

A

# Voice to the Faithful.

---

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

---



LONDON GOSPEL TRACT DEPOT,  
PATERNOSTER SQUARE.

## CONTENTS.

---

	PAGE
<b>HEADINGS OF CHAPTERS—</b>	
Leviticus xxiii.-xxvii. ... ..	1
Numbers i.-xi. ... ..	33
Numbers xii.-xxi. ... ..	65
Numbers xxii.-xxxvi. ... ..	97
Deuteronomy i.-xvii. ... ..	161
Deuteronomy xviii.-xxv. ... ..	193
Deuteronomy xxvi.-xxxiv. ... ..	225
Joshua i.-v. ... ..	289
Joshua vi.-xv. ... ..	353
Breaches ... ..	5
Light and the Source of Light ... ..	13
The Labourer's Hire ... ..	16
Heterodoxy : its Origin and Aim ... ..	19
The Perfect Servant ... ..	30
Piety ... ..	40
This Present Evil World ... ..	48
The Lord's Presence ... ..	53
Short Notes on Luke ... ..	71, 104
A Letter on Timothy ... ..	74
The Anointed One and the Grave ... ..	78
The Lord's Presence—No. 2. ... ..	83
The Almond Rod. (Poetry) ... ..	96
His Love that "Passeth Knowledge;" in the Past "Bearing our sins," and in the Present bearing "us" ... ..	112
"Judge Righteous Judgment" ... ..	115
The Lord's Presence—No. 3. ... ..	117

	PAGE
Fragments ... ..	128, 190, 255
What it is to be Heavenly ... ..	129
Scattering ... ..	138
The Lord's Presence—No. 4. ... ..	149
Correspondence ... ..	159
The Order and Intent of Satan's Temp- tations... ..	169
The Lord's Presence—No. 5. ... ..	178
Forgiveness of Sins ... ..	197
"The Morning and Evening Lamb" ... ..	206
The Lord's Presence—No. 6. ... ..	213
Guilty and Lost ... ..	231
The Lord's Presence—No. 7. ... ..	243
Errata ... ..	256
False Doctrine or Gangrene ... ..	257
Surrender and its Gain ... ..	266
"Life" or "Christianity," and Christ as its Beginning ... ..	279
The two Callings, Heavenly and Earthly	285
Nearness and Confidence ... ..	292
"I Abhor Myself" ... ..	299
The Course answers to the Goal ... ..	305
The Natural Mind and Christ's Mind ... ..	321
On Prayer—God's Twofold answer to it...	335
The Depravity of Man ... ..	340
"That I may know Him" ... ..	357
The various Intrusions of the flesh ; how each is checked or foiled ... ..	367



# A Voice to the Faithful.

---

## HEADINGS OF CHAPTERS.

### LEVITICUS.

#### CHAPTER XXIII.

THE feasts or holy convocations of Jehovah.

The Sabbath. (See Heb. iv. 1-10.)

First month, fourteenth day, the passover.

First month, and fifteenth day, a holy convocation—the feast of unleavened bread for seven days. (See 1 Cor. v. 7, 8.)

When come into the land, the first sheaf of harvest to be brought to the priest to wave before Jehovah on the first day of the week, to be accepted for the people (see 1 Cor. xv. 20), with burnt-offering, meat and drink-offerings.

Fifty days from the offering of the

VOL. XXI.

B

## 2 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

sheaf of first fruits, on the first day of the week, a new meat-offering of two wave-loaves of fine flour baked with leaven, first fruits unto Jehovah (see Acts ii. 1 ; James i. 18), with seven lambs, one bullock and two rams, for a burnt-offering, meat and drink-offerings, a kid for a sin-offering, and two lambs for a peace-offering—the day to be a holy convocation. The gleaning of harvest to be left in the field.

Seventh month, first day—a sabbath, the feast of trumpets.

Seventh month, tenth day, the day of atonement, a sabbath, to afflict their souls and do no manner of work.

Seventh month, fifteenth day, when the harvest and vintage were over, the feast of tabernacles for seven days ; the first and eighth days were to be sabbaths, the eighth a solemn assembly ; the people were to dwell in booths, as a memorial of the wilderness, and rejoice before Jehovah seven days.

### CHAPTER XXIV.

The oil for the lamps upon the

## HEADINGS OF CHAPTERS. 3

candlestick, being ordered by Aaron, that the light may burn continually during the night without the veil before Jehovah. The shew bread; twelve cakes to be set upon the table before Jehovah every sabbath, with pure frankincense on each row; the loaves to be Aaron's and his sons', and eaten in the holy place as most holy; the frankincense a sweet savour-offering to Jehovah. The mind of Jehovah sought and declared as to a blasphemer; he is stoned to death by the congregation.

### CHAPTER XXV.

When come into the land, every seventh year, no cultivation or gathering of its fruits, to be a sabbath of rest unto the land: every fiftieth year to be hallowed, as the year of jubilee, for every man to return unto his possessions; the value of the land to be estimated accordingly, so as not to be alienated, for it is Jehovah's, and the owners but strangers and sojourners with Him: every sale of land to be subject to redemption, and to revert to

## 4 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

the owner in the jubilee, the houses of walled cities excepted—save those of the Levites, which are their possessions, and if sold must revert to them. The treatment of the poor. Their slaves were not to be of their brethren who were Jehovah's servants, but of the heathen round them or strangers among them : if an Israelite sold himself to a stranger, it must be subject to redemption and release in the jubilee both of him and his children.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

Blessing on obedience ; consequences of disobedience, and resource in confession when these are come upon them, Jehovah remembering His covenant with the fathers.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

In the case of anything devoted by a vow, the persons to be for Jehovah according to the estimation of Moses ; the rules given for this estimation ; as also of a beast, house or field valued by the priest, and for the

## BREACHES.

5

redemption of these : if the field is not redeemed it becomes the priest's, as holy to Jehovah, in the jubilee ; no devoted thing can be sold or redeemed, as most holy to Jehovah.

