

## The Word of God and Prayer.

THE close of the short Epistle of Jude contains some wholesome words well suited for our times. After describing the corruptions which were even then coming into the professing church, but which have grown to such serious proportions since, he says, “ But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God ”.

Here are two things of great importance for us to-day, the building up of ourselves, and prayer.

Note the words, “ Your most holy faith ”—a striking contrast to the unholiness spoken of in the Epistle—this most holy faith is to be found in the word of God. It is by meditation upon it, by feeding upon that word, by listening to what it has to say to us, that we are ‘ built up ’. Elsewhere we read that knowledge ‘ puffs up ’, but love ‘ builds up ’.

When we open the word of God, we are not to open it as we would a book on science or history, the knowledge of which is to be acquired by an effort of the mind ; but as the *living word of God*. It is by it, also, we are to keep ourselves in the love of God. Love—the love of God dwelling in us—is connected with the new nature in its activity, and the new man is fed and nourished by the word of God.

How often Christians allow other things to, as it were, *push out* the reading of Scripture ; and how often the daily reading of it is either neglected or not given its proper place in the home. Let us remember that these things cannot be so without spiritual loss.

Then the Apostle also exhorts us to *prayer*. It is not perfunctory or formal prayer, not merely repeating words; but prayer guided by the Holy Ghost. The Holy Spirit would teach us our needs and would keep us from all narrowness, by leading out our thoughts and desires into the breadth of the needs of the church of God, as well as our own individual daily need of being kept by God's grace.

Anyone who is walking in the presence of God to-day must feel the urgent need of His keeping grace. Ordinary grace will do for ordinary times, but special grace is needed for days of declension, when the mass of believers are so easily influenced by the tide of worldliness and want of decision for Christ which is so much on the increase around us.

Let us remember the word, "praying in the Holy Ghost", this is our place of safety and of strength, as well as the place where the "love of God" can be realized and enjoyed in all its warmth and blessedness.

F. G. B.

### Christ's place in our hearts.

**W**E have to watch over ourselves, that nothing should become an object, in our hearts, which would take the place which belongs to our precious Lord and Master. He has *redeemed* us at the cost of His blood; and, as being His redeemed ones, He is our *Saviour*. He has *bought* us and, as such, we know Him as our *Lord*. We owe everything to Him; He has the right to possess us entirely, especially our hearts. We are His bondmen.

There is a very remarkable passage in Exodus xv., which shows us how our God and Father leads us

across the desert of this world to the heavenly Canaan. In verse 13 we read, "Thou in Thy mercy hast led forth the people which Thou hast redeemed; Thou hast guided them in Thy strength unto Thy holy habitation". Here we have the two things which God uses to lead us through everything, whatever may be the difficulties that we meet with in the path of faith and obedience—His 'mercy' and His 'strength'. Both these are displayed toward us in the most touching and condescending manner.

But, as regards ourselves, what should characterize us is perfect confidence in His grace and His power, a complete surrender of our circumstances and our persons into His all-powerful arms. In a word, we should be *wholly His*. This is the first thing which glorifies Him; but there is a second, which is often wanting in our days; it is *the fear of God*. It is lacking in us both individually and as assemblies. I think if each believer realized this fear in his heart and in his walk, it would also characterize the assembly. What abhorrence of all evil there would then be within the bosom of the assembly, under whatever form it might manifest itself.

We also find these two things in Psalm xxxiv.—perfect *confidence* in God in the heart, in such a way that the soul enjoys profound rest amidst all circumstances and can bless the Lord "at all times" (ver. 1): also, a true *fear* of God which fills the heart, in such a way that we walk in separation from evil, hating it as He does. This fear takes root and is developed in the enjoyment of His love. In the first verses of this psalm these two thoughts predominate—the love and the fear of God. He who realizes these, can enjoy perfect rest and can bless the Lord *at all times*.

This is what characterized the psalmist himself, but it is not all, for the desire of his heart was to lead each of us into this state of soul also. He teaches us the way to it by three things which he realized in his own soul—(1) *Dependence* on God (verse 6); (2) The consciousness of the *goodness* of God by which we enjoy simple and real *confidence* in Him (verse 8); (3) The *fear* of the Lord in the heart (verse 9). The following verses develop the characters of this fear of God (verses 11–15). May these things characterize us during the brief time which still remains to us here below, whilst waiting for Jesus, who is soon coming for us. J. B.

### A few words on the Levitical Sacrifices.

THERE is an immense profit for us all in studying and meditating upon the different sacrifices mentioned in the early portion of the book of Leviticus.

These sacrifices all represent, of course, the one perfect sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, but they bring out the varied characters of His blessed work on the cross—what it was, and what it is to God, and the ways in which it applies to believers.

It has been pointed out that the *order* in which the sacrifices are presented in these chapters (Lev. i.–iv.) differs from that of their *application* to the individual soul. The Scriptural order is as follows—The Burnt offering, the Meat offering, the Peace offering, the Sin offering, and lastly, the Trespass offering. All these sacrifices, in type, represent the death of Christ, though the meat offering presents specially His perfect humanity, offered to God and fully tested. In each one the point of view is evidently different, and each one has a particular object.

Four of the sacrifices are with blood: the Burnt offering, the Peace offering, the Sin offering and the Trespass offering. The one that sets forth the life of the Lord Jesus on earth—*the only perfect human life lived down here*—is the Meat (or meal) offering. It is without blood. In the *application* of these sacrifices to the soul, the Sin offering comes first, for there could not be communion, such as is proposed in the other offerings, until the way had been paved by the putting away of, and dealing with, sin. The other offerings were by fire, but the burnt offering alone was a “sweet savour unto Jehovah”.

It is very important to remember and to keep in mind that it was only *after* the Israelites fell into idolatry, when they made the golden calf, that the sacrifices were instituted in connection with the *tabernacle* of the congregation. Moses first pitched the tabernacle outside the camp, consequent on this heinous sin, and called it the tabernacle of the congregation, “And it came to pass, that every one which sought the Lord went out unto the tabernacle of the congregation which was without the camp” (Exod. xxxiii. 7). The tabernacle which was afterwards set up, was constructed according to the pattern given to Moses in the Mount, and the commandments as to the sacrifices were communicated to him by the Lord from between the Cherubim.

It has been shown by another that the four sacrifices with blood correspond to each of the four Gospel accounts of that which took place on mount Calvary. The burnt offering corresponding with John’s account of the death of the Lord, the peace offering with Luke’s account, the sin offering with that of Matthew, and the trespass offering with that of Mark.

The burnt offering was entirely for God alone, the whole victim had to be consumed by fire, "on the altar for a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire of a sweet savour" (Lev. i. 9). It is here that we have set forth, typically, our Lord Jesus as giving a motive to the Father to love Him, "Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of My Father" (John x. 17, 18). How perfectly was the commandment carried out by this blessed One who "became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. ii. 8).

It is very striking to note that, in the Gospel by John, we have no account of the Lord's agony in the garden, no prayer that the cup might be removed, no seeking for fellowship and sympathy from His disciples. Then when we come to the cross, in this Gospel, we find no account of the three hours of darkness, no cry about being forsaken of God, and no reference to the veil of the temple being rent. When the awful hours of sin-bearing had run their course, Jesus said, "I thirst". He would not leave the Scripture unfulfilled (Psa. lxix. 21). Then, all things being accomplished, these wonderful words proceed from His lips, "It is finished".

The character of the death of our blessed Lord in the Peace offering seems to correspond with that given in Luke's Gospel. The offerer was allowed to eat of it, with the priest. This Gospel is the only one relating the conversion of the thief on the cross. One who had railed upon and reviled the Lord even after he had himself been nailed to the cross, becomes a devoted and humble witness. He says, "Lord, remember me when

Thou comest in Thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise " (Luke xxiii. 39-43).

In this Gospel also the first and the last words spoken on the cross are recorded. The first were, " Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do " ; and the last, " Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit ". Out of the seven sayings of the Lord on the cross, these are the only ones in which the name of the Father appears.

As to the *sin offering* and the *trespass offering*, the Gospels of Matthew and Mark alone recall the awful cry which proceeded from the lips of the Saviour after the three hours of darkness, " My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me ? " Here the Lord is made sin, He is our *sin offering*. Here, in His own body on the tree, He bore our sins, as our *trespass offering*. Neither of these offerings are said to be a sweet savour unto the Lord.\* Neither Matthew nor Mark record any other words on the cross than those mentioned above.

It is to be hoped that what is stated in the foregoing may lead the reader to ponder prayerfully over all that is found on the subject of these offerings in the Scriptures themselves.

J. P. (*Montreal*).

### "Behold I come quickly."

IT has often been observed that in the last chapter of the Revelation, we have the words, " I come quickly ", thrice repeated, in these farewell words of our Lord.

First, in verse 7, in relation to the all-important communications made in this book, pronouncing the blessedness of those who keep the words of the pro-

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\* The case of the poor man's offering seems an exception to this (Lev. iv. 31). [ED.]

phesy here unfolded. A timely warning always, but intensified by the character of the days through which we are now passing.

The second time (verse 12), it is in the significant connection of the judgement of every man's work, when before Him all shall stand to receive according as his work shall be. Solemn indeed the thought of what the light will reveal, and the inevitable results.

The third and last time is the closing word of encouragement to a waiting people, who "no sorrow in His presence see", but, on the contrary, have their answer voiced by the Apostle in the Spirit-given words, "Even so, Come, Lord Jesus".

At all times this ("I come quickly") is a searching—though welcome—word for those that through grace have ears to hear; but especially at the present moment of the church's wilderness history. Another year of grace and of God's longsuffering mercy has opened upon us, and the observant Christian cannot fail to have noticed certain marked features of the times. One is, the growth of lawlessness on every hand, and the unrest and confusion into which the world has been thrown by the events of the last few years.

The other, and that which more immediately concerns us as the Lord's people and His servants, is an evident growth of the number of Christians who are looking for the promised return of the Lord Jesus as the proper hope of the church; while departure from the faith on the part of the mass of professing Christendom becomes daily more marked. Thus, the dividing-line between the 'five wise' virgins (Matt. xxv.), and the 'five foolish'—between professors of religion and possessors of eternal life—becomes wider and wider.

*(Continued on page 9.)*



It is a matter for deep thankfulness and rejoicing, that numbers of God's believing children, who once knew little or nothing of the blessed and purifying hope of the Lord's personal return to take away His own, as the prelude of the great events attending His manifestation in glory, now rejoice in this crowning blessing of the church which is His body and His bride. It was, in many quarters where better things might have been expected, regarded as a kind of spiritual 'hobby' of the few, not many years since, and frowned upon by many sincere Christians, who did not refuse it altogether.

On the other hand, the outlook in Christendom is saddening to a degree. The foundations of the faith are challenged on every side, and what was wont to be styled "the flowery path of orthodoxy" might be much more appropriately named "the despised path of orthodoxy". The truth is assailed on every side, not alone by the philosophic or blatant sceptic, but by the supposed teachers and defenders of the faith given us in the Scriptures. The bulwarks of Protestantism are undermined from within, rather than from without, and the Romish Church poses as the defender of the Bible, and the only fold where union and catholicity are to be found. Thus they reap the spoils, and many honest souls seek a refuge there from the prevailing confusion. In vain have these people sought for competent authority, and, turning their backs upon God's word, have gone from bad to worse.

Amongst these ominous signs of the last days there are surely some deep lessons to be learned by any Christian with an exercised conscience. No attacks can ultimately succeed against what Christ Himself builds, "The gates of Hades shall not prevail against it"; and, as to His sheep, "No one is able to pluck

them out of His hand ” ; but what is to be said when we look at the matter from the side of the church’s responsibility ?

This turns us back to another utterance of the words, “ I come quickly ”, addressed to the Philadelphian assembly in the third chapter of this book. “ Behold I come quickly, hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.” Some have said that the Philadelphian phase of the church has passed away, and that the Lord is now outside the one place on the earth where His presence was to be known and felt. But, blessed be His Name, He cannot (and will not) deny Himself. The love that led Him to say to poor inconstant Israel, “ I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals when thou wentest after Me in the wilderness ” (Jer ii. 2), is not the less toward His own which are in the world (yet given to Him out of the world) for “ He loved them unto the end ”.

Who that feels the state of the Lord’s people in the midst of the great professing mass can doubt the Laodicean condition, generally ? But it is still true, thank God, that where two or three are gathered to the Name of the Lord Jesus, there He is in the midst of them. Our grief is, that souls are not found turning to those assemblies so gathered, as might be expected in such a day of unrest and confusion. When we remember what it was in days gone by to gather around the Lord, and sit under His shadow ; what an ‘ Elim ’ His presence was to our weary feet ; we would deeply humble ourselves that more of His beloved sheep and lambs, finding neither food nor rest in the professed folds of man’s formation, are not drawn irresistibly to that place which is sanctified by His presence, according to His own sure word.

Let us humble ourselves about our own weak and divided state—we speak not of numbers, that is never to be expected where the truth is held in communion with the Lord. But the lack of unction, the scarcity of pastors and of shepherds, and the absence of the unselfish love in the Spirit that thinks of *all* the members of Christ's body as His—these things are only too manifest. Then, as in felt weakness and dependence, we respond to His word, “I come quickly”, we may indeed be blessed to others who hear, and they may be encouraged to say, ‘*Come*’, in fellowship with the Spirit and the bride.

T. R.

### His Father's Will.

**I**T is instructive to trace in any little way the perfect ways of our Lord and Saviour, whose life is the pattern for those who have life through His death. To imitate Him in the smallest degree we must have life, a new life, eternal life; that life of which the Apostle speaks, when he says, “When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory” (Col. iii. 4). Again, “He that hath the Son, hath life.” The blessedness of Christianity is, that all its moral traits have been perfectly expressed in Christ here on earth, and are now traced for us in the four Gospels.

There were three occasions—possibly there may have been more—when Jesus went up to the Passover. The first was when He was twelve years of age (Luke ii. 41). It is lovely to see the correspondence between the Old and New Testaments; and when one enters a little into it, one can but pity the blindness of those who set their puny minds against the Word of God.

That Word, if but known, would show them how dishonest a part those play who are expected to teach it, but who, in fact, only dishonour it.

The Lord Jesus here, in Luke ii., though young in years, is found "in the midst of the doctors, hearing and asking them questions", and they "were astonished at His understanding and answers". How beautiful Scripture is, for in it, too, we see the wisdom of God, and how the living Word and the written Word harmonize !

But the point I wish to mark most is that, following this, we have His first recorded words, in which we read the motive of that life which stands alone and is unique ; but a life which is left us as an example, and which God can reproduce in those who are wholly given over to Him. "Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business" are His words, telling us what was the spring of all His actions and ways. They tell, too, to our worshipping hearts, that though here seen in humble environment, He was nevertheless consciously "the Father's Son". Still He was yet young, in His "assumed humanity" and was found amidst the doctors, "hearing them and asking them questions". I doubt whether there is a better antidote for unbelief or superstition than these chapters which tell us of the advent into this lost world of Him who created it at first, and who would now—blessed be His Name—make Himself known as its Saviour.

In John ii. we see the Lord Jesus, now a Man, having been anointed by the Holy Ghost, and having entered upon that work and ministry so often spoken of in the Old Testament. From verse 13 He is again seen at the Passover. Another notice of this feast, in Deut. xvi., teaches us that it was to be kept in the place where

“the Lord chose to place His Name”. He goes to that place, but finds “His Father’s house” profaned. His “Father’s business” filled His mind at first, zeal for the holiness of His house (Ps. xciii. 5) was here shown as the consuming desire of Him who is said to be over God’s house now (Heb. iii. 6). How great that zeal was, only Scriptures such as Psalm lxix. 9 can tell; this was the psalm the disciples called to mind. It was the experience of Him who, restoring that which He had not taken away, would suffer and did suffer, all shame, hatred and reproach because He did His Father’s will, and was zealous for the glory of His house.

And we, believers, now become the house of God; shall not we, by His grace, seek the holiness of that house? Or shall we, forgetting Ps. lxix. give up the task and think that the house is so broken down that nothing matters now, and that we will just do the best for ourselves? Oh, remembering that we shall soon see Him, let us seek to know His motives and imitate His zeal for that holiness which belonged to the house where God dwells.

Lastly, we see the Lord Jesus, now about to be the real Passover Lamb, going up to the feast for the last time (Luke xxii.). Space forbids our noticing the many precious lessons in these chapters in detail. In Exodus xii. the lamb was to be slain “between the two evenings” (see Margin). And how much, that is now so precious to us, and will be the theme for eternal delight, took place from the evening when He sat with them at the table, till His death on the next day! He had come on “His Father’s business”, He knew all that was involved in doing His will, and terrible as what that involved was to Him (as we see in the garden of Gethsemane), yet He would not turn aside from it.

All the passovers had looked on to this day, and from all eternity we shall look adoringly back to it. Truly it is the "centre of two eternities, which look with rapt, adoring eyes, onward and back to Thee". Even now there is nothing so blessed as to sit at the new feast He has instituted, the Lord's supper, and think of Him doing His Father's will in suffering for our sins and dying in infinite love for sinners. Oh, what love! And when He had suffered all, had made atonement (or was about to do it by His death), what are His last words? We have noticed His first words in Luke ii., and in chapter xxiii. 46, we have His last. Knowing He had done all, how blessed it is to see Him turning to His Father, saying, "Into Thy hands I commend My spirit".

In Num. ix. 13, we read of what was to happen to a man who could eat the passover and did not—he was to be "cut off from among his people". God marked His displeasure, as He always did at the beginning of a dispensation, of any neglect of His commands. Besides, there is no hope for any outside the true passover sacrificed for us, as the Lord said, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood, ye have no life in you" (John vi. 53). How happy are they who, in joy of heart, can turn to Him and sing,

We own Thy great deliverance,  
And triumph in Thy favour :  
And for the love which now we prove,  
Shall praise Thy name *for ever*." P. W.

### The Pillar of Cloud and of Fire.

**T**HIS was one of those wonderful provisions which God made for Israel just as they were leaving Egypt, and it continued with them all the way through

the wilderness (Exod. xl. 38 ; Neh. ix. 19). By day the pillar of cloud led the way, and by night the pillar of fire gave them light.

Not only was it for protection and light, but it marked both the time and way of their journeying. The cloud covered the tabernacle and remained upon it, until it was taken up, then the children of Israel journeyed. No matter how long it remained, they kept the charge of the Lord, and journeyed not, except "at the commandment of the Lord". What a testimony to them, as well as to the surrounding nations concerning whom Moses said to Jehovah, "They have heard that Thou Lord art among this people, and that Thou Lord art seen face to face, and that Thy cloud standeth over them, and that Thou goest before them, by day time in a pillar of a cloud, and in a pillar of fire by night" (Num. xiv. 14).

This is surely an instructive figure for us also. We are all prone to walk and act simply on our own initiative instead of waiting on God, seeking guidance from Him, and having it as our great object to do *His* will.

When the Lord Jesus was with the three disciples on the mount of transfiguration, and Peter spoke of making three tabernacles—one for Him, one for Moses, and one for Elias—at once the Father's voice was heard from the 'bright cloud', which was the well-known symbol of His presence, vindicating the glory of His Son. He alone was the One worthy to be heard, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased ; hear ye Him" (Matt. xvii. 5).

Finally, we learn from Isaiah iv. 5, that the pillar of cloud will be found again over the city Jerusalem in the millennial day, as a canopy or covering. Then "the Lord will create upon every dwelling place of

mount Zion, and over her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night : for over all the glory shall be spread a canopy " (R.V.).

When that day comes, the wilderness journey will have been finally past, the scattered nation restored to their land, and the rest of God will have been reached. Then, and not till then, the glory can *abide* over the city, blessed under the peaceful sway of the true Messiah. Then, too, it will be illuminated by the glory of the heavenly city above, " for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the lamp thereof ". But that blessed day is not yet come ; meantime we have much to learn from the instructive symbol of the pillar and cloud.

F. G. B.

## A Separated People.

**W**HERE are those who should be a separated people unto the Lord, rejoicing in the Lord always ? Where is the evidence that " we are not of the night, nor of darkness " ? O let us testify that we are in a position of wondrous blessedness, even here, till that day comes when we shall know even as also we are known ; and when not only Christ—as the firstfruits—shall enter into His glory, but, the harvest being past, the ingathering of all the saints shall be accomplished, and Christ's glory and joy will then be full ; for He shall appear in the midst, and see of the " travail of His soul, and be satisfied " ; for they shall be there, and each shall have entered " into the joy of his Lord ".

J. N. D.



## Peace—on Earth and in Heaven.

**L**ET us take for our text this month Luke ii. 14 and xix. 38—in the first we have “Peace on earth”, and in the second “Peace in heaven”.

It is the same blessed Person who is before us in both passages; first, as born into this world in the most humble circumstances, yet no less than “A Saviour, which is Christ the Lord”. It was God Himself, come down amongst men in the person of His own Son.

All the heavenly intelligences were deeply interested and moved by this wondrous event, and the host of heaven celebrates it, giving glory to God in the highest and proclaiming peace on earth and God’s good pleasure in men.

What grace! What love to man was manifested here! It was a display of grace which rose above all human failure and sin. And what marked and accompanied the coming of this lowly One was, ‘peace’; and God’s good pleasure, not in angels, but in *men*.

Here then was the One who should bring *peace*: not indeed at once, for man was still far from God, a rebel and a sinner. Jesus was, as the prophet had foretold, to be despised and rejected of men. And between the proclamation by the angelic host of “peace on earth”, and the actual bringing in of that peace, how many events were to take place! Christ must die, atonement for sin must be made, Satan and his hosts must be cast out of the heavenly places, etc.

But God so ordered it that a testimony should be borne to the rejected Saviour from the lips of the disciples, who rejoicingly proclaimed, according to Luke

xix., "Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord : peace *in heaven*, and glory in the highest "

They looked on to that day when God's purposes will all be made good in Christ in the coming kingdom. And it is blessed to know that all the evil of men and all the malice of Satan, cannot frustrate or prevent the fulfilment of God's will or the ultimate triumph of His counsels of grace for the glory of His beloved Son and the blessing of His people.

And what do we see in the world to-day ? The spirit of lawlessness, violence, infidelity, and godless indifference. There is neither peace on earth, nor in the heavenly places, which are still invaded by wicked spirits, against whom we have to contend (Eph. vi. 12). But faith can find its encouragement in knowing that both earth and heaven shall yet enjoy true and everlasting rest, when He who has the right to all takes the kingdom and reigns in righteousness and peace.

Meantime *we* (Christians) have even deeper and richer blessings, as being united, as members of His body, to Christ Himself, our glorified Head in heaven. May we enter better, by faith, into our heavenly privileges and calling, and answer to it better also in our practical walk and ways from day to day.

F. G. B.

### "Christ is All."

**M**ORE and more I am made to feel that Christ does not have His proper place amongst the children of God. He is not our object as He ought to be. It is either a doctrine, a dogma, a party, or our experience—something besides Christ.

"Christ is all" (Col. iii. 11). Do we make Him this ? Is it a question of salvation ? "Believe on the Lord

Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved ” (Acts xvi. 31). Is it a question of our relationship with God ? “ Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus ” (Gal. iii. 26). Is it a question of Christian experience ? “ For to me to live is Christ ” (Phil. i. 21). Is it a question of my path ? “ I am the way ” (John xiv. 6). Is it a question of service ? “ I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me ” (Phil. iv. 13). Is it a question of heaven ? He would define it as, “ Where I am ” (John xiv. 3).

Oh, let us know more of that rich blessedness that comes from making *Christ all*, of seeing *Jesus only*. Our cry should be, “ Oh that I may *know Him* ” (Phil. iii. 10). Sometimes in our selfishness we cry and beg for blessings ; but it is the Blessor we need. It is *Himself*. He is the joy of the Father’s heart. Let us taste with Him the delight He takes in His Son. Christ is infinitely higher than doctrine or experience. Sound doctrine is absolutely essential, and experience we shall have, but only with *Him* can our hearts be satisfied and raptured.

F. B.

## The Gospel of God.

THE objective of Christianity, and therefore of all faithful ministry, is God Himself. The revelation of God’s purposes and counsels, as well as of *Himself*, was the gospel committed to the Apostle Paul ; the *Gospel of God* unto which he was separated (Rom. i. 1). It was all concerning a Person, even “ Jesus Christ our Lord ”. The gospel preached by the Apostle differed materially from the mixture which is heard from many in the pulpits of Christendom and, sad to say, in recent years, from many others who profess to have more light from Scripture.

The gospel preached by Paul was the gospel of the grace of God, the gospel of the glory. It was from the Lord in glory he had received it, as well as the revelation of the Lord's coming (1 Thess. iv. 15) and the heavenly character of the Lord's supper (1 Cor. xi. 23).

Paul's presentation of the glad tidings differed from that of all those who preceded him, even from that of the Lord Himself when on earth. We read that, "He came unto His own and His own received Him not" (John i. 11). They would not have Him. But there were those, born of God, that had authority to take the place of children, a new race. The bread was for the children only, those who belonged to the nation of Israel (Matt. xv. 26). The Lord was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God (Rom. xv. 8). When He is rejected by the Jews it is beautiful to see Him taking His place with the feeble and faithful remnant. He ministers to their need. When He speaks to the nation, we find Him entreating and pleading with them to come to Him: "And ye will not come unto Me that ye might have life" (John v. 40).

It has been pointed out by several that, in the Lord's ministry, a period came when it was no longer so much a question of responsibility on the part of His hearers to receive His testimony, and at that juncture He turns to *the Father*, thanking Him that He had hidden the things which He ministered, from the wise and intelligent, and had revealed them to babes (Matt. xi. 25)—then, in verses 28 and 29, He *invites* all that are weary and heavy laden to come to Him for *rest*. As another has said, this is the rest *given*, the new relationship and status, including the knowledge of the Father. Then the practical enjoyment of the rest *given* is the rest *found*, whatever the circumstances we may find ourselves in *with Him*.

The circumstances in which *He* is found (Matt. xi. 20-24) are those of *rejection as Messiah*, but in them He rejoices, thankful and restful, subject to the Father's will. This was His yoke, and He invites us to take it likewise, for He adds, "*I am meek and lowly in heart*". The reader will agree that the Lord fully proved this statement to be true when He "took a towel and girded Himself" (John xiii. 4). Then the lesson to be learnt for us is in His own words (verse 15) "For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you".

It is to be noted also that the Apostle Peter *invites* the nation to repent and to enter into all the promises that had been made to them, but they would not yield, for "as they spake unto the people, the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them" (Acts iv. 1).

Now what the writer desires particularly to emphasize is the testimony quite special to the Apostle Paul, who, as others have pointed out, did not preach what we may call an inviting gospel. He used no enticing words. He did not smooth the way for His hearers or tell them that they would be happy if they would only come. He fell back on truth which, by being received, would bring the soul into the presence of God. This truth was the Cross, the blessed finished work of Christ. So vivid, so true to the life, was his testimony in this respect that he could refer to his former converts, the Galatians, as those to whom, as before their very eyes, Jesus Christ had been portrayed *crucified*.

Such a testimony as this, in power and in the Holy Ghost, was the means of *turning to God* many of the heathen in Thessalonica from their idols. Paul preached the blood of Christ that opened the way into

the very presence of God. His testimony threw upon his hearers the responsibility of receiving it. He called what he preached "Our gospel" (1 Thess. i. 5); and if it was hidden from his hearers there was no hope for them, for he had faithfully proclaimed it. "But if our gospel be hid it is hid to them that are lost . . . . for we preach not ourselves but Christ Jesus Lord" (2 Cor. iv. 3, 5). It is this gospel that brings *an object* before the soul—even Christ Himself.

The preaching of the Cross takes the listener's attention away from himself, and the goodness of God will lead him to repentance, for he realizes his unfitness to meet God. He is thus *brought to God*. It is what we get in 1 Peter iii. 18, "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might *bring us to God*". In the language of one who has long since departed to be with Christ, "The Cross stands alone in the history of eternity, there is nothing else like it whatever, except the heart of Him who died on it".

The gospel, presented in its simplicity, connects souls *with God*. Current preaching seems to have for its object mainly the benefit of those addressed. This has its place, of course; but if the preacher has God's glory uppermost in his mind, and *God Himself as an object* for his own soul, he will be able to impart to his hearers what he is himself enjoying. By the gospel man is BROUGHT TO GOD. J. P. (*Montreal.*)

### Sonship and Liberty.

SONSHIP and LIBERTY may be termed the key-words of true Christianity. They were used in the old dispensation with such words as Father, Shepherd, Comforter; but all of them only faintly

expressed the measureless grace with which they are charged when used afresh by our Lord and His apostles in the New Testament.

For instance, Israel is called '*My son*', and was freed from Egypt's bondage to enjoy a *liberty* in Canaan which both land, cattle, and beasts shared with them. "To them pertained the adoption (sonship) and the glory" in ways unknown before; yet this prefigures but very feebly the *liberty* of those at this time called "*Sons of God* through faith in Christ Jesus" (Exod. iv. 22; Lev. xxv. 5-10; Exod. xiv. 24; xvi. 7-10; Rom. ix. 4).

There is a difference between being a *son* and a *child* of God. "Our *position* is that of *sons*, our proper *relationship* that of *children*. The word *son* is in contrast with the position under the law, which was that of servants; it is the state of privilege in its widest extent. To say the *child* of such an one, implies the intimacy and the reality of the relationship" (J.N.D. *Synopsis*).

This distinction, rather bedimmed in our *A.V.*, is made very clear in the *New Translation*,\* and will repay following up. It is instructive, too, to notice, by the way, how John in his Gospel and Epistles constantly refers to the Lord Jesus as "the Son of God": as does Peter (2 Pet. i. 17); but neither of them ever calls believers *sons*—but always *children*—of God; excepting once, and this in reference to their position in glory (Rev. xxi. 7). Paul only, among the N.T. writers,

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\* The *New Translation* rightly renders *children* rather than *sons* in the following places: John i. 12; 1 Cor. iv. 14, 17; Phil. ii. 15, 22; 1 Tim. i. 2, 18; 2 Tim. i. 2, ii. 1; Titus i. 4; Philemon 10; 1 John iii. 1, 2; and *sons* rather than *children* in Matt. v. 9, 45; Luke vi. 35; xvi. 8 twice; xx. 36 twice; John xii. 36; Gal. iii. 26; 1 Thess. v. 5 twice; Heb. xii. 5. To complete the list of references to the *sons* of God in the N.T., see also Rom. viii. 14, 19; 2 Cor. vi. 18; Gal. iv. 5, 7; Heb. ii. 10; xii. 6, 7, 8; and Rev. xxi. 7.

follows the Lord in designating them *sons* (i.e., if we take the Epistle to the Hebrews as his, which, doubtless, it is).

How remarkable, therefore, is God's favour, that could bestow such rich grace upon sinners—saved from both Jews and Gentiles—giving them the dignity of sons, the very term He used so often to proclaim the rank and precedence of His own beloved Son! This should fill our lips with praise.

God has been pleased to attach two precious features to the position of sons, namely *liberty* on earth, and *glory* in heaven. This is taught in Galatians (chap. iii. and iv.) and Romans (chap. viii.), in both of which all the children of God are called sons, are heirs of God, have the Holy Spirit dwelling in them, and cry 'Abba, Father', and are in the position to enjoy 'liberty'.

This word, 'Abba', is the Hebrew for 'Father', and the word translated 'Father' (*pater*) answers to it in New Testament Greek. This Spirit-given cry of the sons of God is not a mere Hebrew-Greek idiom, to round off the personal prejudices of believers from amongst Jews and Gentiles. Neither does it, in itself, tell us that both mean the same thing, but rather it shows that the very term 'Abba, Father', which best expresses the true character of our sonship with its holy liberty and unspeakable intimacy with God as Father, was the same cherished name which the Son of God Himself used as the vehicle of His affection and devotedness to *His* Father, even in the gloom and agonies of Gethsemane (Mark xiv. 36). He could cry 'Abba, Father', in the darkness of that hour; but we, alas, often hardly say it even in our brightest moments, so little do Christians rise to the privileges that are theirs.

(Continued on page 25.)



Nothing suits the mind of God, nor forms an adequate answer to the cross of Christ, short of believers enjoying their *sonship* and *liberty*; hence the stress laid on this in the Galatian epistle. This blood-bought freedom is hated by Satan and all his hosts; and the struggle in the churches of Galatia was only in a small way the same deadly conflict he has waged ever since, to compass the slavery of God's people, and make void the liberating power of redemption. The law, at the first, kept the Jews designedly under bondage. It was 'our schoolmaster', not 'to bring us' to Christ, but till He came; it fulfilled, as the word implies, the position of the Greek slave who tutored and disciplined his master's child committed to his care till the father thought well this should cease. Moses, the law-giver, cannot bring us into the heavenly Canaan; the divine Joshua alone can do this. So, now that He has come, "We (Jews) are no longer under a schoolmaster, for ye (Gentiles) *are all the sons of God* by faith in Christ Jesus", who has now redeemed both and made them, through faith, the sons and heirs of God.

Their position is one of the fullest liberty. "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" It means freedom from sins because they are washed away in His blood; freedom from judgement and from fear, because His perfect love, told out at the cross, completely met the judgement; while the knowledge of this fact and of the love of God, casts out our every fear. It means freedom, too, from the works of the law, because His death has so met all its claims that not a single element remains that can keep either Jew or Gentile in bondage (Gal. iii. 13). Hence the solemn and almost vehement charge, "Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and

be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage” (Gal. v. 1).

Just as Satan would rather have Israel in the bondage of Pharaoh than freed from it, even if under the law; so he now prefers that believers of our day should be in bondage under this law, unitedly crying to God, “Incline our hearts to keep this law”, rather than rejoicing in the liberty of the gospel of grace.

The two evil forces—Judaism and human philosophy—which assaulted the churches of Galatia and Colosse, are now fully developed amongst us in Romanism and the so-called Higher Criticism. Romanism, whether of the Catholic, Anglican, or, alas now the Nonconformist order, spells spiritual bondage here, in order to secure the supposed freedom from purgatory hereafter. Higher Criticism proposes mental liberty here, but has a false Christ, and a man-made salvation, the sure precursors of eternal darkness. The god of this world (Satan) is the motive power and the director of both.

Both these systems are ignorant of, and bitterly opposed to, true Christian liberty; and they are, in their very essence, the negation of the liberty of sonship, which is the blessed prerogative of the Christian. But, blessed be our God, there is a day coming when the wide creation itself shall be delivered from the bondage in which it now is, and brought into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. So that we may well say, as we look on to that time, “Even so come, Lord Jesus”.

Till then, may the Spirit’s clarion call be heard by all God’s people, ‘**STAND FAST**’.

W. M. R.

## “We faint not.”

**T**WICE in 2 Corinthians iv. the Apostle Paul writes the above words. First, in verse 1, “Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not” A glimpse of this ministry of the Spirit and of righteousness shines out in the previous chapter, “How shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory”.

“We have this treasure in earthen vessels”; the treasure included the gospel of the glory of Christ who is the image of God, and the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. There was conscious and felt weakness in the earthen vessel, but this made Paul fall back upon the ‘mercy’ received, so that the excellency of the power might be of God and not of us.

Thus Paul, as a messenger and minister of such heavenly tidings, experienced “death working in us”, while this same glad tidings worked life in those at Corinth and in all who believed. If the vessel was broken, it was that the light might shine out all the more clearly.

We might well ask, How many messengers and ministers of the Gospel to-day are so weighted with their ministry, and so conscious of their need of strength given by God to carry it out, that they can say that it is only through His mercy that they ‘faint not’? And we can pray that all workers, evangelists, pastors, teachers, etc., may so learn to follow in the footsteps of the Apostle that, while enduring troubles, persecutions, distresses; they also can say, ‘We faint not’.

