

THE

SALVATION OF GOD:

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THE SALVATION OF GOD.



“YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN.”

JOHN iii. 7.

IN the Revised Version this verse is rendered, “Ye must be born anew;” that is, that a totally new birth is necessary; the first Adam with all his doings must be swept away, and there must be an entirely new nature, in order to produce anything fit for God’s acceptance. The word translated “anew” here is used in Luke i. 3 in a very forcible way; viz., “from the very first.” A new start with God, a new beginning, is what is required. It is useless to patch up the old nature, which can never please God; but He introduces a new thing, and makes me a partaker of the divine nature, having set aside the old—root, branch, and fruit—judicially at the cross. *You must have a new life to lead a new life.* Observe to whom the Lord makes this statement, “Ye must be born anew.” People are inclined to think that it is right to insist on the new birth when preaching to Hottentots, but that religious people do not require it. Who was Nicodemus? Was he a Hottentot? Was he a profane Gentile? No, he was a refined, polished, religious man; and to *him* the Lord said, “Ye *must* be born anew.”

“Oh,” you say, “I have been baptized, confirmed, and regularly partake of the sacrament!”

Baptism never kept a person out of hell, or took one to heaven. You *may* be moral and religious, but surely not more so than he to whom the Lord addressed these words. Look at verses 2 and 10, and notice the way in which Nicodemus addresses the Lord, and the Lord Nicodemus. Nicodemus says, in verse 2, "We know that Thou art *a* teacher sent from God." In verse 10 the Lord says to him, "Art thou *the* teacher of Israel?" What does that prove? That there was not a man in Israel above him. He was the head of religious dignitaries, holding a similar position in that country to that which the Archbishop of Canterbury holds in this, yet this man hears from the lips of the Lord Jesus Christ that he "*must* be born anew." Surely then the new birth is a divine necessity for you and me!

It *is* necessary; for, let me tell you, if you are *born only once* you will *die twice*—first the physical death, then the second death, which is the reunion of spirit and body, and eternal banishment from God in the lake of fire. If you are *born twice* you will *never die*. "Whosoever liveth and believeth on Me shall *never die*." (John xi. 26.) Will you be born *once* only, or *twice*? You *must* either have the second *birth* or the second *death*. Which shall it be?

There are seven reasons why the new birth is a divine necessity.

First, a man cannot *see* the kingdom of God unless he be born again.

Secondly, he cannot *enter* the kingdom of God.

Thirdly, the old nature cannot be improved, thus a new nature is necessary; for "that which is born of the flesh *is* flesh, and that which is

born of the Spirit is spirit.” As easily could a leopard change his spots, or the Ethiopian his skin, as flesh become spirit, or spirit flesh. You may educate flesh, make it moral, teach lying flesh not to lie, thieving flesh not to steal, but it remains flesh still, and can never be anything else. You cannot change an oak into an elm, nor can you alter or improve the old Adam nature. See the lion in the Zoological Gardens! How tame he seems! Surely he would hurt no one! Yet he has the same nature as the lion that stalks at liberty in the wilds of Africa. Wherein lies the difference? The first is kept in by iron bars. So the bars of education and refinement may surround the old nature, but it remains the same still, and is the very same nature that exists in the drunkard lying in the gutter; therefore there is a necessity of being born anew.

Fourthly, you cannot serve God until you are born anew. God never accepts service from an unregenerate person. You must be His child before you can be His servant.

Fifthly, you can never worship God until you are born anew.

Sixthly, you cannot love God until you are born anew, for the old nature hates God, and no moral or religious training can make it love Him. The new nature alone is capable of loving God.

Seventhly, you cannot enjoy God unless you are born anew. Suppose you could be taken as you are in your sins into the presence of God, would you enjoy being there? No, indeed; nor could God, who is perfectly holy, enjoy you in your sins. God’s joy is in His children, but

you must become His child before He can have His joy in you.

Indisputably then there is a necessity of being born again. Now what is the foundation upon which the new birth rests? This brings us to the second "must" of the chapter. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so *must* the Son of man be lifted up." (iii. 14.) God is light and love, and in order that our condition should be met, according to Him who is light and love, the Son of man *must* be lifted up. Where do we see God as light and love? At the cross of Christ. There God as light put all my sins away, and made me suitable to the light, in order that love might take me by the hand and lead me into the light and enjoyment of God throughout a golden eternity. God's holiness, and the utterly lost and guilty condition of the old nature, demanded that the Son of man should be lifted up. He went to the cross and bore all the judgment of God against sin, and met all the requirements of God's holiness, and all the need of my ruined condition, in order that God might come out in love to a poor wretched sinner like me. God *was light* before ever there was a universe to illuminate, and God *was love* before ever there was a sinner to love! There was no other way of bringing a poor sinner to God than by the cross, therefore the Son of man must be lifted up. Talk of a thousand years in hell! A million years of hell could not put away *one* sin. Nothing but the blood of Christ can wash away one sin.

The necessity of the new birth, and the foundation on which it rests, are clearly seen in these two "*musts*." The question now is,

How is it produced in a man? Scripture answers for itself. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." The sole Agent in the new birth is God the Holy Ghost. It is His divine work to produce the new birth. Verse 8 tells us so: "The wind bloweth where it listeth . . . so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Again, in chap. vi. 63: "It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing." One verse in 2 Cor. iii. corroborates this: "The Spirit giveth life." (v.6.) Here are three divine statements proving that the new birth is the work of the Spirit of God *alone*. Now what instrument does He use? Verse 5 tells us: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." "At last," you say, "you have arrived at baptism, for water must mean baptism." Water does in some cases mean baptism, but *not here*. First let me say that I believe fully in baptism. It is a divine institution; but it is not the instrument used in producing the new birth, nor is it referred to in this verse. What then does water mean here? Let Scripture answer. A few passages will prove that water is often used to signify the *word of God*. First turn to John xv. 3: "Ye are clean through the *word* which I have spoken unto you." Again in Eph. v. 25, 26: "Washing of *water* by the *word*." James i. 18 distinctly states that the new birth is produced by the word of God. "Of His own will begat He us with the *word of truth*." It does not say, "With the water of baptism." Peter tells us the same. "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the *word of God*, which liveth and abideth for ever." The Holy

Ghost therefore distinctly states that the new birth is produced by means of the word of God. We have seen now the *necessity* of the new birth, its *foundation*, the *Agent* and *instrument* in producing it. One more question remains to be answered—How are men and women to receive it, and know they have it? John i. 12 makes it very simple: “As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that *believe* on His name.” How am I born anew? By *believing* on the Lord Jesus Christ. “He that believeth on the Son *hath* everlasting life.” (John iii. 36.) Again, in Gal. iii. 26: “Ye are all the children of God by *faith in Christ Jesus*,” faith in a *Person*. The brightest glory of God is centred in that Person, and in Him you must believe to become a child of God. Galatians iv. 6 shows that we may have the present enjoyment of our place as children of God: “Because ye *are* sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.” Again, in Romans viii. 15: “Ye have received the Spirit of adoption [or child-making], whereby we cry, Abba, Father.” So that we can say, in the language of Ephesians i., “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.” Nor does God refuse to own as His children those who are in a path of separation; for He says, in 2 Cor. vi., “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.”

H. M. H.

“RUBBING IT OUT BIT BY BIT.”

IT was a lovely and secluded spot, the village of B——; and as I walked round its churchyard, one bright summer day, it seemed too lovely for death to be there. Nevertheless, on every hand there were the unmistakeable signs of it—the freshly-inscribed tombstone, as well as those of two or three centuries, which time had well-nigh effaced, making it extremely difficult to decipher the long-forgotten name. How brief is man’s day! His history summed up by the wise man, “Come,” “Gone,” “Forgotten,” soon forgotten by man, and yet not forgotten by God, each name, each history, and all to come up again in the hour that is nearing apace. “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in their graves shall hear His voice.” How blessed to have heard His word, His voice, in the hour that “*now is.*” To such it will be a resurrection of life. To those who have never heard His voice in that hour, it will be a resurrection of judgment.

Musing thus, I stood under the shade of a tall chestnut tree, whose branches reached out over the churchyard gate, and well-nigh across the road. Under the tree by the roadside was a huge stone. On it I observed sitting an old man, whose grey locks betokened many summers and winters. He seemed to be enjoying the rest and shade; and as there was room for another, I went and sat with him.

I said, “Father, you seem to be getting on in years.”

“Yes, sir, I am well-nigh eighty-two.”

“I suppose you have spent most of your time in this village?”

“I was born, brought up, and have lived most all my life here. I don't think I have been a fortnight out of it.”

I said, “You have seen many changes in your lifetime. Most of the people you knew in youthful days are gone.”

“Ah, yes!” he said, shaking his head and looking towards the churchyard gate.

I said, “They will soon be taking you in there.”

“Yes; I can't expect to be here much longer.”

“Have you any hope beyond?” I said.

He replied, “I think I have.”

“What about your sins? They must be got rid of. It is written, ‘There shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie.’”

He replied, “I am getting on, sir—saying my prayers, reading my Bible. I think I am getting on, sir; rubbing them out bit by bit.”

“Oh,” I said, “you will never get rid of your sins that way! All your prayer saying, your Scripture reading, would never blot out a single sin-stain. No, father [pointing up], there is One blessed Man, the Son of God, who, when He had by Himself made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of God, of whom God declares in His word, that His blood, and His blood alone, can cleanse away our sins; and you, as you sit here, looking up and trusting Him, may know, on the authority of God's word, at this very moment, that all your sins are gone, and gone for ever.”

“It is not thy tears of repentance or prayers,
But the blood that atones for the soul.”

Reader, hast thou known its cleansing virtue? It cleanseth *now*; it cleanseth from *all* sin. What an awful delusion, "Rubbing them out bit by bit." And yet how many there are who, if not using the simple language of this countryman, are seeking some other way than God's way of cleansing.

Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins.

"The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin."
W. J.

A VERY NARROW ESCAPE.

WHEN in Exeter the other day I saw the dismal black ruins of the theatre there, recently destroyed by fire, where some hundred and fifty persons were suffocated or burnt to death out of about eight hundred who were present when the fire signal was heard.

The heart-rending sorrow and distress occasioned by this dreadful calamity, which cast such a sad gloom over that city, was in nearly everybody's mouth, and well it might be; for God does not permit such occurrences for naught.

This is a day when man, on all sides, is forgetting God; and now and then, in various ways, God causes His warning and awakening voice to be specially heard. Well indeed it is when souls take warning and wake up; for God "will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." Just before leaving Exeter by train that night, I met a young man on the platform who told me he was in that theatre when the fire broke out. This young man said to

me, "When the alarm of *fire* was given, sir, I was sitting on a bench with my mate and our two young women, and I at once made a rush for the door, which was blocked, and I scrambled over the heads of others in front of me, and rolled down into the street, I scarcely know how, trembling and most terribly frightened; but my mate and our two friends were burnt to death, as the whole place was in flames in a few minutes. All day long I am thinking of my poor mate who perished."

"Do you think your mate was a Christian?" I asked.

"No, sir, I am afraid not," said he.

"Then have you got your own soul saved? let me enquire."

"No, sir, I think not," he answered.

"Then are you going to accept this very narrow escape as God's warning voice to you, and let Him save your soul?"

"Yes," he said, "I should very much like to; for I have been much troubled ever since that dreadful night I tumbled into that street, and I have felt frightened every time I have thought of it, and of my mate who used to work with me at these trains, and I deserved what my mate has got quite as much as he did."

"Well, dear young man," I said, "Christ, in His love, died for such as you, to deliver you from the eternal lake of fire, and to get you to His eternal glory. In God's rich mercy you have escaped that burning theatre, but there is no escaping the worm that dieth not, and the fire that never shall be quenched, which you must have if you leave this world without accepting the Saviour. Do now take this timely warning ere it be for

ever too late. Think once more of those poor creatures who perished in those theatre-flames only a few days ago, several at least of whom, it is to be feared, went straight from that theatre-pit to the more awful pit of hell! And again think of that poor mate of yours, who is probably now in endless misery. Oh, do, I beseech you, think of what your state would have been, had you been burnt instead of your mate! How gladly you would have exchanged places with anybody upon earth, so as to have gained just one more opportunity of accepting Christ and of being saved. Can you," I said, "as a needy and lost sinner, trust the precious blood of Christ, that cleanses from all sin, and receive that blessed One who shed it as your Saviour and Substitute?"

"Yes, I believe I can," he replied.

"But *do* you?" I pressed.

"Yes, I do," was his definite answer.

"Then," said I, "if you really *do, eternal life and glory are yours*, and the eternal torment and the unquenchable fire you will never know." My train bearing me off ended the conversation.

Dear reader, you may not be a theatre-goer, nor have had any very solemn warnings of your danger, nor be forgetting God quite so much as some are, but, if still unsaved, doubtless you know full well that all is not right with your soul. Let me then make bold to ask, Were you this moment to be called into eternity as those theatre-goers were, how would it be with your soul? Would its destination be *the lake of fire* which is prepared for the devil and his angels, or would it be to dwell in everlasting glory and joy with the Lord Jesus, who in such love "died the Just for

the unjust that He might bring us to God?" Would it be to lift up your eyes in hell like that rich man, in torments calling for a drop of water to cool your parched tongue? or would it be praising for ever in glory, the Lamb who for sinners was slain?

Mark three things about that young man I spoke to. He *felt his danger*, he *was in earnest*, and *at once escaped*. "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." He saves only *lost* ones, and if you, dear unsaved one, really knew and believed you were lost, and on the brink of hell, as God sees you to be, you would be as much in earnest in receiving a Saviour at once, and in making your escape from eternal perdition, as that young man was from the fire that was already about his ears. Oh, dear soul, may God in His great mercy grant you to hear the divine signal, "Fire!" and to "*escape* for thy life. Look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; *escape* to the mountain, lest *thou* be consumed." (Gen. xix. 17.) "Deliver *him* from going down to the pit: *I* have found a *Ransom*. He shall pray unto God, and He will be favourable unto him: and he shall see His face with *joy*. He looketh upon men, and if *any* shall say, *I have sinned*, and perverted that which is right, and it profited me not; He will *deliver his soul from going into the pit*, and *his life shall see the light*." (Job xxxiii. 24, 26, 27, 28.)

But at the same time remember that God is a *holy* God as well as a God of love, and the God of all grace, and has said, "He, that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, *shall suddenly be destroyed*, and that WITHOUT REMEDY." (Proverbs xxix. 1.)

"I'LL NEVER FORGET THAT NIGHT."

SO said a hearty working-man to me at the close of a gospel meeting, as we spoke together of our "common salvation."

It was said too with a bright face and with great emphasis; evidently "out of the abundance of the heart" the mouth spoke.

"What night was that?" you say. It referred to a Lord's-day some two or three years before, when he found himself by faith under the shelter of the blood of Christ, when he believed that that precious blood had put all his sins away, and he was saved for eternity.

The preacher's subject had been Exodus xii. There you get the children of Israel under the shelter of the blood, God's own word to them being, "When I see the blood, I will pass over you." (v. 13.) That was to be the beginning of months to them, the first month of the year. (v. 2.) It was a new start on a different footing before God, and moreover they were never to forget it. It was to be a memorial to them of God's gracious deliverance, and to be kept as a feast for ever. (v. 14.) Their children too were to be taught its meaning. (vv. 26, 27.) "*I'll never forget that night,*" they might have been heard saying long after.

They were sheltered from judgment; the blood was their security, and they had God's own word for it; thus they could eat in peace the roast lamb inside their dwellings.

Now, dear friend, how do you stand in relation to the coming judgment and that precious blood which alone can save you from it? The day of judgment is fixed by God, and the Judge is

ordained. (Acts xvii. 31.) What if *you* are found then out of Christ—unwashed, unforgiven, unsheltered, and exposed to all the righteous judgment of a holy God against you, as a sinner in your sins? The blood *has* been shed, the work of Christ *is* finished, and God's eye now rests on that, and His heart delights to welcome all that come to Him through Christ.

Flee then, dear friend, to Christ for shelter. See Him now at God's right hand, "the Lamb as it had been slain." Trust Him *now*, for soon He will come in judgment "to take vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel." (2 Thess. i. 8.) *Now* is the time to meet Him as a Saviour, One who is longing to save and bless even *you*. Let this be the beginning of months to you—a new year, a new life, a new joy—as you believe what Christ has done for you, and see how His blood has sheltered you from all judgment.

If you refuse, and put it from you, there is another night coming—a night *you* can never forget, a night without a morning, the night of eternal judgment—when God's wrath is poured out on all not under the shelter of the blood.

Once more I plead with you: As you value your soul, as you would escape this judgment, as you would be happy for time and eternity, trust *now* in the precious blood of Christ, which is God's only way of forgiveness, and of fitting you for glory. Thus too you will honour the work of Christ, and glorify God who gave Him to die.

*"It is the blood, it is the blood
Which has atonement made;
It is the blood which once for all
Our ransom price has paid."*

T. E. P.

A VERY IMPORTANT QUESTION.

A SHORT time ago a young woman was traveling in a railway carriage on her way home for her holidays. Opposite her sat a Christian man, who handed her two or three tracts, and then leaning forward asked her, "Have you found the Saviour?" The young woman felt that she had been insulted, and drawing herself up she exclaimed indignantly, "I don't wish you to speak to me about such things, if you please." Some days after, when relating this circumstance to a friend of the writer, she said, "The idea of his talking such nonsense to me." "Well," replied my friend, "he asked you a *very important* question."

Alas! how true it is that "the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them;" and what a sad example of it is the subject of the above narrative. My reader, if you are in the same condition of soul as she was, allow me to tell you that it is a terrible thing to despise God's salvation. He has given His own Son to die for us, so that "whosoever believeth" may have "everlasting life." Spurn not God's love, but beware, oh, beware lest His judgment fall upon you! If you reject His offers of salvation through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, you will have to stand before His awful judgment-throne in your sins. What then? Look for a moment beyond it, and does not the very thought of an eternity in hell make you shudder? yet if you do not accept Jesus as your Saviour, the

word of God declares that that is your only portion.

Oh, think of it, my reader, think of death, judgment, and everlasting punishment, which are the just deserts of each one of us, and then think of the wonderful love of God in giving His only Son to die for our sins, that we might have eternal life and glory with Himself!

Oh, sinner, let Satan no longer blind your mind! Do not despise the love of God, or put off salvation till a more convenient time, which may never come! Believe me, unsaved reader, the question of your salvation is a most important as well as a most solemn one, and I pray you to consider it now, and may God give you no rest until you have owned your lost and ruined condition before Him, and accepted the salvation which He is so willing to give. "To-day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts."

"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.)

G. R. C.

JOHN IX. 25.

"WHEREAS I was blind, I now" thankfully "see"
That Christ *must* have groaned, bled, and died too for me.
(Because of 2 Cor. v. 15; or, "Christ died for all.")
Relying on Him, all my "**SINS ARE FORGIVEN**;"
(Because of Epistle John ii. 12.)
And go when I may, I can't **HELP** reaching heaven.

Whereas you *were* blind, dear friend, don't *you* now see
That Christ *must* have groaned, bled, and died too for thee?
(Because of 1 Tim. ii. 6; or, "a ransom for all.")
IF RELYING ON Him all your sins "**are forgiven**;"
And go when you may, you can't **miss** reaching heaven.

C. G. E.

THE SALVATION OF GOD.



IS THE LINK ON?

THE above question is an important one, even when it refers to a railway train; and how much more so when it is a question of God, eternity, and our souls!

The writer was standing one day on the platform of a country railway station. The train was about to start. Everything seemed to be in perfect order—engine highly polished and well finished, carriages varnished without and cushioned within. The passengers had taken their seats, and to all appearance were quite ready. The guard then blew his whistle, and signalled to the driver with his uplifted left hand, when off went the engine, leaving the carriages with all their occupants behind. All this was owing to the neglect of the company's servants, who had failed to link the carriages to the tender. A laugh was at once caused by what had taken place; but the mistake was soon rectified, and on went the train.

My reader, you and I are fellow-travellers to eternity. Time is passing, and we are going. The very heavens and the earth are going, and Christ is coming. He is coming suddenly, and coming *soon*.

If you have no link with Him when He comes, you will be left behind for judgment, and will

find yourself without resource in God, or relief for your broken heart for ever.

Of the Lord Jesus it is written, that "every eye shall see Him . . . and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him." (Rev. i. 7.)

At the sight of the Son of God they will plead in vain for the mountains and rocks to fall on them, and hide them "from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb." (Rev. vi. 16.)

The coming of the Lord will have the opposite effect to this on them that *are* saved. All that believe on Him are united to Him; and when He comes they will be caught up to meet Him "in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (1 Thess. iv.)

In the meantime the saved one can sing—

"And this I do find, for such is His mind,
He'll not be in glory and leave me behind."

There can be no link with Christ apart from faith. Therefore He says, "If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins." (John viii. 24.)

What can be more simple than faith? And how very soon this wonderful link may be formed, when once the need of salvation is known to the soul, and the eye and the heart are uplifted to God! "Only believe," says Jesus to the anxious one. How could He say *less*? and He would not say *more*. The poor woman in the Gospel had only to touch the hem of His garment and she was made whole; and even *less* than this is needed now to bring peace and healing to the soul. "Look unto Me, and be ye saved," He says. Lift now the eye of faith, and see in Calvary's

tree an altar *laden* with sacrifice for a sinner *loaded* with sins.

“My soul looks back to see the burden Thou didst bear,
When hanging on the accursed tree, for all my guilt was there.”

Reader, have you never known the value of the Saviour's precious blood, or the sweetness of His saving name? If His coming finds you with *no link on*, then depend upon it you will be “left behind” for ever, to join with the tens of thousands outside mercy's closed door, saying, “Lord, Lord, open unto us.” Listen then to His voice to-day sweetly saying, “Come.”

“He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” (1 John v. 12.)
H. H.

A FATAL LEAP.

“Boast not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.”—PROVERBS xxvii. 1.

ONE Lord's-day afternoon recently two men set out from the town of M—— to walk to a neighbouring village some few miles off, expecting to return home in the course of the evening. They called at several public-houses on their way, and it was not until half-past eight that they commenced their homeward journey. The night being dark and stormy, they had not proceeded far across the fields before the footpath was lost. After wandering about some time, they decided to return back to the village, and coming to a hedge one man jumped over, calling upon his companion to follow, and telling him to be careful, as the bank was steep. After getting over the hedge, he suddenly disappeared without any sound what-

ever. His friend shouted to him, but did not get any answer. The poor fellow had fallen into a pit about sixty feet deep. Help was obtained as soon as possible, and willing hands brought lights and ropes, but it was not until six o'clock the next morning that the body was recovered. From the position of the deceased when found, it was evident he had fallen into the pit headforemost, and death was doubtless instantaneous.

Dear reader, if unsaved, is there not a solemn warning for you in the above event? This man, who went into eternity instead of reaching his home, did not expect to be cut off so suddenly. And you may be near, very near, that moment when the silver cord will be loosed, and "the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." (Eccles. xii. 6, 7.) How terrible to pass away, after hearing of God's boundless grace to sinners in the gift of His Son, and be for *ever* in the lake of fire. (Rev. xx. 15.) You will certainly find your part there, if you have not fled for refuge to the Lord Jesus Christ, and are not sheltered from judgment by His precious blood. "Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom." (Job xxxiii. 24.) What a ransom! none other than the Lord Jesus Christ, "who gave Himself a ransom for all" (1 Tim. ii. 6), that poor sinners might be saved from the just wrath of a holy and righteous God, who cannot overlook sin. "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.)

But perhaps you say, "I do not spend the Lord's-day in the public-house. I go to a place of worship, and am doing my best to please God." Ah! all

your attempts to get to heaven by your own doings will end in sad disappointment, and an eternity in the lake of fire. Look at what God says in His word, which shall stand for ever, "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." (Rev. xxi. 8.) The "UNBELIEVING!" You need not be a murderer to be lost for ever. Listen again to the unerring Word: "There is no difference: for *all* have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Rom. iii. 22, 23.) Salvation is "to him that *worketh not*, but *believeth* on Him that justifieth the ungodly." (Rom. iv. 5.) Turn away from your own vain efforts to fit yourself for the presence of God, and take your place before Him as a poor, lost, guilty, ruined sinner.

"Nothing, either great or small;
 Nothing, sinner, no;
 Jesus did it, did it all;
 Long, long ago."

"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." (1 Tim. i. 15.) "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. v. 8.)

You have doubtless heard the gospel of the grace of God many times, and yet you are not saved, know nothing of the joy and peace which fill the heart of a true believer. You are a gospel-hearer, but a Christ-rejecter. How sad to be a *professor*, and not a *possessor*! Soon the day of grace will be past. There is a moment when you will have heard the last invitation to accept Christ as your Saviour. A young woman living only a few miles from the town above mentioned

was returning from chapel on the previous Sunday evening, and missing her way, fell into the river and was drowned.

“Because there is wrath, beware lest He take thee away with His stroke: then a great ransom cannot deliver thee.” (Job xxxvi. 18.) May God in His sovereign grace give you to believe on His Son, and then to speak of Him to others.

“The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.” (Rom. x. 8, 9.)

H. J. R.

THE IMPENDING FAMINE.

“Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord.”—AMOS viii. 11.

I WAS travelling a few months back between Bristol and the North of England. On leaving York our carriage was quite full, but as the train stopped here and there one after another got out, until I found myself left with only one companion.

I got into conversation with him, and found he was a glass-blower by trade; had worked with one firm a great number of years, but through depression of trade was thrown out of work. He had tramped from Newcastle to Manchester in search of work, visiting all the chief towns *en route*.

He was now returning (a kind friend paying his railway fare) quite knocked up by his tramp, and out of spirits at his want of success in finding work. He told me he had left home

without giving his wife any warning, and now she did not know he was coming back.

I asked him why he had left so abruptly.

"Oh, sir," said he, "I could not bear to stop! I sold all my furniture, till my single room was emptied. Then I sold all our clothing, till decency would let me sell no more. In spite of this, my wife and bairns could not get proper food, and they began to look sadly altered for want of it. At last it came to the point that we had no bread in the house, and no money to buy it with. Sir, I could not stay at home any longer when my bairns, thin and pale, came begging in hungry tones for bread when there was none. I could not bear to see the bitter tears running down their poor thin cheeks. It clean drove me away."

My heart bled for the poor man as he told out his sorrowful tale. I gave him enough to buy a meal or two when he got home, and a little paper telling him about Jesus, who had said, many, many years ago, "I am the *bread* of life: he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst." (John vi. 35.) These words are still as fresh and as sweet as when they were first uttered in the midst of *hungering, thirsty souls*, by the blessed loving Jesus. I could not help thinking of that verse, which stands at the head of this paper, which speaks of a famine more terrible than that of bread or water—a famine "*for the words of the Lord.*" That famine is very near. That famine might take place for this poor world TO-DAY.

