

# TIDINGS

OF

# LIFE AND PEACE.

EDITED BY GEO. C.

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"WE DECLARE UNTO YOU GLAD TIDINGS."—*Acts* xiii. 32.

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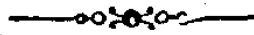


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# TIDINGS OF LIFE AND PEACE.



## THE WISHING CHAIR.

“**W**ISHING YOU A HAPPY NEW YEAR!”  
Such is the expression on the lips of thousands on the first day of a new year. Alas! how few who utter the kindly words really know the source of true happiness.

Last New-year's Day thousands received New-year's wishes. Now, as we glance in retrospect at the year that has passed, the opening hours of which promised so much, we are prone to sigh. How many hopes dashed to pieces! How many pleasures with a bitter sting underneath! How many bright visions of happiness, like the deceitful mirage of the desert, proved phantoms of the imagination! Yes, the fair form of many a one dear to us is now where decay and corruption feed!

That which hath been shall be, everything here is passing and uncertain. Let us remember this. Only for those who love God there is a bright future. Can you, dear reader, say, “If this year should be my last on earth, I have before me glory with Christ for ever in an eternal home, where all is unfading and unchanging bliss”? If not, then let me warn you that wishes for happiness are vain, are a delusion. The pleasures of sin are only for a season, and the end—the worm that dieth not, and the fire that shall never be quenched.

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Solomon, with his ivory palaces, with all his lavish use of gold and marble, sighed, "All is vanity and vexation of spirit;" while Paul, chained in prison and suffering persecution, could "rejoice greatly." How was this? Paul's source of joy was outside this scene, and therefore the world could neither give nor take away his happiness.

If my reader have learned the deceitful character of this world, and if his New-year's wish for happiness be prompted by more than mere fashion, and if he long for that which is real and satisfying, will he listen to the following simple story?

A gentleman was visiting the immediate neighbourhood of the well-known "Giant's Causeway," in the north of Ireland.

A farmer kindly offered him his house to rest in, and transact some business, and as he had also to inspect the seaboard, the farmer, who knew that part of the coast well, offered to act as guide, a proposal to which the stranger gladly assented.

They had to pass over the marvellous "Causeway," with its numerous objects of interest, and on reaching a spot known as the "Wishing Chair" the guide said, "Now, you must sit in this chair and wish. It is the custom with people, who come for the first time, to take their seat here, and wish for all they desire."

"The chair is perfectly useless to me," said the visitor.

"*Useless!* What do you mean?" inquired his kind host.

"For the simple reason that *I have nothing to wish for*. I have all that heart could wish already."

Amazed at the reply, the farmer exclaimed, "Well, well! that's a great thing to say, surely. It must be fine to be like that."

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"Yes, indeed, you may well say so. But when you learn that I have all that God could desire for my blessing, you will understand how foolish and stupid it would be for me to follow your customs in the 'chair.'

"Listen, my friend! I was a sinner only fit for hell, and God gave His Son to die for my sins, and to bring me to Himself without them. His God is my God, His Father is my Father, whose whole heart is revealed to me in that blessed One, the Son of His love, who is coming, I know not how soon, to bring me to dwell with Himself into that Father's house without spot or stain, and in a body of glory like His own. My eternal blessing will be to be thus with Him, and like Him, and not till then will He fully see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied."

As they retraced their steps to the farmer's house, the visitor asked his companion how it was with him—whether he knew this precious Christ, and what he thought about Him and the perfect work which He wrought on the cross for God's satisfaction and glory? The poor man owned himself a sinner, and admitted that if God were to judge him righteously He must send him to hell, but he was not yet prepared to trust Christ alone for his soul's salvation!

While pressing him to take God at His word the house was reached.

The farmer's wife had tea ready, and all in the house sat down to the social meal. Addressing the good woman whose thoughtful hospitality had provided for him, the stranger related what had passed between her husband and himself. It was plain that she was intensely interested; her whole soul was moved as she heard what was

said of the perfection of the work of Christ, and of the satisfaction which, by the grace of God, their guest had found in His person. "Oh!" she exclaimed, "that is what I have been *wishing* for for years. I never understood it like that before. Now I see it. Thank God for sending you here."

Have you, my reader, such a craving as this lady had? Jesus says, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink," and assures all who trust in Him that "he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst." Oh! look to Christ for happiness; it is found nowhere else. Look to His work for peace; vain is the search elsewhere. We desire a truly happy new year for you, beloved reader—yes, that eternal happiness may be yours. It is only as the heart makes Christ its choice, and says, "Christ for me," that there can be real happiness.

Christ first as a Saviour; Christ next as a Master; then Christ as the object in life, the goal to be reached.

To those who look for Him shall He appear before long, to consummate their joy in an endless glory.

H. N.

### SOME FEATURES OF CHRISTIANITY.

**B**Y common consent we judge more harshly of an imposture if its claims are pretentious and far-reaching. The breakdown of a small local bank which has had its few depositors is reprehensible, and will affect its own small circle. But if we could imagine a tremendous smash of



## SOME FEATURES OF CHRISTIANITY.

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the Bank of England, what consternation would fill the minds of those in every zone whose fortunes are bound up in its credit.

If Christianity could simply take rank as one of a score of religions that have obtained footing in the world, men would tolerate it. But in this it partakes of the character assigned to Ishmael: "His hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him." Wherever it goes in its true character, good-bye to peace and ease; for there will its Founder's words be certainly verified, "Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division." (Luke xii. 51.)

IT CLAIMS TO BE *THE* TRUTH.

Systems of belief have been devised by men, and in order to carry popular favour, or to win applause, have taken up, either wholly or in part, some popular notions of the day. Not so Christianity.

It discovers a philosopher, and instead of approving his wise maxims and his deep researches, tells him he must be saved by a Man that was crucified as a malefactor. Does it encounter a man whose mind has imbibed some other religion? It tells him his gods are demons, and his worship idolatry. Even if the man be a Jew whose religion was, as it admits, of divine origin, it has no mercy on him. It affirms that in spite of that religion he murdered the very One who gave it, and hence it is of no avail for him.

Does a man plead that his business or his family have a prior claim? It excludes that man from all its blessings, heaps its anathemas upon

his head, and assigns him eternal punishment as his inevitable fate.

Youth yearns for the pleasures of the world, but in the face of such yearnings Christianity raises its mighty voice and cries, "The friendship of the world is enmity with God." Old age longs for a haven of rest after the storms of life. Christianity exposes the empty vanity of all such aspirations while its truths are still rejected. "If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins." "After this the judgment."

It scouts the idea of the *materialist* when it assures its adherents, "The things which are seen are *temporal*." It baffles the *universalist* and the *annihilationist* when it adds, "The things which are not seen are *eternal*." (2 Cor. iv.) The *evolutionist* is remorselessly overthrown when it describes its commandment as "the word which ye have heard from the beginning." (1 John ii.) It refuses all development in that sense of the word, describing those who receive its author as "complete in Him." (Col. ii.) And farther than this, it deals no less severely with its own supporters, if they be but mere professors, sounding in their ears that word, "Ye must be born again." (John iii.) Thus it claims to be *the* truth, and consequently

#### IT DEMANDS THE FAITH OF ALL,

Jews, Mohammedans, Buddhists, and Pagans; men of some belief, and men of none. It is made known among all nations for the obedience of faith. He who believes it is blessed now and for ever; he who refuses to believe it is under God's judgment for ever.

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## IT REQUIRES THE SUBMISSION OF ALL.

It lowers not its claim when it speaks to an emperor, a king, or a czar. It cringes not before nobility and gentry; be he who hears it marquis or earl, baron or knight, general or statesman, he must submit or perish. Its Founder is King of kings and Lord of lords, and woe to the opponent of His authority.

## IT ANNOUNCES BLESSING FOR ALL,

blessing that every one needs, and that none can afford to do without. The wealthiest merchant or landowner is a beggar without it, the poorest scavenger who has it is rich. It is the safest investment for all, and yet its profits are to be had without money and without price. Its greatest things are free, so that the poor man may be enriched in a moment, and not with those riches which take to themselves wings and fly away. Yet were a man never so wealthy, he could not buy a fragment of its treasure, though he gave every farthing he possessed.

## CHRISTIANITY IS EITHER THE TRUTH OR IT IS NOT.

It must command the submission of the man who recognises it as of God, or the uncompromising hatred of the one who does not. The existence of such a pretentious system, if it be an imposture, is a standing witness to the degraded condition of men. On the other hand, if it be not an imposture, no madness is so mad as that which pooh-poohs its present pressing claims, or puts them off; and no inconsistency is so great as that which pretends to submit to it, and yet affects a compromise with the world.

## ITS CENTRAL DOCTRINE

is that Jesus is the Son of God—eternally and essentially so—and (whatever name or position he may assume) he is *anti-Christian* who denies it. (1 John ii. 22.)

It admits, and indeed exposes as nothing else does, the depravity of man's nature. It shines upon his course, tells him the sins of his life, the corrupt motives of his heart, the absolute perversion of his will, and the eternal and awful consequences if he continues unbelieving. It asserts the claims and rights, the holiness and truth of God, and whilst exalting His every attribute, and showing clearly that He cannot act inconsistently with Himself, it announces a plan of redemption for lost and guilty men. It tells, moreover, that this plan proceedeth not from the offender, man; but from the offended, God. It scatters broadcast the

## REMARKABLE AND WONDERFUL NEWS,

that whilst hating sin God loved the sinner, and in order to save him He gave forth His own Son in never-to-be-forgotten love. The Son came voluntarily in accord with the Father's will, became a Man (whilst ever retaining His essential Deity), showed in His immaculate life, both by His words and works, how God was disposed towards men, and then surrendered Himself to be nailed to a tree. He there took up the sinning man's responsibility (Himself sinless), suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust; was forsaken by God, and endured His wrath; thus exhibiting in His own person God's unflinching truth, inflexible justice, unlimited love, and holy intolerance of sin. Being God, He knew all

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God's claims and character; being man, He made Himself acquainted with the whole extent of our needs. All that God is for man, and all that man could be for God, came out there. Jesus died. Pursued even in death by man's hatred, a spear was thrust into His side, from whence issued blood and water. That shed blood speaks of satisfaction rendered to every claim of God, atonement effected, sin put away from His sight. A righteous ground is afforded on which God can act freely and consistently in love to us.

Then Jesus, who died and was buried, rose again from amongst the dead, and went to heaven as

## A MAN OUT OF DEATH,

to be there greeted with glory and honour. He is made both Lord and Christ. From Him has come down the Holy Ghost, the third personality in the triune Godhead, who is now working amongst men, to beget confidence in that ascended Lord. He who believes in the Lord Jesus Christ, relies implicitly upon Him for salvation from judgment, and by His blood is brought to God. He belongs to Christ, and not to the world that crucified Him (John xvii.), is sealed and taken possession of by the Holy Ghost (Ephes. i.), and expects that ascended Saviour to return shortly for him. (1 Thess. i.) Moreover, by the same Spirit he is united with every other believer to Christ in heaven, and

DESTINED TO SHARE WITH CHRIST FOR EVER that heavenly redemption-glory into which He has entered.

Reader, are you a decided Christian? There

ought not to be any compromise in this matter. Thousands of living witnesses to these truths are to be found, and though unknown to you, the writer gladly attests their reality. Reproaches, trials, persecutions there are for the Christian, but the compensating grace that Christianity affords, enables us to glory in tribulations also.

“If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.” (Rom. x.)

W. H. W.

### THE HOBBLER'S TWO CRIES OF DISTRESS.

FROM Mort to Mumbles is about 30 miles, and this distance, in a 10-foot punt, Tom ——, the hobbler (unlicensed pilot), had to travel one *winter's morning before he could reach his home*. He had not proceeded far when the wind, which hitherto had been fairly propitious, completely changed, bringing with it snow, hail, and heavy seas. It was too late to return whence he came, and the waves were rising higher and higher. Every muscle and nerve had to be strained to prevent the frail craft from swamping. Some distance off a couple of small craft were descried, battling with the storm, and thitherward he sought to direct his boat. Suddenly, however, the wind increased in fury, and these vessels were seen to founder and all on board perished. Left alone, stripped of every human hope of deliverance, with angry waves surging and curling around, every moment threatening to swallow him up, where could he look for help? The heart of the stoutest might well have quaked, but— Hark!

## THE HOBBLER'S TWO CRIES OF DISTRESS. 11

From the midst of the billows a cry of distress is directed to the throne of God. "O! Christ, Thou who didst of old still the storm for thy disciples, save, oh! save poor Tom!"

We read in God's Holy Book of the angels, "Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who *shall be* heirs of salvation?" (Heb. i. 14.) We are not surprised, therefore, that, in the midst of outward storm and inward fear and anguish, an inexplicable calm took possession of Tom. New courage filled his heart and braced his nerves, while his benumbed fingers clasped the sculls with renewed vigour.

From amidst the blinding snow storm a lightship is seen, and, better still, the waves are beating the fragile craft thitherward. But how board in such a sea? Nearer and nearer drifts the punt. Eager eyes and willing hearts are ready to help, and as she approaches the side of the lightship a man with a rope round his waist is seen to leap on board the punt, and in a moment Tom finds himself safely landed on the deck of the *Scarweather Lightship*, surrounded by the loving hearts whom God had used, in answer to his prayer, to save him from a watery grave.

Well might the Psalmist exclaim, "Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!" (Psalm cvii. 31.) No such sound, however, fell from this poor man's lips. Still in nature's darkness, his precious soul unsaved, the pressure of death's cold hand removed for the moment, God's care and pity were soon forgotten.

He arrived home after some days to find himself mourned as dead! But this only brought

forth an ironical laugh, and the subject of this narrative was soon found following his old habits of drunkenness and debauchery. But the God of all grace had not done with him yet. The Shepherd sought the sheep until He found it. (Luke xv. 4.)

Lying at midnight across the lines of a railway much used for mineral traffic is seen the form of a man. A push is made by a passer-by to arouse the sleeper, but in vain. Tom —— lies there hopelessly intoxicated. There is not even a cry for help this time. Yet help from without is his only chance of safety; and this, through God's tender mercy, is once again forthcoming.

Seized by the legs, and swung by a pair of powerful hands from off the tracks, he is thus firmly held in the place of safety while 40 coal wagons back slowly over the spot where only a few seconds before this poor fellow had lain.

What a deliverance! Indeed, the magnitude of it effectually sobered this drunkard. Standing up and trembling from head to foot, he surveyed with awe the shreds of the cap scattered up and down, which he had placed under his head. Terror seized him. Where might he now have been had not God interposed? He went home, but not to sleep. One awful thought alone filled his mind. "Where, oh where shall I spend eternity?" Hell's yawning gulf seemed ready to swallow him up, and from the bottom of his heart this cry was wrung, "O God, save me! O God, have mercy on my soul!" Satan's bondsman was about to be set free. The blind eyes of poor Tom were at last opened to his true state. He saw himself a ruined, helpless, hell-bound sinner before God. What a discovery! Yet how blessed



## THE HOBLER'S TWO CRIES OF DISTRESS. 13

that it was made this side eternity. From without, as before, is salvation brought. The Friend who sticketh closer than a brother breaks on his view; and while God, by His Spirit, reveals to his troubled soul the meaning of those pierced hands and riven side, faith appropriates what love had provided, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners"—even "the chief." (1 Tim. i. 15.) This just suited Tom. The Saviour and the sinner met. The lost sheep was found, and on the mighty Shepherd's shoulders was carried homeward.

Tom —— still lives to testify to the power of the patient grace of a Saviour-God.

Dear reader, Genesis vi. 3 informs us that the Lord said, "My Spirit *shall not always* strive with man." How often from childhood's days to the present time, by means of untold mercies and, it may be, temporal deliverances, as in the case just recorded, has God been seeking to arouse you from your slumberings and to awaken in your soul the consciousness of your deep, deep need of Jesus, as the One in whom alone salvation is to be found. "For there is *none other* Name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts iv. 12.)

Wake up, therefore, I beseech you!

His voice once again rings in your ears. Good resolutions and human efforts, though so often tried, are utterly unavailing. But there is One who once cried, "Come unto me"—"I will give you rest." Although in the brightest glory above, His heart still yearns over you. He "was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." "He was wounded for our transgressions." Behold Him whose pierced hands are still stretched out to you, and rest your soul.

upon the value (as God declares it) of that precious blood which once flowed from His riven side for guilty sinners. Appropriate this mighty work and salvation is yours.

Christ is coming. "Time its course will quickly run." God is not mocked. "He, that being *often* reproved hardeneth his neck, shall *suddenly be destroyed*, and that without remedy." (Proverbs xxix. 1.)  
H. R. H.

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### "HOW AM I TO BE SAVED?"

**T**HE question that troubles many souls is, "How am I to know that I have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ?"

We are brought up with the Bible in our hands; we are taught the gospel by heart; religion—man-made religion—has become a part of our very nature; but faith is not a mere assent to the propositions of a Christian creed; for "except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John iii. 3.) To be saved you must take your true place before God; in simple language, you must feel your need of a Saviour. Do not trouble about the *amount* of sorrow you feel for your sin; nowhere does Christ make the depth of our repentance a condition for granting us salvation. Are you afraid to die, afraid to meet God, afraid as to how the approaching coming of Christ will affect you? This proves that you believe at least two things—God's word and your own guilt. Now read this: "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life."

LOW ENOUGH FOR THE BLESSING. 15

(John iii. 14, 15.) "There is none other Name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts iv. 12.) Turn your eyes to Jesus, hanging on the cross. Cast yourself with the burden of your sins upon Him; for this is believing on Him.

Do not trouble about the amount of your faith; it is because you believe yourself a lost sinner that you have turned to the cross of Christ as the sole remedy for sin; and it is because you have turned to Christ that you are saved. Do not make your feelings a test of your salvation; do not trust to them at all. Be sure you are saved, but oh, be sure *why* you are saved; and, above all, do not dare to build up in some remote corner of your heart any ground of acceptance before God, other than that which He Himself has set forth—Christ crucified for sin.

E. G. M.

LOW ENOUGH FOR THE BLESSING.

A SERVANT of Christ overtook a fellow-traveller in the country, and at once entered into conversation with him about his soul and its welfare. The man said:

"Sir, do you know who I am? I'm the worst man in the village of —."

"Then," answered the servant of God, "you are most certainly in for it."

"In for what?" asked the man in some surprise.

"*In for salvation!*" was the answer.

Reader, I say the same to you. Honestly acknowledge your lost and ruined condition before God, believe the gospel, and, His word for it, you are "in for salvation."

W. N.

## NONE LIKE CHRIST.

CHRIST was forgiving while self-righteousness was grumbling. "Her sins, which are many, are forgiven. . . . Who is this that forgiveth sins also?" (Luke vii. 47, 49.)

Christ was receiving sinners, and eating with them, while Pharisees cavilled at His grace. (Luke xv. 1, 2.)

Christ comforted whom men condemned. "Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more." (John viii.)

Christ relieved whom some men robbed and others refrained from helping. The *robbers* turned away because there was nothing more to get; and the *priest and levite*, because they had either nothing to give or no heart to give it. "But a certain Samaritan [figure of Christ], as he journeyed, came where he was," did all, and paid all.

Christ walked weary miles to reveal Himself to one whom the world was ashamed to own. "Jesus, being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well." (John iv. 6.)

Christ took into His own companionship one whom the world took positive pains to get rid of—"To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise." (Luke xxiii.)

The world gave thirty pieces of silver to get rid of Christ. Christ gave all that He had, and His precious life as well, to make sure of me! (Matt. xxvi. 15; xiii. 44.)

Surely there is none like Christ, none like Christ!

How safely you may trust Him.      GEO. C.

# TIDINGS OF LIFE AND PEACE.



## A LOST ETERNITY IN VIEW.

“**I** NOW know I’m dying. If I knew I were not dying I should want the world and not Christ; but I’m dying, and will He have me?”

Such were the solemn words that fell from the lips of a young lady, as she sat and talked with the writer some time ago. She was about twenty-seven years of age, clever, had read much, had an intense hatred to all that spoke of eternity and Christ, and shewed her hostility in many ways, even going out of her way to insult the Lord’s people. But now her life was nearly over. What is life!

Eternity stared her in the face. She had been the round of the doctors; but at last, reaching one who knew Christ, she heard from him the truth as to her state. Yes, she was dying—dying, too, without Christ, without hope. Her misery was intense.

Dear reader, have you ever looked eternity straight in the face, and asked your heart, “Am I ready to face it?” Life, with all its attractions, is soon to close, and then—eternity; and if still unsaved, that eternity means hell—yes, hell for ever.

But to return to the subject of this paper.

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Weeks rolled on, bringing with them, for our young friend, increasing weakness and increasing unrest. The Scriptures, often despised, were now listened to with intense earnestness, and though they spoke on the one hand of the sinner's ruin, enmity, helplessness, they told, on the other, in all their sweetness, of God's wondrous provision for guilty man; of Jesus—His work, His cross, His death, His precious blood—which alone could meet all God's holy requirements. But yet they brought no comfort, no rest, no peace to our now deeply-troubled friend. Death, judgment, eternity drew near.

One evening, on my going into her bedroom, she said, "Oh, I had such a dream last night!" Her face was calm and peaceful as she told me the following:

"I thought I was standing on a pier; before me was a large globe-like vessel—a world. A plank stretched from where I stood to a small door in its side, and as I hesitated and looked I saw with horror it was a huge world of fire; and I shrank back, exclaiming 'Hell!' As I did so the plank fell into the water, and I distinctly heard a voice say, 'Behold the Lamb of God.' And then I awoke." She lay back on her pillow, saying, "Yes, it's 'Behold the Lamb of God.'" God had spoken to her, and there she was simply clinging to Christ, and repeating those blessed words, "Behold the Lamb of God."

Weeks passed on, the body growing weaker; but this truth remained. Time fled apace; but, oh! so slowly to her who was resting alone on Christ. Believing in Him, she longed to go to be with Him, and soon her desire was satisfied. During the few weeks that remained she wrote with

## THE SAVIOUR'S GRACE.

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her own hand letters of regret for the many rude words she had uttered in past days, and the ungracious actions she had shewn to those that she knew were the Lord's.

But, oh! dear reader, have you found out your unsaved state, your state of enmity to God? Is there any anxiety in your heart as to eternity? If not, oh! awake! awake! "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found"; while you can still be saved. Come in all your sin and weakness to Christ. He never yet sent one poor needy one away. He "will in no wise cast out." He came from eternal glory to bleed and suffer and die for the ungodly, the lost, the helpless; nought else could meet your case. May God lead you, as you read this little paper, to put all your faith and trust in Christ, God's Lamb.

J. C. P.

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THE SAVIOUR'S GRACE AND THE  
SINNER'S NEED.

MATT. ix. 8-26.

**T**HERE is nothing which so offends the pride of the human heart as the freeness and sovereignty of the grace of God, until the heart is humbled by that grace. That God should take up a poor sinner, gain his ear and attract his heart, and AT ONCE and FOR EVER connect him immediately with His richest purposes of grace in His own Son, is contrary to the ideas of the natural man.

Thank God, no one has a right to question His title to do this, nor the title of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Sent One of the Father. When the disciples returned from buying food (John iv. 27), and found the Lord talking to an outcast

Samaritan woman, "they marvelled," yet who could question His title so to do? "None said, What seekest thou? or, Why talkest thou with her?" What he sought was a sinner. He talked with her that she might learn His grace to such an one as herself. He had the right at once, there and then, to satisfy a weary, sinful heart with Himself. Ah! man naturally does not understand this. He would reform the sinner, make him religious, and then hope for mercy at last. But Christ! All the fulness of grace is in Him for the vilest.

We hear nothing of Matthew, the tax-gatherer, until the moment brought before us in this chapter. He is not spoken of as one of John's disciples. We are told of no preliminary work in his soul; not that we must think lightly of such a work; but the first notice of him in Scripture is, that the Lord saw him sitting in the tax-office as He passed by. At once He called him with the words, "Follow me." His occupation—not a reputable one—did not hinder this immediate call. It was the command of Jesus to a sinner. There are no preliminaries to be observed—"He arose, and followed Him." The mighty transaction is done. Love of gain, the great charmer of the ear of man, has to retire before the voice of the Lord. Jesus now has the ear of Matthew.

It is ever with the sinner whose ear is obedient as with the prodigal. The prodigal had nothing wherewith to go to his father but destitution and sin. Forgiveness, reconciliation, the kiss, the best robe, the fatted calf, and the joy of heaven were all with the Father. Was it not everything to turn to where these things were? It was true repentance. So with Matthew; to follow Jesus



## THE SAVIOUR'S GRACE.

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was to go after One in whom the fulness of grace is treasured for a sinner. He came to call such.

This is shewn in the following verses. We learn from another gospel that it was in the house of Matthew himself that many publicans and sinners were assembled. He had invited them to meet the Saviour who had called him. How well he understood the grace of that blessed heart. The Pharisees objected to it; but Jesus and the Scripture also (Hosea vi. 6)—the living Word and the written word—both say, in the face of all objectors, that Matthew had not misunderstood the grace of God. Reader, have you hitherto done so? Have you understood that it is not what man can render, but what God desires and gives, that entitles the sinner to the Saviour. Mercy, full and free, Jesus brought, and then sealed it with His blood; therefore He called sinners.

Further, we find in verses 14, 15 the happiness of those thus called into the company of Jesus. It may take some time—alas! that it should—to empty a heart of its suspicions and doubts, of its reluctance through guilty unbelief to trust itself with the grace of a Saviour; but only let the voice of Jesus reach that guilty soul, and a moment will suffice to light up the dark chambers of the heart with Himself. He is for *sinners*, and has done all the work of atonement for them by Himself. No one touched it but Himself, and it is finished. Those who have found the company of the Saviour have now a new joy. It is as the children of the bridechamber when the bridegroom is with them. Does the reader know anything of this joy? There is the daily toil and labour of this life, and many a thing to fret the spirit of the believer, who in such circumstances

will need to fast; but he has a retreat, a place of calm and heavenly joy—the bridechamber—where he knows the presence of the Bridegroom, the Saviour who has called him.

It is impossible for the worn-out garment of vaunted respectability and legal self-righteousness to be patched with the new cloth of the Saviour's grace to sinners. There is no agreement between the two. The unholy attempt to combine Christianity, which is founded on the fulness of perfected and divine righteousness in Christ, with the unattainable human righteousness of Judaism, will bring about a worse rent than has taken place in the break up of the Jewish system and nation. Woe awaits such an unholy combination. Nor can the new wine of the kingdom be put into old vessels, such as unrepentant, unconverted men. It is a *new* joy which gladdens the heart of one who has heard the Saviour's call. The vessel is formed anew by the call. It is made to partake of the nature of Him who calls. His grace enters the soul. The vessel is thus new, for Christ is there the life of that soul, and the new joy in Christ agrees with the new vessel. If it be otherwise the wine is poured out and the vessels perish. So will it be with the huge system called Christendom. The true grace of God is lost to such as are only of it, and they themselves will perish. You cannot connect the true joy of saved sinners with the religion of unconverted men.

But is my reader willing to accept the true condition of man universally? Here it is (verse 18–25) "*hopeless and helpless*." But for the grace that is in Jesus it must continue so. "While He spake these things"—those which we have just

considered—"a ruler came to Him." The ruler is a religious man, for we learn (Mark v. 22) that he was a ruler of the synagogue; but he has death in his house. There is the pressure of death in this world, and man is *hopelessly* under it. Who can relieve him? He betakes himself to Jesus—"Come and lay thy hands on her, and she shall live." Is that so? It is, and Jesus goes with him. But as He goes a woman who had tried, but could derive no benefit from the help of man, touched the hem of His garment. We are told what passed in her mind. It was as if she had said within herself, "I am *helpless*, but there is virtue in Him." Yes, it is there, and the touch of faith drew it out for this helpless one. He comforted her, and told her the way that healing came—through the faith that touched Him. Dear reader, do you know the virtue in Jesus that meets the helplessness of man?

And now Jesus has come to the ruler's house. Minstrels and noise are in the chamber of death; and such a certainty, though dreaded, is death to the mind of man, that the multitude deride Him when He says, "The maid is not dead, but sleepeth." Death is hopeless for man, but the power of Christ can lift up from it, and turn death into sleep. Without Him, it is death indeed in all its overwhelming pressure. The death-bed of a believer is not really death, but life just going to be set free from all its power. The body Christ will raise. His own words assure the hearts of those who trust Him: "Because I live ye shall live also." What a joy it is that Jesus came into this world of sin and death to call and to be found of sinners.