---

## BREACHES.

THE burden of the valley of vision. (Isa. xxii. 1.) But why, we may ask, is Jerusalem referred to as the valley of vision ? Evidently there is a contrast to chapter xxi., where Babylon is designated as the desert of the sea. In the mind of the prophetic Spirit, she who said in her heart : "I am and none else beside me, I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children" (chap. xlvii. 8), is viewed as a wilderness in the midst of the sea of nations, where once she was called the "Lady of kingdoms." In later days, the mystic Babylon of the Apocalypse is also seen by the prophet as in the wilderness. All was desert there, in the mind of the Spirit. But Jeru-



## 6 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

saalem—God's centre for the earth, whatever its condition may be, is the subject of prophetic vision. There the interests of the Spirit of Christ are concentrated. Prophetic watchmen are set upon the walls—the Lord's remembrancers—who are to give Him no rest till He establish and till He make Jerusalem a praise in the earth. And, though Christ Himself had to say, "Oh Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together . . . and ye would not," yet His Spirit in the mouth of the captive remnant makes known what the city of the great King was to Him. "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning; if I do not remember thee let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem to my chief joy." (Ps. cxxxvii. 5, 6.)

The time which the prophet is considering was a moment of joy and gladness in the city of David, of slaying oxen and killing sheep, eating flesh and drinking wine. It was full of stirs, a tumultuous city, a joyous city. It was,

## BREACHES.

7

too, as utterly unconscious that the Spirit of Christ in the prophet was uttering the words: "I will weep bitterly, labour not to comfort me," as Jerusalem in later times knew not Him who wept over her. What a spot in this earth of marvellous interest to Him! The city of our God, the mountain of His holiness, it surely is in the mind of the Spirit; yet its actual condition was ruinous: "Ye have seen also the breaches of the city of David that they are many." Foe after foe had come against it, and breach after breach had been made in it; moreover, the prophet foresees a day of trouble and perplexity and breaking down the walls in the valley of vision. Hence the call of the Lord was to weeping and mourning and girding with sackcloth; but a time of outward prosperity under Hezekiah made them self-confident, and discovered their indifference to the fact, that Zion did not answer to the Lord's mind. It was neither the mountain of His holiness, save for faith, nor the joy of the whole earth.

## 8 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

They were patching up the breaches after their own fashion, but "ye have not looked to the maker thereof, neither had respect unto him that fashioned it long ago."

What breach could have been made in the city of the Lord of hosts, if God had been known in her palaces for a refuge? When that is so, the assembled kings will be troubled and haste away. The breaches were the result of departure from the Lord—His chastisement for unrighteousness and evil. To bow under chastisement is the true place of the disciplined soul. To set ourselves to repair breaches which He has made, is not to have respect to Him that fashioned it long ago. If we look to the Maker thereof, we know He has said: "*I will close up the breaches thereof, and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old*" (Amos ix. 11), for never can it cease to be the valley of vision, whether the subject be chastening or future glory. Then in the day of glory God will be in the midst

## BREACHES.

9

of her, she shall not be moved, God shall help her when the morning appeareth.

Has this no voice for us? Are we conscious of no breaches in that which now is so dear to Christ—the assembly of the living God? It will, as the holy city Jerusalem, descend out of heaven from God, having the glory of God. It is now the habitation of God by the Spirit—builded together, as Jerusalem of old was “builded as a city that is compact together,” God’s centre, whither the tribes of Jehovah go up. The walk worthy of such a vocation is to be in all lowliness and meekness, really in the grace of Christ, and so endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace. But if grace has waned, and breaches have been made either by foes without or evil within, what, then, is the call of God? On the one hand, to look to the Maker thereof, and have respect to Him who fashioned it long ago; on the other, to have the suited exercise of heart because that which is

B 2

## 10 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

the object of the interests of Christ is the subject of His judgment. Surely Revelation ii. and iii. shew us the candlesticks as the subject of prophetic vision. It suits the flesh in us far more to repair a breach and so to present a respectable appearance, than to bow in confession and own the hand of the Lord dealing in faithfulness with that which He loves. (Rev. iii. 19.)

The rebukes of the Lord by Malachi caused those who feared Him to speak often one to another. The mass were replying to these rebukes by challenging the Lord: "Wherein hast thou loved us?" "Wherein have we despised thy name?" said they in answer to the burden of the word of the Lord. Yet when the Lord rebukes and chastens, how His heart goes out to those who bow to Him in it. Witness his reply to Ephraim when He heard him bemoaning himself, and saying, "*Thou art the Lord my God*":—"A son precious to me is Ephraim, is he not a child of delights?" (Jer. xxxi. 20.) Surely the exercised heart covets the position of

## BREACHES.

11

the Psalmist : " I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts." (Ps. cxix. 63.) There is the sense, too, that we shall not be alone. " Let those that fear thee turn unto me, and those that have known thy testimonies." (Ver. 79.) So spake the Spirit of Christ in one of old. When the same Spirit begins to act in the saints to produce this holy fear instead of indifference, we may count indeed upon others being affected, so that the Lord may hearken and hear as they speak often one to another. The first movement of the Spirit as to the sin of unholy alliance with strangers of the returned captivity, began with Ezra alone. " When I heard this thing I rent my garment . . . . and sat down astonished." (Ezra ix. 3.) But the sense of the evil on his soul affects others immediately. " Then were assembled *unto me* every one that trembled at the words of the God of Israel." The Spirit of God was moving by him, and he makes confession of the sin of the people, but expresses his own personal

## 12 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

sense of the evil which weighed upon his heart. "O my God, *I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee.*" The effect of his confession was that there assembled unto him out of Israel, *a very great congregation* who wept very sore. (Chap. x. 1.)

Oh for a deeper sense in our souls at this day that every breach, every faithful dealing of the Lord (who loves the assembly) in chastening, is a call from Himself to "look to the Maker thereof, and have respect unto Him that fashioned it long ago."

May the Spirit of God, who alone can move in the hearts of saints to produce the true answer to such a call, lead us to remember that "the Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit." May He deliver us from aught that savours of being "haughty because of my holy mountain," and keep us in the place of "a poor and afflicted people who trust in the name of the Lord."

T. H. R.

## LIGHT AND THE SOURCE OF LIGHT.

It is very interesting to bear in mind that our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, is the light. It is not only that He gives light, but He is the Source of it. Christ is our light. The sun gives us light, but it is not our light. The light of the sun I enjoy while it shines ; I lose it the moment that it is removed or obscured. The light from Christ I never lose. I am a child of the light. We are light in the Lord. We have the light in us, because the Source of it is in us. The Christian is in the light, and never out of it. Alas, we may not walk as children of light, but then we are asleep ! Hence it is said, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall shine upon thee." As a Christian the light is my element—we are sons of the light, and sons of the day. When I am *entirely* out of the darkness I shall be in the day ; but I have the light of the



## 14 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL

day in me now. It is a light above the brightness of the sun.

