

**A
VOICE
TO
THE FAITHFUL.**

“He that striveth for the mastery is temperate in
all things.”—1 Cor. ix. 25.

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A Voice to the Faithful.

THE POWER AND AGENT OF TESTIMONY.

PENDING the coming of the Lord, there is no subject of greater importance to the saint than the presence of the Holy Ghost and His offices on earth. The mission of the Comforter or Paraclete is twofold. One part of it we get in John xiv. 26, where the Father sends Him to the saints, His object being to teach them; the other in John xv. 26, where Christ sends Him, and He says of Him, "He shall *testify of me.*" Now here we have the same Person sent for two distinct objects, in connection with Christ's own on earth. The mission is as definite as possible: and when the thorough failure and break down of man, as man in responsibility, under every trial, and in every dispensation is seen, there is no

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difficulty in seeing that the only power or agent of teaching or testimony must be one entirely new—even the Holy Ghost; and then the Holy Ghost's presence would be hailed as the greatest present favour from God.

It will be admitted by the intelligent, that the child of Adam can do nothing of himself; that he must be born of the Spirit (John iii.); that the fountain of living water in him springing up into everlasting life (John iv. 13)—the living waters flowing from him (John vii. 38)—the Comforter during Christ's absence (John xiv)—is the Holy Ghost. But while the services of the Holy Ghost to us individually are more or less seen and enjoyed, the fact of His being the sole power and agent of testimony is not practically accepted or believed. The Holy Ghost cannot be accepted as the sole power and agent of my blessing until I see and own the total failure of man to answer in any way to the mind of God. If they that are in the flesh cannot please God, and if I, through grace, am born of the Spirit, it is plain

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that if I hold this truth simply, I must discard what is of man, and depend only on the Spirit of God. It becomes a very distinct question—Is it the Spirit or the flesh? The one great principle of christian life is “We are not in the flesh but in the Spirit.” The Corinthians must not tolerate it (the flesh); the Galatians must not return to it. “If we live in the Spirit, let us walk in the Spirit.” If I am expecting strength from any other source than the Spirit of God, I am not really convinced of the utter helplessness of the flesh. I betray a confidence in the flesh when I look away from the Spirit of God. I might be even doctrinally assured that there is no gain in looking to the flesh; but it is the practice which determines the measure in which a doctrine is really held. It is a great point to be in heart and conscience convinced that there is nothing for the soul now before God but what the Spirit produces. If man in the flesh has utterly failed, it must be so; but souls take often much time and suffering to learn for themselves that

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they are to have no confidence in the flesh. When this is truly learned, it will be easy to see that there can be no power or agent of testimony here but the Holy Ghost.

The difference between the two offices of the Holy Ghost is; in the first (John xiv.), the Comforter makes the saint His object; in the other (John xv., xvi.), Christ is the object—He comes to us to *testify* of Christ. Besides the incompetence and weakness of the flesh, and hence the need of power from the Spirit of God in man's soul, for new life and for everything, man has condemned himself in rejecting the Son of God come here in grace; as the Lord says, "If I had not come and done among them the works which none other had done, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin." Kings and rulers—Herod and Pontius Pilate—used the power given of God to man for rule and government here, to crucify His own Son, the heir of all things; and now, either He must surrender His rights here to man, who has reached the climax

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of iniquity in rejecting Him (which would be unrighteous), or He must maintain them by a new power; and hence He says, "the Comforter whom I will send unto you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall *testify of me*." Now it is evident that if a new power comes into the world to maintain the rights of Christ in it, He must be not only opposed to the world in all its influences, but also, in order to maintain them for Christ, He must be superior to the whole combined force of it. But as this power is invisible except to faith, while the power of the world is always before our eyes, it is evident that when we use the visible, we have practically turned away from the invisible. This great and invisible One is the power and agent of testimony, and if I am of Him, and in connection with Him, I cannot be connected with that which He opposes and overcomes. He does not come to aid or turn to account anything of the world; He does not come to win over or accept any of the power or influence of the world. He

comes to convict the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. It is not to convert the world, because if it were converted, it would cease to be the world—they would be of Christ. But the meaning of this passage is that the Holy Ghost is the One who, by His presence here, is conclusive evidence of the world's sin. His being here proves the sin of the world, in that they did not believe on God manifest in the flesh; for if they had believed on Him, He would be ruling here, and not the Holy Ghost sent down to testify of Him. His presence here also convicts of righteousness, in that the One who was refused here has gone to the Father, and is no more seen as He was here. The world would not have Him, but the Father would. The world and the Father are at issue. The world refused Him, but the Father claimed Him. Thus righteousness is not in the world but with the Father; and, lastly, the Holy Ghost being here is convincing evidence of the fact that the prince of this world is judged. The power that has aided and set on the

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world has been overthrown in the cross, and now a greater power here makes it evident that he is judged.

Now seeing that this great invisible power is here convicting the world, there must be the most unrelenting opposition between the two. How could the Spirit be here—a distinct invisible power, an incontrovertible evidence against the world, and not be in every way opposed to it? Nothing can be plainer than that, if there be a power here to testify of Christ where He has been refused, it must resist and oppose the power which has refused Him. It cannot form any coalition with the adverse power or accept any countenance or support from it. Nay, as the Holy Ghost is invisible and in direct opposition to the world, the world could not offer or lend any support to Him; nor does He need it, for His power is superior to the power of the world. The Holy Ghost is here as a new and superior power to testify of Christ, and in so doing, He is evidence against the world; and thus the antagonism between them must be direct and continual.

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When the Church—Christendom—lost sight of the peculiar insulated position of the Holy Ghost here, as both opposed to the world and the power which governed it, then clericalism sprang up, and a hierarchy was set up to do that which only belonged to this new and invisible one—the true power and agent of testimony. And then every thing was accepted from the world which tended to make the system more effective, as binding man to it. And in doing this, the great fact of the Holy Ghost being here to testify of Christ, and maintain His rights, was overlooked. In a word, it was practically assumed that man could be the power and agent of testimony, which in itself is at variance with the fact that man had disqualified himself. Man has crucified the Lord of glory, and he cannot in any way be the power or agent of testimony—he is disqualified for ever. The word to him is, “Put up thy sword into its sheath: they that take the sword shall perish by the sword;” the power of the world will be no help but a de-

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struction. If the servant of Christ does not apprehend the power and presence of the Holy Ghost, if he is not attached to it, he seeks some power from the world; and then he is in this anomalous position—namely, deriving support and countenance from the very power which rejected Christ, and expecting to testify of Christ through that which refused Him! This is absurd in itself, and inconsistent; whereas if he were in company with the Holy Ghost, he would understand the true power of testimony, and he would find himself entirely separated from the world, and refusing to accept from it, because of being associated with the Holy Ghost, who both convicts it, and is in every way superior to it.

The question narrows itself into this—Can man maintain for Christ now, as the armies of Israel did aforetime? or has man been set aside as an agent of testimony, and a new power sent into the world, invisible to the world, but known to faith, which is evidence against the world and is superior to it? If it be

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admitted that the Holy Ghost *has* been sent to testify of Christ, and that He convicts the world, it is evident enough that no one in association with Him can borrow or accept any help or countenance from the world; for the moment he does so, in any small degree, he passes from the power and agent of testimony to that which He is in testimony against; and this is the great sin of Christendom. Every one, when really walking with the Lord, will find practically that no temporal influence aids him in the service of Christ, but often has a contrary effect.

See Paul at Philippi. (Acts xvi.) No matter what the extent of discouragement, he will not accept countenance from the prince of this world, and consequently he endures all the opposition of the world; but the end is, the Spirit of God, that unseen power on whom the apostle depends, lays hold of the soul of the jailer, and manifests that there is a greater power than all the power of the world. How different is Paul at Jerusalem (Acts xxii.) when he drops into

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nature's line, and then he accepts what influence and position will confer on him. In Philippi he does not save himself the scourging by pleading that he is a Roman, which he does at Jerusalem. The moment the fellowship of the Holy Ghost as the only power and agent of testimony is lost sight of, then there must be a turning to Egypt for help in some form or other, and the "bleating of the sheep" tells the tale of the church's inability, like Saul, to be entirely superior to Amalek. (1 Sam. xv. 14.)

In conclusion, the Holy Ghost is now the agent of testimony, but man is the vessel; a vessel is controlled by him who uses it; and hence if any means but the Spirit's power be used, then the vessel is used by another power, and this implies that the Spirit's power is insufficient, and that Christ's testimony can be supported by human and worldly means; while on the contrary, I believe from scripture, that every worldly means or instrumentality used, whatever be the appearances, hinder and damage the true testimony. Things at Philippi *seemed* more prospe-

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rous when there was a great proclamation of the apostle's mission; but the fact is, that there was more true power at work when the violence of man was at its height in opposition, and the new invisible power was about to establish the testimony through the means of his faithful vessel.

The Lord guide and uphold His servants in this day in the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, the only power and agent of testimony.

LOVE'S RETURN.

As I receive love I return it. There is a point or two of great moral beauty and interest (among many others) in the closing chapters of the Gospel of John, which I desire to introduce to your readers. It is connected with the recurrence of the expression, "That disciple whom Jesus loved," a phrase with which all are familiar, as applied to John. It first occurs in chapter xiii., when the Lord had quoted that scripture

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after the supper, "He that eateth bread with me, hath lifted up his heel against me." The disciples, unacquainted at that time with the fact that one of *them* should betray their Master, and likewise ignorant of the terrible proof about to be manifested, of the breakdown of human nature in the little circle gathered into the closest intimacy with their Lord, "looked one upon another, doubting of whom he spake." Each could suppose the other capable of such an act rather than himself: "Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing?" The love of all was in question, and each looked on his fellow.

What *more* than this could they do at such a crisis? "Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom, one of his disciples whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake." It is the consciousness and delight of being loved by another, and such a one, much more than the fact of our own love to that object, which draws heart to heart, and in the confidence of rest

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plants the head on the bosom of unruffled peace. He then, lying on Jesus' breast, saith unto Him, Lord, who is it? The disciple whom Jesus loved can put a question which none else durst ask. "Jesus answered, He it is to whom I shall give a sop when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. And after the sop Satan entered into him."

The love that takes its rise in the bosom of the Lord, and which specially owns this disciple for its object, not only gives a boldness of speech to him, of which none of the others are capable, but (chap. xx.) gives swiftness of foot too. When the Lord was announced in that new place for man, as "the *first* that should rise from the dead," Mary Magdalene "runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him. Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and

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came to the sepulchre. So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came *first* to the sepulchre." The man whose head lay on the bosom, in the consciousness of the Lord's love to him, is in the secret place from whence the spring and motive come forth that make him quicker of foot than any else, when the empty sepulchre of their risen Lord is the object. And we, who are more under the anointing of the Holy Ghost than they were, can say, this is all as it should be, for the disciple's head on the breast of Jesus, in communion with His unfathomable love, is declared to be the real power for devotedness of service, whether by hand or foot.

Chapter xxi. supplies another instance of the quickness of eye on the part of "the disciple whom Jesus loved," in discerning the Lord at the sea of Tiberias. "When the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore: but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus." In this well known passage the Lord in resurrection directs the entire service of

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the fishers, and when "they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes, therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord!" whatever else Peter might do and did when he heard it was the Lord, yet it was the love from the bosom that enabled John to be quicker of eye, as he had been swifter of foot than any other.

It is of further interest to notice in the close of this chapter, the love of Christ which brings forward both these disciples (Peter and John), and is occupied, as such a love must be, by associating Peter with the path of suffering and glory which the Lord had just trodden and left, and speaking of the last steps in it, as "the death by which *he* should glorify God." Could love do more than this for Peter, or could the same love do less for John though in another way?

"Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee? Peter seeing him saith

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to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till *I come*, what is that to thee?" The love of the Lord thus associated these two disciples with Himself in His own steps and ways; Peter by death, a death too "in which *he* should glorify God;" and John in the patient endurance of a love which could reckon with his Lord "a thousand years to be but as *one* day; or one day as a thousand years," and tarry till He come again, if the bosom of Jesus, where he reclined and dwelt, so ordered it and qualified him.

In chapter xix. there is an action of the Lord which must not be passed over. "Now there stood by the cross of Jesus, his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home."

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In this action we surely see the confidence of a love which could commit *that* mother to the care of this disciple, of whom Simeon had said, "Yea a sword shall pierce through thine own soul also." This confidence found but its own ready response in the heart of John, for "from *that* hour" the disciple whom Jesus loved, and Mary the mother of our Lord, knew but one and the self-same home. The love of Christ—when He rose from supper, and laid aside His garments, and took a towel and girded Himself, and began to wash the disciples' feet—was the example left by Jesus to His own which were in the world, "that they should do as he had done to them;" and this love was faithfully followed by John. A love that has its origin in the bosom, never knows a burden; and Jesus gives His mother to this disciple, that she might be the object and proof of a new-born charity which "never faileth and is kind." Besides this, there was a love wherewith the Son of God was peculiarly loved—"The Father loveth the Son." His own love!

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But in chapter xvii., *all* that was Christ's opens itself out in its vast dimensions, incomprehensible to all else save the Father and the Son, nevertheless for us. "O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith *thou hast loved me* may be in them, and I in them." His unjealous breast lets us into the speciality of this love, wherewith the Father loves the Son.

This wonderful prayer shews us how the Lord surrounds Himself with the objects of His own grace, having given to them eternal life, by which to know the only true God and Himself. Moreover, The glory which thou hast given me, I have given them, that the world may know that thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me. "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." A love, in truth, that must have us like Himself, and with Himself, wherever that may be. "Fa-

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ther, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world."

On our parts, thus wrought upon by such a love, and maintained in us *now* by the Holy Ghost, who sheds it abroad in our hearts, and pervades the inner man, we add our only proper reply—"The love of Christ constraineth *us*; because we thus judge, that if one died for all then were all dead; . . . that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves," &c. Love has thus run its course, having compassed its own heights in righteous title with God in glory, and its own depths in grace (with the men whom the Father had given Him out of the world) for the eternal delight of the Son, for our unchangeable blessing, and for the accomplishment of the Father's counsels in wisdom, power, and peace.

Exploit is not faith, though faith performs great exploits.

THOUGHTS FOR THIS DAY.

THE MOTIVE AND PURPOSE OF GOOD WORKS.

THE first desire of Saul of Tarsus when brought to God was, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" There is an immediate sense, on being a new man in Christ, that there is a new line of action. New powers and abilities necessarily demand new activities. The nature of the new man being *of* God, he is dependent *on* God; and as he is, he will manifest the grace and kindness of God in this evil world. "God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God and God in him." According as there is dependence, there is ability from God to do as occasion requires, whatever would please Him and declare Him. Without works faith is dead, being alone; but the faith comes before the works, so that with the new man it is faith that worketh by love. Love then is the motive of good works, and faith the sustainer of them. To understand the nature and purpose of the love of

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there is an abundance of good works
within, the motive and purpose cannot
be of or from Christ.

PRAISE.

FATHER, thou hast given gifts
Richly for thy chosen sons;
Thou hast promised lofty things
To thy lowly little ones.

“Praise is comely”—

Give us, Lord, a heart to praise.

Grace and mercy thou dost give,
Royal gift for pilgrims' part;
Living streams of waters flow,
Ever welling in thy heart.

“Praise is comely”—

Teach us how to lisp it forth.

Thou hast portioned us with love,
Boundless as the heart's desire;
Thou hast stored for us in Christ
More than neediest need requires.

“Praise is comely,”—

And to thee we praises bring.

O! 'tis well thy praise to sing,
Meekly bending to adore;
Countless mercies to recount,
Telling goodness o'er and o'er.

“Praise is comely”—

“Praise is pleasant”—“Praise be thine.”

WAS CHRIST REJECTED?

WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES?

THE second advent of Christ is a generally admitted doctrine, yet the nature of His return will not be apprehended, unless the cause and manner of His departure be clearly seen. If Christ be rejected, it is evident, as He is the Saviour, that judgment must fall on the world, the organization which refused Him. If Christ has only retired from this earth, because He pleased to do so, and not because of any opposition or rejection on the part of man, then man is in no way responsible for His absence, for he has not caused it. All our walk here depends on the answer to this question, Was Christ rejected?

In Old Testament times the Lord often visited the earth and retired again, and there was no blame or condemnation on them to whom He appeared, because of His going away again. But if man has *caused* His departure, and if His rights have been disowned and denied by man, then most

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serious consequences must befall man, when He returns and asserts His rights. The gravity of this question cannot be over-estimated. Where is righteousness on the earth, if the Son of God has been refused His rights here? And what is that man's position or doom who coalesces with the world in refusing Him, or who does not boldly and openly refuse to be of the organization which refused Him, while owning His rights and looking for His return?

The whole of the New Testament teaches that He was rejected. He departs because He was not received. The reason of this, which is so plain in scripture, not being seen or acknowledged, can only be accounted for on the ground of fear. The conscience is afraid to admit the fact, because if it be admitted, there is nothing but judgment before man, unless he disclaims the action of the world; and if he does disclaim it, the only place he could take here would be to advocate Christ's rights in opposition to the world; for the very first act of righteousness on

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earth would be to reinstate Christ in His rights, and hence he would be not only an opponent of the world, but a martyr and outcast, because of His loyalty. The saint true to Christ is in the world but not of it. He waits for His return as the only dawn and beginning of blessing on earth, and meanwhile he has no connection with the attempts of Christians to better the world, or to seek to remit its guilt in crucifying Him, by attaching His name to nations and systems. Any really righteous man, seeing that the rights of Christ had been refused and disowned, would feel himself compromised, if he in any way shared in the power which had perpetrated the crime of rejecting Him.

Was He then rejected? Can any one fact be more plainly detailed in scripture than the rejection of Christ, and that His departure was in no way a voluntary act of retirement? "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." (John i. 11.) At His very first appearance in Nazareth they led Him to the brow of the hill to cast Him down

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hence; and when John the Baptist was beheaded, then was plainly indicated what was before Him. His path, as we read in the gospels from beginning to end, was one of continued rejection; and eventually they said practically, "This is the heir, come let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours." So they cast Him out of the vineyard, and killed Him. Hence, at the end of that chapter (Luke xx.), the Lord quotes Psalm cx. as applying to Himself. He is called away to take His place at Jehovah's right hand until His enemies be made His footstool. His enemies have refused Him His rights. Man did so, in the person of the Jews. The nature of man was exposed in a fraction of men. As a pattern cut out of a piece of cloth shews the nature of the piece, so did the action of His own people, those who should have been the most ready to receive Him, indicate the unwillingness of man to acknowledge Christ here. If exception be taken to imputing the sin of the Jews to all mankind, why do not men now in a

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body retrieve their character and wipe off the reproach, by standing up and refusing all place and position here, until He returns whose right it is. Not only did the Jews conspire to put Him to death, but the Gentiles executed the terrible deed, as we read: "The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against His Christ. For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the children of Israel, were gathered together." (Acts iv. 26, 27.) The Son of God, the "last" God could send to man on earth, a man among men who went about doing good, and healing all who were oppressed with the devil; the greatest benefactor ever among men, for He had done among them the works which none other had done; they had both seen and hated both Him and His Father. Man as a whole, every class of men, refused and rejected Him; and with wicked hands He was crucified and slain. The power and authority which

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God had entrusted to man to preserve order here, was used to put to death His own Son, the heir of all things. It may be argued that God used His death in grace to save every believer; but that does not exonerate man from the terrible guilt of rejecting Him, and putting Him to a cruel death. Christendom, I know, attempts to exonerate itself from this guilt by assuming His name, and in adopting the cross as a badge, as well as the means of salvation, and men are thus duped into the notion that they are not chargeable with the guilt of crucifying Christ; but in their very adoption of the cross, like the Jews building the sepulchres of the prophets, they admit their connection with the man who placed Christ there, and thus saddle themselves with the guilt. "Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets." (Luke xxiii. 31.) Deny or screen it as they may, His blood is on them; but if I through grace *believe* on Him, I am no longer a rejecter. I repudiate the act of the men who cru-

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cified Him. He died for me, and being saved by His blood, I am crucified with Him. The cross is not only the door of escape for me, but being so, it is the line of demarcation between me and the world. I cannot support or in heart tolerate the man that refused Him. I disallow the very nature of that man which in Adam I partake of myself. I see it ended in the cross, and I refuse all co-operation and partnership with the world that rejoices in His absence. If I, through grace, find that the rejected One is my Saviour, and that He by His death saves me from the guilt which rests on me as a man, I see also that I die with Him, and hence am morally free of the man who crucified Him; then, as dead here, I am not part of the world that refused Him; but I surrender life, as to place and honour here, because I am on the earth where He who is my life now in heaven, has been rejected and cast out.

To admit the simple fact of Christ's rejection demands too much in the way of self-denial even for Christians; and

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hence, in order to allow some room for conscience in one taking place or position on the earth, the Lord's absence is *practically* assumed to be a voluntary retirement on His own part, and the cross is only regarded as the means of salvation for man, without any thought of man's guilt in putting Christ there; for no one conscientiously believing that Christ was rejected by the world, could ally himself with it directly or indirectly, or be connected with the power that had rejected Him. Even on the score of mere righteousness, where is righteousness if the One with the best and only right has been refused? and how can I assume to have any power when He who has right to *all* has been crucified? I cannot be simply righteous unless I disclaim all participation with the world on the one hand, and on the other, stand forth as the champion and vindicator of His rights by waiting for Him. He would not have been called to sit down at Jehovah's right hand, until His enemies be made His footstool, if He had withdrawn volun-

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tarily after offering grace to man. True, God has turned it all to good account and for greater blessing, but that does not exonerate man, though through mercy there is a door of escape for the believer where man crowned his guilt in the cross.

Every great truth as to a saint's position now, is lost or frittered away, unless the rejection of Christ be clearly and fully accepted. Why should the Holy Ghost be here, if not to testify of Him whom the world would not have? Why is His mystical body here—the great secret—if He were not personally refused? Why should the faithful wait for Him and the bride invite Him to return, or the “wise ones go forth to meet him,” if He had not gone away in rejection and to wait until His enemies are made His footstool? But being rejected, the consequences are grave indeed. Judgment on the world, for He shall return in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Then all “nations

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of the earth shall wail because of him."

But the consequences to His own, and the claim that it makes on them, is what we have now peculiarly to think of and to ascertain. Rejection of the servants of God is no new thing in this world. Every servant of God had been refused or rejected in some degree or another, from Abel down to the greatest and best; and now man has no cloke for his sin. The mass reject the faithful one! Joseph was rejected by his ten brethren, but Jacob and Benjamin in separation and seclusion of heart, sorrow for the rejected one. Was the blank caused by his banishment ever filled up in their hearts until they saw him again? No! after years of sorrow the fact that he was alive was too much for Jacob; "his heart fainted, for he believed them not." Ten out of eleven brothers cast out and consign to death or bondage the father's delight. If Jacob and Benjamin had known of the deed, could they in any way have connived at it? Would it have satisfied them if the ten brothers

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had appointed a house and an empty chair sacred to Joseph? Surely not. Just so now, the faithful one not only repudiates the act of the mass, but he relinquishes his place and position in the world, which has forfeited all claim to moral rectitude in rejecting the One who has all right. He feels that he cannot retain his former connection with man on earth, without accepting or deriving from the power that crucified his Lord. He cannot bear to be recognized as part of the world, who had rejected Him. He feels it has so irretrievably degraded itself that he neither can hold or accept any commission in connection with its power. He is only here on sufferance; he, in the loyalty of his heart, and by the Spirit of God, is connected with the rejected Man, and therefore he renounces his place as a man of the world. He cannot really be connected with both; he must belong either to the man rejected by the world or the man accepted by it; and thus he feels that the simple fact of the rejection of Christ entails

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on him entire separation from the man who has been guilty of it. He knows that there is neither right nor truth nor righteousness here until the day dawns, and therefore the day star arising in his heart is his cheer and support; his one and only hope and prospect is the return of Christ, to whom he is united in heaven, for whom he waits as the light (as He was here), like the moon in the dark night, "until the day break and the shadows flee away," and with the heart of the bride he *invites* Him to come.

THE LORD'S SUPPER,
&c.

[AN EXTRACT.]