Have you ever heard, dear reader, that the Lord Jesus Christ is coming to take His own blood-bought ones home to be with Himself? He might very probably come TO-DAY.

Matthew xxv. 10 says, "They that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was *shut*."

Reader, ARE YOU READY? If you are not washed from all your sins by the blood of Jesus, and thus made ready, you will be left on the wrong side of the shut door.

Then shall begin for you that terrible famine of "the words of the Lord." True, you will still be able to buy a Bible. True you will still be able to read those blessed words, "Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." (2 Cor. vi. 2.) But you will have to say, in bitter, heart-sickening despair and remorse, "*Ah, it was that ONCE, but all is over now. All the Christians I once so despised are gone, and gone for ever. The door is shut, and shut for ever. Now hell is begun on earth for me.*"

My dear reader, God longs that heaven may begin for you on earth. The knowledge of your sins being all put away, the knowledge that you are a child of God, the knowledge that hell your eyes will never see, the knowledge that heaven awaits you, the knowledge that the Lord Jesus Christ is coming for you very soon, is enough to make *heaven* begin on *earth*. All that blessed knowledge can be yours if you will only trust in Jesus.

My friend, I beseech you trust Christ *now*. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." (Acts xvi. 31.)

"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.)

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

A. J. P.

“REMEMBER LOT’S WIFE.”

LUKE xvii. 32.

WEIGHTY words these! and from the fact that they were spoken by our Lord in connection with the period of His second coming as the Son of man, when, as in Noah’s days, people should devote themselves to eating and drinking; or, as in those of Lot, to buying and selling, to planting and building, to interests of time and pleasure, and to the neglect proportionately of the claims of God, we may readily see in them a warning of the most profound significance for ourselves.

✓ We live in such days. Trade, business, commerce, and money rule both day and night. Wealth is the social standard now-a-days. ✓ The spur of battle has largely given place to length of purse. He who by any means can accumulate most money holds a higher rank than the warrior. The ambition of the day is deplorably sordid and selfish. So in the days of Noah and of Lot—days preceding the flood and the fire.

Thus too in our own times the parallel is evident, and the solemn warning to “*remember Lot’s wife*” is therefore infinitely valuable.

We stand on the threshold of great events. Our times are portentous. The horizon is dark; clouds, storms, and convulsions threaten the earth, and those who belong to it. A thousand voices cry, “Escape for thy life; tarry not in all the plain.” A heart that finds its treasure in Sodom will share Sodom’s doom. A treasure in heaven, attracting, winning, absorbing all the affections, is

the only safety. Now what do we see in Lot's wife? First, Who was she? Her native place was Sodom. At least, we never hear of her until after her husband had unfortunately chosen the well-watered plains of that degraded district. His fatal choice of the plains led him to an equally fatal choice of a wife, all of whose associations were connected with Sodom.

Second, What was she? Her husband was "a righteous man." She was married to a saint of God. That was no small privilege; and by this connection she found herself under godly influences, and amid pious surroundings, which contrasted favourably with the black iniquities of her early education. We may easily picture her home, and imagine its relative purity as under the authority of Abraham's nephew; for Lot was a marked man—a white sheep in that black flock, a saint where all were sinners. "All?" Yes; for Abraham had so low an idea of Sodom that even he could not reckon on more than "ten righteous men." If *he* hoped there were ten, God could find but one.

And this one tried, doubtless, to shed a purifying influence around him. His piety, poor and feeble though it was, would express itself most powerfully at home. His wife and family must surely have felt its influence.

Thus she had rare privileges; indeed, we may say that she availed herself of them. She became a professor. Not that her heart found a new object, or her conscience the burden of sin; but outwardly she accepted the form of religion.

Hence when the two angels, those pure and heavenly messengers, came to visit Sodom, she with her husband made them welcome to house

and lodging, made them a feast, and baked unleavened cakes.

Further, she witnessed their power in blinding the men of the city; and, when reluctant to leave her doomed abode, she felt the gentle constraint of an angel’s hand. All this tells of immense privilege!

She follows her husband—walks “behind him,” still reluctant whilst escaping from coming destruction. But, alas! her heart was in Sodom. By leaving it she was severing many a fond association and breaking many a tender tie. Her profession is being tested. Is the call of God to win, or is Sodom? Which is more influential?

The first is faith, the second is fact; the one invisible, the other visible. Ahead, all is uncertain; behind—well, perhaps this talk about destruction is fabulous; the thing is so improbable; so her eye follows her heart back into Sodom to enjoy one more look, and instantly she becomes a “*pillar of salt*”—an abiding witness of God’s judgment on one whose feet are outside Sodom whilst his heart is in it.

Thirdly, whom does she represent? A question not difficult to answer; for, my reader, there are plenty like Lot’s wife now-a-days.

Why does Scripture not give her name? Why is she only called *Lot’s wife*? Just because she represents a class; and if her name were given, that class would fail to see themselves in the mirror, hence the significance of her name being withheld. “*Remember Lot’s wife*,” said the Lord to those who, instead of going on, feel inclined to go back. The first is the true believer who, like Abraham, sojourns in a strange country; the second is the professor who, for some personal

advantage and for the enjoyment of the outward but unfelt privileges of Christianity, "draws back to perdition," never having known in sweet experience the reality of the things that faith can always see, nor the love of that God who calls His people from the "city of destruction" to prove His grace in salvation, safety, and power.

The mere professor finds constraint in his profession. He possesses nothing but a religious name. He is a very sham, and he knows it. His feet are religiously outside Sodom, but his heart and interests are all within; and the heart can be dragged but a short distance. It is a heavy load to carry. Its motive power will win in the long run. The road will test the runner.

Let me quote two verses of a hymn which struck me, by the exquisite pathos of their words, before I was converted, and which are oftentimes present with my soul to-day—

"Jesus sought me when a stranger,
Wandering from the fold of God;
He to save my soul from danger,
Interposed His precious blood.

"Oh, to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be!
Let that grace, Lord, like a fetter
Bind my wandering heart to Thee."

Surely, dear reader, if Moses "esteemed the *reproach* of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt," we may say that His *love* is still more so." Oh, what a mine! what a source unbounded of all the heart could wish for is found in "the love of Christ which passeth knowledge"! Come, explore, discover, believe, rejoice. J. W. S.

“HE DO BE ALWAYS THE SAME EVERY YEAR.”

SUCH were the words of an aged woman to the writer and his companion, as they paused to take breath one glorious summer's morning whilst climbing up the steep ascent of the fishing village of C——. The old lady was standing at the door of her little cottage, which was literally covered with beautiful flowering shrubs; and the writer said to her, after giving her a little book:

“Well, mother, you have a beautiful tree there. In the North of England we can't get them to grow out of doors like that.”

“Yes, he do be a fine one,” was her reply; adding, after a pause, “He do be always the same every year; there be no change in him.”

“How like your bush is to a dear friend of mine,” said I. “Jesus Christ, ‘the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.’ Do you know Him?”

I could see, alas! from the expression on the old woman's face, that she was still a stranger to Him, so I continued:

“I have known Him for ten years or more, and I have found that He do be always the same; there be no change in Him. And, what is better still, He has saved me, and made me fit for glory; and I can tell you that He is just the same living, loving, sinner-receiving Saviour as He was when here among men. He only asks you to trust Him.”

After a little further conversation we parted,

looking to Him who is able and willing to save to bless the seed sown.

And now, my reader, to apply this simple incident, how often have you and I sung in the Sunday-school—

“I think, when I read that sweet story of old,
How, when Jesus was here among men,
He called little children, like lambs, to His fold,
I should like to have been with Him then”?

Indeed, it was a wonderful time. Blind eyes were opened, deaf ears unstopped, the dumb spake, lepers were cleansed, the dead were raised, and, best of all, to the poor the gospel was preached. His ears were ever open to hear the cry of the wretched, His loving heart was ever ready to sympathize with the sorrow-stricken, His mighty power was there to be used on behalf of any needy one who came to Him; and, bless His dear Name, “He do be always the same,” though now the mighty Conqueror of sin and death, the exalted Man at God’s right hand in glory. He still stoops down to hear the feeblest cry, and He still says, “Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out. For I came not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me. And this is the will of Him that sent Me, that every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life.”

Oh, that you may sing with me—

“I’ve found a Friend; oh, such a Friend!
He loved me ere I knew Him;
He drew me with the cords of love,
And thus He bound me to Him.
And round my heart still closely twine
Those bonds which nought can sever;
For I am His, and He is mine,
For ever and for ever.”

HOW LITTLE JOHN WAS SAVED FROM
THE FIRE.

THE fierce flames were fast consuming the parsonage at Epworth, a village in Lincolnshire. All the family were *supposed* to be outside it, when a little boy made his appearance at the chamber window. It was little John, standing with a terrified face and cries of despair. He knew his terrible danger, but could find no way of escape; on every hand the cruel flames faced him, and he must soon perish. What was to be done? One man stood with his back against the burning house, whilst another mounted up on his shoulders, from whence he could just reach the boy. He lifted him out of the place of danger, and handed him down to a place of safety, where the rest of the family stood upon the green lawn. In this way was little John saved from the fire; not by his own efforts, but through the kindness and strength of another, into whose hands he *trusted* himself.

When John grew older he thought of other flames than those of the burning parsonage—the flames of an eternal hell, of which Jesus said thrice, “Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.” (Mark ix. 44, 46, 48.) Death, judgment, and the lake of fire were before him. Others might scoff at these things, and deem them only fables, but John knew that they were realities of which the word of God testifies most solemnly. He knew too that he deserved nothing less than this, for he was a sinner. But could he not save himself, and make his peace

with God? No, indeed! He was just as helpless in the matter of his soul's salvation as he was in the days when he stood at the chamber window of the burning house. He toiled religiously, gave alms to the poor, visited the sick and imprisoned, and sought to mortify himself, yet was he not saved.

But he learned from God's word that Jesus had come into the world to offer himself a spotless sacrifice to God in place of the sinner; that He "died for our sins, according to the scriptures." (1 Cor. xv.) What then was left for John to do? Only *to trust* Him, just as of old he had trusted the kind man who risked his life to save him. "Oh," some will exclaim, "that surely cannot be sufficient for a sinner's salvation!" Was it not sufficient for *little* John to trust his kind deliverer? And could not *older* John treat his *greater* deliverer in the same simple way? Assuredly. Would not doubts and hesitancy have grieved the kind heart of that noble man? And would not doubts and hesitancy grieve the tender heart of the Son of God? Yes, indeed. Moreover, what saith the scripture? "He that *believeth* on the Son hath *everlasting* life." (John iii. 36.) "He that *believeth* on Him shall not be confounded." (1 Peter ii. 6.)

Dear reader, have YOU trusted that precious Saviour? As a guilty, helpless sinner, have you dropped into His hands, leaving your salvation with Him, trusting to His blood, believing His word?

Let your honest language be—

"Jesus, *I do* trust Thee, trust without a doubt;
Whosoever cometh Thou wilt not cast out;
Faithful is Thy promise, precious is Thy blood,
Thou my soul's salvation, Thou my Saviour God."

J. R.

THE SALVATION OF GOD.



A WRONG CHOICE.

“IF you had the choice of anything what would you take?” was the question once put to a young lady.

“Anything?”

“Yes, anything that your heart would like—what would it be?”

“Well, if I could get *gaiety*, I should be perfectly happy.”

“Indeed! perfectly satisfied?”

“Well, yes!”

But satisfaction means a great deal. It extends beyond mere happiness. Happiness touches the surface, satisfaction reaches the centre of the heart. Satisfaction is not supplied by gaiety.

Ah! the young heart wants this. It may be laid down, however, as a fact well attested, that gaiety—that is, the lightsomeness of the world—not its toil or travail, not its drudgery or care, but its laughter and smile, the glint of its sun, and the ripple of its waters, even these cannot satisfy. They may produce a corresponding lightness of heart, but that is all, and with their departure the illusion is dispelled. Why, the Bible itself speaks of “the pleasures of sin.” To deny such pleasure is vain and hypocritical, and the Book is too candid to make such a denial; but together with this assertion is the truth, that the pleasures of sin are

(only) "for a season;" just a moment and then over. Oh, how contingent on circumstances they are! A turn of the wind has often blighted many a gay prospect. Well, the young heart cannot be preached out of such ideas by mere words. The world offers "the pleasures of sin for a season;" God offers "pleasures at His right han' for evermore."

The world supplies water that makes you "thirst again;" Christ says, "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst." This satisfies. The heart that has Christ has found satisfaction, and has a spring of living water, independent of the world.

Young friend, come and prove for yourself.

J. W. S.

THE TWO FOUNDATIONS.

READ LUKE vi. 46-49.

THE best security for a house is to have a good foundation. It is a most important thing; for without it the house may fall in any storm or hurricane of wind. Yes, it is quite true that it is important to have a good foundation to a house; but to have a firm foundation for the soul, and its hopes, is a thing much less attended to, but far more important. A *house* is only made to last for this life, but your *soul* will live for ever. You must have a good foundation. No better illustration of this could be given than that which our Lord gives in a parable. He describes where two men each build their houses. The one builds a house on the sand, which is always shifting and unstable, and the consequence is that when the

storm comes, and the winds blow, that house *falls*; yes, and our Lord adds, that "great was the fall of it." But the other builds his house on a rock, strong and abiding, and when the storms come they cannot even shake his house. Now which would you be like? What foundation are you resting upon? You say that you pray every day, read the Bible, and go to church or chapel on Sunday, and that thus you hope to get to heaven. If you rest on that you will find it to be a refuge of lies, a covenant with hell that will *not* stand; *that* is not God's foundation. Turn to God's Word and see what He says: "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. iii. 11.) What could be plainer? God tells you that the foundation you are to build on is Christ, and *none other*; all your prayers will never stand the fire of God's judgment, they will be consumed in a moment, and you will be left stripped of your righteousnesses, your filthy rags, before a holy, sin-hating, righteous God. But, on the other hand, if you take Jesus as your foundation, and rest on Him, you will be safe in His presence, satisfied with His likeness for ever. When the final judgment comes upon this guilty, doomed world, you will spend an eternity of bliss in His presence, who loved you, and gave Himself for you, instead of spending an eternity of woe, where there is "weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth."

Which will you have? It must be one or the other. You must either build on Christ, God's Rock, upon Him who endured to the utmost all God's wrath, and who now is able to "save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him" (Heb. vii. 25) —or, if you will not, you must see your building

destroyed, and you will be lost. It is now or never; you must build on nothing else but Himself, the Rock, and you must take Him just as you are, just where you are, just now; there is nothing to do, as you foolishly imagine, only to accept Christ as your substitute, and go on your way rejoicing to tell others how great things the Lord has done for you.

Do think on this all-important subject, and choose the Lord Jesus, the crucified one, the risen, the ascended, the glorified, and quickly-coming One, for your own Saviour, and choose *now*.

“Take salvation, take salvation,
Take it *now* and happy be.”

S. S. B. G.

“VERILY, VERILY, I SAY UNTO YOU.”

“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.

CHAPTER iii. of this gospel gives us the account of Nicodemus coming to Jesus by night, and it is said of him in our version that he was “a master of Israel,” but it should be “the teacher of Israel.” There was no one like him. He was the man of all men to whom the people looked, on whom they depended for guidance, and yet with all his brilliant abilities he had not the power to take in such an elementary truth as that of the new birth. The blessed Lord Jesus was the One who communicated the new birth to Nicodemus. Nicodemus was a *good* man, but respectability, goodness, reputation were all set

aside in the sweeping statement, “Ye must be born again.”

Ah! good man, religious man, teetotaler, drunkard, aged man, middle-aged man, young man, “Ye must be born again.”

Chapter iv. is the greatest contrast to chapter iii. There we have an account of a bad, corrupt, wicked woman, and yet she and the religious and moral Nicodemus were equally dark, equally ignorant spiritually. He asked, “How can these things be?” and she asked, “Art Thou greater than our father Jacob which gave us the well?” She knew nothing of His greatness in giving. To Nicodemus He gave the new birth. To the poor woman He gave the living water; *i.e.* the Holy Ghost. He put a well in her, a source of satisfaction which should spring up into everlasting life.

In chapter v. we see the impotent man who had been lying by the side of the pool for thirty-eight years in his helpless condition, desiring to be healed, lying beside that which could heal him, but with no power to avail himself of it. He was like a man under law. All that the law can do is to curse, it cannot help the sin-sick soul.

In the Gospel of John this expression, “Verily, verily,” occurs twenty-five times.

“Verily, verily, I say unto you.”

The speaker in the verse is the Lord Jesus Christ, and “you” are the hearers.

There is salvation for the soul in hearing the voice of Jesus, the Saviour God, the Saviour of sinners, the present, powerful, willing, waiting Saviour. “I say unto you.” To whom does the “you” apply? To any anxious, weary, sin-burdened one; any with whom the Holy Ghost is working; any on whose conscience the Holy Ghost

is pressing sin ; any wanting to be saved. You meet the "I," and He puts His lips to your ears, and drops a message of grace right down to your poor, weary, troubled, sin-burdened heart.

Again comes His word—"He that heareth My word." That word of His which communicated life to religious Nicodemus in the third chapter, a well of water to the poor woman in the fourth chapter, and gave power to the man in the fifth chapter who had been lying anxious to get cured, but was without a particle of power to avail himself of what could heal him.

Religious Nicodemus, "You must be born again." Poor, corrupt, wicked sinner, there is living water for you as a gift ; helpless one, unable to avail yourself of what would cure you, the Lord Jesus takes the place of the pool, and cures you ; and not only cures you, but gives you power over the very thing that held you in bondage before.

It is the character of a person which gives importance to the word he utters. The One whose voice you are called upon to hear and to obey is the Son of God, and He has power to communicate life and to raise the dead.

In verse 25 He is speaking of those who are morally dead, not of people dead in their graves, and He has power to give them life ; but He has also power (*vv.* 28, 29) to bring the bodies of dead people out of their graves.

At the beginning of the millennium the first resurrection of the blessed and holy will take place. At the end of the millennium He will call out of their grave all who have been guilty of refusing the Father's love, rejecting Himself, resisting the Holy Ghost, and ruining their own souls. (John v. 28, 29 ; Rev. xx. 5, 6.)

There are seven testimonies in chapter v. that prove Christ is a divine person.

1. He sets the pool aside, and gives the man what he could not get apart from Himself for thirty-eight years. There was not a man to help him into the pool, as we read in Isaiah, “When I came was there no man.” He learned the truth of those words in John xv.—“Without Me ye can do nothing.”

“None but Jesus can do helpless sinners good.”

2. He communicates eternal life to all who believe in Him. (v. 24.)

3. He will bring out of their graves saints at the beginning and sinners at the end of the millennium. (vv. 28, 29.)

4. John himself. (v. 33.)

5. Christ's works. (v. 36.)

6. The Father Himself. (v. 37.)

7. The Scriptures. (v. 39.)

Read the seven testimonies to the glory of His person given in this chapter, and you will see what perhaps you never saw before. I am free to confess to you I never saw such blessed meaning in that little sentence before—“Heareth My word.” Have you heard the word of the Lord Jesus Christ? Perhaps you think it does not matter whether you accept His word or not. I will just ask you to turn to a verse which shows how much hangs on accepting or rejecting His word—Mark viii. 38. The Person and word of Christ are put together here. They stand or fall together. If you reject His word, you reject Himself. If you accept His person, you accept His word. If you reject Him and His word now, the tables will be turned presently; and when

He comes back with His magnificent retinue of holy angels He will be ashamed of you. I remember a young woman in Canada saying, when this verse was read to her, "I wish there was no such verse in the Bible. There is no verse I am so afraid of." Why? Because she was ashamed of Christ and His word, and she knew if He came He would be ashamed of her and of her word.

There are some who wish to be saved, but they are afraid of the curled lip and the sneer which may fall from the lips of some of their fellows; so they sell the salvation of their souls to death, damnation, and the devil, for a curled lip and an ironical word. Yet think what it cost the Son of God to save us. God forbid you should be any longer ashamed of Christ, lest when He comes He should be ashamed of you, and consign you for ever to the lake of fire.

John vi. 63. The Spirit takes up and uses the words of Jesus to communicate life to dead souls.

"The flesh profiteth nothing." It may make teetotalers, moral reformers, philanthropists, and religionists of men, but it profiteth nothing Godward or soulward. "Ye must be born again."

"The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."

"Heareth My word." There is immense importance attached to hearing the word of Jesus. If you say, "Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth," His word will come down to the dark depths of your heart and bring life. In John xii. 47, 48 we have the Person and words of the Lord Jesus connected again. If you reject Him and His words, there is no other way of getting life; and

He who is now speaking life-giving words to those who receive Him and His words, will speak eternal judgment to those who reject Him and His words. If you reject Him and His words as the life-giving Son of God in the day of grace, you will have to meet Him in the day of judgment as the judgment-executing Son of man, and there will be no way of escape from “eternal judgment.” “He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me.” We are not only to hear when He puts His lips to our ears and speaks loving words, which He expects us to receive, but we are to believe the Father who sent Him. Do you believe the Father? If not, you do not believe Him whom the Father sent, for He speaks the Father’s words and does the Father’s works. If you reject His Father you reject Him.

How fond the Lord Jesus is of using the word “Father.” A hundred and twenty-one times it occurs in this gospel. Do you know the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ? What did Christ come into the world for? To make known the Father. There are words in this gospel enough to melt the hardest heart. “Behold the *Lamb!*” Are you afraid of a lamb? We used to sing in the nursery when we were children—

“Gentle Jesus, meek and mild.”

And He says, “Learn of Me, for I am *meek* and *lowly* in heart.” God’s Lamb is meek, gentle, and lowly. Will you not put your arms of faith round His neck, and tell Him that you can trust Him with your whole heart? He has made known the *bosom* of the Father. Are you afraid that anything but love will come from that bosom? Salvation and the gospel of God’s love come from

His bosom on purpose that you might be saved and find your rest on that bosom. Has the Lord Jesus Christ ever said to you, "I ascend unto My Father, and *your* Father; and to My God, and *your* God"? Do you believe Him that sent Him?

There are two reasons given in 1 John iv. 9, 10 why He sent Him.

1. That He might make the Father known as the *giver* of eternal life.

2. That He might make Him known as the *forgiver* of sins.

Oh, what a Father! Have you not fallen down in adoring worship before the Lamb of God?

Some one once said to a dear old saint who has now gone to the Lord, "I wish you would tell me how you were converted."

"Oh, yes, I will," he replied. "I had been a religious man, for many years trying to get rest; and one day, when I was reading John, God showed me the Lamb of God, and I fell in love with Him straightway, and have been in love with Him ever since."

Do you know Him? You may have the Lamb of God and the Father's bosom for your resting-place now and throughout a golden eternity. That and a great deal more is involved in that little sentence, "Believeth on Him that sent Me."

Have you heard? Yes. And believed? Yes. Then what have you? If He tells you, will you believe Him? He is the truth of God—"The way, the truth, and the life." He is the infallible One, and His words are infallible words. What does He say every believer has? "Hath everlasting life." *Hath*. You are not going to have

it in the dim and distant future, nor are you getting it by degrees. It is a present possession. “Oh,” you say, “but I do not *feel* that I have it!” It does not say, “Hath everlasting life, ‘if you feel it’ or ‘if you hope it.’” He says, If you have heard His word, and believed the Father that sent Him, you have everlasting life. Have you got it? “I am not *quite* sure,” you say. *Why* not? “I am afraid to say I have it.” You have not to say that you have it. You might be wrong if you said so. If *I* said you had it, I might be making a mistake. It is *Christ* who says you have it, and you are to know you have it, *because He says so*. You have the authority of Christ’s own word that you have eternal life; and if Satan, the world, your own deceitful heart, or uninstructed, doubting Christians tempt you to doubt, tell them *all*, you believe Christ, and not them.

Have you *heard*? Yes. And *believed* from the bottom of your heart? for it is with the heart man believeth. (Rom. x. 10.) Yes. Then Christ says you *have* everlasting life. What are you afraid of? “Oh,” says some one, “I am afraid how it will go with me in the future.” Well, listen to Christ’s own word again, “Shall not come into condemnation,” or judgment. The words judgment, condemnation, and damnation in verses 22, 24, 27, 29 should be translated judgment each time. There is a great difference between condemnation and judgment. Supposing you say to a person, “Were the assizes held in your town yesterday?” “Yes,” he answers. “Were you condemned?” “*I* condemned?” “Yes, I heard you were there all day.” “Oh, but I was not there for judgment, I was on the side of the judge!

so of course if I was not judged I could not be condemned." (Rom. viii. 1.)

We shall not come into judgment, and therefore shall never have any condemnation, because Christ took it all on the cross as our Substitute. He took the large, full cup of God's wrath, and exhausted it of its awful contents, saying, "It is finished," and there is now no judgment or condemnation for you. You can sing—

"Death and judgment are behind us,
Grace and glory are before ;
All the billows rolled o'er Jesus,
There they spent their utmost power."

There is no more judgment for me than for Christ Himself. I am in Christ, and to judge or condemn me would be to judge and condemn the One *in* whom I am, and *with* whom I am one. He is beyond judgment in the glory, and to us the Spirit of God says, "As He is, so are we in this world." There is no judgment or condemnation for Him in the glory, and no judgment or condemnation for a single saved person. Instead of anticipating judgment, we have the glory of God before us, and there is only a step between us and the glory. Judgment is eighteen hundred years behind our backs, and our future is the glory, it may be the very next step; for the only space between Christ's coming and the expectation of our hearts, is "the twinkling of an eye." When the dead in Christ will be raised, the living in Christ changed, and all caught up together in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Would you be left, or taken, if He came now? Not only is a saved person free from judgment, but also "is passed out of death into life;" taken out of the sphere characterized by death, and introduced

into the sphere characterized by life—“He that hath the Son hath life.”

Now look at the five things—

“Verily, verily, I say unto you :

(1) He that HEARETH My word.”

Have you heard His word? “He that hath ears to hear let him hear.”

(2) “And BELIEVETH on Him that sent Me.”

Have you believed the Father ?

(3) “HATH everlasting life.”

He says it. We have His own word as our authority to rest upon, that we are the present possessors of everlasting life.

(4) “And shall NOT come into judgment.”

He as our Substitute having been into it, and exhausted it for us.

(5) “But IS passed from death unto life.”

God grant that you may hear Christ's words, believe the Father that sent Him, know that you have everlasting life, will never come into judgment, and have passed from death into life, having God's own word as your authority for it, and then your mouths will be opened in praise to God, and in testimony to others. Do not keep it to yourselves. Tell it out to others, so that God may use you to their salvation, for the joy and glory of Christ.