T. H. R.

## HOW CAN I BE SURE?

WE have a word to say to those who, though they have been taught to consider the assurance of salvation an impossibility, yet really long to know the certainty of their blessing. Their language is, *How can I be sure?*

Our answer is simply this, If God has plainly expressed His mind about the matter (and God *has* spoken, as we shall seek to show), how can you be otherwise than sure, unless, indeed, you do not give Him credit for speaking the truth?

If you turn to the 13th chapter of the Acts you will there see that it is God's desire that believers should have the certainty of their justification; not a certain *class* of believers, but *all that believe*. Examine the passage carefully for yourself, especially verses 38 and 39. See how, by the Holy Ghost, the apostle of the Gentiles addresses the God-fearing ones at Antioch, for the Spirit has been pleased to record it for the comfort of our hearts to-day.

“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.”

Does this leave the question of the believer's present blessing in the least degree doubtful? Nay, the very opposite.

A dying believer, in the town of S——, was once asked about his prospect for eternity. Taking a bit of ice from his mouth, and holding it up to

## HOW CAN I BE SURE?

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the light, he calmly and joyfully replied, "My title is as clear as that!" And no wonder, with such evidence as this in Acts xiii. to rest upon.

But this is not all that the believer is assured of, for we read, in Romans viii. 30,

"WHOM HE JUSTIFIED,  
THEM HE ALSO GLORIFIED."

So that if the God of grace has justified us through Christ, He has pledged Himself to glorify us also with Christ. He has "called us" and "justified" us for that very purpose. Thus we read, in 1 Peter v. 10, "The God of all grace . . . hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus."

*"Grace begun shall end in glory."*

But look at the believer's assurance from another standpoint. Turn to 1 John v. 13, and you will read these words: "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life." If this teaches that the believer may have this conscious knowledge *now*, what becomes of the teaching of those who will tell you that you cannot know it?

But more. There is another great fact to consider; and remember He who is Himself the very source and spring of eternal life is responsible for this statement. Speaking of His sheep (John x. 28) He says, "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall NEVER PERISH, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."

Now don't think that we intend to convey that there is no more in the thought of "eternal life" than that the one who has it will "never perish," for we are fully persuaded that it includes far, far

more; but it certainly includes this. We could not have eternal life and not be saved from the wrath to come. But there is more in it than salvation from coming judgment. It involves for us a state of untold blessedness in the Father's house; it introduces us to the most unclouded intimacy with the Father and the Son—the fullness of heavenly joy. The Queen of England might save a rebel from the gibbet without introducing him to the princely society of the palace. And God might have made us sure of not perishing without introducing us to the innermost circle of His own delights. But how could we be thus introduced without being made sure of not perishing? Our title for glory assumes our escape from the pit, and leaves no question about it. Therefore we read, "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall NEVER PERISH." When God says—

"BE IT KNOWN,"

be sure therefore that

"YE MAY KNOW,"

and everyone who denies it raises a serious controversy both with the word of God and its holy Author. Better be Paul the prisoner on a foundering ship, saying, "I believe God," than the most popular theologian of the nineteenth century, casting a doubt upon what God has said. "Let God be true, but every man a liar." (Rom. iii. 4.)

If you continue in sin and unbelief be sure of what the end will be—"Know thou that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." Make no mistake. God will keep His word.

If you repent and believe the gospel—"Be it known unto you that instead of being judged hereafter and missing the glory, you shall be justified now and fitted for the glory."

## NOT WASHED.

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“Hath He said, and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?”  
(Num. xxiii. 19.) GEO. C.

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## NOT WASHED.

“There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness.”—PROV. xxx. 12.

ONE need not go outside Christendom to prove that this generation has not died out. There is superabundant evidence on all hands that it is a very numerous one. Do you belong to it, dear reader?

Scripture furnishes us with striking examples. Here is one, “The Pharisee stood and prayed thus *with himself*: *God, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican: I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.*” There is no question about that man’s character, according to the testimony of his own lips; but he had evidently never learnt the scripture precept, “Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips.”

Now we doubt not that this man was a bright ornament to the sect of the Pharisees at Jerusalem. But what did God think about him? He was pure in his own eyes, but *not washed*. And no unwashed sinner, not even the strictest religionist, can stand before Him. He seems to have been a good specimen of the generation above described, but evidently too good for Jesus. “I” reigned supreme, as is shewn by his prayer. The old Adam in this proud sectary was quite good enough in his own eyes. With what he did not do and what he did do (giving him

credit for speaking the truth) one would think he would stand a very good chance of acceptance with God, if it was a question of comparison with those around.

But what said the Lord? He tells of another, a poor taxgatherer, who had not a word to say for himself, except to take *the sinner's* place before God, and adds, "*I tell you, this man went down to his house JUSTIFIED rather than the other,*" &c. The man who justifies himself is judged already (John iii. 18); the man who judges himself and believes God is justified. Therein lies the difference. The sinner-despising Pharisee was clothed from head to foot with the gaudy mantle of his own self-righteousness; a beautiful garment to the human eye, but filthy and unwashed before God. The taxgatherer, owning his unwashed condition, returned home washed from his filthiness, for he was justified rather than the other.

Dear reader, where are you found to-day? Still amongst the ranks of the Pharisees, a poor Christless professor, *not washed*; or a sinner confessed, guilty and lost, cast upon the mercy of God, and met by Him as a just God, and justified before Him by the precious blood of Christ? Which is it?

Another striking example may be seen in the prodigal's elder brother, in Luke xv. He seems to have graduated in a very similar school to the last. His moral bill of health was perfect, himself being witness. He could boast of long service, "*these many years,*" and spotless character, "*neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment.*" One would think, to hear him, that he did not come of the same stock as the rest of



## NOT WASHED.

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Adam's race. According to his own account, he had certainly behaved far better in the fallen state outside paradise, than Adam did in the unfallen state in paradise. Alas! he had never seen himself as God saw him. "There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness."

There stand the imperishable records on scripture's page, the word of God, solemn warnings to all who trust in their own righteousness. Tens of thousands to-day, "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.*" (Romans x. 3, 4.) They have never learnt that God has given man and his righteousness up. Each one must be washed, and clothed with the righteousness of God to stand before Him. It is the blood of Christ that cleanses our filthiness away. And *Christ* is our only robe, suited to the eye of God. As long as you are pure in your own eyes, so long are you still travelling the broad road. You may have chosen the cleanest part, so to speak, but *that's where you are.* God says, "All our righteousnesses are as *filthy rags.*" We are covered with the filthiness of sin before Him, and *must be washed.* No unwashed sinner can enter the Father's house, not even so strict a moralist as Saul of Tarsus. *Jesus died for sinners,* not Pharisees, and His blood cleanseth us from all sin. (1 John i. 7.) Now is the time to trust therein. Will you, then, cast away this moment the mantle of your own righteousness *to be clothed with Christ before God?*

E. H. C.

## A WORD TO THE TROUBLED.

**H**OW many unhappy persons the Lord's servants meet with from time to time.

Probably this book will pass into the hands of such. Were the reader asked the question, "Do you know the forgiveness of sins?" perhaps the reply would be something like this: "I fear to say they are forgiven; indeed, it is the very question which gives me much anxiety. It is what I am longing to know."

It is with the hope that our gracious God will use it to the blessing of any such, that the substance of a recent conversation with a woman at P——, in Suffolk, is here given.

"Well, Mrs. ——, it is indeed a happy thing to know that one's sins are forgiven."

"Yes, I am sure it must be."

"I wonder if *you* know your sins are forgiven?"

"I cannot say that I do. In fact, I do not."

"Would you not be glad to know it?"

"I should indeed be glad. I *want* to know it."

"May I ask if you are a believer on the Lord Jesus Christ?"

"Yes, I do really believe on Him. I believe He died for me."

"Do I understand you to say, then, that you believe that when He died it was for your sins?"

"Yes, I do believe He died for my sins."

"Well, that is right; for each believer can say, 'The Lord hath laid *on Him* the iniquity of us all.'" (Isaiah liii. 6.)

"Now, seeing that God laid on His own Son, who *was* on the cross, all our sins, small and great, from the day of our birth to the day of our death

('should we die,' 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17), and that all the judgment which we deserved to bear because of them was in that dark hour poured on His blessed head, do you think God will punish those who believe as well? Would it be righteous to demand the settlement of the debt twice?

"Allow me to give you a simple illustration. Let us suppose that while walking down the street with a young friend by my side, he suddenly becomes very disorderly, and picking up a stone he flings it through a plate-glass window of immense size. In a moment the owner is seen running out. With hot haste and great indignation he takes my unruly young friend by the collar, and angrily makes known his intention of handing him over to the police. That is what he would deserve, would he not?"

"Yes, he would do."

"Well, out of compassion for the lad, I might step up to the shopkeeper enquiring what sum of money would settle the matter with him."

"'I want ten pounds, if I am to be entirely satisfied.'

"'That is a large sum, but I will see if I can manage to pay it, and return to you shortly.'

"On returning with the ten pounds, the man is highly pleased to see me, delighted to think that all the damage is to be repaired, and the whole matter entirely settled to his own satisfaction.

"After paying the ten pounds, and taking the receipt, I sit quietly waiting for my young friend to be brought to me and released, but he does not appear. After some time has elapsed, I address the tradesman, enquiring if he will be long.

"'Oh!' he replies, 'I am not going to set him

free; I shall give him into the hands of the police.'

"Now, Mrs. —, would that be just, after I had paid the ten pounds and received the man's receipt?"

"Oh! no; it would be most unjust, both to you and the lad."

"Well, Mrs. —, do you think God is less just than men? Do you think that, after laying on Jesus all the judgment and divine wrath deserved by us as sinners, God will afterwards visit the same on us who believe on Him?"

"Does it not rather become Him to forgive the sins for which His Son so fully answered, and justify us who are believers?"

"God Himself tells us, in His word (Rom. iii. 26), that he is '*just*' in *justifying* those who believe in Jesus; and He further tells us, in chapter iv. 5, that it is '*ungodly*' persons whom He justifies through believing."

"I have never seen it in *that* way before."

"Do you see it now?"

"Oh, yes, I do!"

"God will not payment twice demand;  
Once at my dying Surety's hand,  
And then again at mine."

Dear reader, this is the way in which God Himself views the question. He invites you to do the same in faith, that you may go "on your way rejoicing," knowing that your blessing depends, not on any good works you may seek to do, nor any frames of mind, however sweet; nor on any experiences, however happy; but that everything rests upon the death and resurrection of Christ, made known to you through God's own changeless word.

E. T. W.

# TIDINGS OF LIFE AND PEACE.



## THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF CHRIST!

**H**OW varied are the emotions which fill the breast of those who read these words. The devout believer treasures them up as among his most sacred belongings; the rationalist ridicules them; the disciple of modern thought expunges them from his creed; and the ultra-refined religionist thinks the expression vulgar and low.

How little have these last grasped their true meaning. Such people can eulogise the patriotic Roman who leaped into the Tiber, sacrificing his life to seek to save his country; can celebrate the heroism of the helmsman who perished at his post rather than sacrifice the crew of the burning ship; can admire the love of the mother who dared the perils of the lofty crag to which the eagle had carried her babe; and extol the devotedness of the servant who voluntarily put his body between his master and the would-be assassin, and received the bullet instead—perishing in his love.

What is it that calls forth admiration for such? It is this, Life given up in death out of love to another!

Tell me, Where can you witness such an expression of it as at Golgotha? Gethsemane's agonies and Calvary's sufferings proclaim supreme love

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and unequalled devotedness, not only because of the dignity of the One who gave up His life, but because of the motives which led Him to do it. History records life laid down for home, country, and kin; but where do we find a life laid down for an implacable enemy, a relentless foe? Only where the precious blood of Christ was shed. "When we were yet sinners Christ died for us."

What does it mean when it says "Redeemed by the precious blood of Christ"? Just this: Your life, my life, is a forfeited one.

The Bible tells us that the life of the flesh is in the blood, and the blood is the life thereof. (See Lev. xvii.)

The blood and the life are thus identical terms. The life of Jesus was free and unforfeited. He, in the deep love of His heart, willingly yielded up His unforfeited life in the guilty sinner's stead; suffered, the just One, for us the unjust ones.

Irreverent tongues have spoken lightly of "the blood," but to the simple believer it has a sacred, holy, blessed meaning.

Let the disciples of modern thought say if their theories can supply such solid, real rest and peace as that precious blood they affect to despise? Are they not missing the meaning of the greatest act, the most stupendous work, the world has ever witnessed, whilst affecting a spurious refinement which pretends to be shocked at the word "blood"?

It is a patent fact, from the first page to the last of the sacred record, that man has a forfeited life, and must needs have a spotless victim to bear the judgment attached to the life he has forfeited.

The only pure, spotless life ever found on this earth was that of the Man Christ Jesus, who

## THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF CHRIST.

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gave Himself a ransom, and bore sin's judgment. Countless myriads will fill the eternal scene with the song of redemption by blood; poor perishing sinners gladly rest their eternal security in it. Will not you? How solid and real a resting-place it is you will see if you will travel with me in thought to three dying scenes.

The first is that of an earnest, devoted servant of Christ, who had long and faithfully served his Master in London as a preacher of the gospel, a visitor of the sick, and a helper of the needy. On Sunday he was preaching the gospel, on Wednesday he is on the borderland of eternity—life ebbing rapidly.

A visitor entered his chamber and anxiously enquired his title to heaven, his password into that home of light and joy. Slowly, between the gaspings for breath, he replied, "Two—things—the—mercy—of—God—and—the—blood—of—Christ!"

We will leave London and travel to New York, and enter another death-chamber. A young woman is dying. She has no life of service for Christ to look back to, but one dark, black record of iniquity. Her life's history may be briefly summed up in a few words—"She was a woman of the city, a sinner."

The poor dying harlot had heard of the blessed Son of God becoming a man and giving up His life for her, and she asked the attendant to open a Bible, place her finger on the seventh verse of the first chapter of John's first epistle, and as she laid her finger on the words, "*The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin,*" she said, "I can go into eternity resting on that!"

We will leave New York and travel to the hot,

burning plains of India. Beneath the rays of a tropical sun a poor heathen is dying. A servant of Christ is bending over him, and anxiously enquires, "What are you resting on for eternity?" Summoning his last bit of energy, he lifted up his hand, and replied, "*This!*" then fell back lifeless.

With difficulty the tightly-clasped fingers were unloosed, and a bit of paper fell out. On it were the words, "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin."

Ponder these scenes. The first was a man who had good works, but well knew that no good works could atone for a forfeited life. The second was one society shuns; the third one whom it pities. But the sin of the harlot and the ignorance of the heathen did not shut them off from the salvation of God, because they both trusted in that precious blood which makes an atonement for the soul.

May God enable you of His grace to rest upon the "blood" for yourself; but if you refuse, remember it is written, "Without shedding of blood is no remission."

H. N.

## ARE YOU WASHED?

**I**N Rev. xx. we get a magnificent description of the heavenly city, new Jerusalem. She has the glory of God, and her light is like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone clear as crystal. A jasper wall surrounds her, garnished with all manner of precious stones. Twelve gates of pearl are in it, and at each gate an angel stands. The street is of pure gold, as it were transparent



glass. There is no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. It has no need of the sun, for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. Incomparable scene—jasper walls, gates of pearl, golden street, all radiant with the shining of God's glory.

Night is never there; the sound of weeping disturbs not the peace that fills that place. Toil has ceased for all who enter there. They share God's rest, they see His face, His name is on their foreheads, they reign for ever and ever.

Say, reader, will *you* be there? Will *your* feet press that golden street? Will that rest fill *your* heart? Will *you* dwell in that abode of Eternal Light?

But the Spirit says that *into this city there shall in no wise enter anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie.*

None enter the sinless city but the sinless. Are *you* sinless? Mark it well—nothing that defileth will ever enter there.

Follow me a moment, and you will understand.

In Genesis iii. sinful Adam is driven out of Paradise, and at its gates are placed cherubim and a flaming sword to keep the way of the tree of life, which grew in the midst of the garden.

Adam never re-entered Paradise; the angels prevented him; and he died outside in the place of the curse.

In the Revelation a city is disclosed to view where the curse is not, where sin can never come. It is the city of God. He dwells there in manifested glory. The inhabitants serve Him. They see His face. They dwell in peace before Him. A deathless joy is theirs. Who are they? and

whence came they? They once were sinners in this world. How they left the world and were brought to God they tell us in chapter v., when they sing to the Lamb in the midst of the throne, "Thou art worthy, for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed [us] to God by Thy blood."

We have seen the tree of life growing in the midst of the earthly paradise, and sinful Adam driven out lest he should touch it.

In the last chapter in the Bible the tree is seen blooming in the midst of the new Jerusalem—the paradise of God.

Oh! reader, wouldst *thou* enter this fair scene and eat of this wondrous tree? Wouldst *thou* dwell in this city of delights?

See then, at each of the twelve gates of pearl an angel stands. These angels are no longer on earth, but at the gates of the heavenly paradise, standing, as in days of yore they stood, at the gate of the earthly paradise.

How will you pass them, sinner? Do you not know that it is written, "*There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth*"? Has sin defiled *you*? Is the defilement still there? The charms of the city may attract you. You may long to be there. But how will you evade those zealous sentinels? Adam passed not the angelic guards of Eden's garden; how then shall *you*, his fallen, sin-stained child, pass by those holy guardians of the golden city?

Is there, then, no hope for me? Listen.

"*Blessed are they that wash their robes, that they may have the right to come to the tree of life, and may enter in by the gates into the city.*" (Rev. xxii. 15, R.V.)

Here is news for you, my reader. They who

wash their robes have *a right* to enter the gates and to come to the tree of life.

Do you ask, With what must I wash *my* robes ? Listen.

In Rev. vii. a great white-robed multitude stand before the throne, and the Lamb leading the angels worship. One enquires, "Who are they, and whence came they?" Quickly comes the answer, "These are they who have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. THEREFORE are they before the throne of God, and He that sitteth upon the throne shall dwell among them." A different company that to the one in chap. v., but the same Saviour.

They are there *because* they have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

This is the truth, beloved reader. Access to God's presence and glory is by the blood of Jesus alone. "Washed robes" is but a figure, signifying the soul cleansed from the stain and guilt of sin. If you ever pass the angels, and enter through the gates of the city of God, it will be by virtue of the Blood of Jesus.

We press the point. Unless in this world you get cleansed from sin by the blood you will never dwell with God.

You may seek to wash your robes in something else, but you can never make them *white*. These had washed their robes, and made them white, but it was *in the blood of the Lamb*. Myriads are trying to wash their robes, but the filth still remains. It is only the blood of Jesus that cleanseth from all sin. The sinner's only passport to God's presence is the blood of His Son.

Oh ! unsaved reader, how awful is your state.

Outside the earthly paradise, your soul black as midnight with years of accumulated sin, and with nothing but eternal judgment before you, what hope have you of passing the sleepless watchers at the city gates? Oh! believe it, you have *no* hope unless you get washed in the blood of the Lamb.

Cleansed thus, the gates are open to you, all heaven will welcome you, the company of God and the Lamb shall be yours for ever. Oh! linger not. He who died for sinners waits to receive you. He has purchased salvation with His own blood, and now offers it to you without money and without price. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

W. H. S.

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### CHRIST REJECTED IS NOT CHRIST DEFEATED.

*Question.* If Christ has a right to the world He made, how do you account for the fact of His prolonged absence from it, and why does God tolerate this state of things? (Ed.)

*Answer.* Certainly Christ has a right to the earth. He not only created all things, but He has reconciled all things. Adam forfeited his right to the earth and, by tempting the woman, Satan obtained temporary ascendancy. Whomsoever we obey, his servants we are. Satan could offer the world, its power and glory, as he says, "for that is delivered unto me." But Christ has the real right. Even as a Man on the earth He was greater than Satan, so that the unclean spirit cried out, "I know thee who Thou art, the Holy One of God."

## CHRIST REJECTED IS NOT CHRIST DEFEATED. 41

If you read the gospels carefully you will see that there was a Man on the earth who could remove from man all the power of evil here. But this was not all. Christ, born of a woman, came to bruise the serpent's head. He entered into death—Satan's power—"that He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." So we read, "Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the prince of this world be cast out." THE PRINCE OF THIS WORLD IS JUDGED, and Christ has bought the world for His "treasure" which is in it.

Finally, He prolongs His absence from no want of power. The keys of death and hades are His. "*The long-suffering of our God is salvation.*" Various ends have to be worked out according "to the good pleasure of His will," and His absence must be prolonged until "His body" be completed. The world could not contain the books that should be written of Him, but the Church, which is His body, will be "the fulness of Him that filleth all in all."

*Question.* If the prince of this world has apparently defeated the rightful heir, so that He was "cut off" and had "nothing," how do you account for the fact that, in spite of the usurper, those who belong to Christ have been left here in the place of His rejection for over eighteen centuries? In other words, How do you account for Satan's toleration of the "joint heirs"? (ED.)

*Answer.* The standing proof of Christ's supremacy is, that His church is here—His own building. "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Satan apparently succeeded in cutting off the Christ from the earth, but wickedness is never wisdom, and this Satan proved to his cost.

In all his course he never failed so signally as in this his most daring act. It was a fatal blow he struck, but only fatal to himself. He expected, in putting the Christ to death, that, like the Jews, he could say in a universal sense, "This is the heir; come, let us kill Him, and the inheritance shall be ours." Our blessed Lord entered into death "that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." But not this only. Christ being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. (Acts ii. 33.) The Holy Ghost has come. He is here in two ways—"with you and in you" (John xiv. 14), and though Christ is not here bodily, yet there are, through grace, scattered over the earth thousands in whom Christ is formed, so that He can say at any time during the last eighteen centuries, "Why persecutest thou Me?" Satan's violent dealing has thus come down on his own pate, and in spite of his animosity, Christ's body, the Church, is and has been all these years the greatest check to his power. When the Church is taken away he will be cast down to the earth (See Rev. xii.), and then, in his last terrible struggle to obtain full possession of the earth, he will meet his certain doom.

The believer who is conscious of Christ's absence appreciates the presence of the Holy Ghost, and as he walks here by the Spirit he will be opposed by Satan; but "greater is He that is in [him] than he that is in the world." Satan is as intolerant of Christ to-day as ever he was; but having tried persecution, and having found that it did not exterminate the power of Christ,

he has resorted to Balaam's artifice, even to draw the Christian into association with the world so that there is apparent toleration. J. B. S.

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### "DON'T LET ME DIE."

SUCH was the last and touching request of one of the passengers on the ill-fated Scotch Express, which was wrecked near Thirsk, on one of the early mornings of November, 1892. Wakened rudely out of a broken sleep by the awful collision, and thrown all in a heap amidst shattered boards, twisted iron, and shivered glass, he was extricated by kind and friendly hands. Brandy was being applied to his lips, if perchance by its aid he might be for the moment stimulated, when these plaintive words—so deeply expressive of the poor sufferer's inmost wish—were feebly uttered, "*Don't let me die.*"

But they were hardly spoken when he passed away, and all was over. Those who had come to render him what succour they could, had to turn their attention to others equally in need, and he was left, lying amid the wreckage, a corpse.

His call was sudden, as was that of many others on the same sad occasion.

Ah, how important it is to be *ready*! Who can tell how or when his own call may come?

What may have been the meaning of this poor fellow's request cannot be said. He may have thought of urgent business yet unsettled, or perhaps of a wife and family dependent on him at home, or perhaps he felt he was unprepared for an immediate call into the presence of God.

None can tell what may have troubled his mind at that supreme moment, but his words were painfully suggestive—" *Don't let me die.*"

Alas! the two men who had befriended him were unable to carry out his desire. They did what they could, but neither their stimulants nor their strong arms could ward off the unwelcome claimant. In presence of death man is powerless.

But did you never see a case where its power carried no terror, and where the sufferer could say in triumph, "*O death, where is thy sting?*"

There lay on her dying bed, in the same month of the same year, a wife and mother. She was passing away too. The fact of her approaching death had to be gently broken to her by a brother.

On receiving the news she remained as calm as if she had been told of a speedy recovery. Death had no terror for her. And why? Because, as she said, "*It is eighteen years ago since I was saved.*" For all these years she had known and enjoyed the way of salvation and of peace. She had known the Lord. Oh, what a difference that makes in life and in death and in eternity! True, tender links had to be severed and ties unloosed, but she did not say "*Don't let me die.*"

*She was ready.*

Now, dear reader, it may seem like harping on an old chord, but never mind, I must ask you the question, *Are you ready?* If not, why not?

You are allowing these years to fly quickly past, and your day must come. Now, face the fact boldly, What is to be done?

Shall you slip on as you are, in your sins, into the grave and judgment and hell?

A rude awakening awaits you, then your cry



will not be "*Don't let me die;*" but "*Don't let me be damned.*" But then your cry is too late—death is past; the grave has disgorged you, the judgment-seat has condemned you, and now nothing but the "lake of fire" awaits you. Fearful prospect! Taken out of the grave, placed in resurrection under the condemning verdict of the great white throne, you must pass away into outer darkness and eternal punishment. That is the result of living and dying in sin and unbelief. Can you bear the very thought? Your harvest is past, your summer is ended, and you are not saved, nay, you are lost and damned. "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still."

Make your cry heard *now*. Escape from death and damnation now. Get saved by faith in the blood of Christ now.

J. W. S.

## GOING WHERE?

**I**T is related of a dying infidel watchmaker in the Midlands that, during his last twenty-four hours, he repeated over and over again these words, "I'm going, I don't know where!"

The language of his life-time had been, "I'm going, I don't *care* where." But now that the weight of death's icy hand was upon him all his hardened carelessness and bravery forsook him; and had you investigated what was wrapped up in that dying cry, "I'm going, I don't know where," there is little doubt you would have found that it meant this, "I'm going, utterly overwhelmed with the question, **WHERE?**"

Who has not heard the excited cry of some

angry foot-passenger as he but narrowly escaped the wheels of a passing conveyance, "*Why don't you look where you are going?*" or the sharp retort of the ruffled driver, "Why don't *you* look where you are going?" One meaning, "Why be so careless as to do me an injury?" and the other, "Why be so reckless as to run the risk?"

One ship, we will suppose, is passing another on the high seas. They are sufficiently near to exchange greetings.

"Whither bound?" enquires the officer in charge of one of the vessels.

"*Don't know*," is signalled back from the captain of the other ship.

"He doesn't understand the question. Ask again—'Whither bound?'"

"*Don't know*," is again the answer returned.

"But is she not an English vessel of such a Line?"

"Yes."

"Then enquire once more 'Whither bound?'"

And then, as before, is signalled the same unaccountable answer, "*Don't know*"; only this time he adds, "NOBODY CAN KNOW!"

Who would not judge such a man to be more fit for a madhouse than for the command of a first-class British trader? or else that one so utterly reckless deserved to have his certificate cancelled the next port he called at?

But stay, my unconverted reader, What are all the fine ships in the world, with their costly cargoes into the bargain, in comparison with the value of *your one soul*? Yet if we cry "Whither bound?" would your answer be more satisfactory than this captain's? Consider.

We are reminded, as one year follows upon the

heels of another, how rapidly we are approaching the end of life's little voyage. The end? Yes, *think of it*—THE END!

No one on earth can assure you of even one more New-year's day in this world; and with this in view we cannot forbear raising the passenger's cry in your ears, and ask, "Why don't you *look* where you are going?" We do not raise the cry angrily, but we could not help raising it anxiously. The issues are so tremendous, the consequences of neglect so serious, that with all the earnestness we possess we would not only ask, "Why don't you *look* where you are going?" but, "Why don't you *know*? for you *may* know."

"I do not feel disposed to face such questions," you may possibly answer. Permit the writer, then, to face them for you, and in the light of God's word to make bare the root of the matter. The secret of the mischief is simply summed up in two words—*fear* and *unbelief*. To explain. Are you not conscious of the fact that to *look* where you are going would effectually spoil all your present enjoyment—the pleasures of sin? You shut your eyes, therefore, to what lies before you, and, willingly ignorant, go blindly sinning on. You are *afraid* to look. Again, if you *believed* the truth of Scripture about your God-forgetting worldly course, you would know well enough where you are going. In proof of this, carefully note the following statements:—

"When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth DEATH." (James i. 15.) "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of DEATH." (Prov. xvi. 25.) "Rejoice,

O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but *know* thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into JUDGMENT." (Eccles. xi. 9.)

What a ring of reality there is about these statements. What certain evidence that *death* and *judgment* are the inevitable results of a course of sin. But, alas! you close your eyes for fear of being made uncomfortable; you harden your heart in unbelief, and persistently sin on. Be honest with your own soul: is this not the truth? Are you not both *fearful* and *unbelieving*? And are not these the two great reasons why you are not a Christian to-day?