My feeling about the whole service is that we are in the joy of heavenly places, risen ourselves, and look back to the sufferings of Christ as that which brought us there. It is a broken body and shed blood—it is death. We are occupied with a broken body in the

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Supper, but it is those who are risen and in blessing by it who are so. Hence the joy flowing from our position has nothing amiss in it; but the more we are thoroughly at home there, the more shall we, as dwelling there, contemplate the sorrows and sufferings of Christ. But they are past, and He is at the right hand of God; so that, though occupied at the moment by how much He has suffered, when occupied with the act itself, there is the sweet consciousness that it is all over for Him, and we are risen in spirit with Him. In the Supper itself (I do not say all that accompanies it) we are surely occupied with Christ's death, but it is viewing it not from outside the cross, as coming to it, or human interest in suffering human nature, but from the risen place in which our worship is carried on. We shall enter much more deeply into His sorrows, not now measured by our need, but contemplated from God's side of it—a much deeper feeling I believe; it is a divine or heavenly contemplation of the cross. It is not

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coming to—not while it is accomplishing—but remembrance of Him, when suffering for us, which has obtained peace for us, who is now at the right hand of God. As to which comes first, we must have life before we know what death is, or our own dying to sin, which is another thing. But it is the applying death to ourselves that enables us to realize rightly life and glory. The “excellency of the knowledge” makes me count all but dross and dung, but it is as “always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus” that we are enabled both to rejoice in the things the Spirit shews to us, and to manifest the life of Christ in our bodies. I desire that the believer may grow up to Him who is the Head in all things, contemplating His glory; but there is a judgment of self and of all the details of our life which, keeping down the movement of will in details, keeps up a practical separation from the world, which is a testimony. There was more of this at the first. Now many come in fresh converted or enjoying the fulness of truth. Up in our parts I can-

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not say there is much worldliness, but in houses and other things much is, in many places, taken for granted which is of the world, and I think something is wanting in very many. I should be very glad to see retrenchment in many worldly symptoms; and I do not think the revival course of testimony tends to this. It looks for testimony in saving souls, all surely right, but it tends to overlook testimony in the path of Christians.

The death of Christ which I contemplate in the Lord's Supper, is not exactly my death with Him, though if realized it leads me to it. It is *His death*—the love in it. It supposes indeed death to the world and sin in me as my place, but I dwell on Him so dying in love. "My body broken," I feed on this (though not only there); but it is seeing the grace and perfectness and absolute giving up of self and obedience of Christ, I get Christ, though it will lead my heart away from the world and sin. My having died with Him is something else, and bearing about the

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dying, though it is a kind of seal and spring and key to this—to the heart. The ministry of the glory gives the energy which casts off the world, when the word is received with faith—as Philippians iii. The lowliness of Christ—His self-humiliation realized in heart, makes us and disposes us to be lowly. That you have in Philippians ii. But Christ becoming everything in the inward life of the soul can alone bring this about.

Philippians iii. and ii. puts these things in their place.

THOUGHTS FOR THIS DAY.

THE SNARE.

ONE great mark of progress is “to have the senses exercised” to discern both good and evil—to be skilful to foresee danger and to guard against it.

The great effort of Satan in this day is to set up man in Christ’s place, and where he cannot do this without religion, he attempts it in connection with re-

ligion. From the nominal professor, according to the measure of conscience, up to the most devoted saint, every device is used to lead class after class, to sanction man, and to set aside Christ. As Satan succeeded through man in rejecting Christ and refusing Him a place on earth, his aim now is to set up man, not only independently of Christ, but against Him. The energy, from first to last, is against Christ, though the purpose is only fully disclosed when Antichrist comes. Hence, though Satan be resisted now in developing his full aim (see 2 Thess. ii. 6, 7), yet those who are taught of God see that every action of his, and of every one of his tools is an antichrist. John says, "Even now there are many antichrists in the world." The snare in which Satan seeks to entrap every man is self-occupation where he gets influence, and as he suits the snare to the state of each, it is most subtle and deceptive, addressing one, when one is least on his guard, though in the form most pleasing to self at the time.

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As a rule, saints talk of their trials and of their mercies; they seldom rise from the level of man; they are in the snare; and the longer they are held in it, the more insensible they become to that which holds them.

How different, and unspeakably blessed is it, when one, resting in faith on Christ glorified, finds streams of living water flowing down from Him, and from which he can *contribute to the earth*, instead of, as of old in a feast of Tabernacles, celebrating how God has made the earth to *contribute to him*. The Lord deliver His beloved people from the snare of Satan.

THE TEST OF GROWTH.

WE prove the reality of our spiritual acquisitions by the easy and perfect way in which we address ourselves to home duties and the trials encountered in our path here. To be asked for tribute when He came down from the Mount of Transfiguration was strange and incongruous to our blessed Lord, but He

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evinced His moral superiority to everything by immediately resorting to His resource in God, for *He had no purse*. I believe that it is the little daily anxieties here which are tests of the quality and power of our growth in Christ. No matter what the trial is, if one is genuine and conscientious, one judges of the virtue of one's gain in Christ by the way the trial or anxiety is affected by it. If I, when in trial because of anything, and pressed with sorrow and anxiety on account of it, were introduced into a very bright scene, and assured of my portion in it, this *of itself* could not divert my heart from the chamber of death and sorrow. Nay more; the more I enjoyed myself in the bright scene—now my own—the less in one sense could I like or bear to return to the scene of my sorrow. It would only make me sadder to think that I could find a scene where there was no sorrow, and yet that I was in heart and feelings connected with one of the deepest sorrow. The bright scene would in one way deepen my sorrow in the dark one.

I require more than a bright scene to make me superior to my sorrow. In the bright one indeed there is no sorrow, nor could any be admitted there; but if I am connected with another, in which there *is* sorrow, my heart wants more than the gift of a scene of perfect happiness to enable it to bear up in the one of sorrow. Now besides the scene of happiness, there is the *perfect love* of the One who cares for me in everything, and who introduces me into the happy scene as an expression of His love; and thus assures my heart that all the sorrow I am passing through, is in keeping with all the happiness He has for me; and that it is there I am to judge of His love; and if I have formed a true idea of His love, if in the happy scene I have got the right impression of Him, I return to the scene of sorrow, as sure of His love in *it*, sad though it be, as I was when enjoying it in the scene where there was everything to minister to my joy. Hence in the sorrow or trial of my path here, is the test of my actual gain in the knowledge of Him and His love for me.

THE BRIDE.

MIDST the darkness, storm, and sorrow,
One bright gleam I see ;
Well I know the blessed morrow,
Christ will come for me.

Midst the light, and peace, and glory
Of the Father's home,
Christ for me is watching, waiting—
Waiting till I come.

Long the blessed Guide has led me
By the desert road ;
Now I see the golden towers—
City of my God.

There amidst the love and glory
He is waiting yet ;
On His hands a name is graven
He can ne'er forget.

There, amidst the songs of heaven,
Sweeter to His ear
Is the footfall through the desert,
Ever drawing near.

There, made ready are the mansions,
Glorious, bright, and fair ;
But the bride the Father gave Him,
Still is wanting there.

Who is this who comes to meet me
On the desert way,
As the Morning Star foretelling
God's unclouded day ?

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He it is who came to win me,
On the cross of shame;
In His glory well I know Him,
Evermore the same.

Oh the blessed joy of meeting,
All the desert past!
Oh the wondrous words of greeting,
He shall speak at last!

He and I together entering
Those bright courts above;
He and I together sharing
All the Father's love.

Where no shade nor stain can enter,
Nor the gold be dim;
In that holiness unsullied,
I shall walk with Him.

Meet companion then for Jesus,
From Him, for Him, made;
Glory of God's grace for ever
There in me displayed.

He who in His hour of sorrow
Bore the curse alone;
I who through the lonely desert
Trod where He had gone.

He and I in that bright glory
One deep joy shall share;
Mine, to be for ever with Him;
His, that I am there.

DO WE RECOVER TRUTH OR DISCOVER IT?

Success in any pursuit depends upon our making a true start. In some cases it is essential. Thus in all research we ought to begin by determining the basis of our operations, and should clearly establish and recognize our own relation towards the subject of our inquiry, and the one from whom we inquire.

It is not questioned that man is competent to seek after truth, indeed it is his bounden duty to do so; but if his efforts are to be successful, he should fully recognize his standing as an inquirer. Inquiry evidences ignorance, and if he is ignorant, why is he so? and to whom must his condition be imputed? But can man be said never to have known, never to have possessed the truth? We believe not. Man "did not like to retain God in his knowledge," When he lost God, he lost truth.

Those wise men of the world, who do not own the fall of man, and his departure from God, are ever seeking, and,

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as they allege, making fresh discoveries of truth. The Christian, who knows that grace and truth have come by Jesus Christ, who confesses man's sin and ruin and his misuse of every gift and revelation which God has made to him, seeks not in pride to discover, but in humility to recover what God has once given, but what man has lost.

There is indeed a vast difference between discovery and recovery. In both there is an admission of ignorance on the part of the inquirer, but the ground of that ignorance is in the one ignored, and in the other confessed. Discovery assumes that the truth sought has never been revealed; recovery admits that it has been revealed, but lost. I cannot be said to discover what I once have had but have lost, nor to recover that which I have never possessed. The spirit of the former therefore exalts man and dishonours God; that of the latter, abases man and justifies God. The latter is the attitude surely in which a fallen and rebellious creature should seek after the true knowledge of God or

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His works and ways. God has without doubt at some time given truth to man whether natural or spiritual. The contrary would be inconsistent with His character and His word. Man was not created to live in ignorance of God His Maker, to grope in the dark all his life long, "ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." He was created with capacity to know and to hold communion with God; to apprehend his works and ways. For instance, we read that "the Lord God formed every beast of the field and fowl of the air, and brought them unto Adam to see what *he* would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof." (Gen. ii. 19, 20.) God was thus satisfied that man should name the things that He had made, and He could hardly have given a greater proof either of the capacity of, or of His confidence in, man than this. Scripture is very silent as to man's original powers and capacities, but we may fairly ask, How much of the natural science of to-day is

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but the recovery of that which man before the fall once knew? *But man fell*, and this is the point from which philosophers so often fail to start.

Truth was given with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven when Jesus was glorified. "He shall lead you into all truth," was spoken by Christ concerning the Spirit. "Enriched in all knowledge," was said of the Corinthian saints. "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things," are John's words concerning all the children of God in His day. If Christians now-a-days are ignorant of the truths of God, if the professing church has for ages groped in darkness, with only here and there the faintest rays of light to guide and sustain it in its dreary path, the fault is not in God, but in man, who has never retained God in his knowledge and has always resisted the Holy Ghost.

If Christians would take the shame of having failed, and confess together the common sin by which they have let slip the precious truths once committed

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to the Church; if they would then in humbleness seek the recovery of these things, what blessing and power would flow into their souls. They would no longer set up new things in doctrine and practice, but God would lead them back into the old paths and confirm them in His truth and in His ways. "Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, and to-day, and for ever," and "that which was from the beginning" is unchanged and unchangeable. "In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily," and Christ—"God manifest in flesh"—"the wisdom of God"—"the power of God"—"the only-begotten Son," who has declared the God whom no man hath seen at any time—He is the sum and substance of all revelation, and *all* truth came with and by Him. There is nothing new to discover, but there is much to recover concerning Him who could say, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

It is well to remember that we are not living in the first days when all was order and beauty in the Church, but in

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the last when all is in confusion and darkness. But "there ariseth light in the darkness for the upright in heart." God will not withhold His truth where there is purpose of heart to follow on to know Him.

In all inquiry it is good for us to begin then by justifying God, acknowledging that He who has not withheld His only begotten Son from us, has neither withheld any blessing, any gift, which it was His will to bestow. If we are not in conscious possession of all His blessings, it is that we have failed to lay hold on them, or have let them slip. If the Church of God through ages of failure has lost the sense and power of the "faith once delivered to the saints," yet the individual Christian who has the mind of God can say, the truth is yet here, for the Spirit and the word of God are here. He says not, "Who shall ascend into heaven, or who shall descend into the deep?" but owns, "The word is nigh thee." Like one who owns treasures, but whose house has been disordered (though not de-

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spoiled) by the enemy, he can say, concerning the truth, "I know that it is here, though for the moment I cannot lay my hand upon it." But "seek and ye shall find," and "If any man lack wisdom let him ask of God."

Now while a true spirit of recovery draws hearts together, all may not in recovering lost ground take the same first step: all may not recover the lost and hidden truths of God in the same order. What may be your first step may be my second. A truth that may dawn first upon one Christian may not be seen by another until after the recovery of other truths. Those whose hearts are now set on the interests and glory of Christ in an evil world, and in the midst of a faithless professing church, are like persons crowded together into a dark cavern and seeking to find their way out. Light may be breaking in through many chinks and crevices, and each will go towards that speck of light which first dawns upon him. We must not however insist upon our neighbour following that same ray which has first dawned

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upon ourselves, provided that he with equal purpose and integrity is pressing out of the cavern and towards the same full light, though shining in on him in a different direction. Only let us take heed that it is *true light* that we follow, and also beware of mistaking *one ray* of light for the whole. One truth is not "all truth," and it is the substitution of one truth for "all truth," and men's self-complacency in settling down in the recovery of some single doctrine of scripture as their Shibboleth or rallying point, that has been the most fruitful source of Sectarianism and division for the last three hundred years. But if *one ray* of light be honestly *followed* and not rested in, more light from God will follow, and fellowship in the light will result. For fellowship is in the light, and not in attainment. It depends on our sincerity, or transparency, "having no part dark." "In the light," the father and the babe are on a level, and "have fellowship one with the other." It is to be self-judged, open, and ready for God's communications.

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“Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth,” is the heart’s utterance. In this spirit souls understand the “communion of the Holy Ghost.” Attainments in common may and do strengthen the bond and tend to our mutual enjoyment and sustainment; but to be in the light together, and to be able not only to bear it, but to delight in it, is the power of all true fellowship. *There* we know God, and we know that God knows us and all that we are; and knowing this, we fear not that others should know us too, but rather rejoice to be relieved from the terrible burden of maintaining a character and appearance, and of walking in a vain show.

In restoring truth to His people, God gives it by “precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little, there a little.” One precept is not all truth. One right practice not all God’s order for His Church. Rest not satisfied with partial recovery, but run your race with patience, forbearing one another in love. While we must each one for himself draw back from false paths, which the light of

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God's word condemns, let us also exercise discernment as to the spirit in which others may be walking, and seek to understand their purpose of heart. Every *right* step leads on a right road, and towards the right goal. There should be then full confidence and fellowship between those who are thus stepping aright, even though they step not exactly in the same order in escaping together from the errors in which *all* have been involved.

THE DAY.

THE evening and the morning is the day in God's order.

It is impossible to overestimate our gain, when by grace our thoughts and judgments fall into God's order respecting all things between Himself and us, whether seen or unseen—temporal or eternal. Moreover, we shall find this difference to be far greater between man and God as to thoughts and ways, than is generally supposed; but the scriptures

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that make him known to us, and which make us known to ourselves, shed their own light on every subject.

This was true even at the beginning, "when the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, and darkness was upon the face of the deep," so that in creation His first words were, Let there be light, and there was light. He not only commanded the light to shine out of darkness, but more, created a man in His own likeness, and breathed into His nostrils the breath of life. Here we learn our first lessons, that it is God's prerogative to bring light out of darkness, and that the creature's place is to walk in the light, when it is produced. Morally too, it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, but the counsel of the Lord giveth him understanding. "And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day."

But we find something more than His prerogative; we get His order—light out of darkness, as afterwards in

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redemption's work, good out of evil, and the evening and the morning were the first day. Solomon knew the Lord had said, that He dwelt in the thick darkness, for who but He could dwell there? "The darkness and the light are both alike to thee," but He comes out of darkness, to reveal Himself, and to us.

We leave creation and its order and pass onward to the times of Israel when in Egypt. And there we find darkness over the whole land, but God working afresh in the midst thereof, to bring out a people into light and glory, concerning whom He said, "Happy art thou, O Israel! who is like unto thee, O people *saved* by the Lord?" God's order was maintained in a fallen creation, as it had been in creating a perfect one; only that in Egypt we find these additions: that the prerogatives of God were exercised in reference to His holiness, man's sin, and the enemy's opposition. The link between the Creator and the creation was broken by the fall; but another link was wrought out in divine wisdom and power, on the new footing of re-

demption from the dark prison of Egypt, and the cruel bondage of Pharaoh. He came down to deliver them, and to proclaim Himself in other titles, and by terrible acts in judgment to make His power known against the oppressor. "I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the first born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the Lord." But out of the night of Egypt's judgment in God's order in redemption, came the morning of Israel's deliverance; and so even as to darkness and light; for the pillar of the cloud came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel, and it was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these, so that they came not near the other all the night."

Light and darkness—day and night—God and Satan, were henceforth to be learnt in new associations between Jehovah and His people, and according to His acts in their redemption. What was night and alarm, yea death to their

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enemies, was one of peaceful communion to the hosts of the Lord; for the fire of God's holiness fed upon the lamb sacrificed for their sin. The power of God protected them in all their dwellings; and the blood upon the lintels of each door forbade the destroying angel to enter. Out of the night of Egypt's darkness and overthrow issued the dawn of Israel's brightest hopes; for "it came to pass, that in the morning watch the Lord looked unto the hosts of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians, and took off their chariot wheels."

The depths of the Red Sea, which swallowed up Pharaoh's captains and horses, became the birthplace of Israel's triumphant song; and this we may say is what *full* deliverance always is, between God and His own in their redemption. This is very important therefore between the soul and God in communion; for redemption by blood, which sheltered Israel in the night time, when they fed upon the lamb roast with

fire, must be accompanied by redemption in power, when *the morning* appeared to carry them out of Egypt against all the strength of the enemy. "It is a night to be much observed unto the Lord, for bringing them out from the land of Egypt. This is that night of the Lord, to be observed of all the children of Israel in their generations." At evening time it shall be light.

Let us pass now from Israel's history—as we did from creation—and see all these things transferred in fresh order and beauty to the person and work of Christ upon this earth.

Light and darkness—night and day—good and evil—yea, God and man—holiness and sin—are now to be understood in their associations with Christ Himself. What in fact was the incarnation of our Lord but the light and glory from above, come down from another creation, to brood over the darkness and evil of this fallen world and to become its light? "I am the light of the world." As Christ grew up in wisdom and stature, and in favour with

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God and man, what was His presence below but a further revelation of the mystery that *morally* light had again risen upon obscurity. This light now shineth in darkness, though the darkness comprehendeth it not. Note also that light and life are *both* combined in the Word made flesh, as it is written, "In him was life, and the life was the light of *men*."

But moral darkness was settling in upon the heart and mind of Israel (even as darkness aforetime rested over creation and Egypt), and the Lord said in their midst, "They loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." In His ministry to Israel He sought again to bring this people out of darkness into light, and to set at liberty them that were bruised, as Jehovah had done by the sprinkled blood and by the right hand of His power, by Moses, when He brought them out from Egypt. John the Baptist (like Moses), the prophet of the Highest, was sent before the face of the Lord, to prepare His ways, to give knowledge of salvation by the

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remission of their sins through the tender mercy of God, whereby the day-spring from on high hath visited us, to give *light* to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace." Light divine has now come down to men and surrounds them. "There was a man sent from God whose name was John: the same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."

Creation-light was extinguished, so to speak, and its sun went down in darkness and death at the deluge, when the world that then was perished. "The light of life" has since risen upon the world that now is. "He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew him not." It is God's prerogative, as we have said, to bring light out of darkness, and it is man's place and privilege to walk in the

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light so given. Light in the person and life of Christ is presented to the world and pressed upon the acceptance of men. "Then spake Jesus again unto them saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not abide in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

One and another had gladly accepted Him in the pathway of His life and ministry. Simeon at the earliest had taken Him up in his arms and blessed God, saying, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." A woman had touched the hem of His garment, and virtue had come out of Him to heal her. Another who was a sinner stood behind Him weeping, and washed His feet with her tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed His feet. But with these and other exceptions of surpassing interest between Christ

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and sinners, and the Messiah and His disciples, the world knew Him not; and Jesus did not commit Himself to *men*, for He knew what was in man. Finally He said, "For judgment I am come into this world, that they who see not might see, and that they which see might be made blind."

(To be continued.)

THOUGHTS FOR THIS DAY.

EVANGELIZING.

THE wider the range of any subject or duty, the more care must there be, if it is to be true to itself, that it lose not its character, because of its diffusiveness, as a stream is lost in a lake.

It has been well said, the greater our privilege, the greater our responsibility. No greater privilege could be conferred on any one than to be appointed of the Lord an evangelist—one to proclaim the good tidings which have been entrusted to him. He has received them

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He does not shrink from publicity, but it is in private when he can engage the soul alone, as he walks by the river's side, or sits weary on a well, or shut up in prison, or in the desert, that he feels he is in the highest duty and glory of his office. As a teacher in a smaller way feels that his work is only begun, when he has set forth the truth; the moment of real interest to him is when he finds how the word has reached, and he like a gardener can form a definite idea of the budding in the soul. The *soul* is the pulpit for both evangelist and teacher; and the one who preaches *there* is at least well heard there and has found the true place for publicity.

A living Christ was merely a testing Christ, a dead Christ one that has made atonement, a risen Christ one that has acceptance.

A broken nature is a useful vessel where the will is subdued. The thing a man is most celebrated for in scripture is generally the very thing he has broken down in. Moses is said to be the meekest man, and we have heard of the patience of Job.

DOCTRINE AND PRACTICE.

EVERY truth has its doctrine, that is what it teaches, and there is a knowledge of the truth according as the doctrine is apprehended. But on divine subjects the truth is addressed to the conscience, and as it is truly adopted there is practice, or the effect produced on the person by the truth which he has accepted. Now it is evident, if the doctrine of any truth be imperfect, there cannot be, even with a good conscience, anything but an imperfect practice, characteristic of the form in which the truth has been received. Hence when any doctrine is propounded the true heart examines first, whether it be according to the word of God, and having received it as His word, he then seeks to conform to it, or otherwise he will not be able to preserve a good conscience. There are thus the two exercises—one, to ascertain that the doctrine presented is from the word of God; and next, to be conformed to the truth it teaches. If there be an im-

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perfect apprehension of the truth—if the theory has been incorrectly accepted, there must, however faithful the conscience, be an imperfect practice. God communicates the truth perfectly, and if man were simply obedient he would follow it; and this is practice. But we have to contend with a will which is opposed to God, and we have, as I have said, first to be like the Bereans, who received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily whether those things were so; and next, like the Thessalonians, to whom “our gospel came, not in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance, so that ye became followers of us and of the Lord.” There is first the readiness of mind to receive the word, and then the practical effect—“followers of us, and of the Lord”—when the word is in power and in the Holy Ghost and in much assurance.* The first must not

* “Much assurance,” used only four times in the New Testament, means *full bearing*, same as *full assurance* in Colossians ii. 2.

be mistaken for the second, though the second cannot be without the first. What hinders the second is the subject I would consider in this paper.

Every portion of truth, every revelation of God, instead of finding a ready acceptance from man, calls forth an opposition, varying according to the nature of the truth given, so that the more perfectly anyone has adopted a truth; the more his own will or flesh has been resisted, the more, like a pent up stream it opposes, because resisted, so that the effort and triumph of the flesh would be to annul that which resists it; and hence, if the flesh gains an ascendancy, it is sure to exhibit its success in carrying one away from the truth; so that the practice is the true criterion of how much any one is governed by the truth. The doctrine must be received or there cannot be any practical conformity to it; and if there has been an error in the terms of it, there must be a corresponding defect in practice, made more manifest as the zeal to maintain it is great and un-

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yielding. A wrong doctrine can only produce a wrong practice, but a right one might be held and still there might be an imperfect practice. Practice simply means carrying out to the letter the doctrine. Hence, to know the truth is the first thing, and the second is to be personally the exponent of it.

My present inquiry is, how souls, having received the true doctrine, fail in expressing it practically. Take for example Abram and Lot. Lot accompanies Abram, accepts the word of God to come into the land. It may be alleged that Lot did not get the word in the same way as Abram did. That will be admitted, and it is quite possible; but he acted on it, and they came into the land of Canaan together.