H. M. H.

“THE PLACE OF THE ARK.”

THE place of the ark was not in a corner, but in the midst of the tabernacle. Christ must not be thrust into a corner of the soul; His dwelling must be in the midst thereof—in the heart of man; He must have the best and choicest room of man's affection. This Christ requires. My

son, give Me thy heart; not thy head, barely to know Me; not thy memory, nakedly to remember Me; nor thy tongue, formally to speak of Me; nor thy foot, only to come outwardly unto Me; —but thy heart, to love and embrace Me, to surrender and yield up all unto Me.

“He that doth not surrender all truly, surrenders none to Christ. He that shuts Christ out of one room of his soul, leaves his whole man to the possession of sin, Satan, and the world.

“We must give our understandings to know God; our wills to choose God; our imaginations to think upon God; our memories to remember God; our affections to fear, trust, love, and rejoice in God; our ears to hear God’s word; our tongues to speak God’s praise; our hands to work for God; and all our substance to the honour of God.

“Self-admirers are incapable of Christ and His grace. No man partakes less of Christ than he that doth most admire himself: such a man hath no right nor clear discerning of Christ, no sense and feeling of his want of Christ, no hunger or thirst after Christ, no honourable opinion and esteem of Christ, no room in his soul to receive and entertain Christ; and therefore continues empty of Christ.”—*Alexander Grosse, who died 1654.*

“JESUS CHRIST THE SAME YESTERDAY,
AND TO-DAY, AND FOR EVER.”

HEBREWS xiii. 8.

A SERVANT of the Lord was visiting a poor woman, and after making a few enquiries as to her health and general welfare, he asked: “And how about your soul? Are you saved?”

“Oh, sir,” she answered, the tears rolling down

her face, “if only you had asked me that question yesterday, I could have given you an answer. Then I was on the mount, and ever so happy, but *to-day* I cannot say that I am saved.”

“How is that? has Christ changed?” “No.”

“Is His blood less precious?” “No.”

“Is He less willing to save *to-day* than yesterday?” “No.”

“Then why are you so downcast? You are looking to your feelings instead of Christ.”

And this is what so many dear souls are doing *to-day*. They forget that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and *to-day*, and for ever—*always* the same. He *never* changes, and He is willing to save all that come unto God by Him; and if He once saves a soul it can never be lost.

“I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand.” John x. 28.

E. C. T.

“THERE ARE NO DOUBTS NOR FEARS
NOW.”

“THERE are no doubts nor fears now, I am as bad as ever, but it is such a comfort to know God sees me hidden in Christ, all covered up in Him, to know He has put me on one side altogether, and that now it is only Christ for Him and for me. It is all as simple and as plain as possible now, but I can see how I was so occupied with myself that God let me go on until I had proved for myself what I was; and when I was too weak and helpless to try and do anything to better myself, and gave it all up, then He opened my eyes and showed me what Christ was.”

B.

“THE BLOOD OF CHRIST.”

“**T**HE blood of Christ is the only ransom for the sins of the whole world. Oh, my son! were there only three men that could be saved by the blood of Christ, believe and believe with confidence that thou art one of the three. It is an insult to the blood of the Saviour to doubt if it saves.”

“**T**HOU, O Lord Jesus, thou art my righteousness, and I am thy sin. Thou hast taken what is mine, and given me what is thine. What Thou wast not Thou hast become, in order that what I was not I might become.”

“There remains now to you Jesus—only Jesus, Jesus alone, Jesus fully sufficient for your soul.”

—*Words of Luther.*

DEPENDENCE.

Tune, “Consecration.” 7.7.7.7. Mosart.

SAVIOUR, keep me lest I fall ;
 Keep me, Saviour, near Thy side ;
 Hear me in this feeble call,
 I would in Thy care abide.

I am but a tender lamb,
 Walking through this dreary wild ;
 Keep me safe from every harm,
 Tend me as a little child.

Oh, good Shepherd of the plain,
 Watching o’er Thy wayward sheep,
 Saving them from harm and pain,
 Thou wilt them in safety keep !

In these pastures I have found,
 By my bleating after Thee,
 I have all things, and abound ;
 Pastures green and waters free.

J. H.

THE SALVATION OF GOD.



“THE WORDLESS BOOK.”

ONE night, when returning home by train, the writer of these lines found himself in a compartment containing but one other passenger, who appeared to be a very respectable and intelligent-looking young man.

We had not proceeded far on our journey when I felt an irresistible desire to look into my black bag, with the hope of finding a little book or tract to give to my fellow-passenger. To my surprise I found my bag was empty of tracts, and I was just about to give up the thought, when I discovered a tiny book which contained no reading, *i.e.* it was a *wordless book*.

The idea of a wordless book may surprise some of my readers; it certainly appeared a surprise to my travelling companion, to whom I immediately handed it. He received it very graciously, and turned the four leaves over with considerable interest. Presently I remarked, “That is a book that the most ignorant person can read.” He made no reply. I proceeded, “I remember some time ago meeting with a poor Irish lad who could neither read nor write, to whom a little book like that was very much used. He understood it at once, and before I left him he said, “Black! that’s what I was—my sins—what I am by nature. Red! the blood

of Jesus. White! what He has now made me. Gold! the glory that is awaiting me.”

* * * * *

My fellow-passenger looked very strange as I was telling him this, so I repeated the description of the pages—Black, what we are by nature and by practice; Red, the only remedy; White, the result; and Gold, the glory for which we wait. I asked him whether he believed in those four pages. He said he did not believe in the *Black* one. I asked him if he believed what God said about him. He replied, “Yes; if I could prove to his satisfaction that it was God who said it.” I said, “Do you believe the Bible to be the revelation of God’s mind?” He said, “No; I want chapter and verse to prove it.” I asked him whether he really believed he required any revelation at all from God. This question he said he could not answer without due thought.

We had some further conversation. He complained of being asked to believe in something in which he could repose no faith, and said that God had spoken to man in other ways. I said that he was greatly mistaken if he thought that the word of God was presented to him as something that he could pass a judgment about. Instead of his judging the Word, the Word judged him, causing his wicked will to resist it.

I said, “I suppose you will admit that God is greater than man?” He replied that he did not admit even that!

He got out of the train at B—— Station, but I let down the window, and calling him back said, “Allow me to give you a parting word from that Book you deny. A word, my friend, that you will never, never forget; a word that you will

never get rid of; a word that will ring ceaselessly in your ears all your life, aye, and that will haunt you throughout eternity in the burning flames of Hell; it is this, ‘The wages of sin is death.’”

* * * * *

And now, dear reader, I would ask you, Are you such an one as this poor deluded young man? Are you tainted by any of the many phases of infidelity? Are you tampering with God’s word? Have you commenced to doubt the eternity of punishment, and had your faith so shaken in the Word, that you begin to look round for a revelation of God’s mind in NATURE?

Oh, be warned, I pray you! If you deny God’s Word, there is positively no hope for you. “Heaven and earth,” we are told, “shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away.”

“I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on Me shall not abide in darkness. And if any man hear My words, and believe not, I judge him not; for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth Me, and receiveth not My words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.”

Tell me now, Do you believe in the Black page? “Where is it?” you say. Turn to Romans iii. “All under sin; none righteous, no not one; all gone out of the way, together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no not one.” Read Romans i. Here it is, an awful picture of the natural man, a perfect picture, drawn by God the Holy Ghost, of what man is; not only of what he is capable of, but of what he delights in, and in this nineteenth century — this age of boasted progress and enlighten-

ment. Well might the prophet of old say, "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint.

"From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment."

Again I ask you, my reader, Do you believe in the Black page?

It is the very first step, dear friend, to wake up to the palpable fact—that—you—are—LOST! That you are CONDEMNED ALREADY! WITHOUT GOD, having NO HOPE!

Oh, that these solemn words may echo and re-echo in your soul! Oh, that they may ring again and again in your ears, "Having NO HOPE, and WITHOUT GOD in the world."

H. M. H.

MY SAVIOUR, SHEPHERD, FRIEND.

WHAT peace it gives to the soul to know Jesus for one's self in each of these three beautiful characters.

He is MY SAVIOUR.

Jesus is often spoken of by many in a vague and general way as "*our* Saviour;" but how few, comparatively, appear to be able to value Him as MY Saviour, "who loved *me*, and GAVE HIMSELF for *me*."

Why is it? Because, not having known themselves as *lost* sinners before God, they have not turned to Jesus as the *only* One who can save them. Upon the cross He satisfied all the requirements of God's holiness and righteousness in regard to sin, and thus opened the mighty

flood-gates through which the great love of God could flow forth, "without limit and free," towards this poor world, and bear confiding sinners, *even now*, into His own blessed presence for ever. "CHRIST JESUS came into the world to save SINNERS." "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was *lost*."

He is MY SHEPHERD.

As the "good Shepherd" He died for me, and thus became my Saviour. "I am the *good* Shepherd: the *good* Shepherd GIVETH HIS LIFE for the sheep." But the poor, lost, and wandering sheep, that He has brought back upon His shoulders with rejoicing, He guards and keeps during the whole of the wilderness journey. He loves His sheep, and they hear His voice, and follow Him.

He is spoken of as the "*great* Shepherd of the sheep;" and surely such an One was needed who was *able* to give utterance to those sweet and soul-assuring words: "My sheep shall *never perish*, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand."

He is MY FRIEND;

and, oh, such a *real* One too! He is a Friend that "loveth at all times," and "a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother." And not only so, but He says, "I have called *you* friends. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man LAY DOWN his life for his friends. *Ye are My friends*."

What is a friend? A friend is one to whom you can communicate the innermost secrets of your heart. This is what Jesus does. He says, "*All things* that I have heard of My Father I have *made known unto you*." What blessed

intimacy to be brought into! In prayer we feel our sense of *need*, and in praise our *obligations*; but as friends we are able to *sit* in His presence, and *commune* with Him, and He with us. "Having *made known unto us the mystery of His will.*"

"Jesus, my Saviour, Shepherd, Friend,
My Prophet, Priest, and King,
My Lord, my Life, my Way, my End,
Accept the praise I bring."

My reader, do *you* know Him as *your* Saviour,
your Shepherd, and *your* Friend? N. L. N.

A WHOSOEVER.

"I'M a whosoever," exclaimed a dear woman lately, as she entered her home on her return from a gospel-preaching. She had been under deep conviction of sin and soul distress; but that evening she had received "all joy and peace in believing," and with an overflowing heart she thus addressed her husband, who had remained at home, "I'm a whosoever!"

"What do you mean?" replied the man, not well pleased at having his meditations broken in upon so suddenly and with so strange an expression, "What do you mean by 'I'm a whosoever'?"

"Why," answered his wife, "I mean that 'God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' (John iii. 16.) And I believe in Him. And I believe that I'm a whosoever, and I have everlasting life."

"He that believeth on the Son *hath* everlasting life." (John iii. 36.) "Verily, verily, I say unto

you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, *hath* everlasting life." (John v. 24.) "And this is the will of Him that sent Me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life." (John vi. 40.) "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me *hath* everlasting life." (v. 47.) "These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name." (John xx. 31.)

The woman seemed so in earnest, and so implicitly to believe that she was one—"a whosoever," as she expressed it—for whom God gave His Son, so that believing in Him she had everlasting life, that her husband, impressed with her words and manner, thought "there must be something in it," and determined that he would go himself to hear the preacher. He went, and the result was that the Spirit of God applied the word to his conscience and heart likewise, and he too was saved; for "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Rom. x. 17.)

And now, dear reader, let me ask you, Cannot you see your part in that all-including, none-excluding word "whosoever" that God has chosen as the limit of His grace? Can you say that "whosoever" does not include *you*? Cannot you now, *believing*, see that you are "a whosoever"? In John iii. 16, Jesus, the Son of God, says, "*Whosoever* believeth in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life." In John vi. 40, that it is His Father's will "that *everyone* that seeth the Son" [by faith now], "and believeth on Him, *hath* everlasting life." So that "whosoever" is "*every one*." But both words are limited in

their application by the word which is common to both passages, and to all that I have quoted above, the word "*believing*." "Whosoever" is world-wide in its aspect, but circumscribed in its application, even as "the righteousness of God which is by *faith* of Jesus Christ" is "*unto all and upon all them that believe*: for there is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Rom. iii. 22, 23.) The "all" unto whom the righteousness of God is "toward" is as large as the "all" who have sinned; but it is only "*upon all them that believe*." This second all is qualified by the word believe. Even so "God so loved the *world* [all], that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever *believeth* in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The whosoever who have everlasting life are only those who *believe*; but the term is large enough to include all who will believe. The fault is on the part of those who, as the Lord Jesus said, "*will not come unto Me that ye might have life*."

But the question is, dear unconverted soul, Are you sensible that *you are perishing*? that your case is as desperate as *that*—perishing? "A *drowning* man will catch at a straw," it is said. Do you know yourself to be drowning under the heavy weight of your many sins, and about to sink into the lake of fire with the portion of men, "once to die, and after this judgment" (Heb. ix. 27, R.V.), before you? God gave His Son, "that whosoever believeth in Him should *not perish*." That is the natural condition of *all*—perishing. Does your soul cry out in agony, "I perish"? It was not until the prodigal son (Luke xv. 17, 18) came to this that he bethought him of the abundance of his father's house, and that he said,

“I will arise and go to my father.” And he did what he said, he went forthwith, confessing “I have sinned.”

If it is *thus* with you, it is no straw that is thrown you to catch at, but the strong threefold cord of the imperishable “word of the Lord . . . which by the gospel is preached unto you.” (1 Peter i. 25.) “WHOSOEVER *believeth* in Him SHALL NOT *perish*, but *have* everlasting life.” Then

“Oh, take with rejoicing from Jesus at once
The life everlasting He gives;
And know with assurance thou never canst die,
Since Jesus thy righteousness lives.”

But it may be the reader of this paper is careless and indifferent both as to his own eternal interests and God’s offer. I trust your eye may fall on another verse I am about to quote; for there is not only the whosoever of grace, but the whosoever of judgment too. Listen. “And *whosoever* was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.” (Rev. xx. 15.)

As sure as God is God, if you die as you are you will be “a whosoever” not found written in the book of life, and cast into the lake of fire. Why? Because you are worse than others? No. Because you have been guilty of flagrant and terrible crimes? No; but simply because you would not be “a whosoever” believing in God’s Son and have everlasting life.

W. G. B.

“HOW SUDDEN!”

A FEW days before Christmas, 1886, a very sudden death occurred in the town of L——. Preparations were being made by many for holi-

days, and the coming home of friends and children; plenty of bustle and rush in most circles. Amongst those busily engaged was J. P——. He stated to a friend of his :

“I shall be in H—— next Saturday by this time.” To which his friend said :

“Ah! we may be dead by that time.”

“Just so; so we may;” and off he went.

He was at business that Saturday and Monday; saw the doctor on Tuesday, not feeling very well; and by Thursday morning following he had ceased to be. Imagine the surprise of all of us, seeing him as we had so often, and hearing him still more often, in the street calling his wares. The news spread throughout the town. Hardly any one of us could think it; still, it was so. The shutters were up, the blinds were drawn, and the busy man is no more with us in this scene.

How sudden, yet how true!

Dear reader, I feel compelled to tell you these things, God knows why, and you will read them, and think.

Oh if, dear soul, you should be an unsaved one, and this sad occurrence should lead you to Christ, how you will thank God that this paper was written! And oh, how much I shall praise Him if I find in the glory ONE SOUL who was made to think through reading these few lines!

Reader, wherever you are, whoever you may be, what would sudden death be to you? Would it be sudden glory? These are things of importance to you personally. God is speaking to you *now*. Do you hear Him? He is telling you, by the Holy Ghost, His love to you, as written in John iii. 16. Yes, that is it; read it through. Better read it again; try it once more. It will

bear it; isn't that nice! How wonderful that He should have loved you, Mr. or Mrs. Whosoever! My dear little boy or girl, young man or young woman, isn't it wonderful? Think about it, talk about it, tell your children about it. Tell that poor old tottering man, and that old infirm woman; brighten her poor face, wrinkled with age and the iron hand of Time. Tell to all, anybody and everybody, the wonderful love of thy God, as revealed in John iii. 16.

Well now, that was sudden to that poor man; and what a warning it is surely to every one of us. Let me speak to you with intensity of earnestness. Had it been you—what! do you shudder? Shudder at death? Why my Lord has taken away the sting of death, robbed it of its power.

Dear soul, Jesus is the Conqueror. Would you know how you can become one too? Look yonder to Calvary. There are three crosses. The centre cross is the one of interest, because that is the Son of God hanging there for your sins. Oh, accept His work! "It is finished!" that is the cry of His last breath. He dies, is *buried*; has arisen, and TO-DAY is at the right hand of God in heaven. Look up; there He is at the Father's right hand.

Dear souls, look up; that's the place for hope, of faith, of power, of salvation. Oh, what a salvation in Jesus! Will you have it? This may be the last time He offers it to YOU. Men and women are dying on every hand; your friends are passing away, and soon, indeed before you have read this paper through, you may cease to be.

To live without Christ is madness; to be in

hell for ever and ever, with the consciousness that you might have been in heaven, is truly awful. My friend, you are travelling very fast, and without an insurance ticket; for there is none issued upon the line you travel; *i.e.* if an unsaved one. Now is your chance; change lines, and take your seat in the right train, that leads to the right terminus. "He that believeth shall be saved."

W. S . . . H.

TOO LATE.

"After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had. And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years. When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole? The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me. Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed and walk. And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath."—JOHN v. 1-9.

HERE the Spirit of God gives us a lovely scene of light in the midst of darkness, well worth the reader's careful attention, giving as it does a most striking photograph of the present moment everywhere.

Beginning with Jerusalem, God's centre once for blessing, we have Bethesda (*House of loving-kindness*), a scene of angelic ministry, proof

indeed that He had not left Himself without testimony in the past dispensation. Here a great multitude of the infirm waited for the angelic visitor. Three words describe to us the character of their infirmities—

BLIND, HALT, WITHERED.

What an earnest crowd they must have been, listening and watching for the first motion of the water, with blessing within the reach of all for bodily healing; but one thing was needful for all to obtain it—STRENGTH to step into the healing waters!

What of those without strength? How hopeless their case would be! Verse seven gives us a clear sample of such, hence the heading of this paper—

“TOO LATE.”

Yes, too late with his efforts to obtain blessing. How striking the likeness of to-day!

A great multitude are marching ON, ON, ON, like a restless sea, to a lost eternity, fully alive to diseases of the body and in earnest about them.

Many too in earnest about their eternal weal, longing to be blest, and still closing out the Blessor.

From the hearts of such whose eyes may fall on these lines has the cry now arisen, Oh for a Bethesda for my soul (*a home of loving-kindness*) where the Healer would visit even me! You may have tried many a *religious Bethesda* (so-called) to find your need met—never! because the One who could meet it was not ministered there.

Then what does it all mean? Can you interpret this strange picture?

Look again at verse 3. Who are they? A great multitude—blind, halt, withered. What a correct likeness of every unsaved soul! *Blind* to their present lost condition. *Blind* to God's love in the gift of His Son. *Blind* to their awful future in the lake of fire. And in that very condition not hemmed in by the porches of a Jerusalem Bethesda; but—oh, soul, think of it—encircled with a LOVE that's *world wide*. "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.) And you form part of that world, and God so loved you that He gave Jesus to die for you.

Faith receives that Gift and says with confidence, "He loved me and gave Himself for me." *Now* "we love Him because He first loved us."

IS THIS TRUE OF YOU?

Two things were needful at Bethesda. The angel's visit, and strength to enter for healing. On this principle many a soul is going to-day—*waiting God's time*; and while they wait, earnest and needy listening to the voice of the law—where one side of God's character shines out (God is light)—demanding the sinner's love with an undivided heart, which, alas! he has never yet given; for the law which says, "This do and thou shalt live," proves him without strength to do it. How hopeless then the sinner's case to merit salvation by doing! Friend, you are *too late* with *your doing*; but, like the man of verse 7, in *time* for CHRIST. Verse 6 tells us Jesus knew all about him, and so does He know all about you. "Wilt thou be made whole?" was

His only question to the poor sufferer. Listen to his reply. "Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me." (v. 7.) In other words,

MY CASE IS HOPELESS.

Then shines out that lovely picture of sovereign grace in verses 8, 9: "Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked." With you it is a soul question for eternity. And what makes this world a "Bethesda" for the blessing of poor sinners is, because "the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man has appeared." (Titus iii. 4.) Not a love yet to be revealed, onward to which any soul in earnest may press; but a love that has measured your distance from God; a love that has found Jesus there in death, even the death of the cross; a love that led Him to triumph over sin, death, and hell for you, a sinner. Listen to His dying words—

"IT IS FINISHED."

Seated now on His Father's throne, love leads Him by His word and Spirit to ask you the question, "Wilt thou be made whole?" or in other words, Are you willing to be saved? Survey your history, and see if you can find any foundation your *doings* have laid on which you can rest for eternity. Grasp the future of your history (short or long), live it over in your mind, fill it full of your very best to make peace with God, nay, but go even further, and offer yourself up as a victim to die for your sins, and solemn words for

you, DOING SINNER, to ring through the caverns of the damned for ever—

“TOO LATE! TOO LATE!”

Better far to confess your case hopeless, in presence of such love, accepting a work already done, so glorifying to God. And *immediately* salvation is yours.

“Cast your deadly doings down,
Down at Jesus' feet;
Stand in Him, in Him alone,
Gloriously complete.”

P. D. O.

THE LORD OF GLORY.

WHAT He is personally demands our meditation. How many wonders are there displayed! He speaks to the wind and the sea, and they obey Him. He subdues the power of devils. He touches the leprosy, and it flees away. And then you see Him walking on the sea. He was the light of the world; He carries in His divine person light wherever He goes. He calls, He creates, He opens the eyes of the blind, and causes the light to shine in. He raises the dead. “In Him was life; and the life was the light of men.”

No power was able to cope with Him. The winds owned Him, creation owned Him. Man alone disowned Him, and then the sun refused to shine, and darkness swept over the scene, though it was mid-day. The unseen world is under His control. It is quite clear He was above angels—“Let all the angels of God worship Him.” (Heb. i. 6.) He is “over all, God blessed for ever.” (Romans ix. 5.)

THE SALVATION OF GOD.



ESCAPED FROM JUDGMENT AND BROUGHT TO GOD.

EXODUS XII. 1-14.

WE have in this scripture a scene in Egypt, which is a type of the world—the place in which and of which every one is until brought to God. There is no link, no association with God, until we are under the shelter of the blood. There is, of course, responsibility to God. He has claims over us as His creatures; but we do not begin with God till we are brought under the shelter of the blood, and then, as we see in verse 2, there is an entirely new start. All the rest of their history went for nothing in God's sight. People think they are conferring a favour on God by reading their Bibles, saying their prayers, giving away tracts, taking a class in the Sunday-school, &c.; but if they are not under the shelter of the blood all is in vain.

Hebrews ix. 14 shows that very clearly. Everything that is done by a person before conversion, whether with the thought of pleasing God or of getting salvation, is stamped with two words, "*Dead works*," and the whole Trinity is engaged to give such a one a new start.

"They that are in the flesh cannot please God."
(Romans viii. 8.) God cannot be pleased with

anything done in the flesh. He has told us "the flesh profiteth nothing." (John vi. 63.) No profit to God, and no profit to the man who has got it.

There *must be* a new start under the shelter of the blood. "This month shall be unto you the beginning of months." It is what answers to the new birth.

God Himself has provided a way of escape from coming judgment; and not only that, but a way of access to Himself. He not only saves us from judgment, but He wants our company; "not only saved from yawning hell, but to God's bosom brought."

Verse 3. You never find more than one lamb spoken of. It is always "a lamb," never "lambs," because God ever had His own Lamb before Him; and in the gospel of John we hear the Baptist saying, "Behold the Lamb of God"—a Lamb to meet my needs and God's heart.

"The *tenth* day." Ten is human responsibility. All had failed. God had proved that man was really a sinner. The trial of man was over. It is a wonderful thing to see ourselves as God sees us, to believe we are as bad as He says we are. A farmer, who had been an exceedingly wicked man, was converted. A woman, who had a spite against him, saw him in the market, and came up to him saying, "Oh, so you are converted!" and then, before all the rest of the farmers, she began to abuse him, recounting all the bad things she knew about him. He listened quietly until she paused, then he said, "It is all quite true; I am as bad as you say. God knows all about it, the devil knows all about it, and you know all about it; but God knows more than you and the devil

put together, and He has given His own Son to die for me, so that I may live with Him in heaven for ever."

It is a wonderful moment in the history of a soul when it says, "I need a Saviour," and finds that God has provided one.

The Israelites were not a bit better, morally or socially, than the Egyptians. There was no difference, they all needed salvation.

Verses 4-6. These verses distinctly point to the Lord Jesus. The Lord Jesus was perfectly holy—a Lamb without spot or blemish.

What searching of the flock there would be to find a lamb suitable for God—a lamb without spot or blemish! 1 Peter i. 19 takes up these very words. The Lamb of God had no spot inside, and no blemish outside. He had no sin, He did no sin, He knew no sin, yet He was made sin for us.

It was to be "a lamb of the first year," in its prime. The Lord Jesus offered Himself up in the prime of life, at the age of thirty-three and a half years. He was cut off in the midst of His days.

Verse 4. There is intense individuality. God does not save in a mass. The Shepherd brings back one by one the sheep who have wandered in different ways. (Isaiah liii. 6.) It is a wonderful moment when a soul can look up and say, "The Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for *me*." Sometimes I ask the question, "Whom does *me* mean?" And the answer frequently is, "Us—all sinners," No. It means *me*; and if it does not mean *me*, it avails me nothing.

Verse 7. Now we come to the blood. The *life* of an unblemished lamb did not screen from

judgment. Unitarians deny the necessity of blood-shedding. They deny they are sinners, because if they were sinners there would be necessity for blood. If an Israelite had been asked, "Does keeping an unblemished lamb safely tied up to the fence save you from judgment?" he would have replied, "No; its blood must be shed. It is kept four days, to prove that it is without blemish, and then it must be killed."

The four days answer to the period of the Lord's ministry—three-and-a-half years, counting a day for a year. During the whole of that time He proved that He was without blemish, saying, as He did, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" No fault could be found in Him. His life was blameless, yet the life of Christ does not put sins away. And if His holy tears, His holy prayers, His holy works, His holy walk, could not put my sins away, how could my unholy tears, my unholy prayers, my unholy works, or my unholy life put them away?