Some there are, believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, who know that their names are written in heaven—written in the *book of life*. Yours is written also—written in the *book of truth*. Nor is this any secret, for if you had the courage to look for yourself you could easily find it. It is in Rev. xxi. 8, in the verse which begins with

\* "The FEARFUL and UNBELIEVING,"  
and ends with  
"THE SECOND DEATH."

Is it not high time to awake, think you? Oh that God would bring you to repentance ere you lay this message aside. That "*going I don't care where*" kind of spirit won't do for a dying hour, depend upon it, and remember

"There are no pardons in the tomb,  
And brief is mercy's day."

GEO. C.

# TIDINGS OF LIFE AND PEACE.



## A ROYAL PROCLAMATION

A.D. 1887.

**I**N the year 1887 the Queen of England and Empress of India sent forth various proclamations in connection with the Jubilee of her reign. One of these held out an offer of pardon for deserters from her army. It ran thus:

“We do hereby grant our most gracious pardon to all men who, having before the date of this proclamation deserted, or absented themselves without leave from our regular land forces, and shall report themselves within two months of the date of this proclamation.”

Now there were three things worthy of note in this offer of pardon.

1. It was only for one special class.
2. It was with one specified condition.
3. It was available during one prescribed period of time.

As to the first, no doubt many a *civilian*, scanning that proclamation, would say like the writer, “Here’s a grand offer for somebody, but it doesn’t refer to me.” Many a *soldier*, too, might read it and

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say the same. One class alone was included in the gracious offer. It was for a *deserter*, and for him only, but it was for *every* deserter—"to all."

In the second place there was only one way of procuring the offered pardon. *He must "report" himself as a deserter.*

Thirdly. There was a limit to his opportunity—"within two months of the date of the proclamation."

How simply the way of royal pardon was opened up for the deserter. How welcome to those who had long wished to return, but dreaded the consequences. Now was the time. Such a chance would never come again. Queen Victoria could have no more jubilees. It must therefore be now or never.

Does not this remind my reader of another and far more momentous proclamation—one that proceeds, not from the clemency of any earthly sovereign, but from the very heart of God Himself. How worthy of our consideration therefore. Let us compare the two.

### 1. TO WHAT CLASS IS GOD'S PROCLAMATION SENT ?

"Go ye into *all the world*, and preach the gospel to *every creature*." (Mark xvi. 15.)

"*Whosoever believeth* in Him [Christ] shall receive remission of sins." (Acts x. 43.)

### 2. ON WHAT CONDITION IS THE BLESSING RECEIVED ?

"God looketh upon men, and if any say, I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not; He will deliver his soul from

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going into the pit, and his life shall see the light." (Job xxxiii. 27, 28.) If Jesus the Son of God took the sinner's place on the cross to secure his pardon, surely that guilty one cannot do less than *take the sinner's place* at His feet and confess his need of this pardon. Countless millions have thus come to Him already, and not one was turned empty away. With one voice they all can say, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." (Isaiah liii. 6.)

### 3. FOR HOW LONG DOES THE OFFER STAND GOOD?

It is here where the Queen's offer and God's so widely differ. "Two months" was the narrow limit of one: eighteen centuries have not seen the end of the other!

Then how much longer can *I* defer the acceptance of God's offer? The answer is serious, and, as you value your soul, mark it well—NOT ANOTHER DAY! "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. iv. 7.) "Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation." (2 Cor. vi. 2.)

But this was not the whole of this royal proclamation. It continued thus:

"We do hereby make further declaration that every offender herein referred to, who shall not avail himself of the pardon we most graciously offer, shall be held amenable to all the pains and penalties provided under the army act,"

Was there anything hard or unrighteous about this part of the announcement? Nothing. The offender, refusing to avail himself of so gracious an offer, proved himself richly deserving of "all the pains and penalties" due to his offence.

There is one important difference, however, between one who refuses pardon after violating English martial law, and one who aggravates the sin of wilful rebellion against God by the refusal of His divine forgiveness. The former might, perhaps, escape after all; but no possibility of escape for the latter, "*How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?*" (Heb. ii. 3.)

"When they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction shall come upon them . . . and *they shall not escape.*" (1 Thess. v. 3.) "See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, *much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven.*" (Heb. xii. 25.)

You have no time to waste, unforgiven reader. Pardon deferred to-day may be forfeited for ever; and when judgment at last shall fall upon your guilty head, whom will you find in heaven or earth or hell that will either blame God for your damnation, or pity you in receiving it? Forgive yourself you never will—never! That is certain. If contempt of justice in an English law court does not go unpunished, how will contempt of grace be treated at the bar of God?

It cost Queen Victoria little more than the paper her proclamation was printed on to send *her* offer of pardon; but God must deliver up to the suffering and death of the cross His only-begotten Son, ere the news of a righteous pardon can reach your ears and mine. And now that all



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this has been done on your behalf, can you still refuse so gracious an offer? There is, then, only one dread alternative, "all the pains and penalties" pronounced in God's holy word against Christ-rejectors must certainly be yours. Prepare yourself for the worst, for as God is true the worst will be yours: "Behold, ye *despisers*, and WONDER, and PERISH." (Acts xiii. 41.) But why will ye die?  
GEO. C.

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## FOREWARNED.

**I**T is well that all should clearly understand that when the Lord has come (an event most imminent), and has taken His believing people to Himself, the door will be closed, there and then, on all who have refused the call of grace and disbelieved the gospel.

Let there be no mistake on this solemn and certain fact.

Only to-day did I meet a lady who had the strange and unwarranted idea, that after the church was taken away those who were left should still have "probationary dealings"; in other words, that there is a further opportunity of salvation at that time for those who have turned a deaf ear to the Spirit of God to-day. A fearful delusion! Strange to say, I had read but shortly before seeing her the chapter which, of all others, destroys any such hope. In 2 Thess. i. 7, 8 we read, "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven . . . taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." Now this refers to the coming again of our Lord—His revelation—after the Church has been "caught up."

At that time she comes with Him. "When Christ, our life, shall appear [or be manifested], then shall ye also appear with Him in glory." (Col. iii. 4.) He is revealed in order to take vengeance on those who believed not the gospel. Is vengeance the same as probation?

Those who have believed the gospel through sovereign grace have gone to be with Him, but they who have disbelieved it are the objects of His vengeance. The classes are distinct, and their respective portion how widely different! Nay, there is not the faintest hope then for any who have deliberately refused the gospel. "They shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power." (2 Thess. i. 9.) "That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (2 Thess. ii. 12.) When the five foolish virgins came to the door they found it closed, nor do we read of its ever being opened again for them. Their "probation" was over, and their doom fixed. When the master of the house rises up and shuts to the door, those without will begin to cry, "Lord, Lord, open to us." But His reply is, "Depart from Me, ye workers of iniquity." (Luke xiii. 25, 27.) Their importunity was unavailing.

Ah, no! the Scriptures hold out no hope for the sinner at that time. It is not only folly, but it is to run in the teeth of God's revealed purpose to count on His mercy then.

No, my reader, if you refuse when God calls, don't be surprised if God refuses when you call. To trifle with grace to-day is to court wrath to-morrow. To assume that His written words do not mean exactly what they say only proves

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that the snare which deceived Eve, "Yea, hath God said," is that which has thus far deceived you. The enemy is the same, and he seeks your damnation, as he sought and compassed the ruin of man at first. Friend, God hath said, and He means it, that now (and only now) is the accepted time, and now the day of salvation. Dream not otherwise. Do not allow yourself to be persuaded with the false idea that when the door is shut it will at the same time be open, or that the awful word "*depart*" means just the same as the precious word "*Come*," or that God will show mercy when He plainly declares that they shall be punished with everlasting destruction. Do not turn things upside down, or put darkness for light, or bitter for sweet! The worst case of suicide is that of the soul.

To-day mercy is calling, and to-day the door is flung wide open. The blood of Jesus is speaking, the Spirit of God is working. These are golden days; but they quickly pass. Soon their sun will set; soon the night-clouds will gather. Lingerer, haste thee home! "Come now!"

J. W. S.

## KNOWING BEFORE FEELING.

**T**HERE are but two classes of people in this world—those who are saved and those who are not. What I mean by being not saved is, not knowing the forgiveness of sins, not having settled peace with God. Every reader of this paper can therefore test himself thus: Do I know *my* sins forgiven? Have *I* peace with God, and no dread of meeting Him?

How important to have divine certainty on such a solemn question. The soul's eternal destiny is involved in it, and a mistake, therefore, eternally fatal.

Many people think it highly presumptuous for any one in this life to say that he is saved, though the Scriptures are so plain upon the subject. Such was the case with a young man of highly-respectable appearance whom I once met. Having asked him whether he was saved or not, he not only told me he did not know, but asserted most fearlessly that no one could possibly be sure of such a thing; so I asked if I might be allowed to read him the following scripture; "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also YE ARE SAVED. . . . For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the scriptures." (1 Cor. xv. 1-4.) "So, you see, the Corinthians need not have remained in doubt." "Well," he exclaimed, "I must confess I never saw those verses in the Bible before." "But nevertheless they were there," said I, "when you asserted so fearlessly that it was impossible for any one to be certain upon such a subject."

Three grand facts were preached by the apostle; first, the death of Christ as that which met the judgment of God—the judgment which we as sinners must otherwise have borne in the lake of fire for ever; second, His burial as the absolute proof that death had actually taken place; and, thirdly, His resurrection as the proof and pledge of God's entire and infinite satisfaction in the

work thus accomplished. This was the preaching that saved the luxurious, licentious, worldly-minded Corinthians, and which, thank God, has saved millions more since then; and it is just as able to save you to-day, my reader, if you are seeking salvation—if the desire of your heart while you read this paper is, What must I do to be saved? God's answer is, "Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will shew you to-day." "STAND STILL" means that you are to cease your own restless activity, give up striving and working, put down your hands, let not a motion or movement be seen. "AND SEE" means that you are to open your eyes and behold the salvation of God brought to you through what Christ has done. Blessed be His name, the work is all done. With His latest breath He cried, "It is finished." And now you have not to say, "Who shall ascend up into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above) or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring Him up again from the dead), for the WORD IS NIGH THEE," etc. Accept then the Word thus brought to you—make it your own by believing it as a message from God to you, and salvation will be yours at this moment, and, like the eunuch, you will go on your way rejoicing, able to sing—

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

Perhaps my reader is like another whom I once met, who told me that he did believe, but that somehow he did not feel happy, his believing had not brought peace to his soul. But the question is, Did he truly believe? In whom and on what

was his faith based? Had he really received God's testimony concerning Christ and His finished work?

I said to him, "Suppose a rich friend in America had died, and in his will left you £1000. After your friend's death his solicitor made you aware of the fact by letter; upon opening and reading the letter would it not affect you?"

"It surely would," he thought. "How could I be unaffected by it?"

"How would you feel?" I enquired.

"Very glad," he replied.

"What would make you feel glad?" I asked.

"Why, the knowledge of the fact that my friend had left me £1000."

"But what brought you that knowledge?"

"The solicitor's letter to be sure."

"And what would produce the gladness?"

"Believing the letter of course."

Yes; the more simply he believed the letter the more happy he would be.

"Well now," I said, "if you believed the gospel—if you believed that Christ had taken the heavy load of your sins, and borne the judgment those sins must have brought upon you (and will if you believe not), would it not make you happy?" He trembled and turned pale. I brought him a little water, fearing he was going to faint. At this point we parted, not knowing whether he was saved or not, but hoping he might be led to receive and believe the glad news thus brought to him.

How solemn to be thus brought face to face with the Saviour and not receive Him! And are there not many such? Many of whom it could be said, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of

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God." But it matters little how near you are, if you are not inside. For if that ghastly visitor, called DEATH, should come suddenly, or the Lord from heaven appear, you would be found outside for ever, FOR EVER to wail, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and I am not saved." That such a doom may never be yours, dear reader, enter in through the open door NOW. "When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and He shall answer and say unto you, I KNOW YOU NOT whence ye are." (Luke xiii. 25.) P. W.

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## A TESTIMONY TO GOD'S ABOUNDING GRACE.

NEAR the end of the preaching one old man stood up to address the multitude. He was a remarkable-looking man. I was beside him before he rose. A dealer in rags would not have given more than sixpence for all the clothes he had on his person. He bore the marks and tokens of a "hard liver"—a confirmed drunkard. He spoke something to the following effect, as nearly as I can remember: "Gentlemen," and he trembled as he spoke. "Gentlemen, I appear before you this day as a vile sinner; many of you know me; you have but to look at me, and recognise the profligate of Broughshane; you know I was an old man hardened in sin; you know I was a servant of the devil, and he led me by that instrument of his, the spirit of barley. I brought my wife and family to beggary more than fifty years ago; in

short, I defy the townland of Broughshane to produce my equal in profligacy, or any sin whatever; but, ah! gentlemen, I have seen Jesus; I was born again on last night week; I am therefore a week old to-day; my heavy and enormous sin is gone, the Lord Jesus took it away, and I stand before you this day a monument of the perfect grace of God. I stand here to tell you that God's work on Calvary is perfect. He is not like an architect who makes a drawing of a building, looks at it, takes out this line and that, or makes some other alteration, and frequently alters all his plan, or even when the building is going on makes some other change; but God drew out the plan of salvation, and it was *complete*. He carried it out by His blessed Son Jesus, and it is all perfect; had it not been so, it would not have been capable of reaching the depth of iniquity of N——, the profligate nailer of Broughshane."

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### TRUE HAPPINESS.

**T**HOSE who know best what it is to meet with disappointment are those who have laboured most diligently to obtain real happiness in such a world as this; and in spite of the manifold testimonies to the fact, that disappointment always attends the search, it is still the one great aim and object of the man of the world to supply himself with something here that will yield him satisfaction—something to fill up the aching void which is, and always will be, in his heart, so long as he remains at a distance from God, who is the source and spring of all true happiness and joy, whether for time or for eternity.



## TRUE HAPPINESS.

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All do not follow after the same thing in order to reach the end in view. One man goes in for honour, another for wealth, another for sport and gambling, but with the same common result in the end, namely, the heart left still unsatisfied, and consequently sorrow and disappointment follow. Nor could it possibly be otherwise in a scene which is so entirely opposed to God, a scene still stained with the blood of His own beloved Son, who came down into it in richest grace to make known to ruined sinners all the love of His Father's heart, but who was "taken, and by wicked hands was crucified and slain." (Acts ii. 23.) And, dear reader, let me tell you that if you want to be truly happy, and able to anticipate, with calmness of soul, that day "when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ" (Rom. ii. 16), you must be brought in this the day of grace into personal contact with this "same Jesus" (now the exalted One at God's right hand) whom the world still refuses to own. Then, and not till then, will you know in your own soul what true happiness is.

It is said of the caliph Abdalrahman that he spent above three million pounds sterling upon his palace and gardens. In his seraglio there were 6300 persons, and he was attended to the field by a guard of 12,000 horse, whose belts and scimitars were studded with gold. One would naturally conclude that this man must have been happy with such earthly resources as these. But we will let him speak for himself. In an authentic manuscript that was found in his closet at his death he says, "I have now reigned about fifty years in victory or peace, beloved by

my subjects, dreaded by my enemies, and respected by my allies. Riches and honour, power and pleasure, have waited at my call, nor does any earthly blessing appear to have been wanting to my felicity. In this situation I have diligently numbered the days of pure and genuine happiness which have fallen to my lot—they amount to FOURTEEN! OH, MAN," he said, "PLACE NOT THY HAPPINESS IN THIS WORLD!"

Such, then, is the testimony of a king who had plenty of this world's goods. What a sad confession! Nor will yours be any brighter if you stay away from Christ. Had he known the Lord during those fifty years, what a different story he would have had to tell;

But we will now turn to another king, a far greater than he, and hear what he has to say with respect to the things in which, if your heart is still in the world, you at this moment are finding your pleasure. I refer to Solomon, "the king over Israel in Jerusalem." (Eccles. i. 12.) He says, after describing the various things in which he sought to find pleasure, "And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced in all my labour: and this was my portion of all my labour. Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun." (Chap. ii. 10, 11.) This is another attestation to the truth of what was said at the commencement, that "disappointment is always the result of searching to find out a portion in this world to satisfy the heart." It is a thing utterly impossible!

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Let me ask you in all affection, "Have not *you* been sadly disappointed in this world many a time? Did you not find that the little bit of pleasure looked forward to so long, but only realized the other day, yielded a great deal less satisfaction than you had anticipated? Yet you are still hoping for something in the near future, that will be better able to meet the longing desires of your poor Christless soul."

Oh, would to God that I could only persuade you to give up all your efforts to satisfy your deep, deep need, and come to Jesus, who alone can fill the heart to overflowing, because I am certain that you can never be truly happy until you know Him as your own personal Saviour! And, even though it were possible to obtain happiness here apart from Christ, what is it all worth when you think of the uncertainty of your life, or the probability that the Lord may come to take away all that are "His own"; yea, even before you lay aside this paper, and leave you in your sins in the world you love so well?

Time is short. The day of God's salvation is well-nigh spent, and soon, how very soon, this world with all its so-called sports and pleasures will be enveloped in the flames of judgment, when all that you are now finding your delight in will be taken from you for ever; and you, if then found in your sins, will be bound hand and foot, and cast into the unquenchable flames of eternal perdition. There—

"Light shall revisit thee no more;  
Life with its sanguine dream is o'er;  
Love reaches not yon awful shore:  
For ever sets thy sun."

Oh, sinner, think of your eternal portion, if you are determined to have the "pleasures of sin for a season" !

One minute more, then you and your pleasures may be separated for ever, and as you are turned by God into that dreadful abode of despair, nothing will cause you more anguish than the thought that salvation was offered to you so freely, but that you preferred to have your fling in this life and to forget the next.

But why should it be so, when God, in love, is still holding out salvation to the vilest sinner under heaven, who will bow before Him, owning his deep need, and accept what He is offering "without money and without price" ? (Isaiah lv. 1.)

"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." (Romans x. 9.)

Oh, how simple ! *Confess, believe*, and you are *saved* ! Then shall you realize that, "*Happy* is that people whose God is the Lord" (Psalm cxliv. 15) ; and then shall you look forward with joy to that moment when all who are Christ's shall be taken into the eternal enjoyment of those things "which God hath prepared for them that love Him." (1 Cor. ii. 9.)

"Happy they who trust in Jesus ;  
Sweet their portion is and sure,  
When the foe on others seizes,  
God will keep His own secure.  
Happy people !  
Happy, though despised and poor."

J. G.

# TIDINGS OF LIFE AND PEACE.



## NO MORE CONSCIENCE OF SINS.

FROM NOTES OF AN ADDRESS BY J. N. D.,  
DEC. 21, 1877. DUBLIN.

LET me turn back to the basis of all this. Christ bore my sins in His own body on the tree, and all is perfectly settled for ever. If it isn't, it never can be. It is done once for all—for ever. There is no other application of the work as regards putting away sins in God's sight. He does not impute sins, for the simple blessed reason that Christ has borne them, and is sitting at the right hand of God because it *is* done.

Many a true, honest soul sees only past sins settled; but what about sinning afterwards? Go to Calvin, and he will send you back to baptism. Evangelicalism would go back to the blood. Heb. x. gives us "the comers thereunto perfect," Heb. ix. 9, a perfect conscience before God. If I go into God's presence, I haven't the most distant thought that He imputes anything to me as guilt. That is what is wanting to so many souls. The worshippers once purged have no more conscience of *sins*—it doesn't say *sin*. The old stock (*i.e.*, the nature which produced the sins) is there still.

I go into the presence of God now and see Christ sitting there, because by one offering He has settled everything. (Chapter x. 11-14.) Those

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whom He has set apart to God, He has perfected for ever as to their consciences.

“For ever” means—never interrupted. If I come to God, Christ is always there, and my conscience always perfect.

One must go and humble oneself in the dust, if one has dishonoured Christ; but that does not touch the relationship.

It is in the holiest I learn how bad sin is. I could not be before God in light until the veil was rent. By one offering He has perfected my conscience. When I go to God, I find Christ, who bore my sins, sitting down at His right hand because He has done it. It makes me see what sin is a great deal more than anything else. I have got a new nature, and am in the light, as God is in the light. It turns the question from righteousness to holiness. As long as I am connecting it with a question of access, it is righteousness I want. Suppose righteousness settled, then I abhor the sin, because it is seen as what it is in itself. Well, but you say without holiness no one can see the Lord. Quite true; but you are looking for righteousness.

The clearance in that way is absolute. But there is another thing that gives the soul its place before God. Not only that Christ died for my sins, but that I died with Him.

J. N. D.

### GOD'S WELCOME TO THE SINNER.

**W**E read in the book of Esther, that whosoever ventured uninvited into the presence of the sovereign of Persia was put to death, unless the king held out the golden sceptre to the intruder;

this was the signal of his safety. On a certain occasion Esther the queen, at the peril of her life, approached the king unbidden, who graciously extended the sceptre towards her, and thus delivered her from death.

When one thinks of the holiness, majesty and glory of God, and the wretched, ruined, sinful state of man, it seems impossible that the latter should ever get into the divine presence; yet the gospel reveals that the sceptre, held in the hand of the King of heaven, is, in this day of grace, favourable to the sinner. He holds it for the purpose of giving life and peace to every one who seeks an interview with Him.

None could enter the presence of the Eastern king uninvited without incurring the penalty of death; but inspiration assures us that none can come to God to-day without obtaining eternal life; that, instead of holding aloof from man, and leaving him to perish, His invitation has gone out to every sinner beneath the sun—"Come!" and "*him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.*"

If it is strange intelligence to you that God gives a hearty welcome to a sinner, know that the explanation is found in the fact that He is seated on a blood-sprinkled throne; the blood of Jesus is before Him in all its untold value and preciousness, the sign of a perfect, sinless life offered up for the salvation of a ruined world; and while this is so it is impossible that He could do other than extend the golden sceptre—signal of acceptance—towards every perishing sinner that flees to Him. Do you not know, my reader, that Christ's blood was shed to enable God to do this, and that He is acting righteously towards His Son in receiving and forgiving sinful men?

The mighty monarch, whose kingdom reaches from India to Ethiopia, sits upon his royal throne, in the royal house, on the third day.

In her apartments Queen Esther sits, troubled and perplexed. Her own fate and that of her nation trembles in the balance, for the king's commandment has gone forth for the destruction of the Jewish nation, of which she is a member. An audience with the king is absolutely necessary, yet how shall she obtain one? The inflexible law of the Persians condemns to death whosoever enters the royal presence uncalled. What shall she do? If she goes not in, she dies; if she enters, she dies, unless—and here is a gleam of hope—unless the monarch exercises his prerogative, and pardons the intrusion. Her mind is made up; she will venture into the august presence unbidden. “If I perish, I perish,” she says, and, rising up, she enters the royal house, and draws near to him. The king's eye falls upon her. It is a fateful moment. Shall she live or die? Her eager gaze is fixed upon the sceptre in the king's hand. Will it move towards her? Ah, yes! See! in kingly condescension he stretches it towards the trembling intruder. She touches it; all is well. Esther is safe.

Sinner, *you* need not hesitate to go into the presence of heaven's great King. *There* the question of life or death has not to be decided; there is no uncertainty as to the issue of *that* interview. *Life only is to be found there.*

It is true that Sinai's law pronounces a terrible curse upon every transgressor. It is true also that you have violated that law, and merited that curse. But come with me for a moment to the place where Jesus died. There, on that accursed



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tree, the Son of God bore the curse that *you* might live and not die.

Men looked at that cross, and saw a Man dying the death of a criminal. God looked, and beheld His beloved Son suffering shame and enduring judgment in the stead of sinful man. Then from that cross went up to heaven a mighty plea for sinners; it reached the ears of the God of Light, and was forthwith answered by the rending of the veil. The gates of the heavenly paradise were thenceforth open to a lost world.

The throne of judgment is converted into a throne of grace. From the lips of the God of love proceeds the sweet word, "COME." Its sound reaches to the uttermost parts of the earth; it penetrates the hearts of myriads of fallen men and women. Hope springs up where despair had reigned. It is life instead of death; blessing instead of cursing; salvation in place of judgment. Wonderful news! Listen, ye travellers towards a lost eternity,

## GOD RECEIVES SINNERS!

Oh, my readers, believe it! You will never perish by going to Him. *You will perish if you don't.* Esther had only a faint *hope* that Ahasuerus might spare her life. There is a divine *certainty* that *you* will be accepted by God. His truth and righteousness stand pledged to receive you. However much you may have merited His wrath, you will find nothing but mercy. Though your sins are as scarlet, you will leave His presence whiter than snow.

Yes, wonderful as it may appear, it is perfectly true that to-day the presence of God is the only

refuge and place of safety for the sinner. An earthly law may guard the presence of an earthly potentate from the intrusion of unbidden subjects; but the holy presence of the King of heaven is open to all. This dispensation is God's great reception-day. Sinners are invited to approach Him. Have *you* had an audience with Him yet? Have *you* drawn near and touched the golden sceptre held out so lovingly to you by the God you have sinned against? In plain language, Have *you* ever come to Him in the quiet and privacy of your chamber, and told Him what a poor, ruined wreck of a sinner you are, but that your trust is in the Saviour's blood? If you have, then you have touched the sceptre; you are saved.

But, alas! millions still distrust God, and avoid having to do with Him as they would avoid death itself.

Oh, ye despairing sinners, did ye never read those marvellous words in 2 Cor. v. 20—"Be ye reconciled to God"?

Who is the pleader here? Man with God? Nay, God with man. It is not the rebel seeking reconciliation with the offended king, but the offended God beseeching the rebel to be reconciled to Him. It is not the sinner beseeching God, but God beseeching the sinner. It is strangely wonderful, and how little understood. But this is *grace*, dear reader—the grace of God towards a lost world. Have *you* obeyed the gracious summons? If you have not, be persuaded and come at once. "My sins! my sins!" you exclaim. Ah, you forget the BLOOD! "The holiness of God is so infinite and unchanging," you say. True; but the BLOOD is before Him, *that precious blood*

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*whose value is equal to the infinite claims of His holiness.* He whose righteousness demanded such a sacrifice ere the great sin question could be settled, has delivered a mighty testimony to its value in the gracious welcome He accords to every returning prodigal.

Myriads have fled to that place where, but for the *blood*, judgment must have met them; but instead of judgment they have found the sceptre in God's holy hand pointing towards them, blessed symbol of all-powerful mercy, of forgiving love exercised in righteousness. *The blood of Jesus has put it there*, and the blessed God finds His happiness in extending that sceptre towards every sinner who approaches Him, hating and confessing his sins, and trusting to the blood.

Queen Esther came before the king attired in her royal apparel. She stood before him in what belonged to her. She appeared before the throne in her proper character. She knew the haughty Ahasuerus well, and had evidently weighed over in her mind what was likely to touch his heart, and the sequel proved how wisely she had acted. As the lovely intruder stood there, robed in the rich attire of royalty, Ahasuerus looked towards her. Forthwith he recognized his beautiful queen, and the sceptre straightway made the longed-for movement.

You, my fellow-sinner, if you desire salvation, must come before God in your proper character—that of a *sinner*. You must appear before Him in what belongs to you—*your sins*. Do not seek to be what you are not. Go not in the way of Cain, who approached God with a gift, ignoring the fact that he was a sinner, and that divine righteousness demanded satisfaction. Make not the mistake of

the Pharisee, who, when he came into God's temple, thanked Him that he was not as other men were. Come to Him this moment just as you are, a lost one, with nothing but your sins and your need, and God will look at you and will say, That is a poor sinner for whom my Son died, and pardon will instantly be yours.

W. H. S.

### WHAT IF IT'S TRUE AFTER ALL?

**T**HE cholera was threatening our shores in its march westward. With leaded type the newspapers were drawing attention to its ravages and progress.

In a busy office a short conversation took place between the intervals of work.

"How do you account for the fact that the last time the cholera visited England the Roman Catholic priests were more attentive than the ministers of the different Protestant denominations in visiting any of their flock stricken down by the disease?"

"That is easily accounted for. The Roman Catholics believe that unless a dying man is confessed, and has extreme unction administered to him, he will pass, not merely to purgatory, but to an eternal hell. Protestants, on the other hand, believe that no extra preparation at the hour of death is needed—that faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour, is enough. 'Justification by faith' was Luther's watchword and battle-cry."

"Ah! *I* don't believe in an eternal hell," said the first speaker, drifting away from the original

topic. "I could not believe that God *could* put people into an eternal hell."

"What is your ground for disbelief on that head?"