Then, in verse 16, we have for a second time the

words, "We faint not". How blessed to see the connection here—"All things are for your sakes". Following, as he did, in the steps of the Lord Himself, and animated by His love for His people, Paul would not faint but would go through all for them. The 'light affliction' was connected with the body, the vessel in which the treasure was; but that affliction was only for a moment, and it worked out for him an eternal 'weight' of glory.

What a means to strengthen, encourage, and sustain the servants of God, as we look, not at things seen, which are only for a passing moment, but at what is unseen and eternal. Thus, while we learn our own weakness and need of God's power, given through His 'abundant grace' and the renewing of the inward man day by day, we are sustained by the hope of coming glory and thus 'We faint not'.

"Eternal glories gleam afar,  
To nerve my faint endeavour,  
So now, to watch, to work, to war,  
And then to rest for ever."

U. G.

### The Lord's Table.—1.

(1 Cor. x. 15-21.)

**F**IRST of all let us remember, it is the table of the *Lord*, the cup of the *Lord*. The name given to Jesus here, that of Lord, tells us that He has authority over this table and this cup. If He deigns to admit us to it, to invite us to come to it, it is a *privilege* for us; it must not be taken as a question of *right*. He has instituted this commemoration of His death; He has spread the table, it belongs to Him, not to us. No one but the Lord has authority there; it is for Him to show who ought to be there.

His authority, as Lord, ought to be recognized there, and we should take care not to make His table ours or to set it up on any human (and therefore sectarian) ground. The Apostle addresses us as intelligent persons, as those who discern these things, and who know what we do, and on what ground we are.

This is why He then gives us what characterizes the communion, or the ground on which the Lord's table is set up. First, the cup which is presented to us there—*the cup of blessing which we bless*—is the *communion* of the *blood* of Christ. It is a cup of blessing or thanksgiving. In fact, what does it not recall to us? It speaks of the precious blood of Christ, of the Lamb without spot or blemish, by which we have redemption, which washes us from our sins, by which peace has been made, and which opens for us the way to God—a free and full entry into the sanctuary. It tells us of the death of Christ, of expiation accomplished, of iniquities taken away. In taking it, we can, in fact, give thanks and say, Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift!

But the cup is the *communion* of the blood of Christ. In comprehending by faith what it signifies, we enter into the thought of the Lord, whose blood has been shed, who offered this sacrifice in order to save us. Thus we have part in it, we enjoy what He has acquired for us by His death. The privilege of drinking of this cup belongs exclusively to the redeemed, because they it is who have communion with the Lord in His death. They form the church, purchased by the blood of Christ.

We have here, then, the first characteristic of those who come to the Lord's table. They are redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, they have the consciousness

of this, they rejoice in it, they give thanks for it. Is it so with us, dear friends ? Do we realize, at the table, this great fact which brings home to us the unfathomable love of Jesus, that the cup which we bless is “ the communion of the blood of Christ ” ?

Then, we have also the bread on the table, this *one* loaf which we *break* : divided amongst ourselves, it is but *one*. The bread represents, without doubt, the personal body of Christ when He was on earth ; we shall see this in chapter xi. ; as also we have seen it in the gospels, “ This is *My* body *given* for you ”. But here, in connection with the table, this is not the only thing which the bread prefigures. It is also the body of Christ now, here below, formed of His members on earth ; for it is ‘ *us* ’, *we* who are *one bread*, *one body*, although being *many*. “ There is one body ”, says the Apostle to the Ephesians (Eph. iv. 4). It is formed by the Holy Ghost come down from heaven, for we have all been baptized by *one Spirit* so as to form *one body* (1 Cor. xii. 13). Each believer has received the Holy Spirit, it is his privilege (Eph. i. 13 ; 1 Cor. vi. 19 ; Rom. viii. 15, 16). This Spirit unites him to Christ in heaven (1 Cor. vi. 17) ; and the whole, thus united to Christ, the glorified Head, forms this real living organism, which is called the body of Christ. We are the members of it.

To break bread at the Lord’s table implies, then, that we are united to Christ as members of His body. In a second point of view it is *communion*, and this is the second characteristic of those who participate at the table. They are united to Christ as members of His body : they are at the same time members one of another (Rom. xii. 5).

Now in order to be members of the body of Christ,

baptized by the Holy Spirit, we must be redeemed and washed from our sins in the blood of Christ. We thus see why, in this passage (1 Cor. x. 16), the cup is placed before the bread. It is precious to see the order which is found in the things of God. We may remark again that this aspect of the bread on the Lord's table could not have been given before Christ, the Head of the body, had taken His place in glory and the mystery of the one body was revealed. We would also observe that we only find it in the writings of Paul, to whom the administration of the mystery was committed.

A. L.

### “Buy the Truth.”

“**B**UY the truth, and sell it not”, says the proverb. In the business world just now some people are troubled about the fall in prices, and some are advised to “cut their losses” by forced sales. Others are only too glad to be able to buy what they want at a more reasonable cost.

To-day, in almost every sect in Christendom, people are selling the truth in order to accommodate themselves to the ‘new age’ with its ‘new ideas’. Alas, the fact is they are frittering away what truth they have, under the specious influence of worldliness, unbelief in the Bible called ‘higher criticism’, and other devices of Satan, whose object is to damage souls and dishonour Christ.

Christian reader—especially you who have heard many blessed truths in the past—remember the word, “Buy the truth, and sell it not”. How many of us have been privileged to listen to the most blessed unfoldings of the truth of God from the lips of devoted servants of His, most of whom have now gone to their

rest ! We are more responsible than those who never heard it, even though they may be true children of God.

We have still the writings of many of these valued men ; do we value them as we ought ? Are our whole souls so set upon learning of Christ and pleasing Him, that we make time to read them so far as we have opportunity ? And remember—we are no more safe from the onslaughts of Satan than others, unless kept by the grace of God.

“Buy *the* truth”—it is not *a* truth. Some have been so preoccupied with some special truth or line, that they have become narrow, one-sided, and unbalanced. We want the *whole* truth ; we want it, too, not merely as a theory in our heads, but in our hearts and consciences. We want it, not as dry knowledge, but so livingly linked with Christ Himself that it has vital freshness in our souls and that it is a practical power in our daily lives.

“Buy the truth”—the truth it is which has brought to us the knowledge of the only true God, whose word is ‘truth’ ; also of Christ who was ‘the truth’ and who bore witness to it. The truth it is which sets us free from bondage to sin, and which sanctifies, or sets apart, to God. May we walk in it, testify to it, be fellow-helpers of it, and never sell the truth which God, in His marvellous grace, has given us to know and enjoy !

*Fragment.*—“The glory which Thou gavest Me, I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one.” Everything that Christ has, except and only His essential Godhead, is His people’s—all the glory and blessedness is theirs.



## “Christ Jesus our Hope.”

THE prophet Malachi gives us the last voice of inspiration in the Old Testament, after which there was a silence, on God's part, of about 400 years.

The moral state of God's people, or of those who professed to be such, closely resembled the state of Christendom to-day. They were saying, “It is vain to serve God : and what profit is it that we have kept His ordinances ” ; they were calling the proud, happy ; and saying that even those who worked wickedness were set up, etc. In a word, what marked them was a lack of heart for God, a spirit of unbelief and even open infidelity ; and all this coupled with outward religious formality—a form of godliness without power.

This gives all the more emphasis to the little word ‘*then*’, which brings in the account of the remnant who were true to God and His word—“Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another”. These two things marked them—they feared Jehovah and they spoke often one to another. It was that reverential fear of God, which showed that they had faith in Him and had God before them. And a common object drew them together—not occasionally when it suited their convenience, but ‘often’.

At the close of Malachi the curtain drops for a long period, until it is lifted again in the early chapters of Luke. How encouraging to see the same remnant 400 years or so afterwards ! They do not seem to have been marked by great exploits or a show in the

world. The aged Simeon was, "waiting for the consolation of Israel", and the aged Anna was "serving God with fastings and prayers night and day". She, too, was "looking for redemption in Israel". What filled their thoughts was the coming of the Lord, the Messiah of Israel.

And they had their reward in a most remarkable manner. God passed by the great leaders of religion in that day and revealed, by the Holy Ghost, to those devoted hearts, the secret concerning the 'child Jesus', who, though born in such humble circumstances, was the centre of all His counsels, as well as the object of all Israel's hopes and expectations.

There is, doubtless, an analogy between the circumstances of the times when the Lord first came into this world, and those which will be found when He comes to take His people to Himself—His coming for which *we* wait. But are *we* in the current of God's mind as those of old: are *we* so separated from the heartless and worldly unbelief, which is so much on the increase around, that God can make known His thoughts to us?

In Malachi the godly ones "spake often one to another"; in Luke, Anna "*spake of Him*"; we (Christians) can speak of a risen, glorified, and coming Lord Jesus. May the reality of these truths have a greater weight and power with us as we pass through this present evil world!

F. G. B.

## Sonship and Glory.

**G**OD has coupled with the rank of *sonship*, *liberty* on earth and *glory* in heaven. As the former was briefly touched on last month, we will now look at the latter.

Although Israel could boast of political and national *liberty* in Canaan after Egypt's slavery, the law kept them all their lifetime subject to bondage and the fear of death which was its penalty. From this fear Christ's redemption alone can give true freedom (Lev. xxvi. 1-13; Heb. ii. 15).

So also as to *sonship*:—"To Israel pertaineth the *adoption* (*lit.* sonship) and the *glory*"—two blessed earthly privileges. But neither of these met their spiritual needs, nor gave them any status or claim in respect of the new order of sonship set forth in Christ Jesus. Hence we read, "When the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we (Jews) might receive the adoption of sons"\* (Rom. ix. 4; Gal. iii. 22; iv. 4, 5).

The law turned every one whom it touched into a bondservant, because men were sinners. It was impossible to enjoy sonship under it, as we can do now. Of the Lord Jesus alone it could be said, "He will magnify the law, and make it honourable". He did indeed truly manifest the character of sonship in all its blessed traits. He did it, too, as born under the law, because He was holy, harmless, undefiled and perfect in all His ways. And further, in His death, He met all its claims and secured for its bondslaves deliverance through faith, thus bringing them into what, hitherto, none but He Himself ever knew or enjoyed—the blessed relationship of sons with the Father, with and like Himself (Gal. iv. 1; Psa. xl. 8; Matt. iii. 13-17; Heb. ii. 13; 1 John iii. 1, 2).

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\* This word 'adoption' is used five times in the N.T., viz., Rom. viii. 15, 23; ix. 4; Gal. iv. 5; Eph. i. 5; and often is translated 'sonship' with equal force.

In Ephesians we discover the further truth, that it was God's purpose, from everlasting, that believing Jews and Gentiles should be made His sons, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who hath . . . predestinated us unto the adoption of children (*lit.* unto sonship) *by Jesus Christ* unto Himself". How unspeakably precious! The dignity of sons designed by God, and we, brought into that blessed place by Him! Further, we learn that He does it "according to the good pleasure of His will". Eternal praise be to His name! (Eph. i. 3-5).

*Moreover God gives us His Holy Spirit—the Spirit of His Son*—so that we might possess and express the thoughts and affections of Christ, and, like Him, cry, "Abba, Father", with the sentiments proper to us as His children. As another has remarked, "The Holy Ghost could not but act in unison with *the* Son who had revealed the Father, and would give the sense of no relationship short of sons" (Rom. viii. 13-17; Gal. iv. 6, 7).

Not only, then, does the Spirit impart a new and divine nature to us, but He witnesses with our spirit that we are God's children; yea, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. And like as He, the appointed Heir of all things, suffered and entered into His glory, so we are co-heirs and co-sufferers with Him, soon to be co-glorified. If there was suffering and sorrow in the Lord's cup, so there is in ours; "The more conscious we are of the blessing and of the liberty of the glory, the more sensible are we of the weight of the misery brought in by sin" (Rom. viii. 2, 9-11, 23; 1 Peter i. 11; John xi. 35-38).

As the life of the Son of God on earth exhibits *to us* the way and path in which all God's children should

walk, and His exaltation shows us the ultimate destiny of sonship; so the Holy Spirit *in us* is the proof and demonstration of our present sonship, as well as the token and pledge of our future joys. For this reason He cannot be a Spirit that leads 'again' to fear and bondage, but rather into liberty and joy (John v. 19; Phil. ii. 5-10; Rom. viii. 29, 11-16; Eph. i. 13, 14).

*So we rejoice in hope of the glory of God as our future prospect*, even as we do in eternal life as our present possession, and in sonship our present position. Each of them is as secure and certain to the feeblest believer as that Christ came, and died, and rose again (Rom. v. 2; John v. 24; Gal. iii. 26).

The sweetest relationships God ever established on earth hitherto have been fouled by man's sin, but this one—the dignity of sons—must wait for another scene and another day for its proper manifestation—a scene where love and holiness, rather than sin, will be the inherent qualities, a day when all the saints will have bodies like His own body of glory, and be perfectly at home in the Father's house because made suitable to His presence and company (Rom. v. 12; Rev. xxi. 7; xx. 4; Phil. iii. 20, 21; John xiv. 1-3).

All taint of sin shall be removed;  
All evil done away:  
And we shall dwell with God's Beloved,  
Through God's eternal day.

Beside all this, Christ's essential glories—His eternal Sonship, His precious death and all that He has thereby secured—unitedly demand, for His honour, the throne of the universe; therefore God will deal with creation in such a way as to honour Him and His death. Yet, withal, God has made—in infinite grace and for the pleasure and the joy of His Beloved Son—poor weak

dying men to be co-heirs with Him, who even now is said to be 'in them', as 'the hope of glory'. "What is man that Thou art mindful of him or the son of man that Thou visitest him"? The answer is: The unique Son of man in glory with the many sons around Him (Heb. i. 3, 12; Dan. vii. 9-17; Col. i. 27; Ps. ii. 8; Ps. viii; Heb. ii. 5-10).

The liberty of the *grace* of God is ours now; the liberty of the *glory* of God is ours in prospect. We stand in grace now, soon we shall stand in glory. His smile is upon us now, His glory also will shine upon us presently (Gal. v. 1, 13; Rom. viii. 19, 23, 18).

Moreover, the creation itself has been made subject to vanity through Adam's transgression, a vanity which is only too apparent in the havoc of war, the misery of humanity and the curse which rests on creation; and God, who sees and knows it all, tells us that it groans for its deliverance. But the last Adam, as Head of the new creation, will more than retrieve the loss. He has ordained that when the sons of God are manifested in heavenly glory—His glory—animate and inanimate creation will rejoice in the liberty which that glory introduces (Rom. viii. 20; 1 Cor. xv. 22-26, 45-49).

The consummation of God's purpose as to creation, and the full display of His glory demands, not only the resurrection and glorification of Christ, but also that of the saints with Him so that they may be vehicles for the exhibition of that glory throughout creation. Through man came the fall; through man, redeemed and risen, will come the glory. The redemption of our bodies at the coming of the Lord involves also the glorious manifestation of the sons as the complement of their adoption. Here, in the dignity, the liberty, the

ineffable joy and the triumphant glory of the sons of God, the infidelity of fallen man finds its complete answer.

What a prospect! May we steadily steer our bark and shape our course by its blessed light. What an impetus this should impart! Heavenly and eternal bliss, "close to His trusted side", to cheer our feeble feet! Neither God's Spirit-breathed word, nor our Spirit-taught hopes will be fully realized till we see His face and are like Him. The extent of our joy, as of our inheritance, will be the illimitable and infinite honours conferred by God on His adorable and well-beloved Son, and on those whom He has made the heirs, with Him, of all that He possesses.

If such, then, be our hopes and prospects, should not the reflection of it all come out in our path now, in true separation of heart to Christ, in unworldly ways, in love to one another, in devoted witness to the truth of the Gospel and the gathering power of His name?

W. M. R.

## "The Servants Knew."

(John ii. 1-11.)

**W**HAT a beautiful picture of the future scene of the blessed Lord's millennial glory we have before us in this second chapter of John's Gospel.

It is the 'third day' of testimony to Him. In the 'first' and 'second' days, testimony is given in the first chapter to many of His titles, among which are those of King of Israel and Son of God. This 'third day' here is typical of His resurrection "on the third day" (Matt. xvi. 21). So we find that He sets aside all human relationship, as shown in His reply to His

mother when He says, "Woman, what have I to do with thee, Mine hour is not yet come". Being rejected by the Jews and unknown to the world (John i. 10, 11) He takes His place in Galilee with the remnant who have received Him. He, therefore, does not own, for the time being, any natural tie that links Him with the nation that refuses to receive Him, and such is the reason He thus addresses His mother.

He now assumes the title of Son of man, the title He frequently used to speak of Himself; His *position*, as such, He could not take until He had passed through death. The 'hour' He refers to will be when He takes His place of authority over the Jews, when the *wine of gladness* will replace the *water of purification*. The occasion which leads to the manifestation of the Lord's glory and this beginning of signs in His ministry, is a marriage in Cana of Galilee, at which His mother is present; and He also and His disciples are invited.

But the Lord, an invited *guest*, becomes the *host*, in that He supplies that which was needed to revive the joy of the feast. "Fill the water pots with water," is His word to the servants, "and they filled them up to the brim." Ignorant of the source from whence flowed this tide of blessing in the provision of the 'good wine', the ruler of the feast rebukes the bridegroom for His alleged lack of judgement; "*but the servants which drew the water knew*". To those who are familiar with Scripture, this event portrays three things which we find here associated with the *kingdom*, viz.: The third day (as the resurrection day is the third day), the marriage, and the wine of the Lord's providing—the marriage figuring the coming *kingdom* of the Lord when He will appear both as King and as Bridegroom.

(Continued on page 41.)



That which strikes one as blessedly sweet is the fact that, while the ruler of the feast is ignorant, and, while His mother (kindred relationship with the Lord in the flesh) is placed, as we might say figuratively, at a distance from Him ; it is the *servants* who are nearest to Him ; as will be the case in that day when He will provide the true ' wine ' of the Kingdom in the day of His millennial glory. His servants that have served Him will then be the dispensers of the joy, under Him. In our day likewise, dear fellow-believer, even *the humblest in service are the nearest to Him*—the One who said of Himself, " I am meek and lowly in heart ". It is His *servants* (at least those who serve in humility and dependence) who are acquainted with His secrets, " The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him, and He will show them His covenant " (Psalm xxv. 14). " His secret is with the righteous " (Proverbs iii. 32).

The Lord Himself, as a man in this world, first took the place of a Servant, as we read, " And now, saith the Lord that formed Me from the womb to be His Servant " (Isaiah xlix. 5). Not only has the Lord been raised up by Jehovah to restore the preserved of *Israel*, but He is given, in this character, to be a light to the *Gentiles* that He may be His salvation to the end of the earth (verse 6). The Lord said of Himself " I came not to be ministered unto, but to minister ". Yet, in a future day, as said above, " His servants shall serve Him " (Rev. xxii. 3).

How is it now with us, dear reader, have we found out from Him our true place and manner of service ? It is often in the little things of life we can truly serve Him. It is related of a lady residing in a Western city of the United States of America, that she deplored not having any opportunity to show her love to the Lord

in service, being much confined to her home. One morning a poor man appeared at her door for a 'hand out', as something to eat is termed in these parts. She irritably declined, stating she was too busy to attend to him, and the poor man departed. Later in the day a little child appeared at her door asking for a rag to bind up his finger which had been cut accidentally, and he was told to go to some one else. Yet later a poor woman solicited assistance, which the lady promised to give; but she told her to call on the morrow as she was busy entertaining guests. After the departure of her guests, reclining in a chair, she fell asleep and dreamed that the Lord came into her home. In a complaining tone she addressed Him saying, "I have been trying to do something to please Thee, Lord, but I do not know where to find it". The Lord answered (as she thought in her dream), "This very day I gave you three separate opportunities, but you turned your back on them all. When you have learnt that little things are pleasing to Me, and have done them, I will lead you into larger fields of usefulness". This is a true story. We can easily understand that the future career of this dear servant and sister in the Lord was entirely changed.

It is in the little things we often fail and miss the mind of the Lord, because we want to do something great and be great ourselves. In conclusion, the writer would draw attention to the fact that the Christian is not told to be looking for the coming Kingdom, when the Lord will appear in millennial glory and we shall appear with Him in that glory; for previous to that event we shall already have been with Him. Scripture tells us plainly that the Lord may come for us at any moment and take us to be for ever with Himself, as we read in 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17. "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 ; and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

J. P. (Montreal).

### Scripture.

THE word 'Scripture' (*Graphee*) occurs about 50 times in the New Testament, either in the singular or the plural. It was the well-known word amongst the Jews for the sacred writings, and is not used in reference to common or secular ones.

Our Lord Himself used the word, as recorded in the Gospels, ten times ; He may, of course, have used it much more often. In a particularly strong and emphatic expression He said, "The Scripture cannot be broken" (John x. 35). On another occasion He said, "Search the Scriptures", and went on to refer to the writings of Moses, saying, "Moses wrote of Me". Here, as elsewhere, He attached as much importance to the *written* word, as to His own *spoken* word ; perhaps we might say even more. For Him, the Scripture was the closing of all controversy, and the final court of appeal.

Indeed the more we study the Word of God, the more we shall see that during the Lord's ministry both before the cross, and after He rose from the dead, He put His fullest seal on the Scriptures. He read them in the synagogue (Luke v. 16-22) ; He referred to those who erred from the truth as "not knowing the Scriptures" ; He met Satan by the simple word, "It is written", quoting from the book of Deuteronomy ; He

was most careful that every detail of the prophetic predictions concerning Himself should be fulfilled to the very letter. In His risen state, He instructed His disciples, not by His divine knowledge simply, but “out of the Scriptures”, just those which we have in the threefold division of the O.T.—“Moses, the prophets, the psalms”.

The apostle Paul, who was a learned Jew, brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, uses the expression, “It is written”, referring to the same Old Testament Scriptures which we possess, about 33 times. The same words, “It is written”, are used by various others in the Acts some 7 times. Surely these writers and speakers, who lived so much nearer the events with which they were familiar, and concerning which they were instructed from childhood, must have known much more about the value of the Old Testament Scriptures than the Higher Critics of to-day! Yet not even one of them quotes these, or refers to them, as of doubtful authenticity, or as ‘probably’ or ‘partially’ true. They take them as the veritable Word of God, and an appeal to the Scripture was, for them also, final.

But there were other and deeper reasons why the apostles and sacred writers of old attached so much importance to the sacred writings. They regarded them, not merely as venerable documents which contained much that was good and true; but as inspired by the Holy Ghost. “Which also we speak,” says the apostle Paul, “not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, communicating spiritual [things] by spiritual [means]” (1 Cor. ii. 13, new trans.).

Here the apostle claims, for the communications which he made, that the words in which they were

given were “taught by the Spirit”. It will be found that the writers in general, of the books which make up the Bible, believed also that the communications of which they were the bearers, were *of* and *from* God. Moreover, this fact of divine inspiration it is which explains the remarkable unity of design and purpose which runs all through the Scriptures; which, though written by so many authors, were the product of one presiding mind; that of God, by His Spirit.

Again, the same apostle says to Timothy in the last Epistle which he wrote, “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God”. This is a part of his last words to his beloved son in the faith, and fellow-servant, and through him to us also. It is of the very last importance that we should remember that everything that goes under the designation “Scripture” is “God-breathed”. It is His voice directly to our souls, and it is sufficient to equip the man of God fully to every good work, no matter what the character of the day may be.

Lastly, the Epistle of Peter gives us yet another confirmation of the same truth. He says, “The prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved [or borne along] by the Holy Ghost” (2 Peter i. 21). It was not man’s will which controlled the vessels of inspiration of old: on the contrary, God selected suitable vessels, “holy men of God”; and what they spoke was not something coming from their own mind or wisdom, but, as moved by the Holy Ghost.

So, too, in chapter iii. 16, Peter refers to Paul’s writings as a part of ‘the Scriptures’, recognizing them (the Scriptures) as the body of truth communicated by God for His people in all ages.

We may truly sympathize with those who have honest difficulties as to any part of the Bible and endeavour to help them as far as we can; but an honest difficulty is a very different thing from the spirit of hostility which we see so much on the increase to-day. Probably nine-tenths of the difficulties which arise are from not understanding the mind of God in the passage; the other tenth may be cleared up by patiently waiting on God for fuller light and the teaching of the Holy Spirit.

Scripture itself explains the real cause of men's opposition to God's Word. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him." The 'natural man' may be a profane, ungodly person; or he may be outwardly moral and pious; but, not being 'born again'—not possessing the new nature and the Holy Spirit—he has no capacity to discern or understand the things of God.

Why should we be surprised at men's hostility to the Bible when we know that it makes nothing of man, but shows up what he is in his fallen condition, with all its depravity and incurable evil? And if He who was the *living* Word had to say at the end of His life, "They hated Me without a cause"; need we be surprised if men dislike and seek to discredit the *written* Word also? The light makes manifest the darkness and evil, the truth shows up the untruth, and man, in the pride of his heart, cannot bear this.

But there are two striking verses in Proverbs viii, to which we may well draw attention ere we close, "All the words of my mouth are in righteousness; there is nothing crooked or perverse in them. They are all plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge". To the soul who desires to

do God's will and to be taught of Him, the Scripture must carry an ever-deepening conviction that it is indeed and in truth the **WORD OF GOD**.

F. G. B.

## The Lord's Table—2.

**W**E have already referred to the connection between the truth of the church—the one body, of which Christ is the glorified Head in heaven—and the Lord's table. When we come together to partake at His table, do we think upon this precious truth? Many, perhaps, up to the present, have only partaken there as redeemed ones, happy in remembering Jesus in His death, realizing, too, His surpassing love to us. This is indeed precious, infinitely precious, and it is what should especially fill the heart at such a moment.

But the Lord does not invite us to His table that we should be there as isolated individuals, who have come in order to eat the bread and drink the cup and to enjoy, each for himself, the remembrance of His love. It is in order that we should be there *together* with Him, and His heart finds its joy in assembling us thus around Himself with one common thought and one common object. Have you never thought, dear friend, that, in being at the Lord's table, you are there as a member of the body of Christ, with the other members of His body, united together to the same Head in glory?

Let us, then, remember that, in drinking of the same cup and breaking the same bread, we express this double fact that we are redeemed, and that we are members of the body of Christ. We thus have communion together, and we give thanks together to our precious Saviour. What joy to His heart to see us assembled around Himself! What joy to ours to realize together this

fact, that we are all members of the same body, having the same Head! In fixing together the eye of faith upon Him, the love wherewith He loves us fills our hearts, and we give Him our united thanksgiving.

The Lord's table is the place of *communion*; of the common participation in all that He is, and in all that He has done for us. It is also the place of the common enjoyment of His love; and in love divine, communion increases our joy. We shall not be isolated individuals in heaven. When assembled together around the Lamb of God, we shall worship and praise Him. We anticipate that time now.

Thus, dear friends, you who are redeemed by the blood of Christ, such are the two characters of those who participate at the Lord's table. This necessarily excludes the world and the unconverted. At the same time, we find that the ground or principle on which the table is spread is that of the unity of the body. Every table which is not spread on this principle, not only in theory but in practice, is not Scriptural. All the tables spread on this ground form but *one*, for there is but *one* body, although there may be various expressions of it in different localities, in such a way that communion exists between them all. Thus we should be assured on what ground a table is spread before associating ourselves with it, and we should also see that the Scriptural ground is kept, in practice, and that the Lord's authority is fully recognized there.

A. L.

**Fragment.**—“*Let us hold fast* the profession of our hope without wavering (for He is faithful that promised)” (Heb. x. 23). Blessed parenthesis! We may well hold fast, seeing He is faithful. Our hope can never make ashamed. It rests on the faithfulness of Him who cannot lie, whose word is settled for ever in heaven.



## Our Responsibility.

**H**AVE we, as servants of God, felt our responsibility to reflect to those around us the light which we have received from Him?—to pass on to others the riches which He has placed at our disposal? If He has confided much to us, let us remember that He will require much from us.

In view of the awful progress of error, how important it is to declare the whole truth and to maintain it, not only in words, but in our very way of acting, according to *what is written* in the Scripture. If we remain silent “until the morning light, some mischief will come upon us” (2 Kings vii. 9), for, “this day is a day of good tidings”.

The coming of the Lord draweth nigh and many souls are still perishing. Happy indeed it is to be sheltered from the hour of trial which is coming on the whole habitable world (Rev. iii. 10), but knowing the value of an immortal soul, should we not, with greater zeal, warn men and invite them to come with us, as Moses said to Hobab, “We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you: come with us and we will do thee good”?

And further, is it not said, “Deliver them that are taken forth unto death, and withdraw not from them that stagger to slaughter. If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not, will not He that weigheth the hearts consider it? And He that preserveth thy soul, He knoweth it; and He rendereth to man according to his work” (Prov. xxiv. 11, 12, new trans.)?

Soon we shall enter upon our rest, but let us not

waste the little time which is allowed us to serve the Lord in the midst of a hostile world. If we sigh for rest, may we at least know how to accomplish all that for which the Lord has left us here below, so that we may be found such as His heart would desire, when He comes. May the Lord direct our hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ (2 Thess. iii. 5).

A. G.

### **“That good thing . . . keep.”**

(Ezra viii. 21, 22. — 2 Tim. i. 14, 15.)

**H**OW similar, in principle, were, for faith, the days of Ezra, to the last days of the present interval. In a time of ruin it requires courage and faith to withstand the attacks of the enemy of the people of God. Ezra, in the 8th chapter of his book, records that he proclaimed a fast and sought from God “a right way” for all “our little ones and all our substance”, for the journey from Babylon to Jerusalem.

Humanly speaking, it would have required a band of soldiers and horsemen to help them against the enemy in the way. But Ezra rises above his natural fear of molestation and puts his trust in God for that “good thing” he had to take with him and with the others, as recorded in our chapter. His own words are, “For I was ashamed to require of the king” a guard on the way, after saying to him, “The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek Him; but His power and His wrath is against all them that forsake Him”.

The Apostle Paul, seeing that all they that were in Asia had turned away from him, saw further the ruin of the assembly coming on, and was given to write his

second letter to Timothy, we might almost say in view of that ruin. We must not suppose, as another has said, that all in Asia had abandoned Christianity; but their faith had become weak, and they did not like to identify themselves with a man who was in disgrace with the authorities . . . they withdrew from him and left him to answer alone for himself.

In the first verse of the chapter we find what stands untouched by the ruin, "The promise of life, the life which is in Christ Jesus". The purpose of God was before the ages of time (verses 9, 10), before the first man was placed on the scene, and before the failure and ruin of the church as left to man's responsibility. How blessed to be cast upon God, "According to His own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the ages of time".

Then the Apostle enjoins Timothy to "*Keep*, by the Holy Ghost which dwells in us, the *good deposit* entrusted" (new trans.). Here, however unfaithful the church as a whole may be, the *individual* is enjoined to be faithful and to remain so. This *deposit*, which has been given to us, we must hold as priceless; it is the *divine truth*, our portion in this world of sin. We are to guard it without fear or favour, and this can be done only in the power of the Holy Ghost. How important then to keep in communion with God in our daily walk! To be *guardians* of the truth as Ezra of old was of *earthly treasures*, it is required of believers to-day to be first of all *furnished with the truth—heavenly treasures*—and then to be in a fit spiritual condition to hold the same in communion with our Head, the Lord Jesus Christ, in faith and love.

Dear fellow-believer, the blessed Lord says, "I come quickly: hold fast what thou hast, that no one take

thy crown" (Rev. iii. 11, new trans.). It is not a *warning* like, "Behold, I come quickly" (Rev. xxii. 7, 12). 'Quickly', too, is not in relation to *time* but characterizes His own desire to have His redeemed with Himself as expressed in John xiv. 3, which should read, "I am coming again"; and so the hope before us is an *immediate* event. The love of Christ alters not with the state of our soul, "Jesus Christ is *the same*, yesterday, and *to-day* and for ever".

J. P. (*Montreal*).

### Eden—Man's and God's.

HOW different is the atmosphere of Eden—*man's* Eden—in the second chapter of Genesis, to God's Eden in Psalm xxxvi. ("the river of Thy Edens", ver. 8). In Genesis we find Eden, as made for the first man and used by him, where God is the Creator of everything, and the planter of the garden in which He put the man He had formed.

It is not surprising, therefore, that we are introduced to scenes of delight; to man and his divinely-provided helpmeet set as head of everything in the sea, on land, and in the air. To him was given every tree, as pleasant to the sight and good for *food*; the *river* also which flowed from the garden for man's refreshment, as well as natural *light* and *life* as they first came from God's hand.

Here then, in the first book of the Bible, the great *facts* of creation are detailed in simple grandeur, but we have to turn to the last book for the clearest announcement in the Scriptures as to God's *purpose* in creation; "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for Thou hast created all things, and for

*Thy pleasure* they are and were created". Again, "Him . . . who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein". "All things were created by Him and for Him" (Rev. iv. 11; x. 6; Col. i. 16).

Yet we know too well how soon all was marred and ruined by Adam's sin; involving in his fall the whole creation of which he was made head, and interrupting the pleasure of its Creator.

But the scenes portrayed in Psalm xxxvi. shine with other glories. It is true we have here also the heavens, the earth, and the great deep; but all radiant in the glow of divine faithfulness and mercy. Here, too, are shelter, food, refreshment, light and life (verses 5-9), but all transcending those of Eden as the Creator transcends the creation.

There man is a sinner hiding from God amongst the trees of the garden. Here he is touched and drawn by lovingkindness to trust in the shadow of God's wings. The revised reading is, "How precious is Thy lovingkindness, O God! And the children of men take refuge under the shadow of Thy wings" (R.V.). Viewed in the light of the cross of Calvary, the exclamation, 'How precious!' is still more fitting. There is the best of reasons for taking the very best place, that of confiding entirely in Him; for at the cross God loved and God gave—yea, He spared not His only begotten Son. Man believes and finds, not only eternal life, but a place of refuge and rest.

"In the refuge God provided,  
Though the world's destruction lowers,  
We are safe—to Christ confided,  
Everlasting life is ours."

In Genesis man is apparently dissatisfied with God's provision, and so listens to Satan's lie. Here, in our Psalm, is God's provision come from His own house, "They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of Thy house". As the fat of the sacrifices—which was the best—was to be for God, so He gives the best to His people. What His love provides must always be in abundance because of who He is. The prodigal's words, "enough and to spare", well represent this; therefore, we read of 'abundant mercy', 'abundant grace', 'abundant peace', 'abundant life' (1 Peter i. 3; Rom. v. 17; Ps. xxxvii. 11; John x. 10). In this Psalm He gives 'abundant satisfaction'. The supply is plentiful, but excellent. Not merely is it out of, but with, the rich store of His house, and as brought to it. The Temple in Jerusalem was His house of old, and from thence He blessed the people: but their sin, like Adam's, made it impossible for Him to remain among them. He is still the giving God, but He pours His blessings now, not from a *place on earth*, but from a *Person in heaven*, even Christ, and according to all the infinite value and worth of His cross. In Him all is secure.

Further, we see in Eden the river flowing out in four directions—refreshing the man, the beast, and the ground: but soon, alas, all is changed, and man is seen eating his food in the sweat of his brow. Here in the Psalm, God makes His own to drink of the *river*—the full stream, as the LXX. puts it—of His own pleasures. When we notice that the Hebrew word translated 'pleasures' signifies 'Edens', in the plural, and is used nowhere else in the Psalms or Pentateuch, it becomes both suggestive and instructive.