There *must* be blood-shedding. The blood of the slain lamb was put on the doorposts and lintel, not on the threshold. People sometimes talk of the blood being trodden under foot, but God never allowed the blood to be put where it could be trodden under foot. He never meant the blood of His Son to be trodden on. Men have trodden under foot the Son of God. They lifted up the heel of cruel unbelief and trod Him under foot, as if He were a worm. So that He said, "I am a worm, and no man." The blood in the basin was not enough. Everyone knows that Jesus died. His death is celebrated on Good Friday. But the question is, Do you view His death as your act, or as God's act? Do you look

on Christ as a Martyr, or as a Victim? If as a Martyr, His death is *your* act, and there is nothing for you but judgment. (Psalm lxix.) If as a Victim, his death is *God's* act, and there is nothing for you but blessing. (Psalm xxii.)

It is not enough to know that Christ died. Have you appropriated His blood? Is it on the doorposts and lintel of your heart? Perhaps you say, "How can I appropriate it." The answer is, "Through faith in His blood." Faith appropriates what love provides.

See what God thinks of the blood. The blood is put outside, and they shut the door and go inside. The blood was put in the basin, then on the doorposts; and they were to eat the lamb in that night. No gap between being sheltered and enjoying communion. I am not merely saved and sheltered from the coming storm, but I find a home in the heart of that One whose blood was shed for me.

The lamb was to be roast with fire. There is no feeding on Jesus in incarnation. The slow process of roasting typifies the fire of God's judicial wrath against "sin" and "sins." The lamb was not to be eaten raw (that is, Christ in incarnation) nor sodden with water, for that which is sodden or boiled is hidden from the fire, but it was to be *roast*. There must be the action of the fire. The Lord Jesus was exposed to the scorching fire of God's wrath. The lamb was to be eaten with unleavened bread (separation from evil) and bitter herbs (self-judgment, no allowance of self; I am only to think of the One to whom I owe everything).

It was a whole lamb that was to be eaten. (v. 9.)
The head—Christ our wisdom.

The legs—Christ our perfect example as to how we should walk, “even as He walked.”

The purtenance thereof—Christ’s inward affections for us. We are the ceaseless objects of the interest and affection of the Lord Jesus Christ. There never is a moment when He is not interested in me.

It is a solemn thing that the very same judgment that delivered one company overwhelmed the other. What could deliver from death and judgment? Nothing but death and judgment. They were my due, but Christ bore them for me; so that I can now sing—

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

Verse 10. Nothing remained till the morning. There is no such thing as saving up what you get on Sunday to last all through the week. The children of Israel had the manna fresh every morning. Grace for this hour does not do for the next. You cannot lay up a store and say, “Oh, that is lovely! I will save it up for the next difficulty I get into.” If you do, you will find yourself overcome by the enemy.

God gives the Lamb the first and highest place. They came to the sepulchre the first of the week, not the first day merely, but the moment the first day broke. The first thing in our minds, directly the first of the week comes round, should be, “Here is the lovely, blessed, holy day, in which I am going to remember my Lord in the breaking of bread, and drinking of wine.”

Verse 11. The Orientals wore their robes loosely flowing about them whilst they were lounging at

ease; but the lamb was to be eaten with girded loins, the garments gathered up, all the affections braced up for God.

They were to have their sandals on—preparedness for a journey; and their staff in their hand; and were to eat in haste—every mark of readiness for instant departure.

The Lord takes up the same thought in Luke xii. 35, 36. We are to be like men who wait for their Lord. In deportment and character we are to be like a people expecting a speedy exit out of this world to the Father's house. "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." He is our treasure there, and our heart is where He is. We are His treasure here, and His heart is where we are. He bought the field for the sake of the treasure.

It is a wonderful thing to go through this world with the thought, "I am His treasure, and I know I have His heart." Very happy it would make us if we realized it constantly. We should have our hands on the handle of the door, our ears listening, our shoes on our feet, everything ready, so that the moment His knock was heard we might fling the door wide open and say, "Come quickly, Lord."

Verse 12. Judgment is coming upon this world, and we never were so near it as we are to-day. Everything points to it. Men of the world speak of it, but we cannot tell when it will come.

Everyone who is not under the shelter of the blood will be overwhelmed when judgment comes. But the Lord Jesus says, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matthew xi. 28.) He wants to get

you from this doomed scene, to find a place in His own heart of love.

Verse 13. This is God's estimate, God's value of the blood. It was put on the doorposts for God's eye. People say, "I don't think I have enough faith, or the right kind of faith." God gives prominence to the blood, not to faith. The blood is mentioned six times between verses 7 and 23, and faith not once.

What has God got for me? The blood. What made the blood come from the side of the Son of God? Love. "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood." Love was the spring and source of all.

People say, "I wish I could have a dream, or a feeling, or a realization, or appreciation of the blood." Not one of these, or all together, would be of any use. He said, "When *I* see the blood *I* will pass over you."

"The blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses *where ye are*." They had not to go a step to get the benefit. It was a present thing, just where they were.

It is not when you write, or feel, or speak well about the blood. There must be faith in God's word about it. And can I not trust His word? The blood was as pure as the One who gave it; and as a proof of this the Holy Ghost takes up His abode in the body of the one cleansed by it. "Ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." The blood clears from everything, so there is nothing left for me to do. We are made nigh by the blood, and in the One who gave it. We are brought to God, and have access to the Father. (Eph. ii. 13; 1 Peter iii. 18.)

In Exodus xii. we are in a *safe* place, and the

blood keeps the Judge outside. In chapter xiii. we are *sanctified* or set apart to God. In chapter xiv. we are *saved*; we stand still and see the salvation of God. And in chapter xv. we *sing* to God, and our song is, "The Lord hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea."

H. M. H.

"IT IS ALL RIGHT."

SHE had been a dreadfully wicked woman, and now, at the age of eighty years, was fast approaching death. The time was near when she would have to meet God.

A servant of the Lord stood by her bedside and asked how it was with her in regard to eternity.

"Oh," she replied, "it is all right."

"All right! How is that? You have been such a great sinner, how can you say it is all right?"

"It *is* all right," she answered.

Again her visitor spoke to her of her many sins, and pressed upon her the solemnity of having to meet God, and a third time she replied, "It is all right."

"Well, *how* is it all right?" he asked. "Upon what ground can you say that it is all right, after having led such a terribly wicked life for eighty years?"

"I do depend upon the blood," was her reply. "I do depend upon the blood."

That was sufficient for her to rest her soul upon for eternity, and it is sufficient for you, dear reader. "It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." (Lev. xvii. 11.)

"The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John i. 7.)

E. C. T.

"SIR, I AM A SINNER."

AN aged couple were sitting by the fireside of their home in Canada, listening to the words of two of the Lord's servants, who had called upon them to tell them the good news of God's salvation.

Having delivered their message, the visitors were passing through the yard on their way home, when they heard a man groan as if he were in great pain. They turned to see what it was. There he stood, with his back against a cart, uttering deep moans.

"What is the matter, my good man?" asked one of them, laying his hand on his shoulder.

Without raising his eyes, the man answered:

"Sir, I am a sinner. When you were inside talking to my father and mother, I stood at the door, and listened, and God spoke to my soul, and *I am a sinner.*"

"Then Christ died for sinners, so He died for you," and the value and efficacy of the blood of Christ was put before the sin-stricken man.

Still he did not seem clear. He could see that the shed blood had met and satisfied all God's righteous claims, but could not see that it was for him.

"Supposing we were in a dark room together," said the gentleman, "and you put your hand into something that felt like water, but I told you it was blood, because I knew what it was. When you get into the light you would see for yourself that it was blood, but *I* knew it

when you were in the dark. God knows the value of the blood of His Son, even if you do not."

"Thank God, then; if that is so, I am saved!" exclaimed the man joyfully.

He took God at His word, and found joy and peace in believing.

It is an immense thing to see God's estimate of the death of His Son. In that passover night in Egypt, only those under the shelter of the blood were safe, and their safety consisted, not in what *they* thought of the blood, but in what *God* thought of it. He said, "When *I* see the blood I will pass over you." So now, every one who is simply resting in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ, washed in His blood, is as safe as God Himself can make him. E. C. T.

"GOD TOOK HIM AT HIS WORD."

THE subject of this paper was a swearer and a very great sinner, who was not afraid to say, "I am as good as God." (Psalm l. 21, 22.) He was a drunkard, and had been drinking, and seemed to be just getting over it, and was taking a basin of broth, I think, at the time I saw him. Just as I got to the house with a few gospel books, he was swearing. I was therefore led to speak to him upon the subject. He did not seem angry with me for doing so, but so hardened as to be past feeling ashamed; but presently as I went on, and may have spoken of the love and holiness of God, I saw him tremble or shake, whether it was from the word or the drink

I cannot say, as his answer was, "I am as good as God." Such an answer, at such a time, and from such an one, almost overwhelmed me, so that I could say little more than, "You should not say so. Are you not afraid? Beware lest He take thee away with His stroke." But as he still used the same words, I could only say, "Ah, you will alter your mind before long." As far as I remember, his words were, "He would not, he should die as he lived."

I felt I could do him no good, and to stop and talk with him thus would only be to encourage him in his wicked expressions, so I left him, and afterwards I remembered the passage, "Unto the wicked God saith . . . Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes. Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver." (Psalm l. 16-22.) And this wicked man did not consider, and it seems evident the Holy One would cast him into the lake of fire burning with brimstone, which is the second death. (Matt. xxi. 44; Rev. xx. 10-15.)

For as I warned him on the Saturday afternoon, I was told that on the following Monday death took him from the earth. He was holding a horse for another man that was drunk; the horse moved on; he was knocked down and killed.

This happened a few weeks ago; but I heard of it for the first time from a woman who was in the house when I spoke to him, and the words at the head of this paper are hers, "He died as he lived. God took him at his word. He died as he lived."

C. T.

DEATH CHANGES EVERYTHING.

THIS may seem a truism. We all know it, most of us from sad experience; but occasionally an event occurs to make us realize the truth more strikingly. Two days ago preparations were being made, more or less all over the British Isles, to commemorate a joyful event—the twenty-fifth anniversary of the marriage of the Prince of Wales; but the news of the death of the Emperor of Germany has plunged, not only England, but the principal Courts of Europe into mourning. All signs of festivity are gone, all plans for a great national rejoicing set aside. Death has come in; all is changed.

The death of one great and honoured man has changed the tide of feeling and action for thousands, for a time at least.

And has it not been so in your own personal history, my reader? Has not the death of some loved relative or friend given another and more sober hue to your own life? It may have been one on whom you counted for support in advancing age, or one who was the dear companion of your youth, and with whom you thought to walk hand-in-hand through life; it may have been a parent, a child, a brother, or sister; for who has not lost a friend? But now all is changed; for death has, with ruthless hand, taken away the desire of your eyes with a stroke, and left you, for a time at least, desolate and wounded in heart. Death has changed everything. Truly “in the midst of life we are in death.”

Yet there is another side to this picture. Have

you ever seen the *bright* side of death? The most wonderful death that ever took place has made it blessedly possible that the darkest thing in this earth should become the brightest. The death of the Son of God has changed everything to the soul that has trusted Him, to him who has learned to view it as the portal of eternal life. Through that death the once-condemned and despairing sinner sees himself justified and filled with brightest hopes. The soul once in the darkness of doubt and uncertainty about his eternal future is made happy in the knowledge that he will live for ever with Christ; for has He not said, "Because I live, ye shall live also"? But, reader, He went down into those dark waters to purchase deliverance from *eternal* death, the penalty of sin, for all who will accept it. He came up victorious, and His ascension to the right hand of God was the proof of it. "O death, where is thy sting?" "The sting of death is sin." Sin is put away, and death has lost its power over the believer.

Would it not be well for every professing Christian who reads these lines to ask, "What has the death of Christ done for *me*?" Is it possible that such a marvellous event as the death of the Son of God has in no wise affected the present course or future lot of those who call themselves by His name, and make a profession of faith in Him? Shall the death of a feeble mortal like myself change the whole aspect of my life, and *this* death leave it as before? Impossible! Either we are false-hearted professors of Christianity, with less faith in our God and His word than the poor idolater has in his idols and shasters, or, throwing off our responsibility to read the word of God for ourselves, we have been contented to

remain ignorant of the blessings which the death of Christ has secured to us. Oh, how many thousands can say, Death has changed all for me! It has shed brightness on an otherwise cheerless scene, has changed despair to hope, sorrow to joy; the trembling anticipation of an unknown future to the sure and certain hope of a joyful resurrection. It has opened up the way to God, changed the nature of man's most dreaded foe—for death becomes a sleep to the believer; and, above all, removed the fear of that which all thinking men dread more than death—*having to meet God*; for Christ in His death bore for me all that I should have had to answer for, on account of my sins, before a righteous and sin-hating God. Yes, death has changed, blessedly changed, everything for me. My hopes, fears, prospects, plans, desires, aims; my entire life here, my everlasting existence beyond the grave—all are coloured, brightened, shaped by the death of Him who died for me.

Reader, what has His death done for you?

“Death comes down with noiseless footstep
To the hall and hut.
Think you death will tarry, waiting
For your door is shut?”

“Jesus waiteth, waiteth, waiteth;
But the door is fast.
Grieved, away the Saviour goeth,
Death breaks in at last.”

E. H.

SAVED BY FALLING ON THE ICE.

AN aged man of 70 years, who had worked in the coal mines of Durham since he was a boy, and had ceased work a short time ago with all his faculties about him, was walking down his

garden one day in the month of January when he slipped on the ice and broke his thigh. He has been laid up with it now twelve months. I visited him at different times, and pressed upon him the great importance of being ready to meet God, and that God had provided a Saviour for him.

At first he told me he often prayed to the Lord to save him. I told him to believe God, and He would save him.

The last time I visited him he was very weak, and life seemed ebbing away. When asked if he was ready to meet God, he said he was ready any time the Lord thought fit to call him. I told him that the Lord had various ways of drawing sinners to Him, which were indeed cords of love. He said he *believed the Lord had allowed all this to take place with him that he might be drawn to Him.*

Dear unsaved reader, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." J. D.

THE FLOWER OF THE GRASS.—The flower is the prettiest part of the grass—that which scripture represents as illustrating the ambition of man. It is that which man looks for most—the glory of man. The glory is that which is brightest and best. It may be beauty, or some other object of ambition. All that man does to glorify himself in the world can only be compared to a flower of the field—like the grass which groweth up and is cut down; "for all flesh is as grass"—there is no distinction—"and all the glory of man as the flower of grass." Of what worth is a handful of grass?

THE SALVATION OF GOD.



“THE SWORD AND THE TRUMPET.”

EZEKIEL xxxiii.

GOD so valued the lives of the Israelites that He commanded “a watchman” to be kept constantly on “the lookout” lest their enemies should pounce upon them suddenly, and slay them with the edge of the sword. The watchman was responsible to “blow the trumpet, and warn the people.” He was not his own master, but God’s *servant*; not told to please himself, but to warn the people. If he feared God, and regarded the lives of men, when he saw the sword coming he would blow the trumpet; if he refused to do so, he must suffer the consequence. God would reason with the unfaithful watchman; he had no right to raise an alarm if there was no danger; but how dare he be silent when he saw the enemy approaching? We repeatedly read of “the sword and the trumpet” in Scripture. The people of Jericho were warned by the trumpet before they were slain by the sword. The sword is a symbol of the judgment which is coming on the world, and the trumpet answers to the present testimony of divine grace warning sinners with respect to it.

There was a lone man in the streets of Athens one day, waiting for some friends of his, and as

he walked the streets of that city, "his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry;" he thought of the greatness of their sin in the sight of God, and also of the judgment which would presently overtake them on account of it. Therefore, seeing that the sword was coming, he "warned the people."

The trumpet gave no "uncertain sound" that day, when on Mars' hill the voice of the apostle Paul was heard saying, God "commandeth all men everywhere to repent, because He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead." (Acts xvii.)

The same man that warned the Athenians was once sent for by Felix (Acts xxiv.), where we see again "the watchman" in Paul, and hear the sound of "the trumpet" in his faithful appeal to the conscience of that great man; for he "reasoned with him of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come," till at length Felix trembled, and said, "Go thy way for this time," etc. He heard the trumpet and took not warning.

The apostle Paul was a faithful watchman; one that *dared* not and *did* not hold his peace. When his course was almost finished, his work for God nearly ended, he could say, "I am pure from the blood of all men." "I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." (Acts xx.) So we see God had His watchman in Ezekiel's day, and also in Paul's day, and no doubt He has such still; men that adhere to the Scriptures, that believe in the *reality* of unquench-

able fire; men that know, on the best authority, God’s unalterable word, that everlasting punishment will be the portion of the unrepentant sinner, and that soon, yea, very soon, the only door of hope for such (through the preached gospel) will be for ever closed, therefore they “spare not, but cry aloud,” to all around, “Flee from the wrath to come.”

Better *far* to be the subjects of divine grace, listening to “the sound of the trumpet,” than to expose ourselves to the judgment by refusing to “take warning.”

Have you, my reader, obeyed the trumpet of grace? If Jesus is your Saviour, judgment will never be your portion, simply because He bore it on the cross for all who believe, and—

“Twice payment God will not demand;
First from our bleeding Surety’s hand,
And then again from ours.”

It is by grace we are saved, and the coming of the Lord will be “the crowning day of that grace for the people of God.” For the trumpet shall sound (1 Cor. xv. 52) which will summon them home to heaven, leaving the unsaved behind to endure the wrath of God against their sins, and to be overtaken by “the sword” described in Revelation xix. 11, 15 as follows: “And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war. . . . And out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations: and He shall rule them with a rod of iron: and He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.”

“OH, I SEE IT NOW!”

IT is very sad to find so many in these so-called Christian lands who, whilst calling themselves Christians, and being members of some one of the many denominations, yet know not their sins forgiven, and have not peace with God. Such was the case with the one of whom I am about to write.

Whilst preaching the gospel, some five or six years ago, in the North of Scotland, there was an aged woman who used to come very regularly, and as she listened to the story of the love of God and of the cross of Christ, the big tears would roll down her wrinkled cheeks. On my getting acquainted with her, I found she had been a widow a great many years, had brought up several children most respectably, was a member of the Established Church of Scotland of many years' standing; but, alas! she knew not the Saviour; her sins were not forgiven; she had not peace with God.

She kept on coming to the preachings, but never seemed to get any comfort or blessing. Well do I remember visiting her in her humble abode, and after pointing her to the finished work of Christ, and setting forth the gospel in every way I could think of, she replied, “Well, I must be more earnest, and do my best.” My heart sank within me, and the thought passed through my mind, “It is no use; she cannot understand it, I will not come again.” Such were my thoughts as I walked towards my lodging, pondering her case, when, just as if some one were speaking to me, there

came the words, “You are not treating that old woman right; you are speaking to her intellect: speak to her heart.”

The following day I called again, and taking a chair I said, “Was it not a wonderful thing, Mrs.— that God, whom we had sinned against, should send His own beloved Son for the very purpose of putting away your sins and mine?”

“Yes,” she replied, “that was a wonderful thing.”

“Now tell me,” I said, “did Jesus fail, or did He succeed?”

“Oh,” she replied, “He never failed!”

“Well, then, what about your sins?”

There was a moment’s pause, and then came the words, “Oh, I see it now! Jesus came for the very purpose of putting them away, and He has done it.”

The darkness of years was gone in a moment. The light of the gospel shone into her soul, and she was saved, and had peace with God about all her sins.

She is still a pilgrim in this sad world, and often since that eventful moment have we conversed together about that precious Saviour—

“Who came from heaven’s highest glory
To Calvary’s depth of woe,”

in order to put away our sins, and make us His very own. How sweet and precious those words, “His own.”

Now, my reader, let me ask, Are you a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ? If so, allow me to ask another question; viz., What has Jesus done for you? “Oh,” you say, “He has died for me.” Then your sins are forgiven, and you are saved. “Ah! but I cannot say that,” you reply. Now let me suppose a case. A man has committed a crime

for which he is righteously condemned to die. One who loves him takes his place and dies for him. Now what would that do for him? "Why of course it would set him free," you say. Exactly so. And so we read in the gospel, "The Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." (Gal. ii. 20.) Believest thou this? Then thank God for His unspeakable gift.

G. R.

"BE SURE YOUR SIN WILL FIND YOU OUT."

SOME years since I stood in a picture-gallery before a masterpiece, which made a deep impression on me, and which serves as an illustration of the above passage of scripture. The title of the picture was, "The Dismal Swamp." In the foreground was a negro, a runaway slave, panting for breath, and entangled by the reeds; pursuing, and close behind him, were the fierce bloodhounds, with terrible fangs and frothy mouths. It was evident he could feel the hot breath of those terrible creatures close at his heels; for in his eyes there was depicted such a look of hopeless despair as I have never forgotten. I have seen such a look once in my life since, at a scene more real and terrible. I was standing by the death-bed of a man who had rejected the gospel of the grace of God. I had been repeating that beautiful scripture, "It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." He seemed unconscious as I kept repeating it close to his dying ear, when, gathering up his strength, he rose up in the bed

with just such a look of dark despair, he wailed so hopelessly, "The Lord Jesus will have nothing to do with me now, and I can have nothing to do with Him. To-night, to-night my soul will be in hell," and that night he died. Oh, my reader, may you never know such a death-bed as that! Rouse, I beseech you, ere the "evil day" come upon you, the day you gladly forget, the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, when the silver cord shall be loosed, the golden bowl broken, the pitcher broken at the fountain, when the dust shall return to the earth as it was, and the spirit unto God who gave it! And it may come in one fell moment, and then, oh, then, you will pass into eternity to await the resurrection, when, like the negro in the picture, discovered and overtaken, in that terrible judgment-day you will find out the truth of the scripture, "Be sure your sin will find you out;" and yet another scripture, "Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they *follow after*." Yes, my reader, those secret sins, hidden and unknown to your fellow-men, but known to God, are on your track, and will face you there if not here. How blessed to be discovered now! "I acknowledged my sin unto Thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord, and Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin."

Mark the words "I acknowledged" and "Thou forgavest." Yes, there is forgiveness *now* for thee, dear reader; but how? through that blessed Man in heaven, the Lord Jesus Christ, who was once on the tree, the sinless One who said, "Mine iniquities have taken hold upon Me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs

of mine head ;” of whom the Scripture says concerning all who trust Him, “Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree.” Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures. He was buried and rose again according to the Scriptures.

“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.”

W. J.

A GREAT GIFT.

W— HALL is a large and beautiful mansion situate in a pleasant part of the North of England. It is surrounded by a well-wooded park, beautiful gardens, and everything calculated to please the eye. The owner, for some reason or other, has not resided in the hall for several years past, and about two years ago offered it and the grounds as a gift to the corporation of N—. After considerable hesitation the offer was accepted.

The writer was one day passing the place, when a young man said, “What a strange thing it is that the people of N— won’t accept such a noble and generous gift as — is offering them. I wish I had such a chance.”

I said, “It does seem strange. But there is a greater and more valuable gift that is offered you ; that is, ‘the gift of God, eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.’” (Rom. vi. 23.)

The young man carelessly replied, “Oh, that’s just what you say !” and passed on.

Now, dear reader, I wish to say a few words about this great gift—the greatest that could possibly be given. In John iii. 16 we read: “God so loved the world, that He *gave* His only begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” Have you accepted this precious gift—the very best that God could give, and that so manifests His heart of love to poor perishing sinners? If you have, you are saved; and shall not come into condemnation (John v. 24), but shall spend the countless ages of eternity in the presence of Him who has loved you, and washed you from your sins in His own blood. (Rev. i. 5.) If you have not, I would lovingly and faithfully point out to you the terrible position you occupy; viz., condemned already, the wrath of God abiding on you. (John iii. 18–36.) Condemned already! Ah, how solemn! You no doubt have often pitied the hapless criminal convicted of murder, who has heard the dread sentence from the judge’s lips, and who is just awaiting the arrival of the executioner to put into effect the sentence of the law, little thinking that you are in even worse case, for the sentence is passed upon you of eternal damnation, of eternity to be spent in the lake of fire, “where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.” Proved guilty before God, (Rom. iii. 19), sentence passed upon you (John iii. 36), your position is a terrible one. At any moment the thread of life may be broken, and then

“Too late you ’ll know your lost estate,
Which now you don’t believe.”

But, blessed be God, He is not willing that you should perish, but that you should “come to

repentance" (2 Peter iii. 9); and you still have "the gift of God" offered you. Will you, can you refuse the gracious invitation—"Come unto Me"? (Matt. xi. 28.) "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." (Isaiah i. 18.) You would think a condemned criminal deserved to die if he refused to accept a free pardon that was graciously offered him; and how strange and infatuated your conduct, if you refuse to accept God's salvation, which was wrought out at such marvellous cost to Him, but which to you is free; ay, free as the air you breathe. God is still waiting in long-suffering grace for you to take Him at His word, and this is the only reason that the sentence passed upon you is not put into execution. Oh, sinner, God loves you, and His gift is the measure of His love. He spared not His own Son for your sake. How will you treat His loving offers? Will you carelessly turn away as if it did not concern you?

"Oh, sinner, pause, lest by-and-by you cry,
 There might have been a place for me on high;
 There might have been the light of Jesus' face,
 If I had hearkened to His call of grace.

"Lest in the terror of eternity you see
 There might have been His endless joy for thee;
 And from the misery of hell's abyss
 You cry, There might have been eternal bliss."

Let me entreat you to accept from God that which can be had only as a gift—eternal life. It cannot be worked for. It is "not of works, lest any man should boast." (Eph. ii. 9.) Whether you believe it or not, without Christ, no matter how moral, religious, or respectable you may be, you are lost; nor can you by any means better

your condition, any more than a condemned criminal could put away his sentence by good conduct while awaiting the executioner. Reformation won't do; it is too late for that. Jesus has died, and unless you believe in Him His blood is upon your head. Again I would repeat, “The gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus our Lord.” “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.” (Acts xvi. 31.)

J. C. T . . . R.

“I’M THE SINNER THAT NEEDS THE SAVIOUR.”

WHAT more touching and yet true words, uttered by a dear woman who felt her need of this blessed Saviour? She wept as she repeated them.

A beloved servant of the Lord had been speaking with much power on Luke vii. 37–50. A wonderful instance of the grace of God, the blessed Saviour, and the poor sinner meeting, and how completely her heart was won. As the woman I told you of listened to this thrilling narrative, she too was attracted, and after their little meeting was over told the Lord’s servant, with the tears flowing, “I’m the sinner that needs the Saviour.”

The Lord hearkened and heard, and gave her the still more blessed assurance that He needed her. As the blessed gospel was put before her, she found joy and peace in believing.

