God glorified, that in the death of Christ all the claims of God, and all the claims of conscience had been perfectly answered.

This was enough. The squire found rest for his troubled soul. He believed the record and was made happy in believing. The bridge had been presented to him, and he instantly availed himself of it, to pass across that otherwise impassable gulf that separated him from God. He saw in Christ the One who fills up every point between the throne of God and the deepest depths of a sinner's moral ruin.

He found his *all* in that very name which he had so strictly forbidden to be named beneath his roof.

May the Lord use this narrative of the German squire in bringing many souls to Christ!

“WHAT IS BELIEVING IN CHRIST?”

THIS is a vital question. All important. None more so. To believe in Christ is to be saved. To live and die in unbelief is to be lost for ever. Yet, notwithstanding its unspeakable importance, there are few questions that come before the anxious enquirer, more undefined to his own mind than, “What is believing in Christ?”

He thinks he has always believed in Christ; and has never doubted anything that the scriptures say about Him. And yet, he is sure that he is not saved by the faith which he has. Hence he gets occupied with faith itself, and soon comes to the conclusion that he has not the right sort. In this state of mind, the young enquirer will be sure to attach a mysterious importance to faith, or believing, which does not belong to it. And in so far as this is the case, Christ Himself, the grand object of faith, will be lost sight of. This is one of the ways of Satan, to darken, confuse, and perplex the mind.

We have something like an explanation or definition of faith in John iii. 33. “He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true.” The testimony, or word of God, is the ground of faith. When the sinner receives God’s word with the heart, as sure and certain truth, just because it is His word, he honours God with the confidence of his heart. He takes God at His word, and honours Him as the God of truth. “He sets to his seal that God is true.” He has faith. He believes God. It is a question of the heart, and not of the head merely. And consequently, he is satisfied. Repose fills the soul. He wants no higher

authority. He now, as it were, countersigns the divine document, and the affairs of his soul are settled for ever. Thus, a link is formed, through faith, between the soul and God, that shall endure for ever,—the word of God, is His eternal bond.

Such must ever be the happy fruits of faith in God's word, whatever may be the character of the testimony believed. Noah, for example, believed one kind of testimony, and Abraham believed another. But whether it was about an approaching flood, or the promise to Abraham that his seed would be numerous as the stars of heaven, it mattered not as regards the result; both believed God, and both were pardoned, justified, and saved. Through doubting God's goodness, and disbelieving God's words, the link of connection between the soul of man and God was broken in Eden; and now, through believing in God's goodness, and trusting in God's word, the soul is reunited to Him in Christ, to be separated no more for ever. Who shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord? (Rom. viii.) None! Heaven will not! Earth and hell cannot! Glory be to His name. And there will be no beguiling serpents in the paradise of God, and no tree of the knowledge of good and evil there. We will only know good there; and fully, perfectly, and eternally enjoy it.

These few brief hints as to faith in general may be useful to some. We will now look at the particular question before us, namely, "What is believing in Christ?" Were we to give a direct answer to this question, we would say, To believe in Christ, is to *know Him, the Saviour-God, as the one object of the heart's confidence and affection*. He may be comparatively little known to the believer, and the expression of his faith may be very feeble, and not only feeble, but sometimes assailed with doubts and fears; nevertheless he who has been taught of God to know Christ, as once dead and risen for him, will cling confidently and affectionately to Him, notwithstanding these things.

Comparatively little was known of Christ by either the woman that came to His feet, (Luke vii.) or the man that was cured of his blindness. (John ix.) (The great truth of His death and resurrection was not then fully revealed.) Yet one can easily see in them both, faith and affection. Neither the deep sense of guilt, nor the difficulties of the Pharisee's house, could hinder the woman from coming personally to Christ. And all the arguments and threatenings of the Synagogue wholly failed to upset the confidence of him who aforetime had been blind; or to withdraw the affections of his heart from Him who had opened his eyes. The former knew more of the *Person* of Christ than of His *work*, the latter knew more of His *work* than of His *Person*. But with purpose of heart they did cleave unto the Lord, and He revealed Himself to both according to their need. No heart ever really desired to know the Person of the Lord to which He did not reveal Himself. And no soul ever really desired to know the work of the Lord, that will not stand in the full credit of that finished work, before the throne of God, for ever. Every desire of the heart towards Christ is of the Holy Spirit, and in due time, shall be fully satisfied. The soul that has got a glimpse of Christ will ever after desire to know more of Him. Nothing will ever satisfy it but Himself.

How often one has seen this exemplified in persons who were passing through deep distress about their soul's salvation. Nothing we could say gave them relief, or brought peace to the heart. The more touchingly we spoke of the love of Jesus, and of His grace to sinners, the deeper was their distress, because they could not see that He was theirs. But only suggest to them, If it would not be better and happier for them to give up Christ altogether, and think no more about these things which only make them unhappy. And, oh! in a moment you would see what a place the Lord had in their hearts. A chord was touched that caused the

whole heart to vibrate for Him, and the tears to flow. "Oh, no!" they would exclaim, "I can never give up seeking after Him. If I perish, I will perish at His feet, still seeking to know His love, and His great salvation." The heart never really desires Christ until He, Himself, is in it. It is His presence there, in a new life, that produces the desire.

The consideration of the four following things may be helpful to some of the Lord's precious, though weak ones. He would have them to be rejoicing in Himself, and peacefully resting on His finished work.

I. To *believe in Christ* is to believe in His *love* to sinners, as revealed to us in the scriptures. But individual faith will surely say, His *love to me* a sinner. To begin with the *love* of Christ, is to begin at the right place. The believing heart will always make a personal application of Christ to itself. The love of Christ was manifested in coming down from heaven to earth, to seek and to save the lost. His whole mission and work express the greatness of His wondrous love. If I want to know the love of Christ to me, I must not look to myself, but to His *manifested* love for me a sinner. His love brought Him down. True, His mission was the expression of God's love to the world. "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) Hence, if I want to know the heart of God the Father, I must not look into my own, but to the gift of His Son. "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.) But the love of God,—the love of Christ,—and the love of the Holy Spirit, is all one and the same love. Only, in the plan of redemption, God is represented as the fountain of love, Christ as the channel, and the Holy Spirit as the power that applies it to our hearts. Oh! wondrous, mysterious, marvellous love,—the love of God to sinners.

In so far as this divine love could be expressed or measured, Christ is the measure and the expression of it; and individual faith, making a personal application of the Saviour's love, rejoices in it, as if it all centred on itself. Just as Paul did when he said, "He loved *me*, and gave Himself for *me*." Here the apostle speaks as personally, as if he had been the only one that Christ loved and died for. And surely this must ever be the language of faith. It never deals in mere generalities. It delights in the Saviour's love specially to itself. Oh! troubled soul, think on this blessed truth! Let your mind dwell upon it, let your heart feed upon it. What more do you want? What more can you desire, than the love of Christ—this perfect love to you? Is there anything you need that is not to be found in His love? In all your meditations on the affairs of your soul, be sure that you make His love your starting point, and lose sight of yourself in its heights and depths. It is the first note in our song of faith on earth, and the first in our morning song of joy in heaven. "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.

Some of the fairest choirs above,
 Shall flock around my song,
 With joy to hear the name they love
 Sound from a mortal tongue.

His charms shall make my numbers flow,
 And hold the falling floods,
 While silence sits on every bough
 And bends the listening woods.

I'll carve my passion on the bark,
 Till every wounded tree
 Shall drop and bear some mystic mark,
 That Jesus died for me.

The swains shall wonder, as they read
 Inscrib'd on all the grove,
 That heaven itself came down and bled
 To win a mortal's love.

II. To believe in Christ, is to believe that He died for sinners according to the scriptures. (1 Cor. xv. 1—4) But true faith in Christ, is not satisfied with the mere general belief of this blessed truth. Taking the ground of a sinner, it says, "Yes, but Jesus died for me—He died for my sins, and through His death I am saved. He was delivered for my offences, and where are they? They are all put away. He was raised again for my justification. Hence, if he be a risen Christ, I am a justified sinner. The only proof, or evidence, that I have of pardon, justification, and peace in the presence of God, is a risen Christ." Faith's question is not, how, or what I feel, but is Christ risen? If He who died for my offences, be indeed risen from the dead, I am perfectly and for ever justified before God. (Rom. iv. v.) No sinner can have settled peace, save on the ground of the DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF CHRIST. He who is seated at God's right hand above the heavens, is the living, eternal witness of the believer's full and everlasting salvation.

There are many other passages that plainly teach the same blessed, soul-saving, peace-giving truth. Indeed, all scripture does. The Holy Spirit never suggests a doubt as to the believer's perfect security. All doubts and fears flow from the wicked insinuations of Satan. Such as "*Yea, hath God said, ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?*" (Gen. iii.) This vile insinuation from the serpent suggested a doubt in the mind of Eve, which led to the whole mischief. The tempter tried the same thing with our blessed Lord in the wilderness, when he said, "*If thou be the Son of God.*" But here he was met and vanquished by scripture. "*It is written.*" Nothing but the shield of faith

will quench the fiery darts of unbelief. Souls must watch against and ever treat all such evil suggestions as coming from the arch deceiver. Doubts and fears are the prolific offspring of the wicked insinuations of the beguiling serpent. Faith's stronghold is the word of God, in which it securely rests. But should the enemy seek to invade its peaceful repose, it can triumphantly reply, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. v. 8.) The love of God to me while in my sins, as manifested in the death and resurrection of Christ, satisfies my soul, and settles all for me a sinner. God says it—I believe it—who may question it? Listen to God only. Such is the character of true faith. It is most personal. At the same time, while maintaining its individual place and communion, it rejoices in the common joy of all believers, and glories in the words, "we" and "us."

III. To believe in Christ is to believe in the cleansing power of His blood, according to the testimony of scripture, and for *my own need as a guilty sinner*. Although this truth is implied in what has been said about His death for us, still, it gives great relief to the conscience to have the plain direct word of scripture on this special point. Such as, "The blood of Jesus Christ, His (God's) Son, cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John i. 7.) Faith takes its place amongst the "us," and knows for certain that all its sins are cleansed away. Hence the following strong language of unquestioning faith, "In whom we *have* redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." (Eph. i. 7.) A personal application of the blood of Christ is peace to the conscience in the presence of God. Had the Israelite neglected to apply the blood of the lamb to the lintel and door posts of his own house in the land of Egypt, he would not have been safe. (Ex. xii.) It was not enough that he had a lamb, or that

he had killed it, and had the blood in a bason. No; it had to be *applied to his own individual door*, or the destroying angel would have entered and killed the firstborn. The blood alone on the lintel and door posts was the safeguard for all that were in the house. So is it now. There must be a personal application of the blood of Christ to our own soul to meet our own need. The mere general belief that Christ loves sinners, that He died for them, and that His blood cleanseth from sin, is not enough. There must be a definite, individual application of these blessed realities to our own souls. The language of faith is, "He loves *me*, He died for *me*, and His precious blood *hath* washed all *my sins* away." But though this is the language of simple faith, it is not, alas, the language of all who believe in Jesus. Many, of whose faith in Christ we can have no doubt, would be afraid to say so much. Through looking to themselves this fearfulness has great power over them, and keeps them from rejoicing in the Lord, and from enjoying His word. Faith never looks to self, but always to the Saviour.

IV. To believe in Christ is to believe that He receives all that come to Him—and, further, true faith in Christ will say, "He *has* received *me*." Sometimes the young believer who is not well established in the truth will get into bondage on this point. He thinks that he sees and believes the truth about the love of Jesus to sinners, His dying for them, and the efficacy of His precious blood; but he looks to himself and sees so many things that are contrary to Christ, and he begins to doubt if he has been or can be received. He will say plainly, "I doubt nothing you say about Christ, what I doubt is myself." This is a delusion. It is a snare of Satan. For how can you know by looking to yourself whether you can be received or not? You must allow Christ to say whether He will receive you or not, and believe what He says without questioning. "Him that

cometh to me I will in no wise cast out," (John vi. 37.) are His words of gracious assurance to the coming one. The believing heart is satisfied with this assurance, and finds rest in Jesus. Now its every need is met. All fulness dwells in Jesus. He has received me and fitted me for His presence. Thus faith rejoices in Christ Himself, and in all His wondrous love, His complete salvation, and His coming glory.

In conclusion, allow me to ask, in plain terms, is my reader a believer in Christ Jesus? Without faith in Christ there is no salvation. The soul that lives and dies in unbelief is lost for ever. Oh! if thou art yet a stranger to Jesus, and living in unbelief, how awfully dangerous thy state is. Eternal danger is treading on thy heels. Another step and all may be over—and all may be lost for ever. Oh! then, at once, as thou art, and without a moment's delay, flee to Jesus the Saviour of sinners. Believe in His love—His love for thee a sinner. Believe in His death—His death for thee a sinner. Trust in His precious blood to wash all thy sins away. Rest assured that He is ready and waiting to receive thee. Oh! then, believe in Jesus—receive the truth into thy heart. Come to Himself. Trust in Him. Oh! with what joy and delight He welcomes home the poor lost sinner whom He loves—the one for whom He bled and died—the one whom He has besought many times by His gospel to return—the one whom the Father's hand of love has guided to His everlasting embrace, that He might "breathe on him," quicken his dead soul, fill and overflow it with life and love divine. "Come unto me," are His own words, "all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." And "whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ," says Paul, "for it is the power of God unto salvation to EVERY ONE THAT BELIEVETH." Matt. xi. 28; Rev. xxii. 17 Rom. i. 16.

WORDS FOR THE NEWLY CONVERTED.

(Continued from page 32.)

THE Master has gone into a "far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return;" but He has left "*to every man his work.*" Our Lord has placed us in different homes, with varied duties to perform, and varied relationships to fill, (and the new life strengthens these ties) but all is to be done *for Him*. He is Lord of our time, our influence, our life: we can give our all to Him and receive it back again, to hold and use for Him. Christ ennobles all work and duty—sanctifies every earthly relationship by consecrating all to Himself. His own perfect example is given as our pattern in daily life. (Eph. iv. 5.) And it will not please our Master for us to neglect this service for what appears to be more emphatically His work. All we do is valued by Him, not by any human standard, but according to the motive from which it springs. "For man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord God looketh on the *heart.*" *Love to Jesus* is the only motive that will bear God's searching eye, but where this is found it is so comprehensive that it will dignify the meanest service. "The cup of cold water," given in His name, shall not lose its reward.

It is a solemn thought, that when we appear to be earnestly engaged in the Lord's work, God may look into our hearts and find many motives there which have outgrown the only one that could make our service acceptable to Him, namely, love to His Son. (1 Cor. xiii. 1, 2, 3.) "The day shall declare it." Many a busy, active professor, when weighed in the balances of the sanctuary shall be found wanting. (1 Cor. iii. 11—15.) But on that day when the Master's smile will be every thing to us, Christ will say to the humble, loving servant, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

“But ye, when ye have done all, say, We are unprofitable servants, we have only done that which was our duty to do.” Our warmest love is cold, our most fervent efforts feeble, and the nearer we are to the Lord, the less we shall think of ourselves; the more we shall feel how unable we are to make any return for all He has done for us, or even to praise Him as we ought; all we can do is to give ourselves to Him to be His for ever.

There are heights in Christ's love that we have never reached, and depths that we have never fathomed; there are victories to be gained over sin which we have not yet achieved; there are treasures in God's Word which we have never reached, but which the Holy Spirit waits to unfold to enrich our souls. We may do much more for Jesus here. He has many sheep and lambs, whom we have not sought to feed; some have strayed, and wandered far from the peaceful fold. We have not gone after them unwearingly till they were found. There are many souls to be saved, over whom we have not wept. Soon our opportunities for service will be over, “for the night cometh when no man can work.”

May the Holy Spirit lead us *upward and onward*, “looking unto Jesus.” May we know Him as our Saviour, not only from the punishment of sin, but also from its power; and more than this as a loving, gracious Friend, who is ever with us, and in whose peaceful presence we may, even now, “rejoice with joy unspeakable.”

Soon God's purposes respecting us will be accomplished, and life and service here being ended, Christ will fulfil the mysteries of glory and of love contained in his own promise, “I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also.” Then the Father's name, so faintly traced here, shall shine in living lustre on each brow. We shall serve Him perfectly, and praise Him for ever and ever.



THE TWO WAVES.

IN looking back over the past two years, we can have little difficulty in discerning the rise and progress of a mighty wave of blessing. It has been rolling across the whole vineyard of Christ, and bearing thousands and hundreds of thousands upon its bosom. From all quarters, the most soul-stirring tidings reach us, of sinners brought to Christ, and backsliders restored. Never, since the day of Pentecost, has there been such a remarkable work of God's Spirit. On all hands we perceive a deep interest in reference to eternal things. Wherever there is a prayer-meeting, a preaching, a lecture, a scripture-reading, or Bible Class announced, numbers flock to it. It is so different from what it used to be. Not long since the difficulty was to get people to listen to the gospel; now, the difficulty is to get persons enough to preach it. There is an energy abroad—a truly divine energy, for which every true christian must bless God.

But we believe that this mighty *wave of blessing* will be succeeded by another mighty *wave of judgment*. Solemn thought! We desire to have this impressed upon our own souls and upon the souls of our readers. We are thoroughly convinced that the present action of the Holy Ghost is the precursor of the coming of Christ. The number of the elect is being speedily accomplished; and what is this but the hastening of that everlasting kingdom for which the redeemed are waiting? Time is short. God is making a speedy work of it. The wave of blessing will soon roll on and waft its thousands to heaven; and then will come the wave of judgment and waft its millions to hell. Does this proportion seem highly drawn? Look at a missionary map with its vast continents of black and green, and its tiny districts of blue, intimating the appalling extent to which

Paganism and corrupt christianity preponderates over the mere outward profession of Protestantism.

And when, we may ask, will the black, brown, and the blue, all become white? When will the whole scene be wrapped in the fair mantle of righteousness? Not until the wave of judgment has rolled over it. The sword of judgment must settle the great controversy between God and this world, touching the murder of His Son. God's question with the world is, "What have you done with my Son?" Has this question ever been settled? Never. The world is stained, to this moment, with the blood of Christ; and what is more, the reader of these lines is either purged by that blood, or stained with the guilt of shedding it. There is no middle ground. *Stained or purged?* Which? This is the solemn searching question. May the Holy Ghost apply it in divine power to the heart of the reader. There is no use saying, "I did not crucify the Lord of glory." It was the act of the human heart, the act of the world; and each one forms a component part of the world until, through faith in Christ, he bids an eternal adieu to that world, and takes his place in the church. This is the true way to look at the matter. There is not so much as an hair's breadth of neutral ground, when Christ is in question. "Art thou for us or for our adversaries?" must ever be the pointed personal question; he must either be *for* or *against* Christ. Some try to assume a border position, but it is utterly vain. There is no such thing, and the sooner this is understood the better.

May the Lord make us more thoroughly decided. May we find ourselves upon the very crest of the wave of blessing which is now passing majestically onward to the sea of glory, and may we be led to utter a warning voice in the ears of sinners, calling upon them to flee from the approaching wave of judgment which shall roll downward into "the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone." Let us be

faithful. Let us tell our fellow-sinners plainly what must be the conclusion of the whole matter. Judgment for the world; glory for the church. Eternal perdition for those who are stained with the blood of Christ; eternal glory for those who are washed in that blood. God grant that my reader may belong to the latter.



ONCE PURGED.

(Heb. x. 2.)

“THE worshippers *once purged* should have had *no more conscience of sins*.” How few, comparatively, understand this simple truth! One is frequently amazed at the language made use of in prayer, by those who really seem to have the root of the matter in them. To judge by their words you would naturally suppose they had never believed in the value of the blood of Christ. For instance, take such language as the following, “We present our guilty, sin-stricken souls to thee, O God, that thou mayest wash them in the blood of Jesus.” Is this the utterance of a purged worshipper? Surely not. A guilty sinner is not a purged worshipper. It may sound like humility, but it is the very opposite. True humility can only flow from our being in our right position before God. And what is the believer’s right position? It is that of a perfectly purged worshipper—one having “*no more conscience of sins*”—one who is as free from every charge of guilt and every breath of condemnation as Christ. Such is the true position of the believer.

If, therefore, I am “once purged,” I have no need to be purged a second time. This is the plain doctrine of Heb. x. 2. So also in John xiii, 10, we read, “He that is *washed* needeth not save to wash his feet, but is *clean* every

whit." "The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from *all* sin." If I am "clean every whit" and "cleansed from all sin," do I need to be cleansed over again? Does God's work need to be repeated? Is the blood of Christ to be brought down to the level of the blood of bulls and goats? Is the believer never to know what it is to have a perfectly purged conscience? Must he be ever asking to have his sins put away? God declares, in the most absolute manner, "Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." Should the believer, then, be perpetually asking God to forget what He says He will never remember? Is it humility on our part to present before God's face, every day, what He has cast behind His back for ever? If God has put away my sins, am I to bring them back again? If they were all laid on Jesus, am I to have them on my conscience? Am I to be continually asking God to do what He assures me, again and again, He has done "once"—done "perfectly"—done "for ever?"

These are plain questions. Let my reader ponder them, in the light of Hebrews ix. and x.. The simple fact is this, Christ's place at the right hand of God proves the complete removal of the believer's sins. "When he had by himself purged our sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high." And again, "But this Man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down at the right hand of God." Hence, for the christian to speak of bringing his "guilty, sin-stricken soul to God," is tantamount to a plain denial of Christ's right to a seat on the throne of God. For why is He there? Is it merely because He is God over all blessed for ever? Clearly not. He could, at any time, have claimed a place there on that ground. But what is so deeply important to see is that Christ is on the throne as having accomplished redemption—having put away sins—having perfectly purged His people. He is there our representative. He is there efficaciously for us. This is

what gives peace. God sees the believer in Christ. This is enough. If we want to know the true standing of the christian, we have only to look at Christ, for "As he is so are we in this world." (1 John iv.)

Now, seeing it is thus with the christian, is it intelligent to be continually bringing our sins to remembrance? Is it consistent with our position as purged worshippers to be addressing God in the language of those who are not purged at all? True it is, that we are poor failing creatures, if we look at ourselves; but it is not at ourselves we are told to look, but away from ourselves altogether, straight to Jesus. God sees us in Him, and as He is. He can only think of us as perfect in Christ; and of this we may rest assured that it neither glorifies nor gratifies God for His people to be dwelling upon their sins, when He would have them dwelling upon that perfect grace which has put away those sins for ever, by "the one offering of Jesus Christ, once."

May God by His Spirit unfold to the christian reader his privileges in Christ, that so he may know the deep blessedness of being "once purged," and having "no more conscience of sins."

NOTE. There is a wide difference between a consciousness of sin in me, and a conscience of sins on me. The former we shall have to the close of our career; the latter we should not have, if "once purged." My reader should seek to understand this distinction. Many do not see it, and hence they think it right to be always occupied with their sins. But when God's full salvation is laid hold of by faith, we learn that both the sins of our life and the sin of our nature were all judged and put away on the cross. To know and believe this on God's authority is to be "once purged," and to have "no more conscience of sins."



"THINE, JESUS, THINE."

"I am Thine." Psa. cxix. 94.

Thine, Jesus, Thine,
 No more this heart of mine
 Shall seek its joy apart from Thee;
 The world is crucified to me,
 And I am Thine.

Thine, Thine alone,
 My joy, my hope, my crown;
 Now earthly things may fade and die,
 They charm my soul no more, for I
 Am Thine alone.

Thine, ever Thine,
 For ever to recline
 On love eternal, fixed, and sure,—
 Yes, I am Thine for evermore,
 Lord Jesus, Thine.

Then let me live,
 Continual praise to give
 To Thy dear name, my precious Lord,
 Henceforth alone, beloved, adored,
 So let me live—

Till Thou shalt come,
 And bear me to Thy home,
 For ever freed from earthly care,
 Eternally Thy love to share,—
 Lord Jesus, come.

THE GRACE OF GOD.

(Read Titus ii. 11—14.)

THIS lovely and familiar passage of holy scripture occurs in the midst of a number of exhortations adapted to various classes of people, in reference to their conduct and character. Aged men, aged women, young men, young women, and servants are to be exhorted as to their proper deportment in their respective conditions.

But lest, by any means, our hearts should be tempted to place these exhortations upon a legal basis, the inspired apostle breaks forth in one of the most magnificent, and comprehensive statements of the gospel which is any where to be found in the sacred volume. "The grace of God," and that alone, must be the foundation of all christian conduct and character. Legality in all its forms, and in all its workings, is most hateful to the Spirit of God. The robe of self-righteousness with which man attempts to cover his sins, is more unsightly in God's view, than the very blackest sin that could be committed. Nothing can be accepted of God but that which flows from His own grace in our hearts.

Now, in the scripture before us, the reader will find three distinct points, namely, The salvation which grace brings; the lessons which grace teaches; and the hope which grace presents. And, first, then, as to

THE SALVATION WHICH GRACE BRINGS.

This is a grand cardinal point. To be uncertain or obscure as to this, must, assuredly, involve uncertainty and obscurity in every thing. "The grace of God that bringeth salvation unto all men hath appeared." (See the marginal reading.) This is clear and conclusive enough. The very first thing that grace does for the lost sinner is to *save* him—save him unconditionally, save him perfectly—save him eternally. It does not ask him to be anything but what he is. It does not ask him to give any thing. It *brings* him salvation,

or the ground of his being *lost*. It is only as a lost one that I need salvation; and the more I feel myself to be lost, the more clearly I see my title to that full and free salvation which the grace of God brings. Salvation is intended for the lost; if, therefore, I am lost, salvation applies itself to me, just as distinctly as though I were the only lost sinner in the whole world.

And observe the immense breadth of this word "*lost*." It takes in all. High and low, rich and poor, learned and unlearned, savage and civilized, moral and immoral, religious and irreligious—all are comprehended under this one title, "*lost*." It is well to see this clearly. Men make distinctions, and necessarily so. Social life has its distinctions. Law and equity maintain their distinctions which must be duly recognized by every well regulated mind. Society awards to the chaste, the sober, and the moral, a respect which it justly withholds from the profligate, the drunkard, and the unprincipled. But, directly we get into the presence of the grace of God, all these distinctions are swept away, and all are looked at on one common ground as lost. The most respectable member of society and the vilest outcast are both in the same condition, as regards themselves; they are both lost, they both need salvation; and the grace of God brings salvation to the one as well as the other; and be it well remembered that the poor broken-hearted outcast is nearer, by far, to the salvation which *grace* brings, than is the cold hearted self-sufficient moralist. (See Mat. xxi. 31.) If the law of God could bring salvation, then the case would be quite the reverse. But the law never brought salvation to any one because no one could keep it; whereas grace brings salvation to all because all need it. It is no longer confined to the Jews. The Sun has risen far above the Jewish horizon, and poured his blessed beams over "all the world," so that "every creature under heaven" may bask in the light thereof. Such is the wide aspect of "the grace of God," which, let me say, leaves wholly untouched the

grand question of God's eternal counsels and God's moral government. God has His counsels; and God displays His mysterious wisdom in government. This must never be forgotten, nor does it interfere, in the smallest degree, with the precious truth that "the grace of God bringeth salvation unto all," and "the righteousness of God is unto all." The inspired apostle is speaking of the aspect of these things, not of their final result—a grave and important distinction.