Imagine the surprise of the questioner when, instead of hearing his friend's belief being based upon God's word, or at least an attempt to construe Scripture to support his theory, he heard him answer, "Oh! a voice within me tells me God *could* not put people into an eternal hell."

Quick as lightning the thought passed through my mind, The voice within us incites to murder, theft, lying, anger—"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer. xvii. 9.)

"Well," said I, "at any rate the Bible is plain enough in its statements. It speaks of *"a great gulf fixed,"* and no *possible* passage from hell to heaven—of the place *"where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched"*; of *"the blackness of darkness FOR EVER."*

"Come, come, that is *your* explanation. Someone else will explain that differently."

"It is no question of explanation. It is what the Bible plainly states. Besides which there is no necessity for you to go to an eternal hell, or even to a purgatory, if such existed. If you read your Bible you can learn the way to heaven."

A third young man now broke in and said, as the conversation was brought to a close, "What if it's true after all?"

Evidently neither of my business friends were easy about the matter. "The voice within" was not sufficient for the one; the vague thought of its being all too "true after all" disturbed the other. Thank God, the third had trusted the Saviour, and for him sudden death would be sudden glory.

“What if it’s true after all?” Ah! what? The vast empty profession, that has leavened the Church, cannot tolerate a doctrine which makes them uneasy. They will shut their eyes and stop their ears, and strive to believe that these things are not true after all.

How awful, when the dark shadows of an endless night gather round the dying bed, for the deceived soul to pass away into eternity, to find he has willingly practised upon himself the most cruel of all deceptions.

But, though such vast numbers are deceived by Satan, and preach that God is *love*, ignoring the truth that He is also *light*, the word of God knows *NO* change on that solemn subject. Above the strife and babel of tongues the silent page of Scripture speaks unfalteringly here. Man may change his doctrines, but the letter of Scripture knows no change. From the busy printing presses of Oxford, Cambridge, London, are issued copies of the word of God. Not one word is altered. They still tell that God is love; that He gave His Son to die on the accursed tree; that the vilest sinner who believes on Him, is saved; but, on the other hand, they still tell that “he that believeth not shall be damned”; that on the last great day, “Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire”; that it “burneth with fire and brimstone.”

God has spoken. Shall fallen, sinful man dare to impose his strictures upon the living God! From end to end of God’s blessed Book the note of warning is struck again and again.

Writing of the fact of so many believing in an eternal heaven, whilst denying an eternal hell, a

## A TIMELY DELIVERANCE.

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celebrated infidel says, "For our part *we* believe in neither; if we believed in either, we should believe in both. If one is true the other is as inseparable from it as the Siamese twins. If true, they must be eternal correlatives of each other." So an infidel writes. The logic is plain and to the point. There is nothing between taking the Bible as it stands, or refusing it altogether. Oh! the folly of taking what merely pleases oneself and leaving the rest.

Friend, I have sought briefly to lay eternal realities before you, let me leave you with one word. *You must be saved in this world, or damned in the next.* Take your choice, but let me pray of you to "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." (Acts xvi. 31.) Amidst the brooding darkness of Calvary, by bitter shame and agony, death and blood-shedding, the blessed Son of God has proved His deep compassion and love to poor sinners like you and me. "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" (Heb. ii.) The work is done. Atonement has been made. All that remains for you is to accept Christ as your personal Saviour. Do so before you lay this paper down. A. J. P.

## A TIMELY DELIVERANCE.

**W**ELL was it for the *Danemark* and her freight of human souls that the *Missouri* hove in sight on the afternoon of the 4th of April, 1889. The sudden breaking of the shaft had torn a hole in the ship's bottom, causing her to leak in a way that sent dismay into the hearts of all on board. Many hundred miles from land, in a sinking

vessel, no sail in sight, the ship gradually subsiding, with 735 precious lives in his charge, was a gloomy enough outlook for the *Danemark's* captain. What was to be done? A gale blowing heavily, it seemed utterly impracticable to lower the boats; every moment the hungry waves threatened to engulf the ill-fated vessel. Promptly the captain decided upon his course of action.

"We must put out a signal of distress, and wait for succour from some passing ship."

Dear reader, have *you* ever, in the history of your SOUL, found yourself in similar circumstances? The helpless and perilous position of the *Danemark* may fitly illustrate the condition of one who has been awakened to a sense of his need and guilt in the presence of a holy God. A case or two may be cited as instances in the New Testament. In Luke xviii. 10-14 we read of a poor, broken-hearted publican, whose deep self-abasement would not permit him to "lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven." He had learnt his need, and he had only *one resource*; if *that* failed him, all was over. "God be merciful to ME THE SINNER." Could such an appeal be made in vain? NEVER. Listen to the grand sequel, "*This man went down to his house JUSTIFIED.*"

Acts xvi. speaks of a jailer at Philippi, who, in his dire extremity, was ready to terminate his existence; he too, like the publican, was fully awakened to his deep need; but, unlike him, he saw no ray of hope to lighten up the gloom that enshrouded his soul. And was he left to die in dark despair? Ah! no. His need was anticipated and met from a quarter he little expected. A heart of infinite love was working out His purposes of grace towards this poor captive of Satan.



"Do thyself no harm: for we are all here," say the Lord's messengers. "What must I do to be **SAVED**?" is the agonizing cry from the depths of a convicted conscience. Swiftly and sweetly comes the heaven-directed message, "*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be **SAVED**.*"

But perhaps the reader has not yet been brought to this point; you have sailed smoothly along life's ocean; you have met with no storms; you see no danger ahead; the horizon looks bright and fair. But stay. Did the captain of the *Danemark* anticipate such an ending to his voyage when his vessel left her moorings at Copenhagen? Surely not. Was he not provided with chart, compass, and rudder? Were not his sails, steering-gear and rigging all in trim condition when he put out to sea? Without doubt. *And yet his ship became a total wreck.* Perhaps he thought he was prepared for every emergency; if so, what a mistake he made. When the deafening crash of the falling shaft fell upon his ear, how quickly he awoke to the fact that he was in *terrible jeopardy*. And may there not be, dear unsaved reader, in *your* life's voyage, unforeseen possibilities against which you have never made provision? Remember that you and I have to render an account of ourselves to God. (Romans xiv. 12.) Will your past history bear the keen scrutiny of His holy eye? for "*God requireth that which is past.*" (Eccles. iii. 15.) What about that accumulated load of sins from your childhood upwards? Sins of thought and word and deed, all faithfully chronicled by an unerring hand. Ah! friend, you are a **SINNER**, and as such deserve **JUDGMENT**, "for the wages of sin is **DEATH**." (Romans vi. 23.) You need deliverance, you need

a Saviour; and it is that your heart may be attracted to yonder "Man in the glory" we thus seek to bring your true condition before you.

After many hours of agonizing suspense the *Danemark's* crew beheld, to their joy, a steamer making rapidly towards them. The strangers quickly perceived that if a rescue was to be effected no time was to be lost. Swiftly, as brave and willing hands could swing them, the *Missouri's* boat put out to the rescue. Although a heavy sea was running, and the task seemed almost a hopeless one, the seamen laboured on with a will. Many a tough battle they had with the angry waves; still they persevered; now in a deep chasm of the sea, next moment on the foaming crest of a huge billow. Again and again the little craft ploughed its way through the surging waters, until all the occupants of the sinking vessel were safe on the steamer's deck. The rescue was effected without a mishap; all honour to the noble men who, in the face of such immense difficulties, succeeded in saving so many of their fellow-creatures from a watery grave.

And now, dear reader, have *you* acted as wisely as the *Danemark's* captain did when once he fully realised his position? Have you learnt that *your* case as a sinner is so desperate, that unless you meet with a powerful *Deliverer* you must inevitably PERISH? for, let me tell you, this is the plain, unvarnished truth. The peril of that emigrant ship was great, but it was as *nothing to yours*. Your weal or woe for eternity is trembling in the balance. Are you prepared to face that storm of judgment which will presently sweep over this guilty world on account of its sin and its rejection of God's Son? Who will shield you

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from its pitiless blast? Oh, be wise! "Seek ye the Lord *while He may be found*, call ye upon Him *while He is near*." (Isaiah lv. 6.) *Hoist your signal of distress*, dear unsaved one. Jesus, the Friend of the friendless, the Saviour of sinners, is ready, able and willing to save you *this very moment*. He has borne sin's judgment in His own person on Calvary's tree, and God is thus FREE to dispense GRACE "through RIGHTEOUSNESS unto ETERNAL LIFE by Jesus Christ." (Rom. v. 21.) "Be it known unto you . . . that through *this Man* is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and *by Him* ALL THAT BELIEVE are justified from *all things*." (Acts xiii. 38, 39.) G. F. E.

## SAVED BY GRACE ALONE.

THERE is nothing more natural to us than the thought of *meriting* God's favour by some goodness of our own. That God should be favourable toward us, when there is nothing in us to win His favour, is entirely outside the reckonings of the unrenewed mind.

A little girl once said to her uncle, during a conversation about the conversion of the dying thief, "I should think, uncle, the reason God saved one thief and didn't save the other, was, that the thief He saved hadn't stolen quite so much as the other." She couldn't imagine anyone getting the blessing without there being *some* redeeming feature in his case. And in this thought she was by no means alone, for multitudes of *professing* Christians in the present day think the same. Yet it is plainly stated otherwise in the Holy Scriptures. "God commendeth His love

toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. v. 8.) "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us." (Titus iii. 5.) "For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." (Eph. ii. 8, 9.)

It is the custom in most of the herring-fishing stations in Shetland to pay the coopers, who make barrels for the salted fish, a certain rate of wages per week whether the fishing is good or bad. Three or four years since, those coasts were so infested with the destructive dog-fish that the herring season was a complete blank. Still the coopers had to be paid according to contract, fish or no fish. One of these coopers said to the writer, "I feel thoroughly ashamed to go and draw my wages week by week, for I know I have not *earned* them." He knew that when the merchant engaged him, he expected that there would be something done by him to *merit* the weekly wage, or he would not have hired him.

Not so with God. He knew that we should have nothing wherewith to merit that which He so richly held out to us. Therefore it is that the gospel which proclaims these blessings—the gospel sent "to every creature which is under heaven"—is called "*the gospel of the grace of God.*" (Acts xx. 24.) Thus could *the chief of sinners* testify, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first [the very nation that crucified His beloved Son], and also to the Greek." (Romans i. 16.) Yes; salvation is entirely of grace, without a single merit on our side. We must be saved through Another's deservings or for ever reap our own.

GEO. C.

## TIDINGS OF LIFE AND PEACE.



### WHAT IS YOUR SOUL WORTH ?

A——, a light-hearted, merry girl of about seventeen, was asked to go and hear an evangelist who was visiting the town of P——. She made excuse, that as it was Easter Monday she did not intend spending it in that fashion. However, after much entreaty, she reluctantly consented to go. The preacher spoke that evening from Mark viii. 36, 37—"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?" He said, "I will ask you a question, 'What is your soul worth?'" A—— sat and listened. She had been brought up from infancy in the fear of God, but now, at the age of seventeen, she meant to go in for the world, which, in all its alluring brightness, was opening up before her. She meant to enjoy life cost what it might, gain a position, and go in for the riches of this world; therefore, as the words of the text rang out through the silence of the meeting, she closed her heart against them. The meeting over, A—— went home, apparently as light-hearted as usual. She laughed and talked at the supper-table with a great show of fun and mirth, but underneath that laughter there was an aching void, and she tried to conceal it. *You*

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may possibly know, my unsaved reader, what it is to try to laugh off the effects of some word which God has sent home to your conscience. Oh, the hollowness of such mirth!

A—— tried that night to satisfy conscience by kneeling down and “saying prayers,” but it did not answer; for in the stillness of the night came the words, “*What is your soul worth?*” She tried to forget them in sleep, but only to awake with a start to hear again, “What is your soul worth?” She thought, “This is terrible. Am I never to get rid of this?” Still, in the silence of the night, came the words, “What is your soul worth?” “What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” The crisis had come. “I cannot stand this any longer,” she said to herself. “This question has to be faced. I must decide *now*, either for Christ or for the world. Which shall it be?” Alone there with God, A—— looked beyond the narrow limits of time out into the boundless ocean of eternity, and as she gazed onward she plainly saw there was nothing to be compared with the worth of her soul. Alone there with God she accepted His Christ, and found in His love that satisfying portion which all the world cannot give.

And now, my reader, have you faced this question, “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?” What is *your soul* worth? For what are you selling it? Is it for a little passing pleasure? Is it for money? What is it? Girl of fashion, do this world’s latest fancies stand between you and the Saviour? Consider, I beseech you, whether any of these things will avail you

## NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL.

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on your death-bed. The fashion of this world passeth away. Man of business, do your plans for profit keep you from Christ? If called hence to-day, will money pay your passage into heaven? Never! There is one price for your entrance there, and that is a price far above the value of anything you can offer God, even the precious blood of Christ. "Without shedding of blood is no remission." But, thank God, the blood has been shed.

Think, therefore, what that soul of yours is worth when Christ would pay such a price for its redemption, even His own life-blood.

Despise that blood, and you must perish *for ever*. There is no other way into eternal life. If you reject God's way of salvation now, will the ill-chosen, trifling things of time afford you any satisfaction, as, in *a lost eternity*, you look back upon them? May God help you to face this question, "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?"

R. M.

## NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL.

BY THE LATE WILLIAM TROTTER.

"**I** AM not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Paul, who said this, might well say it, for he had well proved it, and was not speaking on a subject of which he knew little, for he had felt its power himself; and such was its power upon him that it caused him to despise all dangers and distressing circumstances; and after enduring years of trouble, we find him

declaring, "I am not ashamed of the gospel." When I heard Mr. S—— speak about the blood of Christ, I felt that that precious blood was the very core of the gospel which Paul knew and preached, and in which he gloried. But why was he not ashamed of the gospel? Because "it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," and may God give each of you to understand that reason, if you have never understood it before. Yes, the gospel becomes the power of God to the sinner of seventy years, as well as to the child of two or three just lisping the name of Jesus. When the heart drinks in the story of that precious blood, and that *whosoever* will may be sprinkled therewith—any of Adam's guilty race, rich or poor, young or old—"it is the power of God unto salvation to *every one* that believeth."

Oh that God may seal that gospel on the heart of *every one* here! Is there any one saying, I see others converted and going home rejoicing. I see many a countenance beaming with delight as they sing—

"I do believe, I can believe,  
That Jesus died for me,"

but I am an exception—nothing seems to reach me. Oh that this "*every one*" may, by the Spirit of God, be applied to you!

Now, like Paul, I can declare to you that "I am not ashamed of the gospel." And first, because it has been the power of God to *my own* salvation. I dare not speak to others if I did not know the power of that precious blood. When I was twelve years old the gospel of Christ became the power of God to my soul; and of all things I regret in my past life,



I never for a moment regretted that the Lord brought me *so early* to Himself, and have never wished I had spent a few more years in sin and guilt and misery. Secondly, I am not ashamed of the Gospel because soon after my own conversion *it became the power of God* to the salvation of one who lay nearest my heart—the playmate of my boyish days—my own dear sister. As it was during the time of revival, it was the custom, in the locality where we lived, that all who were anxious about their souls should take seats on benches specially set apart for them. Now, remember, I do not say anything as to the right or wrong of it, I merely tell you that such was the custom. One evening I had the pleasure of seeing my dear sister go and sit on “the anxious seat,” and her going encouraged others to go too, who found peace long before she did. She was a long time in deep distress, so that we almost despaired of her ever finding rest to her weary soul. But one evening I heard one minister say to another, “Well, *she* has found peace at last”; and I felt it was my sister of whom they spoke. And so it was. She had really believed the gospel, which was the power of God to her soul’s salvation. And exactly twelve months after that, my dear sister was so seriously injured by fire that she expired after thirty hours of great suffering; but during that time what did she say about the gospel? When an aged Christian friend asked her, “Do you find the Lord with you?” a heavenly smile lit up her fearfully altered countenance, and she answered, “Yes; and His presence makes a paradise; for where *He* is there is heaven.” Ah! what must the gospel be when that precious one

could rejoice therein at such a time. In the third place, I am not ashamed of the gospel because it became the power of God to *a dear child of mine*, who died before he was sixteen. I should just like to recite to you, dear children, a few lines which comforted my aching heart when I returned from the funeral of my boy, and which have since been printed. He had been ill before his last illness, and expected death. However, he recovered for a while, and during the interval wrote the following lines—

“Oh ! I have been at the brink of the grave,  
And stood on the edge of its deep, dark wave ;  
And I thought, in th’ still, calm hours of night,  
Of those regions where all is ever bright ;  
And I feared not the wave  
Of the gloomy grave,  
For I knew that Jehovah was mighty to save.

“And I have watch’d the solemn ebb and flow  
Of life’s tide, which was fleeting sure tho’ slow ;  
I’ve stood on the shore of eternity,  
And heard the deep roar of its rushing sea ;  
Yet I feared not the wave  
Of the gloomy grave,  
For I knew that Jehovah was mighty to save.

“And I found that my only rest could be  
In the death of the One who died for me ;  
For my rest is bought with the price of blood,  
Which gushed from the veins of the Son of God ;  
So I fear not the wave  
Of the gloomy grave,  
For I know that Jehovah is mighty to save.”

Ah ! surely I may well say, I am not ashamed  
of the gospel.”

W. T.

### WHAT A FOOL I WAS !

**I**T is when we get into the light and liberty of the gospel that we see the folly of all our previous attempts to save ourselves; and when the “glorious

gospel of the blessed God" is known in power in our souls we discover that Jesus did not come down from heaven to earth to help us save ourselves, nor to give us a lift on the road to heaven, but to *save* us, as it is written, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to **SAVE** sinners; of whom I am chief." (1 Tim. i. 15.)

This is very clear. He came to save us, He Himself being the Saviour.

There are a great many souls, however, who suppose they have to keep the law to be saved. As in the apostles' days, so in ours, there are many law-teachers, and, by such, people are deceived.

But it is well to understand why the law was given. An omniscient God could never have given an absolutely perfect law to a fallen, guilty creature like man, with the thought of his being able to keep it, and by it to get saved. Let us see what it is.

1. "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith." (Gal. iii. 24.) The law, then, was a schoolmaster until Christ came. A schoolmaster is to give instruction, and the law imparted the knowledge of sin; "for by the law is the knowledge of sin."

2. It is spoken of as "the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones." (2 Cor. iii. 7.)

3. Also as "the ministration of condemnation." It had a glory, but it was only glorious in the way of upholding the authority of God, of exposing the sinner's sins, and pronouncing his condemnation. *It could not save.*

4. "The law worketh wrath." (Rom. iv. 15.) That which can only work wrath for the sinner cannot be the means of saving him.

5. "Cursed is every one that continueth not in ALL things which are written in the book of the law to do them." (Gal. iii. 10.) A curse, then, rests upon the head of all who are attempting to get saved by the law.

6. "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." (James ii. 10.) "One point," mark you, dear reader. Have you not offended in "one point"? Then you are guilty of all.

7. "What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." (Rom. vii. 7.) This finds us all out. A man may be outwardly blameless, but, in that heart of his, lust dwells. It is as easy for man to covet what is not his own as it is for him to breathe. The law forbids it, but man covets in spite of the prohibition, and comes under its condemnation. "The commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death"; for it not only forbids overt acts of sin, but also the workings of the evil nature within.

The law may be viewed in three different ways: as a divine mirror, a divine standard, and a divine plumb-line.

If you had, for instance, been working among coal, and your face had become very black, and on reaching your house you went to your looking-glass, you would expect the glass to speak the truth. And what would be the truth? The truth would be that your face was black and needed washing.

Exactly so with the sinner. He draws near to this divine mirror—the holy law of God—and he discovers his true moral condition, that he is

exceeding sinful, and needs cleansing. But can the law cleanse him? No more than the looking-glass can wash the man's face. "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.)

In all regiments they have a regimental standard. A hundred men may wish to join, but if they do not come up to the standard they are rejected. The standard can't help them, it can only discover the fact that they are too short.

The law is a divine standard. Let the whole human family pass under it, and the fact is discovered that each and all have come short, for all have sinned, the whole world standeth guilty before God. (Rom. iii. 19-23.) The law cannot help them, it can only assure them of the fact of their shortcomings, and that they need a Saviour outside of themselves. That Saviour is the risen Son of God.

A number of workmen, we will suppose, are building a wall. After a while it is finished, and the foreman is well pleased with the work. Much to his annoyance, however, someone declares the wall to be crooked.

"No it is not!" replies the foreman.

"Yes, it is."

"Well, how are you going to prove it?"

"Adjust a plumb-line."

A plumb-line is brought and adjusted. Everything depends upon the plumb-line. The plumb-line cannot make the wall straight or crooked, but it can reveal whether it is straight or crooked. As soon as the plumb-line is adjusted it reveals the fact that the wall is crooked. The fault was not in the plumb-line, but in the wall.

The law of God is a divine plumb-line. Man talks about his goodness and merits, and a thousand other traits, but on adjusting the moral plumb-line the solemn fact is made known that he is a crooked sinner. He may quarrel with God's line, but the fault is not there, but in himself, as it was in the crooked wall. "The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. . . . For we know that the law is spiritual: *but I am carnal, sold under sin.*" (Rom. vii. 12, 14.)

It is quite clear, then, that while the mirror, the standard and the plumb-line may render us valuable service in discovering to us our need, it is all they can do; they cannot meet that need.

So the soul-remedy is outside of self and of law altogether. The sinner is without strength to keep the law, and the law, by its very nature, cannot help the sinner.

Faith is an outward look. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." (John i. 29.) "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." (1 Peter iii. 18.) "Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." (Isaiah xlv. 22.) "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." (Acts xvi. 31.)

Meetings were held in the State of Minnesota last winter, when a dear soul, after years of vain effort to keep the law to save himself, got free, seeing that "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." (Gal. iii. 13.)

He ceased his doings *for* salvation, trusted Christ who had died in his stead, and was saved.

## THE SINKING SAILOR AND THE ROPE. 91

Now, being saved, he could not do enough for the One who had redeemed him.

At the close of a meeting, a little afterwards, he said to a fellow-Christian, "*What a fool I was to think that I could keep the law to get saved.*"

The law given by Moses can only condemn. "But grace and truth came by Jesus Christ"; and, blessed be God, He can save even the vilest.

E. A.

## THE SINKING SAILOR AND THE ROPE.

SOME years ago a sailor, while on a voyage, fell overboard, and was in danger of being drowned.

As it was impossible instantly to stop the ship, the captain hastily threw a rope, which the sailor seized, and by it he was drawn safely upon the deck.

But so desperate had been his grasp, that the strands of the rope were imbedded in the flesh of his hands.

What was the cause of such eagerness?

1. *The sailor was in imminent danger, and he knew it.* Probably he could not swim, and therefore was quite helpless in the deep ocean.

The sinner that has not yet laid hold upon Christ as a Saviour is sinking in the dark waters of sin. "The soul that sinneth it shall die." "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God."

2. *The sailor could not possibly save himself.* Of this he was fully aware, and so he gladly seized the rope that was thrown him. Neither can a sinner work out his own salvation. The sin once committed cannot be erased from God's books by

reformation, nor washed away with tears of repentance.

*The sailor saw in the rope his only way of escape from drowning.* Christ Jesus is the only Saviour of the lost, for there is no other Name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.

3. *The sailor seized the rope eagerly, because he naturally desired deliverance from death.* Thus the awakened sinner, fearing he shall sink into an eternal hell, eagerly lays hold upon the Saviour. The language of his heart is—

“Other refuge have I none,  
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee.”

4. *The sailor seized the rope instantly, because there was not a moment to spare.* It is madness to defer coming to Christ, for “now is the accepted time,” and “thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.” Who would lie under sentence of death when the prison doors are open, and there is an opportunity of escape?

5. *The sailor was not so foolish as, for a moment, to suppose the captain would be unwilling to save him, for had he been so he would not have thrown the rope.* It would be equally absurd for the sinner to doubt God’s willingness to save. Had He not desired our salvation He would never have given His Son, nor would He send His servants to preach the gospel.

“As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live.”

6. *Though the rope was thrown within the sailor’s reach, had he not laid hold upon it he would evidently have perished.* The Gospel rope is now close to the most polluted sinner.

Stretch forth the hand of faith, dear reader,



## HIS LAST PRAYER.

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and seize it ere it be too late. "To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."

An anxious soul may say, "*But how can I know that I have taken hold of the rope? In other words, How can I be sure that I believe in Jesus?*" Well, hast thou in conscious need turned to the Lord Jesus for salvation, as did the dying thief? Is He thy only hope? Hast thou in thy heart's distress directed thy cry to Him?

If so, it is evident that thou dost believe in Jesus; for the Scripture saith, "How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed?"

"Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." (Rom. x. 13.)

Trust then, unhesitatingly, that sure promise of His, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." (John vi. 37.) "Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him." C. H.

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"HIS LAST PRAYER."

**W**E stood on the sea shore the other day, watching the return of the Walton life-boat. Many an anxious one was there inquiring if any were saved. To our dismay only one was brought to shore, and he had perished on the wreck.

There comes a moment in every man's life when God speaks for the last time. Such a moment had arrived for this poor sailor. He had, to all appearance, gone down into the hold of the ship to pray; for his lifeless body was found kneeling.

One of the life-boat crew remarked that he had gone to pray *his last prayer*; and there can be

little doubt that he had prayed his last prayer in this world.

What a moment! And has this, my reader, no voice for you? You are born for endless years, and to-day may decide your destiny. *God* is speaking, and this is what He says to you, "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." (2 Cor. vi. 2.) Oh that you would wake up to your soul's eternal welfare! I beseech you, be in earnest, while the door of repentance is open to you.

Who can imagine all that it must have been to this poor fellow, whether saved or unsaved?

Was he a Christian? Then his little opportunity for confessing Christ was over; his day of self-denying service for his Lord was at an end. Who can describe such a look back, at such a moment? What mingled regrets and rejoicings!

But then, what a look forward! A few more heavings of the foundering vessel, and he would find himself in the presence of the One who had loved him and given Himself for him, beyond the wrecking storms of life's little voyage.

Yes, if a Christian, he had certainly prayed *his last prayer*.

But if not, what a look back! Sins without number, unforgiven, rising like hosts of overwhelming foes around him; opportunities beyond count, recklessly wasted; grace slighted, salvation neglected, Christ rejected. While if he cast his eye forward, a day of righteous reckoning, a lost eternity! In such case, however, it would be hard to say that he had prayed his last prayer, except his last *on earth*. Did not the man in hell cry, "Have mercy on me"? He did. Not that it was of any avail. It was too late to pray to God,

## A PARADOX.

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and utterly useless to pray to Abraham. Still he prayed.

Oh, dear reader, could I give you a taste of the unfathomable love of Christ expressed in dying for sinners on the cross I would do so! But words cannot express its immensity: it is *infinite*. Time will never measure its duration: it is an *everlasting* love. One thing is certain: you will either believe it now, or mourn over your unbelief for ever. Your companions are, in such case, solemnly described in Rev. xxi. 8, "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." "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." (Mark ix. 48.)

Be entreated by the word of God. Listen to its solemn declarations. "He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." (John iii. 18, 19.)

R. O. (adapted.)

## A PARADOX.

"How perplexed is the course which a Christian must steer,  
 And how straight is the path he must tread:  
 For the hope of his *happiness* rises from *fear*,  
 And his *life* he receives from the *dead*.  
 His *fairest intentions* must wholly be *waived*,  
 And his *best resolutions* be *crossed*,  
 And he cannot expect to be *perfectly saved*  
 Till he finds himself *utterly lost*."

BY AN OLD AUTHOR.

## CHRISTENDOM'S DAY OF RECKONING.

## EXTRACT FROM A LETTER.

THE thought of Christendom's responsibilities is simply *crushing*. Have you noticed particularly Hebrew ii. 2? "*Every* transgression and disobedience received a *just* recompence of reward." Not, as I take it, that a man's sins were treated in bulk, but each separate occasion of offence was most minutely scrutinized and accurately weighed with all its attendant circumstances. And when we consider the years upon years of Christian testimony, the preachings in public, the conversations in private, and the secret conviction that is conveyed to men's consciences by the consistent walk of godly souls, what a terrible indictment is there against the man who continues in his sin. Add to this the fact of most houses having a Bible, containing the whole mind of God, in many cases scores of hymns containing sweet gospel truth, and literature in volumes, any page of which will be sufficient (if truly believed) to save a soul, or (if refused) to damn it; and what avenue of escape is left? "How shall we escape, if we neglect?" To need it and to have no chance of hearing or receiving it is bad enough in heathen countries, but who can measure the guilt of that man who, needing it no less, has opportunities falling thick and fast like snow-flakes in winter, and yet neglects them all. "*Every . . .* disobedience received a just recompence of reward." What a day of reckoning is coming! "and they shall not escape."