Dear reader, have you learned, like this dear woman, “I’m the sinner that needs the Saviour”? If so, the same loving welcome is yours. H.

HE CALLETH THEE.

“**A**DAM, where art thou?” The first question asked by God in the Bible proved that Adam was *lost*; and oh! blessed grace, God came down into the garden to find him. And where did He find him? Hiding from God, his best and truest friend, and seeking also to hide his true condition from *his own* eyes; but, when brought into the light of God’s presence, he there confessed the truth of his own sad condition. Naked, afraid of God, and seeking (if it were possible) to hide from Him.

Sinner, you are *lost*, and hiding from God; but you are worse than Adam. When God called “Adam, *where art thou?*” he answered Him, and came out of his hiding-place into His presence. How often has He called you, and still you are hiding from Him.

How often you have heard Him call you in the gospel—once, twice; yea, more, often has He spoken to you, and yet you have not heard Him. What an insult to His divine majesty! Something within told you that was His voice in love to you, yet you stifled it, and went on still rejecting His loving call.

“Soon that voice will cease its calling;
Now it speaks, and speaks to thee.”

He called you again in that solemn dream you had years ago; you still remember it, although you have tried by pleasure, &c., to remember it not. How good of God! when you would not hear His call in the gospel, He came to your bedside, and spoke to you in your sleep.

Ah! you heed it not now. As His call, it will haunt your memory in hell. You will never forget, but sadly regret it for all eternity. Oh, had I but heeded that warning!

You will say, "Satan told me the morning after it was only a dream;" but your conscience said it was a call from God. Do not turn a deaf ear to it *now*. God has left you without excuse. His hand has perhaps been upon you. That illness, those severe pains, were His call; you trembled as death came with all its terrors before you; you were unprepared as you drew nigh unto the gates of death. You said then, "If He would but spare me to get better, I would seek Him, and refuse no longer." Let me ask you, Have you ever, since you got better, been *alone* in His holy presence, with no eye upon you but the eye of God? Have you ever spent five minutes there?

There is no pain here to be compared with the torment of hell. By the side of that dear mother's death-bed, before she departed to be with Christ, you were entreated to come to Jesus. He called you then. Why have you not come yet? You little know the awful risk you run by delaying. Would you not like to see your mother in heaven?

If you still refuse His loving call, through your dying mother, father, wife, husband, brother, or sister, in hell you will ever remember that loving voice; but then "Too late! too late!" will be your cry. Arise *now*, and come to Him, for He *still* calls you, just in your *lost* condition. In your rags He calls you, not to improve yourself, but to *come* as you are. He says, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." Throw away any thing (like the poor blind man in the gospel), all that would hinder you from coming to

Jesus. But see to it that you *come now*; for you may not have the opportunity to come to-morrow. "Turn you at my reproof." If you decide not to come now, you will be called again, but for judgment. Bound hand and foot, you will be helpless then. Jesus will not keep you in the day of judgment.

"Because I *have called*, and ye *refused*; I *have stretched out My hand*, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought *all My counsel*, and would *none of My reproof*: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; when your *fear cometh* as desolation, and your destruction *cometh* as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish *cometh* upon you. Then shall they *call upon Me*, but I will not answer; they shall seek Me early, but they shall not find Me." (Proverbs i. 24-28.)

J. R. W.

SIMPLE, BUT ALL-SUFFICIENT.

I WANT to relate to you the story of the conversion of Annie H——. Some few months ago a dear Christian friend and I were holding gospel meetings in the town of F——. On the particular night of which I speak we had finished speaking of the wondrous tale of the salvation of God, and were just looking up to God in prayer to bless the word to precious, never-dying souls.

A fellow-believer in Christ gave out a hymn beginning—

"Hark! hark! hear the glad tidings!
 Soon, soon Jesus will come,
 Robed, robed in honour and glory,
 To gather *His ransomed ones* home."

Dear reader, many of those present could sing that hymn with all their hearts. The Lord Jesus Christ is coming (*it may be TO-DAY*) to snatch all His blood-washed ones away to heaven to be with Himself for ever. (See 1 Thess. iv. 15-18.) When that happens, then it will be said that "they that were ready went in with Him, to the marriage: *and the door was shut.*" (Matt. xxv. 10.) Are you made ready by the blood of Jesus Christ, which alone can fit you for that time? You know that well-known hymn, beginning, "There is a gate that stands ajar." The love of the heart of God has thrown *wide open* the way to heaven. It is much more than ajar now; but when Christ comes for His own, it will be *shut* for ever.

Dear Annie H—— knew that if Jesus were to come it would not be glad tidings for her, as she was not ready. She thought of her sins, of coming judgment, and saw herself in the sight of God a guilty, hell-deserving sinner. Her soul-anguish was so great, that she could restrain her tears no longer. They literally coursed down her face. Thank God, they were the tears of *repentance* on earth, not the scalding tears of biting *remorse* in hell.

I went up to her, and asked her what it was that so troubled her. With much difficulty she told me, through her sobs, that she wanted to be ready for Jesus when He came. I found out that she was truly repentant for her sins, and was eager to get rid of them. So it was with great joy I pointed out to her those simple but all-sufficient verses, which declare so plainly the way of salvation—"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." (Acts xvi. 31.) "Verily, verily, I say unto you,

He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life.”
(John vi. 47, also John iii. 16, 36.)

She now saw that all she had to do was to trust Christ and His work, declared to her through God's word, and salvation was hers. As she drank in the precious truth of a free salvation, I could see how it calmed the tempest within. The tears still flowed, but they were now the quiet tears of joy.

I said to her, “ Shall we sing—

“ ‘ Oh, I am so happy in Jesus !
From sin and from sorrow set free ;
So happy that He is my Saviour,
So happy that Jesus loves me ’ ? ”

She said, “ Do, please.” And smiling through her tears, she sang with all her heart her first song of praise to Him who first loved her and gave Himself for her.

Dear reader, do as dear Annie H—— did. Trust in Christ, and her future—heaven's joys—will be yours. If you still refuse, what an awful eternity you are madly drifting on to—hell, with all its woes !

“ Oh, worldling, give ear while the saints are near !
Soon must the tie be riven ;
And men, side by side, God's hand shall divide,
As far as hell's depths from heaven.

“ The children of day are summoned away,
Left are the children of night ;
Sealed is their doom, for there's no more room—
Filled are the mansions of light.

“ What an awful cry will rend the sky—
' Open to us, O Lord.'
Oh, ye sinners, ere the door be shut,
Let that cry in faith be heard ! ”

THE SALVATION OF GOD.



SORROWFUL TIDINGS.

IT may not, perhaps, be known to all the readers of the "*Salvation of God*" that our beloved fellow-labourer and brother in Christ, HENRY MANN HOOKE, who edited this magazine for many years, is now resting from his labours—"absent from the body, present with the Lord." He was summoned home, after a brief illness, on the 11th of May.

For us who are left, how deep the loss! for him, how great the gain! The voyage is over, the haven reached; the weary day of toil is ended, and home and holiday are now his own for ever. The loss is all on our side; and what a loss! To think of the voice that sounded out the news of God's delight in the salvation of a sinner, that heralded forth the tidings of a work which made such a salvation righteously possible, being hushed for ever here below, is truly both sad and solemn. But there is no sadness for the one who has just left us; he has left it all behind.

And has all this no voice to us, fellow-labourers? Are we not forcibly reminded, once more, that the Lord prizes our company more highly than our service? He could easily do without our poor labours. He could bury every one of His workmen to-day, and go on with His work as vigorously

as ever to-morrow. He has power enough, and resources enough to do His work without us; but He is gracious enough still to do His work by us. Yet, with our labour, He can, and ere long *will* dispense; but with our companionship *never!* "Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, *be with Me where I am.*" (John xvii. 24.) He did not die to secure our service, though, apart from His death, we never could have served Him; but we are plainly told that He *did* die to get our company. "*Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.*" (1 Thess. v. 10.)

What precious grace it is, then, that allows us to be left here, for a single day, for such a Master! And what would our stay in this poor world be worth without it? A dear servant of Christ was saying only yesterday that "*if His interests were not here, the sooner I could leave this earth the better I'd like it.*" Nor will our stay be long. The sun will soon set upon our little day of service. Work while it is called to-day: "the night cometh, when no man can work." Till then may *His pleasure* be our constant aim, *His approval* our satisfying reward.

"From various cares our hearts retire,
 Though deep and boundless their desire,
 We're now to please but One;
 Him, before whom each knee shall bow,
 With Him is all our business now,
 And those that are His own.

"Let us our feebleness recline
 On that eternal love of Thine,
 And human thoughts forget;
 Child-like attend what Thou wilt say,
 Go forth and serve Thee while 't is day,
 Nor leave our sweet retreat."

Christ also *hath* once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God.” (1 Peter iii. 18.)

“Righteousness demands no more,
But mercy yields her boundless store.”

It was truly pleasant, therefore, to tell this newly-awakened soul, that though, if left to his own effort of amendment, he must be eternally lost, yet that the Son of man had come “to seek and to save that which was lost,” and that He had finished the work which the Father gave Him to do. God was now satisfied with the one settlement made at the cross, on the sinner’s behalf, and that the only way to get the blessing was simply to believe on Him who made that settlement. For “*by Him ALL THAT BELIEVE are justified from all things*, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.” (Acts xiii. 39.)

And now, my reader, what of *your* case? If God, this night, were to require your soul of you; to call upon you for an answer for a lifetime of sin, could you meet such a demand? You know that you could not! Like Job, you could not answer Him “one of a thousand.” To stand upon your own merit would be to be eternally lost. “Enter not into judgment with Thy servant, O Lord,” said David, “for *in Thy sight shall no man living be justified.*” But if, as a poor repentant one, you turn to Christ for salvation, there will be joy in the presence of the angels of God about you. God is as gratified in beholding the feeblest longings for Christ in you, as He is satisfied with the finished work of Christ for you.

But I solemnly warn you, that if you still persist in evading this vital question, and content

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And now, my reader, what of *your* case? If God, this night, were to require your soul of you; to call upon you for an answer for a lifetime of sin, could you meet such a demand? You know that you could not! Like Job, you could not answer Him “one of a thousand.” To stand upon your own merit would be to be eternally lost. “Enter not into judgment with Thy servant, O Lord,” said David, “for *in Thy sight shall no man living be justified.*” But if, as a poor repentant one, you turn to Christ for salvation, there will be joy in the presence of the angels of God about you. God is as gratified in beholding the feeblest longings for Christ in you, as He is satisfied with the finished work of Christ for you.

But I solemnly warn you, that if you still persist in evading this vital question, and content

yourself with the thought of mere moral reformation, either now or at a future time, then, be sure of this, that the time is rapidly approaching when, as surely as that Lincolnshire labourer was pulled up, face to face with God's righteous demands, so will you be. He was arrested in *time*; take heed that your awakening does not come in *Eternity*! Consider well, I entreat you, the solemn sequel of such a waking up; and before you lay down this paper, bow to God's righteous claims; thankfully accept His gracious provision; trust in the precious blood of Christ; and then you will be able, with another, to record thus, your happy, thrice happy, experience:

“Sweetest rest and peace have filled me,
Sweeter praise than tongue can tell;
God is satisfied with Jesus,
I am satisfied as well.”

GEO. C.

EXTRACT.

“**E**XTINGUISH hope, and happiness is gone. Let the faintest glimmering of hope remain, and a man's misery is not complete. Poor unconverted sinner, it is the most dismal feature in the misery of that hell towards which thou art hastening, that there is no hope there. False hopes may flatter and deceive thee, till thou art cast into that pit of darkness; but once there, no single ray of hope, true or false, will ever penetrate the eternal gloom. The Lord awaken thee, ere it be too late, to a sense of the awful prospect that awaits thee, if thou shouldst live on, and die in unbelief and sin.”

THE SALVATION OF GOD.



THE SINKING SAILOR'S WISH.

ABOUT twenty-five years ago, a young man, in the course of business, had occasion to visit a trading vessel from the Baltic, at that time lying in one of the ports of the Bristol Channel. He observed, on boarding her, that everything was in excellent "trim," as a sailor would say; but it was upon entering the cabin that he saw what so deeply impressed him. Painted, in letters of gold, on a beam, in the most prominent place that could be found, were the following words, "SOLI DEO GLORIA." (*To God alone the glory.*)

It was the captain's delight to explain the meaning of these words, and to give his reason for placing them there, to all who came on board his vessel. Even the German cabin-boy was called to tell, in his mother tongue, what the words expressed—To God alone the glory! What for? For a *double* salvation—the salvation of his body from a watery grave, of his soul from the jaws of hell. As nearly as memory will permit, let us hear his own tale, and see if it has no voice to us.

THE CAPTAIN'S STORY.

"Some years ago, while serving as mate on board a Baltic trader, we experienced, far away at sea, some very boisterous weather. So violently

raged the storm, and so long, that our men became thoroughly worn out by incessant labour at the pumps. The water rapidly gained upon our disabled vessel, and it became sadly evident to every one on board that she was fast foundering. Our case was utterly hopeless. The master of the ship gave way to despair and retired to his cabin. At daybreak I climbed into the rigging, and to my great joy descried distinctly a sail on the horizon. At that time I was not a Christian; but it came to my memory that I had, when a boy at school, read somewhere in God's Holy Word, that *faith could remove mountains*. I reasoned, therefore, in my mind, that if I could only believe—'have faith,' I should, by means of the vessel just sighted, be saved from our sinking ship. But, immediately afterwards, I began to upbraid myself for thus thinking: was it not *tempting* God? And yet I could not help feeling that it was right to *trust Him*.

"I descended the rigging in order to convey to the captain the welcome tidings of the vessel just in view. I besought him, with all my energies, to cheer up and come on deck; and, if it were our lot to die, that we should all die together like men. But all my efforts were fruitless; the thought of his desolate family at home, and of his own hopeless condition, seemed to be completely crushing him. He only bade me pour upon the troubled waters some of the oil which we had on board, in order to lessen, if possible, the severity of the seas which were then breaking over us.

"On going back to the deck, I found that the ship we had noticed in the offing had evidently seen our signal of distress. Once more I returned to the captain; but even this pleasing intelligence

failed to arouse him. What an anxious time it was! For though the friendly vessel was making her way towards us, ours was settling down, every minute lower and lower, into the water, and at last she sank with every soul on board. Even the boats went down with her. Thus did I find myself beneath the water, with nothing that my hand could lay hold of. In an instant the *past* became an awful *present*, as my history seemed to pass in review before me, and with it this thought filled my soul: *Oh that I could reach the surface, and say, Lord, have mercy upon me; for then I think I could die happy!* In an instant I felt I was being borne upward. How, I knew not until I discovered that a large ladder from the ship's hold, commonly used by the Baltic traders in those days, had, in rising to the top, carried me with it. Thus was my heart's deep longing speedily granted. '*To God alone the glory.*'"

How touching is this readiness on the part of God to meet any poor sinner that has a wish to turn to Him! Has He not said, "*Before they call, I will answer*"? (Isa. lxxv. 24.) How strictly verified in this case! His all-seeing eye penetrates to the depths of the mighty ocean. *He* knew, oh, how *well* He knew, all that was passing in that poor sailor's heart as he sank, within touch of death, in the foundered vessel. Not a word could he utter, but the wish was as well known as if uttered with the voice of thunder. Well may He be called "*the God of all grace*"—"*rich in mercy*"—"*rich unto ALL that call upon Him*"—"*not willing that ANY should perish.*"

Dear reader, has a heart-felt cry for mercy ever reached His ear from *your* lips? It is high time to take the question to heart; for be sure of this,

that if this "mate's" cry be not yours in time, the captain's despair, only a thousand times darker and deeper, will be yours in eternity! A sinner who sinks into the lake of fire will never dream of saying what the sinking seaman said: "*Oh that I could reach the surface and cry for mercy!*"

"Of all hope bereft,
And to judgment left,
For ever to wail and to weep."

Too late! Awful word! Too late for mercy!
Too late for ever!

A rejected Saviour, an insulted Lord, will be the righteous Judge at the great white throne. If His loving "Come" be blindly refused, His dreadful "Depart" must eternally be endured. When once the eyes are opened, dear reader, how deeply real it all is! But, you know, the rich man opened his in hell. (Luke xvi. 23.) Are *you* still unconcerned? Then, I beseech you, ask yourself this question:

"How will *my* heart endure
The terrors of that day,
When heaven and earth, before His face,
Astonished shrink away?"

Would you really be saved? Are you anxious, even now, to get this solemn question settled? Do, then, what those distressed seamen did in their water-logged vessel. They knew their efforts were useless, that their strength was expended, and their ship a hopeless wreck. What *could* they do? *They could only look outside themselves for succour and safety.* And look they did, with longing eyes, to every point of the compass, if perchance a friend, in the hour of need, might anywhere be found. And when at last they saw

what they hoped might prove to be one, they found means of making known their deeply-felt need, and hoisted the flag of distress. But, even then, nothing was really assured to them. Would the distant vessel notice them? If she did, would her captain care to go out of his course to help them? And if both had been made sure to them, could their vessel hold out long enough for succour to reach them?

But how different is your case, awakened reader. The Man who once died for sinners upon the cross is seated now, a living Saviour, in the glory of God. Still He waits to be gracious to the vilest, and His blessed message still echoes through a dying world: "*Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.*" (Isa. xlv. 22.) Had that sailor known the truth of this precious message, he need not even have waited to reach the surface. One look of need from his anxious heart would have secured a blessing from that loving Saviour *instantly!* Had he been as many fathoms deep as there were sins in his guilty history, while life remained in his body, and reason on her throne, it would have been just the same. Jesus is "*mighty to save*" (Isa lxiii. 1), and as anxious to do it as He is able. Bless His name for ever!

But to return to the captain's story.

"When I reached the surface I found two others of our crew; one was a seaman, a good swimmer, floating about amid small wreckage, the other was our cabin-boy. All three of us now laid hold of the large ladder, and waited with anxiety the approach of the rescuing vessel. Imagine our dismay when we saw her turn her head in another direction to pursue her own course!"

How different was this to the Saviour's word, "Look unto Me, and *be ye saved.*" They looked, only to get the most heart-sickening disappointment. But how was this?

"It appeared that they had seen our ship sink, and, mistakenly thinking that they had sailed over the spot without seeing any traces of human life, they turned their helm and proceeded on their own way."

"Then how were you saved at last?"

"Well, the captain's mind, it seems, was ill at ease about it. '*Go back, go back,*' whispered an inward voice. 'Then for God's sake *let us go back!*' said the chief officer, upon learning from the captain what his feelings were. Accordingly, to our infinite delight, we saw, once more, that their vessel was making her way toward us, and ultimately they picked us up. On reaching the deck of the friendly vessel, I fell on my knees before them all, and thanked God for His merciful deliverance. To God alone I owed it; '*to God alone the glory.*'"

Reader, have *you* ever thanked God for your salvation—*your own salvation*? Or are you among the many who are kept, year after year, crying for mercy while clinging to the ten-stair ladder of their own law-keeping? The law is holy, and just, and good; but you are a guilty sinner, and therefore it is written: "*By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight.*" (Rom. iii. 20.) But, "by *Him* all that believe *are justified* from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." (Acts xiii. 39.) It must be *salvation first; good works next.* Works, that flow from the knowledge of the love that has saved me, are alone acceptable with Him.

Add but a single good work to the Saviour's merits, as a title for heavenly glory, and you diminish by so much the value of His precious blood, the extent of His finished work. May you rather know the blessedness of being "justified *freely by His grace* through the *redemption that is in Christ Jesus.*" (Rom. iii. 24.) "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son: in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins." (Col. i. 12-14.) To God alone the glory, for such unbounded, unmerited blessing. GEO. C.

LIFE OR DEATH.

A CIRCUMSTANCE is still related, which is said to have happened fifty years ago, in the assize town of C——. A poor man lay in prison, under sentence of death. His landlord, who took a great interest in him, on hearing of the judge's sentence, which was speedily to be carried out, bethought of hastening to the capital and there seeing the viceroy, who alone had the power of granting a pardon.

He rode a fast horse, for the time was brief, and there was no room for even a moment's delay. The horse bore him well till within a mile from the town, when he sank down exhausted. Kind help, however, was at hand; one and another came forward, so that the suppliant arrived just in time, and the pardon was granted, and the

kind landlord had the satisfaction of returning home the following day with this happy intelligence. The poor condemned one, a moment before facing a terrible death, was now *free*.

Now what, dear reader, would any one have thought of that man, if he had shut his eyes and ears to the message of mercy, and refused the offered pardon? Who would not have said, "The man is mad"? Yes, surely, none but a madman would choose death rather than life, even when the question is simply a matter of time; yet when it is a question of eternity, so blind are we by nature, that, if left to ourselves, we should certainly make the fatal choice. "Ye *will* not come to Me," said the Saviour, "that ye might have life." Bear with me then, dear reader, if I ask, Which of the two have *you* chosen—death or life? "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.) And again, "He that believeth not *is condemned already*." (John iii. 18.) Here, then, is a man under sentence of death. The blessed Lord describes the case of every unbeliever—"Condemned already." Is it *your* case, dear reader? Do you accept the sentence? Do you long for liberty? Hear, then, the joyful tidings. A message of mercy has come unto this condemned world. Listen, as He tells His own gracious errand, "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke xix. 10.) "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.)

This blessed messenger *did not come to beg us off* in mere mercy. It is written of Him (1 Peter

ii. 24), "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree." So that we, however vile and guilty, might be freely justified, and for ever set free; and God just, while He justifies the believer in Jesus.

How can you then refuse such a message of love? Does it not claim your attention, to say the least? Does it not concern you deeply? Does it not concern you now?

If these gracious offers come in time, not less will the solemn issues come in eternity. Oh, close in with Him at once! Look unto Him and be saved. See in the pierced hands and feet of the Son of God what it cost Him to save you, and hear His own gracious word: "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." (John vi. 37.) Hear the word of the Holy Ghost through the apostle, "Be it known unto you therefore, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all things." (Acts xiii. 38, 39.) "All they that hate *Me* love death." (Prov. viii. 36.)

K. S. M.

THE MIDNIGHT SUN.

TOWARDS midsummer, people sometimes visit the North Cape of Norway to view the midnight sun, which does not set for several weeks, and the sight from that rocky headland is said to be very magnificent. The sun descends to within three of its diameters of the horizon, and then begins to rise, which, in clear weather, casts brightness in England all night across the northern sky. Last midsummer a friend of mine was on a trip there, and at that time I was admiring this light

at midnight from a railway station in England; and, when thinking of him, I was surprised to see twenty navvies come suddenly upon the platform with picks, shovels, and so forth, as though they had come to pull the station down. I asked one of them what it all meant, as there was no train that night but an inward one. He replied:

“We have come, sir, to wait for the sun to rise, so that we may do some special work at points and crossings, in the station-yard, before trains begin to move about in the morning; and it will be light enough for us to begin about two o’clock.”

I remarked, “I am waiting for *that* sun too, and for *another* Son as well. Are *you* waiting for *two*, or only for one?”

“I am waiting for *two*,” he replied.

“But,” I added, “are you really waiting for, and expecting the Son of God from heaven, to take you to be for ever with Himself?”

“I *am*, sir,” said he; “for He is my Saviour and best Friend.”

“Praise His name for *that*; and He *may* come before that sun rises over those lovely hills yonder; for He says, ‘Behold, I come quickly.’ And just as surely as that bright morning star, shining over there, indicates a brighter sun-rising, in about three hours’ time, so surely *we* have the Day Star already arisen in our hearts, to assure us that the Lord will soon rise up from where He now sits, on His Father’s throne in glory, to take us, His own, out of this dark world to the brightness of His eternal glory, to share all with Himself.”

Some weeks later, when that sun had risen and set a good many times, I met this same man, and asked him if he were still waiting for the Lord

from heaven, when, with a bright smile, he replied, "Yes."

On asking another man who was with him the same question, there was on his face a sad, down-cast, and sorrowful look, as he replied, "I am afraid not, sir."

What a contrast! One person knowing his sins put away for ever by the blood of Christ, and expecting the Lord to come and take him into the *eternal sunshine* of His own blessed presence; while the other (though a nice enough man naturally) was still in his sins, and therefore afraid that Jesus might quickly come and leave him behind for judgment; afraid that he would have to take his place before Him at the great white throne of *eternal judgment*, and to hear Him say, "Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." (Matt. xxii. 13.) What would our reader's reply be to that question? Would it be like number one, or number two?

"The night is far spent, and the day is at hand :
No sign to be looked for ; the Star's in the sky."

"Through the tender mercy of our God, the Dayspring from on high *hath* visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace." (Luke i. 78, 79.) "We have a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the Day Star arise in your hearts." (2 Peter i. 19.) "The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise

first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (1 Thess. iv. 16, 17.) Do you know HIM as your best Friend for the eternity that is before you? and do *you* long to see His blessed face? If not, dear soul, never rest till you do.

"What is loss in this world, when compared to that day,
To the glory that then will from heaven be revealed?
'The Saviour is coming,' HIS PEOPLE may say;
'The Lord whom we look for—our SUN and our Shield.'"

"And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and THE LAMB IS THE LIGHT THEREOF." "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but *they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.*" (Rev. xxi. 23, 27.)

When Jesus was here upon earth He said, "He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life;" and when He had returned to heaven He said, "I am the Bright and Morning Star." "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly;" and it is the privilege of all who *now*, in this day of His grace, receive Him, to say, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." (Rev. xxii. 21.)

But in the same chapter, mark, it is also written, "For *without* are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie." God is love, but He is *holy* also.

Will you spend *your* eternity where the sun never sets? or is it to be where it never rises? Yes, which?

J. N.

PROFESSION OR POSSESSION.

VERY recently, as I was visiting a man on a sick bed, where every symptom of death had set in, I looked round the room, and saw a middle-aged man sitting quietly by the fire. After I had done speaking to the sick man, I had a little conversation with this other person about the uncertainty of human life, and of the passing away of man out of this world. I then ventured to ask him if he were a believer in the Lord Jesus.

He said, rather regretfully, "No, not in one sense." He knew he was not saved.

He told me that his father had been a member of a Presbyterian Church, and that when questioned himself about becoming a member, he said he was not fit to take the Lord's Supper. The minister prevailed upon him to become a member, although this man referred him to 1 Cor. xi. 24-31. He, however, assented to become one, and was now taking the bread and wine, emblematical of the Lord's body and blood, every three months, although he was grieved and condemned in doing so, and many a time he was very unhappy about it. I sought to show him he needed to be saved by the Lord Jesus Christ, and then would follow the privilege to remember Him.