Now, it must be obvious to my reader that the term "*all*" necessarily includes him. It could not possibly be otherwise. If he be not included, then it follows that there is some one for whom the grace of God has not brought salvation; but the Holy Ghost expressly declares that it bringeth salvation unto *all*. This must satisfy the most anxious soul as to the question so often raised, namely, "How am I to know that salvation is intended for me?" Is any one excluded? Is not salvation brought to all? Does not this term comprehend every anxious inquirer? Unquestionably. The declaration of the inspired writer is that "The grace of God, which bringeth salvation unto all men hath appeared." This is as plain as a sunbeam. Men may reject this salvation. Alas! they do reject it; but that can never touch the question of the wide aspect of that grace which shines with undimmed lustre in the gospel, and brings a full and free salvation unto all. Their guilt in rejecting it flows from the fact that it is freely offered. If they could not get it, whence their guilt in not having it? Where the righteous judgment in punishing men for not receiving what was never intended for them? (2 Thess. i. 6—10.) True, it is—divinely true, that God is sovereign; but it is equally true that man is responsible. Are *we* called to reconcile these things? Nay, they are reconciled already, inasmuch as both are taught in the word. All we have to do is to believe them.

But let us inquire what is included in the salvation which the grace of God brings? The answer is, *Everything*. Salvation is a precious casket containing all I want for time and eternity. It includes salvation from the future consequences of sin, and from its present power. To be a divinely-saved person—a person saved by the grace of God saved by the blood of Christ, as every believer is, involves entire deliverance from wrath, from hell, from Satan, from every thing that could possibly be against me. A man whom God hath saved is surely safe from all. There is nothing doubtful about God's salvation; it is all settled. There is no delay; it is all finished. We have neither to wait for it nor to add to it, but to receive it *now*, and enjoy it *for ever*. The mighty tide of grace rolls down from the very throne of God, and bears upon its bosom a full salvation—salvation for *me*. I receive it as a free gift; I bow my head and worship, and go on my way rejoicing.

We shall now proceed, in the second place, to consider

THE LESSONS WHICH GRACE TEACHES.

Grace is a *teacher* as well as a *saviour*; but it never begins to teach me until it has saved me. It is well to see this. Before ever it asks me to hearken to its pure and holy lessons, it brings me a salvation as free as the air we breathe. It is as a divinely-saved person I enter the precincts of the school of grace, and take my place upon the form. Grace teaches *only* the saved. All its pupils are saved. Grace, as a saviour, seeks only the lost. Grace, as a teacher, instructs only the saved. This makes all plain, and puts every thing in its right place. We must never place unsaved persons on the forms of the school of grace. Such have no capacity to learn its holy lessons. There must be a proper material—a proper capacity. This capacity is included in the salvation which grace brings me. I am a debtor to grace both for the lesson which I learn, and the

capacity to learn it. I owe *all* to grace. Grace seeks me, and finds me in my lost estate; it saves me with an everlasting salvation, and introduces me as a saved person to the sphere in which its hallowed instructions are imparted. Grace does not teach those who are dead, it *quickens* them; it does not teach those who are guilty, it *cleanses* them; it does not teach those who are condemned, it *justifies* them. It is as quickened, cleansed, and justified that I become the pupil of grace. The very first thing that grace does for the lost sinner is to *bring* him salvation, and when he receives this salvation, it *teaches* him to "deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world."

I desire that my reader should be clear as to this. If he be, as yet, in an unsaved state, let him understand that the grace of God brings him salvation as a present thing; and, moreover, until he has accepted this free gift, he is wholly unable to understand or take in the lessons which grace teaches. If grace is to be his teacher, he must be saved in order to be a pupil. This simple fact gives the death-blow to all legality, to all human righteousness, to all man's pretensions. If none can comprehend the lessons which grace teaches save those which have accepted the salvation which grace brings, then, assuredly, our language must ever be, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory."

But, let us look particularly at the lessons which grace teaches. It teaches us to deny every thing unlike God, and all desires after this present world; and not only so, but it teaches us how we are to live. The law could never do this. It *tells* us how we ought to live, but it does not *teach* us. It neither gives us the lesson to learn nor the capacity to learn it. It does not bring us salvation. The law could never have any saved pupils, because it does not save the lost, but condemns them for being lost. No doubt men ought to keep the law, and if they were right they would;

but they are not right, quite the opposite, they are wrong, totally, irremediably wrong, hopelessly lost; and in this condition grace brings them salvation. Christ the Saviour is our Teacher, not Moses the lawgiver. May we learn His lessons! May we sit at His feet in all docility, and drink in His hallowed instructions!

These instructions range themselves under three distinct heads, as suggested by the words, "Soberly, righteously, and godly."

I. *Soberly*. This refers to the inner circle of one's own heart. It simply means, *with inward self-government*—a most comprehensive expression. The grace that saves me teaches me to exercise a holy government over *self*. I am to govern my thoughts, govern my tongue, govern my temper—govern them, not in order to be saved, but because I am. The One who teaches me to exercise this government has saved me before ever He commenced His course of instruction. It is as a saved person that I submit my whole moral being to the wholesome control of my heavenly Teacher. The law could not teach me to govern my nature. It condemns me, root and branch, throws me overboard, and leaves me there. Grace follows me, saves me, and endows me with a new nature, seals me with the Holy Ghost, so that I can exercise myself in self-government.

And be it observed that this self-government is totally different from anything that human philosophy or the energy of an indomitable will could ever produce. These things might enable me to subdue some of the accessories of self, while the parent stem was left wholly untouched. But "the grace of God that bringeth salvation," gives me victory over *self* in all the length and breadth of that comprehensive term. Full victory over all the evil that dwells in me is as much a part of "salvation" as deliverance from hell. Alas! we fail to make use of this victory; through spiritual indolence and unbelief, we fail to possess ourselves practically of that full salvation which grace has

brought us; but that, in no wise, alters the truth of the matter. If I am a saved man, I should live as a saved man, in every respect. And how is this to be done? By faith. "The just shall *live* by faith." (Hab. ii. 4; Gal. iii. 11; Heb. x. 38.) I can only exercise inward self-government by faith.

II. The second grand lesson which grace teaches me, as to my practical life, is to live "*righteously*." This contemplates me not merely in the inner circle of my own moral being, but in the midst of the circumstances and relationships of the scene around me—that outward world in which I am called to live and move from day to day. My divine Teacher not merely instructs me as to the government of myself, but also as to the government of all my transactions with my fellow. Here, too, I am to remember that my teacher is the grace that hath *saved* me. I must never forget this. If the resources of philosophy, or the energy of a strong will, might enable me to exercise a kind of inward self-government, so also the principles of a lofty morality, or that pride which spurns a mean action, might lead me to seek the maintenance of an unblemished reputation in all my transactions with my fellow men. But all this leaves me unsaved. Philosophy cannot save me, and therefore it cannot teach me. Morality cannot save me, and therefore it cannot teach me. It is "the grace of God" that alone can save me, and it is that same grace which alone can teach me. Hence, if I see a person who professes to be saved, giving way to bad temper, indulging in passion, or enslaved by a habit, I infer that that person has not learnt practically the first great lesson of his divine Teacher. And if I see a person who professes to be saved, yet not guiding his affairs with discretion, but getting in debt, and indulging in extravagance, I infer that he has not learnt the second great lesson of his divine Teacher. Let us not be deceived with vain words. If the legalist is silenced by the *freeness* of the salvation which grace brings, the anti-

nomian is silenced by the purity of the lessons which **grace** teaches. "These things are good and profitable unto men." The gospel meets every thing. It meets the lost sinner with a full salvation; and it meets the saved sinner with the purest and most perfect lessons—lessons of holy self-government and practical righteousness.

III. But there is a third lesson which grace teaches its saved pupils. It teaches them to live "*godly*." This opens up our relations with the world above. There is great force, beauty, and completeness in these words used by the inspired apostle. They present to us three great circles in which we are called to act: the world *within*, the world *without*, and the world *above*. They must be all taken together to see their divine beauty. There is really nothing left out. All that we can possibly want to learn is taught in the school of grace, if we will only accept the lessons; and let us bear in mind that the surest proof of our having received the salvation which grace brings, is our learning the lessons which grace teaches—those hallowed lessons of inward self-government, practical righteousness, and true godliness. May God the Holy Ghost make us to understand the fulness and freeness of the salvation, and the purity and elevation of the lessons, so that we may more distinctly apprehend, in the third and last place,

THE HOPE WHICH GRACE PRESENTS.

The apostle speaks of it as "a blessed hope," and surely nothing can be more blessed than "The appearing of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." This is the proper hope of the believer, and he is taught to look for it by the selfsame grace that has brought him salvation, and that teaches him how to carry himself in reference to the world within, the world without, and the world above. 'The Lord will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.' (Ps. lxxxiv.)

Now, there are three things in reference to this "blessed hope," which I desire that my reader should clearly understand, namely, title, capacity, and moral condition. Our title is furnished by the blood of the cross; the capacity is furnished by the Holy Ghost; the moral condition is founded upon our learning and exhibiting the holy lessons taught in the school of grace.

Reader, permit me to ask you if, when the subject of Christ's appearing is introduced, you ever feel a sort of hitch, difficulty, or reserve in your mind. Would you be afraid to see Jesus? Would you rather put off the moment of His advent? Do you feel yourself not quite ready? If so, it may be you are not yet able to "read your title clear;" or, it may be, you are not cultivating a spiritual capacity; or, finally, your moral condition is not such as would naturally introduce you to that scene of glory for which we are privileged daily to look. These are points of immense importance—points to which my reader should give deep and prayerful attention. If there be cloudiness as to my title; if there be defectiveness in spiritual capacity; or if my general moral tone and character be not formed by the holy lessons of grace, I shall not be in an attitude of waiting for the glory. In other words, to speak according to the peculiar style of the passage before us, if I am doubtful as to the salvation which grace brings, or if I am backward in learning the lessons which grace teaches, then I shall assuredly fail in looking for that blessed hope which grace presents. It is well to see this, in all its clearness, point, and power. If we are the recipients of grace and the expectants of glory, should not our lives exhibit the moral power of these things? Should they not have their proper effect in the formation of our character? Unquestionably. "He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he is pure." If I expect to be with Jesus and like Jesus, by and by, I shall seek to be as much with Him, and as much like Him, now, as possible.

May the Lord work in us that which is well pleasing in His sight, and bring out in all our ways a more faithful exhibition of the divine life! The language with which our scripture closes is eminently calculated to awaken in our souls the most intense desire after these things; indeed, I cannot conclude this paper without quoting this noble passage at full length, praying the Holy Ghost to apply it in much power to the heart and conscience of both the writer and the reader.

“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation unto all men hath appeared, teaching us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave *himself* for *us* (what a price! what objects!) that he might redeem us from *all* iniquity, and purify unto himself a people of possession, zealous of good works.”

“The day of glory bearing
Its brightness far and near,
The day of Christ’s appearing
We now no longer fear.

He once a spotless victim
For us on Calv’ry bled;
Jehovah did afflict Him,
And bruised Him in our stead.

To Him by grace united,
We joy in Him alone;
And now by faith delighted,
Behold Him on the throne.

Then let Him come in glory,
Who comes his saints to raise,
To perfect all the story
Of wonder, love, and praise.”

T R O P H I M U S.

(2 Tim. iv. 20.)

"Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick." What a very suggestive clause! The great apostle of the Gentiles, endowed with the gift of healing, and who had healed so many, leaves his friend behind him sick. When in the island of Melita he healed the father-in-law of Publius, the chief man of the island; but here we find he has to leave Trophimus at Miletum sick. There was a need for this. God in his governmental dealings sometimes lays His children by. The Father finds it needful, at times, to put forth His hand in wholesome discipline. It is often very good, very salutary, very necessary, to be left in the condition of Trophimus at Miletum. Nature does not like it; but we may be assured it is healthful. Trophimus had a lesson to learn on a sick bed at Miletum which he could not learn any where else, not even as Paul's companion in travel. The solitude, the prostration, the helplessness of a sick bed are often most profitable to the soul. The Spirit of God makes use of such things to teach us some of our most sanctifying lessons. Very often it happens that a time of bodily illness is made the season of much solemn review and self-judgment in the presence of God. How needful are these things; but yet how much neglected amid the bustle of constant travel and intercourse with others!

It is instructive to contrast the position of Trophimus, in Acts xxi. 29, with his position in 2 Tim. iv. 20. In the former we see him in the streets of Jerusalem in company with Paul; in the latter we see him in the retirement of a sick-chamber at Miletum. Now it was his presence with Paul that roused all the bitter prejudices of the Jews who imagined that Paul had brought him into the temple. A Jew and an Ephesian in company was quite in harmony with Paul's gospel, but not at all so with Jewish prejudice. At Ephesus, Paul and Trophimus might have walked in

company without exciting any suspicion; not so in Jerusalem. For a Jew and a Gentile to be seen together in Jerusalem was regarded as an open insult to Jewish dignity; it was a throwing down of the middle wall of partition, and boldly walking across the ruins. For this the Jews were not prepared. They gazed upon the two companions with an eye of dark suspicion, and the strange companionship fanned that flame which so speedily burst forth with terrible vehemence around the beloved apostle of the Gentiles. Alas! one is disposed to say, that the two friends should be found in the streets of Jerusalem. Those streets were evidently not Paul's appointed sphere of labour. "Far hence unto the Gentiles" was the Master's word. But Paul would go to Jerusalem, and when there he could never refuse to walk in company with an Ephesian. He was too honest for that. He could not, like poor Peter, stand aloof from his Gentile brother for fear of the Jews. But then, the ceremonies of the temple and the company of Trophimus could never be harmonized. Here was the difficulty. If the institutions of the temple were to be honoured and maintained, then why this companionship with an uncircumcised stranger? If Paul and Trophimus were both enrolled as fellow-citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem, then why acknowledge, in any way, the old system of things?

These reflections throw a peculiar interest around the name of Trophimus. It is deeply interesting and instructive just to look at the three passages in which this name occurs. First, we find Trophimus as one of a band of companions who accompanied Paul into Asia. (Acts xx. 4.) Then, we find him in company with the apostle in the city of Jerusalem. (Acts xxi. 29.) And, lastly, we find him laid on a sick bed at Miletum. Here the curtain drops upon him. Here he might calmly review the past. Here, too, he might confidently look forward into the future. He could no longer travel through Asia, nor tread the streets of Jerusalem in company with the most devoted and honoured of men. He was an invalid at

Miletum and Paul was a prisoner at Rome; but both could, with undimmed eye, look upward to that bright and blessed world above to which they were both hastening onward, and where they are now safely housed to go no more out for ever.



WHAT HAS THE BLOOD OF CHRIST DONE FOR US?

From notes of a Discourse on Heb. ix. 7—14.

No pen can write, no tongue can tell, what the blood-shedding of Jesus has accomplished. The wondrous fruits of that one sacrifice, both God-ward and man-ward, are infinite in their variety. The intrinsic value of that blood has fully and fairly met all the claims of God—every demand of the law—and the whole need of man. It has laid a foundation, or rather, in itself forms *the* foundation for the full display, throughout eternity, of the glory of God, and the complete blessedness of His people. Its virtue is felt throughout the highest heights of heaven, and appreciated there in a way that we can have no conception of here. But in due time its power shall be manifested throughout the whole universe. The vernal bloom of every leaf, and flower, and blade of grass—the playful lambkin, and the harmless lion—the reign of peace and plenty throughout the whole creation—in the day of His millennial glory, shall alike proclaim the redemption-power of the blood of the cross. And on the other hand, the awful consequences of sinners despising that precious blood, shall be endured for ever in the deepest depths of unutterable woe. Its power must be felt everywhere.

But to the *believer*, the *truster* in that precious blood, it has opened the pearly gates of heaven, and shut for ever the gloomy gates of hell. It has quenched the flames of the burning lake, and opened up the everlasting springs of God's redeeming love. It has plucked him as a brand out of the fire, cleansed him from every stain of sin, and

planted him in robes of unsullied brightness in the immediate presence of God. For none has the blood of Christ done so much as for the hell-deserving sinner. And no order of beings in the bright world above, can ever know the value of that blood, or appreciate the heart that it flowed from, like the redeemed sinner. It was an *elder*, not an *angel*, as one has sweetly said, that told the weeping prophet of the One who had prevailed to open the seven-sealed book: "And one of the elders said unto me, Weep not; behold, the lion of the tribe of Juda, the root of David, hath *prevailed* to open the book and to loose the seven seals thereof." (Rev. v. 5.) There are depths in that blessed word *prevailed* which only a saved sinner can know.

But of all the precious, happy fruits of the blood-shedding of Jesus for us, there is one peculiarly sweet to my heart. Perhaps it is wrong to speak of choosing, where all are divinely perfect, and flowing from the same source; but now, tell me, beloved friends, have you ever thought much of the wondrous blessedness of being brought back to God? I do not mean *into heaven* merely, but *unto God*, and that, too, in companionship with Jesus—as one with Him. O, is there not something that comes so home to our hearts, in the knowledge that we are brought back from our wanderings in the far country, to the Father's house—the Father's home—the Father's heart—the fulness in blessing of the Father's presence? I have often thought that the prodigal would be so overcome with the Father's love, that he would neither see, nor think about, anything else. Had his eye and his heart rested on the robe, the ring, and the feast, more than on his Father's love, would you not be ready to cry out, Unworthy, unworthy? Oh, what are jewels, however sparkling—robes, however fair—crowns, however bright—or feasts, however sumptuous—compared with the deep and changeless affections of the heart, yes! and of a Father's heart too? This will be our heaven, and the very consummation of heaven's blessedness. With Jesus, and like Jesus, at home in the Father's presence, and finding all

our happiness there. The apostle has reached the climax when he says, "But we also joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom. v. 11.) Higher than this he can never go, and better than this he can never get.

There are three things which the blood of Christ has done to accomplish this deeply blessed end for us, namely, to bring us back to God.

I. The way into the presence of God was opened up for us by the blood of the cross. (True, it was always open to the sinner by faith for salvation. Here, it is more a question of worship.) Up till that time the way into the holiest of all had not been made manifest, or laid open. (Ver. 8. God dwelt behind the vail, and His people Israel worshipped Him outside. But the same stroke of judgment that slew the Lamb, and shed His blood, rent the vail from top to bottom, thus laying fully open the way into the immediate, unveiled presence of God. The blood of bulls and goats never could do this. We read in the 16th of Leviticus that on the great day of atonement Aaron sprinkled the blood of the young bullock on the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat seven times, thereby maintaining God's relations with the people, and the ground of their approach to Him for twelve months to come. But there was no rending of the veil, or liberty to draw near to God, save by the high priest alone, and that only once a year, and never without the blood of atonement.

But the blood of the Lamb which flowed on Calvary has accomplished all for us. The vail is removed. The mercy seat above, and the way up to it, are, as it were, sprinkled *seven* times. The number *seven* signifies perfection. All has been perfectly accomplished by Jesus. From the cross to the throne we have a blood-sprinkled pathway. Oh! what a truth this is. Every step of the way is tracked with the Saviour's love. Oh! how this should strengthen our faith, and bind our hearts to Him. The way to God is now open at all times, for Jew and Gentile—for the chief of sinners. In the faith of this

precious blood the guiltiest may come. Come! where to? Into the Holiest of all. He will find the blood there before him. God is satisfied. His character, as well as His claims, have been glorified in the work of His Son. He reposes with divine complacency on the blood-stained merc seat. But how is the sinner met when he comes? In judgment for his sins? No; that was executed on the cross. Love alone remains to welcome the returning sinner. What! nothing about his sins? No; that question was settled on the cross. God will never raise it again with the poor sinner that trusts in Jesus. He both forgives and forgets. Did the father say any thing about sin to the prodigal? Not a word. The prodigal confessed his sins, and that was a right thing for him to do. But God settled with Christ on the cross about his sins. Love, boundless love, flows out to meet the sinner and welcome him home. No barrier intercepts his way. It is perfectly clear. Christ Himself has laid it open—laid it open for ever. Oh! then, my fellow sinner, come. Come now. Return to the Father's house. Thy return will make Him glad, and His arm around thy neck will banish fear, and fill thy soul with a new and heavenly joy. Better far to dwell in heaven than in hell for ever. Christ has opened the way. The blood of reconciliation is there. Fear not, only come. Come depending on that soul-saving, peace-speaking blood. Why delay? Only trust in the blood of Jesus and thou art safe for ever. All who honour the blood of Jesus with the confidence of their hearts, get the highest, and the best place in heaven.

II. The blood of Christ has fitted the believer to enter the open way, and to stand with a "perfect conscience" in the presence of God. (ver. 8—14; chap. x. 1—2.) Blessed truth! No sin is left on the conscience. There is no more conscience of sins. Although, of course, we shall have the consciousness of sin in us while we are here. But the blood of Christ cleanseth us from *all*, not *some* sin. As a young convert so simply but truly answered me the other day,

when I was saying to her, "What a blessed thing to know that our sins are all forgiven," "O, yes," she replied, "why, if there was one left we could not get into heaven." Sin is as far away from the worshipper in God's presence, as from Christ who bore it. We shall never need to be ashamed of our robes in heaven, or seek to hide ourselves behind a myriad of radiant ones. Our clothing is the righteousness of God. The highest angel will never have such a robe. Could envy enter the bosom of an angel, it would be because the saved sinner's robe is brighter than his. The blood-washed robes will be the whitest in heaven. They will be the same as Christ's, blessed be His name, and more than this we can never say.

But there is another thing, beloved friends, that I would notice about our being fitted to enter heaven, and that is, *we enter by the same title as Christ Himself*. He entered by His own blood. (Ver. 12.) In virtue of His own blood. So do we. He would enter, not now on the ground of His own intrinsic righteousness merely, but by the same title as His people. Blessed Jesus! what grace! Having been "numbered with transgressors," He enters heaven by the title which equally serves for them. Hence clearly, the same welcome, the same place of nearness to the throne, as Christ Himself, await all who come in the faith of that blood. The gates were lifted up, and the doors wide open flung, when the victorious Jesus returned. We have the same title—the same right of entrance—the same joyous welcome as Christ Himself. But where, beloved friends, does this precious blood set the believer? Not within the threshold of heaven merely, but in the Holiest of all—near as Christ is near. I was speaking the other day about the place of nearness, and dearness into which we are brought in Christ, when a christian friend replied, "O, I do not aspire to that, I shall be satisfied if I be only a door-keeper." But would Christ be satisfied? was my reply. What! a loving bridegroom allow his bride to be a door-keeper! What would you think of such a thing? The

bridegroom to keep his seat at the joyous table, and allow the loved one of his heart to stand behind the door to open it to every one that knocks! This is a false humility; such thoughts are not honouring to Christ. True, in this world, it would be better far to be a doorkeeper in the house of God, than to have the highest place in the tents of wickedness. But the bride of the Lamb must be where He is, and as He is, and that for ever.

How did the saved thief enter heaven? With Christ, and in all His perfectness. "To-day shalt thou be *with me* in paradise." He was not merely to be within the door, but with Christ, wherever that might be. O! these blessed words "with me!" they settle and define everything as to our heaven. "With me"—"with Christ"—"with the Lamb whithersoever he goeth." When He is on the throne, so shall I. When He is on the mountains of myrrh, so shall I. When He is in the shady grove, so shall I. When He is in the banquetting house, so shall I. O! what a heaven ours will be! always with Christ, and as Christ. Heaven would be a dreary blank to us without Christ, and it would be a dreary blank to Him without us. We can never be separated throughout eternity. The members must be where the Head is, and the bride must be where the bridegroom is. But, oh! the assurance of His love makes our hearts long to be with Him.

Are all here ready to go with Jesus, were He to come to-night? Oh! make friends with the Lamb now. His love is sweet—His blood is precious—His home is dear. With arms extended wide, He waits to embrace and welcome to His heart every soul that will trust Him. It seems to me a small thing merely to trust Him. I want you all to love Him. To love Him for His own sake. Happy, happy they who love the blessed Lord Jesus.

III. The blood of Christ has obtained for us "eternal redemption." (Ver. 12) Oh! beloved friends, what a word this is to an immortal soul! And, oh! to find it written in God's book. There it is, read it for yourselves. "*Eternal*

redemption." It is enough! Jesus has obtained it. All the blessedness we have been speaking of is to be *eternal*. Not only has the blood of Christ opened up the way into heaven for us—fitted us to be there, and given us a right and title to all its blessedness; but it has engraven that divine word, "*eternal*" on all that it has made us, and on all that it has brought us into. Not only is all perfect, but all is permanent. Oh! this just suits immortal souls—does it suit yours? It sweetly suits mine. "*Eternal redemption.*" That will do. It overflows the heart. My soul is eternal,—God's glory is eternal,—heaven's joys are eternal,—the love of Jesus is eternal,—yes, the sweet love of Jesus shall endure for ever—shall shine in my soul, and in yours who believe, throughout the countless ages of eternity. No wonder the redeemed in heaven sing so much about the blood of Christ. It seems to be the principal note in their song "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood." This is a note which no angelic voice can ever reach. It is too far above the line for angel choirs. They will have a song, and a sweet song too, for they do love Jesus. But they must all sing seconds to the ransomed from hell. O, how loud, and long, and rapturous will be our note of praise to Him who drained the cup of wrath for us—who washed all our sins away—who lifted us out of our low estate, and set us in the highest place in heaven—who has chosen us to be the companions of His ways, and the sharers of His eternal glory.

Oh! now, my fellow sinners, tell me, is there a soul present that can yet refuse the Saviour's love—that can slight this precious blood, despise all this coming glory, and neglect so great salvation. God forbid! His love is ready to receive you—His blood is ready to cleanse you—His salvation is ready to bless you. All things are ready on God's part. Are you ready? ready now—ready to-night? Ready to embrace the Saviour—ready to give Him your

hearts? Does it require time to consider whether Jesus and all His love and glory, or the world, and sin, and hell are to be your choice? You must make a choice. And you have only to choose between the way to hell and the way to heaven. Can you hesitate! Oh! love the Lord Jesus, trust in the Lord Jesus, and choose the new and living way, which leads to glory, honour, immortality, eternal life.

WE are by Christ redeemed :
The cost—His precious blood ;
Be nothing by our souls esteemed
Like this great good.
Were the vast world our own,
With all its varied store,
And Thou, Lord Jesus, wert unknown,
We still were poor.

Our earthen vessels break ;
The world itself grows old ;
But Christ our precious dust will take
And freshly mould :
He'll give these bodies vile
A fashion like His own ;
He'll bid the whole creation smile,
And hush its groan.

Thus far, by grace preserved,
Each moment speeds us on ;
The crown and kingdom are reserved
Where Christ is gone.
When cloudless morning shines,
We shall His glory share ;
In pleasant places are the lines ;
The home how fair !

To God our weakness clings
Through tribulation sore,
And seeks the covert of His wings
Till all be o'er.
And when we've run the race,
And fought the faithful fight,
We hope to see Him face to face,
With saints in light.



GRACE AND GOVERNMENT.

THE title of this paper may possibly present a theme to which some of our readers have not given much of their attention; and yet few themes are more important. Indeed, we believe that the difficulty felt in expounding many passages of holy scripture, and in interpreting many acts of divine providence, is justly traceable to a want of clearness as to the vast difference between God in grace and God in government. Now, as it is our constant aim, in the conducting of this periodical, to meet the actual need of our readers, we purpose, in dependence upon the Spirit's teaching, to unfold a few of the leading passages of Scripture in which the distinction between grace and government is fully and clearly presented.

In the third chapter of the book of Genesis we shall find our first illustration—the first exhibition of divine grace and divine government. Here, we find man a sinner—a ruined, guilty, naked sinner. But here, too, we find God in grace, to remedy the ruin, to cleanse the guilt, to clothe the nakedness. All this He does in His own way. He silences the serpent and consigns him to eternal ignominy. He establishes His own eternal glory, and provides both life and righteousness for the sinner—all through the bruised seed of the woman.