The natural light and the spiritual light do not commingle. The spiritual light may be very small in me, but it is a part of the fullest light; it is Christ, and it came to me at conversion. However small our reception of it may appear, "the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ," who is the image of God, comes to us from its highest and greatest brilliancy. This is a very great point. The full and perfect brilliancy does not reach us, though the light of it does. The light comes from its height, *and leads up to it*. The nearer I come to the glory of Christ, the more assured I am that I am of Him. It is "the path of the just that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." It began with me at the *greatest* distance in order to convey me to the *greatest* glory. It began from God's side of Christ's work, or rather what that work was to Him, and it travelled down to me in my deepest darkness to enlighten me, and not with relief or

## LIGHT AND THE SOURCE OF LIGHT. 15

forgiveness merely, but with the glory of my Saviour as He is to God. Then it began with me, and though like as the rays of the sun are diminished in power because of the dense medium which they have to pass through, so the light which came from the greatest brilliancy, is weak in me because of the obstruction of the flesh, yet it is the purest and the brightest light. It does not improve in quality as I approach to Christ in glory, though I enjoy it more. We have heard of one who dreamed that as he passed from one room to another in the great palace, his reception as he advanced was still more cordial, and when he reached the presence chamber he was received with acclamation. So it is with us, the nearer we approach, the more we enjoy the welcome and the glory.

In Old Testament times, God in His mercy, as for Isaiah, effected relief; He worked it out for him then and there. To us He sends the light down from the *finish* which has both glorified Him

## 16 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

and delighted Him, to the darkest depths in which we were, telling us that—all things are ready, come to the supper, and that we are as welcome to Him in the feeblest infancy, as when we shall go no more out—though we ourselves do not know how welcome we are but as we draw near.

---

 THE LABOURER'S HIRE.

MATTHEW xix. 27 ; xx. 16.

THE mercenary character of the human heart is presented to us by the Holy Spirit in this portion of the Gospel, in several instances. The young man in chapter xix. 16 ; the ambitious mother of Zebedee's children (chap. xx. 20) ; and Peter (chap. xix. 27) ; all have in view a well-earned recompense for their efforts, and none of them have a full understanding of perfect grace.

Peter (chap. xix. 27) wishes to know what reward the disciples are to receive for *their* devotedness and self-renunciation. The opportunity seems to him

## THE LABOURER'S HIRE. 17

favourable for reminding the Lord of the sacrifice he had made (he had left a boat and some old nets in Galilee) and of asking what they might expect by way of remuneration.

This gives occasion to our blessed Lord to speak the parable of the labourers in the vineyard, a parable in which we find full and perfect grace contrasted with the mercenary spirit of our hearts, and the Lord's disapproval of the latter. (Compare chap. xix. 30 with chap. xx. 8 and 16 for the connection.)

But, before the parable, the Saviour speaks of a new order of things, the *Regeneration* (chap. xix. 28), when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of His glory—a world of glory, a new creation, where the Man who had taken the lowest place in *this* world—serving even unto death in profound humiliation (chap. xx. 28)—should be the highest, most blessed Potentate! What a field for study to the true Christian, and what a rebuke to the speculator is this wonderful “Review

## 18 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

of the two worlds"! No man has, by pure grace, made any little sacrifice for Christ, but shall receive a hundred-fold, and inherit everlasting life. May we follow with true hearts the One who left all for us.

The parable (chap. xx. 1-16) is full of interest, and none the less because we live in the last moments of the day of grace : the eleventh hour has struck, and in more senses than one. The first labourers (verse 2) make a bargain with the householder, and agree as to the price, a denarius for the day's work. Those of the third, sixth, ninth, and eleventh hours, leave all to their employer. (Vers. 3-7.) The paying-time shews at once the grace of Him who alone is good (compare carefully chap. xix. 16, 17 with chap. xx. 15). He begins with the *last*, rewards them according to His own goodness, and at the same time shews no injustice to the *first*. Would one reason or speculate before the judgment-seat of Christ? Never will reasoning be allowed there, nor, I presume, will any one desire to

## HETERODOXY.

19

reason ; but the parable is spoken to us now that we may learn to appreciate that wonderful grace that has called us to serve in the vineyard and to follow Him who, the blessed Master, came down to us not to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.

It is not, perhaps, going too far to assert, that later on, Peter, when thinking of unfading glory, would not have envied "our dearly-beloved brother Paul," though the latter were called at a later hour and for a higher service than himself.

May the privilege of serving the Lord, who is rightly called Good, and the glory of the day of the Regeneration, be ever more real to our souls !

E. L. B.

---

## HETERODOXY : ITS ORIGIN AND AIM.

HETERODOXY is always the construction of a truth by the natural mind. The

## 20 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

truth is reduced to man's mind, and wilfully maintained. It is to be noted that heterodoxy is the work of the enemy to defeat and corrupt the truth. An avowed friend of the truth is used to be its greatest foe. Hence, as a rule, the origin of heterodoxy is connected with the effective presentation of some truth. It is not the open denial of it, but a side issue, which, while avowedly supporting it, actually undermines it.

The serpent in deceiving Eve, did not deny the word of God, but tampered with it, and compromised it to suit Eve's taste. Eve accepted an interpretation of the word of God which suited her natural mind. She sinned. Sin thus entered. This is the origin of all heterodoxy. It is always to divert souls from the divine scope of the word of God. In this way Lot was heterodox. He did not declare that coming into the land was a mistake, but in choosing the green fields of Sodom he was diverted from the calling of God. No one would have

## HETERODOXY.

21

credited him if he had asserted that they must return to Mesopotamia, but when he put a construction on the calling of God suited to his own taste, he deceived himself, and in wilfully maintaining it, he was heterodox.

Aaron's sons were heterodox. They did not deny the truth, that fire from God had come down to consume the sacrifices, but at the dictation of their own mind they offered strange fire, intimating that theirs was as good as God's, and thus reducing God's to their own. This is just what the heterodox always do. Literally, it is the practical assertion, that the natural mind is quite equal to the mind of the Spirit.

The gainsaying of Korah was heterodoxy. He did not deny that there was a priesthood, but he maintained that according to all natural rights, he, and the sons of Reuben, were as well entitled to it as Aaron and his house. Heterodoxy always assumes, that it is within the compass of man's mind to explain and apply the word of God. Jeroboam was heterodox when he set



## 22 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

up the calves at Bethel and Dan. In the mind of the heterodox, there is not a true sense of the greatness of God, and that there cannot be any deviation from His word ; that He has set His word above all His name. It was heterodoxy in the returned captives when they went on comfortably, saying the time was not come that the Lord's house should be built while the house of God lay waste.