Dear reader, if unsaved, renounce at once your empty profession, and seek ye the Lord while He may be found. Stoop not to any advice of man which is not in accordance with the word of God.

J. D.

“NIGH JERICHO.”

THROUGH Jericho—cursed of God (Joshua vi. 26), rebuilt by the will of man (1 Kings xvi. 34)—comes the Lord of life and glory (Luke xviii. 35), and that on His way to the cross.

Blessed, precious Saviour! In the midst of a multitude—who ran after Him as the last excitement of the day, swayed by their natural feelings, without any sense of who He was, or of their own deep need, and ready to cry when the time came, “Not this Man, but Barabbas:” knowing all this, knowing what was in man (John ii. 25), thinking not of Himself, or of what lay before Him, but of doing His Father’s will, coming down to where man was (see Luke x. 33), and meeting his need in love, in grace, and finding His delight in doing it—comes Jesus, the Saviour of sinners.

“What means the noise?” asks the blind man. “Jesus of Nazareth passes by,” the multitude replies, “Jesus of Nazareth”—name of reproach and scorn—“Jesus, Son of David,” is the cry of faith and need. Yes, Bartimeus had a need, and he *knew it*. True, it was a bodily need, but—and therefore here recorded—a figure of one with a need of soul. Mark the result. For it is faith calling upon God to act and aid.

“*Jesus stood.*” Can it be that the Creator of the universe stands still at the call of a blind beggar? Yes; marvellous, but true; and He not only stands still, but places all the resources of God at his command. Who but God could say, and that as able to grant the request, “*What wilt*

thou?” Wondrous grace! that a poor blind beggar should have the power of an infinite God placed within his reach. And he uses the opportunity. He asks a thing impossible with men—“Lord, that I may receive my sight.” Note the answer. How immediate! How simple! How unlike the actions of men! No show; no seeking notoriety. “Receive thy sight;” and more, “Thy faith hath saved thee.” Yes, faith in the person of the Son of God is salvation. “Are *we* also blind?” you ask. “If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now *ye say, We see*; therefore your sin remaineth.” (John ix. 41.) Notice the result when grace is appreciated. It links the heart to the object of its trust. How does the man use the gift bestowed? In examining the beauties of a world hitherto unseen? in gazing on objects new and attractive? *No*; in *following Him*. He “followed Jesus in the way.” (Mark x. 52.)

Reader, four questions:

Is there a need in *your* soul? (If unsaved, you are blind indeed).

Have you faith in a man-rejected Saviour, but a God-exalted Christ?

Have you believed from the Word alone (apart from feelings) that trusting Him is salvation?

And lastly, Are you following Him? E. C.

L.

“JOSHUA once bid the sun stand still in the heavens, but here the *Lord* of the sun, and the moon, and the heavens stands still at the bidding of a blind beggar! We often admire Jacob laying hold on the divine Stranger, but look at Bartimæus! he would not hold his tongue.”

J. G. B.

EXTRACTS.

“THE natural man is just like this prodigal (in the parable); he spends his substance in the far country, and ruins himself. A man having £5,000 a year and spending £20,000, will *seem* very rich for the time; but look at the results. He is a ruined man. The moment man departed from God he sold himself to Satan, and is spending his soul, his heart, away from God. He even spends what God has given him *against* God; and when he is thoroughly *spent*, and has nothing to live on, he begins to be *in want*. ‘There arose a mighty famine in that land,’ and all the world feels that.”

J. N. D.

“THE worldling is not satisfied, because he knows nothing, is possessed of nothing, which can, either now or at any time, satisfy him. The Christian knows One who can, and is possessed of One who can, satisfy him. He knows Christ, he possesses Christ, he enjoys Christ. Christ is his life, Christ is his peace, Christ is his joy, Christ is his portion; but as yet he has never seen Christ. It is by faith he knows, by faith he possesses, by faith he enjoys Him. But the more he knows and enjoys Him thus, the more he longs to behold Him. ‘Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.’”

THE SALVATION OF GOD.



“I WOULD . . . BUT YE WOULD NOT.”

SOME time ago a Norwegian Christian to whom I was speaking, captain of a ship, made a remark to this effect: “I was brought up to think of God as an angry Judge, ready to turn me into hell for my sins. But one day, when reading the Bible in my cabin, this verse came before me— ‘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.) I found out that I was quite wrong, that God was a God of love; and the proof of this great fact was that He *gave* His only begotten Son. This truth came with such power to my soul, that I could not refrain from going up on deck to tell my men that, instead of being a hard Judge, He was a God of love; and there and then I could make known the gospel in a way I had never seen it before myself.”

Very many have the same thought. They do not see that the gospel begins with God, and that it was *He* who provided the salvation, and sent the invitations to accept it, when we, as sinners, were so far away from Him.

The words quoted at the head of this paper go to prove the same great truth. They present the attitude of God, and, alas! how very often the attitude of the sinner. The whole pathway of the

Lord Jesus Christ, when here, was calculated to win back the confidence of the heart of man to God. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." (2 Cor. v. 19.) He "went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him." (Acts x. 38.)

Unsaved reader, God is beseeching you to be reconciled. The basis of that reconciliation has been laid in the blood of the cross: and what you have to do is to take your place as guilty, and accept it. The Lord Jesus came to Jerusalem as the Messiah—the King. He presented Himself to His own people, but they received Him not; and now He has to say, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often *would I* have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, but ye *would not*." (Luke xiii. 34.) He felt this rejection. He wept over the city. And the result of their refusal was that their city was laid waste, their land desolated, and their people scattered to the ends of the earth. He presents Himself to you, not as the King, but as the *Saviour*. To reject Him must bring, not temporal, but *eternal judgment*. "How often" has He knocked at the door of your heart? "How often" has He spoken to you? It may be through your circumstances, through the preached gospel, a tract, or a word from a friend, He has said, "I would." Have you replied, I "would not"? Well, the day of His beseeching grace will soon be ended, and He will then be required to assume the attitude of a *Judge*. You *must* either accept or reject Christ, and your whole *eternity* hangs upon your choice. "Because I have called,

and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded . . . I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh . . . Then shall they call upon Me, but I will not answer; they shall seek Me early, but they shall not find Me.” (Prov. i. 24–28.)

“Admit Him, for the human breast
Ne'er entertained so kind a guest;
No mortal tongue their joys can tell,
With whom He condescends to dwell.

“Admit Him, ere His anger burn,
Lest He depart and ne'er return;
Admit Him, or the hour's at hand
When at His door denied you'll stand.”

F. G. B.

“I STUCK TO THEM IN THE STRIKE, SIR.”

I ONCE asked an aged superannuated railway engine-driver what amount of pension he was receiving.

He replied, “It is threepence a year, sir.”

“What do you mean by that, John?” I enquired.

“It is reckoned,” said he, “at the rate of threepence for every year of my service, which, for the thirty-five years I was under the company, amounts to eight and ninepence per week; and the directors awarded me a little extra, the other day, because I stuck to them in the strike, sir. I refused to join the union; and in the strike which took place some years since, was the only driver in the town, where I lived, who stood for the company, out of the three hundred men attached to our sheds; so

that this sum, I trust, will keep me from the workhouse."

"Yes, John, I am pleased to hear you are so nicely provided for for this world, but what about the *next*? Have you a provision for your SOUL for ETERNITY?"

"Well, sir, I must try, and I hope I shall be all right at last."

"But, John, look here. When those good directors offered you this pension, how much did they ask you to TRY? The question was not one of trying, but of RECEIVING. In your felt need, being unable to work, I suppose you accepted it; and now that you *have* it, you simply seek to enjoy it, in thankfulness to those who gave it."

"Yes, that's it," said John.

"Now then, John, your title to an eternal inheritance of blessing, and your deliverance from eternal judgment, consists in this: that as a lost sinner, and knowing your deep need of a Saviour, you receive Him as God's free gift; for it was He whom God gave to be the sinner's Friend."

Let us pause here a moment, reader. There are two sides to what took place at the cross—*God's* and *man's*. A righteous God had claims upon us as guilty sinners; and, if we were to be saved, those claims must be righteously met. Who, then, *could* meet them? Who *would*? Hark! for it is God that speaks. From heaven itself the answer comes—"I have found a Ransom!" But will this "found" Ransom undertake such a responsibility? Listen again: "*Lo, I come . . . I delight to do Thy will, O my God.*" (Ps. xl. 7, 8.) And having thus engaged Himself, nothing could turn Him aside. "Like a flint" He set His face. The burden of sin He would bear. Its judgment

He would endure. The cup of unmingled wrath He would drain to its last bitter drop. And who could stand with Him then? Who share in such a work? None! "Whither I go thou *canst not follow Me now*," was His answer to the only one who, in his self-sufficient ignorance, *thought* that he could. I refer to Peter.

"Alone He bare the cross ;
Alone its grief sustained ;
His was the shame and loss,
And He the victory gained.
The mighty work was *all His own*,
Though we shall share His glorious throne."

But there is another side to the cross—a side in which every unsaved sinner is involved. The place where, in love for sinners, He suffered, became, may we not say, the *scene of the world's great strike*, both against God and His beloved Son? As it is written in Psalm ii.: "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against Jehovah, and against His Christ, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us;" that is, "Let us set at nought their authority, and cast restraint to the winds!"

"Now, John," I continued, "if you come out from the world's strike, and receive Christ as your Saviour, if you trust His precious blood, then a full, eternal soul-competency is yours; and not a mere pension for a few years, good as *that* may be."

John turned away sorrowful; and, it was to be feared, without bowing to and receiving Jesus as the sinner's Friend.

A few months later, however, John waited upon me, rejoicing that he had been made happy

in accepting the Saviour, because, as he said, "*He stuck to me* in the strike, sir." So dear old John could now say that his *soul* was provided for, and that for all eternity.

And now, dear reader, I do not enquire how far you are involved in Calvary's strike, for that would be mere curiosity, nor whether you are *trying* and *hoping* as John was; but what I do ask is, Which side do you take to-day? Are you on the side of the so-called strikers, or are you siding with that blessed Saviour who never swerved one single hair's-breadth under the combined forces of God's wrath, man's hatred, and Satan's power? You may be well enough provided for, and have nothing to fear for all time; but, oh, what about your soul's provision for eternity?

Since Adam's fall, the human heart has manifested independence towards God; but never did it show itself to such a degree as at that great strike of strikes on Calvary's mount. It is written in God's word, that "they took counsel against Jesus to put Him to death." Came with swords and staves to take Him. He was betrayed, held, bound, and buffeted. They spat in His face, bare false witness against Him, and vehemently accused Him. They scourged Him, blindfolded Him, struck Him on the face, and smote Him on the head with a reed. They stripped Him, and put on Him a scarlet robe in mockery, placing on His head a crown of thorns. They delivered Him for envy, crucified Him, and that between two thieves. They chose to release a murderer rather than Him. When on the cross they reviled Him, railed on Him, and in derision wagged their heads at Him. They plundered His garments,

and held a lottery for His seamless vesture; and as a crowning act of wickedness, they pierced His side with a spear.

He could have commanded more than twelve legions of angels, and have delivered Himself from them. Yet, as a Lamb led to the slaughter, He opened not His mouth. Oh, how firmly He stood for us in that awful crisis!

Now there were two men in the world's great strike that are specially mentioned as lifting up their voices against Him; viz., the two thieves crucified with Him. But at last one of them ceased from his railing, and said to the other, “Dost not thou fear God? *We* receive the due reward of *our* deeds: but *this* Man hath done nothing amiss.” Then turning to the Lord, he said, “Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom;” that is, one withdrew from the strike, while the other continued in it. One confessed Jesus *Lord*, received Him as His Saviour, and was taken up to paradise that very day; but the other continued his hostility, and, doubtless, went down to hell the same afternoon!

Dear, unsaved reader, we beseech you leave the ranks of the Christ-rejecters, of this world's “*strikers*,” and receive all that God's heart of love is so ready to give you. If you still resist His grace, then remember that the One who, in His love and compassion, stood so firmly on the sinner's behalf at the cross, and who still so patiently waits in grace to save to the uttermost all who accept Him, will, ere long, be quite as firm in holiness and judgment on the great white throne. All who pass out of this world on the side of the *strikers*, will then receive the due reward of their deeds—*endless perdition!*

“Come out from among them, and be ye separate . . . and I . . . will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.”

“He that is not with Me *is against Me*: and he that gathereth not with Me *scattereth*.” (Luke xi. 23.)

Delay no longer. “Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.” (2 Cor. vi. 2.)

Give up your *trying* and *hoping*. *Receive Christ now*; and it will then be yours to bless and praise Him through His own eternity of glory.

“Yet there is room! Still open stands the gate,
The gate of love; it is not yet too late:
Room, room, still room!
Oh, enter, enter NOW!”

“Ere night that gate may close, and seal thy doom:
Then the last, low, long cry: ‘No room, no room!’
No room, no room!
Oh, woeful cry, ‘NO ROOM!’”

J. N.

THE MAN THAT “READ HIS BIBLE FIVE TIMES THROUGH.”

SUCH a man the writer met with a short time since, and was greatly surprised to find, notwithstanding his attention to the daily reading of the word of God, that this dear man knew nothing of the grace that flows in it from the heart of the Author of it, as the short conversation I had with him in the train, on my way to business, one morning, will show. We were the only occupants of the compartment, therefore I

had a good opportunity of pressing upon him the necessity of believing the word of God concerning Jesus Christ His Son, whom He sent to be the Saviour of the world. On presenting him with a little gospel book containing the good news of salvation by grace through faith, he looked at it and remarked, *that he was not ignorant of these things; he had read the Bible five times through.*

“Then,” I said, “you will know that your sins are forgiven, and that you have peace with God.”

But, alas! his reply was, “Oh, no; I could not say that, sir!”

“Oh, dear,” I said, “I should have thought that, by your attention to the word of God, you would, by this time, have found God’s way of salvation, know that you were saved, and have peace with God. Now, my dear man,” I continued, “I don’t think I can say as much as you, that I have read my Bible five times through, although some parts of it I have read fifty times over, yet *I know that my sins are forgiven.*”

With this I took out my Testament, and turned to 1 John ii. 12, where it is written, “I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name’s sake,” reading the verse aloud to him, at the same time asking him if he had seen that this was written to those that had believed in God through Jesus Christ His Son. But, alas! how true it is, “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God . . . neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” Notwithstanding his not being ignorant of these things—his knowledge was only intellectual, there was no heart-work—

he was like those described in Heb. iv. 2: "The word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it."

Alas! what multitudes there are that hear, week after week, the gospel of God's grace, yet remain without the knowledge of His salvation! They receive not the Word into their hearts by faith; if they did they might be rejoicing in the knowledge of sins forgiven, peace with God, and an inheritance amongst all them that are sanctified by faith in Christ Jesus.

Dear reader, are you one of this class—always hearing, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth, like my friend, who read his Bible regularly, and not ignorant of these things as to outward understanding, yet still unsaved? a constant attendant, perhaps, at church or chapel, moral in your habits and ways before men, yet totally unconverted! If so, the Lord Jesus would say to you what He said to the religious ruler who came to Him by night, "Ye must be *born again*," without it you can neither "see" nor "enter the kingdom of God." Let me, then, affectionately exhort you not to rest satisfied with anything short of this. Are you already awakened by the Spirit of God? already in anxiety about your soul's deep need? Would you be assured of exemption from coming judgment? Believe, then, on the Name of the Son of God, sent of the Father into this world to die for sinners; rest your whole weight upon His stable word, and the happiest assurance must certainly be yours. How could it be otherwise with such a scripture as this before the gaze of your soul? "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 judgment*; but is passed from death unto life". (1 John v. 24). What will avail your reading this verse five thousand times if you do not believe it once?

A. H. F.

THE STUDENT'S CONVERSION.

A WORD TO UNSATISFIED SEEKERS.

A YOUNG Scotch student was spending the winter of 1837 with a family in the town of Leamington, in the capacity of private tutor. He had been carefully and religiously brought up, had just finished his university course with brilliant honours, and was, withal, aspiring to the *ministry*. But, alas! he had never been brought to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. With a highly-cultivated intellect, great transparency of character, and stirring moral worth as to outward behaviour, he was as yet a stranger to grace. He was religious, but knew not what it was to be a new creature in Christ. In the November of that year, a circumstance occurred which turned the whole tide of that young man's life. Here is his own account of it.

"I happened, one day, to turn up to the mineral spring. A young man entered the building whose appearance at once attracted my observation; his coarse linen frock contrasted with the gay apparel of the groups before me. He was emaciated, and walked forward with a feeble step. After drinking of the water out of a vessel of earthenware, which was placed beside a number of tumblers, he, without having apparently observed any one, again slowly withdrew. After a little I began to

descend the hill, in the middle of which the spring was situated, and found the young man sitting at one of the bends of the winding path which slopes gently down the declivity. I spoke to him. His diffident tone of voice, and his modesty of manner, at once enlisted my sympathies. During several weeks afterwards I frequently visited his father's lowly cottage. My intercourse with the young man soon gave me ground to conclude that, if my theoretic knowledge of gospel truths were greater than his, he, unlike myself, had experienced their sanctifying power. Truly his was the better portion. When he spoke of the Saviour's love to sinners, and His obedience unto death for their redemption, he at times gave vent to his gratitude with tears of joy. Pointing to his clothes on one occasion, he said, addressing his father, 'These will be no more needed. I wish you to sell them. The price of them will be enough to pay for my coffin.' He seemed like one who had obtained 'everlasting consolation, and good hope, through grace,' to have not a shadow of doubt or anxiety on his soul as to the prospect of eternal glory. One evening, about sunset, he fell asleep."

The student's soul was reached by the arrow of conviction. That poor country lad had a secret of peace to which he was a total stranger, and the question flashed upon him, "Could *I* thus calmly pass into the immediate presence of the holy and just Jehovah? Am *I*, like him, sheltered from the terrors of 'the wrath to come'? The question, too plain to be evaded, and too urgent to be postponed, constrained the earnest enquiry, "What must I do to be saved?" Many a struggle followed this awakening, before peace and liberty

were really reached. Like thousands more, he began by trying hard to put himself right with God. He tried to find love in his heart for God, instead of believing the love which God had manifested toward him, in the gift of Christ. Again let me quote his own words, written at that time. "How miserable a state of mind is that in which sorrow, like a heavy load, weighs and weighs upon the heart, and tries to find relief in tears, but cannot find it! How miserable, above all that is most miserable, to wish that the heart was full of love towards its God and Saviour, and after all to feel that it is as cold as ice, and as hard as adamant! I cried to the *unknown God* with my voice, and often cried in despair. The cry seemed never to reach His ears; and then I was so troubled that I could not speak." The fact was he was reasoning from what he was for God at his best, and not from what God was to him at his worst. In other words, it was a fruitless effort to find merit in self, because of what a bettered religious self was, instead of putting confidence in God because of what God was. He was ransacking all the workings of his unsatisfied heart to find satisfaction, and no wonder he was bitterly disappointed. A village pauper might as well search every hole and corner of his comfortless cottage in order to find how much wealth there is in the Bank of England, as a sinner to search his own heart in order to discover what there is in the heart of God. No, dear reader; God's heart is not so learned. Man cannot by such searching find out God. "No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, *He hath declaredp Him.*" The gospel begins with the heart of God,

and comes *to* the heart of man. "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.) "*God commendeth His love* toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans v. 8.) God can only be known in Christ, redemption only secured by Him, and peace and pardon preached through Him. God has found eternal satisfaction in His finished work, and has caused every divine glory to shine in His countenance as the risen Man, and He wants me to find my satisfaction, therefore, where He finds His—not in self, but in Christ; in Him, and in no other. Is this where my reader is looking for it?

At last the clouds dispersed from the young student's heart, and the glory of gospel light shone in. Let him still tell his own tale. In a letter to his father he thus writes: "I am now convinced that, after hearing it a thousand times over, we still remain ignorant of the gospel, unless we see clearly, and feel joyfully, that Christ is offered to us, wretched, lost sinners, in all His fulness as the free gift of God. I am sure of this, that for a long, long time I have been deceiving myself, and making myself miserable every day, through ignorance of the free, glorious gospel, while I imagined that I clearly understood its gracious character. For long the painful feeling preyed upon my mind that I must do some good works myself, or God would not accept me in Christ Jesus; and my misery was, that while Satan thus blinded my eyes, I found myself unable to do the good work that I would. Now I see that the gospel is quite different—that it is

free, and full, and *wholly of grace.*" And at another time he wrote: "The giving up of all things—of all earthly possessions, of father, mother, sister, brother—is easy, compared with giving up all our fancied righteousness—our own works. This is the last and most difficult thing that the earnest seeker finds to do. We often fancy, and often say with our tongues, '*None but Christ.* I place my whole dependence upon Christ. I know I am nothing, can do nothing—He is my complete Saviour;' and *yet all the time we are trusting to and looking for something in ourselves.*"

Perchance my reader may be one of this very class. You are worried, and disappointed, and distressed, because *you* cannot be what you ought to be. But suppose you were, what then? Why, like the Pharisee in the parable, you could then go before God and tell Him *how well satisfied you were with yourself*; that now, being "*what you ought to be,*" you could stand in your own righteousness before Him; and while thanking Him for His great kindness in giving His Son, yet, that as far as you were concerned, you could manage very well without Him.

Now, perhaps, your whole soul rebels with utmost indignation against such a thought, and yet is this not the very thing your deceived heart is seeking after, viz., *self-satisfaction*? You hear the precious testimony of the work and worth of the Lord Jesus Christ. You listen again and again to what God has plainly declared concerning *all* who believe on Him—that they are justified from all things (Acts xiii. 39), that they shall not come into judgment, that they have passed from death unto life. (John v. 24.)

And yet you turn from the perfections of a glorified Saviour at the right hand of God to your own wretched self, and say mournfully, "If *I* were this, and if *I* were not that, it would be different, but ——" But——why your eye is simply on the wrong person—that is all; it is *self* instead of *Christ*. The moment you really turn to Christ, and give up all expectation from self, your heart will be at rest. Till then, instead of happy assurance, your heart will be filled with the "ifs" and "buts" of unsatisfied desire and of miserable uncertainty. May the Holy Spirit of God so turn your eye and heart to Christ. God has glorified Him upon His heavenly throne, and that because He perfectly satisfied and glorified God when bearing our sins upon the cross. May it be your happy experience to "worship God in the Spirit, and *rejoice in Christ Jesus*, and have *no confidence in the flesh*." (Phil. iii. 3.)

"Satisfied with Thee, Lord Jesus,
I am blest !

Peace which passeth understanding on Thy breast ;
No more doubting, no more trembling,
Oh, what rest !"

GEO. C.

"A YOUNG Christian thinks that he has fully tasted at first that which is in himself, and that which is in Christ; but an old Christian can say, 'Every day I see more of my own evil and of Christ's love; but in spite of all my waywardness, *He* never changes. I look not at my own experience, but my faith is in God, whose Son, at His right hand, never changes.'"

G. V. W.

THE SALVATION OF GOD.



SAVED OR LOST?

MRS. A—— wanted to be saved, but thought she had something to do, and was doing her best, she said. She did not see she was “lost,” and that all she could do was no good in the sight of God.

We read to her such passages in the word of God as: “There is none righteous, no, not one.” “Therefore by the *deeds* of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight: for by the law is the *knowledge of sin*.” “That every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.” We pointed out that God wanted us to own ourselves guilty sinners before Him, that He might justify us freely through His grace. (Romans iii.) Observing the wistful, longing expression of her countenance, we felt encouraged to press *the fact* that she was *lost at that very moment*, and could do nothing to save herself; but that so great was God’s *love* to helpless, hopeless, hell-deserving sinners, that all she had to do to be saved was to “believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.” We read her the account of that cruel jailor at Philippi, who beat Paul and Silas, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks; how, when conscience-stricken by the voice of God in the

earthquake, he knew he was *lost*, and was going to kill himself; but—stayed by the gracious words from their mouth, “Do thyself no harm”—he threw himself as a sinner at their feet, and cried out (from his heart), “What must I do to be *saved*?”

All that Paul and Silas did was to point him to the Saviour, and all he did was to believe on Him just as he was, the blessed result being that he rejoiced, believing in God with all his house. Good works follow faith, and do not go first; for *after* the jailor believed, he washed the prisoners’ stripes, brought them into his house, and set meat before them. (Acts xvi.)

We commended Mrs. A—— to God in prayer and left. His holy Spirit graciously applied His word. She took her stand on it, cast aside all her pre-conceived religious notions, gave up doing her best, took the low place as a lost sinner, believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, and was saved, and *knew* it. Soon after she fell ill of typhoid fever, and departed to be with Christ, which is far better, resting wholly on His all-sufficient work and merits, and filled with joy and peace in believing.

“The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.” (Luke xix. 10.)

Mrs. B—— was dying of consumption, and knew she might be called away at any moment. She said she tried to get the better of her bad habits, but always failed. She had not discovered that sin within us is stronger than good desires, and that we have no power in ourselves to overcome it. She tried, by reformation, to acquire a character in which she could stand, to her

own satisfaction, before God, instead of accepting the righteousness wrought out by God in Christ by the work of the cross, and offered those who have none—a righteousness which God says is *upon* all that believe. (Rom. iii. 22.) This—His own—not our—righteousness, we explained, is the only character which God will accept, and is the only foundation of peace for the believer. (Rom. iv. 22–25.) If we could become righteous in ourselves, we should not be lost nor need a Saviour.

At first Mrs. B—— seemed to take in the gospel plan, and we hoped and earnestly prayed it might be so. Alas! she wavered, and the world and its cares obtained the mastery.

Her husband kept a small shop.

At our last visit she admitted the truth of what had been put before her, but told us that people who were out of work in the winter, and to whom they gave credit, did not pay when in work again. “Y——,” she said, “now spends his money in gin-and-water at the inn, instead of paying us, and *it makes me so angry I really cannot think about my soul.*” We could not again obtain admission to the house, and soon after heard that Mrs. B—— was dead.

It is much to be feared that she died unsaved; if thus, how awful to think that her soul is *lost for ever!*

What a contrast to Mrs. A——, who, although not aware how soon she would be called into God’s presence, found happiness in Him for the little while she remained on earth, and is now with Him for ever and ever! Oh, what joy! “There shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain:

for the former things are passed away." (Revelation xxi. 4.)

Mrs. B—— was well aware of her danger, yet trifled with the interests of her never-dying soul on the brink of eternity, and put the love of money before *the love of Christ*, to which, when we last saw her, she was evidently a stranger. Her heart occupied with the moneys due to her, forgetful that all the gold in the world will not purchase a drop of water in that place of torment where the fire never shall be quenched. (Luke xvi. ; Mark ix. 45.)