W. H. W.

# TIDINGS OF LIFE AND PEACE.



## ONLY A SECOND TOO LATE.

**W**HILE waiting one morning at a large station for a train to convey me further north, I was suddenly startled by a great commotion at the extreme end of the platform.

A train had just dashed in, and been brought to a standstill, when a number of men appeared, carrying the body of a platelayer, who had fallen a victim to his own rashness and folly.

He had been working, with some others, on the line at the entrance to the station. The warning signal from the approaching train had cleared the line of all but this daring man, who thought he might venture a *little longer*; but just as he made the spring to cross the line the huge engine struck him, leaving his crushed and inanimate body prostrate on the "six-foot way."

As we beheld his lifeless and mangled corpse being borne into one of the waiting-rooms, we could not but wonder that men could be found so foolhardy as thus to sport with their precious lives; and yet why wonder at this, when all around us to-day men and women are hurrying on at railroad speed down the broad, steep incline, whose terminus is the pit of perdition. "*Wide* is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to

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destruction, and MANY there be which go in thereat." (Matt. vii. 13.)

Whether he was a saved or an unsaved man we know not, but this we *do* know, if his soul were not *safely sheltered* before that fatal moment arrived his doom for all eternity was sealed. "*In the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be.*" (Eccl. xi. 3.)

Oh, reader, let this solemn little incident sound a warning note in your ear! Had the engine delayed another second he would have been out of the reach of danger, but he lingered *too long*, and paid a heavy penalty. He was warned, but he disregarded the timely signal; while his companions wisely gave heed to it and reached a place of safety.

Unsaved reader, have you ever weighed it carefully, that every moment of your life you are running a terrible risk? Any moment that soul of yours (of more value than worlds, Matt. xvi. 26) may be called to cross time's boundary-line, and enter the portals of eternity. Is it not high time for you to look this matter honestly in the face? Sooner or later you must meet God about your SINS—sins of your childhood, of your youth, of your old age, flagrant, deep-dyed, long-forgotten sins, all will be brought to your remembrance. The God with whom you have to do is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look upon iniquity. (Hab. i. 13.) Yet fear not to own the whole truth in His presence, for He who knows your every thought and motive, who is acquainted with all the dark details of your life's history, is now a Prince and a Saviour at God's right hand, and it is of Him the Scriptures testify, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of

all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to **SAVE SINNERS.**" (1 Tim. i. 15.) Yes, from yonder throne of glory Jesus, the Son of God, speaks *to-day*. Fearlessly trust Him. **HE MEANS WHAT HE SAYS.** "Hath He said, and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?" (Num. xxiii. 19.) He has pledged His word, that if you *come to Him* as a *soul-thirsty* **SINNER** He will more than satisfy your deepest cravings. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters." (Isa. lv.) Do you ask, How am I, a poor guilty worthless sinner, to come in for the blessing? It is simply by trusting the gracious Blesser.

To *you*, it is without money and without price, but think what it cost the holy Son of God to place it within your reach! Think of the agony of His soul in yonder garden, at the mere contemplation of the bitter cup He was about to drain. (Luke xxii. 40-44.) Follow Him from Gethsemane to Golgotha. See Him on that central cross between two malefactors. Hear that bitter cry from amidst the darkness, where the righteous judgments of God are breaking in upon His holy soul, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" (Matt. xxvii. 46.)

Can *you* be an unmoved spectator of that wondrous scene where Jesus suffers for sins not His own? He took upon Himself the punishment due to our sins, and now that a full payment has been made to God's infinite satisfaction He is offering poor sinners to-day, through faith in His finished work, a full, present, and an eternal salvation. "I will *give unto him that is athirst* of the fountain of the water of life *freely*." (Rev. xxi. 6.)

G. F. E.

## CONVERSION OF MIKE THE MIDSHIPMAN.

**M**IKE, as his companions used to call him, had become a midshipman much against his parents' wishes. He seemed naturally suited to the life he led—this tall, powerful lad, who loved to brave danger and difficulty, and who was ever the foremost in deeds of daring during storms. And now he was on his third voyage, and had just reached Calcutta. As the ship entered harbour an old gentleman boarded her, and courteously invited the captain to allow his men to join him in a little service on shore. "I have a room," he said, "and if you will let any of the lads who would like to come go ashore, I should like to speak to them of Jesus." The captain was not a converted man, but he always encouraged his crew to attend services when in port, so his consent was readily given.

That very evening a number of his men entered the preaching-room, and the old gentleman spoke to them with much earnestness, beseeching them with tears to "come to Jesus NOW," and to accept Christ as their Saviour. At last he said, "If any of you will decide for Christ now, come up to me here on the platform." At that solemn moment Mike rose to his feet, but the companion by his side, laying a firm grasp upon the youth, whispered in his ear, as he pulled him back, "Mike, sit down, and don't make a great fool of yourself; you will have all hands laughing at you."

But not in vain had the Spirit of God been striving with this young heart, and though Satan



## CONVERSION OF MIKE THE MIDSHIPMAN. 101

would not yield his prey without an effort, Mike wrenched his coat from his neighbour's hand and boldly walked towards the platform. He had reached the last line of seats when the youngest middy on board whispered, "Mike, wait for me; I will come with you." Poor fellow! No doubt he was "almost persuaded," but the one next him hurriedly pulled him down by his side again, and the opportunity of deciding for Christ was lost, perhaps for ever. Walking up to the platform all alone, Mike said to the preacher, "I want to be saved NOW. . . . I accept the words 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' . . . I believe and I am saved."

On their return to the ship he called his young associates around him, and boldly confessed Christ. "Lads," he said, "I am now converted to God. I have often entertained you by singing foolish songs, now no other songs but the songs of Jesus shall be upon my lips." The young men listened to their formerly thoughtless shipmate; he, their hero, the one who had been the very centre of their every sport, who had been such good company to the gayest, was now beseeching them to accept Christ as their Saviour, and to accept Him NOW. "Let us kneel down," he said, "and I will cry to God to have mercy upon your souls." Hearts were touched, and as they rose from their knees many begged their shipmate, with tears in their eyes, to give them Bibles. Later on it was his happy privilege to supply these interested souls with copies of the word of God.

It was now the joy of his heart to confess "Christ as his Saviour." Writing home to his mother he said, "Oh, mother, you do not know

how wicked I have been; I used actually to go into low public-houses not to drink, but to sing songs to amuse the men. When I left home, and said good-bye the last time, I was on my way to hell, but now I am on my way to heaven; the Shepherd has found His sheep, and I am so happy. Tell Nora, in case my letter to her is delayed a day or two. She will be so glad." To her he wrote, "You will have heard from mother by this time that the lost one has been found. I nearly broke down when I said good-bye to you last time, and you looked at me with your clear, honest eyes and said, 'You will be quite safe if you keep the fear of God before you and avoid evil companions.' I felt I *must* break down, and tell you all what a wicked wretch I had been. Oh, Nora, pray for poor Charlie! I am sure he never thinks about his soul; and pray for A. and S. and M. and J. and father and mother. I wish they could all say with us, Jesus is my Saviour."

Later on, when Mike's voyage was over, and he was once more at home, it was his joy to testify brightly for his Lord and Saviour; and once, when Nora said to him, "Now you have to confess Christ—and you have already," he replied, "Yes, and I like to do it. He bore all the shame and scoffing and spitting for me. What a wretch I should be if I did not confess Him in this little time."

Time went on; it was now 1885. Two years had passed away since the young midshipman had decided for Christ. He had been voyaging about, but now his ship was returning, "homeward bound." No doubt many hearts among her crew were beating high with joyful anticipations of

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glad welcomes to friends and home and parents. No doubt Mike's Christian mother was yearning for her absent boy, as she used to say, "God bless his great warm heart." And when the sorrowful news reached those distant homes that his ship had "gone down, and all hands lost," many a heart ached for departed loved ones. Happy Mike! he has reached the eternal haven, the "Father's house" on high; he has had his glad welcoming there, where no stormy wind and tempest can ever wreck his bright prospects.

Reader, have *you* decided for Christ? and are *you* "homeward bound"?

"His name the sinner hears,  
And is from guilt set free;  
'Tis music in his ears,  
'Tis life and victory.  
His heart o'erflows with sacred joy,  
And songs of praise his lips employ."

S. C. M. A.

YOUR TURN IS COMING.

**R**EADER, thy time on earth is short. Each closing year, each setting sun, each tick of yonder clock is shortening thy days on earth, and swiftly, silently, but surely carrying thee on—on to eternity and to God. The year, the day, the hour, the moment will soon arrive that will close thy life on earth, and begin thy song in heaven or thy wail in hell. No future hour shall come to bring thee back to earth again, thou art there for ever—for eternity.

*To-day* thy feet stand on time's sinking sand—  
*to-morrow* the footprints remain, but thou art gone—where? Into eternity.

*To-day* thy hands are busy at work, thine eyes are beholding, thy mind is thinking, thou art planning for the future; *to-morrow* all is still—the folded arm, the closed eye remain, but thou art gone—gone to eternity. Others were once busy as thou art, healthy as thou art, thoughtless as thou art, they are gone—gone to eternity. The merry voice, the painted clown, the talented artist whose presence made the theatre and the pantomime an attraction for thee, are gone, they are removed far from the region of fiction to that of reality—the reality of eternity. The shrewd merchant whose voice was so familiar to thee on the crowded exchange is silent, he buys and sells no more—he has entered eternity.

And, reader, *thine own turn to enter eternity will shortly come*. Ask thyself honestly, “Am I prepared for eternity?” Give thy conscience time to answer. Listen! It speaks to thee *to-day*, drown not its voice lest it speak to thee no more. Let the heaven and the hell of the future stand before thee in all their realities, one of these must be thine eternal dwelling-place, and *to-day* is the time to make thy choice. *To-morrow* may be too late—one day behind time. Which art thou living for? Which art thou travelling to?

To go from the haunts of sin, debauchery, and vice to the presence of God and the Lamb—impossible; from the crowd of the condemned to the crown of glory—no, never! God says, “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” (John iii. 3.) Reader, has this ever happened to you? Have you been born again for an eternal heaven? If so, well; but if not, the horrors of an eternal hell are awaiting

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you, and to-day you are nearer its unquenchable flame than you have ever been before.

Halt! Why will you meet God with an unsaved soul? He wills it not. *To-day* He pleads, "Turn ye . . . turn ye, why will ye die?"

*To-day* He points you to the Son of God, once uplifted on the cross, groaning, bleeding, dying, for sinners. Yes, reader, for the lost the soldier's spear brought the blood from His side—for the helpless and undone He cried in triumph, "It is finished," and for *you* there is salvation free *to-day*, "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.)

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## COME DOWN FROM THE ROOF.

## A WORD TO THE ANXIOUS.

**I**T is a common practice with drawing students, when they first commence to learn, to draw exactly the opposite way to what they should. The writer well remembers as a boy the raps on the knuckles he got from the drawing-master's pencil for commencing to draw a house from the roof downwards, and being asked sharply how he was going to support the chimneys, &c. As all should know, *the right way* is to begin with the foundation—to draw the house from the ground to the roof, in the same order that a builder would erect it.

We may often gather a useful lesson from a simple illustration, and if troubled souls who

may read these lines once get clearly hold of the truth that we would convey by the above, that which we are writing will not be in vain.

Many souls are just like the drawing students. They have a certain end before them, but are working just the wrong way to attain it; that is, they are seeking to put the roof on before the foundation is in its place. The way of salvation is presented in divine order in God's word. Hundreds are saying, "If I could only leave off sinning, and feel different, and be happy, &c., I should believe I was saved." Exactly. If you could get the roof into order you would be clear about the foundation! Now God's way is just the reverse. In order to leave off sinning, to feel different, and to be happy, I must first be saved, and to be *saved* I must *believe*.

Well, if you are troubled and exercised about the matter, that is a good sign. If truly genuine, it is a sure evidence of a work of the Spirit of God in the soul. To be burdened and heavy-laden on account of sin is not natural. The worldly and careless are not troubled about it. But the Lord's own word to the burdened soul is, "*Come unto Me.*" (Matt. xi. 28.) This is getting the foundation in order. Christ is the Saviour. There is no rest for the soul, no power to leave off sinning, and no happy feelings until we *believe on Him*.

The answer to "What must I do to be saved?" is, "*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.*" It is not, when you leave off this or that, and feel this, that, or the other you shall be saved. Assurance, the refusal of sin, happy feelings, power to live to God, *follow salvation*, but *are in no way the ground of it*. To

refer to our figure, these things are all connected with the "roof." Christ is the foundation, and all the rest is built on Him.

You may be the greatest sinner in the place where you dwell; but Christ died for sinners, and is risen and glorified. Hence when, as a poor burdened soul, in self-judgment before God, you believe on His blessed name, you are from that moment and for ever saved. The word of God will give you the assurance of it, for *He says so*, and He cannot lie. To those who believe He gives the Holy Ghost, and *there* is our power.

Happy feelings are the result of this assurance known and enjoyed in the soul; and in the power of the Spirit you can henceforth live to God and refuse sin. This is God's way. As long, therefore, as you go on vainly trying to build from the roof downwards, so to speak, you will be *miserable*. But the moment you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, making everything of Him, and resting in child-like faith upon His finished work, peace and assurance will be yours, and all the rest will follow.

Troubled reader, come down from the roof.

E. H. C.

## "IT'S A BLANK."

**A**T the close of a recent corn harvest I called upon a farmer on business. When our business was over he placed upon the table a bowl of grain, remarking, "This is a sample of my first production of the present season, what do you think of it?"

After passing a remark or two upon it, I asked him, as a man of experience, to tell me, "What a tare is." He replied, "It's a blank."

"That is just what I have always understood a tare to be, and I suppose, Mr. W——, that you know, too, what is said in God's word about tares?"

"Yes; doesn't it say something about their being put into bundles and burnt?"

"You are right; and it also says that the wheat shall be gathered into God's barn. Let me also ask which kind do *you* belong to—is it the *tares* or the *wheat*?"

"I should like to be among the wheat, and not in a bundle of tares."

"Well, if you would escape the eternal burning, and in due time be gathered into the heavenly barn as a sample of what God has produced in this harvest season of His rich grace and salvation, you will have to receive by faith the Saviour provided by a holy God for lost and helpless sinners."

We would not, however, venture to say whether Mr. W—— sufficiently realized his true soul-danger to make sure of escaping eternal judgment, or of his feeling after God so as to secure the Father's house above. But for all who are running the dreadful risk of putting off this all-important question it is most solemn to remember that God says, "Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the *tares* . . . to *burn them*: but gather the *wheat into my barn*." (Matt. xiii. 30.)

Empty profession abounds in Christendom—plenty of mere "tares."



The empty professor tries to make out before men that he is a true *possessor* of Christ. God says he is without Christ and without God in the world. He is like a shell without a kernel. But "the Lord knoweth them that are His." Those ten virgins mentioned in Matthew xxv. were one-half professors. Five were wise and five were foolish. When the bridegroom came the five wise ones went in with the bridegroom to the marriage, but the five foolish were left outside, and the door was shut against them for ever!

What an awfully solemn reality it would be, my reader, to wake up at last and find yourself a "blank," having only a wick, and no oil in your lamp of profession—nothing for God and nothing for heaven—a worthless hypocrite, fit fuel for the fire that never shall be quenched.

Having deceived yourself, and, it may be, many a one besides, you might blame the devil for tricking you with his artful wiles, but that would not help you. When once the door is closed against you, to think of having heard the gospel preached hundreds or thousands of times without ever waking up to your soul's deep need, would only deepen your remorse. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

Now, dear friend, plainly, Are *you* a possessor of Christ by faith in Him, or are you only an unsatisfied professor? If the former, we thank God for His mercy to you; but if the latter, we ask you to carefully read the following short scriptures, and may the God of love and of all grace bless them to the salvation of your priceless soul!

"I am the bread of life: he that cometh to Me

shall *never hunger*; and he that believeth on Me shall *never thirst*. . . . This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and *not die*. . . . I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, *he shall live for ever*." (John vi. 35, 50, 51.) "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit." (xii. 24.) These golden words were all spoken by Jesus Himself when down here, and mark that upon your believing or refusing such words depends your eternal destiny. Jesus, in His love to sinners, went into death—the consequence of man's sin—as a perfect corn of wheat, and He has come up again in resurrection life, and all who believe in Him to the salvation of their souls are of the same order as Himself, that is to say, they have a nature like His, and are fit for God's glorious garner. He is their life.

Farmer W—— could tell you that when he puts grain into the ground, what springs therefrom is precisely *the same kind as he sows*. Those who have faith in Him who died will, ere long, shine in the likeness of Him who is risen and glorified.

Then, dear one, why not receive Him in this acceptable year of the Lord, and get a place in the heavenly garner—the Father's house—for ever? Jesus said, "I am the resurrection, and the life; he that believeth in Me, *though he were dead, yet shall he live: and WHOSOEVER liveth and believeth in ME shall never die*. BELIEVEST THOU THIS?" (John xi. 25, 26.)

J. N.

## CHRIST IS COMING.

ON leaving my business for the night, a few days ago, I said to my fellow-assistant, "L——, If Mrs. S—— should come in to-morrow morning, and I am not here, you will find her parcel in the locker." L—— looked at me in surprise. I answered his look by saying, "I do not anticipate absence on account of illness, although, of course, we do not know what may occur; but you know, L——, I am not sure of a minute, as I expect the Lord Jesus, and if He come to night I shall not be here in the morning, so you will know where to look for the parcel."

L—— looked rather uncomfortable, but answered, "Well, perhaps *I* shall not be here; if He does come I may go as well as you. Do you think I shall?" I replied, "I cannot answer for you; you know for yourself." He replied, "Oh, I am not so very bad!" I said, "There is no hope in that, L——. Christ wants the *very bad ones*. He came not to call the righteous, but sinners."

Reader, do you know that Christ is coming? Are you ready? His promise remains good to-day, "Surely I come quickly." Perhaps you say, "I have heard this so many times, and He has not come yet." If you are still unsaved you may well thank God that He has not come. But the midnight is passed, the cry has gone forth, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh," and we stand now on the very tiptoe of expectation waiting to hear the voice of the Lord Himself. He is indeed coming. Oh, I would press this fact on your soul! Perhaps, with the latter-day scoffers that the apostle Peter tells us about, you may be saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep,

all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." (2 Peter iii. 4.) But will your unbelief alter the fact that the Lord is really coming? Nay, it only proves the word of God. We know not how soon He may come, perhaps before you have finished reading this. There is no time to lose, "for 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." (1 Thess. iv. 16, 17.) These are the words of our God, and heaven and earth shall pass away, but His words shall not pass away. If you do not belong to Christ you will assuredly be left behind at His coming—the door of heaven closed and you outside.

Your being "not so very bad" will not do for God. Sin is sin, whether it be a million sins or one. You cannot say you have *no sin*. Better far to confess to God that you are a helpless sinner, for then He can and will justify you on the ground of righteousness. Christ died for sinners, having taken their place, under the judgment of God, on the cross. He came "not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." He is still calling you, "not willing that any should perish." Do not resist His loving call. Come just as you are. Come now. There is nothing for you to do, for Christ has done it all.

"Ere night that door may close and seal thy doom,  
Then the last, low, long cry—No room! No room."

"*Whosoever will* let him take the water of life *freely*." Therefore come now. R. M.

# TIDINGS OF LIFE AND PEACE.



## WILL GOD ANSWER A WICKED MAN'S PRAYER?

**Y**ES, God will answer the prayers of wicked men! If you doubt it look at Noah, toiling hard for 120 years to build a vessel of vast and unexampled dimensions on dry land. Listen to him as he announces to the men of his day and generation, that a storm of judgment is about to sweep over the world. He calls upon them to repent and turn from their evil ways: he preaches righteousness to them, and the Spirit of God strives with them. How did his hearers treat that message? Job xxii. tells us that they prayed God to *depart* from them.

Did God hear their prayer?

He did. The vessel was completed, the builder and his family safely housed, when, lo! the heavens for the first time poured down a mighty flood, the fountains of the great deep were broken up from beneath, and as every living thing that moved died, the awful fact was realised that their prayer was heard. God had departed from them, and their imprisoned spirits now witness to the fact that God does hear and answer a wicked man's prayer.

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Years rolled on, the mighty flood of waters had assuaged, the sun shone forth upon a renewed earth, peace and plenty reigned. The providential care and goodness of God was lavished upon His creatures, their flocks and herds increased, their wealth abounded. Their children danced for joy, music from the timbrel, the harp, and the organ was heard in their houses, they spent their days in mirth and pleasure. "Surely," you say, "such must have ever been full of praise to God." Alas! they had failed to mark the old way which wicked men had trodden, whose foundation was overthrown with a flood, and the prayer which fell from their lips was that of their forefathers:

"Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of Thy ways."

Did God hear their prayer?

He did.

Even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, Romans i. 26 and 28 tells us that "God gave them up" and "God gave them over."

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Centuries rolled on, the tender heart of the blessed God yearned in deep love for His creatures, and in the fulness of that love God sent forth His only begotten, His well-beloved Son, to seek to win their long-estranged affections.

He came a man amongst men—the God-man.

Was there a captive? He preached deliverance! A broken heart? It was His joy to bind it up! A blind beggar? He recovered his sight! A bruised slave of Satan? He gave him liberty! Look at Him as depicted by Luke in his gospel, chapter viii. He travelled across a tempestuous sea to deliver a man with an unclean spirit, whose

dwelling was in the tombs, who was night and day crying and cutting himself with stones. He liberated the captive, healed the bruised slave of Satan, and when the people came running together they saw the once devil-possessed man now seated at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind.

Did hosannas fill their mouth? Did they praise this wonderful Deliverer? Alas, no! The same fatal request fell from their lips, and for the third time that wicked prayer was prayed, and they besought Him to *depart* out of their coasts.

Did He listen to their prayer?

He did.

Look at Jerusalem now, trace her history back to that night when the Light of the world departed and did hide Himself from them. Look at that city wrapped in gloom, as from Olivet's Mount Jesus surveyed that scene, and the poignant grief of unrequited affection uttered that touching lament, "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, and ye would not."

Jesus departed, their house was left desolate.

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Jerusalem had sealed her doom when she cried, "Away with this man." Calvary displayed the most awful sight. A sinless, guiltless Man taken by wicked hands, crucified and slain. The holy, spotless Lamb of God, who knew no sin, who had no sin, and who did no sin, crucified like a common felon between two malefactors. Upon that cross He made atonement for sin, settled the question

of eternal judgment, bowed His blessed head, cried "It is finished," and gave up the ghost.

Man took Him from the cross, man laid Him in the tomb. God raised Him from the dead, seated Him at His own right hand, and announced by the Holy Ghost a message of the richest grace to this world. He directed His messengers to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

The day came when those messengers reached Europe. How did this highly-favoured quarter of the globe treat them? After having illegally beaten them, and committed them to the care of a cruel jailer, who fastened their feet in the stocks and laid upon them many stripes, they came and prayed them to "depart" out of their city. Did they depart? They did.

Now, my reader, what have you been saying to *God*? Has judgment had no effect? Has the flood no voice to you? Has the Providence that bestows its bounties, the love that sent a Saviour, the grace that announces a free salvation no response in your heart? Are you praying that same prayer, "Depart from me," as one appeal after another reaches you? Take care the echo of your prayer is not sounded back from the closed door of mercy, and you are among that doomed throng who listen to the solemn words, *Depart from Me, I never knew you!* God heard the antediluvian. His reply was—judgment. God heard the wealthy men in Job's day, the generation that followed, and He "gave them up."

God heard the Jews in the Lord's day, and wrote "desolation" over their house. And God will hear the men of this day, and His answer will be *a closed door*. When once the Master of the



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house has risen up and shut the door, then many shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able.

What say you, reader, of these tidings of life and peace? Are you laying this number down, saying in your heart, if not with your lips, "depart"? Remember, then, your prayer may be answered.

H. N.

## A WORLD IN FLAMES.

**I**T is the positive testimony of Scripture that the present order of things here will end in judgment. This, we repeat, is the testimony of Scripture, though, strange as it may appear, men, to whom the Scripture has come, believe and teach otherwise. Hence few anticipate such a catastrophe, indeed in no previous age have men felt more secure than now.

The nineteenth century has excelled all others, the world has advanced by leaps and bounds. Science and art have made unparalleled progress. Nature in response to man's persistent enquiries has disclosed some of her most marvellous secrets, and laid them at his feet for his service. Civilization is rescuing nations from the fetters of ignorance that have bound them for ages. Exploration is daily opening up fresh markets for the wares of the world's great commercial centres. The Church was never so active, and she and the world have united for one common object; viz., to improve man's circumstances, and to make him happy here below.

But from the word of God comes a cry of strange and awful meaning, almost drowned, though it may be, in the din and rush of the

world's advance. They who catch that cry are startled at its terrible import, for from God's book a warning is perpetually pealed into the sinner's ears, and its burden is "*coming judgment.*" Yet who, to-day, in this busy world, believes that the present established condition of things on earth is to be destroyed by the wrath of God? Permanence and stability seem stamped upon all things. Everywhere men are confederating to rid the world of the abuses that mar the scene, and who would be so vain as to suggest that they will not succeed? Philanthropic movements abound, and the whole end and aim of philanthropy is to alleviate human woe and render earthly existence pleasant. It has a promise of the life that now is, but is silent as to the one to come. Nation holds out hand to nation in fraternal greeting. National exhibitions, held for the purpose of stimulating friendly rivalry in trade, help to bind together the tribes and kindreds of the earth, and soon, we are told, war with its attendant horrors will be a thing of the barbaric past.

Is it any wonder, then, that men are saying, Where is the promise of His coming? Search creation and you will find no sign of it. On the contrary, everything seems to portend coming peace and prosperity. Coming judgment? Bah! 'tis but the fretful croak of the dyspeptic religionist!

But the Spirit, in the last chapter of Peter's second epistle, calls these questioners "scoffers," and announces that the present heavens and earth are by the word of God kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men; that is to say, by the decree of God the earth and the atmospheric

heavens surrounding it are to be burnt up, while men, who by their ungodliness have polluted it, will be judged and consigned to perdition. Prophet and apostle unite in announcing the certainty of this approaching judgment. Throughout both Testaments, old and new, the tale is told. From end to end of a book that comes to us from God is predicted a work of destructive judgment upon this present earth without a parallel in the history of time—a work which will sweep away, as with a besom, every grace-neglecting sinner, to make way for the kingdom of the Son of man.

There is nothing held out for man *in this world* during the present epoch. When the earth is spoken of in relation to *this* dispensation, and those who live in it, God declares its end—it will be burnt up; *i.e.*, He gives us no promise or prospect of blessing *here*, it is found elsewhere—in *heaven*. Yet it is equally true that an age is at hand when God will bless a people upon this very earth, but that age succeeds the present, and all the prophecies that announce a good time to come upon this earth relate not to this, but to the coming dispensation, and to a people yet to be. Between *now* and *then* lies the outpouring of the wrath of God—wrath inflicted upon sinners who refused heaven and preferred earth, notwithstanding God's declaration that the time had not come for man to get blessing here.

In Rev. xx. is found Christ's reign of 1000 years over this earth, but what precedes it? Read from the 6th to the 19th chapters of this awful book, and see for yourself. Judgments, hitherto unknown to men or angels, sweep through the world, purging it of the iniquity that has defiled it for 6000 years.

Yes, a time of blessing awaits this present earth, but the people who will enjoy it *are not the sinners of Christendom*. These have had their opportunity. God for centuries has been offering them heaven instead of earth, but they who have refused *heaven*, preferring a *sin-cursed earth*, will inherit, not the *blessed earth*, but a *terrible hell*.

Peter tells us repeatedly that this earth is to be burnt up. Wherefore? Because sin has ruined it. For 4000 years man went his way rebelling and sinning against God; then Jesus came as the Revealer of God's love, and man consummated his guilt by hanging Him on a tree. God raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, and then the descended Spirit confirmed, by the writers of the New Testament, the predictions of the Old as to the certainty of coming judgment. In language awful in its distinctness and intensity God has made known to man the end of this world. But in long-suffering mercy He has delayed the judgment, and opening heaven in the interval, offers it as the refuge and eternal home of man.