Now, this was grace—unqualified grace—free, unconditional, perfect grace—the grace of God. The Lord God gives His Son to be, as “the seed of the woman,” bruised for man's redemption—to be slain to furnish a robe of divine righteousness for a naked sinner. This, I repeat, was grace of the most unmistakable nature. But then, be it carefully noted, that in immediate connexion with this first grand display of grace, we have the first solemn act of divine government. It was grace that clothed the man. It was government that drove him out of Eden. “Unto Adam

also, and to his wife, did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them." Here we have an act of purest grace. But then we read, "So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden, cherubims and a flaming sword, which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." Here we have a solemn, soul-subduing act of government. The coat of skin was the sweet pledge of grace. The flaming sword was the solemn ensign of government. Adam was the subject of both. When he looked at the coat, he could think of divine grace; when he looked at the sword, he was reminded of divine government.

Hence, therefore, the "coat" and the "sword"* may be regarded as the earliest expression of "grace" and "government." True, these things appear before us in new forms, as we pass down along the current of inspiration. Grace shines in brighter beams, and government clothes itself in robes of deeper solemnity. Moreover, both grace and government assume an aspect less enigmatical, as they develop themselves in connexion with the personal history of the people of God, from age to age; but still it is deeply interesting to find those grand realities so distinctly presented under the early figures of the coat and the sword.

The reader may, perhaps, feel disposed to ask, "How was it that the Lord God drove out the man, if he had previously forgiven him?" The same question may be asked in connexion with every scene, throughout the entire book of God and throughout the entire history of the people of God, in which the combined action of grace and government is exemplified. Grace forgives; but the wheels of government roll on in all their terrible majesty. Adam was perfectly forgiven, but his sin produced its own results. The guilt of his conscience

* The "sword" is the ensign of divine government, the cherubims are the invariable companions thereof. Both symbols are frequently used throughout the word of God.

was removed, but not the "sweat of his brow." He went out pardoned and clothed; but it was into the midst of "thorns and thistles" he went. He could feed, in secret, on the precious fruits of grace, while he recognized, in public, the solemn and unavoidable enactments of government.

Thus it was with Adam; thus it has been, ever since; and thus it is, at this moment. My reader should seek to get a clear understanding of this subject, in the light of scripture. It is well worthy of his prayerful attention. It too frequently happens that grace and government are confounded, and as a necessary consequence, grace is robbed of its charms, and government is shorn of its solemn dignities; the full and unqualified forgiveness of sins, which the sinner might enjoy, on the ground of free grace, is rarely apprehended, because the heart is occupied with the stern enactments of government. The two things are as distinct as any two things can be, and this distinctness is as clearly maintained in the third chapter of Genesis, as in any other section of the inspired volume. Did the "thorns and thistles" with which Adam found himself surrounded, on his expulsion from Eden, interfere with that full forgiveness of which grace had previously assured him? Clearly not. His heart had been gladdened by the bright beams of the lamp of promise, and his person clothed in the robe which grace had fashioned for him, ere he was sent forth into a cursed and groaning earth, there to toil and struggle, by the just decree of the throne of government. God's government "drove out the man;" but not until God's grace had pardoned and clothed him. That sent him forth into a world of gloom; but not until this had placed in his hand the lamp of promise to cheer him through the gloom. He could bear the solemn decree of government, in proportion as he experienced the rich provision of grace.

Thus much as to Adam's history, in so far as it illustrates our thesis. We shall now pass on to the ark and deluge,

in the days of Noah, which, like the coat of skin and the flaming sword, exemplify, in a striking way, divine grace and divine government.

The inspired narrative of Cain and his posterity presents, in lines of unflinching faithfulness, the progress of *man* in his fallen condition ; while the history of Abel and his immediate line, unfolds to us, in glowing contrast, the progress of those who were called to live a life of faith in the midst of that scene into which the enactments of the throne of government had driven our first parents. The former pursued, with headlong speed, the downward course, until their consummated guilt, brought down the heavy judgment of the throne of government. The latter, on the contrary, pursued, through grace, an upward course, and were safely borne, through the judgment, into a restored earth.

Now, it is interesting to see that before ever the governmental act of judgment proceeded, the elect family, and all with them, were safely locked in the ark, the vessel of grace. Noah, safe in the ark, like Adam clad in the coat, was the witness of Jehovah's unqualified grace; and, as such, he could contemplate the throne of government, as it poured its appalling judgment upon a defiled world. God in grace saved Noah, ere God in government swept the earth with the besom of judgment. It is grace and government, over again. That, acts in salvation; this, in judgment. God is seen in both. Every atom of the ark bore the sweet impress of grace; every wave of the deluge reflected the solemn decree of government.

We shall just select one case more from the book of Genesis — a deeply practical case — one in which the combined action of grace and government is seen in a very solemn and impressive way. I allude to the case of the Patriarch Jacob. The entire history of this remarkable man presents a series of events illustrative of our theme. I shall merely refer to the one case of his deceiving his father for the purpose of supplanting his

brother. The sovereign grace of God had, long before Jacob was born, secured to him a pre-eminence of which no man could ever deprive him ; but, not satisfied to wait for God's time and way, he set about managing matters for himself. What was the result ? His entire after life furnishes the admonitory reply. Exile from his father's house ; twenty years of hard servitude ; his wages changed ten times ; never permitted to see his mother again ; fear of being murdered by his injured brother ; dishonour cast upon his family ; terror of his life from the Shechemites ; deceived by his ten sons ; plunged into deep sorrow by the supposed death of his favourite Joseph ; apprehension of death by famine ; and, finally, death in a strange land.

Reader, what a lesson is here ! Jacob was a subject of grace—sovereign, changeless, eternal grace. This is a settled point. But, then, he was a subject of government likewise ; and, be it well remembered, that no exercise of grace can ever interfere with the onward movement of the wheels of government. That movement is resistless. Far easier would it be to stem the ocean's rising tide with a feather, or check the whirlwind with a spider's web, than to stay, by any power, angelic, human, or diabolical, the mighty movement of Jehovah's governmental chariot.

All this is deeply solemn. Grace pardons ; yes, freely fully, and eternally pardons ; but what is sown must be reaped. A man may be sent by his master to sow a field with wheat, and through ignorance, dulness, or gross inattention, he sows some noxious weed. His master hears of the mistake, and in the exercise of his grace he pardons it—pardons it freely and fully. What then ? Will the gracious pardon change the nature of the crop ? Assuredly not ; and, hence, in due time, when golden ears should cover the field, the servant sees it covered with noxious weeds. Does the sight of the weeds make him doubt his master's grace ? By no means. As the master's grace did not alter the nature of the crop, so neither does the nature

of the crop touch, for a moment, the master's grace, nor interfere, in the smallest degree, with the pardon flowing therefrom. The two things are perfectly distinct; nor would the principle be infringed even though the master were, by the application of extraordinary skill, to extract from the weed a drug infinitely more valuable than the wheat itself. It would still hold good that "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap."

This will illustrate, in a feeble way, the difference between grace and government. The passage just quoted from the sixth of Galatians, is a brief, but most comprehensive statement of the great governmental principle—a principle of the gravest and most practical nature—a principle of the widest application. "Whatsoever *a man* soweth." It matters not who he is. As is your sowing, so will be your reaping. Grace pardons; nay, more, it may make you higher and happier than ever; but if you sow weeds in spring, you will not reap wheat in harvest. This is as plain as it is practical, and as practical as it is plain. It is illustrated and enforced both by scripture and experience.

Look at the case of Moses. He spake unadvisedly with his lips at the waters of Meribah. (Numb. xx.) What was the result? Jehovah's governmental decree prohibited his entrance into the promised land. But, be it noted, while the decree of the throne kept him out of Canaan, the boundless grace of God brought him up to Pisgah. (Deut. xxxiv.) where he saw the land, not as it was taken by the hand of Israel, but as it had been given by the covenant of Jehovah. And what then? Jehovah buried His dear servant! What grace shines in this! Truly, if the spirit is overawed by the solemn decree of the throne at Meribah, the heart is enraptured by the matchless grace on the top of Pisgah. Jehovah's government kept Moses out of Canaan. Jehovah's grace dug a grave for Moses in the plains of Moab. Was there ever such a burial? May

we not say that the grace that dug the grave of Moses is only outshone by the grace that occupied the grave of Christ? Yes; Jehovah can dig a grave, or make a coat; and, moreover, the grace that shines in these marvellous acts is only enhanced by being looked at in connexion with the solemn enactments of the throne of government.

But let us take another case, ere we close this paper. Look at David, "In the matter of Uriah the Hittite." Here we have a most striking exhibition of grace and government. In an evil hour David fell from his holy elevation. Under the blinding power of lust, he rushed into a deep and horrible pit of moral pollution. There, in that deep pit, the arrow of conviction reached his conscience, and drew forth from his broken heart those penitential accents, "I have sinned against the Lord." How were those accents met? By the clear and ready response of that free grace in which our God ever delights. "The Lord hath put away thy sin." This was absolute grace. David's sin was perfectly forgiven. There can be no question as to this. But hardly had the soothing accents of grace fallen on David's ear, ere the solemn movement of the wheels of government was heard in the distance. No sooner had mercy's tender hand removed the guilt, than "the sword" was drawn from the scabbard to execute the necessary judgment. This is deeply solemnizing. David was fully pardoned, but Absalom rose in rebellion. "Whosoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." The sin of sowing weeds may be forgiven, but the reaping must be according to the sowing. The former is grace; the latter is government. Each acts in its own sphere, and neither interferes with the other. The lustre of the grace and the dignity of the government are both divine. David was permitted to tread the courts of the sanctuary, as a subject of grace, (2 Sam. xii. 20,) ere he was called to climb the rugged sides of Mount Olivet, as a subject of government; (2 Sam. xv. 30,) and we may safely assert that David's

harp never sent forth sweeter notes in praise of divine grace than at the very moment in which he was experiencing the impressive action of divine government.

Sufficient has now been said to open to the mind of the reader a subject which he can easily pursue for himself. The scriptures are full of it; and human life illustrates it every day. How often do we see men in the fullest enjoyment of grace, knowing the pardon of all their sins, walking in unclouded communion with God, and, all the while, suffering, in body or estate, the terrible consequences of past follies and excesses. Here, again, you have grace and government. Nothing can be more important, in its way, than a clear sense of this subject. It is immensely practical, and will be found to aid the soul very effectively in its study, not only of the page of inspiration, but also of the page of human biography.

I shall close this article by quoting for my reader a passage which is often erroneously adduced as an exhibition of grace, whereas it is entirely an exhibition of government. "And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation." (Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7.) Were we to regard this passage as a presentation of God in the gospel, we should have a very limited view indeed of what the gospel is. The gospel speaketh on this wise, "God was in Christ *reconciling* the world unto himself, *not imputing* their trespasses unto them." (2 Cor. v. 19.) "Visiting iniquity" and "not imputing" it are two totally different things. The former is God in government; the latter is God in grace. It is the same God, but a different manifestation.

“THE GOD OF PEACE.”

“Now the God of peace that 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 title under which the Holy Ghost, in this passage, introduces God to our thoughts, is peculiarly expressive. He calls Him, “The God of peace.” That is what He is to us, in connexion with the opening grave of “The great Shepherd of the sheep,” and on the foundation of “The blood of the everlasting covenant.” In short, we have, in this most comprehensive passage, two persons, and two things. We have the God of peace, and the Lord Jesus; the blood of the everlasting covenant, and the resurrection from the dead. All these we have under the pen of the Holy Ghost.

But there is another title under which God must be seen before the soul can really enjoy Him as “The God of peace,” and that is as “The God of judgment.” To speak of peace, while the claims of God, in this latter character, lie unanswered, is the very height of presumptuous folly. God can have no peace with sin, in any shape or form. If sin be not put away, there can be no peace with God. There may be the peace of ignorance, the peace of carnal security, the peace of a hardened heart, the peace of a seared conscience; but there can be no peace with God, so long as sin remains unjudged. Hence, therefore, it becomes us to inquire on what ground can the inspired apostle speak of God as “The God of peace.”

The ground is this—may the anxious reader understand it!—“The God of judgment” met the Sin-Bearer, at the cross, and there went into the entire question of sin and settled it once and for ever. The Divine Substitute

made peace, by the cross, in order that "The God of peace" might meet us, without judgment, at the opening grave. All that the God of judgment had against my sins, He laid on the head of my substitute, on the cross, in order that I might know and enjoy Him as the God of peace. This is the grand fundamental truth of the gospel which must, when simply believed, give settled peace to the conscience. The justice of God has been perfectly satisfied about sin, by the death of Christ. Nay, more, God has been glorified about sin, by the death of Christ. Yes, dear reader, not only has God been perfectly satisfied, but eternally glorified in reference to sin, by the blood of the cross. This must give peace to every one who simply believes it.

It is truly wonderful to think of the meagre view we take of the gospel, notwithstanding its moral grandeur, as it shines before us in the pages of the book of God. From the way in which one sometimes hears the gospel put, it would seem as though forgiveness of sins were the fruit of an exercise of mercy at the expense of justice, or as though justice consented to stand aside while mercy pardons and saves. How different is this from that stupendous scheme of redemption which had its origin in the bosom of God; which was laid in the eternal counsels of the Trinity, before the foundation of the world; which was ratified by the blood of the everlasting covenant; which is revealed by the Holy Ghost, in the scriptures of truth, and received by faith into the hearts of all those who, through grace, "set to their seal that God is true!" In that glorious scheme we behold mercy and truth, righteousness and peace, blessedly combined; so that the sinner is as positively saved by righteousness and truth as by mercy and peace. The latter are not more favourable to him than the former. Justice and judgment are the pillars of that blood-sprinkled throne of grace to which the saved sinner approaches in worship and adoration.

Is my reader anxious about salvation? Is he desirous of knowing the pardon of his sins? Does he sigh after the peace of the gospel? If so, let him only pause and think of this;—"The God of judgment" met Christ on the cross, and there entered into and definitively settled the great question of sin. How is this to be known? Is it by some feeling in my own mind? Is it by my passing through some mental process? Is it by aught that I can do, or say, or think, or feel? Nay. How then? "The God of peace brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus." This is the way I am to know that the question of sin has been eternally settled. If it had not been settled, we should never have heard aught of "The God of peace," or seen aught of "The great Shepherd's" opening grave, or known aught of the changeless efficacy of the blood of "The everlasting covenant." The God of peace could never have appeared on the scene, if all the claims of the God of judgment had not been divinely answered. How were they answered? By the blood of Jesus—nothing less—nothing more—nothing different. Nought else could avail. If I had all the good works that were ever performed beneath the canopy of heaven; if I had all the morality, all the fleshly pietism, all the legal righteousness that ever man could boast of; if I had all the alms that ever were distributed by the hand of benevolence; if I had all these and ten thousand times ten thousand more besides placed to my credit, it would not answer the claims of the God of judgment with respect to my sins. But the death of Christ *has* answered for me. That sacrifice stands before the eye of infinite holiness, in all its solitary grandeur, in all its divine sufficiency. It needs no addition. It has met all. What more do I want, as the ground of my peace? Nothing more. God is satisfied; so am I; the matter is settled for ever, nor can any one or anything ever unsettle it.

Reader, are you satisfied? Is Christ sufficient for you?

Has He done enough to meet the claims of your conscience? Do you want to add something of your own doings or feelings to His all-sufficient atonement? If not, what are you waiting for? You say, "I do not *feel*." I reply, we are not saved by feeling, but by faith. "The just shall live," not by *feeling*, but "by faith." Do you not see that while you talk of not feeling, you are still on legal ground—on the ground of works. You have, it may be, abandoned the idea of *manual* labour, but you are still looking to your *mental* labour. The one is as worthless as the other. Give up both, as a ground of salvation, and take Christ. This is what you want in order to be happy. If you were to hear a person say, "I am happy, now, I have peace with God, because I have given a hundred pounds in charity," would you not pronounce him self-deceived? Doubtless; and yet you say, "If I could *feel*, I should be happy." Where lies the difference between "do" and "feel?" Is not the one as stable a foundation for a sinner's peace as the other? Would it not be better to let Christ supplant both? Is there not enough in Him without your feelings, as well as without your works? If your feelings or your works had been necessary, then why did "The God of peace bring again from the dead our Lord Jesus?" Is it not evident that you are seeking something more, as a ground of peace, than that which is presented to you in the gospel?

Dear friend, do think of this. My heart's desire is that you may rest, now and evermore, in a full Christ; that He may be sufficient for you, as He is sufficient for God. Then feelings and works of the right kind will be forthcoming, not as a ground of peace, but as the fragrant fruits of an enjoyed salvation—not as a title to life, but as the outflow of a life possessed through faith in Christ. May the blessing of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, rest abundantly upon you!

NOTE.—It is interesting to observe the three titles applied

to our blessed Lord Jesus Christ as Shepherd. In John x. He is called "The *good* Shepherd," in *death*. In Heb. xiii. He is called "The *great* Shepherd," in *resurrection*; and in 1 Pet. v. He is called "The *chief* Shepherd," in *glory*. Each title has its own specific meaning, and its own appropriate place.



A PRESENT PARDON;

OR,

"MY SINS ARE ALL AT THE BOTTOM OF
THE SEA."

A FEW weeks ago, we were present at one of those meetings which are now becoming so general, and which, in some instances that we know of, have been made a great blessing—namely, a meeting expressly for the young. On this occasion, about 130 boys were assembled in a school-room, where a plentiful tea was provided for them.

After tea, some suitable hymns were sung, prayer offered, and the boys, though in great spirits, soon became very quiet, and listened with great attention to an address on the subject of their soul's salvation. Towards the end of the discourse, we observed many of them quite fixed in their attention, and some were weeping.

At the close of the service, those who were really anxious about their souls, or had a wish to remain to an after meeting for prayer, were invited. Perhaps one-third of the whole remained. Many of them now seemed in real earnest about their souls. The scene became deeply interesting. Doubtless, on such occasions, one affects another, so that much of the manifestation of feeling may be through sympathy; still, it is always a blessed sight, to see sinners, young or old, affected about the state of their souls. The

Spirit of God alone can so work, and *His* work will remain, and always prove itself. In moving through the room, we were much struck with the earnest expression and ready answers of one boy that we had some conversation with. The flushed cheek, the tearful eye, the agitation of the muscles, all bespoke deep emotion within.

"And has the Lord spoken to your heart to-night, my boy?" was, substantially, our first question.

"I am sure he has, sir," was his immediate reply; and from his general expression, we could believe he was feeling what he said.

"Do you now know, my dear boy, that you are a lost sinner?"

"I know I am, sir."

"But now, tell me, do you think that Jesus has brought you to Himself this evening?"

"I know he has—I am certain."

"What has Jesus done for us that we may come to Him?"

"He died for us."

"Do you mean to tell me, that you believe you are now safe on the arm of Jesus?" (Something had been said, during the address, about Jesus feeding His flock like a shepherd, gathering the lambs with His arm, and carrying them in His bosom. Isa. xl. 11.)

"I believe I am, sir; I feel sure I am."

"You seem very decided, my boy; but now, tell me this, If Jesus has given you a place on His arm to-night, what has He done with your sins?"

"He has put them away, sir—*they are all at the bottom of the sea.*"

This answer was given with such apparent feeling and energy, that we could only say in our hearts, 'surely thou art taught of God, and to Him alone be all the praise.' Not a word had been said, in the address, about the truth, as to the believer's sins being cast into the depths of the

sea. (Micah vii.) In further conversation, we asked the lad if he had been in the habit of attending school here, or if he had been anxious about his soul before this evening. To both questions he answered, "No."

We are well aware, that it may, by some, be difficult to believe, that a boy, or any other person, could have, in so short a time, such assurance of pardon and acceptance. And truly, were we to be guided by the state of things in general throughout Christendom, on this point, we should suspect all such testimonies, whether from young or old. Uncertainty, not assurance, characterizes by far the greater part. Comparatively few have the full assurance of their salvation. And yet, what are the first two questions that each one of us needs to have settled before we can be happy and really enjoy further truth? Why, surely, *pardon and acceptance*. But if we look at the fulness of the gospel, and are guided simply by the truth as it is in Jesus, all such unbelief will vanish. We shall cease to be surprised at such happy results. A *present pardon*, and every blessing connected therewith, are surely proclaimed to the chief of sinners in the gospel of the grace of God. The blessed Jesus Himself, after He was risen from the dead, told His disciples "that repentance and *remission of sins* should be *preached* in his name, among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." (Luke xxiv.) And this, we find, was their practice. Take two examples:—

I. That of Peter in the house of Cornelius (Acts x.), where, after stating the truth about Christ and His finished work, he declares, "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." The same moment the gospel of Christ is believed, the sins are remitted. As the truth enters the heart, the sins are washed away. When the sinner is accepted, his sins are all cast into the depths of the sea. Nay, more, the Holy Ghost enters the heart that

believes and is forgiven. And He will abide there for ever as the *seal* of all the blessings of grace *already* revealed, and as the *earnest* of all the glory that is *yet* to be revealed. "While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word." Heard, of course, not with the outward ear only, but with the ear of faith. The truth preached was received into the heart. In connection with this testimony, see also Eph. i. 13, 14, "In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were *sealed* with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the *earnest* of your inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." Here, every promise, every blessing, is secured to the *truster in Christ*, through the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, by which, believers are made *one with Christ*, and are brought into the same privileges. Oh! how many there are who are really trusting in Christ as the Saviour, and yet are in constant fear and trembling lest they should be lost at last. May God in mercy deliver them from such dreadful bondage, and bring them into the happy liberty of Christ, in whom they are pardoned, accepted, and complete for ever.

II. Our second example is that of Paul in the synagogue at Antioch. (Acts xiii.) To all there assembled he preaches the gospel; not according to human thoughts and feelings, but as he had been taught it of God by the revelation of Jesus Christ. "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins. And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." This is plain enough, surely. All that believed what Paul preached were *pardoned* and *justified* there and then. And they were fully assured of it by the plain statements of the

word of God. The same word that assured them that Jesus had died and risen again, assured them that they were pardoned and justified, through believing in Him. Surely this is full assurance! What can give fuller assurance than the word of God? If, in place of looking to ourselves and our own feelings, or for some inward token of our acceptance, we looked to the word of God, and believed it, just as God has given it, we should at once be delivered from all our doubts and fears. Full, unclouded assurance would take the place of gloomy uncertainty.

Many persons, engaged in the good work of the gospel, whose sincerity could not be doubted, believe and maintain that if conversion be real, besides the statements of God's word as to pardon and acceptance, there will be an inward feeling, sense, or token, witnessing to the genuineness of the work. The inward feeling must prove the truth of the word to them. And if they have not this inward sense of pardon and acceptance, they have no right to believe that the promises apply to them.

In reply to the above statement, which, in substance, we are constantly hearing in connection with the work of the gospel, we would say, most truly, if the work of conversion be genuine, and the FULL GOSPEL be believed, there must be a deep inward feeling of assurance as to pardon and acceptance. But the mistake lies in looking for the inward *sense* of forgiveness before the *word* is believed that assures them they are forgiven. It will be seen at a glance, that such teaching and belief must lead the soul into endless perplexities. Of course, we speak only of earnest, anxious souls, in whom *we* believe there is divine life, although *they* would not believe it themselves.

Under such circumstances, when a sinner is awakened and really turned to Christ in deep earnestness about his salvation, in place of listening to the voice of Jesus, through His word, which only can speak pardon and peace to a

troubled soul, he anxiously looks within for some inward sense or assurance that he is a changed person, a new creature in Christ Jesus. And not feeling sure that he has undergone this change, the word of God, however plain, is not received as applicable to him; consequently, the anxious inquirer is plunged into a state of the most painful perplexity. This class of anxious souls is numerous, and some are to be found in it of a long standing. We once witnessed a soul brought into full peace through simply believing, who had been thirty years in trouble about her salvation. Her joy was great when she saw it was all settled. She could now rest in peace on the authority of the word of Christ.

The grand aim of the enemy in all this system of looking for feelings, is to get the eye of the believer, young or old, turned away from Christ and His word, and turned in upon self. And so long as he succeeds in keeping them occupied with themselves, his end is gained. The poor soul is kept without peace or joy, and, consequently, in weakness, and so an easy prey to his wicked suggestions. Sometimes they think they can feel that all is right, and hope springs up, accompanied with a gleam of joy; at other times they feel cold and dead, and then, dark, dark clouds overshadow them.

But now, let us turn to the word. What light and direction have we from it on this subject? Does not the Lord say, plainly enough, *by His written word*, mark, that all who look to Him as the Saviour, or come to Him—hear Him—believe in Him—trust in Him—are saved? He never says, “may be—will be—or can be,” but, “are saved.” His word meets every state of a soul that has been moved towards Him by the Holy Spirit. The word assures the coming one, that He “will in no wise cast out.” Here, it is assured of acceptance. But, my sins, my sins! it exclaims. Again the word replies, “thy sins are forgiven.” When Christ receives a sinner, He must put away his sins.

He cannot receive them. Or, as the prophet says, "And thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea?" But whose sins? The sins of all who believe in Jesus. But what is meant by "the depths of the sea?" It means they will be cast, where they can never be traced. If you cast a thing into the depths of the sea, you can trace it no more for ever. Thus God and faith get rid of sin. And not *some* sins, observe, but "*all* their sins." Thus, the sinner can rejoice, through believing God's word, that he now rests securely on the arm of Jesus, and that all his sins are at the bottom of the sea—sunk in the untraceable depths of the deep waters of God's everlasting forgetfulness. As it is elsewhere said, on the same subject, "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." Heb. x. 17.

Listen, then, O tossed and troubled soul, to the very words of Scripture. They are the gracious answers of Jesus to thy anxious requests. Expect not to hear His voice from heaven—look not to thyself in anywise. The right feelings will spontaneously arise from the right truth believed. If *good* news be received, thou art made glad—if *sad* news, thou art made sorry. There must be a corresponding feeling to the news believed. But when is this feeling produced? Just when we believe. Not before it, certainly. Oh then, dear reader, believe the good news of the gospel—the full gospel of the grace of God. A present pardon, full justification and acceptance, are assured, on the authority of holy scripture, to all who believe in Jesus. Look not to self—look to Jesus—look to the word. Go to it at all times and under all circumstances. It is the unfailing word of Christ. Confide in it with unmisgiving assurance. It can never be broken. So shall thy peace be perfect, thy joy abundant, and the light of a cloudless sky shall shine on thy interest in Christ, until thou see Him face to face in the bright and sunny regions of eternal glory.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word

and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation ; but is passed from death unto life." John v. 24.

" Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matt. xi. 28.

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
Come unto me and rest ;
Lay down, thou weary one, lay down
Thy head upon my breast.
I came to Jesus as I was,
Weary, and worn, and sad,
I found in Him a resting-place,
And He has made me glad.

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
Behold I freely give
The living water—thirsty one,
Stoop down, and drink, and live.
I came to Jesus, and I drank
Of that life-giving stream ;
My thirst was quench'd, my soul revived,
And now I live in Him.

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
I am this dark world's light,
Look unto me, thy morn shall rise,
And all thy day be bright.
I looked to Jesus, and I found
In Him my Star, my Sun ;
And in that light of life I'll walk,
Till travelling days are done.



NAAMAN THE SYRIAN.

(2 Kings v.)