Now in the New Testament it was the most religious people, men of the greatest repute, who were heterodox. The Jewish religion suited the natural man, and hence the chief priests and Pharisees would not bow to the light of God in the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ. I believe that when Paul writes to Titus respecting a heretic, he refers to Judaising teachers wilfully maintaining what suits or meets man's mind. In every heterodoxy there is place given to the natural mind. If we look through all that have arisen in Christian times, we shall find, that there is no heterodox

## HETERODOXY.

23

teacher who does not give a place to the old man. That man is always addressed, so that in one way the heterodox now is easily found out, for the only ear he addresses is the natural ear, and this is the way heterodoxy gains ground. Even with believers, unless walking in the Spirit, the natural mind is in the ascendant, and while, and where it is, it necessarily entertains anything addressed to it, because there is a relief to the conscience while there is occupation with religious things. Thus the natural mind is fostered while the conscience is relieved.

Now this accounts for the way the most advanced Christians are led astray. When they decline, and walk in the flesh, they are ruled by the natural mind; and if the conscience can be quieted, they continue in this state. It is here that a departure (from the truth hitherto accepted) which the natural mind can approve of, stifles the conscience; while it is a departure that never would have

## 24 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

been accepted, if one had continued spiritually exercised in the truth ; and this accounts for the fact, that a new heterodoxy haunts every distinct line of truth. Hence the heterodoxy which ensnares at one time, will not at another.

If we carefully review the history of the truth in the last fifty years, I think we shall find abundant evidence to corroborate what I have advanced. I suppose we are safe in assuming that the midnight cry, "Behold, the Bridegroom," began some sixty years ago. At all events, we know that the truth of the Lord's second advent has been revived in a very marked way in this century. Now it is remarkable that at the very start, this cry received a deadly check from those who were avowedly the most earnest advocates of it ; and this in a most specious way.

It was asserted, and insisted on, that you were not fit for the Lord unless you had the Holy Spirit in power, and thus by an appeal, quite intelligent to the natural mind, the

## HETERODOXY.

25

saints were actually diverted from the Lord's coming, for they were pre-occupied with praying for the Holy Ghost in power. The great characteristic truth of Christianity, namely, that the Holy Ghost had come, and was dwelling on the earth, in God's house, and in the believer, was denied.

I believe the first great truth recovered was the Holy Ghost as RESIDING here, both in the house of God, and in the individual saint ; and in connection with this, that the saints were one body, Christ the Head in heaven. Now the heterodoxy which first sprang up amongst the holders of this truth, was, that the church began with Israel, and that it must needs finish with Israel, that it must pass through the judgments. Thus the real nature of the church as the body of Christ was undermined ; and when discipline, always a test, arose, it was proved that those who had adopted this intellectual idea of the church, were not under the rule of the Spirit of God in His own house ; and they

## 26 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

actually refused the co-operation or assistance of a brother from any other place, as if the company in the place comprised the house of God. Independency then severed those faithful to the truth from those carried away by theories which pleased the natural mind, and in which nothing of the spiritual or heavenly character of the church got any place. It is very remarkable that in every heterodoxy now there is ever an absence of the heavenly position of the church. Now, as is always the case, while the heterodoxy, like Absalom, steals away the hearts not truly loyal, it on the other hand awakens others to a firmer and bolder maintenance of the truth which has been insidiously assailed.

Consequent on this breach there was a fresh start, and the truth, that we are all baptised by one Spirit into one body, was vigorously taught and largely accepted. A heterodoxy is always with reference to the truth which is succeeding, in order to neutralise and spoil it. We should

## HETERODOXY.

27

not be surprised to find that, after a while, there was an attempt to limit the work of Christ. It was denied that He endured sufferings which were not atoning, and that He gave up the life to which sin attached. The aim of this heresy is not very apparent, but if the old man has not been set aside in the cross, there surely could not be a body here for the Lord ; we could not be members of His body. Happily this did not disturb many, while, on the other hand, some were much confirmed in the truth. Subsequently to this, there was generally a great increase in gospel work, and the tendency was, and is to this day, to lose sight of the church, in seeking after souls ; so that literally the state of things, from a Christian point of view, could be designated—the gospel without the church. I have no doubt that this leaven damaged many, and prepared the way for the more recent heterodoxy, that independency, or an offence done to the assembly, was not an offence done to the Head. If it be

## 28      A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

not so, they are not one whole, but two separable parts. This teaching, easily comprehended by the natural mind, and addressed to those already more interested in the gospel than in the church, influenced and carried away many; while on the other hand, the great and blessed fact, that everything relating to the assembly, both for order and blessing, must come direct from Christ the Head, and that everything must be in every instance determined by Him, was better apprehended and more faithfully adhered to.

At the present moment the assault is the most dangerous, because it is directed against Christianity itself. On the one hand, we are told that saints could have life in the Son of God before the death of Christ, before man was judicially removed from the eye of God by Man; before the old man was crucified; and on the other hand, we are told that the old man was not judicially terminated in the death of Christ, only the evil nature, and yet that we can have life in Christ; so that

## HETERODOXY.

29

we are virtually asked to believe, that the life of the Son is the life of the believer, while the man born in sin is still existing before God. Hence no new creation, no church, no body for Christ, as actually derived from Himself, unless we accept that He is united to something of different origin to Himself. As I have already stated, heterodoxy must ever, in one way or another, save the old man, for if there were no old man there would not be an ear for the profane mentality which diverts from the truth of God. Nothing can understand God but the Spirit of God; "the natural man understandeth not the things of the Spirit of God." Balaam is referred to in Revelation, because the most effective engine of the enemy's attack now, is association with the Moabite, or natural man.

The Lord lead us to sit under His shadow with great delight, and thus His fruit will be sweet to our taste.





## THE PERFECT SERVANT.

MARK XIV. 1-72.

WE fail as servants oftentimes, by getting occupied with what the enemy is doing. The perfect opposite of all this we see in the blessed Lord. The Gospel of Mark, presenting Him to us in this character, shews this to us in a striking light, and remarkably so in this chapter. The enemy is busy, the shadows are darkening around His feet. But calmly in the midst of it all, as calmly as when sleeping on the pillow on the lake of Galilee, the blessed Lord moves onward in His path of service, undisturbed, and unmoved. What a pattern for us! He knew His work, and undistracted by all that was tossing and heaving around, He goes onward to accomplish it. (Mark x. 45.)