For 1800 years the Holy Ghost has been leading men's hearts away from earth to heaven. From a doomed earth He points to an opened heaven and cries, "Yonder is your hope." 'Tis wondrous strange and but little understood—earth, man's original home, set aside for the fire; heaven, God's home, opened as a refuge for him. How marvellous the exchange, God's glorious abode in place of a world marked out for destruction. But this is what God has been doing since the Cross. And His offer is to all men through the one perfect atoning sacrifice for sins made by His Son. For eighteen centuries He has been taking men into heaven out of a devil-ruled world. The dispen-

sation ends when Jesus comes and catches away His people to glory ; then, after visiting the world by an awful series of judgments, He will vindicate His rights over the earth by reigning as King for 1000 years. It is then burnt up, and a new earth takes its place wherein will dwell righteousness.

The infidel rages against Christianity, charging it with impeding the world's progress by proclaiming its ruin and impending judgment, and testifying of another world where perfection dwells. The professing Church of to-day is labouring hard to remove the stigma. Her cry is for "social and political reform." She seeks to improve the state of man here, to make life worth living ; but she thereby hides the future from the sinner ; she occupies him with time rather than with eternity. She forgets that man has been cast out of the earthly paradise, and is reaping outside the bitter fruits of sin ; that perfect blessedness dwells in the paradise of God, a paradise not to be found on *earth*, but in heaven ; and that the attempt to create a *third* paradise is vain, and a delusion of the devil. Man is a lost sinner, sojourning for a season in a doomed world at a distance from God, and his end, unless saved through the blood of Jesus, is the lake of fire.

The judgment of God broods over this scene ; its execution is but a question of time. The command has gone forth, and will never be withdrawn. When you have done with a thing, and wish to rid yourself of it you throw it in the fire. This is just what God is going to do with this earth when it has served His purpose, He will burn it up, and then from His hands will issue a new and beautiful earth that will last for ever, for it will be safeguarded by divine power from the intrusion of sin.

“Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it.” What fools are they who seek to support what God has rejected and reserved for fire. By His Word He created it, by His Word He has decreed its destruction. Its Creator will be its Destroyer. Oh, the deadly delusion that is stealing over the souls of men! We speak not of Heathendom, but of Christendom. It is here, where the light of revelation is, where the Spirit has wrought for ages, that the madness and infatuation of man is most apparent. In countries boasting an open Bible men are dreaming of a golden age to be brought in by human enterprise and effort.

From pulpit and platform silver-tongued orators propose solutions of social problems, and announce to the applauding multitude the approach of a millennium—a *millennium without a Christ*. But upon faith's ear strikes one solemn word, sounding from the book of God, rising above the din of human voices, and laying bare the solemn future—*Judgment! Judgment! Judgment!*

Come with me into yonder temple, where God is said to be worshipped and His pure Word professedly taught. The service commences, proceeds, ends, and the great congregation disperses. Have you heard one word of warning addressed to the listening sinners to flee from the wrath to come? one word of appeal to accept the Saviour Jesus? Nay, such preaching is not in fashion; the service is warranted not to alarm the most impressionable, composed as it is of ritual and vain repetition.

Now enter the building opposite, whose outward appearance is less ancient, and the style of architecture less ornate. The intelligent audience sit spellbound while the preacher gives them “an

intellectual treat," but not from beginning to end of the service will you hear addressed to those souls so near eternity one word as to a world in flames, and the wrath of God overtaking a Christless people.

Yet let God be true and every man a liar. "Hath He said and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken and shall He not make it good?" Sinner, be not deceived; you are in a world destined to destruction, and God is warning you to leave it by fleeing to Him who died to deliver you from it. Every word of God not yet accomplished *shall* be accomplished. God cannot deceive man, and if He says He has reserved this present earth for fire He means what He says, and the burning up of creation is sure.

Let the world mock if it will; men mocked 4000 years ago when Noah, the preaching builder, announced the coming deluge; but their mocking hindered not the judgment, for when the 120 years of grace had passed the flood came and destroyed them *all*; and Jesus said, "*Even thus* shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed."

Oh, men and women yet unsaved, whose eyes are still unopened, have pity on your souls! If you but knew your danger how quickly you would hasten out of this doomed world to Jesus, the true Ark. The thunder clouds of coming wrath are rising gradually but surely; already they cast their shadows athwart the scene. The swift-winged ministers of God's vengeance stand ready girded for their fatal work, and wait but the word of command. The last trump is about to sound, the end is almost here, and YOU, oh! where are you? Unsaved? Unready? Outside the

ark? Are you trifling with the golden moments of grace, wasting them in the pursuit of perishing gold or empty pleasures? Sinners against your own souls, be warned! The clock of time points to the last moment. The death knell of a lost world is ready to sound. A doomed world is about to be awakened by the awful tidings that God's day of grace is over, and the day of His wrath is come.

W. H. S.

### FIVE MINUTES WITH A PRIEST.

WE were alone in a railway carriage. I said to him, "What a wonderful statement that is in the 17th of John, *'This is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.'*"

"Yes," he answered, "that was the grand design for which we were created, for which, indeed, we were sent into the world, that we should have that life in heaven."

"Oh! but why not *now*? We read," I replied, "in John v. 24, *'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.'* That life is possessed by the believer *now*."

"To say that it is all by *faith*," he said, "would throw open the door for a bad life. We must have good works. Grace is not sufficient of itself."

"The grace that brings salvation teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts. (Titus ii. 12.) Grace first saves, and then teaches the saved one to lead a life that is godly," I replied.

"Quite so," he said again; "but of course



none can be saved until he is beyond the possibility of failure, and in heaven. Hence he leads a godly life to that end."

"Nay," I said, "the true believer begins with salvation, not yet, of course, in all its fulness, but grace saves him at the start, and qualifies him to do *good works* as the evidence of his salvation. Supposing you saw me lying helpless and friendless in the gutter, and, moved by pity, you assisted me from my miserable condition, that would be an act of pure grace on your part, and I should be indebted to you for your kindly assistance—an indebtedness which I should seek to acknowledge by showing practical gratitude to you."

"Just so," he answered, "and therefore our church teaches, that out of gratitude for the death of the blessed Lord on the cross we should seek to do our duty, and to merit His favour, so as to obtain His grace eventually."

"But grace is unmerited," I said. "You fail to distinguish between law and grace. Law demands, but grace bestows; and the difference between you and me is this, that I am working *from* grace, and you are working *for* it. How can anyone work for grace?"

Our station was reached, and our talk ended. A sample, thought I, of all, no matter what church, party, sect, or creed they belong to, who know not the grace of God that bringeth salvation. "What is bred in the bone comes out in the flesh," and it is the essential conviction of the natural mind that, somehow or other, man must work his way to God.

That conviction is false. How could a sinful creature work his way in whole, or in part, to a holy God?

The law was given as a test. It proposed life to the man who could do "these things," and fulfil without the smallest failure each of its terms. But no man could do them. Hence, "by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight."

On the other hand Christianity loudly proclaims, "*Not of works, lest any man should boast.*" (Eph. ii. 9.) Our works are not the merit, though we are told to work out our "own salvation with fear and trembling." Yes, "work it out," not work it *in*! Work it *out*, but not work *for* it! None could do that but the Son of God, when He died under the judgment of Calvary. To Him be the praise.

1. *The grace of God is the spring.*
2. *The blood of Christ the merit.*
3. *The Spirit of God the power.*
4. *The written Word the ground of assurance.*
5. *Faith the instrument.*
6. *Works the happy evidence.*
7. *Heaven the glorious result.*

And wherefore all this? "*That in the ages to come He might shew the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.*"

Happy the man who knows "the grace of God that bringeth salvation." J. W. S.

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### MERCY WITHOUT MERIT.

"**W**HEN I first became anxious about my soul," said an old man who had spent the best of his days for himself in the pleasures of sin, "I felt how impossible it would be for me to get blessing because of what I *deserved*. It

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would, I felt, be something like using a pocket-knife for years, till it was worn nearly down to the haft, and then expecting to get as much for it as for a new one. Indeed, I lie here sometimes and wonder how a sinner like me *dare* have come to God for salvation after a history like mine. But there, *it was all of mercy!*"

Yes, it is indeed all of mercy, all of grace—grace that reigns through righteousness—on God's side; while all the misery, all the guilt, is on ours.

"Nothing but sin had I to give  
Nothing but love do I receive."

And this is the story which every redeemed one has to tell. Spite of our badness His love drew us—drew us to Himself, and blessed us in a manner worthy of Himself. "The goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance." (Romans ii. 4.)

Here is encouragement for you, dear troubled one. Perhaps you have been almost bordering on despair, because you have nothing wherewith to commend yourself to Him. Be of good comfort then. He asks for nothing but a broken and contrite heart, a sense of your need of His mercy. All the rest is on His side. He commends His own love to you, and testifies of His own Son, and of His delight in what He accomplished on the cross for your blessing. GRACE is the word which just suits you. Grace blesses without a meriting cause in the one blessed. Bring as many charges against yourself as you will, and you only prove thereby that you are a fitting subject for grace. When you come as a broken-down sinner to God, you come to One who has been pleased to reveal Himself as "THE GOD OF ALL GRACE." The only thing that can possibly shut you out from the provision of grace

is the fancied claim on your part of proved merit in the past or promised merit in the future. The one who realizes that he has nothing but ungodliness in the past, and nothing but weakness in view of the future, is just the one for the blessing.

"For when we were *yet without strength*, in due time Christ died for the *ungodly*." (Romans v. 6.)

"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 ?"

GEO. C.

### FAINT, YET PURSUING.

A SERVANT of Christ, being too weak and ill for either private conversation or public preaching, used to print, in bold type on neat little cards, pointed and solemn truths for the benefit of his fellow-travellers. The following is an example :

" THERE IS  
A GOD  
WHO SEES THEE.  
A MOMENT  
THAT FLIES FROM THEE.  
AN ETERNITY  
WHICH AWAITS THEE.

*A God* whom you serve so ill.

*A moment* by which you profit so little.

*An eternity* you hazard so rashly.

Reader, Where will you spend eternity ? In  
HEAVEN or HELL—WHICH ?"

# TIDINGS OF LIFE AND PEACE.



## THE RIVER BANK.

AS I drove along to a neighbouring town a short time since I came to a place where the river Ouse had overflowed its banks, and a vast expanse of flooded country was seen. It seemed strange to be driving along so near the water and yet quite dry, nor was I the least afraid of it touching me.

How was this? Because there was a high bank which had been made on the side of the road next the river to protect the road, and thus, though the water was so near me, I passed along quite safely.

I was not disturbed in the least at the sight of the water, for my safety lay in the bank which was between me and the water, and I had no doubt about *it*, it had stood many a flood before, and I had confidence in that bank, and in its power to keep back the great waters on the other side. I did not even stop to think whether the confidence which I had in the bank was the right kind of confidence. I simply drove along quietly and securely, enjoying the comforting knowledge that the bank between me and the water was all right, and thoroughly protected me.

Now how does this apply to the gospel? In 1 Timothy ii. 5 we read, "There is one God, and

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one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus." Dear reader, if you are in your sins and yet unconverted, let me warn you that it will be an awful thing for you to be exposed to all the judgment of that "one God" against your sins with no Mediator between Him and you. There is a day coming most surely when the unbeliever will have to experience the terrible wrath of God against sin, and then he will look in vain for a bank to keep off the floods of great waters from rushing in and sinking him body and soul in hell!

No Mediator will be offered to him then, no one to stand between him and a holy God. To-day, however, grace still reigns, and souls are fleeing for refuge and safety to Jesus, and for the one who thus flees God's promise is true, "Surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him." (Psalm xxxii. 6.)

But suppose you say "I have come to Jesus some time back and sheltered my soul in Him, and yet I don't always feel as if I were safe, I have often my doubts and fears." This is sometimes the language of souls, but let me point out to you that when I was driving along that road it was *the bank* being between me and the waters that *made me safe*. Was it my feeling of confidence in the bank which made me safe? No, but simply the bank itself. So with the believer now, it is the blessed Mediator and His work on the cross that is my safety. It is not my feelings about that Mediator. My safety lies in the man Christ Jesus, having given Himself a Ransom for me, and God has accepted the Ransom.

It is He that delivers me from the wrath to come, and it is He who stands now between me

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and the weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth, which I so richly deserved for my sins. Dear fellow-believer, can you now pass along from day to day quite certain that no judgment can ever reach you, because the work of Christ for you on that cross has availed before God to put away from His sight all your sins, and when the floods of great waters rush in upon the unconverted they never can reach you? A. F. R.

## THE LOSS OF H.M.S. "VICTORIA."

"There were present at that season some that told Him of the Galilæans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galilæans were sinners above all the Galilæans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."—LUKE xiii. 1-5.

SUCH, dear reader, are the solemn utterances of the Lord Jesus Christ, brought to mind by the terrible disaster which happened to the *Victoria* off Tripoli. The sad incident is doubtless still so fresh in the minds of many that it will be unnecessary for me to go into the details of the accident. My object is rather to use the occurrence as an occasion for drawing your attention to *God's* thoughts of these things.

Countless have been the opinions expressed as to the cause of so magnificent an ironclad going down so soon after being struck, as well as upon the suddenness with which it occurred. But the loss of the ship was nothing in comparison with the value of the souls that went down with her. Nor could the terrible agonies suffered by some,

such as those in the engine-room, and others who were sucked under those terrible steel propellers and severed limb from limb, be compared with the mental agony of those who were unprepared to meet God.

Death is a solemn reality, even for a Christian, as regards the body; but how much more so for the soul of one not justified by the grace of God. And what makes it still more solemn is the fact that the hour when death approaches is so *uncertain*. A very short space of time elapsed after the vessel was struck, a few minutes at most, and then more than four hundred precious souls were ushered into eternity. If any were truly converted to God it was, so to speak, for them but a sudden call to a long furlough, and by no means a matter for the least anxiety; but for those who were not, what a moment it must have proved! Not only hurried away all unprepared, but taken beyond the reach of the grace of God, beyond the hope of pardon and peace. Beyond salvation, and beyond it *for ever*. But suppose ye that the crew of the *Victoria* were sinners above all the men who manned the other vessels of the fleet? Listen to the solemn words of one who knows all hearts. "I tell you, *Nay*: but, except *ye* repent, ye shall *all* likewise perish." No; to all appearance they were men of sound, moral character; men who were not wanting in courage and devotion to duty; men who were ready to hazard their lives if need be. But all this could not avail for the salvation of their souls. For the man who went down in that ship without Christ, however morally upright he may have been before his fellow-men, there was nothing but judgment at the great



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white throne, and eternal misery in the lake of fire afterwards. (Rev. xx. 11-15.) It is not a question of *how* or *when* a man meets death, but whether he has the Spirit of Christ or not. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." (Rom. viii. 9.)

"Except *ye* repent, *ye* shall all likewise *perish*." Unsaved reader, this may be thy last warning; the danger signal is once more flashed across thy path. Oh, pass it not heedlessly by, it may be thy last opportunity, to-morrow's sun may never rise for thee! Have you repented of your sins? Sooner or later you *must* meet God about them. If you meet Him *now*, there is the precious blood of His own Son which cleanseth from *all* sin. Will you not at once get under the shelter of the precious blood of Christ, and thus be able to say—

"Precious, precious blood of Jesus,  
Shed on Calvary;  
Shed for rebels, shed for sinners,  
Shed for *ME*"?

Dear reader, the blood of Jesus is a sure foundation, an eternal foundation which never can be moved, and which all the powers of hell can never shake. Oh! let your heart gaze where God gazes, on the poured-out life of His beloved Son. He says, "*When I see the blood I will pass over you, and the blood shall be to you for a token.*" The blood of the cross *has* made peace, the blood alone. It is not the blood and your feelings, or the blood and something else. Oh, no! The precious blood of Jesus *alone* in its solitary dignity *has* made atonement for the soul that trusts in Jesus. The dead and buried, risen and glorified Son of God has obtained eternal redemption. For whom? For *sinners*; for you, unsaved one. Will you simply trust Him now?

G. R. C.

## CHRIST'S RESURRECTION AND THE BELIEVER'S PEACE.

(A SAVED ONE'S LETTER TO HER BROTHER.)

“MY DEAR BROTHER,—I am now rejoicing in the knowledge that my sins are for ever gone in the sight of God. I never knew how simple the Gospel was before, and never took God at His word; but I believe Him now, and have peace with Him. It is not on account of any merit of my own; not because I feel good, not because I shall not sin any more, nor because I love God; but because I believe His word, which says, ‘Christ died for the ungodly’ (Rom. v. 6). And again, ‘Who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification.’ (Rom. iv. 24, 25.)

“I never understood how much the resurrection of our Lord had to do with our peace with God. I always thought God would be merciful to a sinner for Christ’s sake, and might in mercy receive me at the last if I tried to love Him, but now I see my error.

“All mankind have sinned against God, and God could never overlook one sin, or abate the punishment due to any one sin; so He planned to give His own Son, and it says ‘God *sent* His Son,’ that was the wonderful mercy and love of God in giving His Son to die; and when on the cross Jesus bore the judgment due to our sins, He bore it fully, nothing was abated, for God could not pass over any sin. God forsook His Son on the cross because He was covered with our sins; but when the judgment was all borne Jesus died, and God raised Him as a witness and

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receipt, as it were, that the debt we had incurred was discharged, so that is why 'Christ rose again for our justification.' We are cleared now. God could not impute one sin to a believer, because all were laid on Jesus. He bore the punishment due to us. Our sins are not on Jesus now, because He is risen and at God's right hand. I never understood it before, dear brother; but now I do, and I have peace, because we have only to believe God. Our *works* could not make us fit to receive pardon, our need of a Saviour does.

"Then so many blessed truths follow. Those who believe are 'in Christ.' God looks at Christ, not at the sinner, and is satisfied, for Christ had undertaken our responsibilities. I am not afraid to die now. It is all so new to me, but such good news, and so simple. I wonder I never believed before and trusted Christ, but I always thought it was only for good people, not knowing that the vilest may come and trust Christ and be saved.

"We are so happy now, it is like a new life to us."

A. C. E. C.

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DEATH A FRIEND AND DEATH A  
TERROR.

**T**HAT there is an end to every man's history here no one will dream of denying. Death is doing its work too surely for that, doing it daily, spite of all that wit and wealth may do to temporarily ward it off. The poor slave of sin has good reason to dread its approaches, and shrink in terror from its chilling grip. Indeed, his only chance of what he calls happiness is to forget that it is on his track, so he vainly tries to hide the

unpalatable fact even from himself. But though he may succeed in turning his funerals into flower shows, and his cemeteries into lovely gardens, the same unwelcome truth faces him everywhere. Amid all this poor world's shams he knows that death is an inevitable reality, and that his *own* turn will surely come.

Job describes the murderer and adulterer (chap. xxiv. 14-17) as evading the light to pursue their wicked course, and then adds, "If one knew them, they are in the terrors of the shadow of death." How true! A servant of Christ once spoiled an evening for a dancing party by a simple two-paged tract entitled "*Your dying hour.*" He had each tract placed in an envelope, and offered to the different couples as they entered the ball-room. Thinking they were programmes for the ball they willingly received them, but only to find a reminder of the last thing in the world they cared to think of, "YOUR DYING HOUR." Yes, "it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment," and an unconverted soul may well recoil from the thought of both.

But for the divinely-instructed believer death and judgment have no terrors. He knows that Christ has, once for all, conquered death. He knows that the judgment righteously due for his sins has completely spent itself upon the holy Substitute; that death at its worst is but a putting to sleep, but a severing of the strings that bind him to this place, that his happy spirit may find itself with the Lord.

"Jemmie ———" who lived, a few years since, in the north of Scotland, was visited one evening by two Christian neighbours. They found him nearing his end. Jemmie had long known the

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Lord, long lived in the enjoyment of His love, and now that he was dying all was calm within as to the future. His title to glory was unquestionable. All was well with his soul.

Yet Jemmie had just one thing pressing upon his mind that night of his departure, and his two visitors were anxious to discover the nature of this one trouble, if perchance they might in some way help him out of it. And what do you think it was, my reader? The thought of death alarmed him not. The grave had no terrors. He knew that the question of his guilt in the past had all been settled on the cross, that the future was all secured in the Father's house. Was it, then, because he had neglected till the last moment to make his will? His *will*! Old *Jemmie* make a will! He had nothing to leave but circumstances of the deepest poverty. The neighbours discovered after he was gone that even his last penny had been spent, and nothing left in the cupboard but a few scraps of oat cake!

What, then, was Jemmie's last anxious care? It was this: "I fear," said he, "that I shall have to be beholden to the parish for a coffin!"

"No, Jemmie, not so," said his kind visitors, who were both carpenters. "The parish shall not have the chance of doing that for *you*. *We'll* promise to make the coffin for you when you need it."

"Then I shall want no more in this world. I shall be gone before the morning."

They pressed to have the privilege of sitting up with him, but Jemmie would not hear of it. "Oh no, thank you, I want nobody to sit up with *me*. Just leave me alone with the Lord. I shall be gone before morning."

The master carpenter now drew out his rule, and, as though to sweep away at one stroke any tittle of anxiety that might remain on his old friend's mind as to the parish coffin, he carefully measured his length from foot to head!

Strangely premature as this may seem to the reader, it suited this dying pilgrim well, for it looked like putting the welcome promise into practice in good earnest, and no doubt his visitor knew that this would be a comfort to the dear old man, or he would never have done it.

No boarding-school boy could see the railway porter labelling his luggage for home with greater satisfaction than Jemmie witnessed the measuring of his poor worn-out earthly frame.

The carpenter soon left, and Jemmie might have heard during the night the sound of busy hands in the workshop close by; for, believing *that his neighbour was really dying, the master* tradesman was determined to do all in his power to remove completely the cause of Jemmie's last trouble.

Next morning, when the neighbours peeped into his cottage, they found no response to their kindly enquiries; the silence of death was there; the familiar voice would greet them here below no more. He had, as he said he should, departed during the night.

"Jesus can make a dying bed  
As soft as downy pillows are,  
While on His breast I rest my head,  
And breathe my life out sweetly there."

Now for the other side of our subject. A gentleman of wealth and position, residing in the north of Ireland, was unwell. His great fear was that he might die in his sleep. So he paid a

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special nurse to wake him three times during each night, lest his fears should be realized. But with all his precaution he passed away in his sleep after all! After spending the evening at the billiard-table he had retired to bed, and between the hours of special waking his soul was summoned away. Another hand woke him up to the solemn circumstances of eternity. Don't ask *whither*, my reader; for if he died as he lived, that is, in his sins, and it is to be greatly feared he did, *you* know well enough that he went to add one more name to the list of the damned for ever!

What a contrast is presented in the end of those two men. It is well worth your while to consider it, my reader, for both left behind them something for you. One, a legacy more valuable than any other that could possibly be left you, a bright testimony to the fact that neither "*death*" nor what comes "*after death*" have any terrors for the one who knows Christ; the other the solemn warning (oh that you would take heed to it!) that without Christ there is neither solid comfort for the present, nor anything but the most gloomy outlook for the future. To such, death is indeed the "king of terrors," and neither wealth nor paid watchers can keep him at arm's length when once the summons goes forth. "There is no discharge in that war." *That* King is *sure* to conquer.

How is it with *your* soul, dear reader? If unsaved, be not so mad as to delay such a matter another hour, fraught as it is with eternal issues. With the judgment of God resting upon you how dare you trifle? Oh, repent of your sins! Come to the blessed Saviour. His grace will welcome. His blood will cleanse your soul.

His love will captivate your heart. With Him on your side you need not fear. He has the keys of death and Hades in His hand. He assumed human form, "that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." (Heb. ii. 14, 15.)

May that blessed deliverance be yours. It certainly will if the great Deliverer be bowed to and trusted. Still He lingers for you. Bow to Him now.

GEO. C.

### NO REST IN THE GRAVE.

SITTING for a few moments on Plas Mara, Rosario, a stranger in a strange land, I was aroused from my reverie by a stranger accosting me. "Beg pardon, sir; but are you English?"

"Yes."

I was not long in discovering that my would-be friend was a drunken sailor. After a good many disjointed sentences, with which he tried to tell me his past history—doubtless a black one—he paused, and then, as though addressing some one unseen, said, weeping, "Why don't you take me out of this?" "Oh, let me die, there is nothing in this world for me!" Then turning toward me he continued, "I wish I was in the grave, I should be at rest there."

Oh! how my heart ached for the poor fellow, drugged with the opiates of Satan, dreaming in vain of a rest in the grave from the terrible reproaches of conscience and the rebuffs of a selfish world. *Rest!* thought I. What a vain



delusion! Rest, with a guilty past and an accusing conscience? Impossible. What infinite mercy God did not answer his request, and usher his Christless soul into a lost eternity, there and then.

He had tried the world and its varied attractions, as perhaps few of my readers have, spending time, money, and bodily strength in pursuit of those pleasure-phantoms so cleverly devised by Satan, only to find, when everything was gone, his character blasted, his body ruined, and that there was "nothing in the world" for him. There he stood on the verge of eternity, longing to get away from that dread accuser, a guilty conscience.

What a sample of the world's votaries to-day. Careless and gay among their own company, and yet the poor bruised heart longing for true rest. How true are the words of the blessed Son of God, "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall *thirst again*: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." (John iv. 13, 14.) Perhaps my reader has for years been seeking to slake his thirst at the streams of a Christless world, finding, alas! like this poor sailor, *that the world has no rest to offer*. Listen to the words of one whose greatest delight was to heal the broken-hearted and relieve the oppressed, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matt. xi. 28.) Rest, unchanging and eternal, through the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Rest, not in the sensual things of this world, not in the grave, but in the Christ of God revealing the Father.

J. W. H. N.

## INIQUITY FOUND OUT AND TAKEN AWAY.

“What shall we say unto my lord? what shall we speak? or how shall we clear ourselves? God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants.”—GEN. xliv. 16.

SUCH were the solemn words of Judah, one of the sons of Jacob, as he and his brethren bowed before the lord of Egypt whom yet they knew not. The words were true in a way and measure beyond what he intended. He spoke of the cup found in Benjamin's sack. God's great controversy with them was their sin in selling Joseph and deceiving their aged father.

More than ten years had passed over their heads since the terrible crime was perpetrated, yet God had not forgotten it, nor had they. It was still fresh in their remembrance, as on the day when it was committed. On first finding themselves involved in difficulty and sorrow in Egypt their thoughts flew back to that moment. They said, “We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us.” (xlii. 21.) Oh, the misery of a guilty conscience!

And God's hand was upon them to bring it all out, for sin is abhorrent to Him. In the day they committed the sin they deliberated how they might best hide it, deceiving their father with whom they had to do about the safety of their brother. They succeeded well. Jacob cried in bitter anguish as he beheld the blood-stained coat, “It is my son's coat; an evil beast hath devoured him; Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces.”

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Thus they had their own way in sin. They had got rid of their hated brother, and they had so deceived their father that no suspicion fell on them. All seemed well.

But was it so? God can never be deceived. Sooner or later a reckoning day with Him must come, and how serious is that day! It was only by degrees that Jacob's sons were made conscious that God was causing their sin to find them out. But as they became thus conscious it was also to be seen that upon their own consciences their sin had left a wound which all the soothing balm of Time could not heal.

Dear reader, you may not think your sins so serious as that of Jacob's sons, but have you met God face to face about them? Sins you have, whoever you may be. Sins of which you cannot clear yourself. Be assured that God knows them, and one day you must stand before Him, your iniquity all found out.

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“Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.”—ISAIAH vi. 7.

God be thanked. He who finds out the iniquity is the One who takes it away! A God of infinite holiness discovers the sin, for it must be judged; yet as a God of infinite grace He has found the means of glory to Himself with respect to it, and of perfect relief to the poor sinner.

What is His way? By what means can iniquity be taken away? It is alone by the sacrifice of Christ. In Isaiah's case this was expressed in figure. When he cried before God as a sinful man one of the seraphim flew and took a burning coal from the altar and with it touched his lips,

saying, "Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged."

Upon that altar was consumed the unblemished victim offered as a burnt offering to God, a figure of the precious Saviour, the Lamb of God. The moment the man who was confessedly sinful was brought into touch with that offering of sweet savour to God his iniquity was gone. Thus the offering of the Lord Jesus, once for all, has perfectly glorified God with respect to sin, and the moment we are brought in contact with it by faith we are relieved.

In Heb. x. 12 it is said, "But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God." Thus is set forth the infinite satisfaction of God in the precious offering of Jesus. Then are we brought into touch with it by faith through the testimony of the Holy Spirit: "The Holy Ghost also is a witness to us. . . Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." (Heb. x. 15, 17.)

Oh, it is a blessed thing to have had to do consciously with God about our sins, so that we are enabled to say, "He found out my iniquity, and I could say nothing, and could in no way clear myself; but that, blessed be His name, He has taken away the iniquity which He found, by the one perfect offering which has glorified Him about all my sins!"