IN order to profit by the history of Naaman, we must bring it under the light of the New Testament, and interpret it thereby. In this way, we shall find every stage and every point of the narrative fraught with rich and weighty principles of evangelical truth. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable." This statement applies to the fifth chapter of 2 Kings. The record of Naaman's condition, of his course to and from Jordan, of his cleansing and its results, is full of most precious teaching, when viewed in the light which the New Testament pours upon it. Let us, then, in humble dependence upon the Spirit's teaching, proceed to the consideration of this singularly interesting passage of holy scripture.

"Now Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master, 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." Here, then, we have the two sides of Naaman's condition. As to his circumstances, he was all that heart could desire. "Great"—"honourable"—"mighty"—"valiant;" what more could he be? He was, as men would say, one of fortune's most highly favoured sons. He was commander-in-chief of the forces of Syria; he possessed the confidence and esteem of the king; and he wore upon his brow the laurel of victory.

"But he was a *leper*!" Alas! this was a sad drawback—a grievous blight upon all his dignities—a heavy cloud upon all his glory. The foul disease which covered his person not only prevented his enjoyment of the honours which fortune had heaped upon him, but actually changed them into so many sources of humiliation and chagrin. His very elevation made his malady conspicuous, and the

sunshine of prosperity made his personal vileness apparent. His military costume enwrapped the person of a leper, and his laurel of victory crowned a leper's brow. In short, the lowest menial in Naaman's establishment would not have felt the humiliation of leprosy so keenly as the noble captain himself. The higher he was in position, the more intensely he must have felt the degradation and depression of his loathsome disease. What would he not have given to any one who would but take his leprosy? And yet, he was soon to have it taken away for nothing!

Now, when we look at all this from an evangelical point of view, we discern, in the person of Naaman, the case of a sinner in his natural state. He is covered with the disease of sin. Yes; outwardly he is covered, and inwardly pervaded with the incurable malady of sin. He may, like Naaman, be surrounded by wealth and splendour, pillowed on the bosom of fortune, nursed in the very lap of luxury; but he is a sinner—he is lost—he is undone; and when once he is brought to see this, his very honours and dignities only serve to make his inward wretchedness all the more intense. He is lost, and he wants salvation. He wants to have his malady removed, his guilt cancelled, his conscience cleansed. This is what he wants, and this is what God has provided for him. As in Naaman's case, God had the water of Jordan to cleanse him from every trace of his disease, so in the case of the convicted sinner, He has provided "the precious blood of Christ" to cleanse him from every stain of guilt, and free him from every breath of condemnation.

But let us see how strikingly all this comes out in our narrative. "And the Syrians had gone out by companies, and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid; and she waited on Naaman's wife. And she said unto her mistress, Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy." What a difference between this little captive maid and her noble lord! And yet she was in possession of

a grand secret of which he was wholly ignorant. She knew that in the land of Israel her master could find what he wanted. She understood where grace was to be found, and the knowledge of that grace filled her heart with the desire that her lord should partake thereof. "Would God," said she, "he were there." It is ever thus. Grace fills the heart with earnest desire for the good of others. It mattered not to the little maid that she was an exile from the land of her fathers, and a captive in the house of a Syrian. She saw that her master was a leper, and she longed to put him in the way of being healed. The God of Israel was the only One who could perfectly meet a leper's need.

"And one went in, and told his lord, saying, thus and thus saith the maid that is of the land of Israel. And the king of Syria said, Go to, go, and I will send a letter unto the king of Israel. And he departed, and took with him ten talents of silver, and six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment." How hard is it for the human heart to rise to the measure of the thoughts of God! The idea of being cleansed for nothing never entered Naaman's mind. He was, we may safely say, quite ready to give largely, if by that means his leprosy could be cleansed; but the idea of getting all he wanted "without money and without price" was entirely beyond him, and hence his cumbrous preparations. He knew not, as yet, the grace of the God of Israel. He thought that the gift of God was to be purchased with money. Here was his mistake—the mistake of millions—the mistake of the human heart, in every age and in every clime.

And yet, when one looks at it closely, what an absurdity to suppose that a little gold and silver could get aught from "the Most High God, Possessor of heaven and earth!" Yes, this is easily seen to be absurd; but it is not just as easily seen to be absurd to come before God trusting in our own works, in our morality, in our religiousness, in our amended life, our altered conduct, our changed habits, our

pious performances, our tears, prayers, sighs, vows, resolutions, alms-deeds, our feelings, frames and experiences, or in anything, in short, which we could produce of thought, word, or deed. People do not so readily grasp the fact that they might just as well present a piece of silver or gold as the ground of their confidence, as all those things which have been named, and ten thousand times as much besides. If I had all the good works that were ever performed; all the tears that were ever shed; all the sighs that were ever heaved; in one word, if I had all that was ever produced in this world, in the shape of human righteousness, and that multiplied by ten thousand times ten thousand, it would not blot out so much as a single stain from my conscience, or give me solid peace in the presence of a holy God. These things are valuable in their right place; but as a foundation for our souls' peace, we must have *nought but Christ*. He must take the place of everything in which our hearts would place confidence. We have all in Him, and having Him we want no more.

But it takes a long time to convince us of the worthlessness of all our own efforts. It seems passing strange to the human heart to be told that we need no other title to Christ but our utter ruin; that we need not wait to prepare ourselves; that every step in self-improvement is a step in the wrong direction, inasmuch as *self* can never be mended in such a way as to make it fit for God--fit for heaven. Religious flesh is as far from God, as far from righteousness, as far from heaven, as flesh in its very grossest forms. This is a hard saying, but it is true; and, moreover, it is well that its truth should be fully seen. It is of the very last importance that my reader should understand that what is needed is not self-reformation, but a new life altogether, and this life is Christ. This is the grand point. We must get rid of all hopes and expectations from our fallen and corrupt nature, and take Christ as our all and in all. Do what you will with flesh and you can never make it fit for God--fit

for heaven. Flesh could not live in heaven. It could not breathe the atmosphere of that hallowed region. The most fruitless task that ever was undertaken is to effect any improvement in that which God has condemned and set aside as incorrigible and incurable.

Now, it is interesting to see how our chapter opens this line of truth to our view, in its own peculiar style. When Naaman stood with his pompous retinue, and with all his gold and silver, at the door of Elisha, he appears before us as a marked illustration of a sinner building upon his own efforts after righteousness. He seemed furnished with all that heart could desire ; but, in reality, all his preparations were but a useless encumbrance, and the prophet soon gave him to understand this. The brief, simple, pointed message, "*Go wash,*" swept away all confidence in gold, silver, raiment, retinue, the king's letter, everything. It stripped Naaman of everything, and reduced him to his true condition as a poor defiled leper needing to be washed. It put no difference between the illustrious commander-in-chief of the hosts of Syria and the poorest and meanest leper in all the coasts of Israel. The former could do with nothing less ; the latter needed nothing more. Wealth cannot remedy man's ruin, and poverty cannot interfere with God's remedy. Nothing that a man has done need keep him out of heaven ; nothing that he can do will ever get him in. "*Go wash*" is the word, in every case.

Naaman evidently felt the prophet's message to be deeply humbling. He was not prepared for such a total setting aside of all human pretension. He would have liked to be called upon to tell out *his* pieces of gold, *his* talents of silver, *his* changes of raiment ; but to be told to "*go wash,*" without the slightest allusion to any of these things, was quite too humiliating. "But Naaman was wroth and went away, and said, Behold, *I* thought, he will surely come out to *me*, and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover

the leper. Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? May I not wash in them and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage."

Thus it is ever. God's simple plan of salvation is so thoroughly humbling to man's pride that he cannot submit to it. "They being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God." (Rom. x.) And yet, we may say, what right had a leper to reason, to argue, or to prescribe? Had he come to be cleansed or to dictate? Had he tried what "Abana and Pharpar" could do for him? The fact is that Elisha wanted to teach him that he needed to bring nothing to God but his leprosy. All beside was superfluous. This was a noble lesson. Naaman must bring back to Syria every thing he had brought out of it, *except his leprosy*. Such was Elisha's purpose, though that purpose was, in a measure, frustrated by the covetousness of Gehazi. The sinner would fain bring his good deeds to Christ. "I fast twice in the week and give tithes." It is all useless; you must come to Christ bringing only your guilt. You must learn that you want cleansing, and that Christ has it for you. If you think you have a single atom of goodness in you, then you have not yet got to the very bottom of your condition. You may try the Abanas and Pharpars of the legal system; but you must, after all, "go wash in Jordan" ere you can know what it is to be divinely clean.

This is deeply humbling. It puts the legalist "in a rage." All those who think themselves wiser than God, must learn their own folly sooner or later; but as for those who know and own themselves lost, they have but to put their trust in Jesus and be as clean as His precious blood can make them. This is God's simple way of salvation. Jesus has done all. He died for our sins according to the scriptures, and He is now up in heaven as the pledge, proof, and measure of the

believer's acceptance before God. All who, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, and on the authority of the holy scriptures, put their trust in a dead and risen Christ, are as free from guilt and condemnation as He is. Glorious, emancipating, elevating, soul-satisfying fact! May my reader enter into its power! May he prove the deep blessedness of simply taking God at His word!

This was what Naaman, after a fierce struggle, learnt to do. He learnt, after all, to give up all confidence in "Abana and Pharpar," and yield the simple "obedience of faith" to the testimony of God. "And his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean? 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 unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean." This was just and simple reasoning. "If the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it?" No doubt; but then this word, "go wash" was so humiliating, so self-emptying! It left flesh nothing to glory in. "To him that worketh *not*, but *believeth*." "Not of works, lest any man should boast."

Such is God's principle, and to this principle Naaman had to submit. He went and washed in Jordan. He obeyed the word of the Lord. And what was the result? "His flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean." The very moment a sinner submits to God's righteousness, that righteousness becomes his. The very moment he casts himself on Christ he is as safe as Christ can make him. The glory of God is involved in the full and eternal salvation of all those who simply look to Christ. Naaman might have plunged himself, ten thousand times over, in the waters of "Abana and Pharpar," and remained just as he was; but the moment he took God's way, he became as clean as God could make him. Had a

single spot of leprosy appeared on Naaman's person, when he came up out of Jordan, it would have been a dishonour cast upon God's remedy. For a sinner to trust God's salvation and yet not be saved, would involve an eternal insult to the divine glory, and furnish an abiding ground of triumph to all the powers of darkness.

It is important to understand this. To know that the glory of God is involved in my full salvation must impart solid peace to the conscience, and complete emancipation to the heart. I greatly desire to press this upon the anxious reader. God has been glorified in the putting away of sin. What a truth for an exercised heart to get hold of! It is no longer a question of what I am to do with my sins; Christ answered that question over eighteen hundred years ago. This is enough. I rest here, in full assurance that all has been divinely and eternally settled. God is glorified—I am saved—the enemy is silenced—I have only to go on my way rejoicing.

And, now, one word as to the practical results of all this, as seen in Naaman's course, after he came up out of Jordan. Nothing can be more interesting. "His flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean. And he returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and came and stood before him: and he said, Behold *now I know* that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel: now therefore I pray thee take a blessing of thy servant. But he said, As the Lord liveth *before whom I stand*, I will receive none. And he urged him to take it; but he refused."

What a marvellous change in Naaman, from the moment in which he turned and went away in a rage from the door of Elisha, until he found his way back to that door again, cleansed and like a little child! He was, in type, a new creature. He stood on new ground. He was in a new condition. He had submitted to God, and he felt and manifested the precious results of so doing. Thus it is in

every case. The proud, haughty, self sufficient legalist may display all the bitter animosity of his heart against a scheme of redemption which places him on a level with the vilest of the sons of men. He may argue, reason, and rebel ; but the very moment he bows his head and consents to be saved in God's way, all is changed. The animosity and indignation of the legalist, together with the guilt and uncleanness of the sinner, are all left beneath Jordan's flood, and he comes up cleansed and pardoned, calm and humble, to devote all he is, and all he has, to the service of the true God.

But why, let me ask, did Elisha refuse to take a blessing from Naaman's hand? For a truly noble reason. He would have Naaman to return to Syria with this testimony that *the God of Israel had taken nothing from him but his leprosy*. He would have him to go back and declare that his gold and silver were useless in dealing with One who gave *all for nothing*. Elisha would not tarnish the lustre of divine grace by accepting a shekel of the stranger's money. Alas! that the covetous Gehazi should have thwarted his master's noble intention. He fixed his lustful gaze upon the silver and gold. He was wholly incapable of rising to the height of his master's thoughts. He understood not the sacred power of divine grace. He sighed for Naaman's gold. "As the Lord liveth," said he, "I will run after him and take somewhat of him." He could not, like his master, say, "the Lord, *before whom I stand*." Elisha was standing in the presence of God—breathing the very atmosphere of grace. Here lay the secret of his moral elevation and holy disinterestedness. But Gehazi loved money, and hence he cared not how he dimmed the lustre of that grace which had shone upon the pathway of Naaman the Syrian. He would make him pay for his cleansing. He forgot that that was not the time "to receive money and garments." Unhappy man! He gained his heart's desire, but "went out from his master's presence a leper as white as snow." Terrible warning to

all lovers of money! Those who *will* have this world's gold must have this world's leprosy also. A deeply solemn reflection!

How delightful to turn from the contemplation of Gehazi, with his heart full of covetousness, and look at Naaman, with his heart full of thankfulness and praise to the God of Israel! The contrast is as striking as it is pleasing. Naaman's heart went out after the One who, without money and without price, had fully and perfectly met his need. "Shall there not then, I pray thee," he says to Elisha, "be given to thy servant two mules' burden of earth? for thy servant will henceforth offer neither burnt offering nor sacrifice, unto other gods, but unto the Lord." Thus it was with Naaman. He had left home a defiled leper, he was returning thither a cleansed worshipper. What a change! And all done in a moment, when once he took God's way. The work was of God; and, as for Naaman, he had but to bow his head and worship. Having left his leprosy behind him, he desired to bear away with him an altar on which he might offer sacrifices to the only true God.

Thus much as to the practical result in the matter of *worship*. Let us, now, very briefly refer to the question of *walk*. It is obvious that Naaman was exercised as to this latter point. New springs of thought and feeling had been awakened in his soul. A sense of responsibility had been created, to which he had hitherto been a total stranger. Until the moment of his cleansing, all his efforts were directed to the one point of getting rid of his leprosy; now, on the other hand, the grand question was as to his walk before the One who had cleansed him. "In this thing the Lord pardon thy servant, that when my master goeth into the house of Rimmon to worship there, and he leaneth on my hand, and I bow myself in the house of Rimmon; when I bow myself in the house of Rimmon, the Lord pardon thy servant in this thing."

This stipulating was very far below the proper mark. True devotedness never stipulates, never seeks a loophole, never desires to chalk out an easy path. Whenever a person says, "May I do this? Is it wrong to do that? What harm is there in the other thing?" you may be quite sure that Christ has not yet gotten His true place in the heart. If the whole compass of my soul is filled with Christ, I make Him my rule, my measure, my standard, my touchstone in all things. The question, then, is not "What is the harm?" but is it Christ? It is, my beloved reader, be assured of it, a poor, low thing to be questioning as to how far I may go in self-indulgence, without risking my eternal salvation. "To me to live is Christ." This is christianity. May we prove its power, and manifest its fruits!

There is a deep and valuable lesson to be learnt from Elisha's brief answer to Naaman. He does not place him under any rigid rules or legal regulations. To do so would be as foreign to the grace of God as to take money for his cleansing. All must be free. He would not put a yoke upon the neck of one who, hitherto, had been only a subject of grace. He could not say, "go," for that would be to sanction idolatry. He could not say, "don't go," for that would be to sanction legality. The former would be a denial of God's being; the latter a denial of His nature. But mark what the prophet says. Mark his admirable reply. "*Go in peace.*" He casts Naaman back upon the grace which he had already experienced. He does not put him under any bondage. He leaves ample room for the lovely action of personal responsibility, which should never, in any case, be interfered with. The prophet's reply was eminently calculated to produce in Naaman's soul the most salutary exercise. It was calculated to raise in his mind the enquiry, "Can I '*go in peace*' into the temple of Rimmon?" What a searching question! What a healthful exercise! Could he really "*go in peace*" from the altar

of Jehovah to the temple of an idol? Could he combine the altar of earth with the house of Rimmon? The heart that knows aught of the preciousness of Christ, or "the vast constraining influence" of His love, will be at no loss for an answer to all such questions.

May the Holy Ghost unfold and apply this interesting narrative of Naaman the Syrian to the heart of the reader! It is indeed a most fruitful section of inspiration, setting forth the depth of man's ruin—the worthlessness of all his legal struggles—the freeness of God's grace—the efficacy of Christ's work—the precious fruits of a known salvation, and the true principle of a disciple's walk.

May the Lord bless His own word, and His name shall have all the praise!



"COMMIT THY WAY UNTO THE LORD."

MY DEAR YOUNG BROTHER,

* * * *

I can well understand what you feel to be a great trial, and a serious difficulty in your present situation. Still, it may not be your duty hastily to give it up. "He that believeth shall not make haste." (Isa. xxviii. 16.) He may enquire of the Lord, and wait on Him, as to his situation; but he will not act rashly, he will have patience. This is a true christian condition of soul, for we are "in the kingdom and *patience* of Jesus Christ," as to our present path. It will be the kingdom and *power* ere long. Trial must be the rule if we are walking with a rejected Christ, freedom from it the exception.

Some time ago, I knew a young man in a position similar to your own. He became greatly exercised about leaving it. He was the only Christian in the whole establishment. None of the others were even serious. Still, he could not see it to be the Lord's mind that he should leave. He believed the Lord had led him there, and he could not lightly

leave it. He had been converted in it, and the change in his ways was so manifest that he became the subject of all sorts of remarks. He cried to the Lord earnestly for another place, where he might start as a Christian, but no opening appeared. When passing through deep and constant exercise of soul, the following word was brought home with great power to his heart, "Let every man, wherein he is called, therein *abide with God*." (1 Cor. vii. 24.) Now the question assumed another form in his mind, namely, having been called in this situation, can I *abide therein with God*? This became the great question: can I abide in my present place with God? And this, dear brother, should be the grand question as to all occupation: not, can I get rid of this trial, or of that difficulty, by making a change; but, can I continue in my present situation *with God*? If so, wait patiently until He makes the way plain for you to leave.

The young man referred to, was satisfied that he could abide with God in his situation, although there were some things very painful to put up with. He was led to great watchfulness, and frequent prayer. And now, the opposition he had to meet, seemed but to strengthen the life of God in his soul. Every day proved to him more and more the riches of his portion in Christ, and the wretchedness of those in the world. He pitied them, and prayed for them. He felt how much better off he was than they were; and the thought of the Lord's goodness to him, made him patient, enduring, and long-suffering with them. Indeed, after watching the case most closely, I feel assured, that the strong current of the world by which he was surrounded, and the many disagreeable things he had to bear, proved a wholesome discipline to his soul. He exhibited an energy of life, a strength of principle, and an appreciation of Christ as his portion, which many who are excessively loved, and who enjoy every privilege as Christians, fail to manifest. He remained there for several years, and

the end proved that God was with him. Still, we must bear in mind, that the same atmosphere would not suit every plant.

Your situation, altogether, dear brother, is no uncommon one. I know many now, who are constantly exposed to vain and trifling conversation, and not unfrequently to what the scriptures call "The filthy conversation of the wicked ;" and which is often uttered and indulged in, with no other view, than to grieve and annoy some one whom they know to be different from themselves. This, I know, is extremely painful, and when there is little hope of amendment, it becomes very perplexing as to what course to take. If one willingly and deliberately exposed himself to such things for the sake of greater worldly gain, as Lot did, it would be very sad, and he could not count on having God with him in it. But when a young man meets with such things in his lawful calling, what is he to do ? This is your difficulty.

Should you not consider, dear brother, that the remarks, conversation, and unfair demands upon you, are so many aspects of the enmity of Satan against Christ ? One young man may seek to annoy and vex another, in the same workshop, or at the same desk ; but to faith, and in God's sight, the struggle is of a deeper character. It is really, I believe, between Christ and Satan ; and you must thus judge of it, and stand by faith on your vantage ground, as having already the victory in Christ. And this will lead you to care for Christ, and not yourself—to shew a zeal for His glory, and not your own character. Were you to give in to the ways of the flesh, whether in yourself or others, Satan would not seek to disturb you ; he would rather soothe and stimulate you in such a course. But when he finds you going on with Christ, and walking so as to please Him, he will be your constant and determined foe. But you need not fear. Only bear in mind, that by the mighty power of God, you are raised far above every enemy in

Christ. (Eph. i. 18—23.) Every enemy is beneath His feet, and every enemy is beneath yours in Him. Only see that you *abide in Christ*. How many dear Christians, are, practically, at least, beneath the enemy's feet, from not seeing their true position of victory in Christ. Satan will be sure to stand, as it were, at the very door of heaven and seek to hinder souls from entering into their full portion in the heavenlies. Those who know the value of the blood of the Lamb, overcome these wicked spirits, and triumph in the victories of Christ in heavenly places. Read carefully Eph. vi. 10—18.

In passing, let me say a word to you, my dear G. about the armour. The first thing detailed, you will observe, is your moral condition. This is most important, see ver. 14, 15. The girdle of truth—the breastplate of righteousness—the gospel of peace. Truth, Righteousness, and Peace should characterize you. These three things should be seen. Be ever girded—well braced up with truth. You may have seen the rays of light strike upon, and radiate from, the soldier's breastplate, so should it be with us, morally. Walk in full communion with the God of peace, though at war with the devil, the world, and the flesh.

Secondly. For your protection, you have the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit. ver. 16, 17. If the shield of faith be raised the fiery darts of the wicked one will fall pointless and powerless to the ground. Faith alone can quench the darts of unbelief. The helmet shelters the head in the day of battle. It would be foolish for a warrior to enter the battle-field bare-headed. The full assurance of salvation is a divine safeguard. Uncertainty on this point, would be certain defeat in conflict. The sword of the Spirit, when wielded in communion with God, will inflict a fatal blow. "Thus it is written," or the Spirit's sword in the hand of Jesus, gained the victory.

Thirdly. See that your armour is properly buckled on, nicely fitted, and firmly fastened by prayer. Ver. 17.

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints."

Thus, and thus alone, my dear young brother, are you fitted to meet and overcome the enemy, whether amidst the scenes of earth, or in heavenly places. It would appear that through the evil passions of men he seeks to act against the christian down here, and through wicked spirits up there. The blood of the Lamb will make you an overcomer in the heavenlies, and the word of God in the earthlies. Seek to know the value of the former and to be well skilled in the use of the latter.

And now, as to whether you should give up your present situation or not, I cannot say. There is nothing in the calling itself to hinder you abiding therein with God. You would find trials and difficulties in every situation. But the Lord will guide. Look to Him. Keep near to Him. It may be His will that you should remain, at present, where you are, for a testimony to Him. I have known some to give up their situations, in the hope of getting one where they would have greater privileges, and more opportunities for useful service. This seems good and right, but it is not always so. Perhaps the Lord intended them to bear a *quiet testimony*, and they sought *public service*. We have to watch against feelings as to our own importance in that way. Oh, seek to follow the Lord and not your own inclination. "He that followeth me," He says, "shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." (John viii. 12.) And again, "If, therefore, thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light." (Matt. vi. 22.) That means, if your *object* be right, light will shine on your path.

Patiently wait on God. "Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you." Leave all to Him. Confide in Him. Surely you may, seeing "He careth for you." The natural man thinks that if he had the power, he would care better for himself than God does. Watch against

this feeling creeping over your mind. It is natural to us all. As a christian mother lately said to me, "Oh, if I had the power, my two sons would be converted to-night." This is a very common feeling, but it has to be watched against. Its tendency is to exalt self, and to lower our thoughts of God's love and care for us, and so take us off the ground of implicit rest and confidence in Him. Have you not sometimes thought, that if you had the power, you would soon have a much nicer situation than your present one? But whether it be about the conversion of children, or changing our situation, we must learn to wait quietly on God, and leave all to Him. Rest assured that He will not only do better for you than you could do for yourself, but the end will prove that He has done better for you than you ever asked or thought of.

May you have grace quietly and patiently to wait on the Lord. His mind will in due time be made plain, and the light of heaven shall yet shine on all your earthly path. "If God be for us, who can be against us." (Rom. viii. 31. "Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. COMMIT THY WAY UNTO THE LORD; trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass." (Psa. xxxvii. 4, 5.) "When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him." Prov. xvi. 7.

Ever most affectionately

Yours in Jesus,

"Our times are in Thy hand,
 Father, we wish them there;
 Our life, our soul, our all, we leave
 Entirely to thy care.

Our times are in Thy hand;
 We'd always trust in Thee,
 Till we have left this weary land,
 And all Thy glory see."

“ APPROPRIATION; ”

OR, IS CHRIST FOR ME?

SOME time ago, I met with an incident which illustrated, in a very simple manner, the harassing question of “ Appropriation.” The record of it has helped many souls, and with the hope that it may yet help many more, I am induced to give it a permanent corner in the pages of “ Things New and Old.”

A dear child, in whose spiritual history I was, and still am deeply interested, was sorely troubled, for many a day, with this question, “ How am I to know that Christ died for *me* ?” He knew a great deal of truth. He was, intellectually, so clear and well instructed as to be able to detect any false statement, in a tract or lecture. He was intimately acquainted with the plan of salvation, and much interested in the subject of religion, generally. But he had no personal enjoyment of Christ. He could not see his own interest in Christ. His grand and constant difficulty was embodied in the question, “ How am I to know that Christ died for *me* ?”

However, it pleased the Lord, at length, to make use of a very simple incident to answer this dear child’s absorbing question. He was sitting beside me in my room, conversing about the matter of his salvation. He told me he felt assured that Christ died for sinners, but that he could not see how he was to appropriate Christ to himself. There was a railway time table on the wall ; and at the bottom of the table appeared the following statement, “ Children under six years of age travel free.” I called his attention to those words and simply said to him, “ Now, if you were a child under six years, would you have any difficulty in appropriating or applying that statement to yourself? Would it not rather be a difficulty, yea an impossibility, not to apply it.

Before you can refuse the application, you must prove yourself to be over six years of age. To *any* child under six years of age, the statement applies with as much force as though he were the only child in the world. True, you do not see your own name given in the statement; and even though your name were there, it would not help you in the matter of appropriation, inasmuch as if there were any other child of the same name, the question would be involved in hopeless uncertainty. But when you see your age, your state, your condition, you can have no further difficulty, you may refuse to take your seat, but you cannot refuse the application of the offer.

And now to apply this illustration. I read in the first chapter of first Timothy, "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save *sinners*." Are you a sinner? "Oh! yes;" said he, "that I am in truth." "Well, if you are, in heart and conscience, on the ground of a lost sinner, then did Christ come to save you, just as much as if you were the only sinner in the world. You must prove yourself to be not a sinner, before you can refuse the application of the gospel message. The gospel applies itself, it is for you to believe and rejoice in the application."

The Spirit of God blessed the illustration. The simple truth of the gospel flashed like a sunbeam on the mind of the child, and he was enabled to kneel at my side and thank God that he now knew what he had so long desired to know, that Christ died for him. It was a clear, decided, unmistakable case. Speaking to a friend, shortly after, he said, "Do you know that all the devils in hell could not shake my faith, now?" "Indeed," said the friend, amazed at this bold decision on the part of one who had suffered so much from doubts and fears, "How is that?" "BECAUSE IT IS FOUNDED ON THE WORD OF GOD." Blessed foundation! Not on feeling, not on reason not on imagination, not on assumption, but simply on the word of God. This is

enough. "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; he was buried, and rose again the third day according to the scriptures."