This is perfection in the path of the Servant. He went onward with His work. It mattered little to Him what others and Satan were doing, and it did not for a moment enter into His calculations. And herein is a lesson

## THE PERFECT SERVANT. 31

for us, a lesson to be *learnt*, just as Paul once learnt a lesson when he says, "I have *learned* in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." It is of *no importance* to me to know what the enemy is doing. The only effect it may have may be an injurious one—it may deter me in my work. I believe there is nothing so important for me ever to keep before me as a servant, as this fact, what the enemy is doing is of no importance to me. It is what we find in the account of the Hebrew children. (Dan. iii.) They were unshaken in their confidence in Him whom they *served*. No threat of the burning fiery furnace to be heated by the enemy "seven times hotter than it was wont to be heated," disturbed them. "O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and [faith added] he *will* deliver us out of thine hand, O king." This is very beautiful, it is the triumph of faith in the midst of all the

## 32 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

efforts and works of the enemy, and it is seen in men of like passions with ourselves—like helplessness to act.

As a servant following Christ in His path, it is no question with me, and no anxiety what the enemy is doing. I have to be occupied with what is *good*, because His service is good, just as the fishermen have to take care of the good fish. (Matt. xiii. 48.) Blessed service! Happy the life that thus has found its only occupation. "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." This is the language of one who has trodden this path before us, another man of like passions and like feebleness as ourselves.

In these verses (Mark xiv.) we see the calmness with which the perfect Servant met everything. Comment is needless here, for spiritual perception bows to its completeness, and the prayer only is uttered that we all may be not mere copyists, but in the power of the Spirit more simple followers in service, of our one blessed Master.

I!. C. A.

## HEADINGS OF CHAPTERS.

### NUMBERS.

#### CHAPTER I.

THE ordering of the walk and service of the people in the wilderness.

Moses is to take the number of the males of each tribe from twenty years old—all that are able to go forth to war; the tribe of Levi excepted, as appointed to the service of the tabernacle: the numbering takes place the first day of the second month, the year after the exodus—total 603,550.

#### CHAPTER II.

The arrangement of the tribes when encamped and on the march, around the tabernacle as their centre: on the east, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun—to set forth first; on the south, Reuben, Simeon, Gad—second; then the tabernacle with the Levites immediately around it—in the midst; on the west, Ephraim, Manasseh and Benjamin (cf. Ps. lxxx. 2), the third to set forth;

VOL. XXI.

C

## 34 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

lastly, on the north, Dan, Assher and Naphtali.

## CHAPTER III.

The Levites are given to Aaron out of the people for the service of the tabernacle; they are Jehovah's, as taken instead of all the firstborn of Israel, that were to be redeemed. (Cf. Ex. xiii. 13, 15.) Their number, according to their families from a month old: the Gershonites placed behind the tabernacle westward, charged with its coverings and curtain for the entrance, the hangings and curtain of the court and cords—the Kohathites southwards, charged with the furniture, vessels and veil of the sanctuary—the Merarites, northward, charged with the boards and bars, pillars and sockets, pegs and cords of the tabernacle and court; in front eastward, Moses with Aaron and his sons encamped, keeping the charge of the sanctuary: total, 22,000. The number of the firstborn males of Israel is found to be 22,273: the overplus are redeemed at five shekels a head,

## HEADINGS OF CHAPTERS. 35

and the redemption money given to Aaron and his sons.

### CHAPTER IV.

The Levite's age for service from thirty years to fifty. The arrangements for the carriage and coverings of the vessels and materials of the tabernacle ; the ark covered with the veil, badgers' skins, and outside a cloth of blue ; the table with a cloth of blue, upon it the utensils and the continual bread, over it a cloth of scarlet, and outside badgers' skins ; the candlestick and its utensils in a cloth of blue, and outside badgers' skins ; the golden altar similarly covered ; and the instruments of service ; the brazen altar with a cloth of purple, its utensils upon it, and outside badgers' skins : the Kohathites must not draw near to bear them until covered thus by the priests.

The numbering of the Kohathites, Gershonites and Merarites available for the service.

### CHAPTER V.

The unclean are put out of the camp.

## 36 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

Restitution to be made in every case of trespass : if it could not be made to the one trespassed against or his kinsman, to be made to Jehovah, and be the priest's ; besides the ram of atonement. The trial of the woman if suspected of unfaithfulness to her husband ; set before Jehovah with the jealousy offering in her hands, she drinks the holy water with dust (cf. Gen. iii. 14, 19 ; Ps. xxii. 15) of the tabernacle floor in it, which causes the curse if she be defiled, otherwise, not ; and the man shall be free from iniquity.

### CHAPTER VI.

The special vow of the Nazarite, separating himself to Jehovah : he is not to drink wine, nor let razor come on him, nor touch the dead all the days of it ; if defiled by contact with death, he shaves his head on the seventh day, the day of his cleansing, and on the eighth brings two doves or pigeons for burnt and sin offerings to make atonement, and begins the days

## HEADINGS OF CHAPTERS. 37

of his separation again with a trespass-offering, the former days being forfeited; when the days of the vow are fulfilled, the lamb for a sin-offering is offered, the same for a burnt-offering, a ram for a peace-offering, with meat and drink offerings, his hair is put on the fire under the sacrifice of the peace-offering, and afterwards he may drink wine.

Jehovah's name and blessing are put upon the people.

### CHAPTER VII.

The offering of the princes on the completion and anointing of the tabernacle; six waggons and twelve oxen, appointed to the Gershonites and Merarites for the service of the tabernacle: the offering of each prince for twelve days on the dedication of the altar—one silver charger, one silver bowl, both full of fine flour mingled with oil for a meat-offering, one golden spoon, full of incense; a bullock, a ram and a lamb for a burnt-offering, a kid for a sin-offering, and two oxen, five rams, five goats, and five lambs for a



## 38 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

peace-offering. Moses goes into the tabernacle, and God speaks with him from off the mercy-seat.

## CHAPTER VIII.

The ordering of the lighting of the lamps over against the golden candlestick. The consecration of the Levites : the people identify themselves with them by laying their hands upon their heads, and Aaron offers them as a wave-offering from the people ; a sin-offering and burnt-offering, with its meat-offering, are offered to make atonement for them ; and Jehovah takes them to be His instead of the firstborn of the people, and gives them to Aaron and his sons to do the service of the tabernacle, and make atonement for the people that there be no plague among them in drawing nigh to the sanctuary. The age and time of their service.

## CHAPTER IX.

The passover is kept at its appointed season in the wilderness of Sinai, and provision made for those that by reason

## HEADINGS OF CHAPTERS. 39

of defilement by the dead or distant journey were hindered then, to keep it the fourteenth day of the second month. Their journeyings are guided by the cloud of Jehovah's presence, according to His commandment.