J. R.

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It is ever God's way to produce a sense of need in the soul before He meets it. Joseph's store-houses were well supplied with plenteous provision for the hungry, but the doors were not thrown open till the "cry for bread" was heard.

# TIDINGS OF LIFE AND PEACE.



## “THE WEDDING AND THE GUESTS.”

“**T**HEY made light of it.” What an extraordinary statement! How contrary to all human ideas! Whoever heard of such a thing as a host, having furnished the wedding breakfast, finding difficulty in securing guests for the occasion? Does not experience show that the difficulty, if any, arises not from the lack of guests, but from the lack of a wedding feast suitable to the occasion! Amongst men there is not much difficulty in getting guests for your dinner; the difficulty rather lies in getting dinner for your guests.

Let us then, reader, refer for a moment to the parable (Matt. xxii. 1–14) where this remarkable expression occurs, “A certain king . . . made a marriage (wedding feast) for his son.” Carefully consider this. God’s delight is to glorify His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. He is bent upon honouring the One who took the lowest place in death—the death of the cross. Even now He has highly exalted Him, and decreed that to Him every knee shall bow, and that every tongue shall confess that He is Lord.

Secondly it says, “I have prepared my dinner.” The gospel feast is ready, thank God, ready long ago. When was it prepared? When the risen

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Saviour took His seat on His Father's throne. God has done all the preparing. All the cost has fallen upon Him; and now how about the invited—the guests? Alas! we read, “They made light of it.” Sad history of man.

“God beseeching—man refusing  
To be made for ever glad.”

What a story! Man prefers his farm or merchandise to God's bright courts of joy. Doubtless this was literally fulfilled in the history of the Jews. But what of the gracious Host? Does this rude reception chill His heart? Is the door for ever barred against wicked man? Ah no! with loving hand yon festal door is flung wide open. All are *invited*. The vilest is *welcomed*. The wedding is *furnished* with guests.

And has this no voice for you, unsaved reader? The very fact of your being unsaved shows that you have made light of God's offer, and—this is the serious charge—thereby insulted the Son, whom God is bent upon honouring. You may not have openly derided the gospel, but you have *neglected* it, and what is that but making *light* of it—it has no *weight* with you.

Let it have weight with you now, I entreat you. Ah! who can tell how much it cost God to prepare so great a salvation? It cost Him the delight of His heart—“Heaven's beloved One.” It cost Him the choicest and most precious gift that heaven or earth has ever known—it cost Him “Jesus.” Yes, the Lord Jesus became man, went to the cross, and there suffered the Just for the unjust. He was there made sin, and bore its judgment, that we might receive the forgiveness of sins, and be found no longer *in Adam*, but *in*

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*Christ*, the risen and glorified Man. What love! And after this—after God has proved His love in such a magnificent way—can you go on in cold indifference to it all? Oh that the very thought of it may melt your heart.

But what of the last four verses? Unconverted professor, here's a solemn word for you. You may not *outwardly* make light of God's invitation. To all appearance you may be a Christian, diligent in all religious matters. Clad in the garb of your own righteousness you may defy the scrutiny of the most experienced eye. But you have not Christ—the wedding garment; and a moment is coming when you will be read through and through, your mouth stopped, and your judgment pronounced. "Cast him into outer darkness," said the king, "there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Searched by that piercing eye. Silenced by that withering word. Damned by that awful sentence.

One other word of warning. "The wedding *was* furnished with guests." God will have His house filled. If you refuse, then another will reap a benefit out of your folly by stepping in and taking your place. That door will not always be open wide. Ere long the Master of the house will rise up and shut to the door. (Luke xiii. 25.) The Lord Jesus may come ere your pulse throbs again, and the door close, and close for ever. Fellow-traveller, on the road to eternity, I beseech you to be reconciled to God. May you have grace to take the low place of being *the* sinner, lost and hell-deserving; thus will your title be sure to the hell-deserving sinner's Saviour; and has He not said, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." (John vi. 37.)

F. B. H.

## THE SHEET ALMANAC.

IN passing a cottage on the outskirts of a town in Surrey, I was struck with the conspicuous position of a large sheet almanac. The cottage door was partly open, giving a full view of the almanac, which was placed close to the doorpost. Two verses of Scripture on it, in clear, bold type, could easily be read from the road. They seemed like messages from God to every one passing, the one telling 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.) Then below was that verse in John v., "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.)

I often went by the cottage, for it was near where I was staying for a short time. The door always seemed to be left open wide enough for the almanac to be fully seen. The first opportunity I had I visited the cottage.

"Will you tell me who gave you this almanac?" I said to a very old woman who came to the door.

"A lady always leaves me one every Christmas," she replied, and then invited me to come in.

As I entered I pointed to the words and read them, "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."

"Have *you* heard and believed?" I asked her.

"I hope so," was her answer.



"But are you not *sure*? Don't you *know*?"

"I *know* that I have Christ," she replied with deep feeling.

"How was it? Will you tell me about it?" I said as we sat down together.

"Well, it was that almanac two years ago. That verse you have just read was on it then, and it was always catching my eye. One night I could not sleep for studying it over, and then at last it all came quite clear to me."

"You mean that you *heard* and *believed* God's word, when He said He had sent His own Son to die for you as a sinner?"

"Yes, that was just it."

"And have you ever had any doubts about it since?"

"Well, I have often been a good bit troubled," she said, "but I can't say I have ever doubted that I am saved. My daughter-in-law, here, says no one can know they are saved, but I tell her *I* can, I *know* I am saved."

How simply she had taken God at His word, and rested her soul upon it! How many say they *hope* they are saved, not seeing that if they have really believed in Christ they *are* saved, and therefore how dishonouring such words are. Can they ever have read 1 John v. 10-13? "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made Him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son. And this is the record, that God *hath* given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son *hath* life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the

Son of God; *that ye may know that ye have eternal life.*"

Before I left I asked the old woman what her age was.

"Ninety-four," she answered. "Ah! if I had not read those words then I could not read them now; my sight has got too bad for me to read now. I can't go about to tell folks; but I always put the almanac there close to the door, so that they can read the words for themselves, and you would be surprised to see how many come on to the step and seem to study over those words."

Fellow-Christian, does not this old woman put many of us to shame? Are *we* doing all we can to enable our friends and neighbours to "read the words for themselves"? There may be those around whom the question "Are *you* saved?" would rouse to a sense of their awful danger in neglecting eternal things. Perhaps some with hearts aching to know words whereby they may be saved, and if we keep back those words are we guiltless? Oh, may no dying friend ever be able to reproach us with, "*You* know the way to be saved, and yet you never told *me*!"

Dear unsaved reader, why will you neglect so great salvation? "Study over," I beseech you, those two precious verses, and may you receive the message of God's love which they contain. "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.) "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.)

F. A.

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## THE DYING MINER.

**J**OHAN ROCK, a miner, as he was dying, said to his wife, "Mary, you are not to mourn for me; I am quite happy, and shall soon be happier. I shall be with Jesus in glory. The Lord will provide for you and the children. Trust in Him."

One of his acquaintances called to inquire if he would allow a priest to be brought to him, to which he replied, "Tell him I've got a priest already, that's Jesus Christ; I need no other."

Reader, can you say, in prospect of death, "I have Christ; I need no other"? Saved or unsaved, you must soon enter eternity. A death-bed you may never see, and a death-bed repentance, therefore, never be yours. Come to Christ *now*. Hear His loving call, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Then, having found rest in Him, happiness will be yours, even in the prospect of death.

E. E. A.

## WHERE DID SHE SPEND CHRISTMAS?

**A** YOUNG American lady, a short time ago, came with her husband to live in one of our northern cities. They were not long there before, by her ways and conduct, she openly manifested a total disregard of God; in fact she practically ignored His existence. How truly has the Holy Ghost recorded for our instruction and admonition that, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." "They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave. Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of Thy ways."

It is said that this lady wrote to her mother in New York, saying, "I am going to spend Christmas with you, dead or alive," naming the day she purposed leaving home, and the vessel in which she intended sailing. A few days after writing thus to her mother she went with her husband to the theatre, and on their return went to her Christless bed with the wrath of God abiding on her. Towards morning she awoke, saying, "Oh! I cannot breathe," and almost immediately died. On the following Wednesday her body was taken to New York by the same boat, and on the very day she had herself named, saying, "I am going to spend Christmas with you, dead or alive." "But there is no man that hath power over the spirit, to retain the spirit: neither hath he power in the day of death." How little this poor worldling thought, as she sat in the theatre with her heart full of the world, that God up in heaven was saying of her, "Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee." Many poor unsaved sinners who intended spending Christmas eating and drinking, dancing and singing, have found themselves before Christmas came in the regions of despair, where there is no dancing, no singing. If we could listen for a moment at its portals we should hear nought but weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth; there the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. All is intense reality in hell. No theatres there where poor unsaved sinners sit with the wrath of God hanging over their heads, laughing at other lost, deluded sinners acting out some lie of Satan, all fools together making a mock at sin, while the pit of hell yawns beneath their feet, and they go skipping and dancing round it. Satan takes

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care to keep them engaged with such attractions, if he can, till they find themselves in a lost eternity, and, oh! awful fact, there for ever!

A young actress said to me in a railway-carriage, when I spoke to her about her precious soul, and the realities of eternity, "We live in a constant whirl, and never get time to think about these things."

The irreligious worldling has his Christmas pantomime, and the godless professor his Christmas decorations; but God does not forget the crown of thorns that man put upon the head of His beloved Son, and the all-important question is, "What think ye of" (not Christmas, but) "Christ?"

Reader, if you are not saved, if your sins are not washed away in the precious blood of Jesus, take care lest the devil cheat you out of your soul. And "what shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Do not deceive yourself by thinking that because you are not openly irreligious, not a drunkard, or a theatre-goer like the American lady, that therefore you do not need a Saviour, but will get to heaven at the end. Dear unsaved reader, nothing but the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ will secure you an entrance there. Every saint now in heaven has been washed in that precious blood. You remember how the soldier came and plunged his spear into the side of the Lord Jesus Christ as He hung dead upon that cross of shame; but where sin abounded grace did much more abound, and "the very spear which pierced His side drew forth the blood to save." And that precious blood cleanseth from all sin. The greatest,

blackest sinner upon earth washed in it is made clean every whit, and meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.

“Precious, precious blood of Jesus,  
Jesus, God’s own Son ;  
Telling that the work is finished,  
All is done.”

God says, “There is no difference,” so that the theatre-goer, the drunkard, and the religious man must each of them be saved in the same way, and by the same blessed Saviour. Reader, what think you of Christ? “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.”

“Though thy sins are red like crimson,  
Deep in scarlet glow,  
Jesus’ precious blood can make them  
White as snow.”

C. R.

## OUR CONSCIENCE AND GOD’S HOLINESS.

### AN EXTRACT.

**I**T is of the utmost importance to distinguish between the Spirit’s work *in* us and Christ’s work *for* us. Where they are confounded one rarely finds settled peace as to the question of sin. The type of the Passover illustrates the distinction very simply. The Israelites’ peace was not founded upon the unleavened bread or the bitter herbs, *but upon the blood*. Nor was it by any means a question of what *he* thought about the blood, but what God thought about it. This gives immense relief and comfort to the heart. God has found a Ransom, and He reveals that Ransom to us in order that we might rest therein on the authority of His word and by the

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grace of the Spirit; and albeit our thoughts and feelings must ever fall far short of the infinite preciousness of that Ransom, yet, inasmuch as God tells us that He is perfectly satisfied with the sacrifice for our sins, we may be satisfied also. *Our conscience* may well find settled rest where *God's holiness* finds rest.

W. R.

A THREEFOLD CORD.

LOVED *by the Father.* (John xvi. 27, xvii. 23.)

SAVED *by the Son.* (1 Tim. i. 15, 2 Peter iii. 18.)

SEALED *by the Spirit.* (Eph. i. 13, iv. 30.)

TO God in holy praise  
We lift our voice to-day,  
And on this earth commence the song  
We'll sing in heaven for aye.

*The Father's* eye of love  
Has viewed us from afar,  
Before the earth its being had,  
Or sun, or moon, or star.

*The Son* in heavenly grace  
Came down as man to die:  
Our sin's removed, and by His blood  
We're made for ever nigh.

Sealed *by the Holy Ghost*  
Until redemption's day,  
We tread in faith by His blest power  
Our onward, heavenly way.

Thus loved, and saved, and sealed,  
We wait for Him to come,  
Whose present grace and perfect love  
Have made that heaven our home.

W. H. W.

## SATAN'S KINGDOM SUPPORTED BY VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS.

**I**T is a well-known fact that some of the finest institutions England boasts of owe their existence and success to public liberality, including even "The Seaman's Hospital" floating on the river Thames, which could easily be distinguished at one time by means of a wide streak along her broad side with bold letters as follows: "SUPPORTED BY VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS." The value of the above institution is best known to those who have benefited by its means, to whom also the privilege belongs of proclaiming its worth to others. We have simply referred to the same as an illustration, and to contrast it with what we read in the book of Exodus. (Chap. xxxii.)

"The golden calf" was evidently one of Satan's inventions for the purpose of turning away the hearts of the Israelites from God, and was raised "by voluntary contributions," as the following verses prove:

"And all the people brake off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them unto Aaron. And he received them at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf." (vv. 3, 4.) It then became an object of worship, and dancing for joy at their success they said one to another, "These be thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." (v. 8.) They acknowledged their deliverance from Egypt, and attributed the power to Satan, and not to God, like the religious sinners in the gospels, who, when



they saw the Lord casting out devils, said, "He casteth out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils." The Israelites were so happy in their new occupation that after having "sat down to eat and to drink, they rose up to play." (v. 6.) Happiness, however, that is gained apart from God, and at the expense of His honour, is not likely to last long, and will most surely be followed by grief and shame.

The contributions towards the golden calf were only small, and the contributors but few compared with what we see around us at the present time.

The kingdom of Satan is a system of wickedness which has existed ever since the reign of sin began, and will continue until Christ comes in judgment, after which both the deceiver and the deceived will be cast into the lake of fire for ever and ever. (Rev. xx. 15.) The gospel is preached in the meantime, and by its blessed means sinners are "*delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son.*" (Col. i. 13.)

Satan's kingdom is "supported by voluntary contributions," and its extension and prosperity is owing to the hard earnings and willing offerings of the captives of sin.

There will be found among Satan's contributors those who are earnest enough to afflict both mind and body to do his will, and others who are covetous enough to worship gods of gold for the glory of their greatest enemy, while others, alas, sacrifice their time and talents to enrich the one that is seeking their eternal ruin. All persons are not worshippers of gold, it is true; all are not equally greedy of earthly gain or guilty of terrible crimes, but "all have sinned and come short of

the glory of God," and each of us has also contributed our part to Satan's kingdom. Satan's contributors, let us remember, dwell in Christian countries as well as in heathen lands, and the religious sinner that resists the strivings of the Spirit of God as regularly as he attends what he calls a place of worship, if he dies unrepentant will find himself as great a contributor to Satan's kingdom as the ignorant idolater who sacrifices his life in order to do homage to a false God. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

There is nothing on earth so degrading as the service of sin, or so dearly earned as its short-lived pleasures; and perhaps none are so devoted as those who lend their support to Satan's kingdom. Neither is anything so desirable, on the other hand, as the salvation of God which grace has brought, or so delightful as the portion of those who love the Lord Jesus Christ, and whose privilege it is to offer the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to God continually, and thereby glorify Him.

The Thessalonians had contributed largely to Satan's kingdom until they heard the gospel preached by the apostle Paul, and then they "turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for His Son from heaven." (1 Thess. i. 9, 10.)

If the foregoing remarks should be objected to by any who deny the personality of Satan altogether, and therefore ask first of all for "a proof of his existence," allow me to say, no objection could be more easily met, supposing there is, on the part of the reader, a readiness to submit to the best authority, which is the word of God, and accept

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its most substantial evidence. The one whose very existence is called in question bears the most distinct witness before the face of God Himself.

In the first chapter of Job God questioned Satan as follows: "Whence comest thou?" And Satan speaks for himself, without any attempt to disown what some men dare to deny. "Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it." (v. 7.)

If by means of the above Satan is easily identified by those whose eyes have been opened, the following passage proves how much the wicked resemble him in their ways: "Like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." (Isaiah lvii. 20, 21.) "Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die?"

Satan is, be assured, a real person, and his restless activity in ruining sinners a solemn reality. May the reader be led to look to God for deliverance from his power.

"He will save you just now."

H. H.

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 MAN'S DISTANCE FROM GOD

THE *Gospel Narrative* furnishes two vivid pictures of man's position Godward—the *leper* (Luke xvii. 12) and the *demoniac* (Luke viii. 28). One is a figure of his uncleanness, the other of his enmity. On the ground of Levitical restriction, laid down by God Himself, the leper *could not* come near if he would, and because of man's enmity through the devil's deception the

demoniac *would not* come near if he could. Yet how blessed the result of that almighty grace which was seen in the person of Jesus here below—grace which came down to reach man at his lowest, cleanse away his defilement, remove his bitter enmity, and set him down at perfect rest in the presence of his Deliverer! Behold that once devil-possessed sinner who cried, “What have I to do with Thee?” now “sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind,” his one desire being now to be with Him. See that once filthy leper falling down at the feet of Him who had cleansed him, a grateful worshipper.

Thank God, His enemies are still being reconciled to Him by the death of His Son, and the filthy washed from their sins in the Saviour's precious blood.

Reader, has *your* heart been set right with God? Has the conscious removal of your sins from before His all-seeing eye left you a cleansed worshipper in His holy presence? If not, look to it, lest that “certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries,” overtake you unawares, and you be branded as the foe of God and His Christ for eternity. Think of unforgiven Cain, driven out as a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth with God's “mark” upon him, and as you hear his bitter cry, “My punishment is greater than I can bear,” ask yourself, If conscious expulsion from God's presence on earth involved so much anguish, what will it be to be driven into hell? That such a doom may never be yours, we plead with you to resist no longer, but be reconciled to God.

GEO. C.

# TIDINGS OF LIFE AND PEACE.



## A HOME FOR INCURABLES.

PASSING a large building one day in company with a friend, I enquired what sort of institution it might be. "Oh," he replied, "that is a home for incurables!" "Home." "Incurables." How strangely the names contrasted with each other. Could there be any harmony between them? I thought. "Incurables," those who were beyond the reach of doctors and medicine; hopeless cases, baffling the most eminent scientific skill; whose friends had abandoned *all hope* respecting them, upon whom the ravages of disease had made fearful inroads, and who were already marked off by grim death as his certain prey. "Incurables," the very name savours of gloom and hopeless despair, but here was a "home" for such. Kind hearts and liberal hands had provided and furnished a home for these worn-out voyagers over life's rough sea, where, having run their last little "cruise," they could quietly wait the ebb of life's closing tide. "Home," sweet and hallowed name, connected with all that is bright and pure and happy on the earth! Here was a home for incurables, but could it give back the colour to those pallid cheeks, the strength to those feeble and emaciated frames, or recall those once lithe and stalwart

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forms to their youthful vigour? Ah, no! It could only afford a kindly shelter. It was powerless to arrest the rapid progress of disease, or to stay the onward march of that insidious foe, who was slowly, but surely, completing his deadly work.

Will the reader kindly turn with me to Romans iii., 10 to 23, where we are introduced to another company of "incurables?" The circle is very wide, embracing the *entire human family* without exception.

Do you see *yourself*, dear reader, in this picture? "There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God . . . there is *no difference*: for *all have sinned*, and come short of the glory of God." What a startling, sweeping truth is here conveyed to us, and let us remember it is God who speaks. Had it only been the conclusion of some eminent thinker or learned theologian we might well hesitate to subscribe our "Amen" to this dark description of man's condition; but it has pleased God, in His wisdom and mercy, to put before us, in plain and unmistakable language, the *actual truth* respecting us, as children of the first Adam, placing all on one common level that He might have *mercy upon all*. (Romans xi. 32.) Yes, the king and the beggar, the prince and the peasant, the peer and the pauper, all nationalities, from every corner of the earth, are here ranged on one platform before God. Have you learnt this truth, dear reader? Have you bowed to God's verdict respecting you? God's faithful, full-length portrait of man in Romans iii. proves beyond the possibility of a doubt that this earth of ours is peopled with a race of "incurables," and where, oh, where,

will you find a remedy for that which God Himself has pronounced *hopeless*? Perhaps you think the picture overdrawn, you do not believe the case is *quite so desperate*. Will you listen to the words of Jesus, "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was *lost*." (Luke xix. 10.) Did you ever think of the immense distance that lies between a *lost sinner* and a *saved soul*, although you may see them walking side by side on the street, or dwelling under the same roof? Or have you ever sought to measure the distance your sins have placed you at from a holy, sin-hating God? Shall I tell you the measure? In Psalm xxii. 1 and Matthew xxvii. 46 we hear the solemn utterance from the lips of God's blessed Son, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" There alone on the cross He is bearing in His own person the fierce and withering stroke of God's holy judgment against sin. Jehovah's rod must descend upon that sinless One in all its unabated weight; and why? In the quiet and solitude of God's presence have you ever asked yourself the question, *Why did God forsake His Son?* Oh, sinner, it was that the "way of life" might be opened up for you and for me! And let me tell you that the darkness, the distance, the abandonment, from the depths of which that bitter cry was heard, is the *only measure* of a sinner's distance from God. Unsaved one, have you ever gazed upon Him as He hung there suffering for sins not His own? Oh, how earth's fairest glory pales in the presence of a scene like this, while all the divine glories that shall yet be displayed in that blessed *Man of God's choice* find their basis in that wondrous cross, blessed fruit of the Father's counsels from eternity!

And what does God propose, now that Christ's atoning work has furnished a righteous ground on which He can consistently act? He proposes to introduce the sinner who believes in Jesus into a new standing and condition, to bring him, in Christ Jesus, into a new creation, where all is of God. (2 Cor. v. 17, 18.)

Seeing that God has written death upon the "first man" in the cross of His Son, the one who bows to the truth of God against himself is "justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus," and is brought to the "*Second Man*," the Lord from heaven, the glorified Head of a *new race*. Dear reader, have you learnt these realities for *yourself*? "God is light." (1 John i. 5.) "God is love." (1 John iv. 8.) But the *light* must first *expose*, so that a fitting sphere may be found for the *love* to express itself in all its fulness.

There are many "panaceas" held out to the perishing sons of Adam to arrest the progress and development of "sin's fatal scourge." How far have they succeeded? After well-nigh six thousand years' testing, alas! the trial has only proved the utter worthlessness and inability of *every human resource* to remedy that on which God has written, *Incurable*, and man is found to-day, in spite of all the learning, and polish, and enlightenment of this highly-favoured nineteenth century, morally as far away from God as ever. Better far, dear reader, for you to learn this now than to learn it in the dark regions of the lost. You may not feel it, but *God says it*, and your reception or rejection of it will not alter His *purposes*, either in grace now, or in judgment in the day to come.



## "LIST OF THE SAVED."

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Dear unsaved reader of this little paper, whoever you may be, your case is *hopeless*, the terrible leprosy of *sin* is swiftly and surely dragging your soul down to the pit of misery and everlasting despair; but God offers you a remedy in the person of His Son, not a temporary home of shelter or relief for that sin-stricken soul of yours, but a positive, present, and eternal *cure*.

Look away, then, from yourself, your sins, and your sorrows, and from the world with its false remedies, its unsatisfying pleasures, its empty dreams. God offers Christ to you as a Saviour from your sins, and as a present Object for your heart, and with Him He freely gives you "*all things*." (Rom. viii. 32.) And it will take an eternity for you to measure the extent of the "*all things*!"

Turn your eye in simple faith to Jesus, the sinner's well-proved Friend, and the full, unlimited, inexhaustible blessings of the gospel of the glory of Christ are made good to you for time and for eternity.

G. F. E.

## "LIST OF THE SAVED."

"**F**OUNDERING of the *Victoria*; list of the saved." These words might have been seen not long ago printed in large letters and posted up in almost every town and village in the United Kingdom.

One can imagine the intense earnestness with which the relatives and friends of the crew of the lost war-ship would turn to the "list of the saved" to see if a beloved husband, or father, or brother, or friend, as the case might be, were

named in that list; and if the eagerly-looked-for name were discovered therein, what anxiety it would allay, what joy it would give! But, on the other hand, if no such name could be found how great the disappointment, how bitter the grief which would result.

Without the slightest intention of underrating the magnitude of the deplorable calamity by which so many brave men lost their lives, there is yet a matter of vastly greater importance, to which every reader of these pages would do well to give the closest attention, as it intimately concerns every one. Allow me then, as one who sincerely desires your eternal welfare, to ask whether *your* name is to be found in the "list of the saved"?

Not saved from the death which overtook so many of the poor sailors who perished when the ill-fated *Victoria* went down, but from the infinitely more appalling death which is the sure portion of every person who dies in his, or her, sins, and has to meet "the judgment." (Heb. ix. 27.)

It was almost without warning that the *Victoria* heeled over and sank, and you can never be sure that you will not be quite as suddenly called into eternity, after which there is no salvation possible for any one, no matter how much in earnest he may then become.

*Now* is the time to secure your enrollment on the "list of the saved." Be wise, seize this opportunity, it may be your last. Come to Jesus NOW. No one else can save you, "For there is *none other* name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts iv. 12.) He Himself invites one and all to come unto

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Him. (Matt. xi. 28.) "As though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." (2 Cor. v. 20.) "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." (Acts xvi. 31.) Only believe in Him, only trust Him in simple faith, and the divine assurance shall be yours, that "By grace YE ARE saved" (Ephes. ii. 5), and are possessed of the "eternal salvation," of which He is the "Author" (Heb. v. 9), that you shall not come into judgment (John v. 24), but that you are already "found written in the book of life" (Rev. xx. 15)—God's own "list of the saved." J. G.

## REALITY OF HEART.

MY dear reader, in these days of loud profession it is of the greatest importance to be individually *real* and *honest*. God loves reality and hates hypocrisy. He desireth truth in the inward parts. (Psalm li. 6.)

God searcheth the *heart*, and He knows who are *real* and who are *unreal*. Yes, "All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." (Hebrews iv. 13.) "The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord *looketh on the heart*" (1 Sam. xvi. 7), and proclaims it to be "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." (Jer. xvii. 9.) He is, dear friend, a Discerner of the thoughts and intents of *your* heart.

I should like to draw your attention for a moment to Luke xviii. 10-14, where we read, "Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a pharisee, and the other a publican. The

pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank Thee, that I am not as other men are. . . . And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, *God be merciful to me a sinner.*"

The publican was *real in heart* before God. He took his true place—a *sinner*—and we read that (v. 14) he "went down to his house justified rather than the other." On the other hand, look at the proud, self-righteous pharisee, taking a false place, in all the *unreality* and *hypocrisy* of his heart, and saying, "God, I thank Thee, that I am not as other men are." Oh, my friend, is such the language of your heart? The pharisee made a great difference between himself and the poor sinful publican; but the word of God says, "*There is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.*" (Romans iii. 22, 23.) I do not know your heart, but God does. He knows whether you are *real* or *unreal*; but in love to your precious, never-dying soul let me implore you to take your true place—a *sinner*—like the publican. Whether you own it or not, you are "*condemned already*," and if unsaved at this moment you are exposed to the wrath of a holy, sin-hating God! Awful position!

"Eternal wrath hangs o'er thy head,  
And judgment lingers nigh."

God can by *no means* clear the guilty.

"He could not pass the sinner by,  
His sin demands that he must die.  
But in the cross of Christ we see  
How God can save—yet righteous be."

Listen, friend, listen! "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance" (it is worthy

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of yours), "that Christ Jesus came into the world to *save sinners*." (1 Timothy i. 15.) "I came not to call the righteous," said the blessed Lord, "but sinners to repentance." (Luke v. 32.) Oh, needy one, on Calvary's shameful cross a work was accomplished, on the ground of which God can "be just, and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." (Romans iii. 26.)

And now—

"The sinner who believes is free,  
Can say the Saviour died for me,  
Can point to the atoning blood,  
And say, *This* made my peace with God."

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

J. A. D.

## MENDED OR ENDED.

**W**HERE is the man or woman who would not prefer a new garment to an old one? What a pleasure for a man in honest poverty to receive a new coat, after long seeking to keep up appearances by mending and patching his old one!

It is remarkable how sharp human nature is in natural things, and yet how perverse in spiritual ones! What is Christendom doing to-day but mending and patching the old coat? What is her need? *A new one*. Human nature is past mending before God. You may patch it up and keep up appearances before man; but no soul, honest with itself, and with a sense of the holiness of God, will be content therewith. No robe but *Christ* will suit God's eye. This new robe is prepared, and *free for all*.