*God's 'Edens'*, then, and not man's, is what is brought

before us. All the other springs and forms of refreshment He ever opened for man on earth dried up or became polluted through man's sin. Here, at last, He opens a new fountain to us—that of *His own* pleasures, which, when fully disclosed, we find to be nothing short of Christ Jesus in glory. When here, “In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink”; but instead of coming to Him to drink of heavenly streams they nailed Him to the tree. But now, from the throne of glory, we hear the same invitation, almost the last message of the Bible. “Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely”, “I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely” (John vii. 37; Rev. xxii. 17; xxi. 6).

Our God asserts repeatedly His supreme satisfaction with, and delight in, His beloved Son, whether as Son of God on earth or Son of man in heaven. The gospel is God's message from heaven to sinners on earth to bid them share with Him in His thoughts and appreciation of Christ; in figurative language, it is an invitation to drink of the river of His pleasures, which ever flows and overflows. “Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved” (Canticles v. 1).

Lastly, in our Psalm we see *life* and *light*. Life, no longer to be dwarfed or forfeited by sin; but, for us, eternal life, of which Christ on high is the source—an everflowing fountain which sin cannot stint or dry up. *Light*, too, which burns brighter and brighter unto the perfect day—the light in which Christ is in glory. We are brought into nothing short of the light of God's presence in faith: our sins are gone, we are sons of light and sons of day. In that light only, can we, and may we, see light on all the problems of our paths here;

problems which human reason and expediency will never divinely solve.

May His grace keep us from going after the world or hankering after its passing pleasures. Let us have wisdom and faith to find shelter, as well as to eat, drink, and walk in God's Edens by faith now, till we can do so actually in His presence on high.

W. M. R.

### The Lord's Supper—1.

THE Lord's supper is ~~the~~ the repast to which, in His grace, He invites us. It is His supper, not ours, in the same way as the Lord's table is His also. It is not, therefore, a question of eating and drinking without knowing what we do. It is not an ordinary meal, it is partaken of when we come together in assembly (1 Cor. xi. 20). It is not a thing which we can do out of the assembly—a supper which we can spread when we wish, as one would do at an ordinary meal. We must discern what we do when we partake of it. To come together simply to eat, is not the Lord's supper, and we are not there *each one for himself*, but collectively. One cannot partake of the supper alone.

The Apostle would have us to regard the supper from a serious point of view, placing it as a thing quite to itself in our coming together, or rather as that which is the principal object of our assembling. The Lord Jesus, in leaving this memorial, undoubtedly desired to reach our affections, but, at the same time, all is made to be solemn by the very fact of that which is set before us. We are responsible to be present at it, not to be absent ; but when we enter into the reality of what the supper brings before us, we shall enjoy it all the more.

(Continued on page 57.)



In addressing himself to the Corinthians in order to check the disorders which had come in amongst them concerning the supper, the Apostle furnishes precious instructions which show us its value in the Lord's eyes and indeed what it ought to be to our hearts. Although he had been in some measure instructed by the other apostles, and had, without doubt, seen the supper celebrated amongst the disciples at Damascus and Jerusalem, yet Paul received from the Lord Himself what he taught as to it. He says, "I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you".

Now this shows us that the supper formed a part, together with other truths, of what Paul had received direct from the Lord, and enables us to see the importance which He attached to it. How then can Christians treat this institution with indifference, as a thing which they can take part in whenever they so desire, and, as some say, "If it is found to be an aid to their faith"?

Paul does not forget to recall under what circumstances the supper was instituted by the Lord—what it is that should make it so much the more precious to the heart of each of the redeemed. He says, "The Lord Jesus the same night in which He was betrayed took bread". It was on that night when all the wickedness of man and Satan conspired against Him; the night when one of His own betrayed Him, when He was delivered up to be put to death—and for us! What a subject is presented to our hearts and consciences—the *Lord delivered up!* What wickedness this reveals in the heart of man, what grace in Him who allowed Himself to be delivered up! No one could lay hands upon Him unless He allowed it (John xviii. 5, 6); but

He is delivered up, God has delivered Him up, and for us !

And *that night*—has it no voice for us ? When He was delivered up, where was He ? And before it, what was He doing ? He was in Gethsemane ; He had been in an agony, and His sweat had become as great drops of blood falling down to the ground. He had experienced that profound sadness of soul in anticipating death and the forsaking of God upon the cross. That is the ‘night’ which is set before us : a night in which the most awful of all the crimes committed by man was planned, in which the deepest self-sacrifice was made by Jesus ; and in which love received from the hand of the Father, in perfect obedience to Him and perfect devotedness to us, that cup of which He was about to drink.

It was on that night, before His sufferings and the consummation of His sacrifice, that Jesus thought of His own and of the glorious results of His work for them. His thoughts also rested on the title which His work would give to have them near Him in glory, and He instituted that which would recall Him—*Himself*—to His beloved ones during His absence. “ Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end ”, and He has so provided that, right on to the end of our course here below, we should still have this memorial of His love. May we, when we take our place at His table, have before our hearts the remembrance of the night when He was betrayed, and taste the reality of that tender and powerful love, wherewith He loves us to the end !

A. I.

## “Fight the Good Fight of Faith.”

**I**N these perilous times of the last days, the enemy of God and His Christ is making a bold and daring attack upon the Word of God, hence the importance of the above exhortation. He is seeking to undermine its authority, to destroy the citadel of truth, and to take away the foundation of the Christian's faith.

The Captain of our salvation, therefore, through His inspired apostles, calls upon all His soldiers to ‘endure hardness’ and to “contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints”. We must put on the whole armour of God to be able to stand against the wiles of the devil, who spreads his nets in a seductive manner, as he did long ago in the garden of Eden, and transforms himself as an angel of light.

Satan's object is—to rob God of the loyal allegiance of the heart of man, to destroy our simple confidence in the certainty of the word of truth, and to sow widespread the seeds of scepticism and superstition. By this means he hopes to reap a rich harvest of rationalism and ritualism, in fields where once the good seed of the Word of God sprang up, yielding blessed results for the glory of God.

The warnings of the Scripture as to this are very plain and very solemn. The Spirit speaks expressly, that in the latter time some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of demons. This is what God the Spirit says, and He says it ‘expressly’. To-day Satan is *imitating*—he can originate nothing, but only imitate—and he is using his angels *to speak* (in Spiritism, etc.).

The atmosphere of Christendom is permeated by the activity of evil and seducing spirits, sent forth by the

old serpent, the devil. All are in the danger-zone; the tares and the wheat are to grow together in the same field until the harvest. The tares will be gathered for burning; the wheat will be gathered into the heavenly granary. And how soon it may be! for the end is near, the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

U. G.

In reference to the foregoing article; we are reminded of the word of the Lord to the prophet Ezekiel (chap. xxxiii.). It was the duty of the watchman in Israel to sound a warning; he was to blow the trumpet and warn the people of impending danger. This he was responsible to do.

Now a solemn responsibility rests upon *us* also, as servants of God in our little measure, to raise a note of warning as to the state of things in the professing Church—a state by which we are all affected in some way. But it is also a deeply important and practical question—*How are these evils to be combated or met, and how are the sheep of Christ to be safeguarded and helped?* Let us pray about the matter, which may well form the subject of a future article (D.V.).

[Ed.].

## Answered Prayer.

**I**T is encouraging to us to see in Scripture how God answers prayer, even though the time of waiting may sometimes be long. Let us look at three instances.

HANNAH (1 Samuel i.). Like other Jewish women, Hannah had long desired to be the mother of a son. She had made this a subject of prayer, doubtless for a long time. When she went up to the house of Jehovah, we find her praying with much earnestness and even bitterness of spirit, though not audibly. But God knew all that passed in her heart as she “poured out her soul” before Him.

After Eli had sent her away with the word, “Go in peace; and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of Him”, she departed, “and her countenance was no more sad”. Such was the effect

of leaving her burden before the Lord and trusting Him in faith. In due time the answer was given. Do we, when we spread out our petitions before the Lord, find this relief and comfort which removes sadness from the heart and enables us to go on our way in peace ?

ZACHARIAS (Luke i.). This godly man, too, had long prayed to God for a son. But when the angel appeared and announced the good news that, "Thy prayer is heard", his faith could not rise to the occasion and he asked the question, "Whereby shall I know this?" etc. The angel Gabriel pronounced God's discipline for his unbelief, "because thou believest not my words", adding nevertheless, "which shall be fulfilled in their season".

Probably Zacharias and his wife Elisabeth had prayed about this for years, but there was no apparent sign that God had heard their prayer, yet we know that He did hear, and the answer came in His own time. It is significant that Elisabeth said of Mary, "Blessed is she *that believed*".

How often we, too, have been slow to believe! But be that as it may, we may rest assured that God hears and answers a real cry which goes up to Him from the heart of any of His children. The time or way the answer comes may not be just what we might like or expect, but we have the assurance from His Word that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.

CORNELIUS (Acts x.). The case of Cornelius is a remarkable one. He was outside the pale of Israel, and the work of God amongst the Gentiles was then only just beginning. Though a Roman soldier, holding a position in an important regiment (as we would say), and, we might have thought, not in circumstances helpful to his soul spiritually, yet he feared God, gave

much alms to the people and prayed to God alway. Was God indifferent to his prayer? Truly not. He sent His angel with the message, "Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God".

Here was a man who had a deep reverence for God, though quite ignorant of the gospel which, through grace, is familiar to us. But he was a man of prayer. And as he prayed in his house, the angel is sent with the message, "Thy prayer is heard" (verse 31).

We do not know during what length of time Cornelius may have been sending up his daily petitions to God, but we do know that God was not indifferent, nor did He turn a deaf ear to his request. When the right time came, He answered those prayers in a way far more blessed than Cornelius could have thought of.

Let us then persevere in prayer and not be discouraged. Whatever may be the difficulties, whatever the length of time before the answer comes, let us come to God in simple faith and spread out all our needs and petitions in His presence, knowing that He will surely hear and answer just at the moment He sees best.

F. G. B.

## Thankfulness.

"**G**OD is good and doeth good", yet how often we take all the blessings—spiritual and temporal—without any thought of Him from whom they come (James i. 17). But what God wants is that a spirit of thankfulness should characterize us. In Philippians iv. He links 'thanksgiving' with making our requests known to Him by prayer and supplication. The latter we are ready to do, but how prone we are to leave out the thanksgiving. The result of laying down all our

needs and wants at God's throne with thanksgiving is, that *His* peace keeps our hearts and minds.

Again, in Colossians iii., after lifting our hearts above to where Christ is, and then giving us some practical exhortations for our guidance here, the Apostle adds the words, "and be ye thankful" (verse 15). As another has said, "It is like a beautiful garment drawn over all".

In Philippians we find the 'peace of God' flowing from prayer and supplication with thanksgiving: in Colossians, the thanksgiving is connected with the 'peace of Christ' (that very peace in which He walked) ruling in our hearts. Thus, in God's thoughts, they are inseparably linked.

May we be found more and more wearing this garment in a day when on every hand we find increasing unthankfulness, of which God warns us so solemnly in Rom. i. 21.

A. H. H.

### A Few Words on Psalm cxlvii. 1-6.

"**P**RAISE ye the Lord." The last five Psalms begin with this ascription of praise. After all the experiences of God's goodness and grace, praise must spring up in the heart that knows and trusts Him: "Praise is comely".

"The Lord doth build up Jerusalem", such is the hope of the godly remnant of Israel; *ours* is to be "for ever with the Lord".

"He gathereth the outcasts of Israel." These 'outcasts' are, no doubt, the scattered ten tribes, as we read in that millennial chapter, Isaiah xi., "He shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of

Judah from the four corners of the earth " (verse 12). Again, " The great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem " (Isaiah xxvii. 13).

Events happening in the world to-day are all moving on towards the time when these poor ' outcasts ', long lost to our view, will be again brought into blessing under the true Messiah, after He has put down all His enemies by judgment.

" He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds." There are many broken hearts and wounded spirits in the world now : do we seek to help them and sympathize with them in our measure, as does the One of whom it is said, " The Lord is nigh unto them which are of a broken heart " (Ps. xxxiv. 18) ? Jesus Himself had a heart full of love, of compassion, of sympathy, for every sorrowing and distressed one.

" He telleth the number of the stars ; He calleth them all by their names " ; to this the following words may well be added, " His understanding is infinite ". That vast creation which we see above us as well as under our feet, bears witness to the infinitude of His wisdom and the magnitude of His power.

" The Lord lifteth up the meek." How remarkable the transition here from Jehovah's power, wisdom and greatness, to His care for the humble and oppressed ! The great ones of the earth care very little for the meek ; they are forgotten and ignored or despised ; but God, who is infinite in greatness, finds in these lowly ones the objects of His special care and solicitude. Such is our God, and such is His grace !

F. G. B.



## “Contend Earnestly.”

**I**N a foot-note last month we referred to the growth and progress of the apostasy in Christendom, to which the writer of an article drew attention. The Christian watchman and servant of God is responsible, not only to warn souls of danger, but to witness for and to the truth, and to uphold the standard of sound doctrine. It is well not only to warn Christians against error, but to combat it, and maintain the truth in every way we can.

To do this effectually we need to see to our own walk and conduct first, for, if we are mixed up with the world and following its ways, we are no testimony for God, and our armour is not in proper order to fight His battles. Hence the Apostle says to Timothy, “Take heed unto *thyself*, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee”.

The rapid progress of the apostasy, or giving up of fundamental truth, which has been taking place in the professedly Christian churches, especially within quite recent years, is a very solemn consideration. It ought to lead us to prayer—true intercession with God—that He will preserve us from being in any way carried away in the general lapse, and that He will restore many souls. Humility, dependence, the prayerful study of the Word of God—this is the only way to be kept.

The enemy is busy on every hand. One of his chief weapons with which to destroy the citadel of truth is an extensive use of the printing-press. One has often been struck by the activity, in this way, of Millennial Dawn-ists, Spiritists, Mormons, etc. Are the servants of God

to fail, because the agents of Satan are so active? Certainly not.

There is plenty to do in house-to-house visiting, in the circulation of sound gospel magazines and papers for believers. And, in the case of persons at a distance whom we cannot reach personally, the postman can help us at a small cost.

Time is short. Our opportunities for service are running to a close. Let us remember the exhortation to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.

F. G. B.

### Inspiration.

**N**OTHING can be more precise than the testimony of the Apostle Paul concerning inspiration. He says, "Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, *but which the Holy Ghost teacheth*". Could the idea of inspiration be embodied in a form of words more absolutely definite than the expression, "words—which the Holy Ghost teacheth"? Here there is nothing equivocal. When the Apostle set forth the truths which the Holy Ghost had taught him, he used the words which the Holy Ghost had also taught him; that is, it was *God Himself speaking* through the mouth of man.

And remark here, that inspiration is asserted in cases where merely religious inspiration was impossible as in that of Balaam, when "He took up his parable and said . . . having heard *the words of God*". Finally, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and so many others who have said to us, "Thus saith the Lord", "The word of the Lord came unto me, saying", etc., are all examples of positive and properly-so-called inspiration.

Inspiration is a reality, and we possess the absolute authority of God's own Word. The Prophets have affirmed it, the Lord has recognized it, i.e., that of this body of writings as it stands; and He has declared that nothing can invalidate its authority. The Apostle also has declared that these very Scriptures were given by inspiration of God, and are capable of making us wise unto salvation.

Paul says he received '*by revelation*' the truths he taught, and he communicated them in "*words which the Holy Ghost teacheth*", that is to say, by inspiration. Consequently it is certain that the early disciples had the truth communicated to them by inspiration, as the foundation of their faith. . . . When Paul says, "which things we speak", does he mean those things which he spoke by word of mouth only? And has he taught nothing by writing? We well know that he has taught by writing that which had been revealed to him; that is to say, that his writings, for this purpose, were inspired.

Further, he says, "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord. *But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant*". The communications, then, by the Spirit to the church or to the world, were the 'Word of God', and that which was written by the Apostle to direct the saints was the "commandment of the Lord".

"For this cause," said he in writing to the Thessalonians, "also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the Word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the Word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe." Thus we see that the Apostle

put his writings on the footing of the commandments of the Lord, with the sorrowful consolation for those who cannot discern it, "If any man be ignorant, LET HIM BE IGNORANT".

J. N. D.

## "The Way of the Wind."

(Ecclesiastes i. 6—John iii. 8.)

"The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits."

"The wind bloweth where it listeth and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

**I**T has been stated that the book of Ecclesiastes, from which the first Scripture above is taken, tells the experience of a man who has attained sufficient wisdom to be able to give a judgment of what is going on "under the sun", and who has tried everything there which could give him joy and happiness. The result is, vanity and vexation of spirit. The first examples brought in are the things in nature which are unaffected by time, and do not change. The earth, the sun, the wind, and the rivers that run into the sea.

In the second Scripture the blessed Lord takes one of these natural things as an illustration of the sovereign operation of a power that effectuates the new birth: now new birth is one of the most important fundamental truths of which Scripture speaks. Man is ignorant of the currents and circuits of the air in motion, though he hears it and feels its power. But as the way of the wind, so is the way of the Spirit, whose power we feel as in us and for us, when we believe the Word of God. Hearing the Word produces a sense of need, and so the conscience is reached. All this is the work of the Spirit of God,

who then leads the soul to rest upon, and trust in, the finished work of Christ.

But the Spirit's work is objective also. He is engaged in a work that makes *everything of Christ!* He leads those whom the Father has given to the Son, to come to Him, and creates the desire in others to come also (John vi. 37). He is the power of all good here, and *is* here because Christ is absent from the earth at present. The Spirit never ministers in a way to attract to Himself. He speaks *of* Himself as we see in the Scriptures, but never *from* Himself, that is, as a witness independent of the Father and the Son, "Whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak, and He will show you things to come" (John xvi. 13).

One often hears devout souls praying for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and also for Him to come. But is this Scriptural? We read in the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles of the advent of the Holy Ghost consequent upon the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. And He has been here ever since, in the church as the house of God, and in every individual believer, so that we do not need to pray to Him or for Him to come. When He came the word of the Lord was fulfilled and the disciples were "endued with power from on high". In the language of another: It was that mighty wind from heaven which manifested itself to the disciples and came upon them . . . the Holy Ghost has been given, He has come down and all goodness and wisdom in exercise is from Him. He formed the body (the church) and He also makes us members of it . . . the giving of the Holy Ghost to the individual is the *unction* and the *sealing*, and He becomes the *earnest*. Being *filled with the Spirit* is when the Spirit, which is in me, so takes possession of all my

mind and faculties that nought else is there, the things He reveals now occupy the mind, and there is power from God in the soul as to them.

If we do anything contrary to the Word of God we get out of communion and *grieve* the Holy Ghost (Eph. iv. 30), and if we do not judge ourselves unsparingly we may indeed be led on by the flesh very far away from God.

The Holy Spirit of God, whereby we are *sealed* unto the day of redemption, dwells in us; we are not to *grieve* Him.

In the various exhortations to the young believers in Thessalonica, the Apostle tells them as to the public actings of the Spirit in their midst. They were not to hinder the action of the Spirit, this would be *quenching* the Spirit and despising prophesyings (1 Thess. v. 20, 21). The very simplest among them might have something edifying to give in ministry, and it should be received, but they were to *prove* what was said and *hold fast* the good.

With regard to the new birth previously referred to, it may be asked, What is the difference between being "born of God" and being "born of the Spirit"? It has been said that, when the *absolute sovereignty* of the operation in new birth is brought out, the soul is "born of the Spirit"; and when the *relationship* which results from birth is brought before us, *as well as the sovereignty*, it is "born of God" (John i. 13).

As the way of the wind is incomprehensible to us, so the way of the Spirit cannot be comprehended; but just as we often feel His power, and observe the effect of the same, so we little know how much the work of the Lord is due to the effective operation of the Spirit. When He begins a work of God, He carries it through.

He listens, He hears, He speaks, He leads, He disposes the heart to certain action in order to accomplish what is in His mind.

It is related of a certain minister—a Higher Critic—that one evening when deciding to spend a quiet evening in the warmth of his home, there came to his door a Lancashire girl with her shawl over her head and clogs on her feet, who said to him, “I want you to come to get my mother *in*”. Thinking the mother was out in some drunken brawl, he said, “You should get a policeman”. “Oh, no,” said the girl, “my mother is dying and I want you to get her *into salvation*.” Their home being about one mile and a half from his residence, he said, “Is there no minister nearer than I?” “Oh, yes, but I want *you*, and you have got to come.”

The minister hesitated for a considerable time, wondering what his people would think if they saw their pastor walking late at night with a girl with a shawl over her head. He did all he could to get out of it, but finally went. He found it was a very wicked place. In the lower rooms some were drinking and telling lewd stories, and upstairs he found the dying woman. He talked to her of the Lord as a wonderful example to follow and extolled Him as a leader and a teacher; she looked at him with eyes half closed in death, and said, “Mister, that’s no good for the likes of me, I am a poor lost sinner”. “There was I, with no gospel,” said the minister afterwards, “but I thought of what my mother taught me as a child, and told her of God’s love in Christ dying for sinful men, whether I believed it or not; and I got her in, and got in myself.”

Here is an incident clearly showing the Holy Spirit’s silent but mighty working, which lifts our hearts up in gratitude, worship and praise to the Giver of all good.

J. P. (Montreal).

## The Lord's Supper—2.

**A**S we have already seen, the night on which the Lord was betrayed is an occasion which speaks powerfully to our souls. Although at the Supper we commemorate His death, it reminds us also of our deliverance, in which God was glorified, and this is why it is a service of *thanksgiving*. So we read that the Lord Jesus took bread, and, "when He had given thanks, He brake it". He gave thanks, as we see it was His habit to do in other circumstances (Matt. xv. 36; John xi. 41).

Why did He give thanks here? He anticipated the moment when the work which He had come to accomplish would be finished—and it was a work the immense results of which for the glory of God and the blessing of His own, He alone could fully and adequately comprehend (John xvii.). What thanksgiving should spring up in our hearts as we remember Him and His love, as well as the love of the Father who gave His Son for us!

We have already remarked that the Lord blessed\* before the breaking of the bread and gave thanks before the cup. Nothing is prescribed for us as to the form we should follow at the Supper; even the words which Jesus pronounced then have not been preserved for us; but, as always, the Spirit would teach us by setting these things before us according to the thought of God, so that we might act, not after the dead letter, or a cold liturgy, but according to the living activity of the Spirit in us.

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\* 'Blessed' does not mean consecrated. It has the same sense as 'give thanks'. (Comp. 1 Cor. xi. 24; Matt. xxvi. 26, 27; Mark xiv. 22; Luke xxii. 19). It is to bless God, to give thanks to Him (Mark viii. 7).

(Continued on page 73.)



“He brake it” (the bread). The action of breaking the bread shows that it is a question of remembering a dead Christ. He brake the bread Himself. His death was necessary, and He delivered Himself up. As we have already seen, no one had power to touch His precious life. He laid it down of Himself, and on this account the Father loved Him (Gal. i. 4; John x. 18). We break the bread now to recall what has taken place; we can do so, for He has delivered Himself up first. Each one of us participates in it, because it is for each of us individually that Jesus gave Himself. In breaking the bread, and in taking a morsel and eating it, I recall that it is for *me* that the Son of God, having become a man, has suffered; and it is *me* whom He loved (Gal. ii. 20).

“This is My body”, said the Lord. We know that these words mean: this represents My body. *Now*, the Lord’s glorified body is in heaven (Luke xxiv. 51; Acts iii. 21; Heb. i. 3). But the bread set before our eyes is intended to recall to us *His body*, such as it was on earth, that body formed by God (Heb. x. 5), in which He glorified His Father as He passed through this world, by which He was in relation with us (1 John i. 1–3), in which He suffered hunger, thirst, weariness (Luke iv. 2; John iv. 6; xix. 28), in which He took our infirmities (Matt. viii. 17), in which He bore our sins on the cross, and which was put in the sepulchre.

And the Lord adds, “which is for you”. Yes, it is for *us*; so to speak, it belongs to us. What love on His part! What an appeal to our affections! This body, holy and pure, the temple of God on earth, was *for us*. All that He was in His life, in His sufferings and in His death—all is for *us*. He had become man, had taken a body, but it was for us, in order that He might be able

to give Himself for us, to suffer and die for us. What language this word “for you” ought to have for our hearts! It is the expression of the most tender love.

Truly, if it were not for this little word ‘you’, it would not have been necessary for Jesus to have come down from heaven, to have taken the body in which He suffered all the contradiction and hatred of men—this body in which He endured insults and mockery, the crown of thorns, which was torn by the scourge and nailed to the cross. But we needed salvation, and He came for us.

Yet there is another point of view in which His sacrifice may be seen. He made Himself of no reputation, taking a bondsman’s form, being obedient unto death, the death of the cross. By His death upon the cross He has glorified God, as He says, “Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in Him”, we must not forget this blessed truth; but here (1 Cor. xi. 24) Jesus presents rather what concerns *us*, in order to attach our hearts and affections to Himself. A. L.

### A Few Words on Philadelphia.

**I**N His address to the church in Philadelphia (Rev. iii. 7-13) the Lord Jesus presents Himself as the “*holy* and the *true* One”. Though He be the Judge amidst the churches, which are set as the responsible witnesses for Him here on the earth, He is seen less in His *judicial* attitude here than in most of the other addresses. It is rather *what He is in Himself*, a fact which makes the message to this church all the more precious to us.

In a day when ecclesiastical claims and pretensions

are out of place, and when the church cannot be relied on as the guardian of the truth, what an encouragement to turn to Him who never changes and never fails! *Holiness* marked Him, as the epistle to the Romans tells us, He was "the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness"; and, as the inspired writer to the Hebrews says, He was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separated from sinners". What a contrast to the unholiness seen in the world, and even in the professing church!

Then Christ is also the 'true' One. He could say, "I am . . . the truth", and He bore witness to the truth, which was manifested in all His ways. The world—even the religious world so-called—is distinguished by untruth. But here was One who passed through such a world, absolutely undefiled, untainted by its evil, and always witnessing to the truth.

Then the Lord would encourage this church, weak as they were, with the word, "Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it". It is all of *grace* from first to last, and the fruit of divine love. If *He* opens a door for service, testimony, etc., no one can shut it; and if *He* does not open, no one else can. Let us remember this.

How closely this church is identified with the Lord Himself here! Taking the humble and dependent place, He could say, "To Him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear His voice" (John x.). God, in His government and by His Spirit, ordered everything, so that in every detail, the way might be made plain for the true Servant, the good Shepherd, to do the Father's will and finish His work. At the close of Israel's history of apostasy from the truth, when they were just about to crucify their own Messiah, Jesus found His perfect

resource in doing the Father's will and taking everything from the Father's hand.

Remark how the Lord delights to own all He can that is good in His church, "Thou hast kept My word, and hast not denied My name", He says. Was it not just what He had done Himself? He kept the Father's word, of which He says, "Thy word is truth"—kept it, learned from it as the One whose ear was opened, morning by morning, to hear as the learner. And He bore witness to the Father's name against all who would bring dishonour upon Him. With what burning zeal He witnessed, as it is written, "Make not My Father's house an house of merchandise. . . . The zeal of Thine house hath eaten Me up"!

Let us look a little, *practically*, at the address to this church, and ask ourselves the question, Can it be said of *me*—can it be said of *us*—"Thou has kept My word, and hast not denied My name"? We are responsible to do so, however weak or failing we may be.

But to pass on—"Because thou hast kept the word of My patience, I also will keep thee out of the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole habitable world, to try them that dwell upon the earth". [New trans.] "My patience"—what does this mean? This present time, the time of "the things which are", the period of the church's history, is the time of the "patience of Jesus Christ". He is patiently waiting, waiting till the moment arrives when it is the Father's will that He should rise from the Father's throne on which He sits, and come for His saints. And it is as much as to say, "I want you to be waiting in patience just as I am". He gives them credit for keeping the word of *His* patience, and He adds, "I am going to keep you out of the coming hour of trial".

This, no doubt, is not exactly “ the great tribulation ” of which the Lord spoke, and which is more restricted to the land of Judea, but that hour of trial which shall come upon the whole habitable world, to try those whose interests and hopes are rooted in this world. Do we not see the foreshadowings of it even now ?

Let us here remark that He does not say He will keep them *through* that hour, but *out of it*. And how ? By taking them to Himself before the ‘ hour ’ comes. Come it will, and that at a moment when men are saying peace and safety, but it will fall with terrible reality upon Christendom, which professed to have the light, but deliberately turned away from Him who was the beloved of the Father, the centre and substance of all that was good, holy and true. And as surely as His saints are “ not of the world ”, though *in* it ; so surely will they be caught up to meet the Lord in the air *before* the dark cloud of tribulation settles down upon a guilty Christendom.

To this church also the Lord addresses the word, “ I come quickly ”. It is one of the four places in the book of Revelation where He says this (see chap. xxii. 7, 12, 20). It may seem to us a long time, but to Him to whom a thousand years is as one day, and one day as a thousand years, it is not long. And who is the One who is coming ? It is Himself, Jesus, the One who had just said to this church, “ I have loved thee ”. In connection with this hope of His coming the Lord presses upon them their responsibility, “ Hold fast that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown ”.

This is just what puts us to the test—not the accomplishing of great exploits, not making a fair show in the world, but holding fast what, in grace, the Lord has made ours. This can only be done in the way He

Himself has marked out, in humble dependence on God, obedience to His word, and in the power of the Holy Spirit ungrieved. In a day when the church is slipping more and more into the world, and when the tendency is to let slip the truth, how necessary the exhortation to 'hold fast' !

It is also remarkable that, in the case of Philadelphia as in that of Smyrna, the Lord refers to " the synagogue of Satan ". It is that Judaising spirit which the Apostle Paul contended against in the epistle to the Galatians and elsewhere, and which was such a pest in the early church. And it was just at the time when the Spirit of God was reviving long-lost truths concerning the person and glory of the Lord Jesus and our place in Him, that Satan was ready with a counter-move, in the Ritualistic movement, early in the last century. It is always the tendency, in a day of decline of spiritual power, to fall back on what gives a place to man ; to turn to forms, rituals, ceremonies, etc., to anything, in fact, which is not Christ. It is, indeed, a danger from which no assembly is safe unless kept going on in communion with God.

Even in the promise to the overcomer here the Lord still identifies Himself with His church. He speaks of " the temple of *My* God ", " the name of *My* God ", the city of *My* God "—it is what God, what *His* name, was to Christ Himself. The overcomer is the one who stands for God and who witnesses for Him in the particular circumstances of the moment, and who is not carried away in the prevailing stream of decline or corruption around. And in that coming day the One who judges of all according to truth and who knows the secrets of the heart, will give the reward, in perfect suitability, according to *His* estimate of our service and testimony here.

May we seriously consider these truths and ask ourselves how far we can honestly say, "To me to live is Christ", "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord". Thus only can we enter practically into the true spirit of Philadelphia.

F. G. B.

## The Camp.

JESUS suffered without the gate. This fact is the basis on which the Apostle grounds his exhortation to the Hebrew believers to go forth without the camp. The cross of Christ closed his connection with the camp of Judaism; and all who desire to follow Him must go outside to where He is. The final breach with Israel is presented *morally*, in the death of Christ; *doctrinally*, in the epistle to the Hebrews; *historically*, in the destruction of Jerusalem. In the judgment of faith, Jerusalem was as thoroughly rejected when the Messiah was nailed to the cross, as when the army of Titus left it a smouldering ruin. Faith, and the teachings of Scripture, forestall the facts of history.

## Resting Short of Christ.

IN a professing day like the present, it behoves all to be most earnest with themselves, not to rest in nominal Christianity, which is not life, but at the best only a name to live. Satisfaction ensuing from acquaintance with religious doctrines, with creeds, with the letter of the Scriptures, *is resting short of Christ*.

Many thronged Jesus on that day, when but one in faith touched His clothes. Need of Him drew that poor

sufferer to the Saviour, and so it is also in our times; need draws us to Jesus. Thousands are evangelical; alas! few believe the gospel: tens of thousands are nominally Christians, but small is the number of those who have been to Christ for themselves! May God give each reader to come to His Son for life, for the Lord has said, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out"; and more, "This is the will of Him that sent Me, that every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life" (John vi. 37-40).

H. F. W.

### Scripture Notes and Gleanings.

**S**ELF.—It is a much harder thing to forget self than even to have evil thoughts about self. If we are not humble, we must be humbled.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Lord is now, in various ways, weaning our hearts from everything around us, in order that we may find, in the testimony of His personal love to us, that which strengthens our faith, settles the conscience, and guides the heart.

\* \* \* \* \*

I have always remarked of infidels, or infidel writers, that they can make you doubt of many things, but they can give you nothing. They never give you one certain truth. The Word of God gives you many certain truths. It makes you doubt of nothing. It has no need; for it possesses the truth, and gives what is positive. This is an immense difference: it stamps both morally.

J. N. D.



## “God is Love.”

**W**HEN the summer sun shines upon our fields it warms the earth, causes the crops to grow, and prepares the way for the harvest. This is just what the love of God does for the soul. When it shines into the heart its beams produce warmth, freshness and vitality.

One of the special blessings which the presence and indwelling of the Spirit of God brings is that, “the love of God is poured out into our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us” (Rom. v. 5). God, who is Himself the source of every good and every blessing, has given us His Spirit that we might know and enjoy His love.

What is the effect of the conscious enjoyment of this love of God to us? It would lead to love in our hearts to God and to *all* who belong to Him—a love which is not blind to their faults, but which loves them in spite of their faults. He that loves God must love his brother also, and everyone who is born of God is my brother (1 John v. 1). Thus we should be delivered from narrowness, from self-occupation, from that pride of heart which makes us think we are better than others.

It would lead us out, too, in earnest prayer for poor unsaved sinners around us, desiring that they also might taste and know that love which has reached and saved us. And further, if the sense of that love burned brightly in our hearts, it would have a wonderful effect in the assemblies of God’s people. It would take us out of formality, coldness, an atmosphere of ecclesiastical severity, and many other evils of which

we are often conscious, as existing in our midst and casting their chilling influence over our meetings. What a spirit of worship it would awaken, as we think of the greatness and freeness of that love of God which was set upon us without any motive in us, but just out of His own heart of love !

What overflowing gratitude should be ours to the God of all grace, who spared not His beloved Son but delivered Him up for us all. Can we surround the table of the Lord, to remember the Saviour's dying love, to celebrate His name and sing His praises, without giving thanks, too, for *the love which gave Him* ? We cannot rightly do so.

Let us then hold fast all the truth of God as tenaciously as we can, and walk in it ; but let it be done in a spirit of grace and love—love to God first, and love to our brethren also.

F. G. B.

## “The Fountain of Living Waters.”

(Jeremiah ii. 13 ; xvii. 8.)

WE are distinctly told that, “Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning” (Rom. xv. 4), and that “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” (Matt. iv. 4). It will therefore be readily admitted that all decline in the soul of the believer is due to his having turned away in heart from God and from His word, and being occupied with some other object or objects.

The nation of Israel, we are told in the first Scripture quoted above from Jeremiah, had committed two evils. They had forsaken the Lord, “*The fountain of living waters*, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns,

that can hold no water". In the New Testament we read that our blessed Lord refused to sanction by His presence the Feast of Tabernacles, because He felt the nation had no right to the rest and gladness which were the special features of this feast (John vii. 8). So He would not go up to Jerusalem when His brethren did, but went afterwards secretly. The nation had forsaken the fountain of living waters, and all their own cisterns were broken ones. Leaky vessels can hold no water.