Now Abram finds before long that he is not able to maintain his ground there. When there is a famine in the land he goes down into Egypt. It is not that he has not received the truth; he has not only received it, but he has acted on it; but he fails to be practically the exponent of it: he yields to nature and

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there is no practice. By and by he is restored, and then he exhibits a moral superiority to Lot. Abram proves that the truth governs his heart, even though when tried he had failed. Failure has only taught him to value the truth the more; but it had not this effect on Lot, for he shews that the truth that he had accepted had not sufficient value in his eyes; for he departs from it, not like Abram under pressure, but in order to grasp *present advantages*; and there he is snared and taken. The truth is God's mind for man, and man is not of God if he be not a transcript of it; and to be so he must surrender his own will; and hence often where the heart is truest, there is a break down of the man in nature before he is sufficiently docile, or tractable to express God's mind in his walk; in other words to be practical. If the truth has been received in the love of it, though there be failure in the practice, there will be a return again to the claims of it; and there will be a success which was not known before. This was remarkably

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the case with Abraham and David, Samson and Peter. They failed where they would least like to have failed, but failure only taught them to be more devoted to the truth which they had received; whereas the first failure with a Lot, or a Jonathan, or a Demas, seems never to have been recovered.

Many again, like Moses, receive a truth which they try first to bring themselves into conformity with; and failing therein, like him, are slow and fearful to answer to the desire of their hearts (compare Exodus ii. 11—14; iv. 1—13); but they are sure to be led on and helped by God. I think it will be seen that there is a marked difference between the failure of the one whose heart is set on the truth, and that of the one who, though he has received it, has not entered into the value of it.

Job is an example of another class, even that in which God breaks down the will through circumstances, ill health, &c., in order that the saint may be practically according to His mind. Every faithful saint is subject to Job's

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discipline in one form or another. It is not as in Abram's case or Moses', suffering because of the acting of the will against the truth of God; but in Job it is God dealing with him, in order to set aside that which hinders the truth having its full power and sway. In him is exemplified that word, "They who live are alway delivered unto death." The loss and deprivation of everything here effected for him that twofold condition of soul which only ensures true practice. He is brought to abhor himself in the light of God's presence, and ~~at~~ the same moment he depends so fully on God that he prays for his friends. Blessed combination! To lose all dependence on, and respect for myself, and at the same moment to have all my dependence and rest in God.

The simple problem before us is, how we personally may express the truth of God. The truth is supposed to have been adopted in its integrity; but there being in us a mind that is essentially at enmity with God, the inquiry is, What is the mode and process which is used

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o counteract this hostility, and to render us obedient to the mind of God? First, it is, as we have seen in Abram, there is a trial of the flesh in the very point which at once tests the whole power of the truth; and where there is yielding, there is a surrender of it in toto. This trial exposes the weakness of flesh beyond any question, and in the true soul teaches him never to trust in himself. Secondly, with Lot and his class, it is not pressure from which one sees no way of escape, but it is, while avowedly accepting the truth, and acting on it, looking for a *carnal addition*, which will entirely neutralize it. From this there is no recovery.

The third class is that of Moses attempting to carry out the truth in the flesh, and when failing, slipping into the other extreme, afraid to attempt anything at all. Here God manifestly helps.

The fourth, of which Job is the type, is where God so disciplines the soul, through temporal and bodily suffering, that even the good man finds that he

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has nothing in himself to esteem in the presence of God. Nay, he is so utterly stripped of all respect of himself, that, like Peter, he can leave all to follow Him; or, like Saul of Tarsus, he is blind as to everything here: the glory of that light throws everything here in the shade.

The external is the index of the power and influence of the internal. The external is the practice, and according to the measure and extent of the soul's dependence on God (dependence increases as I am nearer to God) so is there external evidence of it. The practice cannot be but as there is power within. It is the power within which determines the practice. If the hands of Moses are held up on the mount, Amalek is worsted, (see Exodus xvii.) there is good practice. The trying to be practical is only an evidence of how little one knows from where it springs. It is simply affectation to attempt to be what one is not genuinely. If I am occupied with what I do, it is affectation. If I

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am possessed by a moral power, I am subject to that which controls me, and there is practice. It is not a question of what I am trying to be, but of what that power makes me. Hence, the extent of practical correspondence to the truth is the real measure of the power of that truth in one; and hence too the unceasing urging in scripture that souls should obey the truth, and the unceasing efforts of Satan—not only to prevent practice, but to subvert or qualify the truth—so that there may be bad practice with an unaccusing conscience.

In fine there is no blessing apart from obedience. “If a man love me he will keep my words.” “But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the word, that man shall be blessed in his deed.”

“*Now* is the judgment of this world.” The cross is the terminating point between God and everything here.

THE DAY.

(Concluded from page 83.)

A DEEPER enmity than Pharaoh's, and a more determined opposition than Egypt's, against the God of Israel; a darkness that might be felt, was manifested against the Lord's anointed, the son of Abraham, son of David, and their Messiah. The Jews took up stones to stone Him, but Jesus departed, passing through their midst, and did hide Himself from them. Refused by His own, and rejected of men, He fell back upon the predeterminate counsel and foreknowledge of God, whose will He had come to do. He changed His relations to suit the glory of God, and accepted the place of the Lamb of God, "the taker away of the sin of the world." Darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the people. Satan took advantage of the degradation into which man had morally sunk, and made him the betrayer of his Master and Lord—and Judas, who dipped his hand in the same dish with Christ, delivered Him with a kiss—and it was *night!*

Jesus, the Word made flesh, who alone

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could take up *this* darkness, between God and man where Satan was, and work in it so as to bring light out of it-- a resurrection morning for Himself, and His redeemed ones--passed on into Gethsemane with His disciples, and began to be sore amazed, and sweat as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground, saying, "Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not my will but thine be done." As to His enemies He said "Be ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves? When I was daily with you in the temple ye stretched forth no hands against me, but this is your hour and the *power* of darkness." Satan, who was a murderer from the beginning, and always at the head of the world's rebellion, was with the chief priests and captains and elders, who with Pontius Pilate were arrayed against God, in open and avowed hostility to Jesus the Lord. What were the magicians, in the land of Egypt, in the presence of Pharaoh, when they withstood Moses, compared with *this*? The cross, with

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the Son of God nailed to it, was the measure and expression of human hatred against life, light, and love. To *this* level the world sunk itself, and lower it could not go---it can never repeat this act.

Can God bring *light* out of moral darkness such as this? Will He bring life out of the death of Christ? Has He in reserve a morning of glorious resurrection out of the world's dark night of betrayal, and blood? Life and death---darkness and light---good and evil---day and night---God and man---Satan and the grave, are all *now*, as we have said, to be looked at and learned in their connection with Christ. God also had *His* part in that same cross, where with wicked hands man crucified His Son. It was in type "a night much to be remembered" both for Israel, and for Egypt---as *this* night of Christ's betrayal is to be had in everlasting remembrance, between God and the redeemed---between heaven and hell. It was the hour of God's glory, but of Satan's overthrow---the hour of Christ's exaltation, but of the world's judgment!

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But resurrection is out of death, and the darkness of the grave served to bring out a new day, to the Son of man—a first day of the week—the Lord's day to us, who shew forth His death in the world that cast Him out, till He come. His ascension into the heavens, by the glory of the Father, has left the world in its night of darkness, and under the coming judgment of the great day. For us, and all the redeemed, God has taken Him up out of the place of judgment, into which He went on our behalf, and in our stead, when He was made sin for us; who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. Of believers it is written, "we are all the children of light, and the children of the day; we are not of the night, nor of darkness." Night and day are now descriptive of two classes of men all around us: and they are thus viewed, in their relation to God, and to Christ. "They that sleep, sleep in the night; and they that be drunken, are drunken in the night; but let us who are of the day, be sober; putting on

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the breastplate of faith and love, and for an helmet the hope of salvation." The world, if looked at in relation to Christ, and His rejection, has cast Him out, as the light—the way—the truth—and the life; and is thus bereft of these, and of Him, in whom they centred. It has reduced itself to itself; and is left to the speculations of men, and wicked spirits that are gone out into it. "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world, therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God; he that knoweth God heareth us, he that is not of God heareth us not. Hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error." This is the only line of demarcation now between darkness and light. The antagonism which was personal at the cross is still continued; but against the whole truth of revelation by the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of truth, come down from the Father and the Son. The last conflicts, between all that is of God on

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the one hand, and all that is of the devil on the other, are coming rapidly into crisis. The night is far spent, the day is at hand; let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light, let us walk honestly as in the day, is the warning voice to faith. Egypt and Canaan once measured the distance, and gave the character, to antagonism; but now the heavenly places, and the earthlies, mark the scope of the conflict, between light and darkness: for God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. The sources of good and evil are all uncovered, and their respective ranges revealed, and we are in the closing scenes of the battle. The war in heaven itself will soon follow, when Michael and his angels fight against the dragon, and the dragon fights and his angels, and prevails not; neither will their place be found any more in heaven. The issue of the war in heaven is certain; the great dragon, that old serpent called the devil and serpent, which deceiveth the whole world, is to be cast out into the earth, and his

angels will be cast out with him. In the meanwhile we who are Christ's, and waiting to be caught up to meet Him in the air, are exhorted to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might, and to put on the whole armour of God. This plainly tells us the nature of the conflict, for we wrestle not against flesh and blood (as Israel did in its day) but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against wicked spirits in the heavenlies, while they are there. Blessed it is to see that in the path we have thus been tracing, God has brought light out of darkness---good out of evil---life out of death---and established His glory in the Second Man in the heavens, as the new unfailing starting point with His redeemed. He also provides the armour for us in this last attack, and encourages us with the word, "*stand* therefore, having your loins girt about with truth."

The night of our redemption and of Christ's death will indeed be ever observed by us; nor can we fail to connect it with the morning of His

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resurrection, which is yet to open out a new history before the universe of God, in the Second Man. But, besides what death and resurrection were to Christ, there is yet to be manifested in His saints at the Lord's coming what life out of death will be to them in the morning of their resurrection. The Israelites left Egypt in the night of its judgment; but they that are Christ's at His coming leave the world in the darkest hour of its long night and of its pending judgment, and are caught up to meet their Lord in the air, to be for ever with the Lord. Six hundred thousand men passed out from Egypt on that night of the Lord; but who shall tell the ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands who shall spring up out of their graves at the rising of that sun, on the morning without a cloud, when the shout of the descending Lord and the voice of the archangel and the trump of God bid His own to rise and meet Him, to put off the image of the earthly and put on the image of the heavenly man? The

creature likeness of God was lost when Adam fell; but by redemption in Christ the believer beholds in Him the glory, as of the only begotten of the Father, and are new creatures in Him. On the day of *our* presentation, in the presence of God, we shall be like Christ; He the first-born among many brethren, and we predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son. What a triumph of infinite wisdom for God, and in divine grace to us, over darkness, sin, and Satan, through Christ! God has man for Himself—not in the creature likeness in which He made man out of the dust of the earth, but by redemption and in resurrection where God dwells—in the life, righteousness, likeness, and glory of Christ, the head of a new creation. God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. This is the testimony we have to scatter around us to those who are still in the night and of darkness.

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to know and be in communion with His mind? Scripture, as I have said, abounds with examples of how the absolutely dependent one was always met and enlightened with a knowledge of His mind, suitable for the time. Even a Jacob, homeless and friendless, through his own waywardness, when asleep on a pillow of stones, and with nothing but God, is not forgotten of Him; but as he is in a state to receive it, the blessing is conferred, the mind of God is revealed to him. Though one may be as ignorant as Mary Magdalene, yet, if there be an entire consecration of heart to Him, like hers, that one is rewarded with the manifestation of Himself, and the communication of His mind, which imparts the intelligence which He wishes His own to have at the time. It is very cheering, though it imposes on us unremitting self-abnegation, to know that if we are in a state to receive the mind of the Lord, He in His grace will communicate it to us. To "the meek he will teach his way," and it will be remarked that any who are ignorant or

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uninstructed in the Lord's mind, are always those who have other confidences, though they may, as I have said, trust God and have confidence in Him as to particular needs. But the tone and bearing of one absolutely dependent on God, without any other resource, is very peculiar and very uncommon; and hence there are so few who are happily assured that they are in concert with His mind, as He would have them to be, with reference to His concerns on earth. There are many happy as to their own state and useful to others to a certain point, who are not in communion with the Lord, having no one but God to rest on, like the gourdless Jonah.

May the Lord touch our hearts with such true devotedness to Himself, that cleaving only to Him we may be in concert with Him touching His interests at this time.

It is the attractive power of Christ that keeps me out of all that is around, and finding Him the companion of the journey. But if we walk with Christ, we must walk with Him *in white*: there must be no spot of the world.

THE WILDERNESS.

WHEN we come to enter into the conception of what Christ has done for us, we become exceedingly attached to Him; but if we are thinking of *our* love, we shall break down entirely, as Peter did. He boasted of his love to Christ, but he could not carry his own vessel when that love was poured into it. But this did not change Christ. He looked on him, and when searching him, He put this as the ground of Peter's confidence: "Thou knowest all things." There was this blessed One before him, who knew all.

In the wilderness the heart is sorely tried. It has got into the school where God tries the heart for Himself. There may be the sense of exhaustion, but there is glorying in tribulation; and we must get that very simply in our souls, if we are to be as trenches for the love of God to flow through. What as to the present time? What is God doing with us *now*? In passing us through the world we learn ourselves. He

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has to separate us from things round about us; make us prove the depth of redeeming love, the love that has picked us up. We cannot except the trials. But how are we bearing them? Are you tried by finding God's check on you, or do you give thanks for the trial? Are you of one mind with God about it? Do you glory in tribulation? It is thus our God purifies our souls, weans our hearts from ourselves, gives Christ a place there, which He would not otherwise have had, and teaches us how blessed it will be to be in that place where not ourselves but Christ is the topic of conversation.

The place where the truth and power of God are gathering souls must be a corresponding place here to the place we have in glory. The Holy Ghost guides us into the path, and is our power to walk in it. But truth is not enough, or being in the right path is not enough. We want the company of Christ. I must talk *with* Him by the way, not merely speak *of* Him; but I must know Him more intimately than my most familiar friend.

THE LIGHT BURNING.

Luke xii.

WHEN God reveals His sovereign will
Let every human thought be still;
For He who feeds the ravens well
Can every cloud of care dispel.

The ravens neither sow nor reap
Nor gather food in storéd heap;
But, fed of God, they *wait* at night,
Till day again affords its light.

Above the birds He bids us rise
To know our home amidst the skies;
And in His own most blest abode,
To find our Father in our God.

The lilies sweet in perfume tell
Of Him who doeth all things well;
Their sweet and stedfast ways declare
The marvel of His matchless care.

The glories of all earth-crowned kings
Fade thus before His smallest things;
And David's son in Israel's story
Shewed not the radiance of this glory.

But how fades all amid the light
In which God's grace our hearts invite
To dwell with Him, to know above,
Through Christ, the Father's wealth of love.

To know the deep embrace of love
Thus drawing long-lost sons above;
And in that robe, and by that kiss,
The foretaste get of endless bliss.

LAW AND GRACE EXEMPLIFIED.

2 Kings iv. 1—7.

A WIDOW of one of God's faithful servants, reduced to the greatest straits through poverty, cried to the prophet Elisha. The exigency of her position she discloses. Her husband was dead, her creditor was pressing his claim, and her two sons in consequence were about to be sent into slavery. What should she do? Her husband's faithfulness when living she recalls to the man of God, but that will not appease the creditor nor mitigate the righteous demands of the law. The claim she admits, its validity was incontestible, the proceedings too of the creditor were unimpeachable. (Ex. xxi. 2; Lev. xxv. 39.) He might have been merciful—that rested with him—but none could challenge his right to exact what was his due, and the law which he put into action knew no pity. Her position was a sad one, she felt it; and, turning to the prophet in her distress, confesses by

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her very action the hopelessness of her meeting the difficulty.

An apt illustration this of the position in which the remnant of the Jews will find themselves in a future day, with the claims of the law pressing on them, the consciousness that the claims are just adding to their misery, without the power to discharge them and free themselves from the penalty they have incurred. This is a position they will be in, but one in which we have never been placed by God. See Galatians iii. 13, 24, Ephesians ii. 15, Colossians ii. 14, where the condition of the Jew as distinct from the Gentile is clearly marked. But though we have never been so placed by God, if we would value aright His grace, we must apprehend the helpless wretched condition of what it must be to be under law. Hence, whilst the position of the widow does not correspond to the one we were in as children of Adam, we can get instruction from it, as we see how grace worked on her behalf.

The prophet attends to her cry; but ere he tells her what to do, he draws out

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from her the poverty of her condition. To his question as to what she has in the house, she mentions but one article, a pot of oil used for the purpose of anointing. Short was the catalogue of her possessions—one pot of oil. Well might she cry for help whose earthly goods could be so easily summed up. Had this pot of oil been of value, would she not have sold it? but it appears to have been an object worthless in the estimation of her creditor, and of no account in her own. He had not seized it, she had not disposed of it. The value both of them set on it is thus clearly manifested. She was to learn, what others have learnt since her day, that an object of little account in the eyes of the world is just that by which full deliverance may be effected. What use could this pot of oil be to her now? might have been her thought, as both Jews and Gentiles have underrated the value of the Lord's death on the cross. The Jews require a sign, the Greeks sought after wisdom, but the apostle preached Christ crucified, to the Jews a

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stumblingblock, to the Greeks foolishness, but to those saved, whether Jews or Greeks, Christ, God's power and God's wisdom. (1 Cor. i.) The judgment of both her creditor and herself as to the value of the article having been elicited, the ground is cleared for God to work.

The prophet bids her to borrow abroad vessels of all her neighbours, empty vessels, and not a few, and then with closed doors on herself and her sons she was to pour out into all of them, and set aside that which is full. To these directions she faithfully adhered. Had she reasoned about them she would probably have not done what he bade her. Who ever heard of vessels filled without the needful liquid to pour into them? But faith does not reason, it counts on God, and is obedient to His word. With closed doors they went to work. God's dealings with the soul are often in secret, for there must be personal and heart work, the effects appear openly afterwards. With closed doors then they worked, and found that the word came true. All the vessels

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were filled with oil. How much would flow Elisha had not told her, but she found, as souls do, that the reality surpassed the anticipation. That little pot, previously of small account in her eyes, supplied oil for all the vessels, none remained empty nor even half filled. She poured into the vessels as her sons brought them to her, she stopped only when they were filled with oil. She could count how many vessels she had borrowed, she learned afterwards the value of what she had got; but there was one thing she never knew, and that was how much oil could have flowed out of the pot. She never fathomed the depths of God's resources. She never drained the fountain of her blessings.

The vessels filled with oil—she acted aright, and told the prophet to whom she had opened out her grief of the abundant supply she had obtained. Should not all recipients of grace acknowledge to Him, to whom they are indebted for it, what it is He has given them? Elisha, hearing of what she

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had received, told her what use she was to make of it. "Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live thou and thy children of the rest." The legal claim must be met. That Israel too will find in a future day. The widow could never have met it. She had felt all the pressure of it, and the anticipation of the consequence which must flow from it. She now was to have her deliverance from the burden, not by repudiating it, but by having the debt paid in full. "Pay thy debt," said Elisha. He acknowledged the legal claim. To have acted otherwise would have been to condemn God's word, which sanctioned the creditor's rights. God's word was upheld, and the widow relieved. The claim was met, the creditor was satisfied, and the sons were free.

But was this all? It was all she had wanted, but would it have sufficed? We can answer, No, it would not. The claim simply met could not ensure her against a similar trouble hereafter; nor could it have provided for her every-day wants. Her capability to keep out of

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debt remained, as far as she was concerned unaltered. She had not been able to keep out of trouble. She had no more power to preserve herself from it, if only the debt was discharged. How little souls understand so living a fact! But God knew what she wanted. He gauged the measure of her need; but He estimated too her capability for the future, so the prophet tells her, "Live thou and thy children of the rest." That by which the debt had been cancelled afforded maintainment for her and her children as well. Here this history closes. It began with the widow in poverty, it ends with the widow in plenty. All was from God, for grace is from Him. She had learnt what her condition was, and that she had nothing to give; she finds what it is to receive. The claim was met, and she lived on the provision of God's grace. Surely the application is plain. He by whom the debt alone can be cancelled, is the one on whom the soul should ever after feed.

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weeds, and stones, and everything which would interfere with the roots of the valued plants. And hence the evidence or assurance of growth is not merely study of and delight in heavenly things, but in the increasing and careful self-denial of every interruption to the manifestation of this life. The sensibility so increased that the smallest thing that would hinder or obstruct is detected and at once removed, as eagerly as a mote would be removed from the natural eye. For the more the life increases in us the more the sensibilities of it will be felt; and its development is checked unless there be prompt self-denial of that which opposes it. If the body is to be controlled by the life of Jesus, flesh must retire. Thus as His life increases in us, the flesh must sensibly give way and die.

Christ wants His heart to be drawn on daily.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HAVING read with much interest your paper in the March number on "Evangelizing," will you kindly answer the following questions?

1. What is the difference between *preaching* and *evangelizing*?

2. What is the difference between "publicity" and "universality?"

3. May not both be sought on the same occasion, supposing that you mean by "universality" speaking to individuals?

A CONSTANT READER.

1. The word "Evangelist" occurs only three times in the scriptures. In connection with Philip the evangelist. (Acts xxi. 8.) In connection with gifts (Eph. 4), and when the Apostle Paul counsels Timothy "to do the work of an evangelist." (2 Tim. iv.) It does not occur at all in the Old Testament. It is an office or service, having its origin with the gospel. Hence it is a person sent to communicate the glad tidings.

The word "Preacher" occurs only three times in the New Testament. In

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1 Timothy ii. 7, where the apostle says, he is "a preacher and an apostle, a teacher of the Gentiles," &c. In 2 Timothy i. 2, where the same words occur with the addition of an "*and*" between apostle and teacher. And thirdly, in 2 Peter ii. 5, where Noah is called a "preacher of righteousness." Preaching is rather a branch of his work than the object of his office or service. The evangelist's duty is to communicate the good tidings, and in order to communicate them, he must know them; and he must have the heart and purpose to announce them. This is his object and his simple duty. He gives himself to this work, cost him what it may. He is a servant pre-eminently. Like our blessed Lord, he will, though wearied and needing rest, devote his time and attention to the desolate one, and think more of the grace that has reached such an one than of his own need; so engrossed in heart with it that in measure he can say, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." The evangelist is called and gifted of the Lord to seek out and bear the word

of life to souls. The shepherds minding their flocks by night were the first evangelists. They were the first to whom the gospel was revealed. The angels evangelized the shepherds, and when they had heard they made known abroad or about* the saying that was told them concerning the child, "and all they that heard wondered at those things which were told or spoken to them by the shepherds." It does not say that they preached, but they made known around the word spoken to them concerning the child. They were informed, and as they were informed, they communicated it. These first evangelists give us the true characteristics of an evangelist at the beginning. He is peculiarly a messenger, a messenger of good tidings which he enjoys himself, and his delight is to do as he has been called. He thinks not of his sacrifice, he has news, news that has

* The word "made known" is only used here in the New Testament. It is a fuller word than that used in verse 15, "which the Lord hath *made* known unto us."

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made his own heart glad, and news that he longs to impart to others, and he is ready to submit to anything in order to do so. He starts on his errand or message, thinking only of communicating it as his Lord will order. He divests himself of everything which would impede him in his work. He is prepared to endure any amount of trial or suffering: he has one great business. It is of him it is said, that they who announce (the same word as is used for "shew forth" the Lord's death) the gospel should live of the gospel. Like the shepherds, he is to make known the tidings, leaving his own concerns, and entirely controlled by this one great duty. The more one examines the course and service of an evangelist, the more one must see that to fulfil his mission perfectly he must be free, and not bound to any service or employment. He may pursue one where service calls him, but it must always be secondary, or he could not be a messenger. He is not simply a preacher. Preaching may be the *mode* but it is not the *object* nor

the vocation, it is only a mode of making known the gospel, as it is said, "How shall they hear without a preacher [or one preaching]? How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things." The gospel is made known, and spoken of, and announced; and it is the feet, the walk of the evangelist which is so commended and is the subject of admiration in this passage. The business of the evangelist is to communicate his tidings fully and simply. To be qualified for his mission two things are evident: one, that he has renounced all position and self-consideration. He is Christ's messenger to the least, and his calling necessarily requires that he should be less than the least. The least shall be greatest. "I am among you as he that serveth." How could he sit weary on a well, and attend on a desolate woman of Samaria, if he had any position to maintain? A preacher is not required to surrender his position in society, he may continue in any circle of taste or

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fashion, and yet from a platform or pulpit address the multitude; but the evangelist, like our blessed Lord on the cross, comes down to the place of the suffering one, forgets his own sufferings to attend to the dying thief; or, like Paul at Philippi, submits to be a bleeding prisoner, to be *within reach* of the convicted jailer. The mistake into which the Church has fallen is in giving too much prominence to preaching, which as one mode of evangelizing is right enough; but as mere preaching involves little or no sacrifice, the conscience of the evangelist is quieted and satisfied, that his duty has been done because he has preached earnestly and faithfully; whereas really, it is simply a branch of his service, and one without which he might have evangelized most blessedly and effectually. The snare is that the conscience is quieted without the sacrifice which the fulfilment of his duty would have required, and he is led to trust too much to an appeal to the senses as a substitute.