## CHAPTER X.

The trumpets of silver and their use : to be blown by the priests ; for the calling of the assembly, and journeying of the camps, also when in the land in war, and in the days of their solemn feasts.

The journey commences on the twentieth day of the second month of the second year. The order of march : Moses seeks the presence of his father-in-law, to be to them instead of eyes ; but the ark of Jehovah comes out of its ordered place and goes before them, three days' journey, to seek a resting-place for them.

## CHAPTER XI.

The people murmur at Taberah, and the fire of Jehovah burned among them, quenched on Moses' intercession.

## 40 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

Moved by the mixed multitude among them, they weary of the manna and lust after the food of Egypt : Moses complaining of the burden of the people, Jehovah associates seventy elders of Israel with him, and gives them of the spirit that was upon Moses, and they prophesy at the tabernacle door ; Eldad and Medad prophesying in the camp, Joshua would have them stopped, but Moses would that all Jehovah's people were prophets : Jehovah fed them with quails, but not estranged from their lust, they were smitten with the plague, and the place named Kibroth-hattaavah ("the graves of lust").

---

## PIETY.

THE employment of words in scripture is an interesting subject of study. Words in common use amongst men, and recognised as conveying certain general ideas, are employed to communicate thoughts in connection with God, with the consequence that the

## PIETY.

41

revelation of God imparts to the words a peculiar force of meaning which is not found in dictionaries, and which can only be learnt from scripture itself. A word of this kind is "piety." It appears in the authorised version only in 1 Timothy v. 4, the original being in other cases rendered "godliness." Piety, however, unquestionably conveys more correctly the idea. The scripture employment of the term has one point in common with the dictionaries, in that it refers it both to God and to parents. The dictionaries differ among themselves, some explaining it as bearing (reverence, respect, &c.), and others as discharge of duty, conduct, &c. The object of the present paper is to seek to present the force with which the word is used in scripture.

It is doubtful if its precise equivalent is to be found in the Hebrew scriptures—the expressions which most nearly approach it being probably the word commonly rendered "fear" of the Lord (see Ps. cxi. 10, Prov. i. 7), when speaking of a quality, and that trans-

C 2

## 42 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

lated "saints," or "godly" (see Ps. iv. 3, &c.), when referring to a class of persons. In the New Testament the expression is in two instances applied to persons not as yet in the enjoyment of christian privileges. (See Acts x. 2-7.)

As piety is presented in the First Epistle to Timothy as the antidote to different forms of evil which the apostle by the Spirit foresaw would corrupt Christianity, it is important to ascertain what is intended to be conveyed by it. At the outset then I would say, it is a quality generated in the heart by the sense of benefits received from one rightly entitled to reverence and affections. It would hardly be an obligation on the part of parents to shew piety towards their children, or masters towards their slaves; the converse would hold good. Piety is not like faith. The latter is the reception for once and for all of a divine testimony, or the substantiation of things hoped for and conviction of things not seen. Piety is rather a

## PIETY.

43

growth in the heart, stimulated by the knowledge of the goodness of the one who is its object. Practically it may perhaps be defined as the exercise of reverent affections in a spirit of grateful confidence. It brings the comfort of the knowledge of God into present things, supporting in endurance, and tends to that quietness and rest of spirit which leave the mind free to find its occupation in the things of faith.

Having thus given the general idea, I proceed to shew how piety is presented in detail in the epistles, as opposed to the forms of evil anticipated by the apostles. The first of these is spoken of in 1 Timothy iv. It is not looked at as universal, but "some" would in the latter times depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats. I suppose that the end proposed by such commandments was, by depriving the body, to attain the subjugation of evil. The practical result was to introduce a class of separatists, not in the power of

## 44 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

the Spirit, the remains of which may be seen to this day in popery and the like. However plausible the end proposed, the means by which it was to be reached were very bad. In addition to the legality involved, there was a still greater evil in the slight thus cast on the beneficent provision of God for the creature. The Christian is still in the place of the creature, and whatever mercies God may have ordained for the creature are not to be refused, but received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.

Now in piety there was the recognition of this—the confidence begotten by God's grace—and hence it was the safeguard against these commandments which falsified the character of God. The blessed God who has bestowed the greater benefits does not withhold the lesser. There is too in piety that warmth and nurture of soul in which lies the secret of keeping in subjection the body. A well-nourished soul is the real security against unruliness of

## PIETY.

45

body. Hence Timothy is exhorted to exercise himself rather unto piety—the range of its value being far greater than that of bodily exercise. The working of it is that instead of practising abstention in a legal way from mercies which are God's provision for the creature, the soul rests in the confidence of being specially the object of God's kindness and care, and finds piety profitable unto all things, having promise of life, of the present one, and of that to come. Thus reverent affections and happy confidence, perhaps amid labour and reproach, are set forward as against legality and asceticism, by the spirit of which souls would be withered.

But if on the one hand piety recognises God's beneficence even to all men, and accepts His mercies with thanksgiving, it refuses on the other to run in the ways of the world, in pursuing present advantage, and so leaving the place of dependence on God. In this way it guards against another form of evil which has pervaded



## 46 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

the church, and which, we learn from 1 Timothy vi., originated in heterodox teaching, and insubjection to wholesome words, the words of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wholesome words tend to health in the soul. If the Lord has said, "Seek ye the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you," it is a wholesome word, which should settle the whole question of "these things" for the disciple. But where the spirit of self-will and insubjection wrought, there came in not only questions and strifes of words, but a sense of the importance of worldly gain; and piety came to be regarded as a means to this end—"holding gain to be the end of piety." Now the gain in piety is not prospective—to be sought or schemed after—but present. Piety with contentment is great gain, and for the simple reason that the soul has for its resource God and His goodness. It may be a question as regards ourselves whether there is not a deficiency in point of piety. In the midst of the influences

of the world, we are seduced almost imperceptibly into walking in its ways, ordering our business and our homes according to man. Individually, our piety is our testimony, since it results not only in maintaining a path of separation from the world and its ways, but in bearing witness to those around that a living God is, to us at least, a blessed reality, and a resource as to present need.

I conclude with a remark or two as to the way in which piety is introduced in 2 Timothy and 2 Peter. In the former the apostle refers to the state of evil which would be prevalent in the last days, when men would be marked by passions and evils as gross as had existed in heathenism. They would however have a form of piety, but denying its power. And the teachers and those that would exercise influence over weak and superstitious minds would arise out of this state of things. Thus unbroken will and unsubdued passions, all the darkness of the human heart, might be

## 48 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

covered by an exterior of affected humility and self-abnegation, which would gain a reputation for sanctity in the eyes of the uninstructed, but would be only piety in form, and not in spirit.