How impressive must have been the words of the Lord on the last 'great day' of the feast, when He stood and cried, saying, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water" (verses 37, 38).

The river of God (Psalm lxxv. 9) is typified by the river in Eden, by the waters from the smitten rock in the wilderness, and, in Canaan afterwards, by the waters of Shiloah that flowed softly. Jehovah watered the land from His own buckets, and made it to drink of the rain of heaven. The river of God now takes its rise in the glorified Son of man in heaven; and the channels through which it is to flow are the inward parts or affections of the members of His body on earth.

Yes, the flowing of these living waters is through the ministry of the Word in the power of the Holy Ghost.

If our souls thirst, the Lord Himself tells us we have only to go to Him for the living water. He has abundance to give. Then, having gone in to Him and received it, we come out with this water of life, the flowing of the Spirit: being refreshed ourselves, we minister the same to any and every weary one who comes across our path.

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It is very important to remember that we must 'drink in' before we can 'give out'. And what is the cause of the declension of soul in many a child of God? Is it not neglect of prayerful study of the Scriptures? When this decline occurs in those who minister the word, believers are in consequence robbed of what the Lord has provided for them, and the doctrine of the gospel, as another has said, is a lost thing because it is then presented alone on the side that meets man, and not from God's side. Thus the eye gets off the Lord, the fountain of living waters, as an *Object*, and the heart easily takes in the first thing the enemy presents to it.

Oh that we panted more after the blessed Lord as the hart pants after the water brooks, and our soul thirsted more for God, for the living God (Psalm xlii)! We should always remember that Christianity is most *objective*, as the Apostle Paul found it. He says, "At mid-day, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me. . . . I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? . . . And I said, Who art Thou, Lord? And He said, I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest" (Acts xxvi. 13-15). It is, no doubt, to this same time that Paul refers in Galatians i. 15, 16, "When it pleased God . . . to reveal His Son in me".

There is another truth very precious to dwell upon, namely, that believers are the objects of the Lord's love; and, as He looks down upon them, the language of His heart is, what it has ever been: "Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold thou art fair, thou hast doves' eyes" (Song of Solomon i. 15). "Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto

the end " (John xiii. 1). How His loving heart yearns, too, over those that are out of the way, as it ever did when He was down here, so that He could, and did, ask a poor degraded sinner for a draught of water (John iv. 7).

Here was *the fountain of living waters* waiting for the soul of this poor Samaritan, asking for a favour at her hand that she might take a favour from Him. This exalted One allows the poor woman to find Him, like any ordinary son of man, sitting wearied on the well; and, in order to put her at her ease, He first asks for a drink, then appeals to her heart and deals with her conscience. Her need is met, and, becoming at once a carrier of good news, she brings others to Him. Thus He freely gives of the water of life, and His blessed words are, "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 *fountain* (new trans.) of water springing up into everlasting life" (verse 14).

It is, no doubt, known to the reader that the Samaritans were outside the circle of the promises; these belonged to the Jews only. In this portion of the Word, as another has said, we find the Lord had left Judea, as the Jews did not receive Him, and He shows Himself to be the Saviour of *the world*. He is here acknowledged as such by these believing Samaritans: "This is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world" (verse 42). This glorious Name recalls to us how one of the beautiful types of the Lord in the Old Testament, Joseph, received from Pharaoh the name of Zaphnath-Paaneah, which has the double meaning of *Revealer of secrets* and *Saviour of the world* (Gen. xli. 45).

How wisely and kindly the blessed Lord revealed to this Samaritan woman the secrets of her heart, and

what a tender Saviour He showed Himself to be then, and He is still the same. The writer remembers particularly how a very near relative of his, who was near to departing to be with Christ, gave a very clear and beautiful testimony when asked of the hope that was in him. He replied, referring to the blessed Lord: "A perfect Saviour, a perfect Sacrifice, and God perfectly glorified". Well, dear reader, "The night is far spent and the day is at hand". Very soon we shall hear the assembling 'shout' calling us away to be for ever with the Lord, and then we shall be like Him actually, as we ought to be morally even now while here. The following verse of Mary Bowley's hymn may well find a response in each of our hearts:

"Whom have we Lord, but Thee,  
Soul thirst to satisfy?  
Exhaustless spring! the waters free!  
All other streams are dry."

J. P. (Montreal).

### The Lord's Supper—3.

"THIS do in remembrance of Me", said our adorable Lord Jesus, in breaking the bread, the same night in which He was betrayed. "This do"—not if you so wish, or to satisfy your conscience, but "in remembrance of Me". He is Himself the Divine object presented to our souls. This closes the door to every other thought, that we might enjoy Him only. Does not this exclude thoughts of self, or those wandering thoughts of which we have so often to complain, or thoughts connected with persons who surround us? It is Jesus Himself whom we remember.

Does not such an object, one so worthy of our affections, eclipse everything else? Everything appears

trivial and poor compared with the great love with which He has loved us. Let us then be occupied with Him, let us fix the eyes of our soul upon Him, then everything else will disappear as darkness before the light of the rising sun. It is what He has been, what He has done for us here below in His tender compassion—*this* it is which He desires we should keep in remembrance. We recall Him in the Supper, and we are made capable of doing so and of enjoying it, because we are united to Him where He now is ; we have received the Holy Spirit, and we participate in His life.

Such is the first part of this service of thanksgiving—the breaking of bread.

The second part relates to the *cup*. He said, “ This cup is the new covenant in My blood ”. It is, it represents, what the new covenant is. As we have seen, the old covenant (Exod. xxiv. 8) was established on the principle of obedience, with death as the penalty for those who transgressed it. The new covenant, founded on the blood of Christ has, as its basis, the remission of sins. Israel, with whom it will be established, is not therefore excluded from the benefit of the death of Christ. The day will come when they will look on Him whom they have pierced.

But here (1 Cor. xi.) it is *we* who enjoy the privilege which the new covenant brings ; although we have much more, even blessings infinitely superior to those of Israel (Eph. i. 3–7). We have redemption by His blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of God’s grace. Thus God never remembers our sins and iniquities any more, and this grace will belong also to the Jewish nation under the new covenant. Set apart by the Holy Spirit, we have part in the sprinkling of this precious blood of Christ, the Lamb without blemish

and without spot (1 Peter i. 2, 19). Our blessings are all founded on this blood, which has made propitiation : the cup recalls this to us.

We have, then, here again the *memorial* of the death of Christ. The cup (as well as the broken bread) recalls Jesus to us in His death, for the blood is *shed*, the body is apart from the blood, and both are thus a symbol of death. It is, then, Jesus in His death which is recalled to us 'as often as' we drink the cup. It is Himself, the One who loves us with a love stronger than death, and who went down into death for us. 'As often as'—let us, therefore, never partake of this cup with a wandering mind, or one occupied with something else ; but let it be always "*in remembrance of Me*" : this is what Jesus says to us. The remembrance of Him, in His death, is bound up with the breaking of the bread, also with the cup each time we put it to our lips.

But it is not only the past which is before us in the Supper. We celebrate it even now in the midst of "this present evil world". And it is there that by the Supper, we announce the *Lord's death*. Each time we eat the bread and drink the cup, we proclaim in the world this fact—a fact unrecognized by it—*the Lord's death*. What an association of words—the *Lord*, and *death* !

We may well remember this with adoration, with thanksgiving and praise, with a heart bowed in presence of such great love ; for we know that He has died for us. And we know also the grace which He has acquired for us, and the place which His death has given us. But we *announce* this death of the Lord. Where and to whom ? In this very world which has hated, rejected and crucified Christ, the Lord. If His death tells us of His love and speaks peace to us, it is—for the world—

(Continued on page 89.)



judgment and condemnation (John xii. 31; xv. 18; xvi. 8). And what is the effect, for us, of His death, as regards the world? It separates us from it, it has made a total breach between us and it. Has not Jesus given Himself for us, to deliver us from this present evil world (Gal. i. 4)?

We are not of the world as He was not of it: we are of God and the whole world lies in the wicked one (John xvii. 14-16; 1 John v. 19). The table spread proclaims, right across the ages, that the Lord, who came into this world, has been put to death in it. What fellowship; what common views, purposes or interests could we have with such a world? Yet it is true that, in this very world, we announce to sinners that it is by the Lord's death that they can be reconciled to God, and thus escape the judgment which is about to overtake the world. What a blessed fact, what a precious work, what a message of love!

A. L.

### Jude's Warnings.

"Woe unto them for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core" (Jude 11).

WE have only to look round us in the world, as it is, in order to see how truly the three things mentioned above express its present condition. They are three heads of evil, under which we may classify nearly all that is seen in Christendom to-day.

What is the 'way of Cain'? Cain's was what we might call *natural religion*—man approaching God without any real acknowledgment of His own sins, and the necessity for blood-shedding to make atonement for them. Cain came with the fruit of the ground which God had cursed; Abel came with the firstlings of the

flock and of the fat thereof. Abel believed in atonement on the ground of sacrifice and the death of a victim.

Now these two represent two schools of thought which have continued all along the line—the Ritualistic school, which teaches approach to God on the ground of sacraments, ordinances, rituals, etc., on the one hand; and those who own the utterly lost condition of the sinner and the absolute need of new birth and atonement by blood, on the other. Cain was the first Ritualist, and many thousands have followed in the same 'way'.

But God has set up a plain finger-post in such chapters as Hebrews ix. and x., which show that without shedding of blood is no remission of sins, and that a full, complete and eternal salvation is the possession of the believer in virtue of the one sacrifice offered up once for all at Calvary, and never to be repeated.

Cain-worship is attractive to many minds. Men do not like to own their true state before God as utterly lost and guilty, as Romans iii. describes them. Then again, fine buildings, a gorgeous ritual, a religion which prides itself on its antiquity, a pompous ceremonial—all these things give a place to man, who likes to feel that he is *doing* something. Like the elder brother in the parable (Luke xv.), if he cannot accredit *himself* with something, he will find fault with God acting in *grace*, and will not have *God's* righteousness at any cost. Hence the 'way of Cain' is very popular to-day.

Next we have the '*error of Balaam*'. Balak, the king of Moab, wanted to prevent Israel from entering into the possession which God had promised them. In order to accomplish this he hired the false prophet

Balaam to curse them, and offered him a large reward for his services. But Balaam had a solemn warning from God, which is strikingly put in the epistle of Peter, who says that he “loved the reward of unrighteousness; but had the reproof of his own wickedness—the dumb ass speaking with man’s voice forbid the folly of the prophet” (new trans.).

Balaam’s case was a solemn one. He was determined to carry out his project if he could, but “God turned the curse into a blessing” (Deut. xxiii. 5), or as we read in Joshua xxiv., God says, “I would not hear him”.

Can anyone doubt that Balaam has many followers in our day? Are there not many who profess to carry on the work of God and are paid for it, but who are only professors of religion, deriving a profit from their work? They teach and preach *religion*, not Christ and Him crucified.

Not that receiving temporal help for the work of God is wrong in itself, for Scripture says, “They which preach the gospel should live of the gospel”; but Paul, who wrote this, could also take the still higher ground and say, “But I have used none of these things”. For the most part he earned his living, as well as carrying on the work of God.

It will always be found that no one is more jealous of his position than the man who teaches error for reward. He wants to get the ear of the people, and he wants to retain it when he has it so that his position may not be weakened. If he can, he will shut out the Bible from the people, or pervert its meaning to suit his own purposes. But Scripture pronounces the solemn words upon such, “Woe unto them!”

Lastly, we have “*the gainsaying of Core*”. Korah was of the priestly tribe of Levi, and he and his company

gathered themselves against Moses and against Aaron, saying, "Ye take too much upon you, seeing that all the congregation are holy", etc. They *spake against* Moses and Aaron (this is the meaning of the word 'gainsaying'), or, as Psalm cvi. puts it, "They envied Moses also in the camp, and Aaron the saint of the Lord". And the result of it was that, "The earth opened and swallowed up Dathan, and covered the company of Abiram". Thus God's judgment on this act of open rebellion was swift and complete.

Now Moses and Aaron, taken together, typified Christ both as King and Priest. It is important, too, that we should notice that this open revolt comes in, in Jude, *after* the two other forms of evil just mentioned. We have first *natural evil* (Cain), then *ecclesiastical evil* (Balaam), then open apostasy (Core). And Scripture, taken generally, shows this same order. The evil arose first within the bosom of the professing church, and it went on increasing until it grew to a great ecclesiastical system in the Middle Ages, from which vast revenues were derived.

At the Reformation, however, natural conscience asserted itself to some degree, under the enlightening power of the Scriptures. But the evil will go on, as Jude tells us, until the Lord comes with ten thousand of His saints to execute judgment.

To-day we see the mind of man active and speculative about all kinds of questions. The ecclesiastical authorities, in order to accommodate themselves to the spirit of the times, either try to keep the masses in ignorance—as in Romanism, or preach semi-infidelity from the pulpit in the form of Higher Criticism, etc. The time has not yet come for the secular power to unmask and cast off the whole of this empty pretension, nor will it

come so long as the true church is here. When it does come, the infidel powers will "hate the harlot, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and shall burn her utterly with fire", etc. (Rev. xvii. 16). Everything is preparing for this complete abandonment of even professing Christianity to-day: it will end in open apostasy under the Antichrist.

Meantime our place is to walk in separation from the world, in humility and dependence, following in the footsteps of the lowly One, who lived by every word that proceeded out of the mouth of God. F. G. B.

## The Continual Burnt Offering—1.

*(Worship and Prayer.)*

AT the close of Exodus xxix., after the consecration of the priests, we have the continual burnt-offering commanded. The priesthood suggests to us that God would have to do with the people, and the people have to do with God, through them. Both these desirable things could only be on the ground of that offering which typified Him who pleased God in His life, and glorified Him in His death.

There were three parts to this particular ordinance, first the lamb, then the flour mingled with oil, then the wine for a drink-offering. The lamb sacrificed sets forth the Lord Jesus in death, obedient thereto; there voluntarily and because of His having received a commandment to lay down His life (John x. 18). The flour mingled with oil tells also of Him who was truly man, yet Son of God (Lev. ii.; Luke i. 35). Wine, as a symbol of joy, would perhaps tell of God's joy in such a Person, such a Man, such an Offering. All together constituted the burnt-offering (verse 42), all being burnt

on the altar and arising to God as a sweet savour, i.e., giving Him pleasure.

Remembering that this offering typified the Lord Jesus, how sweet to see that now God meets with His people, dwells among them, and makes them to know that He is the Lord their God.

If other offerings were occasional, this was to be continual, morning and evening, suggesting that God never loses sight of how He has been glorified in the death of His Son ; and that we who are accepted in the Beloved are precious in His sight, and that continually.

There are four things to be noted in connection with this offering, bearing on worship and prayer. They also teach us something about four men of God.

First, as to worship. In 2 Chron. xxix. we read of Hezekiah coming to the throne of Judah, succeeding his father Ahaz. The latter king had done wickedly, as we see in the chapter previous, profaning the house of God. But Hezekiah does right in the sight of the Lord (verse 2), and begins to put God's house in order, sanctifying the priests and Levites. He judges the evil, and justifies God in judging the people and delivering them over to trouble. In verse 27 he commands burnt-offerings to be offered on the altar. And now notice that, "When the burnt-offering began, the song of the Lord began also, . . . and all this continued until the burnt-offering was finished".

May we not learn a lesson from these significant words ? The New Testament instructs Christians to come together on the first day of the week to think upon their Lord and Saviour, to dwell upon His great love in dying for them. He Himself has appointed this simple memorial feast, wherein they should remember Him in His death. When thus thinking of Him, the "Song

of the Lord " must, of necessity, be the outcome. We think of Him, of His Person, His work and His ways ; of how He always did His Father's will and, even in dying for us, gave Himself an " offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour " (Eph. v. 2). No note of praise ever reached the ears of our God from us before we knew the Saviour, but, knowing Him now, how can we but praise ? And when will our songs cease ? If ever it could be that God would cease to value His Beloved Son and what He did on the cross, then might our song come to an end. But no !—that sacrifice will never lose its sweet savour to Him, and never will our songs cease to delight His ear. Sung as they are in connection with that sacrifice, yea, constrained by it and by the love of Him who, in love to us, thus gave Himself, we can well say, " Sing we *everlasting* glory, be to God and to the Lamb ".

Besides this lesson on worship, we have, in connection with the burnt-offering, lessons on prayer. The seventh king of Israel after the division was Ahab. He did evil in the sight of the Lord and worshipped Baal. In 1 Kings xviii. we have the record of how Elijah vindicated his God before the eyes of both king and people. After the discomfiture of the prophets of Baal in their inability to get an answer from their idol, meriting his cutting rebuke in verse 27, Elijah begins to demonstrate that faith in the God of Israel was not misplaced. He repairs the altar of the Lord, judging Israel's sin in his action of taking 12 stones, according to the number of the sons of Jacob. Idolatry had led to the division, his action tells of one Lord, one altar, and one people. Hezekiah also acted similarly in 2 Chron. xxx. in sending out invitations to *all* the people to keep the Passover, and though his action was

treated with contempt, it shows that he was of the same mind and valued the same truth as Elijah.

Now, having put everything in order, this man of God, Elijah, draws near to the God he loved and knew, "at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice". This suggests that his prayers ascended in connection with the burnt-offering, and, remembering what it typified and what God foresaw in it, can we wonder that he was vouchsafed a glorious answer? No: the Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel showed Himself God in that way which was peculiar to Himself, by consuming the burnt sacrifice, as it is said, "The fire of the Lord fell". The people here, as at the end of Lev. ix. fall on their faces and acknowledge the Lord as God.

P. W.

### "Take ye away the Stone."

**J**ESUS therefore again groaning in Himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it. Jesus said, Take ye away the stone" (John xi. 38). When Jesus Himself rose from the dead there was no need to take away the stone. No stone could hinder His risen body from going forth from the tomb. The stone was rolled away by the angel *after* Jesus had left the sepulchre, in order to allow the women and the disciples to enter in and to establish undeniably the fact that the stronghold of Satan—the grave—had been overcome by a victory which had rendered powerless him who had the power of death. In the case of Lazarus, it was a question of taking away the stone, in order that the dead, raised again to life on earth, in a corruptible body and not a spiritual or glorified one, might leave the tomb.



## “The Work of the Lord.”

THE need of spiritual power and blessing must be felt by every one who has the interests of Christ at heart. Let us, then, not be satisfied with merely knowing this and theorizing about it, but let us get into the presence of God as Ezra, Nehemiah and Daniel of old did, in prayer and humiliation. There is surely a call for this to-day.

“Thou hast left they first love” said the Lord to the church at Ephesus; “Thou art neither cold nor hot . . . thou art lukewarm,” was what He had to say to Laodicea. Lack of earnest devotedness to Christ produces lack of those “first works” which can only be done in the energy of “first love.” Lack of *heart* is what marks Laodicea, and this is the worst of all evils.

The Christian who has really a heart for Christ will find time for prayer, and in God’s presence he will find out what service He has for him to do. It may be quite an humble and unostentatious work known only to the One who takes notice of every little act done for His glory, but there is *something* for every one of us to do.

The last phase of the church’s history, that of Laodicea, is round and about us on every hand—boastfulness, pride, apathy, lack of heart—may we beware of it! If Christ has loved us and given Himself for us, surely we should lay ourselves out to “return His love again.” Soon our opportunities for service, in a world which has rejected Him, will be over for ever, either by our departing to be with Him or by His coming for us.

We quite believe that a genuine revival in the work

of God must be by the Holy Spirit, who works sovereignly as He wills, but God uses His servants, and gives, even to the youngest, the blessed privilege of being His messenger or workman in some way.

And here we may recall to the reader's attention a prayer which was circulated some time ago: "O Lord, send a revival and begin with me." This is most important to begin with, but surely we may also add, "Lord, do not let it stop there, but, by the mighty power of the Holy Spirit, may that revival embrace Thy people everywhere and overflow in blessing to the salvation of a multitude of souls."

F. G. B.

### The Lord's Supper—4.

**B**UT, to the thought of the past and the present in connection with the love of Christ and His sacrifice, the Apostle joins that of the future. He says "For as often as . . . ye announce the Lord's death *till He come*." It is, then, a permanent institution. It remains as long as the church is on earth. But the church is waiting; she has a hope; she knows that Christ who has loved her and given Himself for her: who sanctifies her, purifying by the washing of water by the word, also nourishes and cherishes her, with a view to presenting her to Himself without spot or wrinkle or any such thing (Eph. v. 25-29).

She knows also that the marriage of the Lamb will one day be celebrated in heaven, and she awaits the moment when He will come. She knows that this moment is near, for He has said, "I come quickly"; and "till He come," with upward gaze, she remembers Him whom the world has rejected; and she takes, in the world, the place her Lord had—that of rejection

and reproach. What part can the bride have with the world which has crucified Christ? In separation from it all, she awaits the moment when she shall see Him, in thus recalling His love in the Supper.

Is it thus, dear friends, that we break the bread and drink the cup? Are these holy realities present to our hearts? Have we truly understood how precious it is to the heart of Jesus that we should remember Him? How do we come to the Lord's table? Is it in real separation from the world? Do we come there on the first day of the week with our cares, our pre-occupations, our shallow thoughts; or with a heart truly filled with Him who is in our midst and who is recalled to our affections as we sit around His table?

Do we come in order to receive a blessing, or is it with our souls overflowing with thanksgiving? Ah! we cannot truly think of Jesus, as we remember Him, without our hearts burning within us, and thus we receive from Him—for His overflowing heart is given to us. But it is ours also to overflow in praises, and thus there is a holy reciprocation, and Jesus desires this overflow from our souls:

“We praise, we worship, we adore,  
As round Thyself we meet;  
Thy beauty, Lord, our souls transports,  
While bowing at Thy feet.”

May we thus, when we come together each first day of the week to break bread, taste in all its depth and reality what His love has provided for us, as we wait “till He come”! *Then*, around the slain Lamb, we will say, “Thou art worthy,” and, “To Him that loves us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood . . . be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”

A. L.

\*

## Christian Science.

A "Latter-Day" Delusion to entrap the cultured and restless souls seeking something new.

THIS cult was founded in 1866 by "Mother" Eddy, an ex-spiritualistic medium. Its teachings are officially set forth in an abstruse and disconnected work called "Science and Health," which is read at its public services. In this blasphemous work *Christian Science denies that man is fallen, it denies the judgment, it denies the existence of the Holy Spirit, it denies the atonement, it denies that Jesus was the Christ.*

Christian Science is virtually the Gnostic heresy of the first century and *challenges in toto the very Person of God.* "God is Principle, Spirit, Mind." God is "Infinite Good"—nothing less, NOTHING MORE. The work of *Christ as Saviour has no place*, but Jesus is held forth as *an example of the "perfect mind."*

As there is *no personal God*, so there is (according to this Science) *no personal devil.* "*Sin, disease and death are the result of man's self-imposed wrong thinking.*" Men will through the supremacy of mind over matter reach perfection when sin, disease and death will be no more. Thus—miserable travesty of salvation!—"the Christian Scientist is *ever trying to cast out of himself sin of every kind.*" *Prayer, as revealed in God's Word, is utterly taken away.*

To come boldly to a throne of grace is unknown. "*Prayer,*" says Mrs. Eddy, "*to a personal God is a hindrance.*"

The progress of this delusion is truly remarkable. It has a gorgeous temple in Boston, U.S.A., which vies in size and magnificence with St. Paul's Cathedral. During the past ten years its growth has been so rapid

that it is computed there will, in a few years, be *three millions in England who will have accepted its blasphemies.*

The attraction of this anti-Christian "Science" (?) is the mind cures it is said to have wrought. It has been embraced as a healing Science by many restless souls who have never been brought to realise fully that *Christ is the Satisfier as well as Saviour of His believing people.*

The crowning blasphemy is the claim that Christian Science is the promised Holy Spirit. A leading lecturer of the cult stated in London on July 10, 1916 :—"It is evident from many of Jesus' sayings that He knew that the truth which He taught about God would be hidden from the world for a time, but would again appear as 'the Spirit of Truth' guiding men into all righteousness. This 'Spirit of Truth' *was discovered by Mrs. Eddy in the year 1866.*"

*There can be no doubt that "Christian Science" is one of the great phases of the apostasy, which the Holy Spirit has forewarned us will overspread Christendom, as the end draws nigh (1 Tim. iv. 1-2).* [SELECTED.]

## "Start Right."

**I**N the days of the old Union Station at St. Louis, Missouri, United States of America, there could be seen a very large board stretching from one side of the big station to the other, with nothing on but the two words at the head of this paper in conspicuously large letters. If a traveller intending to entrain for Chicago should inadvertently enter a coach going to New Orleans, or vice versa, it would entail a great deal of trouble, should he become aware of his mistake even when the train was only beginning to move off.

How far more important, then, it is, in the things of God, that the one who is anxious about eternal realities should not make a false start. Separated from God by his sins, man needs to be brought to Him. This immeasurable distance has been bridged by the Lord Jesus Christ, by a work of such incalculable value that God, who is "of purer eyes than to behold evil and cannot look upon iniquity" (Hab. i. 13), is so perfectly satisfied that He can *righteously* forgive the believing sinner, and give him a standing in Divine favour, and put joy into his heart, in hope of the glory of God. And further, in virtue of faith in what God has done in raising the blessed Lord from the dead, the believer can not only know he is forgiven, but that he is eternally justified from all things.

It is thus we are *brought to God*, as we read in 1 Peter iii. 18, "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might *bring us to God*." How blessedly simple are the Scriptures. The sinner has only to take his true place before God as not only guilty but lost, like the prodigal of old, who through the goodness of God was led to repentance and owned his wretched condition. It was not long then before he was received and happy in the home of his father (Luke xv.).

Now this brings to the mind of the writer a story which, though not new, illustrates what has just been stated :

A wealthy Christian called upon a celebrated artist and asked him to paint a picture of the Prodigal Son. The terms having been arranged, the artist busied himself to find models for the picture. He was not long in finding such, with the exception of a suitable subject to represent the Prodigal. This was not an easy

matter, for he many times wandered about in vain through street after street of his city and was about to give up, when he met one of the most wretched-looking individuals he had ever seen. Here, he thought, is just the model I need. He accosted the poor young man and asked him if he would like to earn some money with but little trouble. "Yes, indeed, for I am starving, and do not know where to look for the price of a meal." The artist gave him money to procure food, gave him his address, and told him to call upon him the next day. "Come to my studio, *just as you are*, and I will tell you what I want you for," said the artist.

On the morrow, having some change left after paying for food and lodging, the young man thought he would get a shave and tidy himself up a bit, for he was ashamed to go to such a genteel residence looking so shabby and dirty. True to his promise, and punctual to the minute, he rang the bell at the artist's studio and was admitted. "What do you want?" said the artist. "You told me to come to-day," said the young man. "Yes, but I told you to come *just as you were* when I met you yesterday, but as you are now, you are of no use for my purpose."

Some people think they can win their way to God by law-keeping; others by good works, fasting and prayer. The law may, by grace, reach the conscience and make men feel their guilt, but it does not reveal God in love. Then again, as to good works, Scripture says, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done but according to His mercy He saved us" (Titus iii. 5); and again, "Not of works lest any man should boast" (Eph. ii. 9). So we see from Scripture that all is perfectly settled for man to approach God, and through the work of our Lord Jesus Christ on

Calvary's cross God has revealed Himself in His nature *as love*. That love draws out our heart's affections and produces confidence. But God is light as well as love, and the light shows up what we are by nature, unfit for the presence of God without atonement.

Let us now say a word as to this wonderful work of atonement. It may not be generally understood that it was in those three awful hours, from the sixth to the ninth hour, that He, our blessed Lord, was "made sin for us" (2 Cor. v. 21)—the One "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body *on the tree*" (1 Pet. ii. 24). Then it was that God entered into the question of *sin* and the *sins* of all who believe, and in consequence, turned away His face from His well-beloved Son, for He could not look upon sin even when this blessed One was being made sin. This it was which drew forth that terrible agonizing cry to God from the forsaken One, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" One answer to it was, the rocks were rent, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, the graves were opened; and God so ordered it that the first testimony after the Cross as to the Deity of His Son should come from *Gentiles*, for the centurion and those that were with Him said, "Truly this was the Son of God."

The writer would emphasize the fact—not generally understood—that atonement was made *on the Cross* during the three hours of darkness when the Lord Jesus drank that bitter cup and was made a curse for us. The more we see, as another has said, that atonement was made by His drinking the cup of wrath, the better we shall comprehend what sin really is, and what deliverance is.

It should also be remembered that the sufferings of

(Continued on page 105.)



our blessed Lord from the time of His giving Himself up in the garden of Gethsemane, the cruel mockings and scourging, including the crucifixion itself up to the sixth hour, were His sufferings for righteousness sake. From the sixth to the ninth hour, while still suffering at the hands of man, there was another distinct thing; it is here that His soul was made an offering for sin, it is here also that He drank the bitter cup, so that not one drop remained for us.

Oh, how little we enter into His soul-anguish at this time! It was here the blessed Lord entered into the question of sin, and the sins of all who believe, while *alone* with a holy God as the sin-bearer, and for that reason He was abandoned. It was at this time atonement was made, and at the ninth hour, as it is written, "Jesus cried with a *loud* voice," uttering those ever-memorable words previously mentioned in this paper, and then laid down His life.

It is most important to distinguish between the sufferings of the Lord for righteousness sake, and His atoning sufferings, which alone were vicarious or substitutionary. The latter being only when atonement was made in the three hours of darkness. May the reader, if he has never yet done so seriously, dwell upon the foregoing and appropriate to himself the death of Christ, by faith in Him and His blessed work of atonement. Faith lays hold of the fact that Christ has Himself borne our sins in His own body *on* the tree; not, as it has been quite erroneously said, *up to* the tree.

Nothing that He suffered from man—terrible as it was and fully described in the Scriptures, being the manifestation of perfect hatred in man led on by Satan the prince of this world, whose whole power was directed against perfect goodness in Christ—nothing, we say,

could meet God's holy requirements as to the question of sin. But the atoning work of Christ in those three hours of darkness was complete. God then forsook Him, and *He* was dealt with (He who knew no sin) as made sin before God, when alone with God. Dealt with, too, as became God's holiness, majesty and truth.

We have somewhat enlarged upon the difference between the atoning sufferings of the blessed Lord and His sufferings at the hands of men, as we feel the importance of the subject, and we know that very few Christians have made the truth, in this respect, their own.

Referring again to man's responsibility to believe the Gospel: Does the reader, if unconverted—although perhaps troubled about his soul—realize that his acceptance, when he believes the good news, must depend upon what *God has done for him*? The pride of the human heart puts every difficulty in the way. The eyes and the heart need to be turned *towards God*. This is an immense thing. Conscience is then awakened, and the Cross, when presented to him by the Word of God, attracts him. Instead of looking in upon himself and his feelings, he is occupied with an object *outside* of himself and, in the power of the Holy Ghost, he is thus *brought to God*. God and the soul have met at the cross.

How all-important, then, it is to know that there is only one way, one Person to be looked to, to be seen, to be trusted; and one work, which is all-sufficient. Reader, if not a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, do not delay the settlement of the question of your soul's eternal salvation. Allow nothing to hinder a decision for Christ. There is, as already stated, only one way. START RIGHT!

J. P. (*Montreal*).

## The Continual Burnt Offering—2.

(*Worship and Prayer.*)

WE have already seen that the burnt-offering is frequently connected in Scripture with worship and prayer. The Lord Jesus, just before the cross and His going back to the Father, told His disciples to pray in His Name, assuring them that whatsoever they asked in that Name would be granted. In Acts iv. we see them in trial, and in collective prayer, with one accord (verse 24). They ask God that “signs and wonders may be done by the *Name* of Thy holy Servant, Jesus.” Can He refuse such an appeal? He gave evident tokens that He heard and was pleased to grant all their desire. They had put Him in remembrance of His Servant Jesus, whose interests they were occupied with, whose glory they sought, in and for whose Name they laboured.

Is there not an analogy between “the time of the evening oblation” and praying in His Name? Seeing that God never under-values that Name, and that the sacrifice of Christ is ever fresh to Him, should we not, in our difficult times, esteem it a privilege to meet with others and, in that Name, pray “for all men, for kings and all in authority,” etc., knowing it is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour (1 Tim. ii.)? We pray also for “all saints,” so dear to God and His Son, and for those who serve in the Gospel (Eph. vi. 18, 19).

But, notwithstanding such as Elijah and Hezekiah and other true men, Israel sinned more and more and at length were carried into captivity. After seventy years God was pleased to restore Judah and Benjamin, with some others who had grace to separate at the time

of Hezekiah's invitation (2 Chron. xxx. 11\*). At this time Ezra shines out as a man of God, and in chapter ix. we find him humbling himself on account of the sin of the people. "At the evening sacrifice" (verse 5) he gets down before the Lord and unburdens his heart—a heart set on God's interests as bound up with His people. How he prayed, confessed, and justified God, saying, "Thou art righteous"! God heard and answered, for in chapter x. we find the people themselves weeping (verse 1), confessing their sin (verse 2), and willing to put away the evil (verse 3).

This is an encouragement to individual prayer; that is, if we are seeking the blessing of the people whom God has for His portion (Deut. xxxii. 9). If they were a separate people then, this is no less so now, and there is joy in this, if Christ is the One separated to.

Lastly, whilst the people were in captivity at Babylon, a man of God, Daniel, was occupied about them before God. In Daniel (chapter ix.) we find he was a student of the Word of God (verse 2), and he *understood* "by books" that the end of the seventy years of Jerusalem's desolation was near.

In view of the time in which *we* live, how we should love and value the only source of light and wisdom—God's precious Word. Only so shall we have understanding of the times to know what we ought to do. Daniel was engaged in confession and humiliation, saying "to us belongeth confusion of face," yet to God he ascribes righteousness, as did Ezra. Whilst he was praying, etc. (verse 20), Gabriel was sent to him "about the time of the evening oblation" (verse 21) to give him "skill and understanding."

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\*How interesting it is to see that Anna was of the tribe of Asher mentioned here, showing how God honours separation done in faith (Luke ii. 36).

Thus to Daniel was given, in answer to his prayer and confession, the words of that prophecy which perhaps, above all others, interests students of prophecy to-day, and though it consists of but four verses, it covers the whole period up to the future deliverance of Israel.

But the simple lesson one learns is, that prayer and reading God's Word (in connection also with the sacrifice of Christ, in His Name and in devotion to it) is surely the way to learn the mind of God. Daniel was a man "greatly beloved," and such a privilege may be ours in our measure to-day, if we are lovers of Scripture, occupied with God's interests, and not forgetful of the fact that God's delight is in His Son. And truly He wishes us to have our delight also in the same blessed Person.

David asked that "the lifting up of his hands should be as the evening sacrifice" (Ps. cxli.), i.e., acceptable. We who believe now are accepted in the Beloved, our worship is acceptable through Him, our prayers also are agreeable to God, because ascending to Him in all the infinite worth of Jesus' Name.

"Though great may be our dullness,  
In thought, and word and deed,  
We glory in the fullness  
Of Him that meets our need."

P. W.

## The Kingdom of God in Mystery.

What is the disciple's path in it?

**S**CRIPTURE is perfectly clear as to the path of the disciples of Christ during this period of His absence. Jesus said at various times, "The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the

elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day" (Luke ix. 21-26, etc.). And He graciously prepares them for it, "Remember the word that I said unto you, the servant is not greater than his Lord, if they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you" (John xv. 20).

The Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians iv. 8-13, makes the point perfectly clear, in contrasting the worldly ways of the Corinthians, with the path of contempt and scorn he and his fellow-labourers trod, "Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings without us; and I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you. . . . We are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day." Let us mark this—if the time for reigning had come, then the Apostle and all the other saints would be reigning too, for some will not reign while the others are in trial and persecution. It is the portion of all. "If so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together" (Rom. viii. 17).