Secondly, it is evident that an evan-

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gelist must be free from any occupation which would interfere with his being sent to any part of the earth. A preacher can be faithful in his own locality, and remain in it as Noah did, who was a preacher, not an evangelist. The evangelist seeks the *soul*, and from God to it, is the messenger of the light of the glory of Christ who has finished everything according to the mind of God. He communicates the wonderful tidings entrusted to him. When it is received, his heart rejoices; and when it is refused, he retires to find his rest in Him whose servant he is.

I should add that because the Church has become like a "great house," congregations of professing Christians are now found everywhere, who really do not know the gospel, though bearing the name of Christians, and to such the pastor Timothy has to make full proof of his ministry, and therefore to "do the work of an evangelist;" and in this light a resident pastor is a preacher and an active evangelist, as every true saint is in some degree.

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2, 3. As to "publicity" and "universality," I take your two questions (2, 3) as one. The difference of object always gives a difference in action. My object is to be universal, but I do not begin by seeking publicity. My publicity may increase as I am universal, but it is not my object. Paul was unknown, yet well known. A flag or a signboard is to obtain publicity; a stream of pure water, conveyed to each of our houses, is universal, but it is not public, and does not seek to be so.

THE POWER OF WALK.

God would have us see that in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ everything of man gets its test and utter condemnation. Seeing this gives one such clearness about self-judgment. Everything in this scene is swept away. I am in all things connected with God Himself. I must get everything from that living Person in heaven, who is all things to

me, the source of power, affections, guidance—everything. Why make so much of the Son? Because the Father's thought is, If you know the Son, you know Him that sent Him, and if you want to get to Abba's bosom you must get there by the way that Abba opened through the Son. God gave us to Christ before the foundation of the world, and there is power in Him who is the eternal life to reproduce Christ's life in those who receive Him. Life comes with the light.

When Christ stretched out His hand to take the veil from the heart of Saul of Tarsus, the first thing he says is, "Who art thou, Lord?" He felt exceedingly little before that Person who was all God's delight in heaven. No sooner does he see Him face to face in the glory than he knows nothing. He knew everything before, but now he hears from that Jehovah-glory the voice of the Nazarene. Why do we not know Him thus? The reason Christians do not walk now as they did on the day of Pentecost is that they are not practi-

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cally outside as those who know Him *personally*, so that if I met one I should say, There is a likeness in that person which recalls a Person at a distance: I have got a fresh taste of Christ in his company. It all hangs on individual intercourse with the person of Christ where He is. There is a certain person in heaven. God has called me to know Him, given me a nature that is perfectly competent by the power of His Spirit to get into communion with Him; and if the whole world round about me oppose or hinder, I am justified, and more than that, *called* to be in communion with that Person in heaven. I see what I have got to do—I take that road—I act upon the word of God, and though every one else take the other way, *I go that way*. Have I access to Christ? Do I know the Shepherd's voice? Do I know Him as the one who will rise up and take me to be with Himself? If I do not, I am as a man going into action not properly accoutred.

ROOTS AND FRUITS.

THE right place is the place of growth. Paul grows in Arabia and in the prison at Rome. In the one he was a prisoner, in the other he had liberty enough. In the desert there was nothing around to interfere with, or intrude upon, him, but it was a desert; and the only thing to attract was the vision of heaven, and this he sees—he is caught up to the third heaven.

In Rome, on the contrary, there was everything to try and distress him; the prison, the chain, the din and evil of the world. All this was around him, but this was the right soil and climate for him *at the time*, in the mind of God; just as much so as Arabia had been before. In Arabia he sees the third heaven, he gets rooted there. In Rome, he *dwells* in heaven, the virtue of the roots are developed in the leaves and fruit; he writes there the Epistle to the Ephesians.

The great hindrance or obstacle to true testimony is that the roots are not strong enough, or nourished enough.

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The root is the great thing to be acquired ; and this is acquired in the desert where there is no one but Christ. If there were only good soil, the root would soon be strong and able to bear an external growth, and root and fruit would keep pace together. But the impure soil, the worm, the snail, the creeping thing, too often damage the root. There is not sufficient isolation with the Lord only where we are rooted ; and hence there is not power to dwell in heaven in spirit, when we are in the midst of the great city of this world, where every power is against us, and seeks to keep us in prison ; but the word of God is not bound. What your heart really learns and enjoys in Arabia, your life and ways will not only tell of in Rome ; but that which was only a vision, an introduction to you there, now becomes your resource and dwellingplace. It ruled the *day* for you in the desert, and in the *night* its true and full virtue is known to you, and you become the witness of it.

THE DAWN OF UNION.

John xx.—Ephesians.

SHE *sought* Him while the darkness lay
In sable folds around her way,
Where death had mark'd the spot:
The rest await the "rising sun,"
No light her heart could know save one,
No home where He was not.

She *sought* Him, but He was not there,
In human love, she sought Him where
He never more could be;
The empty tomb so filled her eye,
That when her living Lord drew nigh,
She knew not it was He.

She thought of Him as One who here
Had met her need, and calm'd her fear,
And won her yearning heart:
But He was gone!—was lost to sight,
Her life had lost its joy and light,
Because from Him apart.

But soon His resurrection tones
Ring through her soul; she sees and owns
Her Master and her Lord;
Not now in flesh, but from above,
The Fount of life, and power, and love—
The risen Son of God.

Rais'd out of death, by glory claimed,
Yet Jesus still, and not ashamed
His feeble ones to own:
To call them "brethren," for they've found,
Through death, that new, that holy ground
Where once He stood alone.

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Sons of His Father now they stand,
 His God their God, a risen band,
 With Him the Firstborn Son ;
 Bone of His bone, for now His heart,
 Once straitened, does its wondrous part
 In power through victory won.

In spirit link'd with Him above,
 And sharers of His Father's love,
 His toils for them are o'er :
 No soil can rest on them again ;
 His own pure life, without a stain,
 Is theirs for evermore !

Oh ! what a journey for the soul
 Of that poor lone one ! what a goal
 Of rest to find at last !
 In heav'n her spirit's home to know
 With Him whom she had sought below,
 All fears and longings past.

No more to *seek* Him as a guest
 In wistful doubt and heart's unrest,
 Lest clouds should come between ;
 But join'd in spirit with her Head,
 No more to part, though still to tread
 This homeless desert scene.

No restless fear, no anxious care,
 Can reach her deep reposing there —
 Her Sun doth ever shine :
 On earth she waits, and works, and sings,
 To heav'n she soars on eagles' wings,
 And dwells in love divine.

THE WISE VIRGINS.

IN dispensational failure there are three marks of the faithful remnant. The first is restoration of soul and sense of forgiveness for the sin of failure; secondly, a new prospect opened out imparting a new start; and thirdly, a devoted maintenance of all that remains of the order of things which in man's hand had failed.

In the ways of God the failure is not repaired, but through His grace there is forgiveness, and always a prospect of a new order; and devotion to this new order is the test of the sincerity of those who, feeling the failure, turn to Him for forgiveness. If we really repent of the failure into which we have fallen, and have obtained mercy and grace to walk in the light of His countenance, the evidence and proof of it will be in the way we devote ourselves to the prospect, or new course which He presents to us, and which in His counsel is to supersede the one which has become a failure in our hands.

When Adam failed at the first, there

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was not only mercy for him, in respect of his transgression, but the Lord tells him that the Seed should come through whom all evil would be overcome, and in whom the state in which he had failed would be set aside. Now, the more Adam repented of his failure as to his first estate, the more truly and earnestly would he devote himself, and cling to the prospect and new order, presented to him by God in His mercy; while at the same time carefully and sedulously strengthening the things that remained as to his first estate. This is the rule when man fails in any standing in which God has set him, and when repentant, he is not only assured of the present favour of God, but the new order or era which will supersede the one in which he has failed, occupies his mind and heart, and he gives proof of the reality of his repentance by the earnestness with which he occupies himself with the new and coming order, while still cleaving faithfully to whatever remains of that which is passing away. Noah's father (Lamech) tells of the rest before the flood came,

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and Noah, though saved in the flood, is looking for the rest of which his father had foretold, while he was a preacher in that which was to be set aside. Jacob after all his failure not only found favour with God, but he foresaw (Gen. xlix.) the new and bright course which eventually awaited Israel, the people of God. So also with Moses, and with every remnant. They rested in God for the present, but their hopes were not built on the revival of what they had failed in, but on something foretold of God, and yet future; and yet it must be remembered, that while they kept their eye on the future as the goal of their hopes and wishes, yet it was never with indifference as to the dispensation in which they still were; because the heart truly set on God and His glory, while it is carried forward to the time when it will be brightly and fully maintained, would in every way most zealously cling to, labour for, and strengthen the things that remain.

There would be no consistency if one were repentant because of a state of

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failure, and merely consoled oneself with that which is to come; but in the mean time shewed no interest or care for the order of God in the present. Moses when all had failed in Israel beseeches the Lord to shew him His glory. He looked to the future for a prospect to sustain him, and on which his heart could rest, but at the same time he was indefatigable to maintain the honour of God in the midst of the ruins of Israel. He insisted on the holiness of God's house; he placed the tabernacle outside of the camp, and he enjoined separation unto death, every man on his brother, and on his companion, and on his neighbour. (Exodus xxxii. xxxiii.)

Thus there are these three activities which mark every true saint in every time where the present dispensation has failed. Let us repeat them:—First, sense of favour with God though in the state of failure; secondly, hope, not in the revival of that state which has failed, but in the coming in of an entirely new one, and this new one occupying and consoling the heart and characterizing the

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walk; thirdly, unflinching zeal and labour to strengthen the things that remain that are ready to die, to maintain every remaining fragment of that which has failed in our hands.

Simeon and Anna (Luke ii.) illustrate these activities. "The Lord's Christ" was the future and coming order to the aged Simeon, living in the midst of the ruins of the earthly Jerusalem; and he could freely and fully give up all the present for the coming order; and with the Saviour in his arms, he passes away from the state of failure to that of blessing and glory in connection with Him: and of this Anna is the type—the testimony. She clung to the old order faithfully and rigidly. She departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day, and she gave thanks unto the Lord, and spake of Him, the new and coming One, to all that looked for redemption in Israel.

Now we have only to apply these principles to ourselves in this day in order to discover our true and faithful

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place in the state of church failure in which we find ourselves. First, we have to learn, that through and in Christ, in spite of our share and partnership in the failure, we are in the fulness of acceptance with God in the Father's house as to reception; and in the holiest of all, as to nearness to Him. This is the first thing we learn, and as we are assured of our standing before God, through grace, the next thing we discover is, that we have utterly failed dispensationally, and that there is no recovery of that which is a failure, but that He gives us the "morning star" as the hope and solace of our hearts (see Rev. ii. 28) when things come to their worst in the Church; and thirdly, while occupied in heart with the Bridegroom, who is coming, and characterized by this expectancy, we "strengthen the things that remain," even as it is enjoined on Sardis (Rev. iii. 2), the next church brought before us after the ruin and apostasy had reached its height in Thyatira. The word to Timothy is the word to us as we have ability: "Preach

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the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine. . . . Watch thou in all things, endure affliction, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry." (2 Tim. iv. 2, 5.)

In Matthew xxiv. 45; xxv. 1, it will be seen that when the failure was consummated, the servant had said in his heart, My Lord delayeth his coming; and had begun to smite his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken;—the kingdom of heaven was *then* become like unto ten virgins. This gives us the moral characteristics of the house of God when the Church is in ruins and the candlestick has been removed. There is no longer an exhortation to preserve the candlestick or an attempt to do so. Time has been given to the Church for repentance, but she repented not (Rev. ii. 5); and the Church is not now in testimony as the candlestick. That is the failure, and no saint who enjoys his place in Christ before God has any hope that the candlestick as once here will ever be restored.

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But instead of that, and according as the heart is true and dwelling in the secret of God, there will be the character and way of the wise virgins who went forth to meet (or the meeting of) the Bridegroom. The normal attitude of the Church was waiting—with their loins girt—their lights burning, and they themselves like men who wait for their Lord. The saints remaining in this scene where their Lord had been refused could in no way exonerate or free themselves while sojourners in it, of the reproach and sin of rejecting Him, but by ready diligence in waiting for His return. Hence “waiting for his Son from heaven” is the only true and normal position for the saints in this interval.

Now when the failure set in and the Church failed to hold the light;—that Light which was greater than Jonah, and greater than Solomon, it was no longer a candlestick;—the first mark of the failure was that the servant said in his heart, “My Lord delayeth his coming;” and the result of that delusion was, that the kingdom of heaven was

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become like ten virgins who all slumbered and slept. But when the awakening cry came, then the remnant were marked off in five wise ones, who had oil in their vessels. They answer to the cry, "Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him." To *meet the Bridegroom* was the one simple thought before the mind; and the testimony then was that souls—chaste and unentangled—in no wise mixed up with the things of this world—with lighted lamps sustained by oil in their vessels, went forth to greet the Bridegroom. The coming of the Lord is the great goal and object of their lives. It is not waiting only, but going forth to the meeting; and then, as we find in Rev. xxii. there is a new character imparted, "the Spirit and the bride say, Come." One is able to *invite* Him. The Church has failed and is no longer the candlestick; but now, each one of the true and devoted remnant bears a lighted lamp with oil in his vessel, i.e., the Spirit of God, and thus cleaves to the great and distinguishing truth con-

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nected with the present order—the presence of the Holy Ghost, the only power for Christ during His absence; and hence He and the Bride only can invite Him. The testimony is, not what has been set up on earth in the Church, but that of devoted virgins who go forth to meet the Bridegroom, with each a lamp trimmed, and oil in his vessel, individual separation and devotion of heart to the Bridegroom, and owning that all their power is through the Holy Ghost, and that the power to separate from the “foolish,” the professors, and to testify for the Lord in this day, is not in seeking the reparation or reconstruction of the Church as a candlestick, but while strengthening the things that remain, in holy and devoted purpose of heart to leave all for the meeting of the Bridegroom; and as the heart is associated with Him *where He is*, they acquire that bridal *attire and character* which will enable them to *invite Him who will set up and establish everything in divine and eternal perfection.*

“TRANSFORMATION.”

A SINGLE eye—the body full of light and no part dark—describes the new man, which the Spirit of God forms in those who are Christ's, and in whom the Holy Ghost dwells. On our part too the responsibility is admitted, “*Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.*” These two parts give in outline what the man of God is for to-day.

Here and there such a Christian is seen, like a bright star in the thick darkness around; one who is neither afraid nor ashamed to stand apart from the world, in the true confession of his Christ and Lord, whom it had denied and slain. A solitary man there always has been, with whom God could walk and speak; like Enoch in one age, or Abraham “the friend of God” in another, or David “the man after God's own heart,” in *his* day and generation. An individual saint *now*, with a single eye to the Father's will, and a body full of light—because a receiver of light, from “the

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Lord in glory," where the light now is, may well arrest the soul that knows at all what Christ was on earth; and is as the glorifier of the Father on high.

Still, it is well to remember at such a moment, that the grace which makes one such saint at any time, can make more and delights to do so; for divine love is as active to-day as ever, in producing what suits itself. The Lord is very gracious to *all*, whose hearts are upright in His sight, and with whom, conformity to Christ is the object. Our souls know what a comfort it is in every state and condition, to feel that we have to do with *Him*, and He with us, nor will He pass us out of His own hands. There is, however, a danger here, lest the ways and means which *we* may employ to compass this object, are not such as the treasury of God supplies. For example, we may begin with *ourselves*, and thus look to Moses and the law, instead of to Christ and the cross—I do not mean for salvation, but about the flesh *in* us.

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less than this; that in the school of Moses you have the schoolmaster, and the scholar *alive*, and active as regards the flesh and the claims of the law which are imperative; whereas, the cross is the place of *death*, on which Christ bore the judgment of God for it; so that neither *it*, nor Christ, is any longer there. *It* has been consumed by fire in that place of ashes! For a believer in Christ to return to Moses and the law, or to send that to school again which has been judged and condemned to death by God at the cross, is not only to deceive himself, but in truth to deny the death of *that* for which Christ died, and to gainsay the fact, between God and us, that "our old man has been crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed."

Death is between ourselves and a righteous God, if we look at Christ and the cross; and "*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

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me, and gave himself for me." If *this* death, the death which has put an end to the flesh, and *this* life be the *only* rule of God's present action towards us; then, necessarily this Christ in whom *both* are true, becomes the rule of our faith and communion towards God. For the present, "we *reckon* it," whether as regards the death of the old man, at the cross; or the life and divine righteousness of the new man, in Christ at the right hand of God. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be;" but we know that the truth about ourselves, touching the old or the new man, both now and hereafter, must be learnt outside ourselves, and *only* in Christ. This is Christianity.

But in an apostasy, where everything is wrong (through Satan's craft) which should be bright and true to the faith which owns Christ as the *alone* rule to the soul before God, it may be well to look at things *as they are*, and at people *as we find them*. When moral questions spring up between the soul and God, everyone is dissatisfied with himself and

thinks of becoming better by some means or other. It is natural to us all in such a strait to begin from self and its supposed capabilities; and to try and *answer* every claim made upon us by conscience, and so get a discharge by our own resources. Those who have further a conscience before *God* turn for light to what *He* may have introduced amongst men, as the expression of *His* mind, touching what man ought to be. This search leads the anxious to Mount Sinai and the law. Others again, remembering that the "law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ," pass on to the sermon on the Mount, and the great teacher. But neither of these mountains is Calvary and the cross, and until *this* is reached Moses or Christ may be, and often are, used as the schoolmaster or the teacher, for the supposed improvement of human nature. In this case, outward religiousness, with the addition of ritualistic observances and sacerdotalism, will be likewise accepted by the conscience, instead of the cross of Christ, where God

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“condemned sin in the flesh” and set it aside by death. It is not therefore that sin must die out *in us*, but that *we are* “*dead to sin by the body of Christ.*” What a difference!

But even where “the sentence of *death*” is held as a fact between God and ourselves, “as the truth *is* in Jesus, yet, the comfort of the grace that bears with us in our failures, and goes along with us, may be so exclusively present to the soul, as to describe the circle in which it dwells. Nevertheless, this knowledge of God in grace as meeting us where we are, (precious as it is) must never be separated from His own presence, and what becomes Himself; and we only reach the confines of true christian experience when we are upon this latitude. We make a grand march upon the deceitfulness of the heart, and gain a wonderful deliverance from the enemy’s power, when by self judgment we thus get into the light, and can say with Paul, “*We are manifest to God, and I trust also are made manifest to your consciences.*” In the lack of this nearness to God, it is

well to stir up the conscience by the fact, “we *must* all appear (or be made manifest) before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things he hath done, whether they be good or bad.” Living more in the *daily* acknowledgment of “the judgment seat of Christ,” would be a most healthful auxiliary to “the grace in which *we stand*,” and strengthen the spinal-chord of many a saint who is enfeebled, (and often worse) by the want of this bracing action.

There is a danger at this point of stopping with conscience *in* its difficulties—for it can never deliver from them: but while it finds busy occupation for us, in judging evil in the flesh, it may and ought to cast the soul upon grace—the forbearing grace of Christ. Now while this is quite true, and blessed to know, yet it does not by itself *gird up* the reins. The plant, so to speak, is not yet removed from the shade into the sunlight that alone produces colour, bloom and fragrance. Conscience, in a new nature, where the soul is quickened and

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busy with self-examination, may produce a kind of religious melancholy, suited to the deepening discovery of *what we are*: and sometimes a darker shade of disappointment creeps over the soul, as the conviction settles in upon us, that we shall never *be* better.

Now all this is very real, but it is not *Christ*, nor what Christ is, but what a saint is and because he wants to be a saint, and have *no* flesh to judge. We must not, certainly, make allowance for the flesh; but the existence of the flesh *in us* is palpable, and therefore we have “to reckon” the old man crucified with Christ. Our resurrection, without it, or our being caught up and changed into the likeness of the heavenly man—will make it true *in us* THEN; but it is not the least good to say, “*I will be consciously that now.*” It is not yet the day of our full deliverance. A person under a bright and sharp conscience, searching for something good, or bent upon producing it in himself, is very likely to be legal, for the essence of this was a Job and Judaism. Christ and *His* perfect-

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ness is between the soul and God; and for both. "My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed," and "he that eateth me, even he shall live by me."

It is most valuable to have a conscience quick (and few are up to the mark) in the fear of the Lord. But on that very account we must cherish the heart by the grace of the Father and by the love of Christ, who speaks to us from *His own love*, and declares "we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones."

It is not merely, nor, let me add, *mainly*, the wondrous grace that bears with us, and goes along with us in the wilderness while we are there, (precious as *this is*) but the triumph of this grace and power over all that *we are*; and which by the Holy Ghost occupies us with Christ as *He is*; making us taste the infinite delight and satisfaction, which the Father has found in the Son of His own love.

This is quite another thing, for we are then got to *that* (in the Spirit) which we shall eternally know and be satisfied

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with; when all that is in part shall be done away, and nothing that is of the flesh or Egypt left. "This day hath God rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you." For He will have us with Himself, and in the likeness of Christ and nothing else—not even the smell of *fire*, shall pass upon us, either to tell what we once were or from whence we came. It is *this* we should be more occupied with, the blue, and the purple, and the fine-twined linen, which tells us of Himself: and have too a quicker and more discerning eye for the onyx-stones, and the sapphire, and the diamond; in fact, anything and everything that will witness to us of who and what He is, that we may, *in this way*, be as unlike ourselves as we once were unlike Him!

The best way of getting rid of ourselves (in communion with the Lord) is by putting on Christ, and growing up *into Him*. Besides this, even a good conscience is not one that is *merely* sharp upon the evil that is in the flesh; but a conscience purged by the blood of Christ, and *thus* suited for what God is;

TRANSFORMATION.

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so that we have boldness to enter into the holiest where He dwells. It is not enough for the God *we know*, that He cannot judge us for what we are, for this He has done in Christ at the cross, and it cannot be done again, though He may and will discipline us, as a "father does the son in whom he is delighted." God has suited us to what *He* is, by that same Christ, who is now at His right hand—where no spot or stain can be. All the perfectness and preciousness of Christ is what is put in our hands, and the known delight of the boundless grace which has done it, we wave all in the holiest before God, as our Father, in the place where His own love has set us.

There are two ways of coming short: one is through the imitation of what Christ was on the earth, in His obedience—by mere energetic efforts to work up love, where *life is not*; and this makes a nominal Christendom. The other is a falling short *in enjoyment* of what we *are* with Christ, by the Father's grace in heaven, and this is to miss the incense that covers the mercy seat. Worship

in the holiest is in spirit and in truth; and loving obedience is in the power of life by the Holy Ghost, and these make up a Christian, and define what real Christianity is—all else is formalism.

The Lord, the good Lord, bless us with this deepening communion with Himself, and perfect our transformation through His word, by the Spirit, into His own likeness.

THOUGHTS FOR THIS DAY.

LET THE DEAD BURY THEIR DEAD.

It is in details, even as with the extremities of the body, that the energy of life is tested and proved. If the hands and feet be cold there is evidently a deficiency of vital power in the system; and though in other respects there may be good health, the coldness of the extremities is evidence that there is not much energy of life.

It is in the way we deal with those related to us naturally that we shew the force and measure of divine power in us.

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There can be action, and action sufficient to testify of the existence of life; and yet not enough to enable us to act in quite a new and independent way towards our relatives. Abram, with his father Terah, may remove from Mesopotamia, but until his father is dead, he does not come into the land. When grace takes possession of the soul and a new man is formed, there will be, for a long time—unless there is much exercise of conscience—occupation with it as an object, a seeking to obtain light and instruction for it, rather than to avoid the influence of those to whom we are naturally attached and related. The world, and general society, will be easily refused and separated from; but from those to whom our hearts cling—to whom the tie of nature gives a claim—there will not be separation until the strength of Christ makes their society insupportable. Any one at all spiritual feels that he must get away from the society of the world; he is miserable if he does not, but it is often long and tedious before any one obeys the Master's

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can there be a true estimate of the dishonour to God that we in nature have fallen into, if I can spare my own, and those near and dear to me at the expense of His name and truth? whereas, if on the other hand I have consecrated myself by cutting off that which is nearest and dearest to me, I prove beyond any question the enormity of the evil, and my entire repudiation of it. It is vain for a man to speak of following the Lord while the innermost and strongest chain is still unbroken. It is useless for a man to suppose that he has surrendered the stronghold (in other words that he is devoted), while he reserves the citadel where the main force is quartered. Give up the citadel and all the rest is easy enough. Prove that you are really free to follow the Lord; that there is nothing to stand between you and Him; that where there was a tie, the dearest to nature, you waved it, disowned its influence, in order to be clear of everything which could mar your faithfulness. So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty, and this surely is enough.