In 2 Peter, piety is in one case coupled with life, and in another with holy conversation ; and in the chain which is found in chapter i. 5-7, piety follows endurance, as brotherly love follows piety. What I understand by it is, that endurance on the part of a saint is not stoicism, but marked by the spirit of affection and confidence toward God ; so that, whilst enduring, the heart may be kept fresh and warm ; and then, where true piety is, that the soul, whilst right in its attitude Godwards, should be mindful also of the obligation of love toward the brethren. Each successive quality is adorned and added to by that which follows.

F. E. R.

---

## THIS PRESENT EVIL WORLD.

MUCH has been said and repeated as to our heavenly calling and of our

## THIS PRESENT EVIL WORLD. 49

separation from the world ; the very highest truths are known and “held” by us, such as the church’s place in the counsels of God and in the affections of Christ, the divine nature imparted to us, the glories belonging to Christ, and the revelation of the Father’s heart to His children. There never has been, perhaps, such a time in the whole church’s history, when the blessed word of God has been, and is still, unfolded by the Holy Ghost to believers ; and with all this, a most serious question presents itself to us at the moment in which we live :—Are we, are the saints of God, really walking as a peculiar people, belonging to Christ alone, in the midst of the course of this world ?

When the great awakening at the beginning of this century took place, and when, after years of slumber, Christians were led to ask before God what Christianity means, and what the church of God is, the testimony first noticed by a worldly Protestantism was that of an unworldly few, looked upon as enthusiasts and separatists, but

## 50 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

known as meeting in the name of the Lord Jesus, as owning Him alone as Head, as waiting for Him, and as leading lives *not* in accordance with the generally received religion of the day. Devotedness and true separation to Christ stamped their character on the little flock.

Time has run on since, and things are changed. The world itself during the past fifty years has altered in such a manner that few would know it. Materialism ("we have analysed everything, and we never saw a soul nor a spirit, therefore there is no such thing") has taken the place of the sneering infidelity of Voltaire and his companions of the eighteenth century. The very worst forms of anarchy and social dissolution are to be found in every country. Pious institutions, the bulwarks of Christendom, are shaken, and in many instances fallen, and the impotency of the established religions everywhere manifest. A terrible sign of the times, and one shewing, but too clearly, the end to be nigh, is the

## THIS PRESENT EVIL WORLD. 51

association of men, the doctrine that unity is strength in defiance of God, the binding together of the tares to be burned.

And in the midst of this rapid development of evil and revolt, how has it fared with the little company of saints? We may well blush, and mourn over *our* part in this crisis of the world's history; we may well humble ourselves before God.

But with all the failure, and in praying the Lord to give us the sense of it, He, the blessed Saviour, the Lord of glory, has not forgotten His own, nor can He forget us. The question for us is: "How are *we* walking at this moment in the midst of this present evil world?" We *must* pass through it, we shall soon be with Him, and see Him as He is; the world knoweth us not because it knew Him not, but how far are our hearts in the true and peaceful enjoyment of the Father's love to His children, so that its power makes us truly in our ways "not of this world, as Jesus was not of it"?

## 52 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

It is said, "You cannot make people unworldly;" and this is true, but the consciousness of His love to us makes us unworldly. It is openly taught by some that we should "use the world while not abusing it," and so forth. If ever there was a time when the eye of the saint needed to see Him that is invisible, it is in the midst of the materialism of the nineteenth century; mediæval darkness was nothing compared with it. May God, even our Father, encourage each feeble soul to trust in His Christ, not merely as Saviour but as the Head, the One who hath all things in His hand, yet who never despised a broken reed, that true confidence be placed in Him. We have nothing in common, as to our calling, with the spirit of the age, but are we truly separate from it? To be walking humbly, outside the association of men, with Jesus, in this time is no little privilege. We know how all their confederations will end, as 2 Peter iii. shews us, and the very character described in that chapter is to be seen

## THE LORD'S PRESENCE. 53

in the present day. Was there an insurance company against fire in Sodom ! It is a terrible thing to think upon ; the end is fast approaching, and *we*, who must confess that we have allowed much that is not Christ, that we have failed to carry out the principles we profess, *we* are exhorted to be found before God separate from all evil, in peace, awaiting His Son, in our words and actions as different from this world as He was, and is, in the glory where He sits. (John xvii. 16-18.) May the thought and prospect of that glory, and the present sense of His love and power, keep us amidst the materialism, ungodliness, and exaltation of man, which form the character of the century in which we live !

E. L. B.

---

 THE LORD'S PRESENCE.

As the cloud of glory filled the tabernacle aforetime, so is the presence of the Lord in the midst of His own gathered to His name.



## 54 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

The assembly is the habitation of God through the Spirit, and the Son of God is the rock on which He said, "I will build my assembly." It is gathered to His name, and He is there in the midst of them. Now great effects result from His presence. His presence produces them, and it could not be enjoyed without them. The first is that there is no cloud there, but an assured sense of the efficacy of His accomplished work. If He had not by Himself removed every cause or shade of distance, I could not enjoy His presence. If He had not, by His own work, set me in peace there, I could not enjoy His presence. The Lord of glory is in our midst. He has made me fit for nearness to Himself. I have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus. If I enjoy my right to enter into the holiest I am not only at home there, but I delight to find myself there. This necessarily is the first effect of His presence. It is the realisation of the efficacy of His work. Hence He enters, or first in-

## THE LORD'S PRESENCE.

55

roduces Himself in this new position by saying, "Peace be unto you." (See John xx. 19.) He enters the assembly, having obtained eternal redemption. He comes in with the assurance, that as He is, so are we in this world. If there were not this effect, there would not be a true sense of the work of grace; the Gospel in its reality is not known. Any one not happy in approaching Him does not know the work He has done for him, and therefore he is not able, for want of assured peace, to give his attention to the Lord as present. If I am occupied with my own state, and not at peace, I cannot be happy in the Lord's presence; and it is therefore a terror or an exaction to me instead of a favour. It is quite evident that there can be no true faith in Christ risen—that the Lord has triumphed gloriously—unless I long to be near to Him, and in all the certainty, as Saul of Tarsus was after the three days, that I am fit to be near Him, and that no greater gladness can be accorded to the heart