May the Lord bless this simple incident to many an anxious soul, and His name shall have all the glory.



HEAVENLY SUNSHINE.

"Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun."—Eccles. xi. 7.

Creation's light, how sweet indeed !
 But sweeter light divine ;
 Beneath its soothing, cheering rays
 My soul would e'er recline ;
 Without a cloud to intercept
 Its ever shining rays :
 My soul would feast on heavenly food,
 And tune itself to praise.

The light which shines from Jesus, forth,
 Is light divine and true ;
 It gives to all on which it shines
 A glorious, heavenly hue ;
 It pierces e'en the clouds of woe
 Which cover oft the soul,
 And lightens up the tear-dimmed eye
 With joy unspeakable.

'Tis this which gladdens even heaven,
 No other light is there ;
 The glory of the *risen Lamb*
 Illumes the city fair.
 O light divine, diffuse thy rays
 Within this heart of mine,
 Unfolding more of Him I love,
 And giving joy divine !

THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL.

(Read Luke x. 25—35.)

IN our leading article for July, we called the attention of our readers to the deeply interesting and important subject of "grace and government;" and we have abundant reason to bless God for the way in which He has, already, used that paper.

We now desire to dwell for a little upon two grand questions which are suggested and answered in our Lord's interview with the lawyer, namely, What is written in the law? What is revealed in the gospel? These questions have only to be named to secure the attention and awaken the interest of every intelligent and thoughtful reader. It is surely most needful to understand the object, the nature, and range of the law; and in no way can these things be so clearly seen as when examined in contrast with the glorious gospel of God's free grace in Christ. Let us, then, in the first place, proceed to enquire,

WHAT IS WRITTEN IN THE LAW?

This question may be very simply answered. The law reveals what man ought to do. This is what is written in the law. We often hear it said that "The law is the transcript of the mind of God." This definition is altogether defective. What idea should we have of God, were we to regard "the ten words" uttered on the top of Mount Sinai, amid thunderings and lightnings, blackness, darkness and tempest, as the transcript of His mind? How should we know God, if it be true that "the ministration of death and condemnation, written and engraven in stones," is the transcript of His mind? May we not, with great justice, inquire of the framers of the above most objectionable definition, "Is there nothing in the mind of God, save death and condemnation? Is there nothing in the mind of

God, save 'thou shalt,' and 'thou shalt not?'" If there be more than these, then it is a mistake to affirm that "The law is the transcript of the mind of God." If it be said that "The law declares the mind of God as to what man ought to do," we have no objection to offer, for that is what we hold the law to be. But, then, let the reader remember that the declaration of what *man ought to do*, and the revelation of what *God is*, are two totally different things. The former is the law; the latter is the gospel. Both, we need hardly say, are perfect—divinely perfect, but they stand in vivid contrast; the one is perfect to condemn, the other is perfect to save.

But let us see how this point is unfolded in the scripture before us. "And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, what is written in the law? how readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live."

Now, it in no wise interferes with the teaching of this passage to say that the lawyer stood up with the wicked intention of tempting Christ, or that he could flippantly and unfeelingly repeat what was written in the law. What we have to see is this, that the great law-question, "What must I do?" is here proposed and answered. If a man is to get life by keeping the commandments, he must keep them. There is no mystery about this. It is so plain that the question is, "How readest thou?" A man has only to read the twentieth chapter of Exodus in order to know his duty toward God and his duty toward his neighbour.

But, then, dear reader, the solemn inquiry is, "Have I done my duty? have I loved God *with all my heart*, and

my neighbour *as myself*?" Alas! alas! I have not; far—very far from it. I have proved, times without number, that I loved many things which are quite contrary to God; that I have indulged in lusts and pleasures which God condemns; that my will is most thoroughly opposed to God's will; that I hate the things which He loves, and love the things which He hates. In a word, then, it is perfectly manifest that I have not loved God with all my heart, yea, that I have not given Him a single affection of my heart. And as to my neighbour, have I loved him as myself? Have I, at all times, and under all circumstances, as sedulously sought to promote my neighbour's interests as though they were my own? Have I rejoiced as unfeignedly in his prosperity as in my own? I dare not answer in the affirmative. I have only to bow my head and confess that I have utterly and shamefully failed in my bounden duty, both toward God and toward my neighbour. I own it, most fully, to be my duty to love God, with all my heart, and my neighbour as myself; but I own, as fully, that I have done neither the one nor the other.

What, then, can the law do for me? Curse me and slay me, on the spot. Is there no mercy? Not in the law. There is no mercy at Mount Sinai. If a man stands before that fiery mount, the tremendous alternative is *duty* or *damnation*. There is no middle ground. "This do, and thou shalt live" is the solemn, conclusive, and emphatic language of the law. "The man that doeth these things shall live in them;" but, on the other hand, "cursed is *every one* (without a single exception), that *continueth* not in *all things* which are written in the book of the law *to do* them." (Gal. iii. 10.) "He that despised Moses' law *died without mercy* under two or three witnesses." (Heb. x. 28.) The law makes no provision for imperfect obedience however sincere. It makes no allowance for infirmity. Its one brief, pointed inquiry is, "Have you continued in all

things?" If you say *no*; (and who can say otherwise?) it can only curse you. And why? Because it is perfect. Were it to pass over a single transgression, it would not be what it is, namely, a perfect law. Its very perfection insures the condemnation of the transgressor. "As many as are of works of law, (that is, as many as work on the principle, stand on the ground, occupy the platform, of works of law) are under the curse," and cannot possibly be anything else. This establishes the point unanswerably. The law can only prove to be a ministration of death and condemnation to the sinner simply because he is a sinner, and "the law is holy, and just, and good." It is no use for a man to say, "I am not looking to the law for life or justification, but merely as a rule, and for sanctification." As a rule for what? For the sanctification of what? If you say, "for my old nature," the answer is, so far from being "a rule of life," it is "a ministration of death;" and so far from sanctifying the flesh, it condemns it, root and branch. If, on the other hand, you say it is for the new nature, then is your mistake equally obvious, inasmuch as the apostle expressly declares that "the law is not made for a righteous man." 1 Tim. i. 9.

This is plain enough for any one who is content to take the holy scriptures as his guide. The law can neither be the ground of life nor the rule of life to a fallen creature; neither can it be the ground of righteousness nor the power of sanctification. "By deeds of law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." (Rom. iii. 20.) This one passage is conclusive both as to justification and sanctification. No flesh can be justified in God's sight by the law; and as to sanctification, how can I ever become holy by means of that which *only* shows me my unholiness? If I measure a short web by a true measure I must prove it short. A true measure cannot make a short web the proper length, it can only show what it is. Just

so with the law and the sinner. Again, "The law worketh wrath." (Rom. iv. 15.) How is this? Just because it is pure and I am impure. The law and the sinner are perfect opposites—wholly irreconcilable. I must get a new nature, stand upon new ground, be in the new creation, ere I can delight in the law of God. "I delight in the law of God, after the inward man." (Rom. vii. 22.) But how do I get this "inward man," this new nature? How do I get into the new creation? Not by works of law of any shape or description, but by faith of Jesus Christ. I become united to Christ in the power of a new and endless life, upon which the law has no claim. I died in Christ, and hence the law has no further demand on me. If a man is in prison for murder, and dies there, the law is done with him, inasmuch as the life in which the crime was committed is gone. Thus it is with the sinner who believes in Jesus. God sees him to be dead. His old man is crucified. The sentence of the law has been put into execution upon him in the Person of Christ. Had it been executed upon himself, it would have been death eternal; but having been executed upon Christ, His death is of infinite, divine, and eternal efficacy; and, moreover, having the power of eternal life in Himself, He rose, as a Conqueror, from the tomb, after having met every claim, and—wonderful to declare! the believer, having died in Him, now lives in Him for ever. Christ is his life; Christ is his righteousness; Christ is his rule of life; Christ is his model; Christ is his hope; Christ is his all and in all. See carefully Rom. vi., vii. *passim*. Gal. ii. 20, 21; iii. iv.; Eph. ii. 4—6; Col. ii. 10—15.

But we must not anticipate what properly belongs to the second grand division of our subject, to which we shall pass on, having first sought to meet a difficulty which may perhaps exercise our reader's mind. It is possible that some may feel disposed to inquire, "If the law cannot yield

life, furnish righteousness, or promote sanctification, then for what end was it given?" The apostle anticipates and answers this question. "Wherefore then the law? it was added because of transgression, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made." (Gal. iii. 19.) So also, in Romans, we read, "Moreover, the law entered (or came in by the way, between the promise and the accomplishment) that the offence might abound." (Chap. v. 20.) These two passages declare in simplest terms the object of the law. It is not said, "the law entered in order that we might get life, righteousness, or sanctification by it;" quite the opposite, it was "because of transgression," and "that the offence might abound." Where is it said in scripture that the law was given that we might get life, righteousness, or sanctification by it? Nowhere. But it is expressly declared that "the law was added because of transgression," and that "it came in by the way that the offence might abound." It is not possible to conceive two objects more diverse. The legal system speaks of life, righteousness, and sanctification by law; the scripture, on the contrary, speaks of "offence," "transgression," and "wrath." And why? Because we are sinners, and the law is holy. It demands strength, and we are weak; it demands life in order to keep it, and we are dead; it demands perfection in all things, and we are perfect in nothing; it is holy, and just, and good, and we are unholy, unjust, and bad. Thus it stands between us and the law; and it matters not in the least, as regards the principle of the law, whether we are regenerate or unregenerate, believers or unbelievers, saints or sinners. The law knows nothing of any such distinctions. It is addressed to man in the flesh, in his old-Adam condition, in his old-creation standing. It tells him what he ought to do for God, and, inasmuch as he has not done that, it curses him, and it cannot do any thing else. It shows him no mercy, but leaves him in the place of death and condemnation.

Thus much as to "what is written in the law." Let us now proceed to inquire, in the second place,

WHAT IS REVEALED IN THE GOSPEL?

This is unfolded with uncommon beauty and power, in the touching parable of "the good Samaritan." The lawyer, like all legalists, "willing to justify himself," sought to ascertain who was his neighbour; and, in reply, our blessed Lord draws a picture in which is most vividly presented the true condition of every sinner, be he lawyer or else. "A certain man *went down* from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which *stripped* him of his raiment, and *wounded* him, and departed, leaving him *half dead*." What a picture of man's career and man's condition! "A certain man"—the writer or the reader of these lines, "*went down*." How true! Reader, is it not so? Has not thy course ever been a downward one? Hast thou ever, when left to thyself, taken a step upward—a step in the right direction? There is no use in generalizing, in making statements about mankind, the whole human race, Adam's posterity, and the like. What we want is to bring the matter home to ourselves, and say, each for himself, "*I* am the 'certain man' of this singularly beautiful parable; it is *my own* very figure that appears in the foreground of this masterly picture; *my* course has been a downward one; I have gone down from the innocence of childhood, to the folly of youth, and from the folly of youth to the matured wickedness of manhood, and here I am, 'stripped' of every shred in which I might wrap myself; 'wounded' in every region of my moral being; and having the painful consciousness that death has already begun its terrible work in me."

Such is the career, such the condition of every sinner—his career, downward—his condition, death. What is to be done? Can he keep the law? Alas! he is not able to move. Can the "priest" do aught for him? Alas! he

has no sacrifice, and no ability to rise and get one. Can the "Levite" not help him? Alas! he is so polluted with his wounds and bruises that neither Levite nor priest could touch him. In a word, neither law nor ordinances can meet his case. He is utterly ruined. He has destroyed himself. The law has flung him overboard as a defiled, good-for-nothing, condemned thing. It is useless talking to him about the law, or asking him will he take it as a means of justification, a rule of life, or the power of sanctification. It has cursed, condemned, and set him aside altogether, and he has only to cry out from the profound and awful depths of his moral ruin, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

Now, it is when a man is really brought to this that he is in a position to see the moral grandeur of the gospel. It is when he has discovered his own guilt, misery, and ruin, and also his entire inability to meet the just and holy claims of the law, or profit, in any wise, by the appliances of the legal system in its most attractive forms, that he is prepared to appreciate the ample provisions of the grace of God. This is most strikingly illustrated in the scene before us. When the poor man had got down from Jerusalem to Jericho, from the city of God to the city of the curse; (Josh. vi. 26; 1 Kings xvi. 33, 34,) when he lay stripped, wounded, and half-dead; when both priest and Levite had turned from him and gone their way; it was just then that he was in a position to prove the grace of the good Samaritan who, assuredly, is none other than the blessed Lord Jesus Himself, who, blessed for ever be His balmy, precious name! here appears in the form of a Samaritan only to enhance the grace that breathes forth upon our souls in this lovely scene. "The Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans," and, hence, had the Jew in this parable had sufficient strength, he would not, we may safely aver, have suffered the stranger to touch him. But he was so far gone, so powerless, so under the power of death, that the

gracious Samaritan had it all his own way. And oh ! what a tender way it was !

“ But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, *came where he was* : and when he saw him, he *had compassion*, and *went to him*, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him ; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.”

Here, then, is what is revealed in the gospel. Man has ruined himself. He has gone down from God. He has fallen under the power of the enemy. He is the victim of Satan, the slave of sin, the subject of death. His case is hopeless, so far as he is concerned. But, blessed be God, the true Samaritan has come down into all the ruin. The Son of God left His Father's bosom, His eternal dwelling-place, came down into this world, to remedy our ruin, to bear our guilt, to endure the wrath of God in our stead. All this he did, beloved reader, as the expression of His own tender compassion and love. “ He had compassion,” and came to bind up our wounds, to pour “ the wine and oil ” of His own most precious grace into our souls, to heal, restore, and bless us, to put us into His own position, according to the power which had brought Him into ours, to make ample provision for all our need, until that bright and happy moment when we shall be ushered into His presence to go no more out for ever.

The page of inspiration does not present a more touching picture than that which the Master's pencil has drawn for us in “ The good Samaritan.” It is perfectly beautiful, and beautifully perfect. It is divine. Every expression is fraught with exquisite moral loveliness. “ He came *where he was* ” — not half-way, or nine-tenths of the way, but all the way. “ And *when he saw him*,” what then ? Did he turn away in disgust at his appearance, and despair of his

condition? Ah! no; "*He had compassion* on him." His tender heart yearned over him. He cared not what he was or who he was, Jew or Gentile, it mattered not; the streams of tender compassion came gushing up from the deep fountains of a heart that found its own delight in ministering to every form of human need. Nor was this "compassion" a mere movement of sentimentality—an evanescent feeling uttering itself in empty words and then passing away. No; it was a real, living, acting thing, expressing itself in the most unmistakable manner. "*He went to him.*" For what? To meet his every need, and not to leave him until he had placed him in a position of security, rest, and blessing.

Nor was this all. Not only did this gracious stranger fully meet the wounded one's present need; but, ere leaving, he dropped these touching words, "*Take care of him.*" How this must have melted the poor man's heart. Such disinterested kindness! And all from a stranger! Yea, from one with whom he would naturally have "no friendly dealings."

Finally, as if to complete the picture, he says, "*when I come again.*" He awakens in the heart, by these last words, "the blessed hope" of seeing him again. What a lovely picture! And yet it is all a divine reality. It is the simple story of our blessed Jesus who, in His tender compassion, looked upon us in our low and utterly hopeless condition, left His eternal dwelling-place of light and love, took upon Him the likeness of sinful flesh, was made of a woman, made under the law, lived a spotless life, and fulfilled a perfect ministry down here for three and thirty years, and, finally, died on the cross as a perfect atonement for sin, in order that God might be just and the Justifier of any poor, ungodly, convicted sinner that simply trusts in Jesus.

Yes, dear reader, whoever you are, high or low, rich or poor, learned or ignorant, Jesus has done all this; and He

is now at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens. The One who was nailed to the cross for us, is now on the throne. Eternal Justice has wreathed His sacred brow with the chaplet of victory, and that, be it remembered on our behalf. Nor is this all. He has said, "*I will come again.*" Precious words! Say, wouldst thou be glad to see Him? Dost thou know Him as the good Samaritan? Hast thou felt His loving hand binding up thy spiritual wounds? Hast thou known the healing virtues of His oil, and the restoring, invigorating, and cheering influence of His wine! Hast thou heard Him speak those thrilling words, "*Take care of him?*" If so, then, surely, thou wilt be glad to see His face: thou wilt cherish in thine heart's tender affections the blessed hope of seeing Him as He is, and of being like Him and with Him for ever. The Lord grant it may be so with thee, beloved reader, and then thou wilt be able to appreciate the immense difference between the Law and the Gospel—between what we ought to do for God, and what God has done for us—between what we are to Him, and what He is to us—between "do and live," and "live and do"—between "the righteousness of the law," and "the righteousness of faith."

May the blessing of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, rest upon the reader of these lines, now, henceforth, and for evermore!

"LET ME GO HOME.

"Longer upon this earth I would not stay:

My pulse beats low;

And angel forms, too, beckon me away—

E'en let me go!

Shadows pass over me, like a summer's dream,

And they so vague, yet clear;

Come, now I stand by Jordan's welcome stream,

My drooping soul to cheer:

Let me go home!

Why pray that I may live ? *I shall not die,*
But only sleep.

Nay, dearest sister, do those tear-drops dry :

Oh, do not weep !

A few short moments, and my race is run ;

Then, like a child at rest,

I'll lay my weary head, when all is done,

Upon my Saviour's breast !

Let me go home !

If I, with joy, the birds in yon blue sky

Their strains admire,

How—with what rapture shall I join on high

The heavenly choir !

If on yon orb I gaze with rapture true,

How, in that world so bright,

Shall I rejoice, when God, its King, I view ?

The Lamb thereof, the Light !

Let me go home !

How calm the dying taper's flick'ring light !

So gently soft !

The ransom'd soul prepares to wing its flight,

And soar aloft !

I know, within those glorious realms above,

A mansion waits me there—

All purchased for me by redeeming love—

And joys without compare :

Let me go home !

Say, what was that ? Methought I heard a voice

So soft and sweet :

'Attune your harps ! He comes ! Rejoice ! Rejoice !

His spirit greet !'

I see—I hear them come—yon seraphs bright,

My soul to bear away !

All hail ! ye mansions of eternal light—

Of everlasting day !

Let me go home !"

CONFLICT IN HEAVENLY PLACES.

MY DEAR YOUNG BROTHER,

* * * * I shall now turn to the other point, namely, the nature of our conflict with wicked spirits in heavenly places. This will take us into higher regions than our last letter, still, it is a most important and truly practical subject. Indeed, so practical, that however much the flesh may be mortified, the spiritual warfare goes on. It is also, I fear, a subject that is very little understood. So few really know what it is to enjoy their heavenly portion in Christ, while passing through this world.

Association with Christ as the risen man in heaven, is but little entered into by most Christians. Hence, there is very little conflict with Satan as to the enjoyment of their possessions in heavenly places. They do not see, that *at present* they have any possessions there. They have a hope, that if they hold on to the end, they will come in for something at last, if it should be merely *standing room within the threshold*. While this is the spiritual state of the Christian, conflict in heavenly places is not experienced. Clearly, you must be *in* heaven, before you can *fight* there. Israel must cross the desert, and pass the Jordan, before they could draw a sword, or strike a blow in the promised land. We must know what it is to be dead and risen again with Christ, before we can be engaged, at least intelligently, in heavenly conflict.

But on this, as on all other subjects, we must be guided by scripture only. It is peculiarly, I think, a subject for implicit faith in scripture. Many things connected with it seem so startling, when the soul is not subject to the word of God. Satan's aim will ever be to get the christian under the power of his own notions and feelings, in place of the word of God, and thereby to throw him off the ground of faith. When he has succeeded in this, spiritual conflict in

heavenly places ceases. True, the christian may have some wearisome struggling, and many disheartening defeats; but it is not the same character of conflict as the sixth of Ephesians. He is, practically, off the ground of faith. The word of God is not his only resource. He is under the power of his own notions and feelings, and in so far as this is the case, Satan has the advantage in conflict. Human weapons are useless in this warfare, we must have "The whole armour of God." Thus, the enemy has, as the Psalmist says, "Cast him down from his excellency." (Psa. lxii, 4.) And now he will do his utmost to keep him down. The christian, of course, is not happy, far from it. He is full of doubts and fears as to how it may end with him. He is in darkness. Sometimes he gets a glimpse of the star of hope through the clouds, but these bright gleams are like angels' visits, few and far between. Poor christian, there he is, down in spirit. How often one has seen such, in a low desponding state of soul. His girdle, as it were, unbuckled, his shield off the left arm, his sword out of his right hand, and the enemy trampling him in the mire. In the struggle he has lost sight of his helmet. He questions if he is really saved. And his shoes are gone. He has lost his peace. And as for his breast-plate of righteousness, he never rightly knew how to stand in it, either before his friends or his foes. Every now and then he is crying out with many tears, "Oh that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me. When his candle shined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness." (Job xxix. 2, 3.)

" 'Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought,
Do I love the Lord or no,
Am I His, or am I not?"

Such, my dear brother, is the condition of thousands who really believe in Jesus, and have divine life in their souls. And this is what they understand to be, and

call, *christian conflict*. Whereas, as you will plainly see, it is the unbelief of the heart, fighting against the word of God, and Satan taking advantage thereby. But why, you may ask, should it be so? My own opinion is this,—I believe they do not understand the blessed and glorious truth of the believer's death and resurrection in Christ, as unfolded in scripture; especially in the epistle to the Romans, and the Ephesians. No christian, I believe, can have settled peace, except on the ground of death and resurrection. He may know, and even feel sure, that he is safe through faith in Christ, but his peace can never be solid, until he has learnt from scripture, that in the death of Christ, he died out of the first Adam state, and in His resurrection, he passed into the second Adam state,—the new creation, in Christ Jesus, where *all things are of God*, and, consequently, where nothing can ever again be unsettled.

As a sample of many passages in the epistle to the Romans, take the following: "Knowing this, that *our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed*, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once, but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. *Likewise reckon* ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Chap. vi. 1—11.) Mark well the words—" *Likewise reckon*," like as Christ is dead unto sin—like as He is alive unto God—so reckon—count yourselves to be. Could any thing be more plain, more blessed, more solid? Here the soul finds perfect, settled peace, on the Rock of Resurrection in association with the risen Jesus. Dead unto sin, and alive unto God, in the same sense and measure as Christ Himself. Thus it is in the

mind of God, and it is blessedly true to faith. But we will now turn to the Ephesians.

You will have noticed a peculiarity in this Epistle as to the expression "heavenly places." The blessings of the Church are in "heavenly places." (Chap. i. 3.) The Church is sitting in "heavenly places." (Chap. ii. 6.) It is bearing testimony in "heavenly places." (Chap. iii. 10.) And the warfare is in "heavenly places." (Chap. vi. 12.) Believers, though on earth, are viewed in this epistle, as united to Christ the Head in heaven. This union with Christ gives the Church its wonderful position there. It is thereby brought into the same privileges and blessings as Christ Himself. More than this we can never say, know, or experience. This is indeed wonderful, but it is all wonderful. The love and the grace of God are wonderful. The cross that fits us to be there is wonderful, and must continue to be the wonder of all heaven throughout eternity. But so it is, the Head in heaven, and the members on earth, joined together through the life of the risen Jesus, and the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, make ONE BODY. On this subject, read 1 Cor. xii. and similar portions. So real, so vital, so blessed is this union between the risen Lord and His Church, that He said to Saul of Tarsus, when he was persecuting the saints, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" (Acts ix. 4.) As if *He* had been the one that Saul was hurting. To wound a member is to wound the Head. This proves living union—nay, more—a perfect unity. And again, in our Epistle it is said, chap. v. 30, "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." What could more strongly express our *oneness* with the risen Head, and our nearness to Him?

You will now see, that though we are still in the wilderness, and it may be troubled on every side, we are, in the mind of God, in *heavenly places in Christ Jesus*. And further, observe, we are there in all the acceptableness of Christ Himself. "Accepted in the beloved." Near as He

is near and loved as He is loved. And this is true of all christians. The weakest as well as the strongest, the youngest as well as the oldest. We are all one in Christ. What a ground of peace and rest to the soul. Whatever He is that the christian is. Whatever He has that the christian has. Wherever He is, there the christian, in spirit—in the mind of God—necessarily is, for we are “in Christ Jesus.” (Rom. viii. 1.) And again, “They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.” (John xvii. 16.) “Because as he is, so are we in this world.” 1 John iv. 17.

And now, my dear brother, see that you rightly understand your true position in the heavenlies. God in the riches of His grace, has given you that position Himself. The work is all His own. Let me shew you how. If you look at the close of the first chapter of Eph., you will see Christ among the dead, (ver. 20,) then look at the beginning of the second chapter, and what do you find there? Jew and Gentile,—all mankind, “dead in trespasses and sins.” Christ died *for* sin; we were dead *in* sin. For the moment, there was nothing but death. Solemn moment! not a breath! The first Adam totally ruined in sin and death. The second Adam, for the moment, sealed in the tomb. Who can work in such a scene? Who can begin a new thing? Who can quicken the dead? Who can raise up a new seed? Only the God of resurrection! The work of redemption having been accomplished on the cross, the ground was laid for a new action, and God enters the scene. He, as it were, undergirds the deep caverns of the grave, and by “His mighty power” raises up the obedient Man—Christ Jesus—the second Adam, and His seed with Him. Every circumstance of death is mastered. The Head and the members—the Redeemer and the redeemed—the Saviour and the saved, are raised up together. “But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved,) and hath raised us up

together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." Now, if you look for a moment at both sides of the "But" in ver. 4, you will see what you were, and what, and where, you now are. On the *far* side death reigns—not a heart heaving. On the *near* side, there is, to begin with, the living God,—rich in mercy—great in love. He plants the pulse of life in the dead soul. But mark, it is life in resurrection with Christ. And now, He raises up and sets the quickened ones in His own presence, as all His delight. Quickened together—raised up together—seated together, in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus. This then, is the true position, and the true condition, of the church in the presence of God, and consequently, of every individual christian. You cleared the shores of the old world, in the resurrection of Christ, and now live, and have your eternal, happy home in the new. The work is God's—the foundation is the cross—it shall stand for ever. "I know that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it; and God doeth it that men should fear before him." Eccles. iii. 14.

You now see, dear brother, the position you have been placed in, and which you have to maintain and defend against all your spiritual enemies. "Put on," therefore, "the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." Neglect not one piece of it, or the enemy will soon discover the exposed part. Remember the wily Gibeonites. What Satan could not do by a walled city, he accomplished by stratagem. What he failed to do by Balak and Balaam he succeeded in doing by the daughters of Moab. Your wisdom, your strength are in the Lord; not in yourself. "Be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might." Keep your eye steadily fixed on Him. Feed on Him as the fruit of the land that

you may be strong in battle. "For we wrestle not with flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand." What an array of enemies, and how powerful! Principalities,—powers—the rulers of this world's darkness—wicked spirits in high places. Human opinions—management—wisdom—power are unavailing in this warfare. Nothing but the armour—and the *whole armour* of God will enable the christian to stand. Mark how frequently the word "stand" occurs. This is your object, namely, "to stand"—to keep your ground—to defend your position—to resist the enemy. You are not called to rid the heavenlies of these foes. Michael and his angels will do that by and by. (Rev. xii.) Now, we have the Holy Ghost, and the panoply of heaven, that we may abide in the place where God has set us.

By referring to my last letter, you will find a few hints as to the armour. There, it is more the aspect that we have to bear towards men that is spoken of. Here, I had intended to add a few words more on the different pieces of the armour, as to its aspect towards, or in conflict with our spiritual foes, but this letter is already long.