CHRIST THE MODEL MAN.

JOHN xvii. fully sets before us—the twelve disciples first, then those who believe in Him through their word—in our relationship to the Father, then in our place in the world. There are four different ways in which the practical path of a Christian is presented in scripture. First, in Phil. iii.: “This one thing I do,” the object, a glorified Christ, giving energy and character to the Christian’s race. Second, in Phil. ii.: the same mind that was in Christ Jesus, the pattern and character of the mind of a Christian, always going down, even to the cross. Third, in Ephesians: being brought to God, being seated in heavenly places in Christ, I am sent out to give testimony of Him in the world. Fourth, in John xvii.: here the point is to put them into relationship with the Father, into the Son’s place; then, the Son being glorified, the disciples are left here to glorify Him, carrying the Father’s word as He carried it. They were not of the world as Christ was not of the world.

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Christ belonged to the Father and was entirely His, came down and brought this out before the world, though as to His eternal Sonship He was in the bosom of the Father all the while; having brought us into His place as sons with the Father, He puts us into His place down here to manifest Him. In Phil. ii. you get the mind, spirit, temper of Christ, always going down (in John xvii. He is always going up); you get the lovely character of the descending path of a Christian, esteeming others better than self, making something of them and nothing of self. "He thought it not robbery to be equal with God, took upon Himself the form of a servant, that He might serve us and glorify God. That is what we have to do as set free and brought to God. We have the conscious privilege of this as partakers of the divine nature, to glorify God as our God, to go and serve Him as Christ served. Philippians ii. is a most wonderful expression of consideration and care for others. In verse 15 there is not a single sentence in that

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exhortation that is not an expression of what Christ was down here.

There are two parts in the way in which we are brought into this place with Christ. "Glorify thy Son," there is the relationship; the moment the Son is glorified as such, He adds "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." "Glorify thou me" is founded upon His work. In virtue of His having perfectly glorified the Father, the Son has to be glorified with Him. The perfect work which has glorified God puts us into the place of sons—as Christ, like Christ, with Christ; and the effect of man having perfectly glorified God, is that the Father puts man into the glory of God. It had to do with the purpose of God. As soon as the work was done God gave man title to enter the glory that Christ had obtained for him. It is the mystery now made manifest—they are connected with the Father.

Now the Father had to decide between the world and Christ. The moment of decision had come; Christ or the world

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had to be disowned by the Father. It is a moral crisis, all brought to issue. Christ having glorified God, the time had come when He must choose practically between Christ who had glorified Him, and the world who had rejected Him. He connects all with the Father, so the children are taken out of the world and brought to the Father. It is done with Paul in a distinct way on the road to Damascus. He is delivered from the people and from the Gentiles, and sent—where from? From Christ in glory—taken out from Jews—out from Gentiles. A Christian connected with Christ in glory, he says “I know no man after the flesh.” He has seen Christ in glory, he knows that and that only. He goes out to the world from Him. And that which puts us into this glory and blessedness is in thorough contrast to all that is in the world: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life are not of the Father, but are of the world. It does not belong to this new system that Christ has set up.

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Another point. Whatever the Father gives to Christ as Son, He gives to us as sons. "I have given unto them the words that thou gavest me." He so puts them into the relationship and place that He was in as man down here, that whatever the Father communicates to Him in that relationship and place, He has passed on to them. And it is the very way to get the juice out of the Gospels. We see Christ at the end of Matt. iii. being the perfect model of what God has made man on earth as His child, and as a believer, coming and taking His place with these poor people. At the first step heaven is opened to Him, as it is to us at the rending of the veil. He is anointed and sealed by the Holy Ghost, we are anointed and sealed by the Holy Ghost. He is the beloved Son, we are sons: He in His own blessed person, we are brought into it by redemption. It was the first time the whole trinity was revealed! When the Son is there as man, the Holy Ghost cannot be away, and the Father is there. It is the revelation of the trinity: the

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whole fulness of the Godhead is unfolded with regard to Christ taking our place as man.

But we have another place in conflict with Satan. He took our place there too. (Matt. iv.) He was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. Christ took this place as man, and all that the Father communicates to Him in that place as man He gives to us. It is the Father's word He gives them, and He looks consequently for them to be kept in His own name, kept from everything that was inconsistent with that relationship and place of which He was the pattern in this world. Mark the practical effect as to the world: "I have given them thy word, and the world hath hated them." I have given them thy word—thy testimony; that is their place as regards the world. It is the Father now, with the Son by His side, whom the world has rejected. That is why I am sent into it as the Lord Jesus Christ was sent. "Our God, and our Father." He had His Son upon earth, the world rejected

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Him, and He said, "Sit thou on my right hand till I make thine enemies thy footstool." There He is, as Father, with His rejected Son close by Him; and He must look at the world as Father. The Father is in perpetual consciousness that He has the rejected Son beside Him. It is the condition He sees Him in, but He sees us in relationship with Him. "I am glorified in them." It is Christ, whose character we bear, that is to be glorified in us. He has called us not servants but friends, for He has brought us into all those things which the Father gave to Him as man; put us in the Son's place by redemption, and given us the Father's testimony to carry back to the world. Christ was the perfect expression of what the Father is, and if we are faithful we shall be the perfect expression of Christ. "I have given them thy word:" the consequence is, the world hath hated them—it is a rejected thing—you are not of it.

"Sanctify them through thy truth." It is the Father's truth, and they are

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to be set apart. There is no truth whatever without that. We are put into the place of sons with the Father, and in the world, the sons of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. We have been sanctified with Christ from all evil. He has set Himself apart as the model Man in heaven, the spring and source of everything to us. But you must keep your eye on Him there. You get Him as the object of your heart, identifying your heart with the things that He delights in. We see Him as the humbled One: we see where He was, where He is now, and we stand in the world that Christ may be glorified in us.

Ephesians iv. gives the christian character founded on the place we are brought into. As a divine Person He quickens whom He will. He is become our life: we have done with the life that is gone. We have died with Christ, that is Jordan. The Red Sea is Christ totally alone dying and rising again—that is what saves us—but in Jordan we

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share it with Him, we walk through death into Canaan—heaven. I am renewed in knowledge after the image of Him who created me—after God. Now I get God's measure. It is after God.

Another element of christian walk is here—my body is the temple of the Holy Ghost. God dwells in me, and I am sent to walk as Christ walked—as a follower of God. It is not now to carry the Father's word as a testimony, but to go and act like God. My path is to imitate Him because I am His child; not to forgive my enemies only, but to love them; that is what God did. I have to act like Him, to walk in love—Christ the measure of it; to give myself entirely up to serve other people. If you want to learn the character of what God is in a man, go and look at Christ's life down here. That is love, the expression of perfect divine goodness in the midst of all that was the opposite. So are we to be.

Another character of God is light. "Ye are light in the Lord." God Himself is the pattern of what we ought to

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be in the world as love and light. "Awake, thou that sleepest, and Christ shall give thee light." A Christian cannot be dead; but in a man asleep there is no more good as to intelligence and walk than in one dead. If he is sleeping you must wake him. Christ is the measure of my walk and the light to lighten me in the path. Wonderful measure! Christ so brought out that we are to walk through the world as the expression of what Christ is. The path of the Christian is altogether above law. Do not let there be one bit of self in you—there was none in Christ. I must get a love that is sufficiently above the evil to walk in it, that loves where people do not love, as Christ did. I must have the character that can shew what God is, where all around are quite the opposite. It is wonderfully blessed that He brings us into a path where we are to empty ourselves and to live Christ. Wonderfully blessed to be so brought into the place of a child of God that we are called to imitate Him, to go out from Him in

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the sense that we have got Christ's place, to walk through the world as the expression of Christ, with the word of Him who has received His Son on high because the world rejected Him.

Then the character of what man sitting in heavenly places is, comes out in the world. Flesh resists and there is conflict, but it does not follow that I am going to act upon the flesh. I am never called to act in it. There is no such thing as mending the flesh one atom. In innocence it broke down. Without law it is grossly and horribly ignorant, under law rebellious. Bring grace in, in the person of Christ, and it spits in His face. Put the Holy Ghost in a man, and the flesh lusts against the Spirit. Put a man in the third heavens and when he comes down he will be puffed up about it. If I have a thorough rogue in my house and keep him locked up, all well. Why let him loose at all? I may be foolish enough to let the flesh out, but I *need* not. We never can excuse ourselves. If we are foolish^k enough to leave an open door, Satan will come

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in. There may be a moment when the flesh cannot be checked. Why so? You have been neglecting prayer and reading the word of God, and when the enemy comes, there is no strength to meet him. If I am walking carelessly I shall reap the consequences. If I am not walking in the Spirit, my conscience is not good, and when I get into the presence of God I have to think of myself. The effect of His presence—of light—is to shew me myself, to wake up my conscience. But suppose I am walking without the least thing on my conscience, then I am free to think of Christ. I am practically purged. I have a good conscience, and when I come into God's presence I can let my heart out, and this is great blessedness—this is communion, and it is the real difference between a man who is walking in the power of the word of God and in dependence, and one who is not. Paul is not afraid of the day of judgment: "Knowing the terror of the Lord we persuade men." He brings in the power of divine judgment as a present thing: "We

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are manifest to God:" it is having the sense of divine judgment on everything that I am doing. We are called to walk in the light, as He is in the light, never doing anything inconsistent with it, not grieving the Spirit, who consequently takes of the things of Christ and shews them unto us.

THOUGHTS FOR THIS DAY.

"TAKE HEED HOW YE HEAR."

MAN was in darkness as to the mind of God, until He was pleased to reveal it. Hence, His word is a light to our feet and a lantern to our paths. He tells us His mind in His word, which otherwise we could never have known by any research or thought of our own. His revelation is therefore light, "the entrance of His word giveth light, it giveth understanding to the simple." The darkness is the conclusion of man's mind untaught and undirected by the word of God. Man follows the bent of his own mind, makes himself the centre,

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operation of God's Spirit in his soul, that of implanting the mind of God to supersede the principle of action heretofore dominant there. He does not know how he may be shaped by it, or what appointed to; but, like the vessel to the potter, or the tablet to the engraver, or the canvass to the painter, he is ready and prepared for the wondrous and beautiful touches which will make him a truer picture, or imitator, or expression of the one perfect Man. And as he hears, so is the measure of his gain; and more is given where most has been received.

If you do not hear with the sense of responsibility, you are not really a canvass ready to receive the colours of Christ; but if you are, you will bow to the truth, prepared of heart, and assured that as it is heard so must there be a manifestation of it. It must not be put under a bed or under a bushel. You must maintain it, or it will not maintain you. If you do not use light, you will lose it. As you express it, you put on the armour of light. The evergreen re-

sists the frost. Truth will not preserve you unless you preserve it, and then it is an armour to you ; but if it be neglected, the receiver of the greatest truth will become like "the sow that was washed, wallowing in the mire."

AT REST.

THE Spirit of God is "the wings of the dove," by whom we fly away and are at rest. This is the great normal power of the Spirit of God, the first known action of His presence in our souls, not merely the *intelligence*. Hence the spiritual man emerges out of and soars above this scene of death, without any process of bereavement or severing of ties. He has wings and he can fly and rise above everything which disturbs or vexes him down here ; that is, he has a known way of escape. But still, this does not exempt him from death here in detail, one bit more than the saint who is learning through discipline here that he *must* fly in order to be above it, and

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whose cry is, "*Oh that I had the wings of a dove!*" Each of these learns death here, but in a different way. The one who can fly, who through the power of the Spirit of God has found rest in the domains of glory and light, finds everything here, except what is purely created of God, a trial to him and most incongruous; and as a native of that holy and perfect sphere, in his walk here he incurs hourly suffering, because of everything being contrary to God or used contrary to Him. Even the beautiful things of God's own hand, and the very gifts of God to him here, become the medium through which he dies morally, and learns that he is to have no link with man apart from God down here. Abraham in drawing the knife to slay Isaac, his only son, by his own hand consigns himself to the darkness of the tomb here. Surely he saw Christ's day and was glad; but in order to confine him exclusively to that which was unseen, to God that raiseth the dead, he is called to relinquish the one great tie, and that God's own gift to him,

which bound him to this scene. The flying one is really called to be the best dying one; he is like the tree which casts off the old dead leaf when the new leaf is fully formed.

The saint who does not know the power of the Spirit opening out a clear full way into glory with Jesus, is taught by one affliction after another that there is nothing here to rest on; and like Peter in a ship, *sinking*, though full of favours to gratify him naturally (Luke v.), there is acquired a sense of the perfect resource in Christ, and this for evermore. In this case the heart follows Him ("they forsook all and followed him," Luke v. 11), but such a one never learns things here in their true character, as does the one who began by flying. A butterfly flies from birth; the first action of its new life and entrance on this scene is flying. The one who by sorrow here has been driven from step to step out of nature, like Jacob, gets generally no further than clean out of it. He is brought to exclaim, "As for me Rachel died," &c. In

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other words, I have no more tie to this scene; and he worships in the prospect of delight, in a new unclouded scene of perennial sunshine. But he is really taught by dying the greatness of living. It is not that he dies to *get life*, but he learns through death the *power* of life, and that life, where it can exist, is greater than anything here, where it cannot.

Now the one flying knows already a light above the brightness of the sun. He has learned Christ in unfading glory, and to the joy of his heart has reached by faith his place there, and in walking here, he finds that everything is incongruous; but though he is on earth made by the very hand of Him under whose wing he rests, yet he, as in common with others, must die. Jesus has died for him because of his link with fallen creation on earth, and as he now lives with Him in glory it becomes him not only to accept death, but to suffer death here. True he does not need bereavement and wrenches as a Jacob does but nevertheless he is subjected to

them quite as severely, if not more so. "They who *live* are alway delivered unto death." The contrast which Saul felt when he opened his eyes here which had been closed by "the glory of that light," made it necessary that he should be able to say in the long run, "I have learnt in whatever state I am therewith to be content." This is the goal of the flying one, the perfection of grace. Though still walking here in the midst of death and incongruity, he is satisfied in himself he can do all things through Him who gives Him power. The great solace of a Jacob is to reach where the "wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest." He looks forward to and longs for the rest, because he has learned to have no hope here. The one is looking to escape out of this scene, the other is mastering everything in it. He derives nothing from it, he is like a ship in the northern ice, living entirely on its own resources, where there are no supplies from around. The one is looking for help to escape from this scene, he is subjected to death in

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order to learn to fly; the other, like Stephen or Paul, has power to act in the scene. The death here becomes the occasion for the one to minister Christ in it; for the other, it is only the occasion of acquiring for himself. The one is like an evergreen amid the frost and snow. It has been maturing all through the summer the victory which it announces in the winter; it has learned to surmount all the influences here, and to be the exposition of life in the midst of death. The other is like the tree which has its green leaf in summer, but which withers in winter, and looks forward to a bright spring time to revive. Its sap is in it; but it waits passive and expectant for a more genial atmosphere: its link with the outer world has been severed by death, and it rests in hope. In short, the one dies here in order to set forth life; the other, that he may know the good of life—that he may fly.

The flying one is the living one *where* he has died, but he is also made to die in detail here. By the dying of Jesus I see the measure of what I have to die

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to; but God brings real death on the things which would tie my heart to this scene, so that I may be in actual freedom from all that which His dying marks off and excludes.

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ARE you able to say "Search me, O God, and know my heart?" There may be that there which you are not afraid of His imputing to you, but which you *are* afraid of His taking away. You may be afraid to say "Search me, O God, see if there be any wicked way in me," because He may cure you of it. Whatever hinders Christ is a "wicked way." I do not speak of what is positively evil. I see some Christians with a little cabinet of self well locked. They pray up to that and get answers, but that is locked, and they never get on. That man is preparing something for himself, decay of soul, if not chastening. If you begin to think of your heart, are you glad that God should bring up what

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is in your heart and say, "That is the way I look at it?" Can you say, you would like God to give you *His* thoughts of it all? to be so under the eye that is never withdrawn from the righteous, as to be capable of enjoying Him without hindrance? Every Christian in the bottom of his heart desires this, but practically, if you knowingly keep a part in any way that hinders Christ, you are sowing something for yourself that love must chasten.

When I can see blessedness in the day of judgment, then I can say, "Remove me from everything that hinders." There is no integrity of heart without the perfect knowledge of grace.

The Lord give us to have truth in the inward parts (that we *can* have, because He visits us in perfect grace) that we may grow unhindered, as a garden of the Lord's planting.

"If any man will do *his* will, he *shall* know of the doctrine, whether it be of God."

JESUS OUR PATTERN

AS TO BLESSING OR CONFLICT.

THE presenting of God's grace in the person of the Lord, in the gospel of Matthew, brings before us in a very striking way, how the blessed Lord took our place, and was a pattern of ours in the relationship into which He has brought us by redemption, whether of blessing or conflict, only overcoming for us. Many, many passages shew His grace in it, but in this He takes the place itself. I refer to the end of Matt. iii. and beginning of Matt. iv. The law and the prophets were till John. Then the kingdom of heaven, as presently coming in, was announced. There was repentance for the people, but a new thing to be set up. The first step in good was receiving the testimony and coming to that repentance; and their hearts, touched by grace, go. The gracious Lord could not let His people take one step alone. He goes to be baptized by John. He, I need not say, needed no such baptism. So John receives Him: "I have need to be baptized

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of thee, and comest thou to me?" The Lord answers, "Suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him." In Him it was fulfilling righteousness. Still He takes the lowly place. You, John, have your part to do, I mine. 'Us' is not, I believe, a plural of dignity, though it is not of much moment; it refers to John as to Jesus, compare chapter xvii. 26, 27; a beautiful example of the same grace, only there He shines out as a divine person. The Lord does not identify Himself with rebellious and perverse Israel, but with the path of God, and those who were walking in it, but He makes Himself one of them when they had taken it. The word of God entered into the ear, and led the heart of His perfect servant as fulfilling all righteousness. The blessed Son of God, He has now taken His place amongst the godly and upright, though feeble sons of men, the remnant according to the election of grace in Israel. His person and personal perfectness was there, but among them according to the will of

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God; and He gives us the pattern and model of that into which we are introduced by redemption according to the counsels of God. When He comes up out of the water, having taken this place, He stood according to the perfect will of God as man before Him. Here heaven must respond. Lo, the heavens were opened to Him, and he saw the Holy Ghost descending upon Him. Heaven may have been opened in glorious visions of the judicial throne or the like, but never had there been an object upon earth before to which they could be opened. Divine favour might rest on Abraham and God visit him in grace, and Enoch who walked with God find a lonely way (once indeed though in a different form followed by Elijah) into heaven; but never were the heavens opened before to man upon the earth: now they were. Further, this blessed man was sealed* and anointed† with the Holy Ghost and with power. Thirdly, the Father owns Him, a man, as His beloved Son. Now this is all our place,

* John vi. 27. † Acts x. 38.

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of which He is here the type and pattern. Heaven is open to us, the veil rent from top to bottom, the way into the holiest open. We are sealed and anointed with the Holy Ghost, and the Father owns us as sons, loved even as Jesus is loved: only we of course have it through redemption and faith in Him, He was in it personally. But He gives us the full and blessed pattern of the place in which we stand. Our connection with Him in it, and His own taking it, its being His place, is not its least blessed feature.

Nor is this all. Here, in the Lord's taking this human place yet of full acceptance, the Trinity is first fully revealed. We find indeed remarkable intimations of it in the Old Testament, for the Son in Psalm ii. is Jehovah; people are to trust in Him; and the Spirit, I need not say, is continually mentioned. But it cannot be said it was clearly revealed. That was the effect of Christianity when the Son and the Spirit had come, and the Father was fully revealed in Him, and to us made sons. And in connection with

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His person it is so here. The Son was there as man, the Holy Ghost came upon Him, and the Father's voice came from heaven to own Him Son. What a wonderful connection for us to see Him identified with us, or rather ourselves with Him, and that in this place, He being Son, the whole Trinity comes out revealed, and in that He is a man. Take as an example of the effect 1 John ii. 28, 29; iii. 1—3; where the Godhead and manhood are spoken of in one sentence of the same person, only taking up each side as suited; but we are so identified with Him that though glory be not revealed, this much is certain as to it, that when He shall appear we shall be like Him. Is not this a wonderful connection? If He was Jehovah's delight, rejoicing always before Him, His delight was in the sons of men. Many such cases, and even reasonings from it, may be found in scripture. However, such is the Son's place as man, the model place for us. It is a blessed thought, and how precious becomes His love. Still

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remark how the person of the Lord is maintained in its glory. Heaven is opened to us as to Him; but when it is opened, is there any object on which His eye is fixed to give heaven its character to Him, and form Him after it as in Stephen, and to saints in their measure of faith? If heaven is opened, He is the object of it. It looks at Him, seals Him, owns Him here. He could not be on earth without heaven being opened on Him, the supreme object of every thought there. This we continually see. On the Mount of transfiguration Moses and Elias are in the same glory as Christ, and confer familiarly with Him of what was first in the counsels of God; but the moment Peter would put them on a level in some sort with the Lord, they disappear, and the Father's voice owns Him as the Son, His Son who was to be heard; and Jesus was found alone. So ever. Here then, the Lord having associated Himself with His people, we have the place into which He has brought them. Himself the model of it. It is His place. He

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is now gone to His Father, and our Father, His God, and our God.

But the blessed and gracious Lord has fully entered into our case, the place of His people, and He now takes that in which they are in conflict with Satan, as well as that in which they are in relationship with God. Thus anointed as man, he was led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. Many things here suggest themselves to the mind. The difference of the position of Adam and Eve, when they were tempted; the difference of the character of the forty days during which Moses and Elias were estranged, so to speak, from the common lot of humanity; but I confine myself here to the great fact of the temptation, and the Lord's undergoing it, as the other side of our position from our relationship in Him with God. Only remark that the temptation follows this. That is fully established, and it is as anointed therein of the Holy Ghost that He enters into it. The tempter comes to Him. The point of his temptation was to lead him

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out of the place He had taken as man, and first out of that of obedience, or of a servant, His perfect place as man. If thou be the Son of God, use your authority, speak so that these stones may become bread. In a word, do an act of your own will, since you are nothing less than Son of God. But the blessed Lord holds fast to the simple place of obedience, of the servant, of man, but perfect man.

But several things are to be noted here. First, He has no need to go farther than His own duty, no long controversy or reasoning with Satan. The latter comes with wile, but deceit has no place in simple duty, and the Lord, as a servant, occupies Himself with that, and it is enough. Next, God's will is His motive for acting, not merely His rule. That of course it was, but His motive also: an important principle. It is not selfwill arrested by a rule even cheerfully submitted to. The obedience of Christ has the will of God for the source of His actions. Thirdly, the word of God, the scriptures,

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are the adequate, complete, and sufficient expression of this for man. He quotes a text and that is all. But that is all God's will expressed for man. Man lives by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. Wondrous expression! It is divine, absolutely so in its source and character, out of *God's mouth*, but perfectly adapted for man to live by. There is nothing like that, only Christ is the living expression of it—the Word made flesh. Man may talk very high about it, as the foolish slave of the enemy, deceived by him; but a single text is enough for Him who is the Wisdom of God, the Lord, and enough for Satan, so that *he* has no reply. It gave Christ His place as man, and with that Satan could do nothing. He betrayed himself and his weakness if he suggested anything contrary to it. Scripture is enough for the Lord Himself, for man here below, and for the devil. It comes from the mouth of God and man lives by it. Christ guarantees this to us. And note the occasion. Be it so, He could not fail;

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but He went through the trial. All depended on His victory. *If* the Second Man had failed for man, there was no hope; but a text is sufficient: by it He gains an absolute victory. There was no reply to it. On the authority, truth, sufficiency, and suitableness of scripture, the victory on which all hope for man depended was founded and won. The last Adam had prevailed, and prevailed by it; Satan succumbed, and succumbed to it: only it was justly used by the Holy Ghost. No will was elicited by the temptation; obedience was, and its true character and power shewn.