Every patchwork piece of good works tacked on by man to the old robe of human righteous-

ness is like a piece of new cloth put into an old garment—it only makes the rent worse. The best robe, the one the Father gave the prodigal, is what each one needs to fit him for the presence of God, and what each *must* have, or be lost for ever. (Luke xv. 22; John iii. 36.)

God has given up man as *past mending*. At the cross he is *ended*, not *mended*. But, alas! how few are ready to cast away the old rags, and to wear the new robe! Reader, how is it with you? May be you have struggled many a long weary year with Satan, sin and self, till well-nigh in despair. You have patched your robe Sunday after Sunday with a bit of religion, and it has torn and slit again in the week. You have again sought to mend it with good works, yet only to find that your righteousness is but a faded, threadbare garment after all. In short, you have followed your own thoughts instead of God's, and therefore you are more conscious of unfitness for His presence than ever. Why is it? You have never learnt the difference between *mended* and *ended*. The cross is the casting away of the old garment, the resurrection is the introduction of the new. The new is *Christ*. You need Christ, the Saviour out of death. "He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." (2 Cor. v. 21.) *Mending* is your righteousness; God has closed the door upon that, and brought out His righteousness. As soon as you receive the truth of it in your soul by faith you will be happy.

The gospel is very *simple*, and very *full*. God judged Christ for *sins* and for *sin*. That is enough. He seeks nothing *from* you, but will give something *to* you. A sinner you are, clad with nothing

but rags before His eyes, so long as you trust in *your* righteousness. All your religious efforts and moral doings in the flesh are simply threads in the old, faded, patched, and worn-out robe of *human righteousness*, which God at the cross pronounced once and for ever to be utterly worthless. Cast it aside, and submit to *His righteousness*. (Romans x. 1-10.) Believe on the Lord Jesus, and your sins are forgiven, you are accounted righteous, and are made the righteousness of God in Him. (Romans iv. 5-8; 2 Cor. v. 21.) The cross is both the *end of your sins* and the *end of you*. It is the judicial end of the first man altogether. God has begun over again, so to speak. He has raised and glorified Christ, a Saviour for all. When you believe on Him your sins are put away before God and you along with them, (Romans vi.), and you are clad with a new robe altogether, *the best—Christ*.

The word of God shows that the believing soul is not only forgiven all his sins (Acts xiii. 38, 39), but has died with Christ to sin itself, the root principle which causes the mischief. Christ has died, and *we have died*—we are ended; *not mended*, but *ended*. Happy he who believes it, who reckons with God, and knows it in power in his soul. (Romans vi. 11.) The old *I* has come to an end. (Galatians ii. 20.)

Now where do you stand? Forgiven, justified, righteous before God *in Christ—a new creation, etc.* (2 Cor. v. 17.) The Scripture teems with the blessing that belongs to all who learn they are *past mending*. They reckon with God that they have come to an end at the cross, and that they are alive to Him in Christ on the other side of death, clad with heaven's *best robe*.

And not robed only, we are also shod; we are fitted in the power of the Holy Ghost to walk worthy of Him, who has so graciously dealt with us and given us such a wondrous place and portion before Him for ever.

Reader, are you *mended* or *ended*? E. H. C.

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### THE HEAVENS CLOSED AND OPENED.

WHAT remarkable scenes are these to which your attention is called, beloved reader, for a few moments. Have you ever, in the presence of God, looked at them? If not, lend your attention for a little while, and, in the mercy of God, may your heart be touched and attracted as you listen to this wondrous story of His love and grace.

Let us reverse the order of our title, and gaze for a moment on

#### "THE HEAVENS OPENED,"

as recorded in the third chapter of Matthew's gospel. On whom do they open? Listen, for the answer to that question, to the voice coming out of the heights of heavenly glory, "*This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*" Who is this to whom such wondrous words can be addressed? It is the Son of God become a man to accomplish the glory of His Father, and to do His will. It is the Lamb of God, who, previous to the event noted in this third chapter of Matthew, had been walking in secret with God His Father all through His life. *This is He* whom God can introduce to the world as the One in whom He finds all His delight. And for the first time in the world's history the heavens are opened



## THE HEAVENS CLOSED AND OPENED. 173

over the head of a man, and for what purpose?  
*To let out God's thoughts about His beloved Son.*

But another scene. The heavens are opened again to the vision of one of the Lord's servants. (See Acts vii. 56.) Stephen has given his testimony to the council, and with such power that it has reached even to their hearts. They cannot stand this, and gnash upon him with their teeth. But he looks up, and the heavens are open. Why?  
*To let the believer look in and see his Saviour.*

On what ground can Stephen look in? Has he gained some eminence, reached some pinnacle of religion, from which he can gaze into heaven, while looking down upon everybody else? Has he by personal merit come up to the qualifications needed for one to stand in the holy place—to ascend into the hill of Jehovah? (See Psalms xv. xxiv.) No, a thousand times no! Psalm xiv. declares that such a thing is impossible. What then is the reason? Between Matthew iii. and Acts vii. a marvellous event has taken place—*the heavens have been closed*, and One has taken Stephen's place, and borne the wrath of God that was Stephen's due, so that now Stephen can look into the opened heavens and see his Saviour. Let us look for a moment at

## THE HEAVENS CLOSED.

What a scene! “And it was about the sixth hour, and there was *a darkness* over all the earth until the ninth hour,” and there in the midst of that darkness hangs One nailed to the cross. He has been brought here by the wicked hands of wicked man—the last dreadful act that formed the top-stone of man's guilt—the highest point to which man's iniquity had arisen. The governor had asked the question, “What evil hath He done?” He

gets no reply to it, for there was nothing to bring against Him but false witness. No! *God* had declared His good pleasure in Him, *man* could bring nothing against Him but a lie! What then is the meaning of the scene under contemplation? *He has become the Sin-bearer, and so the heavens are closed.* He cries, but there is none to hearken; He looks for some to take pity, but there is *none*; for comforters but He finds none. (Psalm lxix. 20.) Beyond all that the heavens are as brass. His prayer returns into His own bosom, and we hear His voice, through the prophet, that when He cried His prayer was shut out. (Lamentations iii. 8.) Surely, surely the heavens were closed.

Well, He lays down His life in the place of the sinner who believes; is put into the grave, and is raised for his justification. We leave these precious truths with the reader, and pass on to contemplate once more

#### HEAVEN OPENED.

In Acts x. Peter sees the great sheet filled with creatures clean and unclean, and learns from God the lesson that what He has cleansed is not to be counted common. For the third time in the New Testament the heavens are opened, and for what? *To let out God's thoughts about sinners.* Oh, how precious is this! There is a Saviour provided (as we have seen), and the door is thrown wide open to Jew and Gentile, rich and poor, to vile, lost, undone sinners—yea, “whosoever will.” The lesson we may learn now is that “God is no respecter of persons.” The Lamb of God has suffered for sin; He has been to the cross, and died for sins *not His own*. Whose then, beloved reader, whose then? Do you say, For the sins of those who pray, who

## THE HEAVENS OPENED AND CLOSED. 175

take the sacrament, who do good works, and who try to serve God thus? Nay, dear friend, thou art thus making Him a "respector of persons." It was not for those who strive to do something to merit salvation, but for "all that believe." Yes, "to Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name *whosoever believeth* in Him shall receive remission of sins." (Acts x. 43. See also Acts xiii. 38, 39; Romans v. 8; 1 Corinthians xv. 3; Galatians i. 4; 1 Peter ii. 24 and iii. 18.) These Scriptures should be enough to show that Christ *has died for the sins of the believer, whoever he, or she, may be.*

And now, dear reader, what about thyself? Hast thou, through believing, received this most precious assurance, that God has, for His Son's name sake, forgiven thee thy sins? Or dost thou still despise His grace? If the latter, then beware! Be not a mocker, lest thy bands be made strong. (Isaiah xxviii. 22.) Beware lest thou art left till the last time the heavens are opened. (Revelation xix. 11.) For in that day no mercy will await thee. Mercy does wait now; God is long-suffering NOW. *Then* nothing but judgment—swift, certain, unsparing judgment—will reach thee. Read the prophetic account of that scene where He, the One now offered to you as a Saviour, in righteousness judges and makes war. Yes, reader, then it will be judgment upon the sinner. Once it was judgment upon the Sinless One, so that the sinner who believes might never come into judgment, but might go free. Hast thou believed it? If not, "Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him."

B. C.

## SUDDENLY DESTROYED.

**H**OW hard is man's heart! A sledge-hammer plied against a granite rock would hardly leave a less impression than a warning does upon many souls in the present day.

How it fills the soul with awe as one listens to the story of some great calamity in which men are suddenly cut off—carried away “without remedy.” But how little the effect upon the mass in general!

A man, though “warned fifty times,” persisted in wheeling a barrow on a *high* scaffold, and paid the penalty with his death—“suddenly destroyed” “without remedy.”

Reader, if unsaved you are in infinitely greater danger than this heedless labourer with his barrow. You are in danger of “suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.” Yet what a comfort to know that the “Gospel” is *God's power* unto salvation to every one that *believeth*.

Why am I in danger?

Because you have *sinned*.

Have not others?

Yes, but that does not screen *you*. Some in this world have discovered, through the entrance of God's word into their souls, that they are *guilty* and *lost*. Directed to Jesus, the Sinbearer, they have believed on Him as *God's sent One*, and are *saved*. Dare you risk your soul on a sinking foundation—and anything but Christ is a sinking foundation—or will you rest your soul for eternity on the finished work of God's eternal Son? “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ” (even while reading these lines), “and thou *shalt* be *saved*.”

J. W.

# TIDINGS OF LIFE AND PEACE.



“A BROTHER TO DRAGONS,  
A COMPANION TO OWLS.”

**L.** WAS the son of a Christian mother who had sought to store the minds of her children with the Holy Scriptures, knowing them as able to “make wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” (2 Tim. iii. 15.) Thus was the incorruptible seed of the word of God sown in the soul, and it is this when used of the Spirit which produces the new birth. (1 Peter i. 23.) Alas! the enemy was there to catch away the seed, and apparently to trample it under foot; but God was, and is, over all. Satan may for a season seem to triumph, but he cannot hinder the accomplishment of the purposes of grace. God’s ear is open to a mother’s prayer, and it is answered according to His omnipotent power.

L. early left the shelter of home for educational advantages, and later on for medical studies. Away from the influence of his pious mother, the natural enmity of the human heart to God soon displayed itself, the fruit of that evil principle, *sin*, which is in us all by birth as children of Adam. It is only when we have been born of God that we have a nature capable of enjoying the things of God; for this we never can do with our fallen nature as children of Adam.

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The subject of our narrative, on becoming duly qualified for the medical profession, went a sea voyage. On his return he paid a visit to the home of his childhood. But what of the interval? He had made choice of the broad road that leadeth to destruction. As yet this was not fully known to the praying mother. The Word of God was read morning by morning in the family. It was customary for each one to select a verse to read. The morning after L.'s arrival, when it came to his turn to read, he opened the Bible handed to him by his mother, and read Job xxx. 29, "I am a brother to dragons and a companion to owls." Referring to this in later years he said, "I loved my mother devotedly, but I wanted to shew my opposition to religion." Each reader having finished, the mother closed her book, and dropping upon her knees prayed for her family—pleading especially for L. to be brought to know the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour, and that he might never be the companion of dragons and owls.

Years rolled on. The mother departed to be with Christ and the son continued in open opposition to God; still he could never forget his mother's prayer, though God's time for its answer was yet to come.

An open-air preacher came and told out the message of salvation on a piece of common quite near L.'s house. He was in his garden, and the gracious invitation sounded clear as a clarion in his ear. "Come now, and let us reason together, *saieth the Lord*: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." (Isa. i. 18.) "Who-soever will, let him take the water of life freely." (Rev. xxii. 17.) God makes no selection in His

invitation. He is "long-suffering" (and oh! had He not been so in this instance?) "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (2 Peter iii. 9.) And what is this repentance that God desires all should come to? It is taking His side against ourselves, and, instead of justifying ourselves, judging ourselves to be what we are in His sight, lost and undone sinners, by nature and by practice.

The doctor stooped down under his garden wall, crushing himself against a peach tree to avoid being seen, and there he heard every word. The "whosoever" invitation, so long familiar, came home to him now by the power of the Holy Ghost, and he came and received the water of life freely. He had heard the text many years ago, but never felt its power until now, and there was wrought in his soul real repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ—the One who loved him and gave Himself for him.

He was indeed a trophy of grace, and this was soon manifest to those around him. He was well versed in human learning, but now he had found something to supersede it all, and said, "I feel such an infant, I don't know my A B C in spiritual things," for there seemed to him such fulness in the unsearchable riches of Christ.

His residence was in a large agricultural district, and he had been a great man for public dinners, ploughing matches, &c., but now in Christ he had found pleasures which are for evermore.

He lived to witness for Christ for some years. Deafness came on with old age. A servant of the Lord visited him when near the end of his journey, and wrote on his slate, "How is it with you

now?" "Of course Christ," was his reply, adding—

"On Christ the solid rock I stand,  
All other ground is sinking sand."

It was not long after this he departed to be with Christ.

Beloved unsaved reader, whether a professor or a careless soul, you need Christ. He is still inviting, still saying, "Come unto Me." Man is still refusing, though his day is rapidly coming to a close. Christ's day is at hand, when God will deal with man in judgment, and there will be no more offers of grace. Now He is saying "Come"—then it will be "Depart." L. L.

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### EXPERIENCE.

**E**XPERIENCE is inward conscious knowledge. It is gained in passing through circumstances in which the particular knowledge was obtained. Much is made of experience in matters of everyday life: the person of experience has been in difficulties, and knows the way through them. When we come to the matter of the soul's interests we find the importance of experience, and according to the measure of experience so is the truth really known in the soul. Faith believes God without any questions, and experience follows. Faith grows, as fed by the word of God, and experience grows in the same proportion. Take the Lord's words (Matthew xi. 28), "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Who in this world labour and are heavy laden? They who have never experienced any soul-burden could not find any meaning in those words, but the one who has had



## EXPERIENCE.

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the burden of sins and has made fruitless efforts after deliverance could reply, "He calls *me*." When that one has come to Christ and obtained rest—that is, when the burden has gone—there is the most blessed experience of relief. This being known, the soul can be led on to the reception of other truths of the gospel, each of which produces its corresponding experience. Christ goes on to say, "Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find *rest* unto your souls." This is another kind of rest, and only found when under His yoke; that is, it is again a matter of experience. Faith brings one under the yoke, and then comes the blessed experience of the second rest. The third rest we must wait for. (Heb. iv. 9.) There can be no experience of that till we enter on it. The departed saints have entered on it, and experience as much of its blessedness as is possible for them while in the separate state. The fulness of it will only be theirs when the body shall be raised at the first resurrection. Then will they fully experience that rest which remaineth for the people of God.

Experience is practical, and in these days of theory we need to be more than ever practical. *Faith looks without, while experience is a result within.* There is no such thing as beginning with experience, but neither can you go on without it. Every truth produces experience when it is learned, and the experience can only be in proportion as we *have* learned it. If the truth be a blessed truth it produces a blessed experience, if it be a solemn truth it produces a solemn experience, and if an awful truth an awful experience.

THE BELIEVER'S EXPERIENCE IN THIS WORLD.

"Being justified by faith, we have peace with God." (Rom. v. 1.) When faith lays hold of this we experience "peace with God." Some persons may lay hold of it much more firmly than others, and will have a proportionate experience, but all who do lay hold of it have peace.

Again. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." (Rom. viii. 1.) Mark the word *therefore*. This is the conclusion arrived at through the truths of chapters v. 12 to vii. 25, where we are shown how before God our position is entirely changed, from association with the first Adam and condemnation, to association with the last Adam (who is Christ risen from the dead) and no condemnation. Now this truth is not so easy to learn as the justification of Romans v. 1; and while many believers experience peace with God, few, perhaps, experience the truth of "No condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." Romans vi. and vii. are largely taken up with experience of the utter ruin of the first man. "He that is dead is freed from sin." (vi. 7.) "Being then made free from sin." (vi. 18.) This freedom from the power of indwelling sin is through death. I learn that I have died with Christ from my responsible association with a ruined Adam, and now I am associated with Christ as the Head of a new race, and this Scripture calls, "*in Christ*," in contrast to where I was before "*in Adam*." Romans vi. looks at a man *under sin*, Romans vii. at one *under law*. Death frees us from both, we are dead to that wherein we were held. The truth of the death and resurrection of Christ, and the believer's association with Him, sets the heart free from the bondage of both

sin and law. This is blessed experience, even if only a little known, and gives the desire to know more and more.

**THE UNBELIEVER'S EXPERIENCE IN THE NEXT WORLD.** "Broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat." (Matt. vii. 13.) "It is better . . . to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." (Mark ix. 43, 44.) "And he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever." (Rev. xiv. 10, 11.) What an awful experience!

When those Scriptures shall have their fulfilment, what will the lost think of those professing Christians who deceived them by telling them the devil's lie, that there is no eternal punishment? Oh that the people of God might yet wake up, and not continue to be tools of the enemy in deceiving the unconverted! The judgment of God upon sinners and their sins is all that God's Word says it is. The Saviour's agony in the garden was in anticipation of drinking the cup of divine wrath, and He prayed three times that it might pass from Him; but how could it pass if sinners were to be saved? So He went on to the cross, there to be forsaken. There He cried, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" God's judgment on the sins then laid on the Sin-bearer was there expressed, and there could be no relief till he could say, "It is finished." When God gives the unrepentant sinner the cup of judgment which his sins deserve, can that sinner ever say "It is finished"?

Never, never. Could God release him before it *is* finished? He could not in righteousness release His Son when He was the bearer of sins not His own. How could He then release the one who has committed them? No, no, He could not; therefore the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever. What an experience! Oh, that God's people might know "the terror of the Lord" (2 Cor. v. 11), and persuade men to be reconciled.

G. W. Gy.

### A DRUNKARD'S HEAVEN.

A CHRISTIAN woman living at the village of D——, in Lincolnshire, had a confirmed drunkard for her husband.

Perhaps none but those who have found themselves in like circumstances can have any conception of the bitter trial and sorrow of such a position. Yet the grace of God is equal to anything, and this dear woman proved it to be so. The gentle forbearance she showed toward her husband, the patience she manifested under the most outrageous provocations, made her an astonishment to her neighbours.

One day the woman who lived next door almost upbraided her for the gracious way she treated such a selfish sot. "How ever you can bear his goings on," she said, "I can't imagine. I would never do as you do. Let him make as much of a beast of himself as he may, you wait upon him hand and foot, cook little tempting bits for him, and indeed give him the very best you have in the house."

"Well, yes, I confess I do. But then, you see, I think of it in this way: I know that while there is an eternal heaven for me, there is no such

thing for him, poor fellow, in his present state. He is having all the heaven here that ever he *will* have, and I would not spoil it for him for the world!"

What she meant was, no doubt, that all the happiness he was likely to get was in the natural enjoyment of the things of this world. He had nothing for the next.

Not long after this conversation he came home intoxicated, and a few hours later was found dead in his bed. His so-called "heaven" was over!

Now if such is a drunkard's only heaven, what must A DRUNKARD'S HELL be?

Should this fall into the hands of any poor slave to the intoxicating cup, let me entreat you to stop and consider what the end of such a course must inevitably be. Left to your own efforts your case is utterly hopeless. You lash yourself when sober, perhaps almost hate yourself. You make resolutions by the hundred, but go on still in your old course. The chains that bind you get tighter, and the old habits a deeper root. God alone is able to deliver you from such fetters, and the sooner you discover this the better. In your present state you are lost, absolutely beyond recovery on man's side. If man could make a total abstainer of you to-day, how are you going to meet the past? "God *requireth* that which is past" (Eccles. iii. 15); and if you meet Him in judgment, you will certainly find that His requirements are inexorable. There is no getting out of them. But here is tidings for you, tidings which may well be welcomed by all. "Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall

blaspheme." (Mark iii. 28.) How widely does Mercy spread out her arms! How far-reaching is the grace of God! Even a blaspheming drunkard will get a welcoming embrace if he will but come. "*All* sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme." Surely we may say to Him who uttered such words, "Grace is poured into Thy lips."

Would you then have pardon for the past and power for the future, turn to the Lord *at once*, for, be assured—

"There are no pardons in the tomb,  
And brief is mercy's day."

"Now is the accepted time." "To-day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts."

The precious blood of God's beloved Son is of such infinite efficacy that the vilest, hell-going sinner upon earth, washed "in that blest flood," is cleansed from every spot of defilement. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." (Isa. i. 18.)

With what blessed suitability does the gospel message adapt itself to every state and condition?

Does the sense of your grievous offences in the past make you hesitate about coming to Him?

"ALL SINS shall be forgiven unto the sons of men" ought to encourage your heart to bring your guilty all and spread it before Him at once.

Would you know the ground upon which a God so holy can righteously make such an offer to one so sinful, "The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from ALL SIN" is enough to set your mind at perfect rest about it.

Would you be assured that even your weakness of faith does not exclude you from the blessing, "Be it known unto you . . . that . . . by Him ALL THAT

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BELIEVE are justified from all things" ought to remove every shadow of doubt from your mind.

But perhaps my reader may outwardly belong to a very different class. You are a rigid teetotaller, but not saved.

Remember, then, that as long as you remain without Christ, you, too, are having here below all the heaven you ever will have. Your earthly enjoyments may be of a vastly different character to those of the poor drunkard. For social comfort, for commercial capacity, for outward respectability you may tower very far above him. You may be as much praised and envied by your fellow-men as he is blamed and pitied. But if you have never experienced the new birth, if your soul has never been cleansed from sin's foul stain by the blood of Jesus, you will end your so-called heaven where the drunkard ends his, and you will share your hell together. Don't quarrel with plain honest dealing. It is true. Be not deceived in this matter. There is a Saviour for every sinner out of hell, let him be ever so bad, and a hell for every sinner out of Christ, let him be ever so good.

Out of Christ both the degraded drunkard and the respectable teetotaller are alike under the judgment of God. "He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

Dear reader, where art thou?

GEO. C.

## PLENTY OF TIME.

**E**ARNESTNESS is, with one remarkable exception, the order of the day.

See that man behind the counter, how keenly

in earnest he is to strike a good bargain with his customer!

Look at that man on the Exchange; he is dead in earnest to get the highest quotations of the day!

Observe that man running for the train, what earnestness he shows in his desire not to miss it! If he should lose this one he may have to wait half an hour. Half an hour! How could he afford to lose that?

Watch that woman, what earnestness she displays in her endeavour to make for that tramcar. To lose it would cause her great disappointment, and necessitate waiting perhaps twenty minutes.

Yes; men and women are in deep, real earnest as to temporal things, but when eternal things are mentioned, and the all-important subject of their souls' salvation is pressed home upon them, they talk of there being plenty of time for that, as though they held life as they do land, on a ninety-nine years' lease.

"*Plenty of time!*" Reader, is this your plea? *Plenty of time!* when death may overtake you at any moment. *Plenty of time!* when eternity lies but a few paces ahead of you. *Plenty of time!* when God says, "*Now* is the accepted time . . . *now* is the day of salvation," and in solemn warning whispers, "Boast not thyself of to-morrow."

"Plenty of time!" Never was there a better soul-snare invented by the devil than that of "Plenty of time."

*Plenty of time!* Tell that to the man behind the counter, or to the man on the Exchange, or to the man hurrying to catch the train, or to the woman who hastens to reach the car, and they



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will laugh at you and say you are beside yourself.

"Plenty of time" do you say? Yes, God has given you plenty of time, and what have you done with it? Warning after warning He has sent you, opportunity after opportunity He has given, and still you talk of "Plenty of time!" "Plenty of time" have you had for repentance. "Plenty of time" to think of your soul, your sins and your salvation, "Plenty of time" to make preparation for eternity. Plenty of time to trust in Christ and confess Him as your Saviour, and what have you done with it? *Squandered it all away.* Oh, reader, may God awaken you to your danger!

*Plenty of time?* Yes, if you reject Christ you will find plenty of time to reflect upon your folly. If you lose your soul, you will find plenty of time to bemoan your loss. Plenty of time will you have to think of lost opportunities and misspent hours. *Plenty of time in hell! Plenty of time in eternity!*

Memory will be active there. Thousands will wake up too late, in that awful abode where nought but the wail of the damned is heard, to find that God's time, which they despised, has passed for ever, and that "*plenty of time*" was but the devil's wile to destruction. E. E. N.

## A STREET SCENE IN JERICO.

LUKE xviii. 35-43.

I WISH to take the reader back in thought about 1800 years, to the city of Jericho. What a commotion! What a concourse! The

people seem to have the whole of their attention riveted on one object. Is it the poor blind man sitting by the wayside? Oh, no! Those who at other times had listened to his entreaties for help heed him not now. Poor blind man, he hears the crowd moving on, and possibly snatches of the conversation passing from mouth to mouth. Oh that he could see who is the centre of attraction! He must learn by some means. "What meaneth this?" he enquires. The answer comes from the lips of a bystander—"Jesus of Nazareth passeth by." Yes, "Jesus of Nazareth," the son of the carpenter. "The man Christ Jesus." But what a man!

"Though in the very form of God,  
With heavenly glory crowned,  
He did a servant's form assume,  
Beset with sorrow round."

Dear reader, it was the Lord of glory who was treading those hot, dusty streets of Jericho. It was He who in Joshua's time had thrown the walls of that very city to the ground. Consider it. He, the Creator God, albeit a perfect man, condescending to walk the streets of that noisome eastern city. What was His object? To punish man for the sordid wretchedness which He there beheld? To smite Jericho as in a former day? To wreak righteous vengeance on a people who had insulted God? To unsheath the sword of justice, and wield it in vindication of the claims of a God, who had been outraged in His very deepest feelings? No. See, He pauses. Something is deterring Him. Although surrounded by immense numbers, He notices a little on before, on the outskirts of the crowd, a little disturbance. He hears the whispered injunctions

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to the blind man not to cry out so loudly. But the poor fellow had heard of the sympathy of Jesus, and was not to be silenced easily. "Jesus, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me," he cries. "Silence," says the bystander. Still more lustily he shouts, "Jesus, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me." He was in earnest. He was determined to get the blessing. And He who said, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out," stood still, and in the love and grace of His heart said, "What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee?" "Lord, that I may receive my sight." And the blessed response is forthwith given, "Receive thy sight, thy faith hath saved thee." Do you not see by this, dear reader, why the Lord of glory was passing by? It was for blessing, not for judgment. The blind man knew where help was to be found, and availed himself of the present opportunity to obtain it.

Is the heart of Jesus changed? Surely not. He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. Still He is passing by to bless. Whom? To bless thee, dear unsaved reader. Why not be prompt, like the blind man? He did not wait. An indefinite 'to-morrow' would not do for him. Why should *you* procrastinate? Perhaps you have not realized that you stand in need of the blessing which Jesus gives, or that you stand in need of mercy. What led the blind man to cry to Jesus? He knew he was blind, and stood in need of mercy, and he took the place of a blind sinner. If you want Jesus to bless you, to open your spiritual eyes, you must take that place. That is the only ground on which God can meet you. If you say "I see," "your sin remaineth." Confess therefore before God that you are a lost,

hell-deserving sinner! What then? Ah! then God can come out in blessing toward you. Do you believe that Jesus died on Calvary for you, for you expressly? Do you say, Why should I believe it was for me? I answer, Why did the blind man believe? He would tell you that he knew that Jesus would save him, he *knew* that Jesus had the power to open his eyes, and that it was this knowledge which procured the blessing—the simple belief of the heart in the Blessor Himself. What did the Lord say to the man? “Thy FAITH hath saved thee.” Not faith in his own works, or in anything connected with himself at all. Perhaps this blind man had tried remedies connected with the earth. He may have applied to human sources for deliverance, but he was still blind and still begging. His condition had not been met, and he could not rest satisfied. What indeed *can* satisfy but Christ? Who can meet the sinner in his lost condition but the Lord? The blind man proved this. Have you? You *may* prove it. God is beseeching you to prove His love.

But what about the blind man when he had found satisfaction? He gave praise unto God. To whom else could he give glory? Not to himself, for his cry of misery was the only share he had in what took place. No, it was all of Christ. And if you reach the glory, dear reader, your song of praise will not contain one word about yourself. Oh that you might be led to Christ, and sent on your way rejoicing, as this man was!

“All of grace ; yes, grace surpassing,  
Such a portion to bestow ;  
But the love all knowledge passing,  
Grace has taught us now to know.”