Perhaps, at some future time, I may write you again, following out the same subject. In the meantime, let me earnestly entreat you, to study closely from scripture, the difference between what may be called the trials of the wilderness and the wars of Canaan; the manna was sufficient for the former, the old corn of the land was needed for the latter. Now, you require both. As a matter of experience you are in the wilderness,—as a matter of faith you are in heaven. Feed on Christ the fruit of the heavenly land, and walk in the light as He is in the light. Remember Satan is the ruler of the *darkness*

of this world, not of the *light* of heaven. There is no surer way of escaping Satan than by walking in the light; he is certain not to be there.

May God be your sun and shield, my dear young brother, until the blessed Lord Himself shall come, and sweetly close our pilgrim path—and take us up to be with Himself, far beyond the reach of every enemy, and of every hindrance to the full enjoyment of Himself in the Paradise of God for ever.

“How sweet the shout of victory,
That ends the battle’s roar;
And sweet the weary warrior’s rest
When all His toils are o’er.”

So prays, ever affectionately,

Yours in Jesus,

THE VICTORY.

My chains are snapt, the bonds of sin are broken,
And I am free.

Oh! let the triumphs of His grace be spoken
Who died for me.

“O death, O grave,” I do not dread thy power,
The ransom’s paid.

On Jesus, in that dark and dreadful hour,
My guilt was laid.

Yes, Jesus bore it—bore, in love unbounded,
What none can know.

He passed through death, and gloriously confounded
Our every foe.

And now He’s risen, proclaim the joyful story,
The Lord’s on high;

And *we in Him are raised to endless glory*,
And ne’er can die.

We wait to see the Morning Star appearing
In glory bright;

This blessed hope illumes, with beams most cheering,
The hours of night.

PRIVILEGE AND RESPONSIBILITY.

(Read Deut. xx. 1—9.)

PRIVILEGE and responsibility! Yes, this is the divine order; and how important it is, in dealing with the things of God, to place them in the order in which he places them, and leave them there! The human mind is ever prone to displace things; and hence it is that we so frequently find the responsibilities, which attach to the people of God, pressed upon those who are yet in their sins. This is a great mistake. I must be in a position before I can fulfil the responsibilities attaching thereto. I must be in a relationship before I can know the affections which belong to it. If I am not a father, how can I know or exhibit the affections of a father's heart? Impossible. I may descant upon them, and attempt to describe them; but, in order to *feel* them, I must be a father.

Thus it is in the things of God. I must be in a position before I can enter into the responsibilities which belong to it. I must be in a relationship before I can understand the affections which flow out of it. Man has been tested in every possible way. He has been tried in creation. He has been tried under divine government. He has been tried under law. He has been tried with ordinances. He has been tried by the ministry of the prophets. He has been tried by the ministry of righteousness, in the person of John the Baptist. He has been tried by the ministry of grace, in the Person of Christ. He has been tried by the ministry of the Holy Ghost. What has been the result? Total failure! An unbroken chain of testimony from Paradise to Pentecost has only tended to make manifest man's utter failure in every possible way. In every position of responsibility, in which man has been set, he has broken down. Not so much as a single exception can be adduced.

So much for man's responsibility. He has proved himself unfaithful in every thing. He has not a single inch of ground to stand upon. He has destroyed himself, but in God is his help. Grace has come in, in the Person of Christ, and perfectly met man's desperate case. The cross is the divine remedy for all the ruin, and by that cross the believer is introduced into a place of divine and everlasting privilege. Christ has met all the need, answered all the demands, discharged all the responsibilities, and, having done so by his death upon the cross, He has become, in resurrection, the basis of all the believer's privileges. We have all in Christ, and we get Him, not because we have fulfilled our responsibilities, but because God loved us even when we had failed in every thing. We find ourselves, unconditionally, in a place of unspeakable privilege. We did not work ourselves into it; we did not weep ourselves into it; we did not pray ourselves into it; we did not fast ourselves into it. We were taken up from the depth of our ruin, from that deep, deep pit into which we had fallen, in consequence of having failed in all our responsibilities; we have been set down, by God's free grace, in a position of unspeakable blessedness and privilege, of which nothing can ever deprive us. Not all the powers of hell and earth combined; not all the malice of Satan and his emissaries; not all the power of sin, death, and the grave, arrayed in their most terrific form, can ever rob the believer in Jesus of that place of privilege in which, through grace, he stands.

My reader cannot be too simple in his apprehension of this. We do not reach our place of privilege as the result of faithfulness in the place of responsibility. Quite the reverse. We have failed in every thing. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." We deserved death; but we have received life. We deserved hell; but we have received heaven. We deserved eternal wrath; but we have received eternal favour. Grace has entered the scene, and

it "reigns through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord."

Hence, then, in the economy of grace, privilege becomes the basis of responsibility, and this is beautifully illustrated in the passage of scripture which stands at the head of this paper. I shall quote it for my reader, lest he should not have his Bible at hand. "When thou goest out to battle against thine enemies, and seest horses, and chariots, and a people more than thou, be not afraid of them: for the Lord thy God is with thee, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And it shall be, when ye are come nigh unto the battle that the priest shall approach, and speak unto the people, and shall say unto them, Hear, O Israel; ye approach this day unto battle against your enemies; let not your hearts faint; fear not, and do not tremble, neither be ye terrified because of them; for the Lord your God is he that goeth with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you."

Here we have Israel's privileges distinctly set forth. "The Lord thy God is with thee," and that, moreover, in the very character in which He had brought them up out of the land of Egypt. He was with them in the power of that sovereign grace which had delivered them from the iron grasp of Pharaoh, and the iron bondage of Egypt, which had conducted them through the sea, and led them across "the great and terrible wilderness." This made victory sure. No enemy could possibly stand before Jehovah acting in unqualified grace on behalf of His people.

And let my reader note carefully, that there is not a single condition proposed by the priest in the above quotation. He states, in the most absolute way, the relationship and consequent privilege of the Israel of God. He does not say, "The Lord thy God *will be* with you, *if* you do so and so." This would not be the proper language of one who stood before the people of God as the exponent of those

privileges which grace had conferred upon them. Grace proposes no conditions, raises no barriers, makes no stipulations. Its language is, "The Lord *thy* God is with thee. . . he goeth *with* you. . . to fight *for* you. . . to *save* you." When Jehovah fights for His people they are sure of victory. "If God be for us, who can be against us? Grant me but this, that God is with me, and I argue full victory over every spiritual foe.

Thus much as to the question of privilege: let us now turn, for a moment, to the question of responsibility.

"And the officers shall speak unto the people, saying, What man is there that hath built a new house, and hath not dedicated it? let him go and return to his house lest he die in the battle, and another man dedicate it. And what man is he that hath planted a vineyard, and hath not yet eaten of it? let him also go and return to his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man eat of it. And what man is there that hath betrothed a wife, and hath not taken her? let him go and return unto his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man take her. And the officers shall speak further unto the people, and they shall say, What man is there that is fearful and fainthearted? let him go and return unto his house, lest his brethren's heart faint as well as his heart."

There is uncommon moral beauty in the order in which the *priest* and the *officer* are introduced in this passage. The former is the exponent of Israel's privileges; the latter, of Israel's responsibilities. But how interesting it is to see that, before the officers were permitted to address the assembly on the grand question of responsibility, the priest had established them in the knowledge of their precious privilege. Imagine the case reversed. Suppose the officer's voice had first been heard, and what would have been the result? Fear, depression, and discouragement. To press responsibility before I know my position—to call

for affections ere I am in the relationship, is to place an intolerable yoke upon the neck—an insufferable burden upon the shoulder. This is not God's way. If you search from Genesis to Revelation, you will find, without so much as a single exception, that the divine order is privilege and responsibility. Set me upon the rock of privilege, and I am in a position to understand and fulfil my responsibility; but talk to me of responsibility while yet in the pit of ruin, the mire of legality, or the slough of despond, and you rob me of all hope of ever rising into that hallowed sphere, upon which the sunlight of divine favour pours itself in living lustre, and where alone responsibilities can be discharged to the glory of the name of Jesus.

Some there are who talk to us of "*gospel conditions*." Who ever heard of a *gospel* fenced with *conditions*? We can understand *law*-conditions; but a *gospel* with conditions is "a different gospel, which is not another." (Gal. i. 6, 7.) Conditions to be fulfilled by the creature pertain not to the *gospel*, but to the *law*. Man has been tried under all possible conditions. And what has been the issue? Failure! Yes, failure only—failure continually. Man is a ruin—a wreck—a bankrupt. Of what use can it ever be to place such an one under conditions, even though you should call them by the anomalous title of "*gospel conditions*?" None whatever. Man, under any kind of conditions, can only prove unfaithful. He has been weighed in the balance and found wanting. He has been condemned, root and branch. "They that are in the flesh cannot please God." It does not say, "they that are in *the body*." No: but "they that are in *the flesh*." But the believer is not in the flesh, though in the body. He is not looked at in his old-creation standing—in his old Adamic condition, in which he has been tried and condemned. Christ has come down and died under the full weight of his guilt. He has taken

the sinner's place, with all its liabilities, and by His death settled every thing. He lay in the grave after having answered every claim and silenced every enemy. Justice, law, sin, death, wrath, judgment, Satan, every thing, and every one. There lay the divine Surety in the silent tomb; and God entered the scene, raised Him from the dead, set Him at His own right hand in the heavens, sent down the Holy Ghost to testify to a risen and exalted Saviour, and to unite to Him, as thus risen and exalted, all who believe in His name.

Here, then, we get on to new ground altogether. We can now listen to the officer as he tells out in our hearing the claims of Christ upon all those who are united to Him. The priest has spoken to us, and told us of the imperishable ground which we occupy, the indestructible relationship in which we stand, and now we are in a position to listen to the one who stands before us as the exponent of our high and holy responsibilities. Had "the officer" come first, we should have fled from his presence, discouraged and dismayed by the weight and solemnity of his words, and giving utterance to the despairing inquiry, "Who then can be saved?" But, inasmuch as "the priest"—the minister of grace—the exponent of privilege, has set us upon our feet in the new creation, and strengthened our hearts by unfolding the unconditional grace in which we stand, we can listen to the "commandments" of the officer, and find them "not grievous," because they come to us from off the mercy-seat.

And what does the officer say to us? Just this: "No man that *warreth entangleth* himself with the affairs of this life." This is the sum and substance of the officer's message. He demands, on the part of God's warriors, a disentangled heart. It is not a question of salvation, of being a child of God, of being a true Israelite; it is simply a question of ability to wage an effectual warfare; and,

clearly, a man cannot fight well if his heart is entangled with "a house," "a vineyard," or "a wife."

Nor was it a question of *having* such things. By no means. Thousands of those, who went forth to tread the battle-field, and gather the spoils of victory, had houses, and lands, and domestic ties. The officers had no quarrel with the possessors of these things; the only point was, not to be *entangled* with them. The apostle does not say, "No man that warreth *engages* in the affairs of this life." Had he said this, we should all have to live in idleness and isolation, whereas he distinctly teaches us, elsewhere, that, "If any man will not work, neither shall he eat." The grand point is to keep the heart disentangled. God's warriors must have free hearts, and the only way to be free is to cast all our care upon Him who careth for us. I can stand in the battle-field with a free heart when I have placed my house, my vineyard, and my wife, in the divine keeping.

But, further, God's warriors must have courageous hearts as well as free hearts. "The fearful and the faint-hearted" can never stand in the battle, or wear the laurel of victory. Our hearts must be disentangled from the world, and bold by reason of our artless confidence in God; and, be it well remembered, that these things are not "gospel *conditions*," but gospel *results*—a deeply-important distinction. What a mistake to speak of gospel conditions! It is simply the old leaven of legality presented in a new and strange form, and dubbed with a name which, in itself, involves a contradiction. If those precious clusters which are the result of union with the living Vine, be set forth as the necessary conditions of that union, what must become of the sinner? Where shall we get them if not in Christ? And how do we become united to Christ? Is it by conditions? Nay; but by faith.

May the Holy Ghost instruct my reader as to the divine order of "PRIVILEGE AND RESPONSIBILITY!"

A NOTE OF SYMPATHY.

G—, *Aug. 2nd, 1861.*

MY DEAREST —,

I am now in receipt of your last two notes. I can say, that I understand, in measure at least, every line of them, having tasted the bitter cup myself. Yet not the most bitter, dearest —, that has been drank, and drank for those who were, meanwhile, not seeking to sweeten its bitterness with the sympathies and consolations of love, but who were adding the poison of ingratitude and insult to God's heavy wrath against sin. Nevertheless, He drained it to its dregs. Not even the odour of wrath remained. The flame of love in the heart of Jesus was stronger far than the lurid glare of divine wrath, and, for the believer, extinguished it for ever. The intense flame, becoming yet more intensified amidst the breakings and meltings of that mysterious heart which could only love, rose far, and for ever, above all that bore down upon it. The righteous wrath—the holy justice of heaven—the concentrated hostility, envy, and wanton cruelty of earth, and the malignant, combined malice and hate of hell, only proved the depth of the springs, and the power of that love, which rose as far above them all, as heaven is higher than earth.

Fire purifies gold by separating it from its alloy; but those holy and searching fires, penetrating as they were, could detect no alloy in the holy humanity of Jesus. They only proved what was always there. They brought out, what only the forsaken place could fully bring out; even His perfect, absolute, unchangeable confidingness of heart in God—His pure and heavenly worship of God His Father, in the very regions where nothing but blasphemy was ever before heard. "My God, my God," and, "But thou art holy," must ever stand as the only accents of worship that were ever rendered to God in those regions of utter distance—outer

darkness. His were the only lips that ever breathed adoration to the Holy One of Israel there. All others in that place have only blasphemed and gnashed their teeth against the God of holiness.

But that heart of unselfish love had also other objects to think of, and other interests to care for, though His Father's glory was ever the first. He died for sinners to save them from hell's burning flame. He died for the nation of Israel that the children might inherit the promises made to the fathers. He loved the Church and gave Himself for it, that in the day of His appearing she might be displayed with Himself, in all His bridal glories. The groaning earth, too, was remembered by the dying Jesus, and full provision made for its final deliverance and millennial blessedness, in the blood of that unfathomable cross. And, oh! sweet thought—soul-sustaining thought, amidst the darkness of sore afflictions, the desolations of bereavement, the bitterness of disappointed hopes, the breaking of hearts, and when, in very deed, "love lies bleeding," my Jesus—my Lord, loves me the same to-day as He did the day He died for me on Calvary. Oh! my Jesus, my Jesus, my Lord, my God, my Saviour, my Bridegroom—affianced to Thee! affianced to that heart, affianced until the day of Thy nuptial glory; and then, oh! then, to be in the place—the permanent place of wife for ever.

Can it be, then, my dearest —, that the heart of Jesus has ceased to love? Why these deep waters? Why these howling winds? the poor heart may be ready to say at such a time. Oh, no! no! He may seem for a moment to be unconcerned—to be asleep in the vessel that is tossed from wave to wave—but no sooner has the distressed heart turned to Him, than the troubled waters are calmed, and the stormy elements are hushed. He is only training, in the wisdom of love, His new and much-loved disciples to walk by faith on the tempestuous sea of life. Like the eagle, which stirreth up her nest, carrieth forth the young eaglet,

and leaves it in mid-air to try its own infant wings. But has she ceased to care for it? Is her piercing eye turned away from it? Is she careless whether it flies or falls? Oh, no; she keeps near to the timid one, and eagerly watches, with native instinct, its first feeble flight; and, as it grows weary, she sweeps down, places herself under it, and again, on her own powerful wing, bears it safely to the home-nest on high. So the blessed Lord leads out and disciplines the children of His grace, until, borne on the mighty wing of His love, we reach and rest in the fruitful boughs of the tree of life in the paradise above.

* * * * *

Excuse me saying more at present. I am thankful to have been left alone so long. I need not say how much I should be gratified to sit down and weep with you. Sorrow would only and ever feed on sorrow. But this we cannot have at present. Nevertheless, I can say, though at a distance, rest assured of love and of sympathy unfeigned; interest in all you are passing through unabated; and my recollections and thoughts of the dear, dear departed one, and my feelings about him and you all, I cannot speak of at present. But all is past with the loved one now, as to this weary land. He has reached his home and rest in early days. He was early called—early ripened—early removed. He has gone to shine in sunnier regions, where no blight shall wither the blossoms of spring, and to wait with patience, in fellowship with Jesus, the day of His coming glory. Hasten it, O Lord, in Thy time. Come, Lord Jesus—come quickly!

Ever, most affectionately, your own

P.S. It is said of the apple tree, that its own leaves, buried at its roots, form the best nourishment for its future growth and fruitfulness. Oh what a picture! it is almost too severe to contemplate. The roots of the parent tree nourished by its own offspring, and its branches strengthen-

ed for fruit-bearing. Oh! that the roots of our *faith* may be nourished by every trial, and the boughs of *hope* and *charity* become more richly laden with riper and mellow fruit.



HE DOETH ALL THINGS WELL.

I remember how I loved her, when a little guileless child,
I saw her in the cradle, as she looked on me and smiled :
My cup of happiness was full, my joy words cannot tell,
And I blessed the glorious Giver, who doeth all things well.

Months passed : that bud of promise was unfolding every hour,
I thought that earth had never smiled upon a fairer flower ;
So beautiful it well might grace the bowers where angels dwell,
And waft its fragrance to His throne, who doeth all things well.

Years fled : that little sister then was dear as life to me,
And woke in my unconscious heart a wild idolatry :
I worshipped at an earthly shrine, lured by some magic spell,
Forgetful of the praise of Him, who doeth all things well.

She was the lovely star whose light around my pathway shone,
Amid this darksome vale of tears, through which I journey on :
Its radiance had obscured the light, which round His throne
should dwell,
And I wandered far away from Him, who doeth all things well.

That star went down in beauty, yet it shineth sweetly now
In the bright and dazzling coronet, which decks my Saviour's
brow :

She bowed to the Destroyer, whose shafts none may repel,
But we know, for God hath told us, He doeth all things well.

I remember well my sorrow as I stood beside her bed,
And my deep and heartfelt anguish, when they told me she was
dead :

And, oh ! that cup of bitterness—let not my heart rebel ;
God gave—He took—He will restore ; He doeth all things well.

THE CHRISTIAN'S CUP-BEARER.

FAITH is to the Christian as Nehemiah was to Artaxerxes. (Neh. ii. 1.) Of all the graces this is the Christian's cup-bearer. The Christian takes the wine of joy out of faith's hand, rather than any other grace. It is Christ that we are allowed only to rejoice in. Christ's blood is the wine that gladdens the heart of God by way of satisfaction to His justice, and, therefore, only that can bring true gladness into the heart of man. No grape of our own vine is pressed into this sweet cup.

Now, the Christian's joy, flowing in from Christ, and not any thing that the poor creature doth or hath. Hence it comes to pass, that faith brings in the Christian's joy and comfort, because this is the grace that improves Christ, and what is Christ's for the soul's advantage. Faith is the good spy that makes the discovery of the excellencies in Christ, and then makes report of all to the soul it sees in Him and knows of Him. It is faith that broacheth the promises, turns the cock, and sets them a running into the soul. Till faith comes and brings news of the soul's welcome, oh, how maidenly and uncomfortably do poor creatures sit at the table of the promises! Like Hannah, they "weep and eat not." No, alas! they dare not be so bold; but when faith comes, then the soul falls to, and makes a satisfying meal indeed. No dish on the table but faith will taste of. Faith knows God sets them not on to go off untouched. It is, though an humble, yet a bold grace, because it knows it cannot be so bold with God in His own way as it is welcome. "I live by the faith of the Son of God."—GURNAL.

There are three things which faith does, namely: It purifies the heart. (Acts xv. 9.) It works by love. (Gal. v. 6.) It overcomes the world. (1 John v. 4.) It acts on the fountain-head of all my feelings and affections. It exerts its hallowed influence upon all my relationships and associations. And, finally, it renders me victorious over the circumstances and influences which surround me.

PEACE: WHAT IS IT?

"HAVE you found peace?" is a question frequently put, now-a-days, to people; and it may be there are many who do not exactly understand the question, or know how to answer it. They look upon "peace" as a certain feeling of calm repose in their own minds, and inasmuch as they feel any thing but that, they come to the conclusion that they have not yet found peace.

Further, there are many, we doubt not, who think that, unless they experience this feeling of repose, they cannot be Christians at all; and, seeing they have it not, they conclude that they have neither part nor lot in the matter.

Finally, there are many who think that, if only they possessed this peace, they should never again have to bewail the inward workings of evil. They imagine, that true gospel peace and indwelling sin are wholly incompatible; and seeing, alas! that they are painfully conscious of a mass of evil within, they conclude that they have yet to wait for the enjoyment of peace. Thus do all these three classes of persons, by harbouring wrong ideas on the subject of peace, only augment their sore trouble.

I. And, first, then, let me say, distinctly, and emphatically, that true gospel peace is not a mere feeling of calm repose in the mind. It is something far more solid and settled than that. It is a certain condition, into which the believer is introduced by the atoning work of Christ on the cross. Take the following passages of scripture: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom. v. 1.) Is this a mere feeling in the mind? Clearly not. It is a blessed condition, into which the soul is introduced by the death and resurrection of Christ. No doubt the heart will feel happy and peaceful in proportion to the simplicity of its faith in this grand truth that *all* sin is forgiven, and

that the soul is as justified as Christ can make it—as justified as Christ Himself. But the apostle does not say, “Being justified by faith we have a happy feeling of peace in our minds.” This would never do. Our feelings are as uncertain and changeable as the winds. The peace of which this noble passage speaks is as stable as the throne of God itself.

Again, “Preaching peace by Jesus Christ.” (Acts x. 36.) Does this mean preaching a certain feeling in the mind? Nay; but a glorious proclamation of peace between God and man, founded on the accomplished work of Christ, who, having made peace by the blood of His cross, is Himself our peace in the presence of God. It would be a very serious mistake to suppose that “peace,” as spoken of in the above passages, is only a calm and comfortable frame of mind. It is far more. It is not our feeling of peace, but God’s foundation of peace. This makes all the difference. We should never confound our sense of a thing with the thing itself—a plain fact with the effect which that fact, when known, may produce upon us.

Take an illustration. When peace was proclaimed between England and Russia, was that a mere feeling in the mind of an Englishman, or in the mind of a Russian? It was far more. It was a certain condition, into which the two nations were introduced by the signing of the treaty of peace. No doubt, when a man heard and believed the proclamation, he would enjoy the comfortable feeling which such a proclamation was calculated to produce; but who does not see the difference between his feeling and the fact by which it was produced?

Take another illustration. When, by the noble efforts of Wilberforce and his companions, the bill for emancipating the slaves in our Colonies passed through both Houses, and received the royal signature, and when twenty millions of British gold were voted for the ransom of those slaves, was that a mere feeling in the mind of a slave? It

was far more. It was a certain condition, into which the slave was introduced by the Emancipation Act. No doubt when a slave heard and believed the report, he would enjoy a most comfortable feeling of liberty. He would no longer feel his chain, or hear the harsh tones of his taskmaster enforced by the cruel lash; but who does not see the difference between a feeling of liberty, and the basis on which that feeling rested?

Now I admit that these are but human and therefore imperfect illustrations of the divine theme on which we are dwelling; but they do, at least, set forth the distinction between a condition and a feeling—between our sense of a thing and the thing itself—between a fact and its results. In the gospel I get a divine truth, to be received in a divine way, and to be productive of divine results. It is not an intellectual assent to a certain proposition which I receive as true because I have no reason to doubt it. It is a poor, guilty rebel—a slave—an enemy—receiving, through grace, pardon, liberty, and reconciliation from God, through the precious sacrifice of the cross. Will such an one not have happy feelings? No doubt; but the feelings must never be mistaken for the blessed truth which gives them birth. Peace is a divine, independent, changeless reality, based upon the blood of Christ, proclaimed on the authority of the word of God, and received by faith through the power of the Holy Ghost.

If, therefore, I were asked the question, "Have you peace?" Should I look in at myself and shape my reply according to what I find there? By no means. What then? I should say, "Yes, thank God, I have peace—perfect peace—peace as perfect as Christ could make, or God could give." Nor can anything ever disturb my peace, inasmuch as God has preached it to me "by Jesus Christ, Lord of all." If anything could disturb my peace, then, Jesus Christ would not be "Lord of *all*;" for whatever caused the disturbance would be lord of Him, which were

blasphemy, to suppose for a moment. My feelings could be easily disturbed, but God's foundation never can.

II. And now, one word to those who think that, unless they have this inward feeling of repose, they are not Christians at all. I do not believe their idea is borne out either by Scripture or christian experience. It is not that I want to justify doubts or fears, or lead any to be satisfied with themselves, or their present practical state; far from it. I fully believe that doubts and fears are as dishonouring to Christ as they are subversive of our own true peace of mind. They are wholly unwarrantable. They spring, in many cases, from a false apprehension of the real nature of gospel peace; from looking at self instead of at Christ; from confounding our enjoyment of peace with the peace itself; from looking at what we are to God, instead of looking at what God is to us. But, from what cause soever they spring, we should judge and disallow them, just as we should any other evil thought or feeling that might spring up in our minds.

But while it is unquestionably wrong to harbour doubts when God has spoken peace, or to harbour fear when Christ has made peace, it is much more wrong to call in question our personal interest in Christ because we do not feel quite as happy as we might or ought. This is just allowing Satan to gain his end. Should I doubt my natural existence because I have head-ache? Surely not. And why doubt my spiritual existence—my life in Christ, because my heart is not as happy as I should wish it to be? Very many true Christians—genuine, earnest, devoted souls—are afflicted with doubts and fears at times. Indeed, in proportion to their seriousness will be their anxiety, until they learn to look away from themselves and rest simply in Christ. Not to feel anxious until I know, on divine authority, that Christ has put away all my sins, and perfectly satisfied, on my behalf, the claims of the throne of God, would only prove hardness of heart and indifference

as to sin and holiness. May God preserve my reader from aught of this! God forbid that he should ever cease to be anxious until his anxiety is hushed by the blood of the cross! It is to be feared that many have a flippant way of talking about peace, and finding peace, which argues a very shallow apprehension of the evil of sin, the claims of divine holiness, or the solemn reality of the cross. We should ever remember that though peace has been made, without any demand upon us, yet it cost Christ everything. We do not lose aught of the simplicity and certainty of divine peace by having a deep sense of its solemnity; quite the opposite. The more fully I apprehend what had to be done, the more thankful I am that Christ has done it; but I must never forget what it cost Him to do it.

III. In conclusion, let me add a word for those who are troubled with the thought, that the enjoyment of settled peace is incompatible with the sense of indwelling sin. This is a serious mistake which must produce great darkness and heaviness of soul. The most advanced believer upon earth has sin dwelling in him. "In me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing," must be our language to the very end of the chapter. "If we say that we (believers) have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." 1 John i.

It is interesting and consolatory to see that, in the law of the peace offering, (Lev. vii. 13,) *leavened* bread was to be offered, because of the *evil* in the worshipper; for leaven is, without so much as a single exception, only symbolical of evil.