Next, the enemy would draw Him out of confidence in God and therein too out of the true path of obedience, for it would have been Christ's own will and act. Cast thyself down. He has promised to keep you: try and see if He will be as good as His word. Perfect confidence had no need to try, no will to exercise. Again, the word is quoted: "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Exodus xvii. 7 gives us the true force of the expression, often used to

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pretty nearly the opposite meaning to the true. We have need of perfect confidence to obey and to await the Lord's time. Anticipating the Lord's time is one proof of want of confidence and want of obedience. See the case of Saul waiting for Samuel. His confidence fails and his will works, and all is lost, though he thought to shew faith and service to God. Obedience and dependence for which confidence in God is needed were now fully manifested, and Satan had nothing to do but to shew himself, and then the case is simple: he is Satan and may go. For "resist the devil, and he will flee from you." The Lord has destroyed his force, has bound the strong man. The first two cases were wiles. And then, abiding in the simple place of obedience according to the word, waiting for God's will, obedience to the word, and confidence in what is said that God will accomplish it, entirely frustrate every attempt of Satan. He may seek to lead us openly from God by the world, but it is owning the power of it. The word of God is

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absolute as to that. It is still "It is written," but it is not now simply obedience, but openly affiance to God, and all is simple; and if the heart be right, Satan, revealed as such, dismissed. Angels are the ministering servants of the obedient Son of man; so for us, as scripture shews. (Heb. i.)

The way in which the Lord met the enemy is exceedingly instructive; but that to which I desired especially to draw the attention of your readers was the blessed way in which the Lord took our place, put Himself in it, a model and a pattern of ours for its simple but highest privileges, and in the combat which belongs to it, in which we are, and there in the lowliness and perfectness of a servant's place has shewn us to our path too. But in both He really was, and, the combat now over, as to the relationship and blessing, is only in glory, but as man, and has brought us into it by redemption and grace. I know no more blessed picture of our connection with the Lord, the man of God's counsels, and that because we see Him in it alone in His own perfectness.

**“IN HIM DWELLETH ALL THE
FULNESS OF THE GODHEAD
BODILY.”**

A GODLY Israelite, when moved by the Spirit, as to the nature of his public worship at “the door of the tabernacle,” or else in his private communion with the Jehovah of that people, must have connected the Levitical offerings together, in order to get the full representation of the future and perfect sacrifice of Christ, before his faith. The burnt sacrifice, the meat offering, the sin offering, and the peace sacrifice, were all necessary for the establishment of his soul in intercourse with God, and as shewing how the Jehovah of Israel was to be approached; for as yet “the way into the holiest was not made manifest.”

The coming mystery of the God-man or an undivided Christ was equally important, when a pious Jew (exercised in his soul about the prospects of the nation) stepped beyond the tabernacle and the wilderness, and, guided

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by the pentateuch and the Psalms, looked onward to the throne of Solomon, and the bright days of Theocracy in Israel, for "all flesh was declared as grass, and the glory of man as the flower of grass." That sun was to go down at noon day and end in obscurity, save as the man of faith could look through things seen, and discover "a greater Solomon" in reserve for the nation's hopes.

"God manifest in the flesh," was if possible still more necessary as a stay to the soul of such an one, as he looked through the long vista of prophecy into the future, in order to learn the secret purposes, and the ways of God "with a rebellious and gainsaying people." Nor could such an instructed saint overlook the fact, that the cross was the appointed pathway by which the future Son of David will yet take possession of the millennial throne, and in the power of which He will introduce and establish "the kingdom under the whole heavens."

The promised birth of this Messiah had even a twofold character in the

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scriptures that foretold His incarnation, for in the counsels of God the humiliation of Christ was to precede His exaltation, just as His death was necessary to His resurrection, and His rejection by the world to His ascension into the heavens, where He now sits, "till his enemies are made his footstool." "The sufferings of Christ" were the ordered pathway by "the predeterminate counsel," by which He would redeem Israel and eventually carry them out into "the regeneration," to sit on thrones. When their Messiah was on earth He sought to connect these two parts of His history together; "Peter said, This be far from thee Lord, this shall not happen to thee!" After His sufferings, and when He walked in resurrection with the Emmaus disciples, He rebuked them, saying "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken; ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory?" These sufferings and the attendant glory were made plain to their open understanding, just as afterwards they were to Peter in his

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two epistles, when under the anointing of the Holy Ghost.

Nevertheless, they had Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms, and made their boast in them; and if followed, how securely might their thoughts and faith have been guided by the prophecy of Isaiah. Though he had to say, in a period of great profession, "your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth; they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them:" yet he could add, "if ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land." Yea, though personally he exclaimed in the presence of "the holy, holy, holy Lord of hosts. . . . Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips;" yet he was a witness that the altar, and the live coal, and the tongs in the hand of the seraphim, had taken away the iniquity, and purged the sin. Beyond all this, and as respects the nation, even in the time of its deepening declension, if not apostasy, in the reign of Ahaz, the faith of "the remnant" could have found its resource

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where Isaiah found his. The prophet's relief, when the glory of the wisest king was blighted, was the same as now; when the wickedness of this most foolish king Ahaz was to be met by "the sign which the Lord gave" of the conception by the virgin, and of her incoming Son, the Immanuel, God with us—the Jesus who would save His people from their sins, and "set up a kingdom which should never be moved."

This open door (the person of Christ) was but dimly seen by some, and refused by most; so that "they fulfilled their own scriptures in condemning him." The nation, with its scribes and rulers, declined such prophecies as spoke of the humiliation and rejection of Christ, as the way by which the Spirit would lead "the captain of their salvation," and only accepted those magnificent strains which celebrate Him as the Son given, "whose name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." They forgot that this glorious millennial prophecy of Isaiah ix. is preceded

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by the lowly child of chapter vii., and His declared rejection in the intermediate one of chapter viii., where the Spirit writes, "He shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem."

The object of this paper is to shew that grave errors like these are repeated in this new dispensation of Christianity; whereas, the warnings in Jewish history, and the judgments of God which they record, as well as the writings of our own apostles, tell us distinctly that "these were our examples [types], to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they did. Neither be idolaters, as were some of them." The variations in the form of such errors, as well as the fact of their repetition (of which we are now speaking), are equally striking; for instance, a modern Jew expects a glorified Messiah to come, and personally to reign over Israel and the Gentiles; according to that word, "of the increase of his government and

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peace there shall be no end." Whereas, modern Christians (for the most part) deny that this is literal, and have no such expectation. Again, a modern Christian insists upon the strict application (and rightly so) of the passages in the Prophets and Psalms which speak of the Lord Jesus as "led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before his shearers, dumb." Whilst a modern Jew denies this to be true of Christ, or that it is to be taken literally, and in this way rejects Him.

The only variation consists therefore in this, that a Christian (so called) reverses the order of the unbelief of a Jew, and *vice versâ*. Whereas, the first and the second coming of our Lord are as necessary for the accomplishment of the hopes of the Church and the glory of Christ and of God, as they are for the establishment of Israel and Jerusalem and the prospects of the whole earth under the reign of the Messiah, in the coming millennium.

(To be continued.)

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trolled, as there is no one to interest or direct me but Christ. "The ways of wisdom are ways of pleasantness and peace; but they that love lying vanities forsake their own mercies."

HIS SENT ONES

John xx. 21.

"Who are these who come amongst us,
Strangers to our speech and ways?
Passing by our joys and treasures,
Singing in the darkest days?
Are they pilgrims journeying on
From a land we have not known?"

We are come from a far country,
From a land beyond the sun;
We are come from that great glory,
Round our God's eternal throne:
Thence we come and thither go,
Here no resting-place we know.

For within that depth of glory,
In the Father's house above,
We have learnt His wondrous secret,
We have learnt His heart of love:
We have seen and we have heard
That bright joy He has prepared.

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We have seen the golden city,
 Shining as the jasper stone;
 Heard the song that fills the heavens
 Of the Man upon the throne.
 Well that glorious One we know,
 He has sent us here below.

We have drunk the living waters,
 On the Tree of Life have fed;
 Therefore deathless do we journey,
 Midst the dying and the dead;
 And unthirsting do we stand
 Here amidst the barren sand.

Round us, as a cloud of glory
 Lighting up the midnight road,
 Falls the light from that bright city,
 Shewing us where He has trod,
 All that here might please the sight
 Lost in that eternal light.

“Wherefore are ye come amongst us,
 From the glory to the gloom?”
 Christ in glory breathed within us—
 Life—*His* life, and bid us come
 Here as living springs to be—
 Fountains of that life are we.

Fountains of the life that floweth
 Ever downwards from the throne,
 Witnesses of that bright glory
 Where, rejected, He is gone.
 Sent to give the blind their sight,
 Turn the darkness into light.

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There amidst the joy eternal
Is the Man who went above,
Bearing marks of all the hatred
Of the world He sought in love.
He has sent us here to tell
That His love is changeless still.

He has sent us, that in sorrow
And in suffering, toil, and loss,
We may learn the wondrous sweetness,
The deep mystery of His cross—
Learn the depth of love that traced
That blest path across the waste.

He has sent us highest honours
Of His cross and shame to win,
Bear His light through deepest darkness,
Walk in white midst foulest sin,
Sing amidst the wintry gloom,
Sing the blessed songs of home.

From the dark and troubled waters
Many a pearl to Him we bear,
Golden sheaves we bring with singing,
All His depths of joy we share;
And our pilgrim journey o'er,
Praise with Him for evermore.

1871.

JOINED TO THE LORD.

UNION with Christ is now a generally admitted truth by saints, but very often a great truth, being always beyond the natural mind, is either refused altogether, because too high and transcendental (and this when there is a true conscience) or it is reduced to a theory which being accepted as a matter of simple information, does not demand any special effect from the recipient. There is nothing more detrimental to spiritual progress than receiving the word of God simply as *information*. The intent of the word is *formation*. It is to produce morally a transcript of what it communicates. Now if the truth of our union with Christ be known in the heart there must be a most distinct severance from all that is not of Christ or that is opposed to Him.

Union with Christ is consequent on His ascension—His leaving this world and going to the Father. Union could not take place until His resurrection, until everything which could have

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barred it was removed in the cross, and when He is risen from the dead by the glory of the Father, and gone to the Father, the Holy Spirit is sent down uniting the saints to Him *where He is*. If Christ had remained here, even after His resurrection, union would not be necessary, because He would here impart from Himself and shelter the saints under His own wing and through the force of His own power. But Christ having gone away, there is either no link with Him, or we are united to Him by the Spirit of God.

Before union with Christ can be truly known, the soul must be conscious of deliverance from the state of sin and judgment in which I am by life and nature; but this in itself is not enough, though it be first and indispensable. It is clear there can be no union with Christ while I am an unforgiven sinner. To suppose a sinner in union with Christ is supposing an impossibility, for light and darkness cannot be united. There is therefore nothing simpler or more positively true than that there can be no union

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with Christ as a known enjoyment of the soul, unless there be the knowledge that Christ, by His own death and bloodshedding, has washed away my sins. I am born again, and God is just and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus. This, I repeat, is the first thing. I am through grace forgiven and justified by the blood of Christ; this must be preliminary, but there is another. This first is necessary, and would take place even if there were no union; and hence, it is the blessing conferred by grace on every saint, in every age, as it is written of a saint, "Blessed is the man whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sin is covered." Every saint will enjoy this blessed state, but all will not be united to Him, and though the first be indispensable and imperative as meeting my need and distance from God, yet it is evident there must be another step before union can be known, and nothing now is really secured to me until I know it.

If Christ were on earth the saint would have the consciousness of His

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protection and power, but Christ being absent, unless I am united to Him, I am worse off than the millennial saints, though immensely better off if I know that I am united to Him by the Holy Ghost, which they never know. When Christ was rejected by man on earth (for He was disallowed or rejected by men, 1 Peter ii.), He was called of God to sit at His right hand (Psalm cx.), and it is consequent on His going there, that the saints, through the unspeakable grace of God, are by the Spirit united to Him where He is. Man refused Him. Both Jew and Gentile joined to put Him to death, but God called Him to His own right hand, and has sent down the Holy Ghost into our hearts uniting us to Him where He has called Him to sit down; and hence union with Him, while it makes us *one* with Him, whom the Father has called to His right hand, necessarily separates us from the man who refused Him life and place on earth. If I am united to the Man at God's right hand, it is evident that nothing of the man who refused

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Him can enter into that union: nay, more: the more I know of this union, the more must I be separated from the man who refused Him. It is not only that Jesus has come and rescued me from the man under judgment, "dead in trespasses and sins;" but now God, by His Spirit, unites me, forgiven and saved, to the Man who has saved me; and associates me with Him in the place where God set Him when rejected on earth. How could one maintain relationship or friendship with the man who rejected Jesus, and be one Spirit with Him who was rejected? He that is joined unto the Lord is one Spirit. In order to assure the heart of union, there must be a severance from the man who rejected Jesus, or there would be a mar or hindrance to the union. This is the perfection of grace, even that when Jesus was refused a place here by man, God called Him to His right hand; and now, by His Spirit, unites us to Him in heaven where He is. The union is effected by the Holy Ghost, but, as it is in consequence of Christ's rejection, and His

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having ascended to the Father, there is more required in order to enjoy it, than merely the truth, blessed as it is, that Jesus came down here, and so fully paid the debt due by me, that I am free from judgment, and am made an heir of the kingdom. All this is because He came down to my side and suffered for me; but the other is that He, being seated at God's right hand, man having refused Him a place on earth, the Holy Ghost unites me to Him where He is; and as this union is true and effective, I must be separated from man, or the world which rejected Him. In a word, I have not only to be rescued from the judgment on man, but I must stand apart from man as he is altogether, for he rejected Christ to whom I am united. I am to leave my own people and my father's house, "so shall the king greatly desire thy beauty."

If the heart be attached to Christ and bound to Him personally, surely the better He is known, and His company enjoyed, the more it will be occupied with Him, adopting His tastes and interest;

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and as it is so, the less can this world which refused Him be tolerated. It must be refused and disowned! How can I be united to the greatest person in the purest and highest associations, and still be identified in any way with the man that neither sees beauty in Him, nor could in any way enjoy His society? I believe a man can have a partial sense of the forgiveness of his sins, and yet not enjoy union with Christ, because it is impossible to be consciously united to Him without feeling it necessary to break with the man here who has not in his own mind one thought in common with Christ, but who, on the contrary, would find His company so irksome that by violence he would get rid of it. Moreover, when there is a sense of union with Christ, there can be no doubts or fear about one's sins. The union with Him puts me altogether outside man, not only as under judgment, but as in the flesh. And hence nothing can arise, either to weaken or to mar the union. It deepens as it is enjoyed. The old man only could

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interfere with it, and that now distanced, both as to sin and condition, and by a new power, union with another Man (the Man Christ Jesus) is effected. Hence union does not weaken the first necessity of a sinner, but confirms it. The slave is not only released from the gallows, but also is joined to his Saviour; and hence not only are the sins hateful and renounced, but the man that could not and cannot appreciate Christ is refused and cut off.

Peter and John (John xx.) were saved and deeply attached to Christ, long before they were united to Him. When He rose He announced to them through Mary Magdalene their new standing, only known in union with Him, and also the state belonging to it. The Spirit ratified all when He descended, as we see fully disclosed to Stephen, when the rejection of Jesus was completed. Now He is refused as the ascended Lord, and hence now the place of the union is disclosed. Union by the Spirit had been known by the saints since Pentecost; but now the place where

Christ to whom we are united is disclosed, because, though union be a real known fact, the gain and blessedness of it is only enjoyed as we are with Him where He is. He, Stephen, "being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven." That is the place, and the contrast to earth. There is no place for Christ on earth, according to man, though entrusted with the oracles of God; and now the place where Jesus is is revealed to His faithful servant on earth.

The Holy Ghost is the agent in conducting the soul into the consciousness of what the union involves; even that it is with Jesus in the glory of God. He saw the glory of God and Jesus. Jesus, the Son of man, is the One to whom God's Spirit unites him, and then he finds and accepts death at the hands of the man on earth who will not accept Him. The scene of Cain is enacted over again in a more fearful way. The accepted of God is put to death by man; but Stephen is united to the Man in heaven, and hence he is prepared to be entirely apart from the man here,

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and man refuses that he should any longer share in man's life on earth. At any rate, if one Man, the Son of God, is the joy and portion of Stephen, he practically finds and accepts, without a murmur, his entire dissociation from the man on earth. The definiteness of his union with the Son of man in heaven makes it consistent that he should have no life in common with the man on earth. Have one fully, and you must fully break with the other. The suffering in consequence of the break, or the reality of the break with the man here, is not endured until, or only in proportion as, the fulness of the blessing of union with Christ is made known and entered into.

Now when we come to Paul's conversion we find that Jesus is revealed in glory to the chief of sinners. Man as a sinner is entirely passed over because of the righteousness of God that is now ministered from the glory in the face of Jesus Christ; and now, as only of God He acknowledges the saints in only one light, and that is as Himself. He re-

gards them only as His body when He says, "Why persecutest thou me?" There is no recognition now of any man but Himself, as they are of Him; and in this light He speaks of them, and not as simply saved ones or saints. The man here is left out and it is only as His, and of Him, that He speaks of or regards them, and this expresses the *corporate* union, the one body, just as Stephen expresses the individual union. Stephen enjoys union with Christ, in the sphere where there is nothing to mar it, by the Holy Spirit, where the joys of union can only be known. Paul is instructed that the Saviour in glory owns nothing of the man on earth, but His own body the heavenly man. The one enjoying union with Christ in heaven dies to the man of earth: the other sees a Saviour in glory, who regards the saints on earth as Himself, in heaven, and excludes everything, and everyone but Himself. There is no man to be seen or recognized but the Man in glory, and thus saints are seen in corporate union.

**“IN HIM DWELLETH ALL THE
FULNESS OF THE GODHEAD
BODILY.”**

(Continued from page 243.)

NOR are these repeated errors between Jews and Christians the only ones which in effect rob Christ of one half of His glory, either personal, moral, or official; but there is a further damage done by some of the Lord's people who even *do* accept the first and second coming of Christ as indispensable and substantial realities between God and their souls; and to this we will now turn.

We may see plainly enough from what has occupied us, that Satan's craft is to get the Lord's people to divide the person of Christ, and in this way to deny His glory; all the glories in fact that hang upon His second coming, just as aforetime he succeeded with the nation of Israel, in heading their rejection of the Messiah, when presented to them as “the Immanuel,” in the grace of His humiliation. Those who have clean escaped out of *this* snare of the

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devil, may be sure he has other ways by which he seeks to catch them—some more subtle forms by which to tarnish the glory of the Son of God. The present danger arises from the same *non-acknowledgment* that the Godhead and Manhood were and are inseparable in the person of our Lord, whether on earth, or as now passed into the heavens.

This may be put in the way of question—Does our faith embrace the *fact* that the Son of man, who is now at the right hand of the Majesty on high, is the very Person who was introduced by incarnation, as “God manifest in the flesh?”

No doubt, as a doctrine or a statement, this will be admitted, as will also “that he was once in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant.” The inquiry is not so much as to the correctness of what *we hold*, as how we are held in our souls *by it*, “He humbled himself and be-

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came obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." It is also easy for us at this point to separate His "equality *with* God," from His "fashion as a man;" and thus allow ourselves to be robbed in a new way, of one half of the glory of His Person. But who must *He* have been, who could have *thus* humbled Himself? is a question that recovers the soul. His *deity* is involved, and becomes a necessary part of such an action, in Him that did it. He "made himself of no reputation" it is true; but what dignity attaches to Himself from the *fact* that *He* did it who alone could!

If we receive the Lord Jesus Christ, in the way in which He is given out to us, from "the Father's bosom," and proclaimed by the Holy Ghost, we shall acknowledge Him as nothing *less* to us than "the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person," whatever the *form* may be in which He manifests Himself. Indeed the disciples are witnesses to us of this truth, when they said, "We beheld *his*

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glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." So also with Nathanael, "Thou art the Son of God: Thou art the King of Israel." Again with the woman of Samaria, "who went her way into the city, and said to the men, Come see a man that told me all things that ever I did, is not this the Christ?" But even when the Lord was not discovered, and therefore not confessed to the full by those whose faith lifted the veil that concealed His glory, He must of necessity take a place for Himself in this world according to God, and consistent with His own Person, both as regards whence He came, and whither He was going. Of whom, for instance, but Himself could it be said, "he was the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature?" And we do well to charge our souls to have no other thought of Him than *this*—let Him wash the disciples' feet, or eat and drink with publicans and sinners!

How much we lose, not only through the poverty of our thoughts about Him,

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but because we do not take them from His own Person, or the bosom of the Father. Is it merely Jesus, the Man, that we see in John ix. "making clay," and opening the eyes of another who was blind from his birth? or is it the Person who thought it not robbery to be equal with God, who is before us?

Nor is it mere equality as in the Godhead which is in danger of being compromised in this way; but besides the Person of the Son, there is oneness in counsel and operation which may be also disregarded, although plainly enough presented in the gospels: as for example, "the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth Him all things that Himself doeth." The six waterpots of stone in Cana of Galilee—Jacob's well in Samaria—or the pool of Bethesda and its crowd of impotent folk—alike lead Him to manifest forth His glory, or to say, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." This was the thing that made the Jews seek to kill Him, "because he had said that God was his Father, making himself equal with God." We need dis-

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tinguish between the acceptance of this equality as a doctrine, and putting it into place in the soul as a great *fact*, "the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise." The doctrine of equality no doubt springs out of this fact, and this fact becomes such to us, because of two persons in co-operation, counsels, and work; but the Jews could not put them together in "the Immanuel," and said, "for a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy, and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God." Again, if we leave the pool of Bethesda, for the Good Shepherd and the fold, this same equality is the subject in John x., with this important addition—that it embraces oneness of interest in the sheep, and is founded upon the fact that "I and my Father are one."

It is in truth the combination of counsel and purpose with the Father in Godhead, when carried out by the Son in words and works in manhood, which

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not only transcends all our natural thoughts, but in many respects is contrary to all we have ever seen or heard. The mystery of the Person—which commands and is suited to faith, and a worshipper—becomes a mere speculation when submitted to reason; so that “there was a division therefore again among the Jews [as now] for these sayings.” The glory of the Person is lost, for example, if verse 18 is anything else to our souls than the bright light which makes Jesus known to us. “No man taketh my life from me, but I lay it down of myself.” Again, “I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again,” is but proper and common language, because descriptive of Himself; and if Jesus adds, as He did, “this commandment have I received of my Father,” it occasions neither perplexity nor doubt to the soul; but establishes faith, in the mystery of the Person come down from God, as the obedient one. No alternative is left for a reasoning mind, but the one which the Jews accepted, when they said, “He

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hath a devil and is mad, why hear ye him?" or else, to be brought in heart and conscience nearer to Himself by the language which gives Him forth to us, and is true of no one else. This is the happy portion of a true believer in Christ as indwelt by the Holy Ghost, and "having an unction whereby we know all things." Unreadiness of faith in the Messiah's disciples, as well as unbelief on the part of the nation of Israel, led some to doubt, and others to deny the mystery of the Word made flesh. The gradations were as marked then as now, both as to the life He lived, and the life He laid down—some wagged their heads, and said, "If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross." The chief priests mocking Him, cried, "If he be the king of Israel, let him come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God, let him deliver him now if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God."

Caiaphas rent his clothes upon the confession witnessed, by Jesus, of Godhead and manhood "when he declared

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himself the Christ, the Son of God," accompanied by the assurance "hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." When the Lord had taken His life again, and appeared to His disciples as the risen man on the earth, Thomas would only say, "My Lord and my God," by putting his finger into the print of the nails. The seeing of the eye, and the hearing of the ear, and the touch of the hand, with the wounded side—however assuring these were to sense—were only a part of the glory of the Person; so that Jesus said to Thomas, "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

You cannot cultivate the flesh save to the grief of the Spirit. As you cultivate, so you grow.

THOUGHTS FOR THIS DAY. THE SPIRITUAL MAN.