This is the reason why Scripture speaks of "the kingdom and *patience* of Jesus Christ." It is now the time of testing as to discipleship, and this explains the Lord's word, "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever will lose his life for *My sake*, the same shall save it."

The difficulty that so many professed Christians have in understanding the so-called "Sermon on the Mount" arises from the same cause—they do not see the amazing difference resulting from the absence of the *King*. A prominent city man wrote recently: "With respect to the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount, to

demand implicit obedience would mean the utter collapse of our entire social and industrial fabric, even the church would go down."

Exactly so, we agree. But the question arises whether the Lord ever gave these principles to nations or governments, expecting general or universal obedience to them. On the contrary, it is instruction for His *disciples* during His absence, and it is impossible for any but those walking in faith and dependence, to obey God; against a social and industrial system that has grown up independently of God. The true church, which is composed of the living members of the body of Christ, will not go down in any sense, but the fabric of *man's* building will assuredly do so, when judgment begins at the house of God; for it is a house "built upon the sand . . . and it fell, and great was the fall of it" (see Rev. xviii.).

The coming glories of Christ and His earthly kingdom form a large portion of the Divine revelation. The Old Testament is, we might almost say, full of it. Amongst the "things concerning Himself," which the Lord unfolded to the two disciples in that memorable walk to Emmaus, Psalms xxiv. and lxxii., with many other Scriptures from "the prophets" and "the law," would be doubtless recalled to their memory. But not yet does He reign. It is now the time of His "patience," and, moreover, the patient long-suffering of God too. His people have to follow Him in the path of rejection, and we must not suppose that the spread of Christianity outwardly affects the truth of Christ's position. The world has become more tolerant certainly, but that is only diplomacy on the part of the arch-enemy of Christ; he has transformed himself into an angel of light, and it would doubtless serve his purpose if he

could persuade us into the belief that this outward change had altered the position of the world before God.

But let not the Christian be deceived. There is a marked contrast between the Christianity of the Scriptures and the religion of Christendom. The former is a Divine revelation intended to command the obedience of faith of all nations; and, where accepted in faith, it moulds the life and character of those who receive it in an unmistakable way.

While the Lord Jesus is absent, true Christianity owns no alliance with the world that crucified and still rejects Him, though His people share, in common with others, the vicissitudes of every-day life. No outward differences mark them off, so as to tempt the enemy to say, "Doth Job fear God for nought, hast Thou not set an hedge about him?" But *faith in God* sustains them in any and every circumstance of the way, as they seek to learn to say from the heart, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us."

T. R.

## Christ is Coming.

CHRIST is coming! Christ is coming!—

We have waited long;

Eager for the first glad rapture

Of the endless song.

Eager to bow down before Thee;

Longing, Saviour, to adore Thee;

Waiting, till our lips proclaim

Glory to Thy peerless name,

Thou art coming!—

Come, Lord, come!



## God and His Word.

**I**T is well to ponder carefully over the warning words of the Apostle Paul to the elders of the church at Ephesus as given us in his last address to them (Acts xx.). He could truly say that he had never spared himself in his devoted service to his Master. Amidst persecutions, trials and difficulties, he did not count even his life dear to himself. He kept back nothing that was profitable to them, but declared the whole counsel of God.

Now that he had to leave them, and that the church would be deprived of his watchful care and faithful ministry, he forewarns them of what would come. And we know that what his prophetic foresight discerned was just what came to pass. There would be, not only attacks on the truth from outside, but even from within, from among themselves, men would arise speaking perverted things and drawing away disciples after them.

In such a state of things what was to be their resource and safeguard? It was not to a line of successors, or even to gifted and valued teachers, that the Apostle commended his beloved Ephesians. Nor was it to any particular form of church government or doctrine, nor to an ecclesiastical organization of any kind. These would, indeed, be but a broken reed to lean upon.

Let us note it well—what he does commend them to is—“God and the word of His grace.”

To lean on a system, or a church organization, or something of this kind, would not require any exercise of *faith* and communion with God: we should then have something *visible* to look to. But to be cast

entirely on God and His word brings the soul into direct relation to Him about everything, and does call for the exercise of faith.

Yet how very far better it is to find our resource in God and His word than to lean on some poor human prop. "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm. . . . Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is," says the prophet. God can never fail the soul that trusts Him—NO, NEVER. God is faithful, and He abides faithful, He cannot deny Himself.

So also with God's word—the prophet says, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart."

Amidst all the unfaithfulness of the people, he found God's word, not only his sustenance, but his joy. But observe; it was not merely the word in the *intellect* as so much knowledge, but the words "found" and "*eaten*." It entered into his heart, his soul, and gave him strength and wisdom amidst all his troubles and difficulties.

May it be so with us also.

F. G. B.

## Revelation and Inspiration.

**O**H, what a thing it is to hear vain men babbling about the Scriptures and talking of what is right and wrong in them forsooth! In the Scriptures I have things revealed, given by inspiration; and men must seek to find faults! How busy they are measuring spots in the sun and the bumps upon it if they can, when it has been the light of the world ever since it was created!

First there was the *revelation* of the things, after that

the *communication* of them by inspiration, "God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit . . . which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth" (1 Cor. ii. 10-13).

Here I get three things in all. First, revelation—and this some would deny altogether; second, communication by the Holy Ghost—and some will not deny that the Word of God is *in* it, but what they deny is that the Scripture *is* the Word of God. I say, nay, it was the revelation from God to man, but it came out from man (the apostles, etc.) as pure as it came in—"Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth," and as he says again, "We have not corrupted the Word of God." We have given it by inspiration as we received it by revelation.

And now I get the third step, which explains man's infidelity as to all the rest, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God"; that is the truth of the riddle. He is a "natural man" and does not receive the things of the Spirit of God at all; it is only by the power of the Spirit of God that they are received. "Who hath known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ."

J. N. D.

## The Fear of God.

"Fear ye not Me? saith the Lord: will ye not tremble at My presence? . . . But this people hath a revolting and a rebellious heart; they are revolted and gone." Jer v. 22, 23.

**I**S Christendom now in a better state than Israel was in the days of Jeremiah? The Word of God instructs us as to what is now passing before our eyes

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and what the professing church is, as the Lord sees it. The present state of ruin is greater than that of Judah of old.

Jehovah will, in a future day, make an everlasting covenant with the Remnant of His people. He will receive them again in grace, and will "put His fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from Him" (Jer. xxxii. 38-41); but *never* will Christendom, the faithless spouse, be received again in grace. When the Lord comes, and has gathered His own to Himself in heaven, there will remain nothing on earth but apostate Christendom, the great harlot whose destruction the heavens will celebrate (Rev. xvii. 16, etc.).

But we—we who are now the witnesses for Jesus Christ—have we understood that it is the *fear of the Lord* which ought to characterize the faithful ones at a time when the foundations of everything here are being shaken? "Who is among you that feareth the Lord?" says Isaiah—and remark what distinguishes that man; he hears the voice of the perfect Servant, trusts in His name and leans upon his God (Isa. l. 10).

Yes, the fear of God is ever the characteristic mark of a faithful Remnant, whether it be the Jewish Remnant of the end or the Christian Remnant of to-day. Remark that the prophet Malachi gives such ones no other character than this, "*They that feared the Lord spake often one to another.*" It was this fear that bound them together, that filled their thoughts with one object, that separated them from the prevailing unbelief, that enabled them to maintain the blessed hope of that event which is so near at hand—the coming of the Lord. They were waiting for the Lord's coming here in grace.

Thus it was that an Anna, a Simeon, a Mary, an

Elizabeth, waited for the consolation of Israel. And the mark of the Christian Remnant to-day—does it not resemble that of those who feared the Lord of old? Is it not ours to wait also for His coming in grace, when we shall enter the Father's house above? *Then* all those who fear Him—whether on earth or in heaven—will be associated in the glory of His reign. “Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: for our God is a consuming fire” (Heb. xii. 28, 29).

H. R.

### The Riches of God's Grace.

**I**T was in the midst of the profound darkness in which man was plunged that God caused the light to shine and has displayed both His compassion and His power (Eph. ii.). The motives were all His own—it is because He is rich in mercy, and on account of His own love, that He has done so. All human merit is entirely excluded. He Himself has quickened us together with Christ.

Our new position in a risen Christ embraces three blessings: (1) Instead of the state of moral death in which we were, we are *quickened* with Christ. (2) Whilst we walk through this dark world, we are even now *risen* with Christ—His resurrection introduces us into a new scene of light and holiness called “the kingdom of the Son of His love” (Col. i. 13). (3) Whilst formerly we were led by the prince of the power of the air, we are now seated in *Christ* in the heavenly places. We belong to the glorious Head who has triumphed over death and delivered

us from the terrible power of the devil who held us in his grip.

It is the same power which wrought in Christ to raise Him from the dead, which has quickened us with Him. It needed the creatorial power of Him who called the world into existence to communicate this new life to us. "If any one [be] in Christ, [there is] a new creation"; and, again, "We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works."

In this chapter (verse 5) we have a little parenthesis, "By grace ye are saved." He interrupts the course of his instruction in order to recall to us the fact that it is the grace of God alone which is the source of all our privileges. Being risen together with Christ, we are introduced with Him into this sphere of blessing in which God would have us, in order to show, in the coming ages, the exceeding riches of His grace displayed towards us poor fallen creatures.

We should not see in this merely an abstract truth—one not having a practical bearing on our present condition. On the contrary, God desires that we should realize it by faith, and that we should show forth the effects of it in a holy walk, set apart to Him here below.

What a contrast between this picture of our blessings in Christ—every feature of which leads us a step higher, until we arrive at its acme by the fact that we are seated *in* Christ in the heavenly places—and the picture of the moral condition of fallen man, every step bringing him nearer and nearer to the abyss.

Such grace as this will always magnify the goodness and the wisdom of God who, in all this labour of love, has in view His own glory; whilst man is completely put on one side (verses 7-9).

There ought to be, henceforth, fruit to the glory of

God from everything which He has wrought in us; we are "created in Christ Jesus *unto* good works." This is the present object which God has in view in our conversion, as we read elsewhere, "ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God" (1 Thess. i. 9). What are these good works "which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them"? They go to make up, in fact, our whole Christian life, as represented to us in this epistle. J. B.

### The Preaching of the Cross.

**I**T is a source of grief to many that there are so few conversions as a result of current preaching. Is not the real secret of it that the *Cross of Christ* is not made the *prominent object* presented by the preacher to those he may address? And another reason is, probably, that the spirit of the old-time martyrs is not with those who proclaim the good news.

It is necessary to preach not only the *death* of Christ but *His cross*. As another has said, "If we separate the doctrine of *His death* from *His cross* we leave a standing-ground for human nature." The preaching of *the Cross* does not leave any room for the natural man to stand upon.

We would refer the reader to Paul's epistle to the Galatians in which he sets forth the Cross more prominently than in any other of his epistles, on account of the evil which he had to meet. This evil was *legalism*, which links the soul with the elements of the world, gives room for the flesh, and thus leads to association with this present evil age. It is the preaching of *the Cross*—not merely the *death of Christ*—that cuts away the ground from under the feet of the legalist. The

Cross speaks of Christ *alone*, where there can be no agreement between the old man and the new.

Let us then note how the Apostle Paul preached Christ; it was as *the crucified One, abased and humbled* as well as glorified. Paul's view of the Cross was such that it enabled him to present it with telling effect; he told these heathen Galatians of the soul-agony of the blessed Lord in *the three hours of darkness*, of the vindication of God in the Saviour's abandonment, when He drank the bitter cup, *unheard* for the time being, when His heart was broken, and with a *loud* voice He cried, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani."

The physical sufferings of the blessed Lord, terrible as they were, bore no comparison with His agony of soul when, between *Him and God alone*, the whole work of atonement was accomplished. When He had drunk, in His soul, the cup of death and of judgment for sin, there was nothing left Him but to lay down His life. He is now the *Saviour of the world*, for Judaism has rejected Him. God is no longer concealed behind a veil, for the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom. At this moment, as another has said, the manifestation of perfect grace is there, for the Gentile, the centurion, acknowledged—because Jesus gave up His life with a cry that proved the existence of so much strength—that the Prince of life, the Son of God, was there. This Gentile confesses in the *death* of Jesus, *the Person of the Son of God*, "Truly this was the Son of God." Pilate also is astonished that He is dead, and will not believe it until such is certified by the centurion.

It should be remembered that at the Cross man comes to an end of his connection with *the flesh, the world and the law*. It has been said that it can never be true that we are *crucified to the world* unless our

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hearts are in constant communion with the cross of Christ, with Christ crucified. What is mainly before the writer is the necessity of preaching the Cross of Christ.

The *doctrine* of the "Gospel of God" (Rom. i. 1) as we get it, for instance, in the first eleven chapters of Romans was written to *believers*, in order that they might be established in the truth. The cross had already been proclaimed to them and they had *believed*, and now the Apostle writes to them to lead them on *in the truth*. The preaching of the cross *brought them to God*, after which they needed to be taught in the Word.

It is quite true that any portion of Scripture, which is quick and powerful, can be used by the Holy Spirit to convict of sin. We only wish to draw attention to the *divine order* in ministry, which is important in its place.

The Apostle Paul's proclamation of the Gospel of God began at the cross, to the heathen and others, and it must have been with power and unction, as his words, by the Holy Ghost, entered their hearts and consciences when he depicted the soul-agony of the blessed Lord, endured when, in that hour of forsaking, the sword of divine justice was unsheathed against that holy sinless One, upon whom it fell.

The Apostle's heart, in his appeal to the Galatians, surges over with grief and disappointment as he tells them that he marvels that they were, "so soon removed . . . unto a different gospel." In an impassioned manner he appeals to them, and demands from them an explanation as to who it was that had charmed and influenced them, for the cross had been so clearly presented to them that he could remind them of the striking manner in which they had received it. How feelingly the Apostle must have described to them that

scene at Calvary! It had been so soul-stirring and impressive that they could not but be moved in their inmost being as though they themselves had been eye-witnesses of the awful scene, as he said to them, "Before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified."

The Apostle having learned the truth from the Lord, could vividly describe what his own soul had received. When these Galatians realized WHO HE was who thus offered Himself without spot to God, it became so real—and so amazing was the silent patience of the Sufferer, so convincing the evidence that the Victim was not merely human, but also Divine—that they, at the time of their acceptance of the truth, spoke joyfully of the blessing that they had received through the Apostle's ministry. The story of the Cross was so told to them, that each time the Apostle preached, they were carried in heart and soul to "*the very place where Christ was crucified.*"

If the Cross is not kept prominent in our ministry, the gospel presented can only be a diluted gospel.

The writer's desire is that his own heart, as well as the reader's, may enter more into what the soul-agony of the blessed Lord was when, in those three hours of darkness, not one ray of light came from God when the Son of His love was there, and was bearing sin—when the whole weight of God's wrath against sin came upon Him.

The physical sufferings of our blessed Lord, or His sufferings for righteousness sake, should be kept distinct in the mind from His vicarious sufferings. The latter were what He suffered in the agony of soul when drinking the bitter cup. Not that we mean to convey the thought that the physical sufferings were lessened

at this time, for they were not, but continued throughout; which only increased the terrible agony He endured.

And again we would, in the language of another, describe another source of sorrow which was perhaps more human, but not less true—the violation of every delicacy which a perfectly attuned mind could feel, “*They look and stare upon me.*” Insult, scorn, deceit, efforts to catch Him in His words, brutality, and cruel mocking, fell upon no insensible, though a divinely patient spirit. Not to speak of desertion, betrayal and denial—He *looked* for some to have pity on Him, *and there was no one*, and for comforters, but found none—but also of what broke in upon every delicate feeling of His nature as a man. Reproach broke His heart. He was the song of the drunkards.

Doubtless Jehovah *knew* His shame, His reproach and His dishonour; all His adversaries were before Him; but He passed through it all. No divine perfection saved Him from sorrow. He passed through it with divine perfection, and by it. But there was not a single human feeling that was not violated and trodden upon in Christ. *But this was nothing to the cup He had to drink.* Men and their ways were forgotten there; but the suffering was not the less real when it was there . . . the judgment of God against sin closed over and obliterated the hatred and wickedness of man.

We cannot have too deep a sense of the depth of the Lord’s suffering in *His atoning work*—of that which *no human word is competent to express*—what the Lord’s drinking the cup which sin had filled, under the judgment of God, was to Him. With this nothing can be mingled or mixed up. Judges had been heartlessly unrighteous, and washed their hands of such an One and

His matters; the chief priests who should intercede for the infirm, cry for cruel death upon the guiltless. The blessed Lord is hurried forth with rough and indecent haste "from prison and from judgment," and there was no one to "*declare His generation.*"

In dwelling thus, for a little, upon what our Lord suffered from the hands of men, we must keep clearly before us that His suffering in atonement was *from God alone* during those three hours of darkness, drawing forth that supplicating cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" which closed that awful scene. And we may add, in the words of another, "Never was the obedient Christ so precious; but His soul was made an offering for sin, and to bear it judicially before God." Again, "He could even say—so great was the infinite and truly divine value of that hour and work—'*therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again.*'" J. P. (*Montreal.*)

## From Crete to Malta.

(ACTS xxvii.)

**I**T was a most trying time, that stormy voyage from Crete to Malta, but the history of it is very interesting and instructive to us. All hope of saving the ship seemed to be gone in spite of every effort the master and crew could make. To all appearance, everything was adverse after they left Crete with a favourable wind. A violent tempest had burst upon them and had continued long, leaving the ship almost helpless and a wreck.

But *God* was above all, and this was *everything* for the man of faith.

We might have expected that, at such a time, the

master and owner of the ship, being an experienced navigator, would be the right person to look to and depend upon in the circumstances of the moment. But this was not so at all. The real master of the situation was the poor prisoner, Paul.

Paul, as we know, was the man of God, the man devoted to his Master's service, the man of prayer ; and, therefore, the man of power and of intelligence in God's mind. And on that stormy night when everything seemed to be at its worst, there stood by him an angel of God—a messenger who had come all the way down from heaven itself to that ship.

Amidst the crowd of 276 souls on board, Paul was *the* one on whom God had His eye in a very special way, and whom He singles out to receive this communication from Himself through His angel. And who was Paul, that this remarkable evidence of divine care and favour should be bestowed on him ? Let us ponder deeply over his own answer to this question : he says, " God, whose I am, and whom I serve."

Yes, he belonged to God, not to himself. Ever since divine grace had reached him on the road to Damascus, he belonged to a new Master. And remark, he does not say, " whose Apostle I am," for he is here speaking of himself, not as an Apostle, but as a *Christian* and a *servant*, and therefore an example for us. This fact, that we are Christ's, is just what we have to remember, as he says elsewhere, " Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price."

And he *served* that same God—whom I serve—not indeed in a half-hearted or apathetic way as we sometimes do, but with his whole soul and heart and energy. How cheering is the message that the angel carries to him, commencing with the words, " Fear not, Paul."

Does He not often, amidst the storms and difficulties of *our* life, say the same to us in our measure? This is what the Lord also said to the disciples on the stormy lake, "It is I; be not afraid."

And not only would Paul's life be saved, but that of all those who sailed with him. So that every one of those 275 people were the better of the company of that man of God. Are those we meet with from day to day the better of our company?

Did even a shade of doubt cross Paul's mind as to the fulfilment of the angelic message? Not one. He could say, "I believe God, that thus it shall be." Oh, for that simple faith that "BELIEVES GOD!" Fellow-Christian, do you and I "believe God": not merely trust Him for our soul's salvation, but do we count upon Him with absolute certainty, no matter what the difficulties of the moment may be? Surely we have every reason to do so.

And now, ere we close, let us turn back for a moment to chapter xxiii. 11, to look at another visit from heaven to Paul. It was the night following the day when Paul stood before the council at Jerusalem and when he said to the high priest, "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall"; and, again, "I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee," etc. Here Paul—if we may venture to say so of such an one as he—failed somewhat, or at least did not act up to the level of what he brought out elsewhere.

But it was on this very occasion that the divine visit took place. And here it was not an angel who stood by him but, "*the night following the Lord* stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul," etc. Oh, the exceeding grace of our Lord Jesus Christ—how well He knew how to cheer and encourage His poor servant just

at the moment when he might feel downcast or depressed ! Truly, He knows the heart, He can weigh everything in a perfectly even balance, and He knows how to encourage and sustain us even at the moment when, perhaps, we might be misunderstood by others, or we might be depressed by the thought of our own failures or lack of wisdom and devotedness. He says to us now, as He did to His disciples of old, and to Paul, "Be of good cheer," let us remember and treasure His word.

F. G. B.

### A Word of Comfort for His Own.

"Let not your heart be troubled." John xiv. 1.

I KNOW not what each day to me may bring ;  
God knows, and I am safe beneath his wing,  
So of His love and wisdom I can sing,  
And cast my care on Him in everything.

I know not, yet with Him I need not fear.  
"Let not your heart be troubled," He is near ;  
" 'Tis I, be not afraid," His voice we hear,  
And Jesus always saith, "Be of good cheer."

I know not—if I knew, all hope were vain !  
Who, with to-day's, could bear tomorrow's pain ?  
His hand appoints the sunshine and the rain,  
Night bringeth sleep, renews life's springs again.

My Father knows, and in His love I rest ;  
The path He chooseth for His child is best ;  
Were it not so, I well might be distrest,  
But in His care I am forever blest.

He knows the dangers that beset the way,  
And He hath promised strength for every day,  
Bread for my need, a staff to be my stay ;  
He bids me trust in Him, and watch and pray.

So I will journey on along the road,  
With a glad hope, free from every load,  
Waiting for Him, with staff and feet well shod,  
Until I reach the city of my God.

## The Coming of the Lord.

**T**HERE is a great difference between a person believing in what is called "the doctrine of the second advent," and a loving soul in the joy of communion, earnestly looking and longing for the Lord Himself to come. How little influence a belief in the doctrine has on the heart and life, compared with having the Person of Christ as the all influential object for the heart, and being like the Thessalonians, "waiting for the Son from heaven"; or like the bride waiting for the Bridegroom. "The Spirit and the bride say, Come." It is the heart of the bride that says, 'Come,' though moved and stirred by the Spirit who dwells there. He gives us the happy consciousness of the relationship, and the affections that belong to it.

A. M.

## Compromise.

**W**HEN it is a question of the truth concerning the Person or the work of Christ, or other vital or fundamental truth, to compromise is to show that we value neither the truth nor Him who is the truth. Scripture is most emphatic as to this (2 John ; 2 Tim. ii. ; Jude, etc.).

But, on the other hand, forbearance with those with whom we may not see eye to eye on matters which are not vital, is equally called for—see such passages as Rom. xiv. ; 1 Cor. viii. In such cases as the eating of meats, observing a day, or the like, there was to be forbearance and mutual consideration for the conscience of others. It is well to remember this and to distinguish things that differ.



## “Where is the God of Judgment?”

**T**HIS was the scoffing challenge of unbelievers amongst the professing people of God in the days of Malachi. “Unbelievers” did we say?—yes, but how strange that there should be such a thing as open unbelief amongst even the remnant consisting of the two tribes that had been brought back from captivity in Babylon!

What marked those days was, *an unbelieving spirit and pride of heart*. Does not this mark the professing church to-day? Truly it does, and for this very reason we need to be especially on our guard, because we are always in danger of being affected by the atmosphere through which we pass, unless kept by the grace of God, going on in humble dependence on Him.

“Where is the God of judgment?” (Mal. ii. 17)—the answer comes at once, “The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to His temple.” It was Jehovah without doubt, but it was Christ. He would come, first in grace, as we know, and afterwards in judgment. The direct answer to the unbeliever’s challenge is given in the words of chapter iii. 5, “I will come near to you in judgment.” However great God’s patience may be, either with the world or the professing church, yet, as the prophet says, “The Lord God of recompences shall surely requite” (Jer. li. 56).

But if there is true repentance and turning to God, His grace is infinite. He is willing even to open the windows of heaven and pour down a blessing so great that there is not room to receive it! This is what the soul that is true to God has to fall back upon—grace—His infinite and unchanging grace.

But we live in days of the rapid advance of an infidel spirit, showing itself, even amongst professing Christians, in a growing unbelief in the Scriptures of truth. In principle, it is the same as in Malachi's day, and it led on to the blasphemous saying, "Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and He delighteth in them," and the scoffing question, "Where is the God of judgment?" How different the language of faith as seen in Moses' song: "God is the Rock, His work is perfect: for all His ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He"!

In view of all this, let us ever remember the need of God's keeping grace and power, as well as our responsibility to maintain the truth and to witness for Christ. May we be found amongst those who "fear the Lord," who value and believe His word, and who "think upon His name." It is not human strength, learning, or wisdom which will stand in an evil day, but that spiritual wisdom which is found in the path of obedience and dependence on God and His word.

F. G. B.

## Romanism and the Bible.

**A**T the recent Cambridge Bible Congress, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Clifton said that, "with Roman Catholics the Bible got its hall-mark from the church, and not the church her hall-mark from the Bible." On this subject the following remarks are apposite:—

"Now what does the Romanist say? He says, you cannot believe in the Scriptures, without the authority of the church to accredit them; that is, that *God's*

testimony does not bind the conscience—does not oblige to faith, without something else to accredit. Now this is infidelity, and a horrible dishonour done to God. It is declaring that God's testimony is not sufficient, not competent in itself, to bind man—to oblige man to believe and bow to it.

“God has given an inefficient thing as a testimony ; so that if I do not bow to it, that is, if I remain an infidel, I am justified in so remaining ! This is high treason against God and His truth. They dare not say that it is not God's Word, for they would be avowed infidels themselves. But they do dare to say, consequently, that though it be God's Word, it does not bind the conscience of a man ; and that something else is necessary to give it authority to his conscience. No matter what it is ; they may call it the church, or the pope, or a general council which represents the church. It is something *besides* the Word, without which God's own Word is not binding on the conscience.

“That is, their principles are infidel before God. . . . But the Word of God is a testimony to man's conscience, which bears God's authority itself. If a man does not bow to it when sent in grace as a testimony to save, he will be obliged to bow to it when it will be executed in judgment. In a word, Romanism declares that, without what is called the church's authority, God's word is not such as obliges me to believe it.

“This doctrine is infidelity, as to the proper authority of God's Word. And mark further : if I do not believe what God's Word says without the authority of the church, I do not believe *God* at all. It is not faith in God ; there may be faith in the church, but there is not faith in God. For when I had only what God said, I did not believe it ; when the church tells me to believe

it, I do. But this is faith in the church ; and I do not believe God : I decline doing it, unless I have something else to accredit His word.

“Now the only true faith is believing *God*, believing God Himself. This is the real return of the soul to God. Abraham *believed God*, and it was counted to him for righteousness ; he had no church to accredit what God had said.”

(*Coll. Writ.* xv. 387.)

J. N. D.

## The Fatherhood of God.

Individual and Universal.

**G**OD *the Father and the Son*.—By taking a glimpse back into the past eternity, now that the eternal counsels of God have unfolded themselves and the veil is lifted for us in the inspired Scriptures, we are enabled to listen to the converse of the divine Persons before the world was. In that bygone eternity we find the Son, who dwelt ever in the bosom of the Father—for this relationship existed eternally—undertaking to do the will of God, in the body prepared for Him (Psa. xl. 6-8 ; Heb. x. 6-9).

The silence of eternity, if we may so speak, is broken. What, we may ask, would most astonish the angels in those boundless tracts of glory, were they able to enter into these things ? Surely the Spirit of Christ in Psalm xl. gives the answer in the words, “Lo, I come.” This brings before us the Son’s free offering of Himself to accomplish the whole will of God in His work here below according to the eternal counsels of the Godhead.

Thus, before He became man, in that place where only Godhead is known, and where these communications passed between the divine Persons, we find the

place of perfect willingness which was taken by the One who thus offered Himself for the carrying out of these divine arrangements in counsel. How wonderful, how perfectly marvellous is the grace of God that allows poor finite beings such as we are, to be admitted to know the secrets of those divine counsels and purposes—to hear what passed between the Father and the eternal Son, when the latter undertook to accomplish all the will of God, in the body prepared for Him (Heb. x. 5)!

And more than this, the Son of the Father's love was the One who according to divine purpose, was destined for many glories. He was the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation, being the Creator of all things that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created *by* Him and *for* Him; He was before all things and *by Him* all things subsist. He is also, in resurrection, the Head of the body, the assembly, being the firstborn from among the dead, that in all things He might have the pre-eminence (Col. i. 13–18).

Further, He was marked out as Messiah of Israel, as well as sole arbiter of the eternal destinies of that race of which He is the Head; being the Second Man, the last Adam. We also learn that, in becoming a man He, *as divine*, 'emptied Himself,' and *as human*, He 'humbled Himself.' Moreover, our Lord did not esteem it an object of rapine to be equal with God, for He was God (Phil. ii. 6, 7, new trans.).

Christ's unique place, therefore, as the eternal Son of the Father, as well as His glorious position as Son of man, is fully maintained and proved in the Scriptures of truth.

*Satan's opposition.*—Was there no opponent to the carrying out of these counsels of God and to His truth? There was. In the temptation in the wilderness Satan's character as *the liar* was manifested, and his attacks were foiled by Him who was *the truth*. Let us observe that so far back as John viii. 41, Satan uses the hostile Jews to introduce that figment of apostates, "The universal Fatherhood of God"—they say, "We have one Father, even God"; it had been said also, "Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us?"

But now, in the closing days of the church on earth, Satan is more than ever "transformed into an angel of light," as the great counterfeit and deceiver of men. It is therefore most important that we should "distinguish things that differ." We are already living in the "perilous times" when universalities, generalities, ethics, ethnology, and many other 'ologies,' together with a host of 'isms' are influencing people's minds as trees are moved by the wind. The result is that many are tossed to and fro "with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive" (Eph. iv. 14).

*Effect of false doctrine.*—The doctrine of "the universal Fatherhood of God" is drawing men together something like Freemasonry. But while God is owned as a Supreme Being, the positive teaching given us by revelation in the Bible is practically disowned, and men fail to be made conscious, through it, of their soul's need. It is, alas, for them, a vessel that does not contain the water of life to satisfy the thirsty.

*God as Creator.*—Without doubt God is the *Creator* of all mankind; and, as such, the covenant of Genesis ix. 9-17, between Himself and His creatures, stands to-day, and will stand till the end of the world. This

doctrine was not unknown even to the ancient pagan Athenians, whose poets had said, "For we are also His offspring" (Acts xvii. 28). God had indeed "made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth." But did the Apostle Paul seek to establish men on that ground or set it before them as the ground of the Christian's relationship with God? Indeed he did not.

Such teaching, if it stops there, belongs to "the times of this ignorance," when even the more intelligent heathen went no further than worshipping "an unknown God." Men *now* are "commanded to repent," because God has "appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead."

*Fatherhood individual.*—But further, as W. Y. Fullerton wrote, "We must never lose the emphasis on the *individual* Fatherhood of God. In these days when the *universal* Fatherhood is so much emphasized, it is well to remember that the relation between the *regenerated* soul and God is different from the relation between God and the *unregenerated* soul. When we receive the Lord Jesus we have power to become the children of God, and are taught to look up and say, 'Our Father.' The sons turn to the Father, and gain secret content by mentioning His name."

Again, we read in Galatians iv. 6, "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." Can an unregenerate or unconverted person join in this cry? Certainly not—we need to be sons by individual faith in Christ Jesus to do so. The trial of the first man under probation ended at the cross. Christ risen is

the Head of a new race ; He is the firstborn from among the dead.

*Need of new birth.*—Our relationship, in and with Christ, to God the Father, is *individual*. We become sons by faith in Him, and faith is always individual. So the Apostle Paul teaches us in Galatians. Or, to take the aspect in which the truth is presented by the Apostle John, “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the children of God” (1 John iii. 1). Let it be well noted that there is no vital link with God as Father apart from being ‘born of God.’ It has been truly said : “To suppose that God brings fallen man into the relationship of a child, apart from being born again, is a false and fatal delusion.”

Referring, in conclusion, to Ephesians iv. 5, 6, we have three circles or spheres of unity mentioned there, but these have not the same extent. These circles enlarge each time. (1) There is one body and one Spirit ; (2) One Lord, with whom are connected one faith and one baptism ; (3) One God and Father of all, who is above all things, everywhere, and *in all Christians*. But God’s general relationship to men as the Creator, Preserver, or Father in that wider sense, in no way touches the fact that only those who are *born* into His family—“born again,” and thus “made partakers of the divine nature”—are entitled to take the place of children of God (see John i. 12, 13).

The writer would, in closing, affectionately urge all his readers to keep clear of this pernicious error “The universal Fatherhood of God.” It levels down the special privilege of the true believer as being alone privileged to enjoy relationship to God as Father ; and it levels up mere profession, deluding unregenerate

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men with the idea that they are indeed children of God. Sad to say, this is being widely spread from the majority of the pulpits in Protestant Christendom.

J. P. (*Montreal*).

## An Ideal Church.

THE unrest that characterizes everything in this present day has led to many schemes of reformation and reconstruction, and it is not to be wondered at that the church has not escaped the attempts of the improvers.

We hear of hopes and promises of a new world to be evolved out of the chaos into which the Great War has thrown the nations, and it is frequently said that the church has failed because it does not attract the masses nor lead in the path of progress. Her methods are said to be obsolete, the doctrines antiquated, and we need—so it is said—a new gospel, a new brotherhood, etc.

Let it not be thought that our object in this paper is to defend the national church, or indeed any religious organization, but what is really at issue in many of these attacks is, not only “the faith” for which we are exhorted earnestly to contend, but the essential authority of the revealed will of God.

Now our starting-point is this: Before we can say the church has failed in her mission, we must know the object for which it was founded; and the more clearly we see that, the more evident it becomes that the would-be improvers have misunderstood the purpose of the Divine Founder.

It never was the object of God, in forming the church, to improve the world. This will seem to many a bold

statement, nevertheless it is quite clear if we take the Scriptures as our guide. It is true, however, that every real member of the Church of God must necessarily improve the world, because he walks through it in the fear of God and love to his fellow-men. We speak now of a true believer in Christ, one born again of the incorruptible seed of the Word of God, and not merely a professor of the Christian religion. Such a person walks in righteousness, and "the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient," etc. (1 Tim. i. 9, 10).

In considering anything that relates to the Church of God, it is incumbent upon us to remember the two aspects in which it is presented to us in the Scripture itself. On the one hand, that which the Lord Himself speaks of in the well-known words to Simon Peter, "Upon this rock (the confession of His name), I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it": and, on the other, that which is committed to man's responsibility as "the house of God," in which man is permitted to be a builder, and which consequently may have bad material built into it, and even be corrupted by man's self-will and laxity (see 1 Cor. iii. 13-17).

Of the church viewed in the first aspect it is written, "Which is His (Christ's) body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all"; and viewed in the other, "judgment must begin at the house of God." In connection with this latter, the Lord threatens the Church of Laodicea with utter rejection, with being spued out as nauseous to Him; and many Scriptures foretell declension, step by step, even into open apostasy.

But we would confine ourselves to the former view of the church, as composed of every living member of

the body of Christ, irrespective of man's failure in maintaining the true expression of God's will in testimony in this world. The church was to be a people called out from the world, without regard to nationality or race, united by the Holy Spirit to each other and to the risen Christ, and waiting for the Son of God from heaven. As such it was also to be a testimony to the world of its heavenly origin, and even an object-lesson to angels of the all-various wisdom of God (Eph. iii. 10).