Reader, *which* are you, *saved* or *lost*? You are *one* or the *other*. There is no third condition. Good intentions, religious efforts, doing your best, will not save you; for "all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." (Isaiah lxiv. 6.) God in mercy speaks to you from heaven, and points you to the pierced hands, and feet, and side of the Lord Jesus for pardon, righteousness, and peace. Eternal issues are at stake. Your happiness *for ever* trembles in the balance. Shall the world, its pleasures or cares, its gold or its lusts, rob your soul of heaven and its joys, and weigh it down into depths of endless misery in hell?

Will you refuse alike the *beseechings* of God's grace, and the *warnings* of His faithfulness? "Flee from the wrath to come." Hesitate no longer. As one would thrust an adder from his path, cast aside your hindrance; no one but God knows so well as yourself what it is. Do as Mrs. A—— did. Turn *to Him*. Own yourself *lost*. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be *saved*." God says it. A.

THE RICH CALIFORNIAN.

IN the year 1875 a gentleman, who had made his fortune in the gold fields of California, sailed from New York for Liverpool in the ship *Adriatic*, of the White Star Line. He had just started on a five years' pleasure tour, which was to end at Rome. He was known on board as "the rich Californian," and as "one holding very strong infidel principles." One fine moonlight night about forty of the saloon passengers, of various nationalities, congregated on the upper deck of that ship for conversation, and one subject after another was discussed, until Christianity became at last the topic. Up to this point our Californian friend kept remarkably quiet, but now he rose and—so far as memory serves—said, "I don't believe in a God, a devil, Bible or prayer, a heaven, a hell, or even in a hereafter; only so far as when our bodies die our spirits take possession of some animal, such as a lion, a tiger, a lamb, or a serpent, just as our dispositions have been on earth."

This infidel was asked by one present, "If you knew you had only twenty minutes to live, how would you spend that time?"

"Well," said he, "give me my desire, and I would have a six-chambered revolver, and would shoot down red Indians till the end of my last moments on earth."

The next conversation of the passengers was held a very few hours later; but oh, how different its character from the former ones! The subject then was, "The rich Californian has just dropped down and died suddenly, his last words being,

‘Let some one pray with me.’” What this pitiable man’s eternity is, eternity itself will disclose, when “God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ.” But we do know that God says in His word, “Be not deceived; *God is not mocked*: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” (Gal. vi. 7.)

God bears long and patiently with souls in this day of His rich grace and long-suffering mercy, not willing that any should perish. Judgment is His strange work; but shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? A rich Californian may set out on his five years’ pleasure tour with plans and purposes, no doubt well digested, but in a “heart deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.” On the night when his soul was required of him, what could his perishing gold, or his wicked bravado against God, avail him? Yes, what? Think of it, friend. As he stepped on board that vessel from the American shore, on his voyage across the Atlantic, little did he think that his pleasure trip would terminate before he reached the first port. Of course, it is no sin to be rich; but the solemn secret is, that “the love of money is the root of all evil.” It is not riches that send people to hell, nor is it poverty that gets them to heaven, though both may hinder souls from being saved. We are told in Scripture of a certain rich man who fared sumptuously every day; that he died and was buried, but that in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments; and that in those torments he began to pray. But it was for ever *too late*! He prayed for himself, and even for his relatives on earth, but found himself for ever beyond the reach of a satisfying answer. Yes, God is *not* mocked. “I also will

laugh at your calamity; I will *mock* when your fear cometh." (Proverbs i. 26.) Dear reader, be you rich or poor, old or young, learned or unlearned, infidel or mere professor, we entreat you, "*Be not deceived,*" but receive as your Saviour the One of whom it is written, "He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through *His poverty* might be rich." He left glory's heights and went into Calvary's depths to rescue hopeless, helpless, ruined sinners from endless misery, in order to have them with Himself and like Himself for ever, sharing with them His joy in that eternal glory. Do you mean to be in that glory-joy?

Hear the word of a Saviour-God, "Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom." "Because there is wrath, beware lest He take thee away with *His stroke*: then a great ransom cannot deliver thee." (Job xxxvi. 18.)

May you never have to say, The harvest is past, and the summer is ended, and I am not saved. Do not put off till God has to say to you, "Thou fool, this night *thy soul* shall be required of thee." Do not any longer evade your responsibility. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and *thou* shalt be saved." Will you? J. N.

"THERE is but one and the same salvation for all. There was evidently no time for *him* (the dying thief) *to do anything*, had *that* been the way; but all is done for him. That very day his knees were to be broken. How could he get into paradise? Christ wrought his deliverance through His own death, and his eye was opened in faith to what Christ was doing."

“RELIGIOUS FOR ALL THAT!”

A CUSTOMER entered a barber's shop the other day, and while the smart young hairdresser plied his work, the following conversation took place between them.

Hairdresser. “The great circus commences here to-day. I suppose there will be a rare turn-out to see it.”

Customer. “Yes, no doubt; but I take no interest in those sort of things.”

Hairdresser. “Indeed! Ah, well, when you have seen one good circus you may say you've seen the lot.”

Customer. “I reckon you have seen a good many sights of that kind?”

Hairdresser. “Oh, yes! I've seen the Grand Cirque, in London; the Zoological Gardens; Bellevue Gardens, at Manchester, and most of the sights worth seeing in both those places.”

Customer. “Well, I've seen a good many of those places too, together with menageries, pleasure gardens, music halls, and theatres into the bargain; but do you know what I consider the best sight that ever I saw?”

Hairdresser. “Well, no; but for myself I like a good wild beast show better than anything else.”

Customer. “It is a few years ago now, and I was getting tired of menageries and such-like things; but one day I got a look at *Christ*, and *He* has eclipsed everything else for me. Nothing else has a charm for me now; and only those who know Him in reality can tell what a world of lasting pleasure there is to be found in Him. I

have known Him now for over ten years, and can speak from personal experience."

Hairdresser. "Well, sir, you are on the best side. As for myself, I have not tasted drink for seven years. It is true I have never been at church since I was confirmed, because I thought confirmation was only a sham; but still, mind you, I have been religious for all that."

Customer. "Yes, but have you *seen Christ*? Being religious is only being taken up with *yourself*, and you need not expect any good from that quarter. But looking to Christ by faith as a sinner, looking to Him as helpless and lost, puts you into immediate possession of salvation; and that's something worth having in a poor, empty, vain world like this! Your heart longs for something better than the flimsy tinsel, the gilded baubles, which compose its best offers. You want a solid foundation beneath your feet. Search the wide world over, and you will never find it. Christ is the Rock of Ages. Place yourself under His shelter, and never a storm can reach you."

The young hairdresser, like many others, was pluming himself upon his temperance principles, his respectable life, his religious tendencies; but he hadn't got Christ.

Reader, is this where you are? Better, far better surely, to be moral and temperate than to be the slave of evil passions, and revel in open wickedness; but if you rely on anything you have done or can do for salvation, you are only building on the sand. Did Jesus, when He came, do a Saviour's part? Did He do it well? Was His work *finished*? Do you say "yes"? Then why seek to add to that perfectly finished work? Oh, self-righteous one, you need to be born again!

Otherwise you will be a stranger to Christ through eternal ages. Can you bear that thought?

“A stranger to Jesus! what, do you not know?

He is washing poor sinners much whiter than snow.”

But it is only *sinner*s—lost, guilty, hell-deserving sinners—that Jesus came to seek and save; and that is just what you are, dear friend; in spite of all your religious leanings and straightforward life, you are, before God, a sinner. Many a fair professor will be found on the wrong side when the door of mercy is shut for ever. (Matt. vii. 21-23.) But, in sovereign grace, God has borne with you all these years, and Jesus lingers still. None need perish, for “Calvary’s Victim” has vindicated the throne of God, and still occupies the throne of grace. But we solemnly warn you against the devices of Satan. He will give you as much religion, and morality, and philanthropy as you choose—yes, and an *imitation Christianity* into the bargain—but *no Christ*. His grand effort is to prevent you from reaching Christ; and to accomplish this he will spare no pains. Is the enemy of your soul, then, to be so vigilant, so diligent in plotting your ruin, and you remain indifferent as to your eternal weal or woe? God has placed on record the history of a man who died without Christ. (Luke xvi. 19.) What an appalling picture! Unsatisfied thirst, torment, eternal banishment from God’s presence were his! Dare *you* face such a doom? You need not, bear in mind, be a notorious sinner, or a profane, disreputable member of society, to earn your title to that place of woe. Nay, friend, you can glide *religiously* down the broad road that leads to the pit. Have you not heard such warning before?

Then remember that “he, that being often reprovèd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.” (Prov. xxix. 1.)

Quite recently we stood by the death-bed of one who, although often appealed to, and at one time seemingly concerned, resisted the Spirit’s strivings, and was lulled into Satan’s deadly sleep. He passed out of time into the boundless ocean of an undone eternity unconcerned and indifferent.

Beware lest you be deluded into a false peace and fancied security by the soothing opiates which Satan gives to his willing victims!

This moment, then, decide. Choose Christ as your own Eternal Portion, and with Him you will have life and light, joy and peace, unfading pleasures, and a future of endless bliss. One look of faith to Him, in all your deep need, will put you in possession of life and blessing.

“There is life in a look at the Crucified One,
There is life at this moment for thee.”

G. F. E.

“GOD IS LIGHT.” “GOD IS LOVE.”

DEAR FRIEND,—These two statements you will find in 1 John i. and iv.

The words seem simple, but pause for a while and consider them, and you will find they contain the essence of a vast scope of truth which is of the deepest importance to you and me.

Take the first—“*God is light.*”

Now what does light do? You say, it dispels darkness. Quite so. But it consequently reveals what the darkness had hidden.

There are some very clear illustrations of this principle in both the Old and the New Testaments.

Isaiah said, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips . . . for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." (vi. 5.)

Job said, "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth Thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." (xlii. 5, 6.)

In both these cases we get the effect of but a partial display of the Light; for as yet

God had not come out;

i.e., He was not then fully revealed.

The question of sin was not settled.

The veil was not rent.

Now take the case of Saul of Tarsus. (Acts ix.)

Here we have a more powerful action of the light; for then God *had* come out. Christ had died. The question of sin *had* been settled; *i.e.*, for the believer. The veil *had* been rent.

But what an effect! Saul falls to the earth, and is three days without sight.

Now, reader, just pause and ask yourself this question, If that was the effect upon one of the most strictly moral men of his day, what about me? It is probable that if any unconverted man or woman, in any class of life, were to see himself or herself as revealed by the Light, or, in other words, as God sees, such a one would be driven to despair. But, thank God, with the searchings of light come the drawings of love; indeed, the light which, with convicting power, shone into the heart of Saul of Tarsus, came from the face of the very One who is the perfect expression of God's love to sinful man. This brings us to the second statement—"God is

love.” This sentence is more commonly quoted than the former; but, dear friend, have you really understood it?

Where do we get the fullest expression of this attribute of God? Surely at the cross. Do you understand the cross? Do you think that God’s estimate of it is the same as yours? Be sure of this: Until you have known something of *His* estimate of it, you will not understand His love. And how understand the cross at all without seeing there also a display of the hatefulness of sin to His holy nature?

We speak of angels as higher created intelligences. What must they have thought when they saw the Son of God, whose birth they had announced a few years before, hanging on that cross?

Well, there is one grand fact which results from this.

God is not occupied now with the putting away of sin, but is seeking to occupy us with the Person who did that work. He has raised Him from among the dead, and seated Him at His right hand; and now the all-important question for you and me is, What think ye of Christ? It is of no use trying to shirk this question, for we shall have to face it by-and-by. Every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess. Earthly and infernal beings will all have to own that He is Lord to the glory of God the Father. (Phil. ii. 11.)

But suppose we do evade the question, there is yet another to face us: “How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?” (Heb. ii. 3.) God has no reply to this. Christ has none. Neither angels, nor living saints, nor departed

spirits could tell us how. Take it to heart, dear reader. There is *no escape* from the consequences of such neglect. An eternity in the lake of fire will be the certain doom of all who are guilty of it.

“*God is light,*” and sin cannot, therefore, go unpunished; but “*God is love,*” and He so loved that He gave His only begotten Son to receive sin’s just judgment. You do well, then, to ask yourself the question once more, *How shall I escape if I neglect so great salvation?*

L. H. M.

“NOT YET.”

“**W**ELL, are you saved?” said an evangelist, at the close of a gospel meeting in France, to a young man, son of a Christian.

“Not yet,” was the reply.

Having pointed him to Christ, he turned to another, who gave the same answer—“Not yet.” A third, and yet a fourth, responded in like manner. All four were connections of Christians; all four *knew about* the way of salvation; all four evidently had *the hope* of being saved some day; but all four were *putting it off*. What are you doing?

They appeared to be neither ungodly, nor careless, nor indifferent, but only *undecided*. This pleases Satan right well. How is it with you? Probably you have sometimes thought about your soul; but Satan has brought up so many things to distract you, that you have gone on and on, and on and on, and—well, how much longer are you going on? Ah, you do not know! No, that

you do not; for, for aught you know, to-day may be your *last*. You might die *as you read this*. You might drop into hell *at any moment*. We ask you plainly, Are you saved? Do you reply, "Not yet"? Beware, for if you drop into a Christless grave it will be too late. Yes, too late, *too late for ever*. But, thanks be to God, it is not yet too late. God offers you salvation now—His great salvation, full and free. Will you have it? How shall you escape if you neglect?

"Well, and how is it with you?" was the question addressed on another occasion to a young girl, who was lingering in her place with a deeply-troubled look.

"*Oh, I am a great sinner!*" she replied, and burst into a flood of tears.

Blessed place to take that, dear reader. Perhaps you wonder why. The answer is simple. Because there is a *great Saviour* on the throne of God, who died for *great sinners* on the cross. It is those who find out that they are great sinners who get saved. Such was this young girl's case. She had found out, through grace, that she was a great sinner, and the great Saviour met and saved her *that night*.

Being asked a similar question the night after, she replied, her face radiant with joy, "*I'm rejoicing in the Lord.*" Yes, one night she cried for "sorrow of heart," and the next could sing for "joy of heart." (Isaiah lxx. 14.)

Well, will you continue with a procrastinating "Not yet"? or are you going to bow before God as a great sinner, and be saved now? There is no Saviour but Christ, no time to be saved but the present. Plead guilty before God, believe on His Son, and you are saved. Satan provides

plenty of cheats for the unwary. His poor blinded dupes trust in all kinds of sham saviours, but God presents *Christ*. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we *must* be saved." (Acts iv. 12.)

One trusts in his "harmlessness," another in his "moral life," another in his "good works," a fourth in his "prayers," a fifth in "sacraments," a sixth in his "religious zeal," a seventh in the "mercy of God." Well, friends, all we can say is, Satan does not mind which you trust, or whether you take them all together. You may trust in one, or all, or anything you please, so long as you do not trust *in Christ*.

The religion of *works* is no novelty. Cain started it. (Genesis iv. 3.) And if its numberless followers be a proof of its worth, it must be *very good*. Many follow it, vainly hoping to arrive in glory. But that all such are fast hastening to hell it is evident, for God says that salvation is "*not of works*." One work alone suffices, and that work neither you nor any other can do, or need do, and for the simple reason that it was done by Another more than 1800 years ago upon the cross. The finished work of Christ is the alone ground of salvation. His blood alone can cleanse you from sin. (1 John i. 7.)

Instead, then, of continuing to say, "Not yet," or trusting in your own wretched self or works, bow, as a guilty, lost one before God, believe on His Son, and *salvation free and eternal is yours*.

E. H. C.

THE SALVATION OF GOD.

“READY.”

NOTES OF ADDRESS BY THE LATE EDITOR, H. M. H.

I WANT to refer you to several passages of Scripture in which this word “ready” occurs. First turn to Deuteronomy xxvi. 5: “A Syrian *ready to perish* was my father.” This is *confession*. Have you ever confessed to God that you are ready to perish? John iii. 16 tells us that those who believe on God’s Son—that is, accept God’s gift of love—shall *never perish*. The very fact of God’s giving His Son proves that *we were* ready to perish. The question is, Have you confessed it to God? or are you sleeping, eating, amusing yourselves on the verge, as it were, of the lake of fire? God knows that you are ready to perish, though you may not believe it. Be wise in time, and confess to God your perishing condition. None *need* perish, for God has provided a remedy. He has given His only begotten, His eternal Son, for those ready to perish. “The wages of sin is death.” (Romans vi. 23.) Christ bore those wages on Calvary’s cross. Now “the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” For whom is this gift? For those *ready to perish*. Earnestly I ask you, “Have you confessed to God that you are ready to perish?”

Now there are three blessed statements to meet the condition of those ready to perish, proving

that God is ready to bless them in a threefold manner, and that they have a threefold need. The first you will find in Nehemiah ix. 17: "Thou art a God *ready to pardon*, gracious and merciful." Here God is presented as ready to meet the need of these guilty people mentioned in the chapter. What were they? They were disobedient (refused to obey), unmindful of God's wonders; they had hardened their necks, and were rebellious. (v. 17.) That was their fourfold guilty condition. God meets them in a fourfold way. He is gracious, merciful, "slow to anger, and of great kindness." (v. 17.) The four characteristics of those "ready to perish" brought out the four opposites in Him who was *ready to pardon*. Do you believe you are guilty? Romans iii. tells us that the whole world is guilty. Have done then with excuses and extenuations, for all are guilty, though all may not have sinned alike. Romans iii. is like a court-room. The judge is seated; the whole world is the criminal; the sentence has been passed; the verdict is "Guilty." Now the world is hurrying on to meet the executioner; but what is God saying from heaven before the sentence is finally executed? "I am a God *ready to pardon*." Oh, what a God!

Turn to Psalm lxxxvi. 5: "For Thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive." Who need forgiveness? Those who have committed sins. So if God is ready to forgive, those ready to perish must be sinners, or they would not need forgiveness. God is plenteous in mercy. His wealth consists in mercy, not, like man's wealth, in the fleeting things of time. He "is *rich* in mercy." (Ephes. ii. 4.) You are filled with your sins; He is filled with mercy. Your sins reach

to heaven; His mercy is above the heavens. You may be a very moral person, and yet *lost*. You may be amiable, religious, a tract distributor, an obedient child or wife, a kind neighbour, there may be no charge against you morally, but God says you are a sinner; "for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Romans iii. 23.) God does not measure you by your neighbour, but by His glory. Would you like to be taken just as you are in your sins, unsaved and unwashed, into the full blaze of the glory of God? You know you would not. You would ask God to turn you out. Having owned that you have sinned, you are glad to hear that God is ready to pardon, ready to forgive. He does not keep people waiting, for He is ready. Are you ready to receive His forgiveness? Have you found out that you are as unfit for the glory of God as your sins can make you? Or can you say, "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ . . . and rejoice in *hope of the glory of God*"? (Romans v. 2.) God is waiting to administer to you this very night a forgiveness made possible by the work of His Son on Calvary's cross. "Through *this Man* is preached unto you *forgiveness* of sins." (Acts xiii. 38.)

Look now at Isaiah xxxviii. 20: "The Lord was ready to save me."

There is a threefold condition, in which those ready to perish are found. Your position, if unsaved, is, that you are ready to perish. In that position you are in a threefold condition:

1. You are guilty.
2. You are a sinner.
3. You are lost.

What do the lost need? Salvation. Paul said to Timothy, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." (1 Timothy i. 15.) A sinner needs a Saviour, and the Saviour needs sinners. There is no salvation out of Christ, as Peter distinctly states in Acts iv. 12: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." It does not say, He is ready to do His part, if we do ours. He will not help us half-way to heaven, and leave us to go the remainder as best we can. God must do it all. A drowning man does not need some one to help him to shore; he needs a saviour to bring him safe to land. God is ready to save the helpless, hell-deserving sinner, and to Him is due the whole glory of salvation for time and through eternity. The gospel of the salvation of God does not tell us that God is willing to help the sinner, but that "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans v. 8.) We are utterly helpless, but God is ready to save. "Salvation is of the Lord."

"But," you ask, "do you not believe in works?"

Certainly. But works flow from salvation; they do not produce salvation. Does the fountain come from the stream, or the stream from the fountain? Salvation is the fountain, good works the stream, and good works flow from the fountain of salvation. You are not saved *by* good works, but you are saved to *do* good works. Holiness, prayers, praise are streams flowing from the fountain of salvation.

Are you guilty? God is ready to pardon. Have you committed sins? He is ready to

forgive. Are you lost? He is ready to save you with a present and eternal salvation. How are you to get it? “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.”

There is one more “ready” that is of solemn import to every unsaved soul. “Who shall give account to Him who is *ready to judge* the quick and the dead” (1 Peter iv. 5); that is, the living and the dead. The Lord Jesus Christ is coming for His saints very soon, and they will be with Him during the thousand years of His millennial reign. At the beginning of the millennium He will judge the living nations; at the end, those who have died in their sins. You must have to do with God as a Saviour or as a Judge. Let me press this upon you with all the earnestness of which I am capable. You must have to do with God at the blood-stained mercy-seat as a God ready to pardon, forgive, and save, or at the great white throne, where He will dispense righteous judgment. There will be no mercy at the day of judgment. God would not be righteous if He were to show mercy then. Have to do with Him now! Listen to the words of the Lord Himself: “Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” “Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.”

H. M. H.

“GOLDEN GUINEAS, FOURPENCE EACH.”

NOT many days since a poor man, while digging a foundation for a new house on the outskirts of a town in the midland counties, unearthed a parcel covered with lead. It need

hardly be said that curiosity soon impelled him to open it, and, upon examination, he found that it was filled with bright yellow coins, in a good state of preservation, about sixty in number. These he readily sold to neighbours and fellow-workmen at various prices, averaging about threepence and fourpence a-piece for the whole of them, little knowing that they were *bona fide* golden, spade-ace guineas, of the reign of George III., and valued at a considerable sum by those who understood their real worth. When the man's good fortune became known, along with the reckless manner in which he had parted with the discovered treasure, what a talk it made, to be sure! Some blamed, and some pitied. "What a fool!" said one. "How stupid!" said another. While others exclaimed, "What a pity that the poor man had not been better advised as to the value of his discovery, and thus made the best of it."

What the man's own feelings were it is hard to say, but it was certain that a real prize had been within his grasp, and that, to his own annoyance and mortification, he had parted with it for a mere trifle.

Now the writer could not help thinking, as the story was related to him, of another man who acted, on one occasion, even far more foolishly than this.

Who that has thoughtfully considered the history of Esau, will not say that his was the greater folly? For one morsel of meat he sold his birthright; for one bit of present gratification he sacrificed his title to a vast inheritance, and found afterwards, to his sorrow, that his father's blessing and the forfeited inheritance went to-

gether; and that, in sacrificing one, he had lost them both. He had deliberately bartered away the one for a mess of red pottage, and the bitterest tears of remorse could not win back the other. The former he *might* have had, but would not; the latter he *would* have had, but could not. What a sad bargain was his! and all the remorse in the world could not alter it. Solemnly does it read in God's word, "Thus Esau despised his birthright;" and not less solemn are the Holy Ghost's comments upon his conduct. "For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." (Heb. xii. 16, 17.) Poor profane Esau!

But does Esau, with this Derbyshire labourer, stand alone in the world's history, think you? Are there not other monuments of like folly? Alas! yes; their name is legion—men and women a thousand times more foolish than this man with his spade-ace guineas. He only sacrificed gold coins for a few copper ones; they are sacrificing an eternal weight of glory for the empty baubles of time. In their estimation "the pleasures of sin for a season," in this dying world, are of much more consequence than "the pleasures for evermore" in the presence of the blessed God. And yet their ears are not strangers to the sound of that solemn question, asked by the blessed Lord, "*What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?*"

No doubt the poor workman in question was never told the real value of his parcel of coins, until they were out of his reach, and, consequently,

the few coppers, that he did know the value of, were thought to be a good exchange for the shining coins, whose worth he knew not. He had probably never seen a *bona fide* spade-ace guinea before, and how did he know that these might be nothing but gilded medals?

But can the thousands of unsaved gospel-hearers, in this land of light, plead a similar ignorance? Impossible. If man did not know the worth of his soul, God did; and the price He paid to redeem it, even the precious, precious blood of Jesus Christ His beloved Son, puts the stamp of His estimate upon it. "None can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him: for the redemption of *their soul is precious*, and it ceaseth for ever." (Psalm xlix. 7, 8.)

Well, reader, you might never be the finder of even one spade-ace guinea, but you have had scores of *golden opportunities* put into your hand—opportunities of getting your soul saved. What have you done with them? Are you prepared to give account to God for the way you have used them? or have you trifled them away with guilty recklessness?

If so, remember that as surely as the man we speak of came to his last guinea, so will you come to a last soul-saving opportunity; but with this important difference—he knew, when the last was being parted with, that it *was* his last, and it is more than probable that *you will not*. God is, by the very message you are now reading, giving you another chance. Will He ever offer you another, think you? This is the most solemn you have ever yet had, because you never before had an offer so near to a lost eternity. In God's name

we call upon you to stop. Get upon your face before Him; thank Him that your soul is still out of hell; confess to Him your crimson sins, your proud neglect; tell Him of your guilty hardness, your daring unbelief; nay, unbosom your whole soul before Him. Yet remember that neither the bitterest penitential tears, nor the most heartfelt cries for mercy, nor the most unreserved confession of sins, can possibly atone for your guilt. Nothing, nothing but the precious blood of Christ can do that. The penalty for sin is death, and nothing short of the death of a God-accepted Victim can therefore meet your deep need. But Christ has died; God did accept His precious sacrifice, and the Holy Ghost came from heaven at Pentecost as the witness of it. All you have to do, therefore, to obtain salvation is, as a sinner truly repenting before God, to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour; for “to Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive *remission of sins*” (Acts x. 43), as well as an “inheritance among them which are sanctified.” (Acts xxvi. 18.)

But, miss your final opportunity of salvation (and, again I warn you, *this may* be the last), and then, instead of *your sins* being put away, *you* will be put away; instead of an inheritance of eternal blessing, “want” shall come upon you like “an armed man” (Proverbs vi. 11), and you will be left without one drop of water to cool your tongue, or one ray of hope to shine upon your dark, eternal, inevitable future. How often, think you, through the never-ending night, will a lost soul recount the precious opportunities which he threw away with as much indifference as a

child tosses beach pebbles into the ocean? See to it, my reader, that such a destiny shall never be yours.

But a *bright* side is also suggested by the profit-and-loss question just referred to. Let us consider it a moment.

A quaint old Christian, of a few generations past, used to speak of three things that would cause him to wonder when he reached heaven. His first surprise would be to find many whom he never expected to meet there; his second, to miss many whom he fully expected would be there; but that the greatest wonder of all would be to find himself there.