So also, in the "two wave loaves," (Lev. xxiii. 19.) leaven was permitted, because they were typical of the people of God, who have evil in them, and will have it so long as they are in the body. God knows all about us. He knows the very worst of us, but yet He loves us, and has made provision for the evil which he knows to be in us; so that it

should not, in the smallest degree, interfere with our peace. If the evil be suffered to act and shew itself, it will, very seriously, interfere with our enjoyment of peace, and put us upon our faces before the Lord in confession and self-judgment. God the Holy Ghost, who dwells in us, cannot sanction a single thought of evil indulged. All must be judged. The struggle must be maintained. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh." This conflict will never cease in the believer, until that blissful moment, when he shall lay aside his body of humiliation. Hence, if indwelling sin were to hinder our peace, it would come to pass that not a single member of the family of God could ever enjoy one moment's peace. Thank God, such is not the case. Our peace does not rest upon sinless flesh, but upon a perfect sacrifice.



"GAIN TO ME."

"BUT what things were gain to *me*, those I counted loss for Christ." (Philip. iii. 7.) What a marvellous change! Saul had had many sources of gain. He had gathered many honours round his name. He had made progress in Judaism beyond many of his equals. He had achieved a legal righteousness in which no man could find a flaw. His zeal, his knowledge, and his morality, were of the very highest order. But, from the moment that Christ was revealed to him, there was a thorough revolution. Every thing was changed. His righteousness, his learning, his morality, all that could in any wise be gain to *Paul*, became as dung. He does not speak of open sins, but of those things that could justly be esteemed as gain to *him*. The revelation of the glory of Christ had so completely changed the entire current of Paul's thoughts, that the very things,

which he had once esteemed as positive gain, he now regarded as positive loss.

And why? Simply because he had found his all in Christ. That blessed One had supplanted every thing in Paul's heart. All that belonged to Paul was displaced by Christ; and hence it would have involved actual loss to possess any righteousness or wisdom, holiness or morality, of his own, seeing that he had found all these, in divine perfectness, in Christ. If Christ is made of God unto me righteousness, is it not a loss to me to have any righteousness of my own? Surely. If I have gotten that which is divine, have I any need of that which is human? Clearly not. The more completely I am stripped and emptied of every thing in which "*I*" could glory, or which would be gain to "*me*," the better, inasmuch as it only renders me all the more entitled to a full and all-sufficient Christ. Whatever it be that tends to exalt *self*, whether it be religiousness, morality, respectability, wealth, glory, personal beauty, intellectuality, or philanthropy so called, it is a positive hindrance to our enjoyment of Christ; first, as the foundation of the conscience, and, secondly, as the object of the heart.

May the Spirit of God make Christ more precious to us!



THE BELIEVING MIND.

O THE believing mind,
Which sets Thee, Lord, above
The dread accusings of my heart,
In sovereignty of love!
Impart it, Lord, to me!
Each moment may it reign,
In all its calm and brightness there,
My spirit's realm within!

Should busy mem'ry wake
The slumbers of the *past*,
And o'er a present, cloudless day
Some gloomy shadows cast ;
Then, let believing thoughts
Assert for Thee the place,
Fill the whole region of my soul
With glories of thy grace!

If *now* my slumbering heart
Should feel thy two-edged sword,
And conscience waken but to seal
Thy holy judgment, Lord—
Let faith be witness then,
That I am seen of Thee
In light of everlasting love,
Uncoloured, changeless, free.

Should fear, with fruitful skill,
Image *my days to come*,
And bear my trembling footsteps on
Through dangers, snares, and gloom—
May faith, then, eye the bow
Which spans the distant cloud,
And pledges safety to the end
Though tempests rage aloud.

Let faith, with clear, calm light,
Thus measure *all my days*—
Keep my whole soul in constant peace,
And give it thoughts of praise !
In converse, Lord, with Thee,
My Saviour, Guardian, Friend,
While onward still to glory's home
My guided footsteps tend !



ELIHU ;
OR,
"ONE AMONG A THOUSAND."

(Job xxxiii.)

THE entire book of Job illustrates, in a very forcible manner, the interest which God takes in the history, the experience, and the condition of a single soul. It is a lengthened book of forty-two chapters, containing a statement of various events and circumstances, varied agencies and influences, all looked at in reference to the history of one soul. Heaven, earth, and hell are all brought upon the scene. Jehovah, Satan, the Sabeans, the Chaldeans, fire from heaven, and wind from the wilderness, Job's wife, Job's friends—all are seen in action, all busily engaged in reference to a single soul. This one fact is sufficient to clothe the book of Job with peculiar interest. It teaches us a lesson—a deeply impressive lesson as to God's estimate of one soul, and His interest in all that concerns it, whether great or small.

However, my present object is not, by any means, to enter upon an exposition of the book of Job, as a whole, but merely to call my reader's attention to the ministry of Elihu; the place which that ministry occupied; and the effect which it was calculated to produce in Job's spiritual history.

The meaning of the word Elihu is, "God is he;" and he stands before the spiritual mind as the marked type of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is "God over all, blessed for ever"—"God manifest in the flesh"—"The one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." The point at which Elihu enters the scene is worthy of my reader's special attention. Job's three friends had utterly failed to meet his case. Their ministry was entirely one-sided. They

brought a considerable amount of *truth* to bear upon him, but there was no *grace*. Take a single example illustrative of the tendency of all their addresses. "How then can man be justified with God? or how can he be clean that is born of a woman? Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not; yea, the stars are not pure in his sight. How much less man that is a worm? and the son of man which is a worm?" (chap. xxv. 4—6.) Bildad and his companions could raise these questions, but they could not answer them. They could wound, but not heal; they could break down, but not bind up; and hence we find Job breaking forth, again, and again, in such strains as the following, "No doubt but ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you"—"Ye are all physicians of no value"—"Miserable comforters are ye all"—"How long will ye vex my soul?"—"Have *pity* upon me, have *pity* upon me, O ye my friends"—"Oh! that I knew where I might find him"—"How hast thou helped him that is without power? How savest thou the arm that has no strength? How hast thou counselled him that hath no wisdom?"

Such were the accents which Job poured out under the one-sided ministry of his three friends, whose intentions were, no doubt, good and sincere; but they lacked one grand element which alone could have fitted them to deal with a sinner. They lacked *grace*. They could not tell Job where he was to find the One for whom he was searching. They had no power for the powerless, or wisdom for the foolish, or pardon for the guilty, or balm for the wounded, or medicine for the sick, or life for the dead. There was an air of legal sternness, and unbending austerity about these three well-intentioned but mistaken men, which rendered them wholly unfit to deal with a poor, blind, helpless, needy, guilty sinner. In order to stand before Bildad and his colleagues one would need to be without a wound, without a bruise, without speck or stain. Let there be but one wound, and on that these "valueless physicians"

would be sure to fix their stern gaze in order to raise the harassing question as to why and wherefore it was there. Let there be but one calamity, and on that these "miserable comforters" would be sure to fix the eye of cold severity, and ask why it had come. Let there be but one flaw, and on that, these stern judges would be sure to lay the finger and enquire why it was not removed.

It was, therefore, obviously impossible that Job and his friends could ever come to an understanding. They demanded what he could not produce; and he needed what they could not give. They were on the wrong ground in dealing with him, and they were unable to put him on the right ground to answer them. Thus it stood between Job and his friends. He *would* justify himself; here was his error. They *would* condemn him; here was their defect. Had they changed places, they might have understood each other better; but, as it was, nought could be looked for but an endless strife—an interminable controversy. He would not make any confession to them; and they would not make any allowance for him.. He had no penitential breathings for them; and they had no soothing accents for him. The case was hopeless.

Thus, then, the stage was cleared for Elihu to enter. He was the man for the occasion. He brought with him the very thing which Job needed, but which his friends were unable to supply. Job had plaintively sighed for such an one. He had earnestly longed for a daysman; and now this daysman stood before him in the typical person of Elihu—the figure of that blessed One by whom both "grace and truth" came from God to man. "The law was given by Moses; but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Here the moral glory of Christ's Person and ministry shines forth in all its matchless lustre. He brought "*truth*" to reveal the real condition of man; and He brought "*grace*" to meet that condition as thus revealed. Truth puts the sinner into his right place; and grace brings God down to

meet him when there. Grace *cannot* act apart from truth; and truth *will not* act apart from grace. Both are inseparably linked together in the precious ministry of our *Lord and Saviour* Jesus Christ. The glory which belongs to each, when looked at apart, is enhanced, when viewed in connexion. "Truth," which vindicates the holy claims of God, shines all the more brightly because of its connexion with the grace which perfectly meets all the deep necessities of the sinner; and "grace," which meets the sinner's need, is all the more glorious because of the basis of truth on which it rests. We shall find these two elements of grace and truth beautifully developed in the ministry of Elihu, to which we shall now direct our attention.

When Job had ended his words, and when his three friends had ceased to answer; or, in other words, when all parties had left off, just where they began, "Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu, the son of Barachel, the Buzite, of the kindred of Ram; against Job was his wrath kindled, because *he justified himself* rather than God. Also against his three friends was his wrath kindled, because they had found no answer, and yet had *condemned Job*."

Here, Elihu, in the exercise of his truthful ministry, seizes the exact point in which both Job and his three friends had erred, from the very outset. He first addresses himself to the friends. "Behold," he says, "I waited for your words; I gave ear to your reasons, whilst ye searched out what to say. Yea, I attended unto you, and, behold, there was none of you that *convinced* Job, or that answered his words. Lest ye should say, we have found out wisdom: God thrusteth him down, not man." They had condemned him without convincing him. The divine method, on the contrary, is to convince a man and make him condemn himself. The language of a divinely-convicted soul is, "Let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged." (Rom. iii. 4.) But Job's

friends had failed to reach this result, in his case, and of this the faithful Elihu convicts them, and they are obliged to remain dumb and astonished in his presence.

Thus much, as to the three friends. Let us now turn, for a little, to his address to Job. All is in lovely moral order. We shall confine ourselves, for the present, to two or three leading points in chapter xxxiii.

And, first of all, Elihu stands before Job as the very one who could meet his need. "Behold, I am according to thy wish in God's stead; I also am formed out of the clay." What a striking type of Christ! "In God's stead," and yet "formed out of the clay." This is the one for a poor needy sinner. "Behold my terror shall not make thee afraid, neither shall my hand be heavy upon thee." Here, the touching, soul-subduing notes of grace fall upon the ear of Job. That ear which had hearkened to accents of harsh judgment and cutting severity, now listens to words of heart-melting tenderness. And oh! what joy fills the heart of a convicted sinner when he hears from the lips of Jesus those words, "Neither shall my hand be heavy upon thee!" And such is, in very truth, His gracious language to every one who takes his true place as a lost sinner. The hand of Christ never was, never will be, never can be heavy upon a penitent soul. He will never break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax.

Now, the sinner finds it very hard to believe that the Lord's hand will not be heavy upon him. "Day and night," says one, "thy hand was heavy upon me." But why was this? Because he had not taken his true place, in confession and self-judgment. But the very moment he said, "*I acknowledge my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid: I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord;*" it was no longer the heavy hand, but, "*Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.*" (Ps. xxxii.) Thus it is ever. Divine forgiveness follows hard upon human con-

fession. So long as the sinner holds back—so long as there is any reserve—any cloaking or palliation, any hiding of the sins, any pretension to righteousness or religiousness, any assumption of strength or wisdom, so long there must be the heavy hand; but the moment the sinner takes the place of self-judgment, the word is, “My terror shall not make thee afraid, neither shall my hand be heavy upon thee.” The heavy hand of Eternal Justice was laid upon the Sin-Bearer when He hung upon the cross, in order that it might be for ever removed from the poor self-condemned sinner.

This will fully explain Elihu’s meaning, when he says, “If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to shew unto man his uprightness; then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit, I have found a ransom.” It is, indeed, only “one among a thousand” that will shew unto a man what his uprightness really is. For one that will tell him the truth as to this, there are nine hundred and ninety-nine that will tell him that his uprightness consists in doing his best, *in his endeavouring to live a good life, in efforts after self-improvement and the like.* If “uprightness” were to consist in these things, Job had abundance of it. If my reader will turn, for a moment, to chapter xxix., he will see that Job stood, as we say, at the very top of the wheel, as a man of reputation for high-toned morality and large-hearted benevolence, things really beautiful in themselves. And yet, when the faithful “messenger”—the true “interpreter”—the “one among a thousand,” enters the scene, he gives a totally different view of the matter. He tells us that man’s uprightness consists in his owning himself a sinner. “He looketh upon men; and if any say”—What? “I have lived a good life—I have given thousands in charity—I have said many prayers—shed many tears—observed many fasts—heard many sermons—read a great

many chapters—done all manner of good works.” Is this it? Nay; but “if any say, I have sinned and perverted that which was right.” What then? “He will hurl him into the pit of hell?” Nay; but “He will deliver his soul from going into the pit and his life shall see the light.”

Reader, note this, I pray you. Man’s uprightness is to confess that he has sinned. How simple! And yet simple as it is, how hard it is to get the heart to take this ground! How hard Job found it! What arguments! What strife of words! What self-vindication! What recording of his good deeds! What reference to public opinion! What a process! What immense difficulty in getting him to the end of self, and evoking from his heart those accents of true uprightness—the three monosyllables, “*I am vile!*” Thus it is with the poor human heart. It is so hard to see the entire superstructure of one’s personal reputation lying in ruins around one! And yet, it is only amid the ruins of self that one can get a view of the glories of Christ. Establish your own character—build up your own reputation—work out your own righteousness, and what are you doing? Just raising an insuperable barrier between your soul and God’s salvation. That barrier must be demolished, it must crumble into dust at your feet, before ever your soul can bask in the sunlight of that free grace which reigns through righteousness, unto everlasting life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.

It is of the very last importance to get a clear understanding of this question of man’s uprightness. It is to be feared that very few really apprehend it. The only upright ground for a sinner to occupy is the confession of utter ruin. “I have sinned.” This is what I have done. “I am vile.” This is what I am. These few words make up the sum total of man’s conduct and condition, and furnish the only formula for an upright soul. “Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just

shall live by his faith." (Hab. ii. 4.) "God be propitiated to me a sinner," is the only breathing of an upright heart. If I have not, from my inmost soul, owned myself lost, I am not upright. If I imagine that there is a single redeeming feature in my nature and character, as before God, I have not yet heard aright the voice of the interpreter—the one among a thousand.

And, now, let me ask, what does a soul receive when it has learnt its uprightness? It receives, according to the language of Elihu, three things; namely, ransom, righteousness, and resurrection. The divine testimony to every convicted, self-condemned soul is this, "*I* have found a ransom." It is not, "Go thou and find it where thou canst." No; God assures me He Himself has found it—found all that was needed—found it for all who know and own themselves lost—found it for me. God declares Himself satisfied with the ransom. He could not be otherwise seeing He Himself has found it. He has proved Himself satisfied by raising from the dead the One who "paid in blood the dreadful score, the ransom due for me." He can now pronounce, in the sinner's hearing, those emancipating words, "deliver him from going down to the pit"—words, which, while they tell me of the grace that delivers, tell me also that there is a pit to be delivered from. God can now address the poor trembling penitent, and say, "My hand shall not be heavy upon *thee*;" and, as He speaks, He points to the cross where the ransom was paid, in the life-blood of His co-equal and co-eternal Son. May my reader know now, if he has not known it before, the value of the ransom, and the completeness of the deliverance founded thereon.

Intimately connected with this ransom, yea based upon it, is the divine righteousness which God "brings near" to the soul that knows and owns its guilt and ruin. Elihu says, "He will render unto man his righteousness." That

is, God renders unto me His righteousness, directly I take the only upright position before Him, which is to own that "I have sinned." The very moment my heart confesses that I have nought but guilt for God, that moment He tells me that He has righteousness for me—a divine righteousness, founded upon a divine ransom. This is the very opposite of my endeavouring to find a righteousness for God. All I can say is, "Behold, I am vile." The divine response falls with clearness on the ear of faith, "I bring near my righteousness." God has found the ransom; God brings near and renders the righteousness. When we were slaves He paid the ransom, and when we were guilty, He provided the robe of spotless righteousness. It is all of God. So long as the sinner remains under the impression that he must find a righteousness for God, it is all gloom; and the gloom is deep in proportion to the exercise of conscience. But the moment he finds out from the true interpreter—the "one among a thousand"—that he is all wrong, that he is under a complete mistake, that instead of his toiling to get righteousness for God, God has actually gotten a righteousness for him, and this righteousness is a "gift" through Jesus Christ our Lord, then is his heart relieved, his conscience enfranchised, his whole soul filled with peace and joy; he sees his folly in having so long sought to establish his own righteousness, and he is able to begin, here below, the song which he shall sing for ever in glory, to the praise of "Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood."

And, now, one word, in conclusion, on the hope of resurrection which Elihu introduces, after his own peculiar fashion, "His flesh shall be fresher than a child's; he shall return to the days of his youth." This completes the lovely picture. The ransom is the foundation of the righteousness, and resurrection-glory is the proper hope of all those who stand in the condition of righteousness. "We, through

the Spirit, wait for the hope of righteousness by faith." (Gal. vi.) That is the hope which suits our condition. We have gotten righteousness, and we wait for the time when we shall appear in resurrection glory with Christ. Then there shall be no more sorrow, no more sighing, no more sickness or pain, weakness or death, no more parting, bereavement or desolation. The verdure and freshness of immortality shall characterize us for ever. We shall know an eternal youth. "It doth not yet appear (is not yet manifested) what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." (I John iii. 2.) "He shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things to himself." Philip. iii. 21.

May the Lord, by His Spirit, engrave these holy lessons on the tablets of our hearts, so that we may form a loftier estimate of the ransom, and of the righteousness founded thereon, and cherish a more earnest hope of that resurrection-glory in which we shall shortly appear!

"The Lord of life in death hath lain
To free me from all charge of sin;
And, Lord, from guilt of crimson stain,
Thy precious blood hath made me clean.

And now a righteousness divine
Is all my glory, all my trust;
Nor will I fear, since that is mine,
While Thou dost live, and God is just.

Clad in this robe, how bright I shine!
Angels possess not such a dress;
Angels have not a robe like mine,
Jesus the Lord's my righteousness."



GRACE ABOUNDING.

The following letter will be read with interest. It is from the pen of one recently brought to the feet of Jesus, after a dark career of guilt and folly. He is the son of christian parents, whose many prayers have been answered in his decided conversion to Christ. We insert it in our pages with a threefold object: first, that the grace of God may be magnified; secondly, that christian parents may be encouraged to persevere in prayer for their unconverted children; and, thirdly, that some of our readers may reap profit from the truth contained therein.

13th Sept. 1861.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have again to thank you for your letter, which sundry little worldly matters prevented me from responding to earlier. With advertence to my remarks in my former letter as to *living without sin*, I fear that I did not make myself quite intelligible.

I have no idea that I shall at any future period of my race for a glorious and immortal crown, be in such a state as to feel able to do without a Saviour's intercession, which state I certainly should have attained to, if I was able to exist without sin, as that alone caused the separation between me and God, and made the office of a mediator necessary. But when I look on myself, and (God having mercifully opened my eyes) see what a degraded, sinful thing I am, I certainly do hate sin, and most longingly wish that there was nothing in me to grieve so long-suffering a God. Oh, how long-suffering, none can tell better than I.

I cannot but think that there has been an unusual display of mercy in my case. Men who have led a so-called moral life, can have no better than a dreamy conception of the depths of sin into which men can plunge. I have myself considerable experience in sin of the lowest grade—and of one thing I am convinced, that I never yet met with any

man who drank so largely of sin. I dare not tell even a child of God what a life I have passed, lest he should doubt that my conversion was genuine. I have read of most of the proverbially-hardened sinners, but have not yet met a parallel case to my own. Oh! when I think of it, ought I not to long to be without sin, however high above my aim the state may be. What a mercy that God did not leave me alone.

I have been many times under conviction of sin, and very anxious; but in no case did the anxiety remain long in my heart. How hard it must be to blunt so many pointed shafts!

It was while listening to Paul's description of the love of God, in Rom. viii., that I last felt that I had no desire to share in that love; for the idea most prominent in my mind was, that as there must be a *last* time for every thing under the sun to take place, it was possible, and highly probable, that this was the last time that God would knock at my heart. And, oh, the despair that filled my soul, until, after six days, the Spirit answered with the blood, and told me I was born of God.

I cannot recall any point so deeply engraved on my memory, in my most adventurous life, as that moment in which I felt that I was inseparable from Jesus. The change was not a gradual one, but sharp and sudden. From the despairing criminal to the pardoned child, full of peace in his Father's love, was but one instant.

My heart feels for the poor soul which, awakened to its need, has no child of God to lead it to the fountain of life to drink. God dealt mercifully with me in sending me guides to point to the foot of the cross, where, God helping me, I take my stand; that hallowed place where nothing but blood can meet the eye of God, and consequently my sins must remain unseen.

Yours affectionately in Jesus,

THE PRIEST'S PLACE AND PORTION.

(Read Lev. vi. 14—18.)

THESE verses present three things to our notice, in connection with "the law of the meat offering," namely, the priest, his place, and his portion.

I. *The Priest.* All the sons of Aaron were priests. They became such by birth. They were born into this highly-privileged position. They did not reach it by effort, but simply by birth. Being sons of Aaron, they were, of necessity, priests. They might be disqualified for the discharge of the functions of their position, through bodily blemish or ceremonial defilement; (see Lev. xxi., xxii.) but as to the position itself, it was a necessary result of their being sons of Aaron. Position is one thing; ability to discharge the functions, or capacity to enjoy the privileges thereof, is quite another. A dwarf among the sons of Aaron was deprived of many of the higher priestly dignities; but even a dwarf was to "eat the bread of his God, of the most holy, and of the holy." God would not leave the feeblest or most diminutive member of the priestly household without a holy portion. "Only he shall not go in unto the vail, nor come nigh unto the altar, because he hath a blâmish, that he profane not my sanctuaries: for I the Lord do sanctify them. A dwarf could not attend upon the altar of God; but the God of the altar took care of the dwarf. The two things are divinely perfect. God's claims have been perfectly answered, and the need of His priestly family perfectly met.

II. *The place.* The place where the priest was to partake of his portion teaches us a most valuable lesson of practical holiness. "*With unleavened bread shall it be eaten in the holy place, in the court of the tabernacle of the congregation they shall eat it.*" That is to say, it is only in the power of personal holiness, and in the immediate presence

of God, that we can really partake of our priestly portion. The way in which we get the place exhibits absolute grace. The place which we get demands personal holiness. To speak of effort in reaching the place, is the fallacy of legalism. To think of unholiness in the place, is the blasphemy of antinomianism. I reach the position, *only* through grace. I occupy the position, *only* in holiness. The pathway to the sanctuary has been thrown open by free grace; but it is to the sanctuary of God that grace has opened the pathway. These things must never be forgotten. We want to have them graven on the tablets of the conscience, and hidden in the chambers of the heart.

III. *The portion.* And, now, as to the portion. "This is the law of the meat offering: the sons of Aaron shall offer it before the Lord, before the altar. And he shall take of it his handful, of the flour of the meat offering, and of the oil thereof, and all the frankincense thereof, and shall burn it upon the altar for a sweet savour, even the memorial of it unto the Lord. And the remainder thereof shall Aaron and his sons eat." The fine flour and oil typify Christ's perfect manhood, conceived and anointed by the Holy Ghost. This is the portion of God's priests, to be enjoyed in the sanctuary of the divine presence, in separation of heart unto God. It is utterly impossible that we can enjoy Christ any where else but in the presence of God; or in any other way than personal holiness. To speak of enjoying Christ while living in worldliness, indulging in pride, gratifying our lusts, giving a loose rein to our temper and passions, is a fatal delusion. "If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth." (1 John i. 6.) The two things are wholly incompatible. "Fellowship with God" and "walking in darkness" are as diametrically opposed as heaven and hell.

Thus, then, the place of all true priests—all believers—all members of the priestly household, is to be within the

sacred precincts of the sanctuary, in the immediate presence of God, feeding upon Christ in the power of personal holiness. All this we are taught in "the law of the meat offering."

But, let the reader note particularly that "*all* the frankincense" was consumed on the altar. Why was this? Because that frankincense typified the fragrance of Christ's manhood as enjoyed exclusively by God Himself. There was that in Christ, as a man, down here, which only God could duly appreciate. Every thought, every look, every word, every movement, every act of "the man Christ Jesus" emitted a fragrance which went up directly to the throne of God, and refreshed the heart of Him who sat thereon. Not a single atom of Christ's perfectness or preciousness was ever lost. It might be lost on a cold, heartless world, and even upon carnal and earthly-minded disciples, but it was not lost upon God. It all went up to Him according to its true value.

This is a spring of joy and comfort to the spiritual mind. When we think of how the blessed Lord Jesus was depreciated in this world, how little even His own disciples understood or valued Him, how the rarest and most exquisite touches and traits of His perfect humanity were lost upon a rude and unbelieving world, and even upon His own people, what a comfort to remember that He was perfectly understood and appreciated by the One who sat on the throne! There was an unbroken line of communication kept up between the heart of Jesus and the heart of God—the cloud of incense was continually ascending to the throne from the only perfect Man that ever trod this cursed and groaning earth. Not a grain of the incense was lost, because not a grain was entrusted even into the hands of the priests. All went up to God. Nothing was lost. The world might despise and hate; the disciples might fail to understand or appreciate; what then? Was a single ray of Christ's moral glory to go for nought?

Surely not; all was duly estimated by Him for whom it was designed and who alone could value it aright. This was true in every stage of Christ's precious life down here, and when we reach the end, and see the climax, when one disciple sold Him for thirty pieces of silver, another cursed and swore he knew Him not, all forsook Him and fled, the world nailed Him to an ignominious cross between two thieves, God showed to the universe how much He differed from all the thoughts of men by placing the crucified One on the throne of the Majesty in the heavens.

Thus much as to the primary application of the incense which, unquestionably, is to Christ. We may also observe that it has a secondary application to the believer which he should seek to understand. True christianity is the outflow of the life of Christ in the believer's practical ways, and this is most precious to God, though it may be lost upon an unbelieving world, and even upon a professing church. There is not a movement of the life of Christ in the believer, not an expression of what He is, not the smallest manifestation of His grace that does not ascend, directly, as sweet incense, to the throne of God. It may not attract the notice or elicit the applause of this world. It may not get a place in the records of men; but it goes up to God, and this is enough for the faithful heart. God values all that is of Christ, nothing more, nothing else. There may be much that looks like service—much show—much noise—much that men make a great ado about! but nothing goes up to the throne—nothing is entered in the imperishable records of eternity but that which is the fruit of the life of Christ in the soul.

May God the Holy Ghost lead us into the experimental understanding of these things, and bring forth in us, day by day, a brighter and fuller manifestation of Christ to the glory of God the Father!

“WATCH AND PRAY.”

A FRAGMENT.

WAS there not a heart-crushing ingredient in the blessed Saviour's path of sorrow which none of His people have ever tasted? I mean, He knew beforehand what was coming. How often we may have heard the desolate widow, the bereaved parent, mournfully saying, “Oh! had I known what was before me—what I had to go through, my heart would have fainted within me. I could never have gone through it; yet the Lord has brought me through it all—I am a wonder to myself.” But the blessed Jesus, always patient, and perfect in every scene, saw in the distance, the bitter, bitter cup.

The deep dark shadows of the cross were ever casting their gloom over His path. He knew what was coming. He saw the gathering clouds. But did He faint under their frown? Oh, no! as they drew near and gathered thick, He retired into the garden of Gethsemane. And, there, *anticipating the sufferings* of the cross, He went through them all, in communion with God His Father. He had suffered many things from the hands of men, during His blessed and blameless path through this world, but, in Gethsemane He was pressed by Satan with the terrors of death. Still, His sufferings were anticipative. It is quite evident, that at this time, though His sufferings were so intense, He had not taken in His hand the cup of God's indignation against sin. He saw it. He knew every ingredient that was in it; but He had not yet come into actual contact with it. It was still before Him. But, oh! what must His sufferings have been, as the cross with all its dread realities rose up before His mind. Oh! how His pure and holy soul must have recoiled from the very thought or near approach of sin and wrath. Hence His mournful

and pathetic cry, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." But it behoved the Christ to suffer, and His subjection to His Father's will was perfect. "O my Father, if this cup may not pass from me, except I drink it, *thy will be done.*" Matt. xxvi.