It is needless to point out how far from this ideal, Christianity, as now seen in the professing church, has departed. But all the efforts to widen its doors so as to include all and every so-called progressive movement, is only the precursor of its ruin as a testimony for God in the earth.

The efforts to meet the so-called demands of "the man in the street" are useless if they shirk the truth both as to God and man; his conscience will not be reached, nor his mind convinced by any methods that conceal the truth behind a religious garb. What is wanted on the part of preachers to-day is fidelity to the message of the Gospel of God—to the truth that the Spirit of God can use to produce repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

To maintain the truth of the church's place in the counsels of God on the one hand, and to go patiently forward "holding forth the Word of life" on the other, is the Christian's true service; and one living example of a person governed in everyday life by this ideal is worth more than any other human testimony to the truth of God.

The church, viewed in its true heavenly character as the body of Christ, and an holy temple in the Lord, must necessarily be in direct antagonism to the world around,

because it must bear testimony against evil, at well as of the fact that the world has rejected Christ. "They have both seen and hated both Me and My Father," said our Lord. The ties which bind the people of God, the sheep of Christ, together are divine. They are all partakers of divine life, and not merely professors of the Christian religion. They are born again, are indwelt by the Spirit of God, are united to Christ risen at God's right hand and, as the result of having this divine life, they love one another. Here is an ideal brotherhood that cannot be improved upon, because it is of God, not made by men. And it is one of life and nature, as well as purpose and power, "By this shall all men know that ye are *My* disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John xiii. 35).

Similarly as to fellowship. There is a divine fellowship formed by God Himself that cannot be improved upon by human ties or bonds, however strong. It is "*God* who hath called us unto the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ."

A national church may be judged to have failed according to the view of the critics as to what the purpose and effect of such a church should be; but, as before said, the *Church of God*, according to Scripture, consists of a heavenly company, called out from the world, and divinely sustained in the midst of a world that lies in the wicked one, as a witness to a rejected Christ, for whose return from heaven to take her to Himself she waits (1 Thess. iv. 14-18).

Such a people, gathered together by the power of the Holy Spirit to the Name of the Lord Jesus, with no creed, no humanly-ordained priesthood or ministry, and contending for "the faith once delivered to the saints" in the written Word, as the all-sufficient guide both for

doctrine and practice, must necessarily have the appearance of weakness to the natural mind, and be the object of Satan's attack from the very beginning.

Let us not be surprised if such companies are few and feeble. Why did the Lord Jesus promise His presence to *two or three* gathered unto His Name, if such a contingency was unlikely to arise? No position on earth can be more difficult to maintain, if we think of human weakness and what we are naturally, and nothing can be more distasteful to worldly-minded Christians who, therefore, make up their minds that it is an impossible ideal.

Nevertheless, this is God's ideal, if we are to be guided by His Word only; and whatever may be our weakness and failure in maintaining it, we may trust Him to support any who seek to do His will along that path. But the effect of such a church, or people, upon the world around them is the point. Is it to include the world? Should it make its creed wide enough to receive anybody and everybody who is not an infidel, or all who have a desire to be included in a religious fold? Or is it to maintain, in faithfulness to the Lord, that testimony to Him and to the truth which calls for separation from the world and heart-obedience to His Word? Unquestionably the latter.

We do not expect these considerations to have much weight with professing Christians, whose object seems to be how far they can accommodate themselves to the world without losing heaven. But we all need to be reminded, in whatever part of the Lord's vineyard may be our sphere of service, that "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it" (Ps. cxxvii. 1).

T. R.

## A few Thoughts on Daniel and his Times.

**D**ANIEL was carried away captive to Babylon at a very young age, probably well under twenty years, and he lived to over eighty ; he “ continued even unto the first year of King Cyrus.”

The first thing we are told about him is that he “ purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king’s meat, nor of the wine which he drank.” He might have argued—“ What is the use of trying to keep up Jewish customs here in Babylon, why not take what is given you and be thankful ? One must accommodate oneself to the circumstances of the times.” But no : this was not the path of separation to God which was the only right one for the man of faith, however great the ruin of Israel collectively might be.

And how blessedly God answered his faith and that of his companions ; they were found to be fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat of the king’s meat. Blessed be His name, God always answers faith, however much He may allow it to be tried.

The next test was the case of the king’s dream. Here was a matter which baffled all the wise men of Babylon ; for the king required them not only to interpret the dream, but to recall it to his memory after it had gone from him. Daniel called together his three companions to a little prayer-meeting, to seek mercies from the God of heaven. The case was a trying one indeed ; here was a despotic monarch ready to put them to death if they did not do that which was utterly impossible to man. But Daniel knew that *with God* all things are possible, and the secret was revealed to him in answer to prayer.

Nor was Daniel at all disposed to take to himself

the glory of this wonderful revelation. On the contrary, he was careful to give God that glory, and so he plainly tells Nebuchadnezzar that the secret was not revealed to him for any wisdom that he had more than any living, but because *God* would make it known to the king. The interpretation gives us, in a short sketch, a brief but complete outline of the history of the Gentile empires from that moment down to their end.

Passing over much that is instructive in the history, we come to chapter vi., where we find Daniel a *praying man*. Three times a day he prayed, with his windows open towards Jerusalem, in accordance with Solomon's prayer (1 Kings viii. 48). Do we, in these serious times, pray three times a day for the people of God, the work of God, and the interests of Christ, as Daniel did, also the Psalmist (Psa. lv. 17)? How wonderfully Daniel's faith rose above the circumstances of the times and found a resource in a prayer-hearing and prayer-answering God! Neither the plots of evil men, nor the state of his own people Israel, prevented him from being found in the attitude of prayer and supplication before God.

In chapter ix. we find Daniel as a *student of Scripture*. He "understood by books" the number of years that the Lord would accomplish in the desolations of Jerusalem. Daniel did not merely read a chapter and close the book, or forget all about it, as many do: no, his prayerful study of the Word of God—the means God has placed within the reach of every Christian to-day—gave him intelligence in the mind of God. We may be persuaded of this, that if *we* are to know the mind of the Lord, the way to learn it is by the prayerful and diligent study of the Word.

The result for Daniel was that it brought him to his

knees before God in prayer and humiliation. His confession was not merely with the lips or with the tongue, but from the very depths of his soul, and most part of this chapter (ix.) is occupied with it. Nor did Daniel condemn others without taking his own share in the common ruin. There can be no doubt that he was, personally, perhaps *the* most godly man in Israel at the time, but he fully identified himself with the sin of the people, whilst he vindicated all that God had done in the judgment brought upon them.

This is most instructive to us and most necessary. If there ever was a time calling for humiliation and confession it is *now*. The Church of God is in ruins as regards a united testimony for Christ; many true believers little understand the high and heavenly character of the Christian's place and calling; and what is worse, they seem to have very little interest in it. The world, in one shape or another, has blunted their spiritual appetite for anything that does not in some way or other appeal to their natural tastes and inclinations.

But this is just the time for faith to shine the brighter. *We* (Christians) have even a fuller revelation of God than Daniel had, and we have a living Christ at God's right hand and the Holy Spirit indwelling the believer and the church. Let us seek grace to rise in faith to the privileges and blessings that are ours.

F. G. B.

*Fragment.*—The resurrection of Christ, laid hold of by faith, is the pivot of true separation to God. It is the only thing that enables a man to make a clean break with the world and the flesh, as it is the witness of victory over Satan and judgment.



## “Be of Good Cheer.”

SOMETIMES we especially need such words as these. Man is born to trouble, and the people of God are not exempted from it. We are part of a groaning creation and we groan with it. Our Lord Jesus Himself wept and groaned and was deeply moved, for He had a human and a sympathizing heart. How deeply sensitive He was and truly touched by the weight of sorrow that pressed upon men: “In all their afflictions He was afflicted”; “Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.”

We read of Jesus speaking the word, translated by the four words, “Be of good cheer,” on five occasions. To a sick man afflicted with palsy He says, “Son, be of good cheer”; to a suffering woman He says, as recorded in the same chapter (Matt. ix.), “Daughter, be of good cheer”; to His disciples in the tempest-tossed boat on the lake of Galilee His voice sounds clear above the storm, “Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.” Does He not say the same to every troubled heart to-day?

Then at the close of that touching word of comfort spoken to His disciples just before He left this world, given us in John xiv.-xvi., He says again, “Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.” If He had to tell them faithfully what a world He was leaving them in, and what they might expect as His witnesses, He does not fail to add this encouraging word, assuring them of His victory over all that was against them.

And lastly, He comes to stand by His faithful servant Paul, just at the very moment when he might have

felt discouraged, and He says, "Be of good cheer, Paul" (Acts xxiii. 11).

May we too find the solace and comfort of His words. As the risen and glorified Saviour, our High Priest with God, and our advocate with the Father, He serves His people ceaselessly now; and He is able to sympathize, to sustain, and to comfort us to the very end.

F. G. B.

### Life, Light and Love.

**I**T is most interesting and instructive to follow the order in which these gifts of God are presented in the earlier portions of John's Gospel.

The opening sentences of the first chapter have often been the subject of remark on account of their surpassing simplicity yet profound wisdom, and one in particular—the statement of the fourth verse—compels our attention, "In Him was life; and the life was the light of men." He was the true Light, which, coming into the world, shone, not for angels, nor for the Jews, nor for any other special people, but *for men*.

And this light was the life which was in the Word. It shines in a dark place, and for those in darkness hitherto, putting man under a responsibility to God totally different from that which existed before it came. The Son of God has been in this world—has been here for man, full of grace and truth, the only begotten of the Father, come from His bosom to make Him known, lighting every man that cometh into the world.

How this reminds us of the creation work in Genesis. God said, "Let there be light" (or "Let light be") and the whole of the five days' work and part of the sixth

is complete, before man, the object of the love of God, is brought upon the scene. So in our Gospel, it is not until we get to the third chapter that we hear of the love of God ; and then, after declaring the necessity of the Son of man being "lifted up," in order that life may flow out to a perishing world, comes the announcement that it was because "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son."

Turning again to John i. 4, we cannot but be struck with the simple yet sublime words just referred to. And how blessed to see these two things, life and light, linked together for the illumination of man, and found in Him who is the Saviour. The divine link with God being formed not by intellectual enlightenment or attainments, but by the gift of life to all who receive Christ by faith in His name.

Herein lies the secret of the true knowledge of God, and the understanding of what life is. Human wisdom would naturally lead us to look to the powers of the mind of man as that by which we are to discern divine things, and as the source of life and light. But these powers of which men boast, uniformly ignore what sin has done in estranging man from God, both as to mind and heart, as we read, "Alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them" (Eph. iv. 18); consequently they fail.

In Christ, divine life, divine light, and divine love move across the darkened stage of this world—a world "lying in darkness"—and light it up with the light of God. Therefore He says so appropriately, "He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John viii. 12).

In Christ also is found the light on death and all that is after death ; but the light of life as to all that relates

to God. And as for "life" in this world in its source, character, and destiny; this is found alone in Him, "Ye were sometimes (or formerly) darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord."

What a contrast it is when we turn from these luminous statements of the Word of God—who has graciously given us, by revelation and inspiration, all that we need to know of Himself and of ourselves—to the so-called wisdom of the ancients and moderns, who fail to give us one tangible, satisfying thought either about Him or about man. Compare these words in their majestic simplicity, with the high-sounding phrases of philosophy that lead us through mazes of unbelief—but to nowhere! Contrast them with the vapid reasonings of Christian Science, or the esoteric subtleties of Agnosticism, and how thankfully we turn to *God*, and to Him who is "the Way, the Truth, and the Life," to learn in the heavenly light that He has shed upon us, what sin and righteousness, wisdom and light, love and holiness, really are.

May we be preserved from walking in the light of the spark of our own kindling, and be found following Him until He comes to complete the story of grace, and translate us to the Father's house above.

"There in effulgence bright,  
Saviour and Guide, with Thee.  
We'll walk, and in Thy heavenly light,  
Whiter our robes shall be."

T. R.

FRAGMENT.—The disciple who teaches most of "the life" was he whose head had lain on the bosom of Jesus, in holy, but loving, familiarity. . . . The way to perceive what the eternal life is which was with the Father, is to receive Him who is the Life and also the Light of men. H. F. W.

## The Valley of Achor.

### A Door of Hope.

THE word Achor is equivalent to the word trouble or distress. It was the name given to the valley where Achan, the troubler of Israel, was destroyed. In the coming day of Israel's restoration, the valley of Achor is to be given them for a "door of hope" (Hosea ii. 15). But that valley proved a door of hope in the past also as soon as Achan had been put away. Israel had sinned, and the Lord had refused His presence among them while the evil remained; consequent on this there was great searching of heart. This searching became increasingly personal and individual among them all until Achan was singled out as the guilty person; and upon the people's self-judgment and his removal, Israel was able to make a fresh start.

In this way, renewed hope sprang up from their trouble and distress now that they had cleared themselves, and in that sense the valley of Achor became indeed a door of hope. Distress and trouble, producing heart-searching on account of sin, are very often the precursors of better things, for godly sorrow worketh repentance, not to be repented of. Men do not reach the solid ground of God's salvation without trouble of soul. Sorrow for sin always precedes the joy of the Lord. The stony-ground hearers are marked out as immediately receiving the word with "joy," but it only lasts for a short time; there is no divine work in the conscience, and they do not represent persons who are saved eternally.

On the day of Pentecost some who heard Peter's

address "were pricked in the heart." The time of finding out sin, when God is speaking, is very solemn and serious indeed. Peace, safety, and deliverance come later, but at first, when the heart is pricked, there is sure to be distress and trouble. It was so with Isaiah when he saw the glory of the Lord; he said: "Woe is me! for I am undone."

Israel in Joshua's day were distressed on account of sin in the valley of Achor, but the complete removal of the evil became, through grace, the foundation of fresh hopes. The chapter following their self-judgment records a victory over the men and city of Ai, though as a rebuke to their previous self-confidence, it cost much trouble and preparation.

The valley of Achor, in days to come, is to prove a door of hope to returning Israel. The essential part of Israel's restoration will lie in their repentance and faith. Mere deliverance from Gentile powers can never suffice for the joy which will be theirs in restoration to their own land. They will be delivered from the consequences of their sins and will glory in the Lord: "There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away *ungodliness* from Jacob" (Rom. xi. 26). But they will pass through deep sorrow and distress of soul.

In Zechariah we read that the spirit of grace and supplications will be poured upon the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem (Zech. xii.), and they will mourn for Him (their Messiah) and be in bitterness for their past ways. There will be individual and personal self-judgment—families apart, and wives apart—and, as we read, "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness." And here

will ever lie the basis of Israel's hopes ; for they would be no better off, though back in their own land, than they were among the Gentiles if their sin and unbelief were allowed to remain unjudged and to continue. But spiritual and moral restoration is what awaits them, as it is written, " Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean ; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you," etc. (Ezek. xxxvi. 25).

God's principle of blessing is the same now, whether for the unconverted or for the straying Christian. We find the Apostle writing to the saints at Corinth : " Who is he then that maketh me glad, but the same which is made sorry by me " (2 Cor. ii. 2). The Apostle had written a letter calling attention to gross evil in their midst, and that letter had been the means of leading the saints into a condition of sorrow and self-judgment. They were made sorry by the Apostle's letter, but it was that *godly* sorrow which wrought repentance unto salvation ; and this kind of sorrow gladdened the Apostle's heart. There was indeed good hope for such saints. However great the distress may be, there is always hope when men deliberately turn from their sins to God, in true repentance.

It is in this way that the valley of Achor becomes a door of hope ; when there is real soul-exercise, men rise from distress on account of their sins to lead a new life. And the only way back to happiness for a Christian who has gone astray is through the valley of self-judgment and humiliation. Great as is the grace of God revealed in the cross of Christ, there is but little use in talking much about it to people who are already familiar with it as a doctrine, unless there be evidence of a work in the conscience in a complete breaking

away from all known sin. This is the sure result where a soul is really in the presence of God.

May He search our hearts and lead us in the way everlasting.

T. H. (*China.*)

## The Cross.

A Word to all Christians.

THE Lord Jesus, at the turning-point in His ministry, when the nation of Israel had practically rejected Him as the Messiah, the Christ, the Son of God, the King of Israel, told His disciples that they were no longer to say that He was Jesus, the Christ; and He put before them His sufferings and death as the Son of man, and His resurrection after three days. In short, He put before them *the Cross* (Matt. xvi. 20, 21). He said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (verse 24). Many would follow Him in the flesh, but this is impossible; "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground *and die*, it abideth alone" (John xii. 24). There is no way of following the Lord, save through the cross.

The Apostle writing to the Corinthians says, he determined not to know anything among them save Jesus Christ, and *Him crucified* (1 Cor. ii. 2). And in the second epistle he could say, "Henceforth know we no man after the flesh; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more" (2 Cor. v. 16). The Lord Jesus Himself had said, "The flesh profiteth nothing" (John vi. 63). We find in Romans viii. 8, 9 that "they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." In Galatians ii. 20 the Apostle

(Continued on page 153.)



writes, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." Again in chapter vi. 14, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

When God gave to Israel, under the first covenant, ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary, which were patterns of things in the heavens, we are told that "almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood there is no remission" (Heb. ix.). But Christianity is not an earthly or a worldly system, though man has made it so, and many Christians, alas! have fallen into the snare. God did not accept Cain's offering, which was the fruit of his own labours (Gen. iv.), nor does He accept such at the present time, be it never so costly and precious in the sight of men.

Do we not see to-day, at best, very much of Cain, and very little of Abel? Had Abel been willing to mix his offering with that of Cain, Cain would not have slain his brother. So it is now: Cain and Abel are, figuratively speaking, at peace with one another; but it is a false peace. Let us remember the word, "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you" (1 John iii. 13); and the Lord Jesus said, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you" (John xv. 18, 19).

Moreover, there is no true worship short of the cross—of death and resurrection. The Christian has the cross behind him and the glory before him, and he worships the Lord in the glory. There is manifestly

no room for any admixture of flesh and spirit there ; “ God is a Spirit ; and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth ” (John iv. 24). If we glory only in the cross, we leave all this world’s glory behind us ; there is no true Christianity short of this. The admixture of Cain-worship with Abel-worship will never be accepted ; but God judges righteously, and He knoweth the heart. God’s word teaches us that the precious blood of Christ is the only sacrifice acceptable with Him.

It is those who have the cross before them, instead of having it behind them and the glory before them, who can talk of “ giving God *our* best.” In truth, we have nothing to bring but Christ (Heb. x.). The cross now is an empty cross, the grave is an empty grave, and Jesus now is seated at the right hand of God, crowned with glory and honour (Heb. ii.). By faith we see Him there and we await His coming again *for* us, and *with* us, according to His promise (John xiv. 3 ; 1 Thess. iv. 14–18 ; 1 Cor. xv.). We cannot add to the work of Christ, it is a finished work, and every believer is complete in Him, accepted in the Beloved, blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ, chosen in Him before the foundation of the world (Eph., Col., Heb.).

Of old there was the temple in Jerusalem, adorned with goodly stones and gifts, but there is no such thing now ; all that is trodden down and gone. Christ has died and risen again, and God has no house on earth to-day but the saints, as we read, “ whose house are we ” (Heb. iii. 6) ; we are a “ spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ ” (1 Pet. ii.). The world may think otherwise, they may adorn and beautify their

buildings, but let us, beloved brethren, beware of offering "strange fire" to the Lord (Lev. x.). It is true we are all builders in the house of God, but let us take heed how we build. Read carefully 1 Cor. iii.

It is well we should remember that flesh and spirit are contrary the one to the other; law and grace are opposed to each other also (Gal.). For us, Christ and the world have nothing in common, the cross has decided that.

We know there will again be the temple rebuilt in Jerusalem, according to the prophet Ezekiel, but the Christian's place and calling are entirely different, *we* are not of the world even as Christ is not of the world. Christians are a *heavenly* people, not an earthly people as Israel will be in a future day when, after all Christians have been taken to be with the Lord in heaven and the world has been purged by judgment, even the heathen shall be given to Christ for His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession (Ps. ii.).

Beloved, let us ask ourselves on which side of the cross are we. Let us be in spirit, as well as in fact, on the resurrection side; then we shall not want to mix Cain's offering with that of Abel.

R. J. K.

### The Father's Family.

**W**HENCE sprung this wonderful family? At whose suggestion was this relationship formed? It was formed by the One who "is" in the bosom of the Father, and who never has left it, and never will leave it.

Who else could make this wonderful disclosure but the One who, from eternity, dwelt in the warmth and affections of that bosom? It was a revelation made by Him whom the Scripture designates as "the Son of the Father" (2 John 3).

How dear to the heart of the Father is the Son of the Father who has revealed Him! What a wonderful disclosure has been made!—one which was all thought out and determined in the eternal counsels, before the world was. To whom was this disclosure made? Not to the wise and intelligent, but to “babes.” Is not the ground on which it was made contained in the following Scripture, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit” (John xii. 24).

Here we get the fact of the absolute necessity of Christ’s death, also of the oneness of the life of which we partake. At the same time we should note that it is not here a question of *union*, such as we find in the case of the church, the one body, united to Christ in heaven by the Holy Ghost; but of *oneness of life before the Father*. When a grain of wheat is sown, it does not fructify unless it die; but from the small white grain there springs up, in time, the green blade and stalk, upon which are formed many grains.

This beautiful illustration of the blessed Lord’s gives us to understand something of the oneness of the family. Then, again, as Scripture shows us, every one of the members of that family have been “born again,” they have received a new life and a new nature. The basis of this truth of the family is, therefore, the birth tie; they are *born* into the family of God, and they are *His* children, all partakers of the same life and nature.

One cannot doubt, however, that the majority of Christians see only *the Church* in their study of the Scriptures, and miss very largely the truth of *the family*. It is important that we should note, in order to obtain a proper grasp of the truth in this connection, that the

Gospel of John, which treats particularly of *the family* and the *revelation of the Father by the Son*, has a character altogether different from the other three Gospels. This Gospel begins before all time. The Lord's ministry in John takes the soul beyond the cross and Jewish hopes into the wider field connected with His glory as Son of man. But it was only after His death and resurrection, and the coming of the Holy Ghost, that those He ministered to (His disciples) apprehended the true meaning and realized the full power of His ministry.

The majority of believers to-day are—as to their apprehension of the truth this Gospel specially deals with—only where the disciples were when the Lord was upon earth before He had gone to the cross and accomplished redemption. The *revelation of the Father by the Son* is a truth but little understood by them. The sweet intimacy and nearness of the relationship into which grace has introduced the believer, is not experimentally realized by the majority of believers. The Father is known by many only *at a distance*.

But when we come to Scripture we find that, since the cross and the descent of the Holy Ghost consequent upon the Lord's death and resurrection, the believer is brought, through grace, *right into the Father's presence*. The believer is here seen *in the Son before the Father*. It is such an absolute and intimate nearness that we address Him as "Father," and not, as is frequently the habit amongst Christians, as "Heavenly Father," or "Father in heaven." This latter was correct when the Lord was with His disciples on the earth, and when they were looking for the kingdom for which they prayed, "Thy kingdom come."

Moreover we should remember that, since the Lord's death and resurrection and the descent of the Holy

Spirit, the believer is taught to look for "that blessed hope," the coming of the Lord. What occupies him is, not the kingdom, but the One who is coming to take him to Himself *before* the kingdom is established on earth.

Now the Gospel of John clearly shows us the Lord as the stranger upon earth, and our association with Him in that character makes it a portion of the oracles of God most precious to us. Every line carries with it its own divine authority. That Gospel opens by presenting the blessed Lord before creation and above it. He is the Word, the revealer of the Father, "The only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him."

How many of us really know the Father as revealed by the Son of the Father, and that we are children in the Father's family? The Son is the source and sovereign giver of life, and He gives liberty as well as life. It should be remarked that *life* invariably precedes *position*. So in divine truth, the family, composed of all who have life eternal and are the children given by the Father to the Son, precedes the truth of the Church and the children's place in it.

Scripture plainly distinguishes, but does not separate, the truth of the Father's family, which is the teaching of John; and the Church, which, as the body of Christ, is found in the teaching of Paul. The children in that family are members one of another and of the body of Christ also.

So in John xiv. the Lord tells them that He was going to *the Father*. The disciples believed in *God*, as every godly Jew did, and they believed the Lord came from *God*, but their faith did not rise to this new testimony—the revelation of *the Father*. It is well to notice that

though they *thought* they understood (chap. xvi. 29, 30), the Lord well knew that they did not, and could not, until after His death and the coming of the Holy Ghost who would open their understanding and guide them into all truth.

It was, therefore, the Lord's intention to draw them away from merely Jewish ground to a higher elevation, and, as they had known and believed in *God*, so His mind was fully set upon leading them into the knowledge of *the Father*. As another has said, the revelation of *the Father* goes beyond that of *God*. As a child, I am brought where I can have fellowship with the thoughts of the Father and of the Son (1 John i. 1-3).

And how blessed to see that the Lord *fully* declared this relationship immediately He rose from the dead in the message sent to the disciples through the lips of Mary. "I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God" !

J. P. (*Montreal.*)

## State of the Assemblies of God's People.

**A** CORRESPONDENT writes, "You have spoken in various articles recently of the needs of to-day and the felt weakness everywhere. Is there not a remedy, or are we beyond the reach of help?" He also suggests that some of the Lord's servants should give, in a brief article, any special light which may be given them on this important subject.

No doubt pages might be profitably written in answer to this suggestion, but if we may venture to give a very brief reply, for lack of space, we should refer to the words contained in the Lord's message to the church

at Ephesus, "Repent, and do the first works" (Rev. ii. 5).

Here we have two things—repentance, and the practical fruits of repentance. There is but one way of restoration when failure has come in, whether for the individual soul or for the assemblies of God's people, and that is by true, heartfelt contrition and repentance.

But it is in vain to speak of repentance and humiliation unless it is deep and genuine before God; and if it is, it will surely bear the practical fruits shown in doing the "first works." If Christ has really His place in the heart; the practical life, conduct and works of the believer will all flow from love and devotedness to Him.

God's grace is infinite, the power and energy of the Holy Spirit is always the same, but to make these available, there must be the right state of soul; there must be practical godliness and unworldliness, and a single eye for His glory. If this were more so than it is, the whole tone of meetings would be raised; freshness and spiritual power and blessing would be the result. [ED.]

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FRAGMENTS.—Those who dwell in spirit in the heavenly country take the tone of it, and grow in the things wherein they find themselves.

\* \* \* \*

My business is to walk as a Christian, and show the character of Christ, not to set the world right; . . . If I could only set myself and other Christians right, that would be the thing.



## “Follow Me.”

TWO words only, which fell from the lips of the Lord Jesus, but how much they contain for our souls ! Let us ponder over them prayerfully.

Man follows his own pursuits, his ambitious designs, his worldly pleasures ; as to which it may be said that they all perish with the using. But, as for us, we who are redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, let us say from the depth of our souls, “ *For me, it shall be to follow Jesus.* ” Who so worthy of being followed as the One who died for us, who lives in heaven’s glory and watches over us every moment of our life, and who is coming to take us to Himself ?

To Peter, after his fall and restoration, the Lord said these words, “ Follow Me ” (John xxi. 19). But first he had to learn, through bitter experiences, that he had no strength in himself to do so : self-confidence had to be judged and uprooted in his heart.

We take the following profitable remarks on John xiii. 36, 37, from a recent paper, “ Studies at Lausanne ” :

“ In verse 36 we find that Peter desired to know where his Master was going. The Lord replied—not ‘ Thither thou canst not come,’ as He had said to the Jews ; but, ‘ Thou canst not *follow Me now.*’ Yet what encouraging words He adds, ‘ *Thou shalt follow Me afterwards !*’ ‘ Afterwards ’—after all thy experiences, after thy denial, after thy repentance, after thy will is broken, after thy restoration, thou shalt follow Me through life, through death, when everything else shall have disappeared from before thine eyes and thou see none but Jesus only ! (John xxi. 19).

“Peter answered, ‘Lord, why cannot I follow Thee now? I will lay down my life for Thy sake.’ Poor Peter! He had not understood that he would indeed follow the Lord—not after that he, Peter, should have laid down his life for Jesus; but after Jesus should have laid down His life for Peter. Nevertheless, in that same night, Peter, fearing for his life, denied three times the very One for whom he desired to lay it down.”

Such is man; such are we, each one of us, by nature. But the same gracious Saviour that could restore Peter and send him forth in service after he had learned his lesson, can strengthen and, if need be, restore us also. Meantime His word comes to us to-day, “Follow Me.”

F. G. B.

## The Love of God.

**T**HERE are five different ways in which the love of God is brought before us in the Scriptures. In 1 John iv. it is spoken of as being manifested *toward* us by God in sending His Son. He “loved,” He “gave”; and in the gift we have love *manifested*. Then in Romans v. we have the *commendation* of His love. As a sinner I look to the cross at Calvary, and there I see how God commended His love toward me by giving Christ to die for me, and He still commends it.

Then, in 1 John iii. I learn the *manner* of His love in the fact that I am brought into relationship, I belong to the family circle. I belong to a new creation, “old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” I have a new life and a new hope, and at His appearing—the One in whom I am created anew—I shall bear His likeness. Blessed hope!

Then, as a child, I learn the *perfection* of that love,

“herein is love with us made perfect” (1 John iv. 17). This gives boldness, even in view of the day of judgment, because perfect love casts out fear. I know that the One who sits on the judgment seat is none other than the One “who loved me and *gave Himself* for me.”

Then last but not least, in John xvii. 23, we have the *measure* of His love, “Thou hast loved *them* as Thou hast loved me.” If we can measure the Father’s love for His Son—the One in whom He was “well pleased”—then we have the measure of His love for those for whom Christ died. “The Father Himself loveth you” were our Lord’s own words. Would that we felt the constraining power of that love more as we tread the desert sands!

J. B. N. (*New South Wales.*)

## Peace, Grace, and Glory.

THIS rich cluster of the fruits of divine love is given us in Romans v., verses 1, 2.

1. PEACE. Once we were at enmity with God and rebels against Him, now we are reconciled and have peace. It is not a question of peace with our fellow-men, good as that is in its place, but “peace with God.” Wonderful fact that I, a poor sinner saved by grace, can have peace with God—a God of infinite justice, righteousness, holiness and truth: yea, a God who never surrenders one whit of His just claims or lays aside one attribute of His holy nature!

On what ground does this peace rest?—this is a most important question for every soul. The last verse of chapter iv. tells us that Christ was “delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification”; so that the believer’s peace rests on the imperishable and unchanging foundation of the death and resurrection

of Christ. It rests, not on my doings or efforts, but on Christ ; it is all God's work from beginning to end. The result is that, being justified by faith, we *have* peace. This peace is ours, it is a present possession.

Everything in this world may be shaken, but the foundations of the believer's peace never can be. God has been satisfied, yea glorified, by the work done at the cross ; and He has publicly attested His satisfaction by raising Jesus our Lord from the dead, who is now the crowned, glorified Saviour, in heaven. Now this is what the Christian starts with on the road—*peace*, and that peace resting on a foundation that nothing can ever shake.

Reader, does a shade of doubt or uncertainty ever cross your mind ? If so, turn away from yourself and your feelings, and rest by faith on the death and resurrection of Christ, and the most profound peace will be yours.

2. GRACE. By that same Lord Jesus, we have access, by faith, into the grace in which we stand—this is a present and permanent blessing. Grace means “favour”—and in this case it is God's favour, a favour which is better than life. We stand *now* in the favour of God. If God looks at us in ourselves He sees many faults and imperfections ; but, through Christ, we stand before Him, not only freed from our sins and justified, but in divine favour. Such is our present position.

3. GLORY. What troubles many people is, *the future*. And when we consider what the “wrath of God” is, what a solemn outlook for the unbeliever ! But, through Christ, the believer is delivered from the “wrath of God” ; he has believed the “gospel of God,” in which is revealed the “righteousness of God,” which is

on the principle of faith, not of law. Yes, we who had not one shred of righteousness to bring to God, are now reckoned righteous before Him on the principle of faith, God being just in justifying the believer in Jesus. Thus every question between the soul and God is settled—divinely settled in a way perfectly in keeping with God's claims and glory.

So that, whilst we enjoy the present sunshine of the "favour of God," we look on with joyful anticipation to the "glory of God." How blessed—"peace" to commence with, "favour" to go on with, "glory" to end with! As sinners we had "come short of the glory of God": as believers we "rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

Such are the blessed results of the work of our Lord Jesus Christ; may we appreciate them better and make our boast in Him!

F. G. B.

### Remarks on Psalm LXIII.

"A Psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah."

THE psalmist was here realizing that this scene had neither food nor refreshment for his soul. The world, to him, was a dry and thirsty land where no water is. And, how was this? Because he was a "partaker of the divine nature." For, were this not so, he could not possibly have thirsted for God as he did.

And, though this was the character of the world, do we find David indulging in any spirit of discontent? It was far otherwise, for joy and praise was the portion of his soul.

Before proceeding further, let us note what is said in the first verse, "O God, Thou art *my* God." The psalmist knew Him as *his* God. Again, "My soul

thirsteth for Thee.” How precious this is ! The new nature within him was thus expressing itself. This thirst was for nothing less than for God Himself—the sole source of all grace and goodness.

There are two causes in this rich Scripture which drew forth praise. First, “Because Thy lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise Thee” (ver. 3). Here the soul, sensible of God’s lovingkindness, although in a barren land, breaks out in praise. Long afterwards we find Paul and Silas, when in prison and their feet fast in the stocks, singing praises to God. They had God between them and their circumstances.

Secondly, “Because Thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of Thy wings will I rejoice” (ver. 7). God Himself had been the psalmist’s help, and being in the shadow of His wings where there was divine safety, joy was his happy portion.

But in order to have such a blessed experience of soul, it may be said that faith, and a single eye, are needed. Be it so ; and surely both are seen in this Scripture.

Now one of the things standing out distinctly here is found in verse 1, and indeed throughout the psalm, viz., David’s individuality. The words “I” and “my” are freely used ; not “we” and “us.” Has not this a voice for saints in 1921 ? A sad state of things now exists in Christendom ; hence how needful for Christians, individually, to have God Himself, who is light and love—the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ—before the soul. But this is a digression.

In closing, let us come back to our beautiful psalm to note the following suggestive words : “My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, and my mouth shall praise Thee with joyful lips.”

W. J. M. (*Wellington, N.Z.*)

In Psalm lxiii. we see a soul which realizes, in the fullest way possible, what the wilderness is, viz., “*a dry and thirsty land, where no water is.*” In this wilderness the psalmist thirsts after God, and his flesh longs for Him. Then the soul receives a marvellous answer, the same which passed before Moses when he was hidden in the cleft of the rock, “I will make all My goodness pass before thee.” How desirable it is, beloved of the Lord, that we should all receive this answer; but in order to receive it, we must have *begun with the sanctuary*. The believer says here, “To see Thy power and Thy glory, so as I have seen Thee in the sanctuary.” This is the secret of the overflowing joy with which his soul is filled in ver. 7.

How are we to find that which can attract us in this dry and thirsty land, when we have witnessed the splendours of the holy place—these splendours which make us feel all the more the desolate character of the wilderness? Let us begin with the sanctuary, where we find *Him only*, for He fills heaven, whose sole object He is, with His power and glory. Let us be drawn to His person, to Himself, such as He is in the Father’s house; and we will be able to judge, by contrast, what this world is in its true character.