SUFFERING is not the normal state of any creature. God saw every thing that He had made, and, behold, it was very good. If the creature be good, when true to its own nature and make, it must be happy. If the creature has lost the goodness in which the Creator had made it, it is no longer in its normal state, nor in a happy state. Now the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain, for the creature has been made subject to vanity. Man is fallen, and every creature, instead of fulfilling the end for which it was made, has to be constrained, one and all, in order that they may in some degree contribute to the comfort and benefit of man on the earth. Not one offers its services voluntarily, or yields its services without constraint. As man is fallen and perverted because of his own will, it is plain that there can be no return to the path of duty, or any continuance in it, but as his will is subdued and he is constrained into

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to what it is at another; and if one does not walk in self-death, there will not be a correcting of the mistake, but a bolder assertion of it, which often ends in heresy. If I am daily carrying my cross, that is death to the flesh. I am led through grace to see where I have over-stated, or under-stated. I am less conformed to the world and I am more transformed by the renewing of my mind, and thus able to prove what is that good and acceptable will of God. I am spiritual as I see things as the Spirit of God sees them, and there the natural has no place.

Insisting upon the Lordship of Christ, and overlooking His Headship to the body, is an instance of limiting truth in order to suit a low state of soul.

“Of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, seeking to draw away disciples after them.”

EDIFICATION; OR GIFTS AND JOINTS.

THE sum of Christianity is that I am a new creation in Christ Jesus; and consequently, the more simply this fact is held and maintained, the more evident is it, that the great aim must be growth or progress in the new creation, as well as renunciation of the old. Nay more, that without growth or edification of the new, there cannot be renunciation of the old, and hence the intent and the true test of all service is edification.

The great and peculiar calling of the Church is, that it is the body of Christ, on the earth where He is not. And the standard for it, as well as for individual members, is "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." All teaching and exercise is to this end. No higher nor more wondrous position could be given to us, nor one that so affects our hearts, than that when Christ was rejected by man on earth, the saints as

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His members are united together by the Holy Ghost, in one body; He having in Himself made of them twain (Jew and Gentile) one man.

Now as there is a standard, it is evident that there must be growth and progress in order to attain to it. The standard is the stature of the fulness of Christ, and every one will admit, that not only is the newly born saint very far from this point, but that even the most matured is at a great distance from it. It is, as I have said, the only standard now either for a single member, or for the whole body. The body is here, but it is to be edified, and the measure assigned to it is "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

The body is presented in three aspects in the epistles. In the Ephesians, we learn how it is formed and maintained. In 1 Corinthians xii., it is shewn in its normal state of corporate vigour by the Holy Ghost.

In 1 Corinthians we have its formal expression on earth, at the Lord's table announcing His death until He comes.

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If the second but feebly exists, yet the first remains in all its integrity; because it depends on the faithfulness of God; and therefore in the Ephesians we are taught how the body is edified, and according as it is true to itself, it presents the third aspect, as incumbent on it.

Now in Ephesians iv. edification is spoken of in two ways. I need hardly insist on the importance of edification, for the apostle says, when he would give a general rule for ministry in the Church, "Let everything be done for edification;" and he establishes the superiority of prophecy by saying, "He that prophesieth edifieth the Church" (1 Cor. xiv. 4), and "greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, unless he interpret, that the Church may receive edifying, or edification." Again, if he speaks of the object to be held in view in pleasing another, it is "Let everyone please his neighbour for his good to edification." (Rom. xv.) Again, if he would shew the superiority of charity over mere knowledge,

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he says, "Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth." I adduce all these passages to prove that edification is the great work of the Spirit of God, and that though His work in turning sinners from darkness to light be a more manifest one, yet the great aim and action of the Holy Ghost is edification, and this we will now consider as set forth in Ephesians iv.

First, there is edification through the gifts. All the gifts, including that of the evangelist, are given for a special intent; namely, "for the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ministry, unto the edifying of the body of Christ." No one can weigh the force and meaning of this passage, before the Lord, without coming to the conclusion that men are gifted by the Lord for a very special purpose; not simply to convert souls, or to see that saints are happy and in good repute in their ways here on earth, but to contribute to their growth—to edify them. Those who are thus gifted are like builders. A builder is employed to erect a building; not merely to pre-

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pare stones for the structure, but to add to it, to work towards its completion, according to the design of the Architect. This is only done by the communication of truth, not doctrine merely, but Christ Himself. The evangelist not only finds the stone, but, like the woman who when she had found the silver piece that was lost, called together her neighbours and friends, saying, "Rejoice with me, for I have found the piece that was lost;" so he invites the saints to rejoice that a lost soul is now in its right place; his being found is only partial if he is not set in his right place. If a man had lost a sheep and heard it was in a park ten miles off, he could not say it was really recovered until it was on his own land, and under his own care. A man who has lost a piece of money is not satisfied with hearing that the police have found it; he does not feel he has really recovered it until he has it in his own possession. This at all events (whoever performs it) is for a soul the first work of *edification*. There can be no building except as the stones are laid

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in their right places; and there is no edification of the new convert until he is placed consciously *in Christ*; and when he is, he is in the body; for he cannot be in Christ, and at the same time in anything not of Christ, and if in Christ he is of the body; for he could not "hold the Head" simply, and not know that he belongs to Christ's body on earth. It is plain that one must be in Christ before there can be growth, according to the standard. Conversion or quickening is not properly edification. Edification is when I am growing up to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. I must be in Him first, and then as baptized by one Spirit into one body, the growing has begun. A soul, not out of bondage, though truly loving the Saviour, is not growing, he is not edified until he gets clear as to his place in Christ; when he is, he begins to grow in Him, and like Him, but he must be in Him first. Not only must there be a true work of grace in his soul, but he must also know himself in

and of Christ. All the edification through the gifts has only one aim or end, even to present every one perfect or grown up in Christ; and the ministry which does not contribute to this is not profitable or of the Lord. All is of no use if, as the apostle says, "the other is not edified."

Now the gifts are edification *from without*, communicated through servants, chosen of God, with distinct specialities. They are properly acting from without, towards the body, and *for it*, not simply as members of it. The latter is the case in 1 Corinthians xii., when the body is in corporate vigour. When saints meet as the assembly, they are after this type, however feeble they may be; but as they are true, the vigour is genuine. But then, the gifts or the members, which are the organs of the body there, (not gifts to it, as in Ephesians,) are waiting on the body, and not on their individual responsibility to a specific gift. There (1 Cor. xii.) I am in an organization, and I must take care that I do nothing to spoil or to hinder it.

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If I have a special gift, I must see that I am all right myself, walking truly, holily, and unworldly before the Lord, or the gift will be hindered, the bell will not toll distinctly; but in the assembly any member may disturb, weaken, or hinder. It is a wonderful mechanism, or organization; and, like a watch, the very beauty and perfection of the works makes it the easier to be put out of order by the obstruction of even a hair. This is of course the highest exposition of the grace conferred on us; but because the highest it is the one most rarely attained to. The gifted man may and does truly exercise his speciality if he himself be spiritual, but, in order that the body should be true to its own functions, it is necessary that there be no grieving of the Spirit by any of the members, and this accounts for the prevalence and acceptance of individual ministers or preachings, in preference to that which accrues from the assembly meeting as such, which is the *second* and greater edification.

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In verse 16 of this chapter (Eph. iv.) we read, "From whom the whole body, fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." Here the body is spoken of as edifying itself in love—the nature of God. It is edification of the highest order; but here it is not gifts, though it be the result of gifts. It bears relation to gifts, as health does to food and air. Food and air are not health, though they promote it, and without them there could not be health; but the health is a state quite distinct from food and air. It arises from constitutional vigour, and a true concert of all parts of the body. The virtues of life are evolved by the exercise of the members in happy organization. It is independent of any specific gift, though it does not refuse the gift. The means are "that which every joint supplieth," even the power of the Holy Ghost, which has formed and which maintains the body.

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I think it will be found that many understand and appreciate the edification from gifts, which for distinction's sake I call the edification from *without*, more than the edification by joints and bands, which is from *within*.

The Lord grant that edification may be more the one simple aim of all His gifted ones, and that every member of His body may learn how he can contribute to edification or constitutional vigour in the body.

There was but one Person who could stand in the gap, and that was the Son of God. He stood in the gap for me; was put to open shame—crucified—laid in the grave, and I am connected with Him who rose.

We are occupied with our affections to Christ until they are assured in union, or possession of Him. Thus the bride can be occupied with pleasing her Lord, and this is character or attire.

THE SUFFERINGS AND GLORY OF CHRIST.

THE EFFECT OF EACH ON US.

How far is the contemplation of the sufferings of Christ, our blessed Lord, used to produce the effect in us of being epistles of Christ down here?

In 2 Corinthians iii. evidently it is the glory of the Lord. It is blessed to think of His sufferings, and it draws out the affections of saints even more than the glory, but I have to watch against mere human feeling. There may be a great deal of natural sympathy and natural feeling about the sufferings of Christ with nothing divine in the soul. The women who followed the Lord on His way to the cross were touched by the sufferings of the innocent one, but there was nothing divine in their weeping: Jesus says to them, Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and your children.

Here, at the Lord's table, He calls

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us back to dwell on His sufferings in remembrance of Himself, and in that way He presents Himself to us as the glorified One ; the Person who has drawn us completely out of the world, and unto Himself. We look back *with Him* at what His sufferings and sorrows were, and we get their divine character, as in Philippians ii. He was equal with God, yet He humbled Himself, &c., and God has highly exalted Him. When we contemplate Christ in that way, we stand and adore ; and when I trace His life, a lonely life, I see divine love at every step ; the most gracious, most accessible of men, full of lowliness and grace, utterly without sympathy from man : Divine love bearing our sorrows and carrying our sicknesses : I get there the divine thing and stand and look on the divine Person — Christ made sin. No place where He was so alone as on the cross, and in this way alone that in the glory we shall be with and conformed to Him ; answering to Him in all things. When we see Him as He is we shall be like Him.

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When I see Him as man, working that work by which I am with Him in the glory, my heart is fixed upon Him; there my mind dwells on Him in the glory where He is, and if my soul has got hold of that, the effect is to make me like Him down here—His epistle.

Faith is always lonely; it is an individual thing that we must have each one for himself, for faith looks to God, and God only. There are moments in every man's life when he must act with God absolutely, and God alone, and so in every step it is the practical possession of the soul. The Lord is that Spirit, He is the summing up in His own Person of all that the Spirit unfolds through the word. The Spirit of the Lord gives me to behold a man in glory gone up on high; all is accomplished in His Person, and glory is the result. Then there is liberty in the presence of the holiness of God, the question of sin settled, death done with, Satan's power done with; the fruit (we are the fruit of His work), liberty of heart in God. We are made the righteousness of God in

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Him, associated with Jesus, the heart at liberty in perfect love, at liberty from Satan, from death, from sin. We are foolish and let ourselves slip down again into bondage, and miss this divinely given, divinely wrought, divinely sustained place, by the power of God's Spirit—this place of a child of God, heir of God, &c.; but *there* the place is, and it is ours. The heart turns back and sees the perfect divine work, and the divine Person who stood there, then always the divine element comes out, and we must adore.

The glory is now in the face of Jesus Christ. There is no veil on the glory of God for me. I do not fear the glory, for the place where I see it is in the face of the Man who bore my sins. I dwell on Him, and look on Him, and I am changed into the same image; but my heart goes back to see how it was all accomplished. You get the same in John vi. The bread which came down from heaven—it came *from* heaven; but He must give His life that I, eating His flesh and drinking His blood, may abide

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in Him, and He in me. In heaven the Lamb that was *slain* will be the theme of praise; and let me say, we must be in heaven to know the Lamb that was slain. The more in spirit I know Him exalted at God's right hand, and myself brought there too, the more my heart goes back to the cross to see Him as the One who became obedient to death. The moment I see the glory in the face of Jesus Christ my heart goes up. Angels veil their faces before His glory—I can adore! still a poor feeble creature, but I can look on Him, can dwell on Him, and only get blessed and established by it.

Is there any *constancy* of heart in us to contemplate the glory? are we steadfastly looking up into heaven like Stephen? I feel for myself how little one has it, but just in the measure of that steadfastness is the result, that we shall by the Spirit be His epistles known and read of all men. And it is refreshing after all to think that God contemplates us with undivided love. When I think of looking at His glory in the face of Jesus Christ, I think of

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my weakness to do so; but when I think of His looking at me, I find that there is *no cloud*, and that God is stedfastly looking at me in undivided love.

**“IN HIM DWELLETH ALL THE
FULNESS OF THE GODHEAD
BODILY.”**

(Continued from page 276.)

Tradition and the elders, whether past or present, can only lead the mind back to an historical Christ, and to the acknowledgment of a national establishment, as agreeing therewith. This is, alas, where the professing people of to-day are found, and on such a ground as this moreover, attempting to witness to a rejected Son of man, made Lord and Christ, and about to descend from heaven to call us up to meet Him in the air: or else, what is *their* testimony to the world? What must a national establishment be now, or the veiled and sacramental Christ that suits it, when

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viewed in the presence of the speedy coming of the Lord to receive us to Himself, and to *establish* the Church which is His body in the glory where He is, and according to the counsels of the Father? The Lord help us, as indeed He does where the heart is simple and the eye single, to behold Him in no lesser glory than as the One "in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead **BODILY**," which text as clearly insists upon His manhood, as on His deity. When we think of Him as "crucified through weakness," may we connect with *this* glory the fact, that "by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth," and that all things were created by Him and for Him: nor fail to add to these glories another, that "he is before all things, and by him all things consist." Nothing but a poor reasoning mind can be confused, yea, confounded (as it deserves to be) by such definitions of power, and such descriptions of the person of the Son of God.

Faith finds itself at home in difficul-

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ties, because it is there with the God in whose presence there are none. Faith gets its liberty in mysteries because nothing common could express the glory of the Person, with whom it lives and moves and gets its being.

A "walk with God" in olden time was characterized by a mystery and a difficulty: for example, the journey of Abraham to mount Moriah with his son Isaac, and the wood and the knife and the fire; or the whole history of Moses, from the voice out of the burning bush at Horeb, which said, "Put off thy shoes from off the feet," to the day when the Lord took him to the top of Pisgah to see all the good land, and there buried him in a valley in the land of Moab. In the measure in which the elders of Hebrews xi. held the mystery and the difficulty together, they "obtained a good report," and practically learnt that "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." The Promiser and the promise made all plain in those days, but now in these last times God has come down to man,

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in the Person of "the Word made flesh," and without controversy "great is the mystery of godliness," nor would faith have it otherwise, in communion with God. In the measure in which we are in the mystery, and at home there with the Father and the Son, in the light where God dwells, our fellowship will be what it ought to be; and in the same measure our feet, and the path they tread below, will only know a difficulty, to prove that God, who has called us to walk through this world, with the Son of His own love, is at home in them all. Faith follows the living God, who makes a way for Himself, and for those who can walk with Him, whether it be from Egypt to Canaan, or from earthly places into the heavenly ones. The total of our profession is not that "we are more than conquerors through him that loved us," though this be true, and a great fact, but growing up into Him in all things who is the head, even Christ, and knowing the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that we might be filled with all the fulness of God. The cha-

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racteristic feature, yea, charm of our profession is, "We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding to know him that is true; and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life. Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen."

God undertook to bring the Israelites into Canaan; and He took such ample care of them that their shoes did not wear out, nor did their feet swell. And He has undertaken to bring many sons to glory. Think you that He takes less care of these? No; He has made full provision to bring them home in a manner *worthy of Himself*.

When you get into God's presence as a sinner, promises will not do—forgiveness will not do, you *want righteousness*. Man has none, you must have God's.

In Christ my present is the favour of God; my future, the glory of God.

THOUGHTS FOR THIS DAY.

“IT IS MORE BLESSED TO GIVE
THAN TO RECEIVE.”

A CONDITION which no amount of favour can satisfy—one which desires more and is more sensible of its need and deficiency the more it has acquired—can never be happy in giving, or in depriving itself of anything it has. Man, in his natural state, cannot spare anything, unless with the expectation of requital. He is unsatisfied himself, and though what he possesses does not satisfy him, yet he will not give it away, unless to gain something which he has not. With man it is rather sale and bargain than gift. A real gift supposes a state where one can rest independent of what one gives; and to be a giver instead of a receiver argues a state of satisfaction, and not of discontent, which is man's state at its best. A giver is the very opposite to a receiver. When I am giving I am not claiming or expecting.

The great effect of the work of Christ

THE SON OF GOD—JESUS CHRIST.

2 Cor. i. 19, iv. 4, 6.

AND ME.

HE, the Father's Rest eternal,
Jesus, once look'd down on me,
Called me by my name external,
And reveal'd Himself in me.

With His whisper, Life, light-giving,
Glowed in me, the dark and dead,
Made me live, Himself receiving,
Who once died for me and bled.

Abba's love is on Him beaming :
Grace and favour in Him shine ;
Life eternal from Him streaming
Fills my soul with joy divine.

From the glory still He eyes me,
Guides me with God-honouring love,
Till He comes Himself to raise me,
And present at home above.

THE POWER OF THE HOLY GHOST, AND THE PRESENT MANNER OF IT.

POWER is perfect when it can descend from the greatest manifestation down to the least and most insignificant detail, and be as great, if not greater, in the little things, unseen and unknown, as in the greatest and most marvellous display. There is no greater evidence of imperfect power and ability than the fear or the incapacity to leave the place of display, where the power is seen and acknowledged; and to bend to the little things where there is no display, or any opportunity of discovering its action, except by one in the secret. A man of assured power and ability can afford to play with a child; his dignity is not forfeited because of his condescension: but a youth just emerging from childhood would fear to descend to the ranks from which he had just risen; he would be afraid that his ability to be any higher would be denied, or at least questioned. Thus it is with conventional

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dignities. They never can afford to descend from the exhibition of their consequence, lest they should forfeit the homage or acknowledgment that they claim or are entitled to; and men as a rule do not render due respect to any one who does not support his own dignity and lay claim to the respect to which it is entitled. The claim has to be supported by manifestations of means of one kind or another, or it would not be recognized. Every human dignity or power is always sustained by the expression of its title in some form or other; and the claim generally would be unrecognized where there was nothing visible to give assurance of it. Who will be found to care for a man of the highest title, if he be a fool or a pauper, if he have neither property nor ability to maintain his title? It is patent to every thoughtful person that man estimates power or ability according as it can prove its own existence or shew itself; and if there be no display, nothing visible, there is no sense of its authenticity, no conviction of its existence.

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Thus the Lord's "brethren" (John vii.) say unto Him, "Depart hence, that thy disciples may SEE the works that thou doest. For there is no man that doeth anything in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, shew thyself to the world."

Now the fact of power being only acknowledged in proportion as it is displayed has led to two errors in the Church; one that there is no admission of the presence of the Holy Ghost on earth, because there is no display of His power (this is the more general and prevailing error, though it assumes many forms and varieties); and the other, that a display of the Holy Ghost in some remarkable manner is looked for; and this last, though nearer to the truth, as admitting the actual presence of the Holy Ghost on earth, is not the less dangerous, because it indirectly asserts that the power cannot be here, unless there be display according to its own greatness, or in a visible way—a way to be recognized by man. The first

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error I will not comment on. It is simply ignorance of the plain words of scripture; as the Lord says, "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever." The Spirit remains during the absence of Christ. But as to the second, I purpose to examine scripture, in order to see how, and in what manner, the Spirit of God, though still here, acts in this day.

The Holy Ghost did act in a very visible way at first, and not only were signs given to those without, and miracles performed, but in the Church also were manifestations of His power, visible and patent to all, none of which now remain; that is to say, none of the character of display, so easily recognizable by all. First, it should be admitted that the power of the Holy Ghost remains the same, however differently He may manifest Himself. The power could not alter; and it is of immense importance for us to be assured of the simple truth that the Holy Ghost is here, and that His power, however manifested, be

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it ever so little, is the same as it was in the day of His greatest manifestation. Now this manifestation depends on the condition of the Church, which is the sphere of His manifestation. The Spirit of God has two distinct spheres of action; one in the believer, and the other in the Church; one to reveal Christ to the soul, the other to testify of Christ in the world through the saints. Now that which is spoken of in John xiv. 26, which is His action in the believer, is known and enjoyed by every believer in Christ, according as his faith is simple and restful. There is really no change in the manner of manifestation. The same unfolding of Christ, the same comfort of soul, is known to the devoted believer now as at the beginning. He is as much the Comforter to the individual now as ever He was, and with the same manifestation according as there is faith. There is really no change in the way or manner of His manifestation to the individual saint. As he is true of heart to Christ, he enjoys the Comforter now as much as one of the

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same measure did in the first days of His coming.

But it is evident from John xv. 26 that the Holy Ghost is here also to bear witness of the glorified Christ; and while He does, as we have seen, fully according to faith, minister to the individual soul, there is a difference in the manner of His acting in testimony on the earth. His power is the same, and we do well to remember this, however differently He may manifest Himself. But it is evident that if the company of the disciples, that is the Church, are not fit or qualified for the manifestation of His power—if they have lost their first love—even though He remains with them, He could not use them as a channel of display, as He could if they were all earnest and faithful to their Lord. It is a simple matter, that though the light may remain, yet that it uses a perfect eye more fully than an impaired one. A father may live with his children and be as rich as ever, but he will not, if wise, give them of his wealth to signalize themselves with it, if the

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family name has been tarnished by the folly and recklessness of some of them, or as he had done when they were all wise and faithful and fit to be trusted. The wealth remains, but it is not becoming that a family in their state should be placed in distinction before the world. The individuals of the family enjoy the comfort and benefit of the wealth, but the family as a whole is not to be made illustrious by a display of the wealth, when it is patent to all that they are as a whole under a cloud. Neither could the wiser members of the family, those who individually and privately enjoy the wealth, seek that there should be public distinction conferred on the family in its present state ; nay, the wisest and truest members, those who cared most for the honour of the name they bore, would not expect or seek family distinction ostensibly, though the young and ardent members might think and act otherwise. The former would seek more to recover the qualification for being honoured than the public honour itself.

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In every instance, and in every dispensation, there has been a greater manifestation of the power of God before failure occurred than afterwards, though individuals, if faithful, were always peculiarly succoured of God; but then it was privately, and in secret to themselves. The manner of the power manifested at Jericho (Josh. vi.) was never given again. Afterwards at Ai there was the same power, but no public manifestation, though to faith it was known to be entirely of God, but not discernible to the human mind. The manifestation of power in the Church at Jerusalem was much greater than it was ever afterwards; and with Paul, it is remarkable the difference between the manifestations which accompanied him at first, before his captivity, and what it was afterwards. At first, we read, "God wrought special miracles by the hand of Paul. So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them." (Acts xix. 11, 12.)

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But afterwards, though the power was the same, there was not the same display. In the case of the shipwreck in chapter xxvii., though the power of God was there and effected a rescue for all in the ship in answer to Paul's faith, it was exercised in no remarkable manner; as we read "they that could swim cast themselves into the sea to get to land; and the rest, some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship; and so it came to pass that they all escaped safe to land." And when we turn to 2 Timothy, where the apostle writes from prison, there is no thought or expectation in his mind of the manifestation of power on his behalf; but yet, while to all appearance everything is reduced to the greatest weakness, there is no lack of confidence in God, or of assurance of His power and presence. The brethren forsake him, but the Lord stands by him. The true heart can count on God, in the darkness and weakness; and read as in cipher His love and care. An evil generation seeks a sign. (Mark viii.) And as it was then—Jesus at

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the other side and no bread—so is it now. It is not in seeking displays of power in any way, whether in connection with conversions or otherwise, that we shall be in accordance with His mind, but quietly going on enjoying His favour and serving Him; seeking the lost silver pieces, and zealously and diligently leading the household of Rahab out of the world (see Josh. vi. 22—24), assured that we have the same power on our behalf in extricating one soul from the world, as the apostles had when five thousand were gathered in. (Acts ii.) Seeking for great results is often a seeking for quails. Human effort takes the place of the Spirit of God, and though there may be apparent success, there is no progress of soul in the truth or the knowledge of the Lord, because there is no understanding of the wisdom and reserve of the Spirit of God, nor of the present manner of His power.

Do I know the neutralizing effect of seeing everything in God's presence; or have I been making myself the centre of everything?

THOUGHTS FOR THIS DAY.

THE

ONLY LINE OF POWER AND SAFETY.