There is, however, a greater wonder than these three put together; viz., the cost the blessed Saviour was at to bring any of us there. The Son of God laid aside His heavenly glories, and, according to the parable (Matt. xiii. 44), sold all that He had in order to secure for Himself the treasure which He saw hidden in the field; *i.e.*, in this poor world. And in what did this treasure consist? Why, of a number of poor, guilty sinners as bad as bad could be!

And what could He do with such people in heaven? Can defilement enter there? Never. He would wash them from every stain of sin; clear them from every breath of condemnation; and then present them to Himself in heavenly glory *with exceeding joy*, unblamable in holiness, unrebukable in love. And if, when He came on such an errand, the world would give thirty pieces of silver to get rid of Him, He would still not only give up all that He had, but surrender His life as well; *all*—all to possess the precious treasure. He would allow nothing to turn Him

aside till the purchase was completed. What love! No love like His! Will it not, fellow-believer, be our eternal wonder and joy? God grant that each dear reader may form part of that treasure in the coming day, and be found His happy, humble follower in this. GEO. C.

“MERCY! MERCY! MERCY!”

“DO you know what it means?” enquired the stranger.

“Mercy! mercy! mercy! Perhaps not as you understand it.”

“Only for the mercy of God,” he replied, “I should have been in hell long ago!”

“In hell, sir?”

“Yes, in hell; for, being a sinner, and consequently under the judgment of God, I needed mercy; and ‘God, who is rich in mercy,’ gave His Son to die.”

“Mercy! mercy! mercy!” How fresh in my memory are these words; for, though years have passed away since they were uttered, it was in connection with this circumstance that God spoke “peace” to my troubled soul.

Anxious, burdened, and sin-stricken, I was seeking rest by works; *i.e.*, by attending religious services, praying, Sunday-school teaching, and all that was highly esteemed among men. Indeed, I was endeavouring to work out a righteousness of my own to fit me for the presence of God; although it is written, “For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted

themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." (Rom. x. 3, 4.)

In this condition, dear reader, God's voice was heard, His word received. Let me tell you how it was brought about; for truly

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform."

While attending to my usual calling one day, the man who was to become God's messenger to my soul entered our house of business. He was attracted towards a quantity of china cups, with names in gold written upon them, "and I must take one," he said, "for my little grand-daughter, Mercy." While the purchase was being made, the conversation recorded above took place.

Words fail to describe how deeply the voice of God penetrated my soul in those words, "*Only for the mercy of God, I should have been in hell long ago.*" It was then that the truth, "There is no respect of persons with God" (Rom. ii. 11), flashed upon me. High and low, rich and poor, old and young, the careless and indifferent, the church-goer and public-house frequenter, moral and immoral, *all*—and you, dear reader, among the number—"all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. iii. 23); all the world is become guilty before Him; "for God hath shut them all up together, that He might have *mercy* upon all." (Rom. xi. 32, margin.)

"Born in sin," the wickedness of man is very great; a sinner by practice, he is under the condemnation of God, "the wrath of God abides on him." And if he is to be saved from the righteous judgment of God, it must be in the way of *mercy*

—sovereign mercy. But, blessed be His name, according to the greatness of His mercy (Neh. xiii. 22), He has wrought a way of escape.

“Nothing but mercy ’ll do for me,
Nothing but mercy, full and free ;
Of sinners chief, what but the blood
Could calm my soul before my God ?

“Save by the blood He could not bless,
So pure, so great His holiness ;
But He it is who gave the Lamb,
And by His blood absolved I am.”

Yes, mercy descends to sinners ; pity and love are engaged to bless them ; “and through the mercy of the Most High” the guilty and condemned can be justified ; for Jesus suffered and died, and by the agonies of the cross completed the work of redemption. He is now set forth a propitiation, a mercy-seat, through faith in His blood (Rom. iii. 25), and God withholds His strange work, which He has determined upon the whole earth. He withholds judgment a little while, and sheds abroad His mercy. The earth is full of the mercy of the Lord. (Ps. cxix. 64.) Yes, God gave His Son. The eternal Son of the eternal God became a Man, became the Saviour, to save His people from their sins. He had compassion on the poor, helpless, guilty sinner, and gave His life “a ransom for many.” (Matt. xx. 28.)

At the cross God’s love and mercy are fully revealed. Mercy and truth there met together ; righteousness and peace kissed each other. (Ps. lxxxv. 10.)

“Mercy! mercy! mercy!” Do *you* know what it means, dear reader? Have you accepted this sovereign mercy—the salvation of God? Or are you going to and fro, swaying with the religious

multitude, content with your own thought of the future, perhaps thinking, by forms and ceremonies, by good works and almsgiving, by church-going and the like, that you will be able at last to escape? If so, pause and consider. You are like a man found guilty and condemned, and shut up in a cell, waiting the day of execution. What can he do? And in the light of eternity, what can *you* do, dear soul? You are guilty and condemned, and in a world that is about to be destroyed, with all that is in it. (2 Peter iii. 10.) "Consider your ways." Oh, see where your sins have set you—a vessel fitted for destruction, and waiting for the execution of God's wrath, which is even now revealed. (Rom. i. 18.) The judgment of God is according to truth. Oh, be wise then, while there is time to escape! The door of mercy is wide open for you. Cease from your works, and believe in Christ and His finished work.

"Lord, have mercy upon me!" was an oft-repeated prayer of mine; but when the "old, old story" of the Saviour's love and grace was received by simple faith, through the power of the Holy Ghost, joy and peace became my happy portion, and grateful praise to God took the place of my previous groan of misery.

Again, dear reader, let me repeat the question. "Mercy! mercy! mercy!" Do you know what it means? Are you a recipient of God's wondrous mercy? Do you know the truth—the truth that makes free, even the truth concerning Jesus, the eternal Son of God? (John viii. 32.) Can you say, "It is of the Lord's mercy that I am not consumed" (Lamentations iii. 22); or, in other words, that "*I was not in hell long ago*"?

If not, how is it that the word of God has no place in you? “*I am come that they might have life,*” said Jesus, who is “mighty to save.” (John x. 10.) Whither did He come? To the place of judgment and death. And what for? That He might righteously be the giver of life—eternal life—joy, and peace. “For the Son of man is not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save.” (Luke ix. 56.) He came to heal the broken-hearted, to deliver the captives, to give sight to the blind, and to set at liberty them that are bruised. (Luke iv. 18.) But how could He effect this? He took the sinner’s place. He “was delivered for our offences.” (Rom. iv. 25.) “Himself bare our sins in His own body on the tree.” (1 Pet. ii. 24.) He “was raised for our justification,” and now, being at the right hand of the Majesty on high, “He is able also to save them evermore that come unto God by Him.” He speaks from heaven. Listen to His gracious entreaty, “Come unto Me.” (Matt. xi. 28.) And “him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.” (John vi. 37.) Oh, reader, come to Jesus! Believe on Him in thine heart, and thou shalt be a vessel of *mercy* prepared unto glory. (Romans ix. 23.)

“Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear Him, upon them that hope in His mercy; to deliver their soul from death.” (Psalm xxxiii. 18.) “The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Rom. vi. 23.) What a gift to bestow! What mercy to descend to such sinners; making them meet for heaven, and setting them at liberty to serve the One who has thus righteously saved them! This is indeed “*mercy!*”

Is my reader in possession of it? T. H. D.

CONFIDENCE.

THE confidence of a sinner in a Saviour is what God proposes to Himself, for the glory of His great name, in this revolted world. Having exposed us under the law, He says to us, as another has said, as in the gospel, "*I find I cannot trust you. You must now trust Me.*"

God claims our confidence, and He has graciously entitled Himself to it. He has accepted the death of Christ for sinners. He is *just* when He forgives, because of the work of Christ, and because of the glory of the Person of Him who did that work. It is not mere mercy that forgives the believing sinner; it is righteousness. Grace provided and gave the Son. That is so indeed, mercy unfathomable, inestimable. But it is righteousness which accepts the Son, and what the Son has perfected for sinners. We lean our souls and our hopes upon facts, not upon gleams of sunshine in our spirits, nor upon promises in the Word, nor upon help from God. Mere help would not do for them that are already under condemnation, promises to us would not answer God's demands upon us. It is upon facts, upon transactions counselled, accomplished, and accepted as between God and His Christ, and as for us, we rest ourselves—"an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast."

Convicted, yet confiding. Yes, it is a fitting motto for the family of believing, ransomed sinners.

We must be convicted, or we should not know ourselves; we must confide, or we should not know God.

J. G. B.

THE SALVATION OF GOD.



THE RED-LETTER DAY.

“They remembered not . . . the day when He delivered them from the enemy.”—PSALM lxxviii. 42.

AND yet no such day occurred in all their after-history! It was the red-letter day of their calendar, that day of God's deliverance from Egypt and Pharaoh. But they remembered it not. Alas! like too many, they were afflicted with a bad memory for such things. A bad memory should be called much more frequently a bad conscience. When conscience is kept awake there is no fear of memory. The mind is (other things being equal) but the servant of a spring that lies much deeper. For one, I confess a real delight in calling to remembrance the day of my deliverance from the world and sin and Satan by the grace and power of my God. Yes, I find hearty pleasure in recollecting a day, more than a quarter of a century ago, when I was converted to God. Oft and oft since then have I sung—

“O happy day, that fixed my choice
On Thee, my Saviour and my God!”

And why? Ah! because it was not a mere choice on my part of the right instead of the wrong, or the good instead of the evil, of heaven instead of hell, of eternal life instead of everlasting punishment, but because on that day I

discovered first that God loved me, even poor guilty me, and that His grace was in quest of such as I, for the display of its rich and sweet and perfect blessing. Oh, what a discovery for one who felt his deep guilt, his danger of judgment, his desert of punishment—one ignorant too of the way of life—to find that the Lord Jesus had died for such (for me), and had been raised from the dead after having borne all the judgment in my stead; and that now, through simple faith in Him, I was delivered from all that was against me!

Blessed discovery! And well I know that the most blessed part of all lay in the fact that *God loved me!* It was so new, so unexpected, so wholly inexplicable, and yet so true! The love of God was shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Ghost. I felt it as a living reality; I cherish the day. Then God is not austere, nor hard. No, but He is love. The first dawnings of this hitherto discredited, unthought of truth were sweet beyond description. They have but to be proved in order to be valued, and the longer the better.

Stop, dear reader, is there such a red-letter day in your spiritual calendar, or the consciousness of such a deliverance in your history?

But does every Christian know the exact day of his conversion?

Perhaps not. Indeed, I have met one or two devoted servants of God who could not tell when they were converted. It took place when they were very young, but that they were converted was evident in their lives.

However, the immense majority of Christians can speak of the day of their deliverance, of the very day.

Could not the 3000 in Acts ii. ? It was on the day of Pentecost. What a day for them ! Could not Saul of Tarsus ?

The "deliverance" (what a significant word !) was such that it were well-nigh impossible to forget it.

Well-nigh, alas ! Israel forgot it. They allowed idolatry to intervene and obliterate God's salvation from their memory.

The world, if allowed, will blot out every good impression. There is nothing so blinding as sin.

What a mercy that neither the world nor sin can disannul the relationship grace has formed for eternity ! God justifies and God glorifies, but God also may see fit to chasten. Hence the great need of a lowly walk on the part of His children.

"*The day when He delivered.*" It is a charming retrospect. The beginning of days and of life eternal.

"He that is born once dies twice ; but he that has been born twice may never die at all."

Reader, pause and think.

J. W. S.

"THE SECOND DEATH."

HAVING been asked by a Christian to be present on the occasion of the burial of his only infant son, after saying a few words about the portion of infants who died, I spoke to the friends who were then gathered together about the *first* and *second death*. I showed from Scripture that there are persons who will "not be hurt of the *second death*," while there are others who

will be "cast into the lake of fire. *This is the second death.*" "He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the *second death.*" (Rev. ii. 11.)

Now, in this scripture the Spirit of God speaks of the devil as casting certain persons into prison. But how would he do this? He would use the *world* to oppose those who held the truth, and this is what he was doing in Smyrna. He was trying to make believers give up the truth; but some were resisting his efforts, and the Lord, accordingly, gives them this comfort, they should "not be hurt of the *second death.*" The enemy *might* resist them, even to death—the *first death*, that is, he might martyr them; but beyond that he had no power. So they are exhorted to be *overcomers*, and *not to be overcome*.

"Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" (1 John v. 4, 5.)

But if, instead of persons overcoming by faith, they go on with the world, and live and die in their sins, then comes the *second death*, which will take effect at the "*great white throne,*" after the *second resurrection* has brought forth the unsaved dead. (Rev. xx. 11, 12.) "Whosoever was not found written in the *book of life* was cast into the *lake of fire.*" (v. 15.)

Among those who listened that day was an old man, who had often been to hear the preached gospel, but who was quite indifferent to it. He preferred living in sin to the offer of God's grace.

Two days after the funeral I received a message that the old man wished to see me, for the word about the *second death* had alarmed him. I went

as soon as I was able, and he gladly received me. We soon began to speak of the concerns of the soul. But how very ignorant he was of the true way of peace! On asking him what he thought was necessary for his soul's salvation, he replied, "I must renounce the devil."

"But," I said, "he will not renounce you. He has held dominion over you these many years, and he will not let any of his slaves go till he is compelled. But Jesus came into the world to destroy the works of the devil, and *He only* can deliver you out of the enemy's power. 'When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.' (Rom. v. 6.) And because of this, all who believe on Him for the remission of sins are delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of the Son of God's love. (Col. i. 13.) Such are true overcomers, and they "shall not be hurt of the *second death*." After some further conversation we parted.

I afterwards met the Christian who lost the infant son, and related to him my interview with the old man.

He replied, "Well, if the death of my child is life to the old man it is worth losing the little one, if only for that."

And now, should these lines be read by any unsaved person, I would say, For *your own sake* weigh the solemn facts recorded in Scripture. There *are* those on whom the *second death* has *no power*; "but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him." (Rev. xx. 6.) Then there are those who will be cast into *the lake of fire*. "*This is the second death*." (Rev. xx. 14, 15.) Ponder which portion shall be yours.

G. W. G^y.

"ONLY THINK OF THAT!"

WHILST staying a short time in a little town on the coast I was asked to visit a fisherman who was dying; and having been shown into his room, I saw lying before me a fine young man of about twenty-five, apparently in the last stage of consumption. He eyed me suspiciously, and after a few moments' conversation said abruptly, "I believe in Jesus. I suppose you believe in Christ?"

Surprised at such ignorance in a place where the gospel was often preached, I explained that these were both the names of the same Saviour—the Son of God. They differ of course in their signification.

Upon further conversation I found he could not read; and though he had been visited by some who had prayed with him, had never had the finished work of Christ set before him in its all-atoning efficacy.

He told me he was confident that God would hear his prayers, but he had no joy or peace.

I explained that we are saved through faith, and quoted several scriptures to him. On my repeating to him 1 Tim. i. 15, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," he exclaimed, in tones of wonderment which I cannot forget, "*Only think of that—'Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners'!* Only think of that!"

So I went on to tell him of that One of whom he was so ignorant.

He listened attentively, drinking in the truth which was now for the first time presented to him, and rested his soul on that Saviour who is so willing to save.

The next time I called what a change was apparent in this young fisherman! His very face reflected the joy which filled his heart, as he told me of the longings he had to be with his Saviour. He was evidently worse in body, but bright in soul. My stay there was ended, so I parted with him, to see him no more on earth; but I was told he died rejoicing in his Saviour.

Often since then have I thought of the words of the young man, "Only think of that!" How different to what one so often hears, "We know all that!"

Reader, careless of aught but the passing pleasures of the moment, I sound in your ears these words, "Only think of that!" How many will think of anything rather than of the sweet story of the love of Jesus.

A man was telling me once of a clock in his house, whose ticking he never noticed until it stopped in the night, and thus awoke him. What a picture of a gospel-hardened sinner, who has become so accustomed to the sound of the gospel that its oft-repeated calls are never even noticed by him, till *one day* the sound ceases, and he awakes—awakes to the fact, when too late, that the day of grace is over, and there is nothing now for him but judgment.

Reader, may this never be your experience. Accept the Lord Jesus Christ now as your Saviour, and pardon and peace will be yours.

E. R. E.

A SOLEMN

THE VOICE OF GRACE.

BOAST not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth." (Prov. xxvii. 1.)

To day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." (Heb. iii. 7, 8.)

"Behold, **now** is the accepted time; behold, **NOW** is the day of salvation." (2 Cor. vi. 2.)

Come; for all things are now ready." (Luke xiv. 17.)

"And **YET** there is room." (Luke xiv. 22.)

I know My sheep, and I am known of Mine,
They own My love as "better far than wine,"
And they shall dwell for evermore with Me—
Oh, will ye not among their number be?

My sheep shall never perish, nor shall aught
Unto their charge in judgment e'er be brought;
My Father, too, is keeping them for Me—
Oh, will ye not among their number be?

Come unto Me, ye burdened and distressed,
Ye weary ones, and I will give you rest—
Love's pleading call wins priceless souls for Me—
Oh, will ye not among their number be?

CONTRAST.

THE VOICE OF JUDGMENT.

“**W**HEN once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; he shall answer and say unto you, **I know you not** whence ye are.” (Luke xiii. 25.)

“**T**HEN will I profess unto them, I **never** knew you.” (Matt. vii. 23.)

“And these shall go away into **everlasting** punishment.” (Matt. xxv. 46.)

“For if ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins,” and “whither I go, ye **CANNOT** come.” (John viii. 22, 24.)

I know you not—and ye may never know
The love that would have spared this cup of woe!
The charmer’s voice your ears refused to hear—
Nought now remains but judgment’s awful fear!

I never knew you—ye were not My sheep,
For ye would none of Me, and lo, ye reap
What once on earth ye sowed with hardened brow—
I would, and ye would not—ye **cannot** now!

Depart from Me—ah, it is now **too late**
To knock with sad entreaties at My gate:
Your hearts had once **NO ROOM FOR ME**—your doom
Is now that here **FOR YOU** there is **NO ROOM!**

"REVEALED UNTO BABES."

IN a private house, at a fashionable health-resort in the south of France, a company of professing Christians had gathered to hear an address from a Protestant minister. The afternoon was intensely hot, and the preacher, deeming it an effort, or perhaps a matter of small moment, to fulfil the functions of his office, was carelessly fanning himself while he spoke. After a few general remarks referring to the Bible he said, "Not that we are to receive all that we find within its pages. We must pass over this, reject that, choose what is considered authentic; in fact, it is a book to be used with judgment;" and so on in the same strain. Truly the marvellous things of God's word are hidden from "the wise and prudent" of this world. (Matthew xi. 25.) "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called." (1 Cor. i. 26.) Most of the audience were surprised; some were careless; but one, perhaps a "babe," to whom heavenly things had been revealed, arose from her seat, and, quietly threading her way among the hearers, left the room. She could no longer countenance, by her presence, that which was so contrary to even the mere profession of Christianity, much more to the faith of the Bible and the Master whom she honoured. "God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty." Education and scholarship will not bring a man to God; nothing but faith in the Person and the work of the One who "suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." (1 Peter iii. 18.)

At a later hour on the same day, in a Roman Catholic chapel of the town, many had assembled to hear a Dominican friar. He looked ill, and entered with feeble step, but with a face full of earnestness. He announced one verse as his subject: "Take up thy bed, and walk." (John v. 8.)

"Dear friends," he said, "I came to this town in a condition as bad as that of the poor man to whom these words were addressed by the Saviour. I was carried hither; but I have heard the blessed words, 'Take up thy bed, and walk,' and I am here this day before you whole. A great change has been wrought in me through the goodness of Another. Let me say to you that a mighty change may take place in you also. You are enchained by your sins as I was, and as this poor man was, by disease. You cannot move hand or foot; you are helpless; but there is One who has power to release you. He can say to you, 'Take up thy bed, and walk,' and you may leave this chapel free from your sins to-day. *The Christ alone can set you free.*" Strength did not permit the monk to say much more; but was it not enough? It is happy to know that God *can* cause His light to shine by means of His word and His Spirit in hearts that would otherwise be dark and blinded by the doctrines of men and Satan. (2 Cor. iv. 4.) Jesus said that no one could know the Father save the Son, and "he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him." "And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." (Matthew xi. 27; John xvii. 3.)

In a low Irish cabin a number of men were sitting around the smouldering embers of a peat fire. Only those who have visited benighted

Ireland can picture the scene in all its squalor. The conversation turned in course of time upon the subject of the forgiveness of sins, and the question arose as to whether it were possible for a Protestant to be saved. Naturally enough, most of the men, priest-taught as they were, averred that the thing was impossible. The owner of the cabin, however, who had been in the habit of going to England during the summer, and working for a Christian landowner, where he had been present at gospel meetings, and often spoken to about his soul, asserted the contrary, and assured his friends that he could prove to them that a Protestant might be saved. He accordingly produced a Testament from some hiding-place, and read aloud to them John iii. 16: "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." May we hope that this verse, by which some of the men seemed struck, was blessed, as it so often has been, and that by the incorruptible word of God, so despised by some, they may have been born again. (1 Peter i. 23.) "Whosoever" includes you and me, everyone who will, from the unbelieving Protestant to the deluded Roman Catholic. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." Surely he who considers the Bible a book to be used with judgment may not be called a *believer*, since the Scriptures testify of Christ; while those who, amidst the gross darkness of a false system, have groped their way to the hem of Christ's garment, and are "made whole," will shine in glory for ever, to the praise of Him who loved and died for them. "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in Thy sight." (Matthew xi. 26.) H. L. H.

IS JUDGMENT BEHIND YOUR BACK OR BEFORE YOUR FACE?

WE think we hear some one say, on reading the above, "Why, before my face to be sure! How can it be behind my back before it takes place? Why, it is before everybody's face, is it not? The idea of asking such a question!"

"Stay a moment, hasty conclusions are often ill-formed. No doubt many think with you. But what saith the Scripture? Have you never read, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and *shall not come into condemnation* [or *judgment*, R.V.]; but is passed from death unto life'? (John v. 24.) What do you make of these blessed words of the Son of God?"

"But I thought everybody was going to be judged."

"You thought wrongly, then; that is all. God's thoughts are not as ours, and He says to every believer that he '*shall not come into judgment.*'"

"But how is that? Explain it, please. I do not understand."

"It is very simple. 'God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son.' Christ went to the cross, and *bore the judgment of God*, was buried, rose, and entered glory, *leaving judgment behind Him*. If you hear His word, and believe God who sent Him, *your judgment* was borne by Him, and *hence judgment is behind you too*. When He was on earth, judgment was before Him, not on His own account, but on ours. When He left the earth, and entered

glory, we repeat, *the judgment was behind Him*. Hence He says to every one that believeth (and therefore to you, if you believe), he '*shall not come into judgment*;' and he can join in singing the blessed little verse—

“ ‘Death and judgment are behind me,
Life and glory lie before ;
All the billows rolled o'er Jesus,
There they spent their utmost power.’ ”

If still unconverted, you are already *under judgment*; for the Word says we are all ‘guilty before God,’ or, as the margin more correctly gives it, ‘Subject to the judgment of God.’ (Rom. iii. 19.) It rests upon all in the natural state since the death of Christ. But His death *for ever delivers from it every one that believeth*. Nothing can be clearer than the Word. Note the following scriptures :

“ ‘He that believeth on Him is *not condemned*’ [*not judged*]. (John iii. 18.)

“ ‘There is therefore now *no condemnation* to them which are in Christ Jesus.’ (Romans viii. 1.)

“ ‘He that heareth My word, and believeth . . . shall *not come into condemnation*’ [*or judgment*]. (John v. 24.)

“See how perfectly God has met our case. ‘Dost thou believe on the Son of God?’ Do you reply, ‘Yes’? Well then, as these verses show, the moment you believed on Him for the first time, ‘*not judged*’ was written, so to speak, against your name. Then as to the present, there is *no condemnation*, because you are in Christ, and there can be none to Him. And, as to the future, you *shall not come into judgment*, because it has already passed upon Him more than eighteen hundred years ago.

“The result is, the moment you believe in Him

you are *as clear from all condemnation and judgment* as God in His rich grace can make you."

"But how about the judgment of the sheep and the goats in Matthew xxv.?" says one.

"Well, that is the judgment of the living nations at the manifestation of Christ as King, and not us at all."

"But how about the great white throne in Rev. xix. 11?" says a second.

"That is the judgment of all who die in their sins, and where you will be judged if you believe not on God's Son, and die in yours."

"And how about the judgment-seat of Christ?" says another.

"It is there that believers, delivered from all judgment, will be manifested in glorified bodies in Christ their Saviour's blessed presence, to be rewarded according to their works." (1 Cor. iii. 10-13; 2 Cor. v. 10.)

"But how about a believer then, if he commits sin after he believes?" says a fourth.

"Well, if we judge ourselves, we shall not be judged; but if we do not, God will chasten us *now* in His government, because He is not going to condemn us with the world. (1 Cor. xi. 31, 32.)

"Hence it is evident, that for every believer in Jesus, *judgment is behind his back*, and not before his face. Which is it with you? If unconverted, and in your sins, death, judgment, and the lake of fire are right before you, and death may overtake you this moment. But *believe in the Lord Jesus Christ* just now, and through the abounding grace of God you are *as clean delivered from all judgment as Christ Himself*; for you are once and for ever in Him. God give you to know it; and if you know it, to show it by following Him."

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER TO A
YOUNG CONVERT.

“YOUR interesting letter of yesterday seemed to come to me like the returning of bread once cast upon the waters. (Ecclesiastes xi. 1.) ‘The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.’ (1 John i. 7.) We cannot see the blood, neither can we see the remembrance nor consciousness of sin; but they are facts, the one in the written Word, the other in us. Oh, then, let us feed upon that precious Word! May we really *feel* that it is the Word of the living God.

“That is the key to the Christian’s power—*heart-work*.

“I was asked to speak to an infidel the other day. He did not think, he said, that there was a God. Well, my friend, I said, I do not *think* there is a God, I KNOW there is; and what is more, *I know Him*. Do you think that our forefathers, who opened their bosoms to the sword, and kissed the stake that was to burn them, *only thought that there was a God?* Oh, no! They *knew Him*. They knew that our Lord Jesus was God manifested in flesh; that as ‘out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh,’ so Jesus came (though still in the bosom of the Father), and was ‘*the Word* made flesh.’ * * *

“ ‘A man of subtle reasoning asked
A peasant, if he knew
Where is the internal evidence
That proves the Bible true?
The terms of disputative art
Had never reached his ear;
He laid his hand upon his heart,
And simply answered, *HERE.*’ ”