The world can offer nothing to a soul nourished on the perfections of Christ; yea, much more than that, the world then assumes in our eyes such an appearance of desolation and emptiness that we say unhesitatingly as we look upon it, “This place has no attraction for me, it offers me nothing which makes me desire it, for I know, by having visited the sanctuary, the true place of abundance and divine riches.”

But this is not all. The soul compelled to pass through the wilderness and giving an account of the

awful emptiness and void experienced there, has but one thought; that is, to enjoy, on the journey, the things which it has found in the sanctuary. It desires that the Word of God should be made good in its case, "Although I have cast them far off among the nations, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come" (Ezek. xi. 16).

Thus the soul understands that what the sanctuary contains should come down to its level, even in the land of hunger and thirst. It realizes the barrenness of that country; but it remembers that it is precisely in the wilderness that God came of old to set up His tabernacle in the midst of His people. Then, if the believer "thirsts," if the flesh "longs," it is *after Him*, the Lord, and not after "the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlic" of Egypt. It desires to see, in the wilderness, *Jehovah's strength and His glory*, as it had seen them in Him in the sanctuary.

Is, then, this psalm of the wilderness a psalm of affliction? Quite the contrary; it is a psalm of *joy*, of *praise* and of *satisfaction*, "my lips shall praise Thee. . . My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise Thee with joyful lips. . . . In the shadow of Thy wings will I rejoice. . . . The king shall rejoice in God"!

Let us not forget that the whole secret of joy, of praise, and of spiritual growth in our Christian life consists in having begun with the sanctuary. The things which we have seen there must displace, in our eyes and to our souls, all desire to gain a position and an advantage in the dry and thirsty land on which our feet tread. May we all desire this in truth and with our whole heart and soul!

H. R. (*Vevey*.)



## “Fear Not.”

“Fear not; for I have redeemed thee.”

“Fear not; for I am with thee.”

Isaiah xliii. 1, 5.

**I**N the midst of the complete ruin of the nation of Israel, God preserved, nevertheless, a faithful remnant to whom the promises and exhortations of the prophet are addressed. It is just the same now. The ruin of the church is irremediable, the judgment pronounced on the lifeless professing body is rapidly approaching; yet in the midst of the present confusion there are pious souls who are attached to Christ and His Word, and who possess the certainty of His approval and His intervention in power for their final deliverance.

We find in the epistle of Jude the dark picture of the apostasy of Christendom, as well as the resources which remain for faith, viz., (1) “Building up yourselves on your most holy faith” (ver. 20). This is the divine provision in possession of which we must abide so that our souls may be nourished and kept. It is the Word of God which builds us up; we have to hold firmly to the truths which it reveals and which are apprehended by faith.

Then (2) “Praying in the Holy Ghost.” The reading and study of the Word is not sufficient; we need that constant dependence on God which is expressed by prayer (Eph. vi. 18). (3) “Keep yourselves in the love of God.” To continue in the conscious enjoyment of that love in our souls, practical communion with God must be maintained by meditation on the Word and prayer. (4) “Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ,” etc. We go on to meet the Lord who will come to take His saints from the present ruin and misery: it is to such a state of things that this “mercy” applies.

“Fear not ; I have redeemed thee,” says the prophet. In the midst of the hostile nation and in view of God’s judgment which was coming, the pious remnant is exhorted not to fear. God assures them that His favour rests upon them in virtue of redemption. They may be called to pass through fiery trial and the deep waters of affliction ; but they are, nevertheless, the objects of His tender love, “I have redeemed thee ; I have called thee by thy name, thou art Mine.”

This is, indeed, the language of the purest *grace*, which can cast all fear out of the heart of the one who is its object. It is thus that the Good Shepherd acts with His sheep, “He calleth His own sheep by name.” “Fear not, thou worm, Jacob ” (chap. xli. 14) : that poor and insignificant creature has a value for the heart of God. Is it not so with us ? All the blessings of “His own ” flow from what He is in Himself, for He has found in His own heart all the motives to love us.

We may remark here how frequently the words “My,” “Mine,” “I,” etc., are used in these chapters, “Thou art Mine,” “I am the Lord,” “I have loved thee,” etc. Man is entirely put on one side, and God enters the scene in all the fullness of His grace. He is *the Same* ; whatever the condition of His people may be, whatever its misery and its ruin, He acts in grace. Why ? In order to make known His own perfections. He always remains “the Same ” (for it is really a title of God) in His counsels and His promises ; whatever may be the ruin, He will surely fulfil His word.

The pious remnant, to whom the prophet addresses himself, will pass through all these experiences at the end. They will be led to rest entirely on the resources of grace, and that is what will make them precious to the heart of God. They will be gathered from the ends

of the earth where they had been dispersed on account of their disobedience, and brought into a place of rest where "the children of wickedness shall afflict them no more." Then God will rejoice with joy in His redeemed people and will "rest in His love."

In all these ways of God towards His poor people we find the type of those which He follows with us. If His glory shines in this patient work of His love towards His earthly people, how much more towards the Church which the Lord will present to Himself, without spot or wrinkle, as His beloved bride! The infinite wisdom of God will be manifested in her in the coming ages.

May we understand that we are responsible to profit by all the resources which divine grace has placed within our reach in order that we may glorify the Lord whilst waiting for the full display of His "mercy" towards us at His coming.

J. B.

## **Fellowship with God and with one another.**

**O**F all the privileges conferred upon the believer through the work of Christ, none is more blessed than that of fellowship with God.

In 1 Cor. i. 9 we read: "God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord." And finding this where we do in the epistles, precludes the thought we might perhaps have had if we had found it in Ephesians or Colossians, that it belongs only to those advanced in the truth. It is a beautiful characteristic description of the Christian calling.

It is well known that the word used in the original is translated in our ordinary version both by "fellowship" and "communion," so, in this suggestive paper,

we shall use these words interchangeably without further explanation. Could we have a better start? "God hath called us unto the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ," and our privilege is to be

" Learning of Him to walk in grace  
And fellowship with God."

When we come to the first Epistle of John, we have another feature of this fellowship and, here we may again say, one suitable to the place where it is found, "Fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ." Surely this is an expansion of the blessing. John declares that the object of writing his epistle is, that his children in the Lord may have fellowship with the apostles, and that their joy may be full. The apostles were already in the enjoyment, by the Holy Spirit, of this communion with the Father and the Son, but it was not to be confined to them, they desired no monopoly of the truth, or of the enjoyment consequent upon it.

In similar grace, the Lord Himself, as we see in John xv. 11, makes His final communications, "that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full."

This communion is in the light, where God is, and is the privilege of every believer, whether enjoyed or not, because the work of Christ has brought us there. And there, in the light, we share with every other Christian the enjoyment of the things of God and of Christ, according to the measure of our spiritual capacity. But what words can adequately describe what this communion with God is, and the blessings flowing from it? How often have we enjoyed this fellowship with one another—a fellow-believer never met before perhaps—and together have tasted the sweetness of the things of Christ and of God, that are the common portion of

“all saints,” until some such question as, “What denomination do you belong to?” has marred the joy, to our mutual loss and sorrow. But, primarily, of course, these two aspects of fellowship belong to all Christians.

We append a few sentences from another, that beautifully express the truth of 1 John i.: “Thus we have fellowship with the Father in the possession of the Son, and fellowship with the Son in the possession of the Father. How could our joy but be full? Even heaven and glory everlasting dwindle in comparison, but we have these too.”

If we turn to the Acts and read the refreshing picture of the early Church immediately after Pentecost, we find (chap. ii. 42) that it is said of the newly converted disciples, “They continued stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.” Two things are linked together here by the Spirit of God that cannot be separated without loss—the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship. But they *have* been separated, alas, and the doctrine corrupted; the bright picture of that early assembly did not even last out the apostles’ days on the earth, as we know.

Returning again to first Corinthians, the epistle of church order and church government, we find in the tenth chapter another fellowship named, “The communion of the body of Christ.” A different aspect of Christian fellowship, but belonging to and enjoyed by all who participate in what has been referred to. The 16th verse of this chapter is the only Scripture where the expressions occur, “The communion of the blood of Christ, the communion of the body of Christ.” Here also is the only place where the expression is found, “The Lord’s table.”

Undoubtedly the view of the Lord's table given us here embraces the whole Christian company at all times, and not only when gathered together; for the analogy referred to as to "Israel after the flesh" eating of the sacrifices is, no doubt, the peace-offering, of which all Israel partook. In so doing they were in fellowship with the altar; and so also as to the cup and the bread at the Lord's table, all true Christians are contemplated as participating. Not, however, as members of some particular company, or assembly, or so-called church, but as in the fellowship of the body of Christ. The order in this passage (the cup being first partaken of) is not the order of the supper, as is well known, but would appear to be what may be called the sacrificial order, because of the reference to Israel.

Separation from evil is plainly taught, for the import evidently is that the Corinthians were to be true to their calling of separation from all that is contrary to God, and were not to have fellowship with the tables of demons, which was the only other then existent.

The contrast was simple enough in those days, when the Lord's table stood out in sharp contrast to the table of demons, but it is not so easy a matter now, when the Church's earthly testimony is in ruins, and numberless divisions have made the path most difficult for a Christian desiring to do the will of God. Yet, in view of all this, we can surely count on God to give the needed light and wisdom from His Word. T. R.

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It is of *all-importance* that our inner life should be kept up to the height of our outward activity, else we are near some spiritual fall.

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Christ has purchased us too dearly to give us up.

## The One who is coming.

**I**T will be a marvellous scene when Christ presents the Church to Himself, when the last Adam takes that bride of His to share His glory. Ah! not only that, but the oneness with Himself that characterizes us. What the heart feels is our being looked at as belonging to Himself, taken out of Himself—that the Father sees us, not only in a relationship that links us up with the Son of His love in the glory, but in such a relationship that He could not do without us. He, the Bridegroom, must have the bride up there.

We have to lay a stress on that word “surely”—surely, *I, I* come quickly. Oh, it is the sweetness of that “*I*” presented there that so touches the heart! “*I* come,” not “*I* stand at the door knocking,” but the Lord speaks of Himself coming for His bride. Ought He not to be jealous if He is not the only object before our hearts? We have here not alone, “*I* am the bright and morning star,” but, “*I* come”—presenting Himself with all the savour, all the attractiveness of what He is.

Have not some of us known Him for years, and have we not found the attractiveness of His beauty deepening in our souls? What is all we have learned of Him here when compared with the thought of beholding Himself, looking on His face, seeing the One who died for us, the One that loved and watched over us from infancy—oh, with what tender gentleness watched over us!

“Surely *I* come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.” An important thing comes out here; that not only should we have communion with His mind in all that meets us in the wilderness, but there is another sort of communion to be enjoyed—communion

responsive to the desire of His heart, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." The effect of the bright light shining down has been, *that we have found earth would not do* for our future course, and we know, because we have it revealed, that He means to come and take us to heaven. This thought has given joy in persecution.

But what is the thought of being in heaven compared with the thought of His coming to take us there? At times our hearts are drooping, and we are "hardly bested;" but what is anything we have to pass through here, if one has the consciousness of being able to respond to Him, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Thou dost desire, Lord, to take up Thy people, and most blessed it will be to be up there; but, ah! it is Thyself my soul craves for.

Is the desire of the Lord Jesus to come, which is put forth here, burning in my heart? If I know His desire to come, am I able to say, "Even so, come"? It is really having communion with that heart of His, whose every thought is the Father's will, and who has been waiting eighteen hundred years to come, and take up the people given Him by the Father—He the Bridegroom, they the bride!

G. V. W.

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*Fragments.*—The blessed Lord never fails in sympathy and kindness for the inevitable sorrows of the way. If He takes away what was long an object, and for our hearts at least a prop, He always comes in to cheer and comfort the spirit. He alone we can never lose, who is really nearer to us than any human tie.

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The armour should be put on before the battle, not just at the battle.



## “I have loved you.”

**W**ERE we to ask the question, why these four words are true of us—of all true believers—we should have to give the answer found in the seventh chapter of Deuteronomy, which amounts to this, “I have loved you because I have loved you.” God’s love to His people is a love which found its source and origin in His own heart. *We* love because we see something which we think lovable in the object: God loves without a motive, in pure sovereign grace.

But, alas, how easily His people forget this and grow cold and lukewarm. In the last of the Old Testament prophets, Malachi, we find that he begins with the Word of the Lord, “I have loved you,” but the only answer was one of cold and heartless complaint, “Wherein hast Thou loved us?” And the Church’s first failure, as expressed in the message to Ephesus was, “Thou hast left thy first love”; its last and worst phase is what we find in Laodicea—lukewarm indifference to Christ, *lack of heart*. Let us take warning and beware of this.

But how precious the Lord’s Word to Philadelphia (Rev. iii. 9), “I have loved thee.” Has He not proved it in the most blessed and wonderful way—by His death upon the cross, by His present unceasing service as our High Priest with God and our Advocate with the Father? And will He not do so when He comes to call His saints to meet Him in the air (1 Thess. iv. 15–18), and when, in that coming day of glory, He will, so to speak, spread the table in heaven and come forth and serve those whom He finds watching (Luke xii. 37)?

Well may we join in that beautiful doxology given

expression to by the Apostle John, to Jesus Christ as the One that loves us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and say from the very depths of our souls, "To Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

### "I . . . have the Keys."

Revelation i. 18.

**I**N the midst of all the confusion and babel of tongues in Christendom to-day, it is a happy thing for the believer in Christ to be able to fall back upon the truth contained in the title of this paper.

"And when I saw Him I fell at His feet as dead;  
And He laid His right hand upon me saying, Fear not;  
I am the first and the last, and the living One:  
And I became dead, and behold, I am living to the ages  
of ages, and *have the Keys of death and of hades.*"  
(Rev. i. 12-19, New Trans.)

To the Apostle John, who was the disciple whom Jesus loved and whose head rested upon the breast of the blessed Lord at the last supper, the vision revealed to him of the appearance of the One in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks must have been very terrifying, until he felt His right hand laid upon him, calming and pacifying his spirit.

In view of the ruin of the church, viewed as under man's responsibility, and the chaotic state of Christendom generally—the enemy leading men and women on to lay all sorts of claims to power to delve into the unseen world—how blessed it is for the believer to know that there is only *One Person* existing, in either time or eternity, who has the power to open and to shut (Rev. iii. 7). The keys of death and of the unseen spirit-world are not held by fallen and sinful men and women. They are not held by the Vatican or by

Canterbury, by Sir Oliver Lodge or Sir Conan Doyle. The keys to unlock and open up the future are not held by Geneva or the Hague, by London, Paris or Washington.

Let no one be deceived : this power is alone in the hands of Him who is the sole authoritative arbiter of the eternal destiny of the human race. The One who holds the keys is the same One who *became* flesh ; and who *became* dead : it was His voluntary act. But before the latter took place He was *made* sin ; and He who was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross (when He “made propitiation for the whole world”), was *made* both Lord and Christ. All authority over death and the unseen world is in His hands.

If, then, the keys of death and of the unseen spirit-world are alone in the hands of the One who was seen in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, referred to in the Scripture quoted, under what controlling power are those who pretend to call up the spirits of the departed, and allow assumed intercourse between a lot of foolish curiosity-seekers and these so-called spirits ? There can surely be but one answer to this question, and it is this, that it is none other than a work of Satan and of demons.

Let not the reader think that the influences at work in the séances of Spiritism are all the outcome of trickery, for such is not the case ; although there is a good deal of trickery, sleight of hand and illusion. The system is demoniacal, and demons can, and do, impersonate the dead. We are told in Scripture (Deut. xviii. 11) of persons who seek information from the dead, and who are called “necromancers,” and “all who do these things are an abomination unto the Lord” (verse 12). The mediums, generally of the female sex, who are

wholly given up to satanic power and indwelt by demons, procure their messages from demons, who personate the dead and imitate their voice, etc., but they have no power to communicate with the departed who inhabit the unseen spirit-world.

The Apostle Paul, in his first letter to his son Timothy, chapter four, verses 1 and 2, gives a warning as follows : “ But the Spirit speaks expressly, that in latter times some shall apostatize from the faith, giving their mind to deceiving spirits and teachings of demons ” (New Trans.).

In conclusion, the writer would urge his readers to be on their guard, especially at the present time, against the awful power of Satan and his crafty, insidious and ceaseless activity. This makes it all the more necessary for both writer and readers to be sober, to be vigilant, and to be strong in the Lord ; and, as it is written, to “ put on the whole armour of God that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places ” (Ephes. vi. 10-13).

J. P. (*Montreal*).

### Strength.

They go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God (Ps. lxxxiv. 7).

THE strength of the servant of Christ, which he draws continually from its source, resembles electricity, by which such great results are now obtained. A central station produces this power and suitable wires convey it to the point required. When these wires become deteriorated, the current is interrupted and consequently the power from the station is diminished.

Those who, by means of the wires, receive the light or energy, do not notice this deterioration until they are suddenly enveloped in darkness or their machines cease to work.

Often the Lord's servant himself is the last to perceive a loss of power. He may, like Samson, have lost his strength without knowing that for a long time "the Lord was departed from him." How necessary it is, then, to watch over ourselves continually, so that the enemy may not gain an advantage over us by his wiles !

But, besides the strength which *is in God* and on which we have continually to draw, there is, in addition, a strength which God *gives* and with which we need to be supplied. We have set out here below on a *path* which should lead us to a definite end ; we are engaged in a *work* which has for its object the house of God, and we are carrying on a *warfare* which ought to enable us to overcome the obstacles which the enemy opposes to us.

Now God provides us with strength for one or other of these things, and often for two at once. The poor Remnant of Judah under Nehemiah had in one hand a trowel and hammer to build the wall, whilst with the other they held their arms. Abraham leaned with one hand on the pilgrim's staff and with the other he held the sword which won the victory over the kings. Caleb continued to *walk* (God taking care of his shoes) and was still as active at the end as at the beginning of his journey, as ready to *war* in order to possess himself of Hebron as to traverse the desert. "I am," said he, "as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me : as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out, and to come in" (Joshua xiv. 11).

The strength given to the believer is capable of being increased, of remaining stationary, or of decreasing as a consequence of his neglecting to renew his supplies or of allowing his sword to become blunted through having failed to sharpen its edge (Eccles. x. 10). In such a case he will only recover his strength by humiliation and by constant meditation on the Word of God.

The *normal* state of the Christian—yet, alas, by no means the frequent one—is to “go from strength to strength.” We have seen that, in order to realize this, we must be in continual communication with the source of strength, we must “keep ourselves unspotted from the world,” and continue in the service, the walk and the warfare of faith. Let us add that another thing is necessary also, namely, to walk continually in the paths of the Lord, “Blessed is the man whose strength is in Thee; in whose heart are the ways.”

The Christian often meets with paths which would lead him astray under the pretence of avoiding fatigue, of shortening his way, or of making the journey more agreeable. Such are the world's paths, as to which those who return to them must say, “We have turned every one to his own way.” When we follow paths which lead us astray we lose all strength.

There is in the Swiss mountains a path which is called “the strangers' tomb.” It seems at first sight much more attractive than the ordinary path. But woe to him who is caught in it! This path leads to a precipice. Warnings have not failed to be given to these unfortunate misguided ones who turn that way. Nevertheless, each year a new catastrophe comes to warn these rash climbers of the danger of not having had at heart the well-tried and beaten paths.

The paths of God are beaten paths. We find there the footsteps of the faithful who go up to the house of God to celebrate the "solemn feasts." These are the paths of the sanctuary. The pilgrims who walk in them mutually encourage each other to reach the end. When the heart is on the beaten paths we do not lose our strength. Hope sustains us, faith rests on an object which gives us strength. We may indeed meet and pass through a "valley of Baca"; but the pilgrims undertake it without fear, for they recognize in it the beaten path which others have walked in before them, and which has led them to the desired end. Let us not fear the beaten paths—paths of happiness and joy, in which our strength increases instead of diminishing, in the measure in which we make use of them. These paths lead to the house of the Lord on Mount Zion—that mountain which is the place and centre of triumphant grace, and of the royal power of our Lord Jesus Christ.

H. R.

### The Titles 'Son of God' and 'Son of man.'

THE blessings which are connected with the characters of Jesus as Son of God and Son of man, would not be realized if these two titles were not united in one and the same Person: nevertheless they are quite distinct from each other. The Lord Jesus is called *Son* in two ways—first, He is the eternal Son of the Father, He who has created all things and who has been sent down here. Then He is the Son of God in this world, in this relationship of Son, inasmuch as He is Man in this world. Nevertheless, it is one and the same Person who unites this double glory in Himself.

With the first of the two relationships of which we speak, namely, the eternal relationship of Son with the Father, is connected the measure of the Father's love and the perfect revelation of the Father; then the power of divine life—"In Him was life"—the power demonstrated in His life of perfect holiness here below, and definitely in resurrection (Rom. i. 4); and which also shows itself in quickening us. There is seen there the grace, the perfect revelation of the Father (John i. and xiv.), the power of life, and the special relationship of Son with the Father.

Now, in becoming Son of man, the Son brought all these things into humanity, in human nature, in His own Person amongst men. Then He communicates this life to His people, He becomes the life of men according to grace; and having put away sin for them, He baptizes them with the Holy Ghost. He does so in such a way that they possess this new life and, by the Holy Ghost, are in the relationship in which He Himself, the Son, is, as Man. They are *sons*; the Father loves them as He loves Jesus; we see and we know the Father in Him.

There is still another truth which is connected with this title of Son of man. As Son of God, born on earth, Jesus is also anointed as King in Zion (Ps. ii.). Having been rejected in this character (although He will surely vindicate His title in this respect later on), His rights are displayed under the character of *Son of man*.

Now God has destined man, in Him and with Him, to be the heir of all things, in heavenly glory. Rejected in His position as Messiah, He takes up the wider one of Son of man; suffering first, but then raised and glorified (see Psalm viii., cited in the New Testament also Daniel vii.). We see in the Gospels the transition

(Continued on page 185.)



from the title of Messiah to that of Son of man ; which, moreover, He always takes Himself.\*

John's point of view is a little different, because he begins with the Lord's divine nature, and because he views His rejection as the beginning of a greater and more excellent manifestation of the glory of His Person. As Son of man He must suffer for man, and He is heir of all that the counsels of God have designed for man, the One under whose feet all things will be put. Also, He connects us with Himself as the second man, the last Adam. As Son of God, He is in relationship with *the Father*.

J. N. D.

(Translated from the French.)

### Accommodation.

**I**N looking over the newspaper reports of the recent Church Congress at Birmingham, we cannot fail to be struck by the fact that the professing church is sliding down an inclined plane towards the apostasy from biblical and primitive Christianity, of which Scripture warns us. The key-note of most of the speeches may be found in the word "accommodation"—How shall the church accommodate itself to a new age with new ideas and new ideals? How may its services be best altered and accommodated so as to make them attractive to the masses?

And even still more grave are the questions now at issue in Christendom relating to the fundamental truths of Christianity, such as the Deity of our Lord, the inspiration and integrity of the Bible, and many others.

After all, the professing church—we mean Christendom as a whole—is a compromise. It has sunk to the

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\* Jesus always takes the title "Son of man" in contrast with that of "Christ," which He only gives Himself once, that is, at Sychar (John iv. 26) Coll. Writ.

level of the world, adopted the world's ways, and in order to get the world's patronage and money, it must accommodate itself to the world's tastes and wishes.

But, if we are to judge of all these things aright and to view them in a true light as they are *before God*, as *He* sees them, we must have that spiritual intelligence which alone can be had in communion with God. Why are men so adrift as to what is right, what is pleasing to God, and what is not? Why is their great aim to please *men*, not God?

The simple answer to these questions is, that without faith it is impossible to please God, and without a new and divine nature it is impossible to know what is suitable to Him. How well this is expressed in the words of the Apostle Paul, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. ii. 14). Unless that great change of which our Lord spoke to Nicodemus called "new birth" has taken place, man has no spiritual capacity either to receive or to understand the things of God, because he is still "the natural man," unconverted, unregenerate.

But the progress of the apostasy in Christendom is a very solemn and serious consideration. The Apostle John, the last of the inspired writers, brings before us in his gospel truths which are a divinely-given safeguard, well suited to keep us in this day of drift and compromise. The very first words of his gospel present to us Christ, the eternal Son, the eternal Word, a distinct person of the Holy Trinity, who was God and was with God, eternally and before all time. In divine love and grace the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth.

It has been well said that the Deity of our Lord shines like a sunbeam all through Scripture. No less real was His pure and spotless humanity : God and man in one person. So also in his epistle the same Apostle begins, without preface or address to any particular church, with the remarkable words, "That which was from the beginning." It was Christ Himself. He then goes on to show the reality of Christ's Person when in this world, as attested by witnesses who had heard, seen, contemplated, and handled Him.

What men call "development" has no place here, because the eternal Word, who is outside all dispensations and periods of time, knows no change. "I am the Lord, I change not" (Mal. iii. 6). Thus the glory of His person as the eternal Son, as well as Son of David, Son of man, here in this world, can never change. Nor can it be comprehended or fathomed by man, even by the most profound thinker ; so that all the petty activity of the mind of man and his changing ideas, come to nothing here.

But, another truth which the Apostle John gives prominence to is the truth of eternal life, a life given to every believer, in God's grace. This life dwelt ever in the eternal Word, it was fully manifested in Him in this world, and it is communicated to us. This is indeed something that is unchangeable in a world of change.

Now the Person of Christ is the foundation of all true Christianity. If the truth of His Deity or of His pure and spotless humanity be called in question, the very foundations of the Christian faith are destroyed. Hence this same Apostle gives the most peremptory instructions to "the elect lady," in his second epistle, to the effect that if anyone came not bringing the true

doctrine of Christ, she was not to receive such an one into her house, or even to bid them God speed. To do so would be to partake of their evil deeds. This may not suit men's minds in the present day of compromises, they may think it far too narrow and rigid, but he who desires to be loyal to Christ, will listen to God's Word and feel bound to act upon it.

And further, looking over these speeches at the Congress, we cannot fail to be struck by the absence of this very essential principle of *obedience* to God and His Word. It is, with most of the speakers, a question of how the masses can be induced to go to church, and to religious services which would be to their liking. These services must, therefore, be made such as "the man in the street" would appreciate. Where is obedience to God's Word, to His mind and will, contained in it—where is a "thus saith the Lord" in all this?

Now if it were a question of seeking to reach the masses with the blessed gospel of Christ—of showing them their lost condition and their need of a Saviour, and lifting up before them a crucified and risen Christ—one could heartily go with that. But the object is not that, but rather to attract them to *religious services*: it is *outward*, the *heart and conscience* of the sinner are not reached or touched. The truth is that, short of that great moral change of which we have already spoken, namely, being "born again," born of water (figure of the Word of God) and of the Spirit, all religious performances or attendance on religious observances as a stepping-stone to heaven are mere empty and lifeless forms.

But the end of the present dispensation is approaching quickly, and the dark shadows of the apostasy are falling upon Christendom with appalling rapidity.

May the God of all grace keep His people humble, dependent, valuing His inspired Word more every day ; and getting from it that help, strength and wisdom which alone can avail to preserve them in an evil day.

F. G. B.

## The Father and the Son.

“ Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah ; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I shall tell thee of ” (Gen. xxii. 2).

THIS chapter is a wondrous picture of the Father giving the Son, and the Son as the obedient One doing the Father's will. One has often felt the depth of those words, twice repeated, “ And they went both of them together.” It was the Father's will to give the beloved Son ; and the Son says, “ Lo, I came to do Thy will, O God.” And why ? In order that the Father may be glorified (John xvii.), and that life and glory may be the blessed possession of those chosen in the Son before the foundation of the world (Eph. i.). These loved ones were the Father's gift to Jesus.

Father in all Thy wondrous ways,  
Thy glory and Thy greatness shine ;  
Thy smallest work Thy power displays,  
And manifests a hand divine.

But oh ! the love that gave Thy Son—  
*There* glory sheds her brightest rays ;  
He who is Thy beloved One,  
Thy joy from all eternal days.

Thou gav'st Him, Father, and He came,  
Obedient to Thy holy will ;  
His joy it was, through death and shame,  
Thy blessed purpose to fulfil.

*Thy* love, *His* love together go,  
Into those depths where love has found  
Loved objects—and it now can flow,  
Unhindered, free, in grace profound.

And when those loved ones Thou shalt bring,  
 Where joy undying fills the breast:  
 There love—responsive love—will sing  
 Thy praises, in *Thy* home of rest.

M. B.

## The Paradoxes of Faith.

“As unknown, and yet well known; as dying and behold we live; as chastened and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor yet making many rich; as having nothing and yet possessing all things” (2 Cor. vi. 9-10).

**R**EAD the whole passage, dear reader, from the third verse to the thirteenth of this wonderful chapter, and you cannot fail to be struck by the character of the Apostle's exhortations.

Confining our comments to the verses quoted above, we venture to say that Christianity alone can produce such paradoxes, and only Christianity can explain them.

What can the man of common sense say to such a statement as this, “Unknown, and yet well known,” or, “dying, and behold we live”? And again, “as poor, yet making many rich,” or “having nothing, yet possessing all things”? And so through all these expressions of practical experience, paradoxical as they appear, we ask, How are they to be understood? The secret of the whole passage is *faith*, a living faith in God, who calls things that are not, as though they were, and enables those who trust in Him to do the same, in the measure of their faith.

God had Himself spoken to Saul of Tarsus, and had revealed His Son in him, and to him. Doubtless, therefore, the Apostle's ability to help others was by the reckoning and power of *faith*, the conception of Christ he possessed in his own soul, and his personal enjoy-

ment of the unsearchable riches of Christ. Where else could he learn such a mode of reckoning, such a conception of things, as this ?

Peter also lets out the secret when dealing with the helpless beggar at the gate of the temple. He says, "Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have give I unto thee." And what were these gifts ? They were such as silver and gold could not buy, and vastly different from the expectations of the poor cripple, when he first fastened his eyes upon the Apostles. The mercy and power of God were at the call of faith in the Name of Jesus, the risen Christ ; and the glory of God was manifested in the 'walking' and 'leaping' and 'praising' man, so well known previously as the miserable mendicant at the temple's gate.

The world around us is unsatisfied and thirsting for something it has not. Every day testifies to its vain search for happiness and satisfaction. Bubbles are floating through the air, promising a panacea for the numerous ills that afflict all classes of men, but only to burst when grasped and add to the bitterness of life.

Where, then, shall wisdom and satisfaction be found ? What is "that good thing for the sons of men, which they should do under heaven all the days of their life" ? (Eccles. ii. 3). Is there no such thing as satisfaction and contentment to be known in this world ?

Let the Scripture with which we began speak, for neither logic nor arithmetic can supply us with a rule for this mode of reckoning. We often spend our time in vain regrets over our inability to help others, and perhaps we think that if we had increased possessions that would be the solution of the problem. Certainly the needs are great, Christian experience is admittedly low, and spiritual poverty abounds ; but the source upon

which Paul drew is open to us to-day, namely, the inexhaustible, unsearchable riches of Christ.

The Lord Jesus cried, on the last day, the great day of the Feast of Tabernacles, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believeth on Me . . . out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive." This is the first essential if we are to be dispensers of blessing in this world. Our own thirst must be quenched, and we are then put into connection, by the Holy Spirit, with the wellspring of life and blessing that is in Christ.

Is it not more blessed to give than to receive? Well, grace has put us among the givers. We need not repine because we have so little to give. The secret of Philippians iv. 11-13 is not confined to Apostles. All things are *in* Christ, all things *with* Christ, and all things *through* Christ. Here is a bank with reserves upon which we can draw without any fear of exhausting the capital.

The world may adjudge us to have given up much and to have got little or nothing in return. (Alas! that any child of God can get so far away from the Lord as to think so too.) But faith reckons with God, and learns, little by little, the true meaning of the word, "All things are your's; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are your's; and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

May the Lord make us more apt scholars in this school, where we can never cease to learn the resources that are ours in Christ, and thus follow Him more closely in the path of faith.

T. R.



## Prophecy.

**I**T is important to remember that the true key to the understanding of prophecy is to be found in the truth contained in such Scriptures as Psalm ii. and cx. ; God's ultimate purpose being to set His King (His Son) upon His holy hill of Zion. Whatever may be the tumultuous rage of the nations, joined by the apostate part of the nation of Israel, yet, in spite of all, God's purposes and counsels for the glory of His Son will certainly be carried out.

*Now* the Lord Jesus is sitting upon the Father's throne, not yet upon His Own throne. He is waiting until the moment comes, when, in accordance with the Father's will, He will "ask" and get, "the nations for His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession."

Prophecy gives us a view of the wonderful drama or series of events which lead up to the full accomplishment of these purposes of God. Meantime, nothing that happens in the world can possibly frustrate or change what God has in view, and all man's busy activity, as well as his selfish and ambitious schemes, can but accomplish what God permits and wills.

What stability and calm this should give us in a day of upheaval and revolution like the present ! And it is precious and comforting to note that our Lord in His prayer (John xvii.) said that, while He did not pray for the world—for the time had not yet come to ask for dominion over the world according to Ps. ii.—He did pray for those whom the Father had given to Him out of the world, as the special treasure and object of His love.

[ED.]

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## FROM THE SCRIPTURE OF TRUTH.

JANUARY, 1921.

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The prayerful study of the Word of God, under the teaching of the Holy Spirit, is much needed in the present day : it is only thus that we can derive profit from written or oral ministry.

Four pages in the centre of the magazine are devoted to Gospel articles ; these can be easily detached, if desired, by bending the wire binding.

If each reader would kindly remember the work in prayer and recommend the magazine to someone else, this would help to spread the truth.

F. G. BURKITT, *Editor*.

4, TEMPLE VILLAS,  
PALMERSTON ROAD, DUBLIN.

## The Work of God in Russia.

A PAPER, entitled *The Friend of Russia*, published in Philadelphia, U.S.A., gives an interesting account of the work of God in that country. It is edited by Pastor W. Fettler, a native of Russia; and the doctrines—which members of the mission of which he is the leader are expected to agree to—are sound.

It is a matter for sincere thankfulness that a good many Russians, most of whom have been converted and educated in America, are being enabled to return to their native land to spread the glad tidings of the Saviour's love.

The circumstances are trying in many ways owing to the state of the country, as we may well understand. It is evident that the Greek Orthodox Church, which is very corrupt, has largely lost its hold over the people, and this leaves the way clear for the preacher of the Gospel. The Bolshevik Government, materialistic and atheistical though it be, has not been able to do away with the production of the Scriptures, on account of the public demand for them.

Formerly, the Holy Synod of the Greek Church had the monopoly of printing the Bible, but the Soviet authorities have 'nationalized' the work of printing it, and turned over their privilege of selling and circulating it to the 'sectarians'—Baptists, Stundists, etc.

According to the account given, there seems to be a great desire to hear the word of God, but the number of preachers at present able to undertake the work is very limited, considering how vast the field is.

Let us pray for blessing on the work of God in Russia.

[ED.]

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W. M. ROBERTS.

*Edited by*

F. G. BURKITT,

4, TEMPLE VILLAS,

PALMERSTON ROAD, DUBLIN.

## The Seventh Day Adventists.

**I**N view of the activity of this American sect in many places and the large sums spent on propaganda work, our readers would do well to beware of having anything to do with them.