“GIRT about with truth” is the first power of the panoply of God; and if the first be neglected, or defective, there is no use in attempting to acquire or put on any of the others. Nay, the possession of the others without the first, only helps one on in a wrong line. For instance, if I could have the shield of faith without truth, I should by my faith commend and support that which is untrue, and thus great mischief is done to the truth by devoted saints who have some faith with only a measure of truth. The truth is necessarily the first point. Since man has believed a lie, and is under penalty in consequence, the first and greatest acquirement must be the knowledge of the truth, and in the maintenance of it only there is safety, if the heart would be true to God. The law, demanding righteousness from man, came by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. The truth has come by

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and known to us. Many are booked for the journey who do not travel on that line. The moment you have faith in God's purpose you are in the power of the Spirit of God, and all the opposition has been surmounted. A ticket gives the right to travel; but many a one with this *right* does not understand the power which would carry him, because he does not accept the line for which he is booked, and commit himself simply to the Spirit of God to convey him to the terminus according to the will of God. The right to go, and really going, are two very different things. I am safely carried where I bid farewell to everything, and consign myself simply and wholly to the purpose of God—the height to which He has called me, and the same power which will carry me to the top is that which enables me to take the first step. But the first step must be with the purpose to reach the top, or you are the slothful man that will not roast what he took in hunting.

THE WAITING ONE.

THE only true way to promote the pleasure of meeting face to face is to make up for absence by correspondence. The more the Lord's absence is compensated for by the Holy Ghost, the more deeply does the heart desire to see the One so compensated for. The compensation keeps alive in the heart the sense of what the Person is; and hence, the more He is before the soul as compensated for, the more will there be eagerness of desire to see Him. I must be the waiting one for the Lord's return before I can be the inviting one. Now a waiting one is one with a body full of light, like a glowworm.

The greatest visible achievement of grace is that the body in which sin and death are, should be the vehicle or medium of divine light, the light that resists the darkness. The waiting one derives light from the One who was here, greater than Jonas and greater than Solomon (see Luke xi.); and he waits in light for that Light. Until He returns, you *wait* for Him here in the

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character *He had here*. You *invite* Him to come in the character *He is in heaven*. As a waiting one, your body is luminous. That is the great point, as when the clear shining of a candle doth give light—properly the blaze. To effect this there must be a single eye, and no part dark. If there be not a single eye—that is, if one is not free from selfish ends as to Christ and the truth—there is a colour in the light.

Eve had not a single eye when she applied the promise to be accomplished only in Christ to her own son Cain. She, like a jaundiced person, took in the light, but coloured it with something personal. The first great thing is to get the truth simply. Peter takes in the truth simply; he has a single eye, but he is not without a dark spot. You must not only have a single eye, but there must be no dark part. The part dark is the part in your nature or habits not yet under the control of the light and truth which you have accepted, and then there is, as it were, a waster on the candle.

THE WAITING ONE.

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What a masterpiece of grace it is, that my body, which has been the vessel of vanity, the theatre of every worldly thought and desire, should now be set up here as the medium of the LIGHT, which the world—darkness, would not have; and that I fail to be the glowworm, a body full of light, effulgence on every side, unless *first* every part is brought under the sway of the light. It is not enough that I have perfectly and truly accepted the light, that I have a single eye; without that every part would be dark; but consequent on this, I must not allow any tendency in my nature to work, as Barnabas did when he took with him Mark; or as Paul when he unknowingly denounced the high priest.

There is a tendency to be satisfied with purity of purpose and assured conviction of the eye being occupied with Christ. This of course is the main thing; but I am delaying its effulgence, rendering the blaze dim, if every part of my body be not under the control of it. Isaac had the light purely, but because of the dark spot, loving his son's

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venison, he for a moment would divert the blessing from Jacob to Esau. The light above the brightness of the sun is made visible in this dark world. As the nightingale in the dusk or the darkness in the sweetest notes invites the sleepless one to listen, but sings on whether attended to or not; as the luminous bodies shine through the night whether they are seen or not, so is it with the waiting ones they shine all the night through. Whether they are acknowledged or not, they shine on, waiting for their Lord, the Son from heaven. The nightingale must have melody within, or she would not sing in the silence of the night: and so with the waiting ones. With hearts full of heavenly ways, they can invite their Lord to come, and with bodies full of light they shine on in the darkness. Grace always looks from within to the without, the pharisee is only occupied with the outside. Grace makes sure of the heart first, and as it is controlled, the virtue of the grace is expressed through or by means of the body; and hence the light is preoccupied

or expended in removing "dark spots," or correcting natural habits or tendencies either of birth or education, and thus hindered effecting that bodily effulgence which would characterize us if wholly devoted to Christ.

SENTIMENTS WITHOUT AN OBJECT IS MISERY.

Do you find that you have an object in Christ for every sentiment? Does every bit of light and truth you receive and enjoy find its way, like a tributary stream, back to the ocean from which it came to you? Does every new idea only deepen in your soul the consciousness that you have an object in Him which daily is making you more independent of efforts to supply substitutes? Is the object so assured to your heart that you rather fear substitutes than seek them? Every sentiment must have an object, or the heart is not true to itself, and condemns you. But then do you find a jealousy in yourself when you

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receive any truth, of holding it apart from the object of your heart; or are you, as you receive truth, longing to be alone with Him in order that you may find it, as linking you more closely with Himself; the truth being only a fuller unfolding of His moral being, and hence more absolutely acquainting you with Him, and you finding in the acquaintance that which supersedes everything, so that you only value everything around you as it connects you with your object. When Christ is your object you cannot be self-occupied, because all your resources are in Him, and you really want nothing more, for they are superabundant in Him. Divine sentiments without Christ always tend to human objects, and one is like a rich man reduced to poverty, whose cultivated tastes only add to his misery. So saints with high conceptions of truth, without Christ as an object, grow weaker and duller, because they see what they do not enjoy.

TRUE ROYALTY.

YE kings, ye great ones of the earth,
Frail beings of a fleeting hour,
What reck ye of the grace, the worth,
Of Christ, and His eternal power?

What know ye of that race of kings
Whose peerless glory rises far
Above the flight of angels' wings,
Or heaven's remotest, brightest star?

No name had they, no place, till He,
The Christ, the King of kings, had shed
His life-blood on the accursed tree,
Then rose victorious from the dead.

Till He, beyond the cross, the grave,
Enthroned on high their living Head,
Himself to them His nature gave,
On them th' Eternal Spirit shed.

Then, then the Church, that chosen race,
Born from above, on earth unknown,
In spirit found their destined place
Beside Him on the Father's throne:

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There to abide that coming hour
Of blessedness and peace, when He
Shall as a conqueror claim His power,
Heir of a kingdom yet to be.

Nor only He: we, heirs with Him,
That crown of glory yet shall share,
Whose dazzling beauty nought can dim,
Nor the cold hand of time impair.

Yes, Lord, in that celestial throng
Ourselves, our very selves, we see,
Fruit of thy sufferings, who ere long
Shall reign in life and light with thee.

Sweet blessed hope! but why, O why,
These lingering years, this long delay;
While love, with ever wakeful eye,
Is watching for the break of day?

Hear then the cry, the ceaseless cry,
Of weary spirits far from home:
O take us to our rest on high;
Come for us now—Lord Jesus, come!

FRAGMENTS.

If one is really denying oneself that the life of Jesus may be manifested, one is familiar with death, and it is conducing to life—the best and happiest life. It is a grand moment when the sensibility of His life in us is so strong in one that one feels the intrusion of the flesh, in the smallest particular, as one feels a mote intruding on the eye. I refuse the most beautiful things in nature or creation, because it would offend the life I now live in the flesh.

The mind of the saint should be simply a mirror for the truth of God. It is to be kept clean; but the moment it suggests, it spoils. The best expositor of scripture is the one who does not bring to it a single thought of his own. The body should be the exponent of what the *mirror receives*.

If people were unselfish, never thinking of themselves or gleaning to themselves, they would never be disappointed. The last Adam had one single thought, “Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. *He* was perfectly unselfish. Paul had looked upon this Christ, the entire moral contrast of the first Adam.

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You never get two natures in the Old Testament. The saints there walked upon earth in piety, but never got into heavenly places. God came down to them to the tent door, but did not lift them up to Himself.

The first thing I get when I am in the presence of God is lowliness of mind: self is nothing; and as a consequence of being in the presence of God, I am meek to others.

Truth makes the metal; but it is prayer, exercise of heart with God, which tries it in the fire and makes it ductile. How many a one is strong and cogent who is not ductile!

Amiability is a beautiful thing: it comes from God like a flower, but it has no fruit: it has nothing to do with God.

Let the going without the camp bear the fragrance of one who has come from the altar before God.

In Christ, my present, is the favour of God;
my future, the glory of God,

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PART II.

IN what follows the temptation, we have the sum of all the Lord's ministry; not His discussions at Jerusalem, which have another character and are chiefly in John, in the midst of a condemned people, but amongst the poor of the flock, spoiling the goods of him whom He had overcome. The rejection of John was His rejection, the close of his ministry the beginning of His own, and leaving Judea He seeks the poor of the flock, where prophecy had already declared the light should spring up. He was carrying on the testimony begun by prophets, and more immediately before by John the baptist, Himself a testimony not to what was, but what was to come. His person, Jehovah in grace, in their midst, was the great testimony; but His ministry, followed in the train of those who had gone before, only announced the near approach of the kingdom; calling to repentance, because the kingdom of heaven was at hand. It is the

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same testimony as that of John baptist. Not owning the title of the people to have the kingdom as the people in iniquity (compare Isaiah xlviii. 22, lvii. 21), but calling to repentance, separating morally those who had ears to hear, and on the ground that the kingdom of heaven was close at hand. But there is necessarily this difference between John the baptist and the Lord, that though they may have surrounded him as a teacher, John pointed to another; while the Lord — and great grace it was — gathered round Himself proof that a divine Person was there; such alone had title to do it. They leave all and follow Him. He is a commanding and binding point of attraction. The whole of His general ministry is summed up in verse 23. This single verse embraces characteristically His whole ministry. The two following state the effect: His fame spread through the country, the sick were brought to Him, and He was followed by multitudes from all parts.

The history of His ministry is here

complete, multitudes surrounding Him, giving occasion to His taking His disciples apart to a mountain (though it appears the multitude followed so as to hear what He said), and teach them what were the real principles of the kingdom which was going to be set up. Such is the sermon on the mount. The first sixteen verses give the whole positive statement of the character and position of those who belong to it in truth, or rather to whom it belongs. It is taken, remark, in its whole extent. First, the general character of those to whom it belongs, the poor in spirit, not the haughty of this world, but those who mourn in the midst of evil. It is a characteristic of grace when evil is in the place of righteousness. Peace-making characterizes God. It is striking how peace is associated with God and His work. He is the God of peace. Peace on the earth is announced with Christ: He has made peace. "Peace be with you" was His twice repeated word. The fruits of righteousness are sown in peace. Pure in heart comes no doubt first, as else-

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where: first pure, then peaceable. Pure in Himself, He is at peace, and so makes it, in grace. When we are pure in heart, the Spirit of peace seeks it in others. In the fourth verse we see that the promises of the kingdom rise to its highest privileges. The moral character looked for in those who were to have part in the kingdom having been stated, rising to its highest privileges and activity in grace, the consequences in a world of evil till it was set up in power, are then pointed out; persecutions for righteousness, and persecutions for Christ's name. The former shewed the kingdom of heaven theirs, the latter pointed to reward in heaven itself. Thus, while verse 5 assures the meek of the earthly portion, this points to the possessions of the reward in heaven itself. Their position in the world is then stated, the salt of the earth and the light of the world—what is in contrast with and so far hinders the corruption of that in which it is, and the testimony of God's light to those in darkness in the world around. We have thus the

character fitted for the kingdom of heaven. Its earthly and heavenly portion, but its carrying out in a state of things adverse to it, persecution, corruption, and darkness—only that which was of God in it. What follows is the relationship it bears to what had subsisted up to then, and the contrast with the workings of the human heart, which may put on the form of good, or render external service to God, but not have purity within, nor God for its motive in every thing; which can listen to the words of good, but not build its house in obedience to them. The law is not referred to, save in the declaration that it and the prophets must all be fulfilled. It is not obedience, but fulfilling, every jot and tittle of it accomplished. What preceded was fully confirmed, but a new thing brought in, in the person of the Lord. The lusts and unsubdued movements of the human heart are wholly disallowed. The Father's name is introduced, Christ declares His name, a very important element. The kingdom to be desired by the disciples was the

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Father's kingdom, though He, as to the present condition, be seen in heaven, while they were on earth. But love according to His ways was to be exercised, goodness without motive save in itself. They were there to serve, not to judge, but with insolent evil not to misapply their blessings. It was a strait gate and a narrow way, and few would go in at it. False prophets, for Satan would have every hindrance, would be known by their fruits.

The true character and condition of the children of the kingdom, the Father's name, and the contrast of this new place in holiness, grace, and obedience, with what had gone before, while sanctioning fully what God had given previously, the law and the prophets, which must all be fulfilled. Thus the true character of the ministry of Jesus the Lord, in grace and power, and in its bearing and character in Israel, is fully given from chapter iv. 12 to the end of chapter vii. Now begin the details of His personal presentation in Israel, so that what should have acted on the hearts and minds of

those He walked amongst is fully set before us, ending in His rejection by and through that, for the time, of Israel, and the substitution of the Church and kingdom.

Let us then now follow the blessed character of the Lord thus revealed, Immanuel in the midst of His people. A leper comes to Him on His descent from the mountain, accompanied by the multitudes. None but Jehovah cleansed the leper, but Jehovah was there. The leper, while doing homage to the Lord and owning His power to heal, of which abundant proof had been given, was not quite assured of His good will and readiness to do it. "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." But the man of grace was there. Jesus put forth His hand and touched him. He is come to the sorrows and wretchedness of man—a man with them. One not to be contaminated, but in grace come to those who were; not driven away by the corruption and evil, but come to man when in them, touching him as man to relieve and help, yet Jehovah. Wondrous

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truth? "I will," who can say it, or say it with right or with effect? God. Why should He say it, when sin, and misery, and defilement were there to produce repugnance? Perfect grace—the grace man's heart was no way sure of—was there. Divine goodness touching man as man, with the will to heal, but in power, man in his defilement, but to remove it from him: such was Jesus, Himself undefiled.

We can hardly have a more wondrous picture or presentation of His coming to the earth, Jehovah-Man, touching man in grace, power, and love, good will to heal in grace, and present there with man. Grace is there—a word heals—the work of Jehovah, but man touching, laying His hand on man. At the same time the Lord, while giving this proof of His divine presence, recognizes the Jewish economy as still subsisting. The cleansed leper was to go to the priest and offer his offering for a testimony. In accepting it, they owned he was healed, they owned that Jehovah was there—Jehovah there in grace, but still owning Israel as

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to its standing. But this divine grace manifested in Israel, being divine, could not limit itself to Israel. A Gentile—owning far more fully, as not shut up in Jewish thoughts, the divine power that was in exercise, that the Lord could dispose of all things, as he sent his soldiers hither and thither—looks for mercy for his servant. But, with a faith which, as ever when it realizes the divine presence, produced true lowliness of heart, counts himself unworthy that Jesus should come under his roof. A word from the Lord, ready as He was to go to him, sufficed, and the word was spoken. Such faith had not been found in Israel. It is for the Lord the occasion to declare that many from all parts, Gentiles, shall come and enjoy the promises with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and the children of the kingdom, its natural heirs, Israel, would be cast into outer darkness. Faith and the person of the Lord take the place of natural succession, because God is revealed, and, as He must be if He is, in grace; and once revealed must have

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what suits Himself, and acts in a grace which is above ordinances. It was now because the person of the blessed One was there, As thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. Yet He was still subject, coming in by the door, we have seen, to the law in Israel, yet in power, and grace could not be limited to it. Jehovah healing in Israel, a man amongst them, but one who must reach to the Gentiles, going forth in grace towards them.

But we have further traits of His character in this chapter. Not only is He Immanuel in Israel, and the God of grace to Gentile need, but He is come for the sorrows and evils that sin has brought in here below. The sick mother-in-law of Peter rises up at His word and serves them, and the evil spirits depart at once from the possessed, and all the sick are healed. But it was not merely power. His heart was in it and felt it all. Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses. His miracles were miracles of goodness. It was not merely some as a testimony, but

deliverance from all the *effects* of sin and Satan's power. One was there who revealed God in goodness, able to remove all the effects of sin in man. He was there who did it and could give power to others to do it, not a mere confirmation of testimony, but He who was to be testified of, present in that power. Nor only that, but present as One who entered into them all. But He sought no honour from men, and when His works attracted the crowd, He left the place. It was His work, not admiration He sought. And this brings out another side of His character as the Son of man. He has not where to lay His head. Such an one as the doer of miracles, the scribes would follow; but He has not lost sight and would not have others lose sight of it, that He is the rejected One, hidden and despised in the world. "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air nests; the Son of man has not where to lay his head." If followed, He must be followed with nowhere in this world to go to; followed for His own sake only. And thus it involves following

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Him absolutely — with an absolute breach with all that is of the life of the flesh, however near or dear. "Suffer me first" will not do, though it seemed the strongest possible claim. If Christ was there and went that road, His disciple must follow Him and leave all behind, nor look back. He was come into the world because the world was far from God, and in it was gathering to Himself out of it. His disciples did follow Him, and into a storm where He seemed to have left them, disregarded in danger, wholly regardless of their difficulties and dangers. But foolish creatures that they were, that we are, they were in the same ship with the Lord. Was He, the centre of all God's counsels, the Lord of glory, going to sink, and all God's plans, by an accident? Alas, what are we! But the Lord was there and with the deep lesson—alas, how often to learn—of their unbelief, a word from Him calms the winds and waves. There was a great calm. And the men marvelled when they had not believed.

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But we are not quite at the close of this presentation of Emmanuel, the Lord manifested on earth. He comes into the country of the Gadarenes. There the power of Satan meets him, a power which was terror to subject man: a word from Him and all is over. The men possessed speak under the influence of those they were possessed by as if themselves. Man does not know how Satan governs and uses him when under his power; but to shew the reality of it, the Lord suffers the devils to go out into the swine, and the unclean animals rush into ruin. But the quiet world will not have God's presence; Satan's it cannot help now; but if God's power and presence is revealed it cannot bear it. They beseech Jesus to depart out of their coasts, and He went. So it has been with the world. In Luke we have more details and an application to other points. Here it is the great truth of the result of God's revelation of Himself in grace in this world. The world would not have Him, and He departed out of their coasts.

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Terrible as will be the end of the unclean vessels of Satan's power, the quiet world rejects the Lord. In general the chapter is in the midst of Israel, but shews the dealing in grace with the Gentiles and the judgment of the children of the kingdom, and here we have passed over to a wider scene without leaving Israel. God is ever the same, and the heart of man, but proved in Israel, the world has rejected Christ. It loves its quiet and ruin, the destruction of Satan brings with it the revelation of His power. But it is God that the people *will* not have. Our chapter gives us thus a full picture of the Lord's presence in the world in grace and power. He is there. In chapter ix. we have more the principles of His dealings.

"To me to live is Christ." The life of Christ is given to you, and there is not a single item of your life that could not be an expression of your love to Him. Do you eat to His glory? Do you sleep to His glory? He says, I have sought *yourself*, and it will be a poor thing if things do not come forth from you with a savour of Christ.

THOUGHTS FOR THIS DAY.

NO VICTORY—NO WITNESS.

MANY a one admires and covets eminence and distinction, who will not begin at the first step and steadily work up his way to it. It is the honour of the position that is before his mind, and not the qualification for it. The sons of Zebedee longed to sit one on the right hand and the other on the left with Christ in glory. They admired the place; and the Lord does not discourage them, but challenges them thus: "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I drink of and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" That is to say, Are they willing to walk in the path, to endure the suffering that would qualify them for such an eminence? Every man in himself is a part of the system of the world, and hence, if he would influence any in it, or be superior to it, he cannot do so truly but as he has been influenced and is superior to it himself. The extent and force in himself individually is the real measure and force of what he can effect

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cannot deny in myself the things of the world, which foster my flesh, I cannot endure the persecution of the world. If there be not by the Spirit a mortifying of my members (Col. iii. 5), when affliction and persecution arise for the word's sake, immediately there is offence. The testimony fails because there is no root; no known sense of the power of God overcoming the desires of the flesh and of the mind. There is nothing to rely on in the face of the enemy if the soldier has not learned by personal drill to have confidence in himself; that is grace in practice. A man who is not a soldier in heart is never one in action; and if he will not submit to the irksomeness of daily drill, he will find himself unskilful, unwieldy, and discomfited when charged by the enemy. The word of wisdom is, "Prepare thy work without, and make it fit for thyself in the field (in private), and afterwards build thine house;" i.e., that which is visible to everyone.

FRAGMENTS.

Matthew xxvi. 6.—We see the way this woman is devoted to Christ. None entered into His mind as Mary did—she had sat at His feet and heard His words. Her heart was occupied with getting wisdom, not for wisdom's sake, but for Christ sake, because it was *His* words, because she delighted in Him, and she is armed for the battle, she has the secret. The soul that has got Christ for His own sake has Him when it wants Him; Mary drank in His words for His own sake; not for the sake of knowledge, but for the sake of listening to Christ, of receiving from Christ; and the word of Christ brought light and truth into her soul. It is the heart feeding on His words, delighting in Him, receiving truth directly from Him, the stream of divine life received from the heart of Christ, and what makes it so precious is that it is His. And we see, as the waves of man's hatred arose, Mary's heart felt it, and her spirit and heart go out to the Person who is her object.

Attachment to Christ gives her spiritual intelligence; she does the right thing, though no other heart whatever understood it; her heart goes with this rejected Christ, pours itself out on Him; and as the hatred arose, her devotedness and attachment to Christ arose. Those around say, What use? Use? It is what Christ delights in; the spirit of Mary, spending what it has on Christ personally. And if I find Christ disowned in the professing church, I shall go with Him, and spend my box of ointment on

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Him. If I take counsel of the unspiritual, I shall think it is a foolish thing to break my box. May we follow Him ! waiting upon Him, spending oneself upon Him. That is what Christ delights in. And the foolishness of man is the wisdom of God.

The pattern characteristic of Christ's love was service. "I am among you as one that serves." Selfishness likes to be served, love likes to serve; that is one characteristic of Christ's love. Another is that it is a companionable love. How free the Lord was going in and out among them, sympathizing with them, when they had no sympathy with Him ! Another, that it was above all the evil that it met with. We have not to go with the evil, but above it with patience, as Christ did, because our love, as His, has its spring from a source which is not dependent upon the thing that it loves, and which is above all the things that hinder. It goes on and abides, because its spring is in God. Another characteristic of Christ's love is that it is thoughtful and considerate to us, and consequently adapts itself in the way of love to my condition, because it is entirely above it.

Another, that it esteems others better than self. Christ could go and take up these poor wretched disciples as those who had been faithful to Him, and say, I will give you a share in my kingdom. He picks up every heart by the good He can say of it, lays it open to receive rebuke. Another, is the anxiety of love. In

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this world, where evil is, we cannot have love without anxiety. The heart yearning in love is drawn out in anxiety ; an anxiety that looks to the Lord, and finds an answer there. The measure and extent of the love of Christ was the total giving up of Himself to die for us. If I want to have a love that will do for a world of evil, it is the giving up of self for everybody, a love that is above the evil.

HIS WAYS AND HIS ACTS.

IN the palace-halls of Egypt,
 One there was who walked apart,
 Egypt's glory all around him,
 Ceaseless sorrow in his heart.
 For afar his heart was dwelling
 Where the people of his God
 Toiled amidst the bricks of Egypt,
 Toiled midst sufferings, tears, and blood
 The adoption and the glory,
 And the covenant their own ;
 And a land where, in God's favour,
 Israel should dwell alone.
 Thither—who would lead them thither ?
 For they would not understand
 That their God had heard their groaning,
 And would save them by his hand.
 Therefore in the lonely desert,
 As a stranger would he dwell,
 Egypt's glory cast behind him,
 Scorned by those he loved so well

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There, amidst the lonely desert,
God's untiring grace to learn,
And in His almighty power,
Israel's saviour to return.

Then again with cloud and fire,
With the Lord's own ransomed band,
Through the riven sea to journey
From the desolated land,
From the place of Egypt's treasures,
Now to win the joy he prized;
Grief with God's beloved people,
And the blest reproach of Christ.

Learning ever deeper lessons
Of the grace that dwelt above;
Those dark clouds of awful thunder,
Veil that hid God's cloudless love;
Whilst beneath, amid the shadows,
Israel trod the desert road,
He above, in God's bright glory,
Learnt the wondrous heart of God.

Whither led that long strange journey?
To the hills so green and fair,
Where the vine and spreading fig-tree
Tell of God's unwearied care:
This the rest for Israel's children,
But to him no portion fell;
Barred by law from Canaan's pastures,
Brought by grace with God to dwell.

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