Having thus passed through the scenes of Calvary while yet in the gloomy garden, He waits, in readiness and with calm, quiet dignity, the actual conflict. He was not like Peter, taken by surprise. He was already girded. His armour was on, none of it was forgotten, none of it misplaced. Peter was fluttered, Christ was composed. True, Christ was perfect in Himself, and perfect in every scene. But here we learn more than these facts. Christ, though thus perfect, was praying before the trial came, while Peter was sleeping. Luke xxii. 41, 46. Heb. v. 7.

Herein lies the example for us. We are to "Watch and pray." The Christian can only be calm, peaceful, and dignified, in scenes of suffering, through the power of communion with God his Father.

In illustration of this I will narrate a scene which I witnessed many years ago, as I stood by the bedside of a beloved child evidently dying. His mother, in deep distress, but apparently not aware of what was so near, was bending over him in the agony of suspense. The thought struck me, "How can this mother meet the coming struggle?" I ventured to suggest, that as the Lord might soon take her dear child home to Himself, it would be happy, if she could freely give him up to the Lord. She quietly withdrew, leaving me to watch the dying child, her only son. In less than half-an-hour she returned, calm and peaceful in her spirit. "I have given my darling —— to the Lord," she said, "and now I am happy to let him go." She embraced her son. And now, as if the Lord had been waiting for this victory over the power of death, in a few moments, the little heart ceased to beat, the spirit was gone to be with Jesus. "Oh! he is gone!" calmly exclaimed

the now childless mother, and with her own hands, and in great composure, closed his eyelids, until the morning of the first resurrection, when they shall be re-opened to gaze on that mother, and be closed no more for ever.



THE STARLESS CROWN.

"They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever."—Daniel xii. 3.

Wearied and worn with earthly cares, I yielded to repose,
And soon before my raptured sight, a glorious vision rose :
I thought, whilst slumbering on my couch in midnight's solemn
gloom,
I heard an angel's silvery voice, and radiance filled my room.
A gentle touch awakened me,—a gentle whisper said,
"Arise, O sleeper, follow me;" and thro' the air we fled.
We left the earth, so far away that like a speck it seemed,
And heavenly glory, calm and pure, across our pathway streamed.

Still on we went,—my soul was wrapt in silent ecstasy ;
I wondered what the end would be, what next should meet mine
eye.
I knew not how we journeyed thro' the pathless fields of light,
When suddenly a change was wrought, and *I was clothed in
white.*
We stood before a city's walls most glorious to behold ;
We passed thro' gates of glistening pearl, o'er streets of purest
gold ;
It needed not the sun by day, the silver moon by night ;
The glory of the Lord was there, the Lamb Himself its light.

Bright angels paced the shining streets, sweet music filled the air,
And white-robed saints, with glittering crowns, from every clime
were there ;
And some that I had loved on earth stood with them round the
throne,
"All worthy is the Lamb," they sang, "the glory His alone."

But fairer far than all beside, I saw my Saviour's face;
 And as I gazed he smiled on me with wondrous love and grace.
 Lowly I bowed before His throne, o'erjoy'd that I at last
 Had gained the object of my hopes; that earth at length was
 past.

And then in solemn tones he said, "Where is the diadem
 That ought to sparkle on thy brow—adorned with many a gem?
 I know thou hast believed on me, and life through me is thine,
 But where are all those radiant stars that in thy crown should
 shine?"

Yonder thou seest a glorious throng, and stars on every brow?
For every soul they led to me, they wear a jewel now!
 And such *thy* bright reward had been, if such had been thy *deed*,
 If thou hadst sought some wandering feet in paths of peace to lead.

I did not mean that thou shouldst tread the way of life alone,
 But that the clear and shining light which round thy footsteps
 shone,
 Should guide some other weary feet to my bright home of rest,
*And thus, in blessing those around, thou hadst thyself been
 blest."*

* * * * *

The vision faded from my sight, the voice no longer spake,
 A spell seemed brooding o'er my soul which long I feared to
 break,
 And when at last I gazed around in morning's glimmering light,
 My spirit fell o'erwhelmed beneath that vision's awful might.

I rose and wept with chastened joy that yet I dwelt below,
 That yet another hour was mine my faith by works to show;
 That yet some sinner I might tell of Jesus' dying love,
 And help to lead some weary soul to seek a home above.
 And now, while on the earth I stay, my motto this shall be,
 "To live no longer to myself, but him who died for me!"
 And graven on my inmost soul, this word of truth divine,
*"They that turn many to the Lord, bright as the stars shall
 shine."*

S. S. T.

THE CHRISTIAN'S ARMOUR.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

HAVING spoken, in my last letter, of the Christian's *position* in heavenly places, through his death and resurrection with Christ, I will now endeavour to explain the several pieces of the Christian's *armour*, by means of which, that position is practically maintained.

Human wisdom, and human reason, are of no avail in this warfare. Such weapons present no resistance to the wiles and darts of Satan. Our place, with Christ in heaven, can only be maintained and enjoyed through the use of the armour with which God has furnished us. The sharp arrows of the enemy would instantly strike through a merely human defence. Nothing short of "*the whole armour of God*," will enable you to turn aside triumphantly the subtle wiles and the poisoned arrows of hell, and to make good, in experience, your inheritance on high.

The apostle, first of all, observe, turns your eye to the Lord Himself. "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might;" and, secondly, to "*the whole armour of God*." (Ver. 10, 11.) This is all-important. Watch against being, for a single moment, at any time, ungirded, and pray that you may be kept from the snare of self-confidence. You may see the fearful results of the former in David, and of the latter in Peter. Never loiter on the housetop in carnal ease, when your presence is demanded in the battlefield, or you may have to repent it all your earthly days. And never seek to warm yourself, however cold the night, by an enemy's fire, and thus expose yourself in the enemy's camp. Such self-indulgence gives the adversary an immense advantage over us, and is unworthy of the soldier of Jesus Christ, who is called to endure hardness. Always be at your post, and never forget, that you are in an

enemy's country, where foes innumerable abound. A soldier should never think of his own ease when the enemy is in sight.

The great object of Satan is to lead us to act inconsistently with our heavenly calling, and to pursue a course, as if we still belonged to earth, and had no place or portion, at present, in the heavenlies. On the other hand, our great object must be, in all respects, to act consistently with the blessed reality of our *present* oneness with Christ, the exalted Head of His body the Church. We have not, blessed be His name, to combat with enemies in order to gain an entrance and to obtain a position there. These are eternally-settled questions in Christ. We are accepted in the Beloved, and joint-heirs with Him. Still, we have to war and fight, that we may keep our ground in spite of such powerful foes. Israel's title to the promised land, under Joshua, was clear enough, nevertheless, they had to combat with the Canaanites, in order to make good their title in actual possession. And for this they were strengthened, by first feeding on the old corn of the land. But "we wrestle not against flesh and blood," as Israel did in Canaan, "but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand." (Ver. 12, 13.) And our strength for this spiritual warfare, is to feed on Christ, the Risen Man, in heavenly places.

I will now, as simply and briefly as possible, speak of the *character* and *uses* of the different pieces of the Christian's armour. And may He who has gone before us through every scene of conflict, as the Captain of our salvation, and who knows every movement of the enemy, train His young soldiers to follow in His footsteps on earth, while their hearts are maintained in communion with Himself in heaven.

1. THE GIRDLE OF TRUTH. "Having your loins girt about with truth." As I noticed in my first letter, there is a beautiful order and connection in the different parts of God's armour. Our own personal, spiritual condition is the first thing. We must be all right with God ourselves, before we can stand up with good courage before our enemies. Hence, the girdle of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, and the feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace—all go before the activities of the shield and sword. The thoughts and affections must be governed by truth—the conscience kept good both towards God and man, and the general walk characterized by the peaceful spirit of the gospel, before we can have that confidence in God, which makes us valiant before the face of every foe. Carefully note these moral links of your armour, and see that you understand them. Remember this,—fighting is a practical thing, especially when you have to combat with Satan. Mere theories are assailable at every point.

We may learn something from the use of the girdle, in those parts of the world where Judea is situated. John the Baptist wore a "leathern girdle." It is a band, or belt, used for gathering up the loose, flowing folds of the garment, and fastening them firmly to the waist, so that the person may not be entangled, or hindered, in such exercises as walking, running, or working. It is also used to *strengthen* the loins, and to give *firmness* to the whole man. Now, you can easily see the character and use of the Christian's girdle. Is it not the application of the truth as it is in Jesus, by the Holy Spirit, to our thoughts, affections, and conscience? If you would walk and work well for the Lord, and be a good soldier of the cross, there must be the constant application of the truth to the entire "inner man." All the outgoings of the heart must be kept, as it were, within the sacred belt of holy scripture. And further, remember, that this great and needed work of girding, at *the outset*, can only be done in communion with God, and by the power of His Holy Spirit. There is no

better safeguard than the glance of His eye. To allow your thoughts, affections, and desires to fly loose, like the flowing robes of an Oriental, would greatly hinder your own spiritual growth, unfit you for active service, and constantly expose you to the cutting wounds of the enemy. Often has the Christian smarted keenly, from gratifying the desires of the heart and mind, on objects which were not sanctioned by the word of God. Oh! that the grace and truth, which came by Jesus Christ, might encircle and garrison our whole inner man.

From the constant application of the truth as it is in Jesus, you will find advantage and blessing to your own soul, far beyond what you have any conception of. You will soon discover that there are many things in your own heart and ways, which are entirely opposed to the mind of the blessed Lord—to the grace and truth which came by Him. These things, having been detected by the word, must be condemned and given up. And, on the other hand, what you see revealed in Christ for you, is to be received, loved, submitted to, and delighted in: thus allowing that blessed One to have power and authority over you, in place of your own alien will, and foolish desires. I know of nothing more dangerous, in this deceiving world, than for young Christians to allow their affections to fly loosely and carelessly around them. Stay, my loved brother, until you get home to heaven. There, you may safely unbuckle your belt, and let them have the wide range of the realms of the blest. You cannot find a wrong object for them there. But till then, oh! keep them reined in with a firm hand. Watch and pray that you may never get beyond the sacred circle of the truth, as it is in Jesus. Let your will be subject to His, and let your affections be gathered up to, and centred on, Him now. "Set your affections on things above, where Christ sitteth, not on things on the earth." If the eye, the ear, the heart, were more filled with Christ, oh! what happy fruits would appear in our many young disciples.

Watch narrowly, my young brother, the direction of your eye; for rest assured, that the heart will follow the eye, and the feet will follow the heart; oh! look to Jesus. Gaze on Him. All loveliness is there. The power that Satan has over souls, through getting the eye turned to the tinsel attractions of this world, is immense. Let me give you one criterion by which to test everything in this gilded scene; especially if you may be inclined to think about it, or to desire it. It is this. Always ask yourself this question, before ungirding the loins of your mind, and allowing your affections to flow: "Can I count on the sympathies of Christ with this object of affection or desire? Is it what He could give me out of His own hand?" If not, think no more about it. Be decided. Pull your belt yet tighter. Allow no play to the will and affections, without the assurance of the sympathies of your blessed Lord, and heavenly Bridegroom, to whom you are now espoused. Oh! that our affections might flow more fully and freely around His heart—the native fountain of all love, grace, truth, holiness, goodness, and patient kindness towards us, notwithstanding all our foolishness. May we only love what He loves, and care for what He cares for. Content, until He come, to receive everything from His hand alone. The affianced bride of heaven should spurn the offers and favours of the prince of darkness.

2. THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.

"Having on the breastplate of righteousness." Let me first of all draw your attention, to what seems to be a common error as to this part of the armour. It is generally spoken of as the righteousness of God in which we stand justified in His presence. This is a mistake. The breastplate is *practical righteousness*—the righteousness of a walk, which necessarily follows the loins being girded with truth. When the movements of the *inner man* are guided by truth, the movements of the *outer man* will be practically right. Christ Himself, the Risen Man, is our righteousness before God, and He being always there, our

righteousness is always there, and our peace is settled for ever in God's sight. There is no conflict there. The assurance of this, fills the warrior's heart with true valour; and is the foundation of all his victories. Nevertheless, a holy walk, a good conscience, is our breastplate before the enemy. It covers a vital part. It is always needed. To forget it, is like forgetting that we have enemies. "Herein," says the Apostle, "do I exercise myself to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men." Acts xxiv. 16.

A good conscience makes a man brave, both naturally and spiritually. A man fears nothing when his conscience is good; but how often has even the falling leaf startled, and filled with fear, the guilty conscience. When we have done wrong, we are afraid of being detected, and exposed before others. Hence, we are timid—afraid to stand up for truth and godliness, lest we be assailed on our own weak point. We allow things to pass that we know to be wrong. We become unfaithful, the conscience gets bad, Satan accuses and triumphs. We get out of communion with God. We are unhappy. Our strength is gone. We are drawn into Satan's snare, and sorely buffeted by him. And now, under such circumstances, until there be full confession before the Lord, and the soul restored to happy communion with Him, there will be no strength to stand up against the enemy. But oh! how different things are with the soul, when we are kept in happy communion with God—enjoying, and maintaining the truth as it is in Jesus, and delighting in the ways of practical godliness. Then have we good courage before men and before all the powers of darkness.

The blood of Jesus Christ which cleanses from all sin, gives us a perfect conscience before God. A holy walk gives us a good conscience, a breastplate of righteousness before all our enemies. And this leads us to the third thing, namely:—

3. THE FEET SHOD. "And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." On this part of

the armour, I think it will be unnecessary to say much. It fits well with the first two. The three parts go beautifully together. When the inward movements of the heart, and the outward conduct of the life, are governed by the grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ, the general walk is sure to be characterized by the peaceful spirit of the gospel. And here, again, let me observe, that the peace spoken of in this passage, is different from the peace that was made by the blood of the cross. That is made, blessed be God, and can never be unmade. Nothing can ever disturb the believer's peace with God. Christ Himself is our peace, and He is in the presence of God for us. We may get out of communion with God, as, alas, we sometimes do, and then we lose the sweet enjoyment of our peace with God; but the peace that was made by the blood of the cross, which put away for ever all that was against us, can never be broken. The blood can never lose its power. And the more fully we enjoy this glorious truth, the more habitually shall we manifest a spirit of peace before men. When we are out of communion, we are unhappy. Easily troubled in our own spirit, and soon angry with others. Then Satan finds us defenceless and an easy prey to his subtle wiles.

Remember the word of the Lord which says, "Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God." (Matt. v. 9.) In all your movements, be sure that your feet are shod with the gospel of peace, then you will be sure to carry peace with you wherever you go. In every scene through which you pass, let the sweet odours of the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace, be richly diffused; but in no place let its fragrance be more plentifully shed around you than in your own house at home. So shall your walk be divinely guarded on all sides.

4. THE SHIELD OF FAITH. "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." The object of the shield is to defend the whole man. Hence the meaning is, *over all*, the shield of faith. But this is not the faith, ob-

serve, that receives the testimony of God about Christ, and the salvation of our souls, and by which we are justified. Although, we may say, it is founded on the revelation of God in Christ to us as sinners, and necessarily flows from it. The shield of faith, then, is full, unwavering confidence in God—the God of love. We know and confide in Him, who, because He loved us, “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.) In the divine reasoning of the apostle, every lesser blessing is included in the greater. He who has given His Son for us, will never fail nor forsake us.

All the grace and goodness that has reached us, flows from His heart. And conducted by these streams of grace, we rise to their native source, and there securely rest. Thus brought into His presence, in the full credit of Christ, no fiery darts of the enemy can ever reach us there. This is our sure defence, behind such a shield, the soul can triumphantly say, “If God be for us, who can be against us?” Rom. viii. 31.

It is also important to understand, that the fiery darts of Satan, are not his temptations to lead us astray in our conduct—they are quite different. Frequently, the most tender walking, serious Christians, are greatly troubled with them. Only last evening, I saw a well-known, dear young Christian in great distress of mind. On inquiring what was the matter, I learnt that a dear and loved one had been removed by death about a fortnight ago. A few days after the funeral was over, when she was feeling the loss very much, and perhaps brooding over it too much, the thought came into her mind, ‘Can this be love? Can this be kindness in God to me?’ This wicked insinuation of Satan, in place of being instantly repelled with the assurance of God’s unchanging love and favour, was listened to. She began to ask, as many do, in such circumstances, “*the reason why*.” This is always wrong. Did Christ ever ask *the reason why*? Self-judgment under affliction, and wishing

to know the reason why God thus deals with us, are widely different things. Faith will always justify God, and repose in Him.

Here, you perceive, the shield of the young soldier was let down, and the fiery darts of the enemy flew thick and fast into her soul. "Oh," she said to me, with many sobs and tears, "I have had hard thoughts of God these two days; I know it is wrong, but I cannot help it. Oh! I am rebelling." Such is real agony. I referred to the latter part of Romans viii., and similar portions, and left her somewhat relieved. Pray that you may be kept from ever dropping your shield—from ever losing confidence in God's love and goodness, whatever may be your trial. Imagine for a moment, what state Peter would have been in after his fall, had he thought that God was against him. He would have been without a refuge, and in dark despair. But Christ had prayed for him, and his faith failed not. Ah! dear brother, this is the secret of our faith abiding: "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." Luke xxii. 32.

The only safeguard against such attacks of the enemy, is to have the soul well established in grace—the grace that shines in the work of redemption, and to know our place abidingly in God's presence, in all the acceptableness of His own beloved Son. Then should we know our God and Father to be unto us what He says to Abraham, "Fear not; I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward."

5. THE HELMET OF SALVATION. Believing that you are now happily acquainted with this part of the armour, I will not dwell upon it. Besides, my letter is already long; so I will do little more than name the remaining parts. If the shield be what God *is* for us, the helmet is what God has *done* for us. It is the known and enjoyed salvation of God through our Lord Jesus Christ. This is a truth of immense practical importance, like all the other parts of the Christian's armour. Uncertainty on this point would greatly enfeeble us, and expose us to the

assaults of the enemy. Christ has accomplished it for us. "*It is finished.*" Jesus says it ; we believe it. So that we may well hold up the head in the day of battle. No weapon of the enemy can ever pierce, or even scar, our helmet. "The LORD is my strength and song, and is become my salvation." (Psalm cxviii. 14.) He who was on the cross for us, is now on the throne for us. The grave is empty, and heaven is filled with the glories of the Risen Man.

6. THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT. "And the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." We are furnished with only one offensive weapon ; the other parts of the armour refer to our condition and defence. This is the only one of active energy. The sword is the symbol of that by which questions are settled. The nations of the earth appeal to the sword that is used by carnal force in settling their questions. The Christian has to learn to appeal to the sword of the Spirit, the word of God, in settling all questions that come before him. "To the law and to the testimony : if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." (Isaiah viii. 20.) The blessed Lord, always perfect in every scene, is our example in the use of the Spirit's sword. Here, you have both example and precept. All through the scriptures, and especially in the psalms, you may learn the many uses and applications of the word of God ; but above all in using the word of God as a weapon of offensive and defensive warfare, follow the Lord's example, study the way He used and applied the word in the temptation, and all through the gospels, when in conversation with the cavilling Jews. There is one thing, however, I must tell you, that is absolutely necessary to a good swordsman ; it is this :—Unless you are walking in communion with God, and in the power of an ungrieved Spirit, you cannot even hold your sword aright, far less use it. It is only by the light and power of the Spirit that you can lay your hand on the right passage at the right time ; but when guided by the Spirit, a single verse, like the

pebble from the brook, will slay the mightiest and proudest foe. It is the Spirit's sword. He uses it by us when we are walking in communion. "If any man will do his will he shall know of the doctrine." (John vii. 17.) You may have often heard a person quote, or misquote, a passage, which confuted himself, and gave to his opponent the victory. This is like a man grasping his sword by the wrong end, and thereby wounding and disabling himself for further conflict.

7. PRAYING ALWAYS. "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints." This remarkable verse points out the true position of a successful warrior, namely, dependence upon God—intercession for all saints—always, and "in the Spirit"—the power of the Holy Ghost. We never feel much interest in people until we pray for them. If we have been at the pains to water our plants in the evening, we will expect to find them looking fresh in the morning: thus, loving all saints, united in the one dear uniting name, our sympathies flow out as wide as the sympathies of Christ, and our prayers and intercessions flow in a channel wide as the circle of the Holy Spirit's action in the body of Christ.

And, oh! my dear brother, remember that all this praying for brethren, and all this fighting with enemies, can only be maintained in a spirit of entire dependence upon God. "*Praying always.*" God is our strength—our all; we can do nothing without Him. Oh! how complete, how practical, is the armour of God—the panoply of heaven! The thoughts and affections well ordered by the truth, the practice right, and the ways peace. This sound moral condition of soul keeps the enemy at a distance, and leads the heart into happy nearness to God, and strengthens its confidence in Him, which is a shield over all. The head is covered with the helmet of God's salvation, present oneness, in the heavenlies, with the Risen Jesus. The word, as a sharp two-edged sword, used in the wisdom and power of

the Spirit, puts the enemy to flight. The spiritual warrior, thus secure in the strong tower of entire dependence on God, he can look out on the movements of the enemy, and abide in prayer and supplication for all saints, in the happy assurance of his own final victory over every foe, and of the indestructible unity of the church which is the body of Christ, and the Bride of the Lamb.

“LOOPS OF BLUE.”

(Exod. xxvi. 4.)

IN contemplating the structure of the tabernacle in the wilderness, we may observe what an important place was assigned to the “loops of blue.” By means of them and the “taches of gold,” the curtains were joined together, and the manifested unity of the whole structure preserved. These loops and taches might seem to be very insignificant and unimportant; but, without them, there would have been no unity. The curtains, however beautiful in themselves, would have hung apart one from the other, and thus one grand feature of the manifestation would have been lost.

Now, looking at the tabernacle as a figure of Christ, as surely we may, we can easily trace the beauty and significance of those “loops of *blue* and taches of *gold*.” They typified that perfect unity and consistency in the character and ways of “the Man Christ Jesus” which were the result of His *heavenly* grace and *divine* energy. In the life of the blessed Lord Jesus, and in all the scenes and circumstances of that life, we not only see each distinct phase and feature perfect in itself, but also a perfect combination of all those phases and features, by the power of that which was heavenly and divine in Him. The curtains of the true Tabernacle were not only beautiful in themselves, but they were beautifully combined—exquisitely linked together by means of those “loops of blue and taches of gold” which can only be discerned and appreciated by

those who are, in some measure, instructed in the holy mysteries of the sanctuary.

And let me add, that what is true of the Divine Living Word, is equally true of the divine written word. The spiritual student of holy scripture will readily discern the "loops of blue and taches of gold." This is only what we might expect. The Living Word is the divine embodiment of the written word; and the written word is the divine transcript of the Living Word. Hence, we may look for the same heavenly unity, the same divine consistency—the same rare and exquisite combination in both the one and the other. It would be, at once, pleasant and profitable to trace, in company with my reader, the various illustrations of the loops and taches, through the word of God; but to do this fully would demand a volume; whereas, at present, I have merely time and space for a brief suggestive fragment. I should, however, like to give an example or two from the written word which may perhaps lead him to study the subject for himself.

In 1 Corinthians xvi. we have a very lovely and a very practical illustration of our subject. At verse 13 the apostle says, "Quit you like men, *be strong*." Here we have one fine feature of the christian character—that manly strength which is so desirable. But this, if taken by itself, might easily degenerate into a rough, rude, high-handed way in dealing with others, the very opposite of what we find in our divine Exemplar. Hence the Spirit in the apostle forms a loop of blue, and by means of a golden tach, links on to this manly strength, another feature which is so needful, namely, *charity*. "Let all your things be done with charity." Most precious combination! Strength and charity. Charity and strength. If you untie this heavenly loop, you will either have a high, haughty, inconsiderate style, or a soft, pliable, enfeebled mode of acting which will sacrifice everything for peace and quietness.

Again, look at that noble definition of pure religion,

given at the close of the second chapter of James. There the apostle uses the loop and tach in order to connect together the two phases of divine religion. "To visit the fatherless and the widow in their affliction" is looped with unspotted separation from the world. In other words, active benevolence and personal holiness are inseparably linked together. Untie the loop, and what have you got? Either a sort of benevolence which can go hand in hand with the most intense spirit of worldliness; or a rigid pharisaic separation without a single generous emotion. It is only the presence of that which is heavenly and divine that can secure true unity and consistency of character. And, let it never be forgotten, that true Christianity is simply Christ reproduced, by the Holy Ghost, in the life of the Christian. Dry rules will never do; it must be Christ in all.



THE HARVEST HOME.

• That both he that soweth, and he that reapeth, may rejoice together."
John iv. 36.

FROM the far-off fields of earthly toil
A goodly host they come,
And sounds of music are on the air,—
'Tis the song of the Harvest Home.
The weariness and the weeping—
The darkness has all passed by,
And a glorious sun has risen—
The Sun of Eternity!

We've seen those faces in days of yore,
When the dust was on their brow,
And the scalding tear upon their cheek—
Let us look at the labourers now!
We think of the life-long sorrow,
And the wilderness days of care;
We try to trace the tear-drops,
But no scars of grief are there.

There's a mystery of soul-chastened joy

Lit up with sun-light hues,
Like morning flowers most beautiful,
When wet with midnight dews.
There are depths of earnest meaning
In each true and trustful gaze,
Telling of wondrous lessons
Learnt in their pilgrim days.

And a conscious confidence of bliss,
That shall never again remove,—
All the faith and hope of journeying years,
Gathered up in that look of love.
The long waiting days are over;
They've received their wages now;
For they've gazed upon their Master,
And His name is on their brow.

They've seen the safely-garnered sheaves,
And the song has been passing sweet,
Which welcomed the last in-coming one
Laid down at their Saviour's feet.
Oh! well does His heart remember,
As those notes of praise sweep by,
The yearning, plaintive music
Of earth's sadder minstrelsy.

And well does *He* know each chequered tale,
As He looks on the joyous band—
All the lights and shadows that crossed their path,
In the distant pilgrim-land;—
The heart's unspoken anguish—
The bitter sighs and tears—
The long, long hours of watching—
The changeful hopes and fears!

One had climbed the rugged mountain-side;
'Twas a bleak and wintry day;
The tempest had scattered his precious seed,
And he wept as he turned away.

But a stranger-hand had watered
That seed on a distant shore,
And the labourers now are meeting,
Who had never met before. .

And one—he had toiled amid burning sands,
When the scorching sun was high :
He had grasped the plough with a fevered hand,
And then laid him down to die :
But another, and yet another,
Had filled that deserted field,
Nor vainly the seed they scattered,
Where a brother had tilled.

Some with eager step went boldly forth,
Broad casting o'er the land ;
Some watered the scarcely budding blade,
With a tender, gentle hand.
There's one, her young life was blighted,
By the withering touch of woe ;
Her days were sad and weary,
And she never went forth to sow.

But there rose from her lonely couch of pain,
The fervent pleading prayer ;
She looks on many a radiant brow,
And she reads the answers there !
Yes ! sowers and reapers are meeting ;
A rejoicing host they come !
Will you join that echoing chorus ?—
'Tis the song of the Harvest Home !