The following, penned by the late J. N. Darby during one of his visits to Canada, exposes the heterodox nature of their doctrines, and they have not improved since then :—

“We know well the system of the Adventists in the United States. . . . They are numerous but divided. They had announced the coming of the Lord for a day named in 1844, which has failed. The greater part are entirely removed from all the truths of Christianity : one party among them, more orthodox—separate in the large towns, but in small localities walking together. But all hold the darkest errors. We do not go to heaven *at all* : we sleep until Christ comes ; then He establishes His reign in resurrection on the earth, and then only we have eternal life, which is not possessed now at all ; we have only the promise of it. That is the doctrine of those who have the least departed from the truth. The others deny the immortality of the soul, and a good number amongst them, almost all Christian truths. They observe the sabbath on the seventh day of the week. . . . The mass of Adventists is composed of the worst heretics of the country, denying, at bottom, all that is important in Christianity, and really infidel. . . . I hope the brethren will avoid them. . . . May God keep them in His goodness.”—*Letters J. N. D.* Vol. ii., 469.



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By **THE EDITOR.**

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**MARCH, 1921.**

**VOL. X. No. 3.**

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## Brief Prophetic Notes.

**A**S we look abroad upon the world to-day, we see unrest and a spirit of lawlessness everywhere. In Russia, chaos and anarchy reigns—a forecast of what will be still more universal after the Lord comes for His saints (2 Thess. ii, etc.). In the East, generally, there are constant threatenings of war and rebellion.

No doubt Russian Bolshevism will give place to some kind of imperial rule, as soon as the period of God's chastening on the former ruling classes has come to an end. Russia is to be the chief of the great North-eastern confederation of Powers which will take part in the final attack on Jerusalem (Ezek. xxxviii-xxxix; Dan. xi. 45; Zech. xiv.).

It would seem also that Syria will ultimately pass from under French control (see Rev. ix. 13-21), for that country will be the seat of one of the great adversaries of the Jews in the last days, namely, the 'little horn' of Dan. viii. 23-35, who will derive his power from elsewhere (ver. 24), probably from Gog or Russia. Will England be able ultimately to maintain her rule in Mesopotamia?—this seems very unlikely. We must remember that the mass of prophetic events will take place *after* the coming of the Lord for which we wait.

Greece, too, will, very probably, be detached from her association with the Allies, or Latin confederation of Powers; as she will not, it seems, form part of the future Roman Empire, having been one of the four great empires of the past, whose lives are to be prolonged (Dan. vii. 12). We see pointings in this direction even now. "The days are at hand, and the effect of every vision,"

[Ed.]

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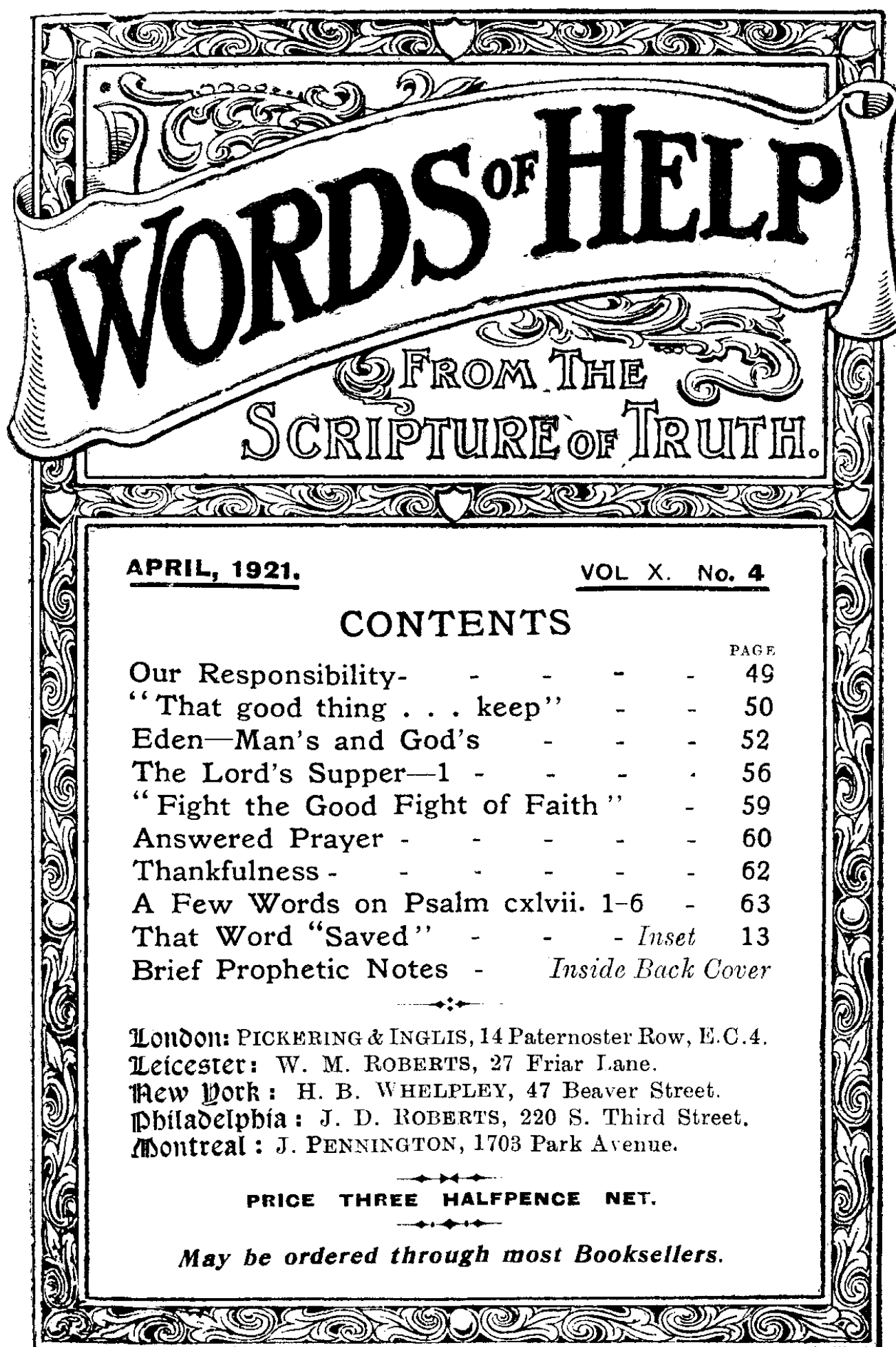
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## Brief Prophetic Notes.

“**T**HEY shall be scattered among the nations”, so says the prophet Hosea concerning Ephraim. And why scattered? Because “their heart is divided”; they went after false gods, whilst still nominally owning Jehovah. This was the real root cause of their dispersion.

Over and over again by His prophets God warned them that He would scatter them among the nations, but we find twice over in Jeremiah, in two verses to which special emphasis is to be attached on account of their repetition, that He that scattered them would gather them, after He had corrected them by judgment (Jer. xxx. 10, 11; xlvi. 27, 28).

In the daily press we find constant reference to the advance now being made in the colonization of Palestine by Jews. They will certainly settle in the land in considerable numbers, but, alas, unbelieving and unrepentant, still refusing Christ as the true Messiah. We know that it is only a remnant that will be saved (Rom. ix. 27; xi. 5), two parts will fall under the power of Antichrist, ‘the idol shepherd’, and shall be cut off and die. The third part will be tried and refined, and brought into blessing under their Messiah, in the end (Zech. xi. 15–17; xiii. 8, 9). This is God’s set purpose for the glory of Christ and the blessing of His people, which nothing can frustrate.

But the Christian has not to wait for the fulfilment of signs or events before he is “caught up to meet the Lord in the air”, that may take place at any moment; yet the events now passing under our eyes point plainly to the near approach of the end of the present dispensation and the coming of the Lord.

[ED.]



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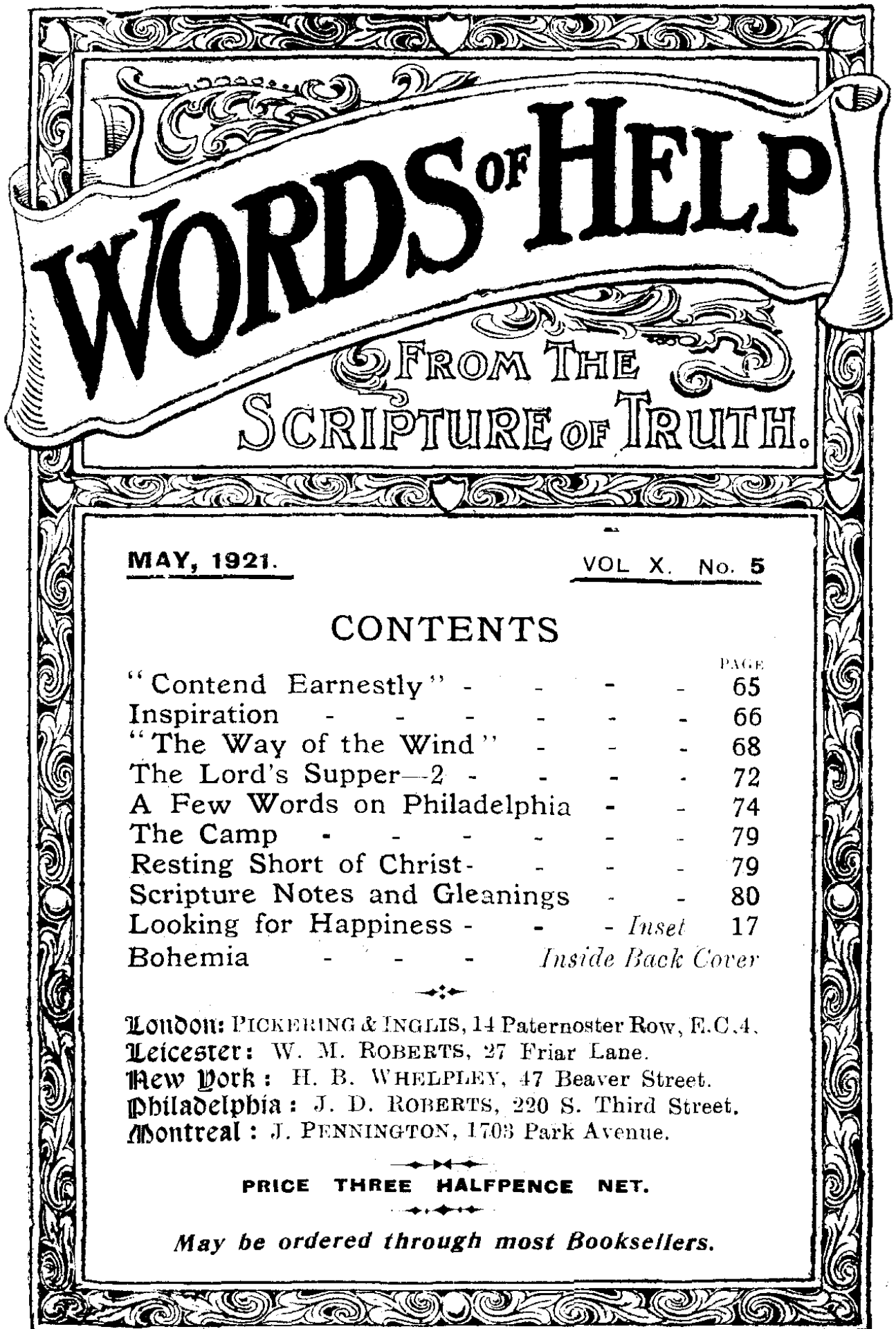
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## Bohemia.

**I**T is happy to know that the gospel of Christ is again beginning to shine in the country of John Huss, so long held bound and tied under the persecuting power of the Hapsburg Monarchy. Now that the settlement at the Peace Conference has brought religious liberty, thousands are leaving the Church of Rome. It is true that the movement is largely political, but God is using it for the blessing of souls.

A letter from an earnest Christian who visited the country in January, 1921, mentions the translation and printing of many thousands of suitable gospel booklets, such as the 'Kerry Boy', by J. N. D., 'Safety, Certainty and Enjoyment', by Geo. C., etc., for circulation in the country. The Scripture Gift Mission has just reprinted the four Gospels in separate parts, in Bohemian, and they are proceeding with the remainder of the New Testament.

Before 1620 some 90 *per cent* of the population was Protestant, now only about 5 *per cent* are so. About that year also the population was reduced from 2,000,000 to 800,000 by fire and sword; now, thank God, there has come about a large secession from the Church of Rome, so that, as has been said, "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church".

John Huss, who learned much from Wickliff's writings, carried on his work just a little more than 100 years before the Reformation. He was burned at the stake at Constance in 1415, in spite of a 'safe conduct' given him by the Emperor Sigismund. His ashes were collected and thrown into the Rhine—such was the bitterness of his enemies!

[Ed.]

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## Progress of Democratic Power.

*From a paper by J. N. D., written more than 60 years ago.*

THE effect of putting power into the hands of the masses will be to lead to infidelity and the exaltation of man. Even popular preaching will take this character: it will exalt man, not Christ. Human reason, not God, will be the arbiter of good and evil. The aristocracy will give themselves to luxury and pleasure, and will seek to increase the influence of the clergy to maintain quiet, and as a barrier against the strong will of the people. The dependent part of the population will incline to Popery, and the more actively minded to infidelity. Individual liberty and independence of character will disappear: men must go with others to be anything. The importance of money and luxury will rapidly increase, as well as the moral degradation and dissipation which go with it.

But I have no doubt that God will keep every faithful soul, and maintain every needed testimony. The Christian may walk in peace through it all, waiting for God's Son from heaven, and keeping the word of His patience. Yea, he may have a specially blessed place of testimony in the midst of it all, but a lowly one, content to be nothing in a world which has rejected Christ and is ripening for His judgment. Our part is to *keep His word* and not deny His name.

[The foregoing is only a brief summary of what is contained in the paper; but the estimate given by the writer, of what was likely to take place, has been strikingly fulfilled. The moral features which mark the end of the history of Christendom are plainly set forth in 2 Thess. ii., 2 Tim. iii. 1-5, etc. Ed.]



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## The Work of God in Russia.

**R**EFERRING to our previous note on this subject, the way has now been opened up for many of the missionaries to commence work. These, it will be remembered, are Russians who have been brought to Christ in America and England, and who are desirous of devoting their time and energies to the spread of the gospel in Russia. One has to bear in mind the vastness of the field and the difficulties to be met with in a country reduced to its present awful condition under Bolshevik misrule.

Pastor W. Fetler writes in the April number of *The Friend of Russia*: "We have a number of interesting and encouraging letters from our missionaries which display a wonderful opening for the gospel. They are working already in Roumania among Russians and Ukrainians, one brother having received from the authorities a permit to travel as an evangelist all over Roumania; others having taken up work in Poland, eight are working among Russian refugees in Danzig." Again, "Ten of the brethren decided in favour of Soviet Russia. They have left London and are 'on the way.' They need very special prayers for God's over-ruling providence to guide them and to enable them to overcome, humanly-speaking, insurmountable difficulties."

According to the report, there seems to be a great desire to hear the Word of God in some places, and Bibles and suitable tracts are much needed. Workers—spiritual workers—are badly needed also. Let us not fail to remember the work of God in Russia at the throne of grace. [ED.]

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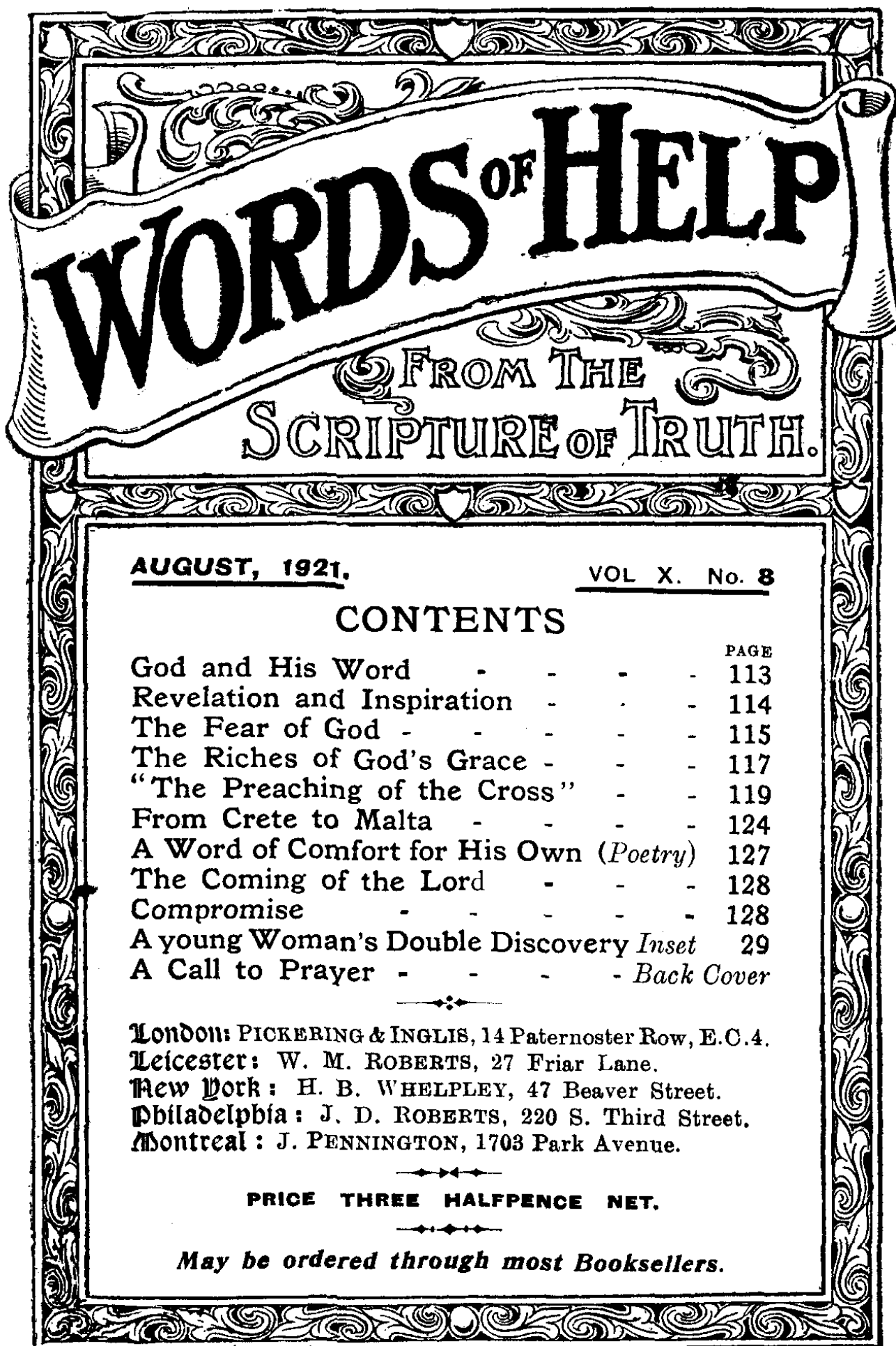
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## A Call to Prayer.

THERE is surely a special call for prayer at the present time. If we look at the world as it is, we see a spirit of lawlessness and rebellion which the governments of the day are almost powerless to restrain. Religiously, the state of things is serious enough indeed. The great advance of a spirit of unbelief in the Word of God and worldliness, has sapped what spiritual life and power there was in the churches. Amongst true believers, our divided state and want of devotedness to the Lord causes general weakness, and the lack of blessing in the gospel is apparent. To these we must add the constant increase of evil doctrines and satanic religious systems and new cults in Christendom.

Is there not a special call for humiliation, confession and prayer ?

In the ninth chapter of each of the books—Ezra, Nehemiah and Daniel, we find these men of God on their knees in deep confession and humiliation. Let us follow their example. Only let us remember that we need to get *down to the bottom* before God.

We read in Zech. vii. 5, “When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh month, even those seventy years, did ye at all fast unto Me, even to Me ? ” God looks for reality, taking a place outwardly will not do ; it must be from the heart and soul.

In view of the great and serious needs of the hour, may the Lord lay it upon the hearts of His people to be more than ever before Him in humiliation, confession and prayer.

[ED.]



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# WORDS<sup>OF</sup> HELP

## FROM THE SCRIPTURE OF TRUTH.

**SEPTEMBER, 1921.**

**VOL X. No. 9**

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W. M. ROBERTS.

*Edited by*

F. G. BURKITT,

4, TEMPLE VILLAS,

PALMERSTON ROAD, DUBLIN.

### SPECIAL NOTE.

***In order to meet the high cost of printing, a very considerable increase in our sales is absolutely necessary.***

## Cheering Words for Gospel Preachers.

**M**R. George Whitefield was preaching one time at Exeter. A man was present who had loaded his pocket with stones in order to fling them at that eminent ambassador of Christ. He heard his prayer, however, with patience; but no sooner had he named his text, than the man pulled a stone out of his pocket and held it in his hand, waiting a fair opportunity to throw it. But God sent a word to his heart and the stone dropped from his hand. After the preaching, he went to Mr. Whitefield and told him, "Sir, I came to hear you this day with a view to break your head, but the Spirit of God, through your ministry, has given me a broken heart." The man proved to be a sound convert, and lived to adorn the doctrine of God his Saviour. Such power belongeth to God.

\* \* \* \* \*

Lady Huntingdon was once speaking to a workman who was repairing a garden wall, and pressed him to take some thought as to eternity and the state of his soul. Some years afterwards, she spoke to another on the same subject, and said to him, "Thomas, I fear you never pray, nor look to Christ for salvation." "Your ladyship is mistaken," answered the man, "I heard what passed between you and James at such a time, and the word you designed for him took effect on me." "How did you hear it?" "I heard it on the other side of the garden, through a hole in the wall, and shall never forget the impression I received."

\* \* \* \* \*

"Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong."

U. G.

# **NOTICE.**

## **SPIRITISM**

(The Serious Aspect of the Question.)

By THE EDITOR.

---

*Reprinted from this Magazine.*

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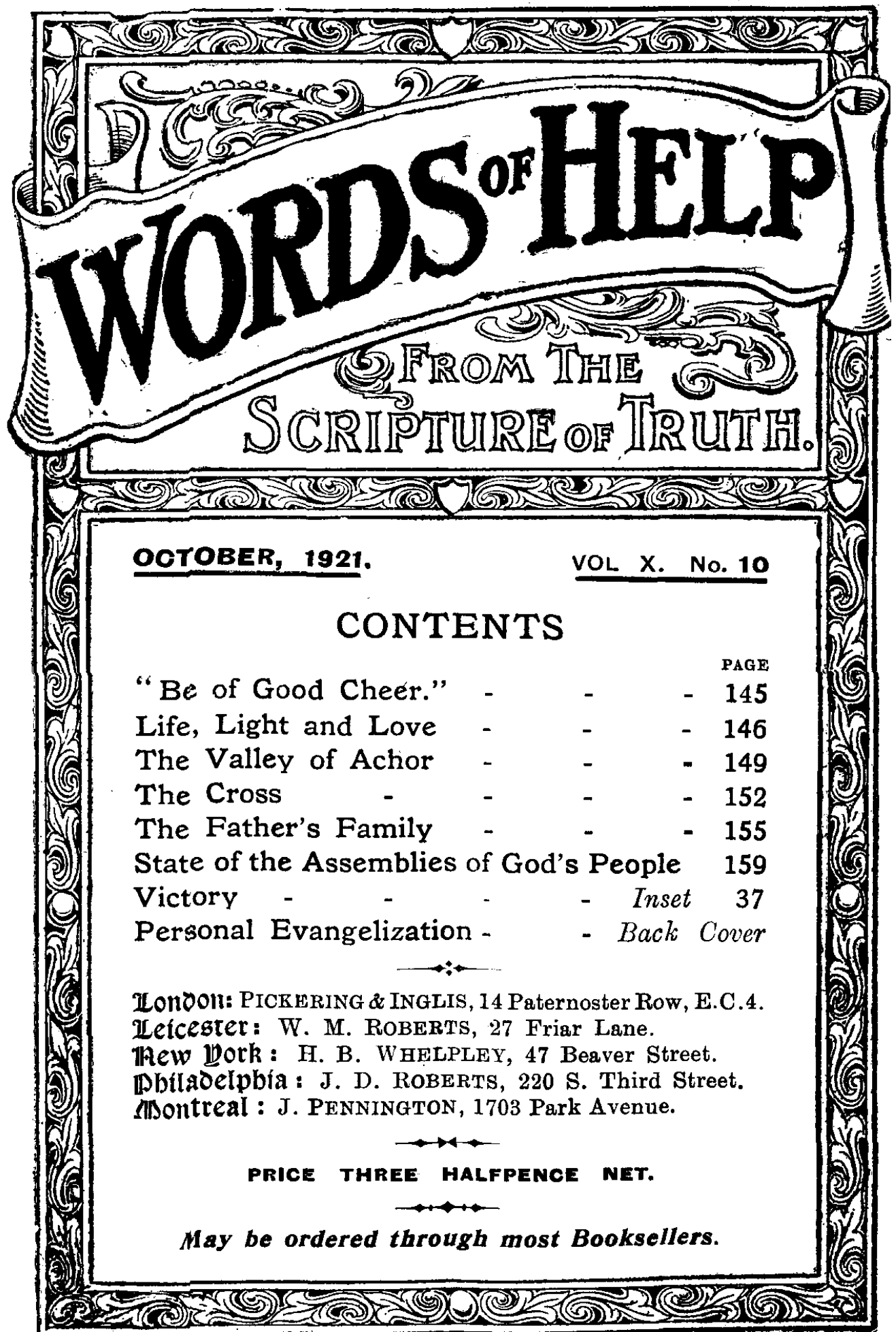
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## FROM THE SCRIPTURE OF TRUTH.

**OCTOBER, 1921.**

**VOL. X. No. 10**

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### SPECIAL NOTE.

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## Personal Evangelization.

**W**E have received the following from a contributor :  
 “I venture to offer a few comments as to the field for service in personal evangelizing in the villages and scattered homes in the country. As one who has had some experience in this work, I can testify to the great need, great encouragement, and wide field of labour that both brothers and sisters may find in this service.

“Rebuffs are rare, though indifference prevails everywhere, and there are many isolated believers and weary souls that welcome a word of cheer and hope. It needs tact and patience, and above all faith, but we know *Who* can give all these and all that is necessary.”

The time is short, the opportunities are great, the harvest field is wide, and God can give the increase. Let the reader procure some gospel magazines or books and go forth in dependence on God, and we feel assured he will prove the truth of what our contributor says—  
 [ED.].

\* \* \* \*

A lady went some time ago to hear Dr. F—— preach, and, as usual, carried a pocket Bible with her, that she might turn to any passages the preacher might happen to refer to. But she found she had no use for her Bible there ; and on coming away, said to a friend, “I should have left my Bible at home to day, and brought my dictionary. The doctor does not deal in Scripture, but in such learned words and phrases as to require the help of an interpreter to render them intelligible.”



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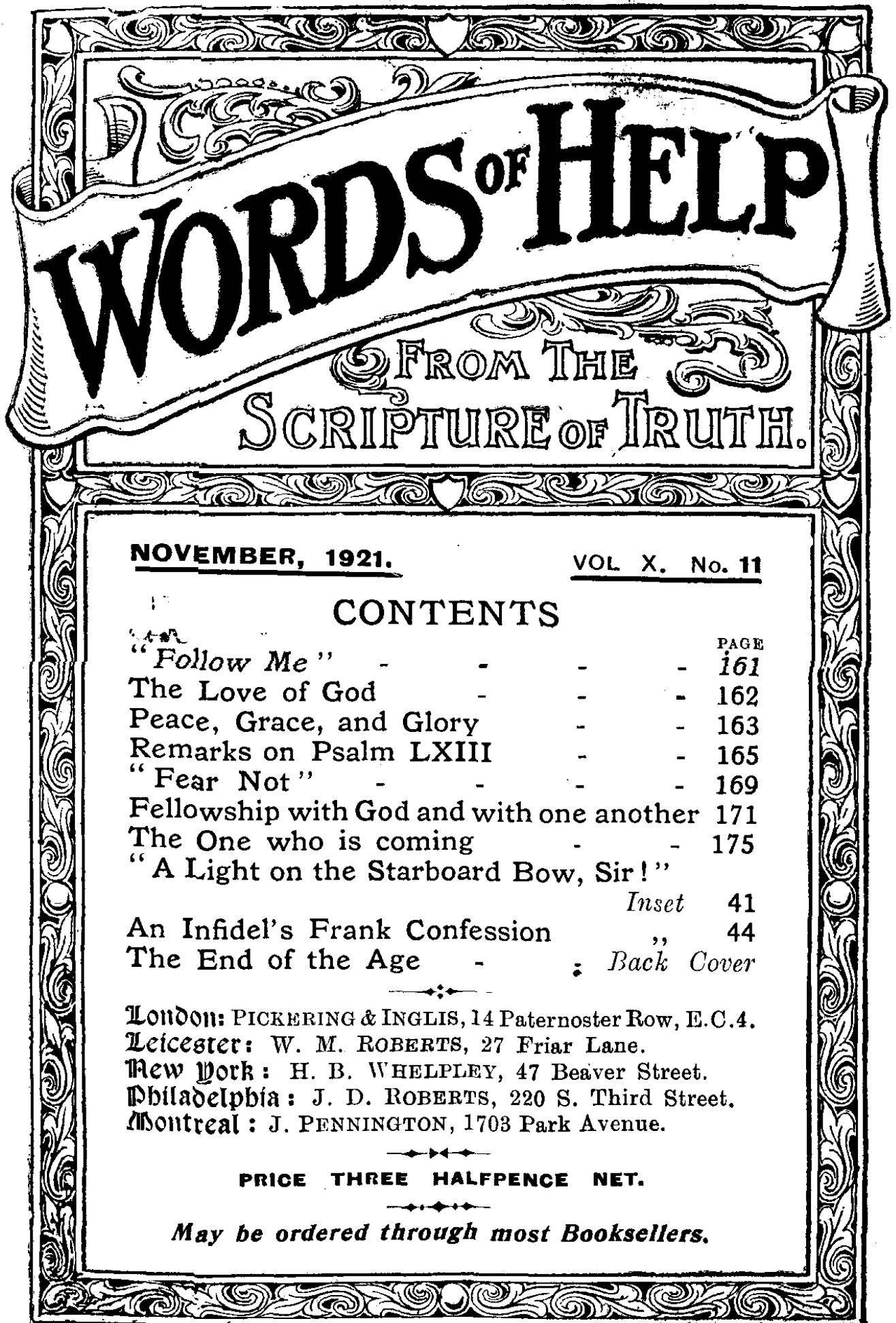
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**NOVEMBER, 1921.**

**VOL. X. No. 11**

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W. M. ROBERTS.

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### **SPECIAL NOTE.**

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## The End of the Age.

THE proper hope of the church is the coming of the Lord to take His redeemed people to meet Him in the air according to 1 Thess. iv. 15–18. We have not, therefore, to await the fulfilment of any sign or event, but we are to wait for a *person*, even “God’s Son from heaven . . . who delivered us from the wrath to come.” At the same time, we are quite justified in looking round at the remarkable series of events which prepare the way for the state of things which prophecy shows will be found on earth after the church has been taken to glory. Let us briefly enumerate some of these comparatively recent events.

The breaking up of the Triple Alliance between Germany, Austria and Italy, and of the alliance between Russia and France. The loosening of the hold of Russia on Constantinople and Palestine—the last three through the Bolshevist movement. The deliverance of Palestine from Turkish rule, thus opening the way for the return of the Jews; or at least helping towards that end. And, perhaps we might venture to add, what is now taking place in the direction of a partial (if not complete) separation of Ireland from England. These are among the events which will prepare the way for the re-formation of the old Roman Empire under the beast and the Antichrist (see Rev. xiii.).

It has been truly said, “God’s ways are behind the scenes; but He moves all the scenes which He is behind. We have to learn this, and let Him work, and not think much of man’s busy movements: they will accomplish God’s [purposes].”

[ED.]

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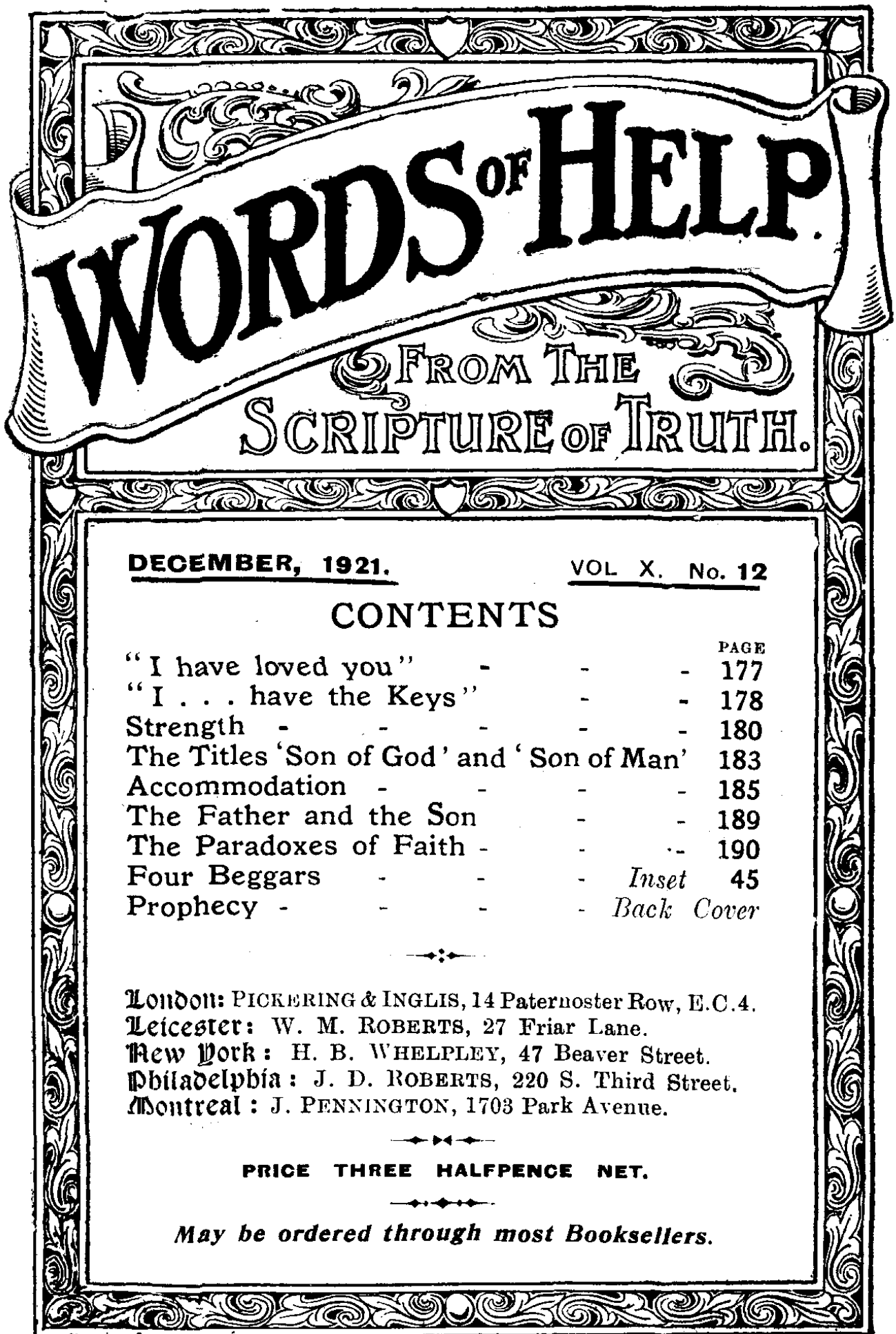
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**DECEMBER, 1921.**

**VOL. X. No. 12**

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**This magazine will be continued, God willing, for 1922.**

**The prayers of God's people are earnestly sought, that it may render true witness for Christ, and prove helpful to believers.**

**We also earnestly desire that our readers will do all they can to assist in extending its circulation, so as to enlarge its usefulness.**

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**W. M. ROBERTS.**

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