## 56 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

than to be in the presence of the One who died for me and rose again. "Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord." The greatest gladness known to the heart is to be in His presence, who by His own work has removed everything which could have barred me from His presence. I do not know His presence if I shrink from it ; or rather, I have not entered by faith into all He has done to entitle me to be at full rest there. If there be any sense of unfitness unremoved, then His presence cannot be sought. Hence the great and simple effect of His presence is that I can enjoy it fully, in the deep and deepening consciousness that He Himself has made me fit for it ; and unless I am in the unclouded assurance of His work for me, the *light* of His presence occupies me with my own state, and that is the prominent object to me, and not Himself in the midst, because I am so assuredly restful in His presence. This accounts for the character of our assembly meetings in general. The

## THE LORD'S PRESENCE.

57

state of souls is more the object before the mind than the Lord Himself. It is plain that the Lord is the only true object, but the more truly one seeks His presence, if one is not sensibly fitted by Himself for it, the more must this fitness be the object before one, and thus the Lord's presence in its great and primary effect is not enjoyed. It is most important and blessed to see, that the very first effect must be the gladsome assurance, that I am entitled to be in the full splendour of His presence by His own work, and consequently, that it is nothing of myself which commands my attention, but simply and solely the blessedness of His presence.

Now, consequent on being at home in His presence, another effect follows, namely, that one is beside oneself (2 Cor. v. 13) ; that is, that Himself is so entirely the object of one's heart, that every other consideration is in abeyance. The greatest mercy is not in the ascendant, nor is the greatest sorrow paramount. He exclusively

## 58 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

detains and engrosses the heart. It may be only for a moment, but it is a verity, and one knows that it is true and right, and the better it is known, the more it is sought after; as the Psalmist could say, "To see thy power and thy glory so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary."

Now this effect is confirmatory of the first. How could I be engrossed with the Lord unless I were in assured enjoyment of my title to be near according to His holiness? Hence this "ecstasy" follows from the deep and deepening enjoyment of being near Him. "I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste." There is a gain from this sense that could not be acquired from anything else. It is not easy to describe it; one is made to know that Christ is enough. The varied things actually necessary for us in this life do not occur at this moment; there is no place for them; no room for any lack or loss to be felt. There is, though it may be but

## THE LORD'S PRESENCE. 59

for a moment, such a sense of the sufficiency of Christ that no more is required. The heart is full and flowing over. One is, as to sense, over Jordan. What is natural is unrequired at the moment, and there is such a sense of our portion that one can truly say, "God is the strength of my life and my portion for ever." I have laid hold of eternal life. I am in the reality of my new being, which is an immense gain. Because once I have tasted of the greatness of my calling, as really a companion of Christ, and able to enjoy Him, the better I am able to rejoice and turn away from everything here which would divert me from Him. It is here that the heart truly forgets the things which are behind, and has before it, fully and decidedly, only one thing. But I believe there is a gain from this ecstasy which one must know in order to understand. You are then only in the region of divine health, and the better it is known, the more it is sought for, as introducing me into the true element of life.

## 60 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

As far as we can understand the effect of the Lord's presence to His servants aforetime, it was of this character. The effulgence of the glory excluded every intrusion, so that His word reached them without adulteration ; and surely much more to us now, though not in the same way. There is no notice now taken of the flesh. The Spirit leads the new man into Christ's presence, and makes the heart so sensible of the fulness of blessing that is there, that there is for the time no sense of connection with that which is natural, though the more we know and enjoy this ecstasy, the better we can re-produce Christ in the duties proper to us here. The great point is that it is as we are beside ourselves, we are fitted to understand His things, which I hope to refer to further on.

Now I think it will be seen that when I am thus "beside myself" the first consequence is worship. Worship is the outburst of a full heart : "My cup runneth over." When the heart is entranced in the presence of the Lord,

## THE LORD'S PRESENCE. 61

there is the sense that there is fulness of joy there ; it is not only that nothing is wanting, but there is such a sense that you are in the Father's things, as His house expresses, that it is a relief as well as a necessity for the heart to express itself in adoration of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has so fully blessed us. The sense of blessing calls forth the worship, and Christ's presence in our midst, when enjoyed, always connects us with the Father ; as He says, "Glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee." This is His present work, and we are conscious of it when enjoying His presence. The Queen of Sheba illustrates this ; though there is no more spirit in her, yet she bursts forth in expression of praise and blessing. There is such a sense of the blessedness of God that one's tongue cannot refrain from testifying of it. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name." Often with very little light there is true worship, because one is over-



## 62      A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

whelmed with the sense of the goodness and grace of God ; but it is when one is in Christ's things. " All things that the Father hath are mine, therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you." The very fact of being in such a scene awakens worship. You cannot work yourself into worship, but when you are impressed with the greatness and goodness of the blessing in which you are set, you cannot keep silent ; you praise and bless : " the Father seeketh such to worship him." The sense of the abundance of blessing in which you find yourself at home through the Lord's presence, calls forth the worship. It is the impression made upon me by what He is, and what He is to me that prompts me, and in a way obliges me to worship. I am not trying to worship, but I cannot refrain from doing so. I am provoked to express my appreciation and adoration of Him who has so fully blessed me. " Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

## THE LORD'S PRESENCE. 63

Now connected with worship, and growing out of it, is edification ; that is, I am gaining as I am there in ability and taste to be there.

“ And with adoring fervour  
In this Thy nature grow.”

I can be there only in the Spirit, and hence I am governed by Him in everything consistently, and in consonance with the Lord, in whose presence I am.

Here one acts as led of the Lord. Every one in His presence is worshipping, every heart is moved, but He chooses to lead one or more of His servants to express aloud something of the impression which His presence imparts, and for the edification of all. The servant is himself edified as he, led of the Lord, seeks to edify others as he has been edified. Many, nay, all of the company may be edified, but a brother or brothers only are led by the Lord to speak to edification, and the edification is not so much a knowledge of His grace and ways

## 64 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

acquired at another time, but the result of His present influence. It is quite possible that a certain line of truth may be on the mind of this servant or that, but the power and freshness in presenting it depends on the Lord's immediate approval and support. As we read in 2 Cor. iii. 18, beholding the Lord's glory, we are changed into the same image, so it is that in His presence we acquire the moral power of Himself in the ministry of His word, as always to impress the heart of His servant with His own mind with respect to the truth, so that it comes in a fresh and vigorous way.

Thus there are at least four characteristics of the presence of the Lord in the midst of the saints gathered to His name.

The Lord give us to meditate more on this very interesting subject, to give ourselves wholly to it, that we may in some measure enter into its great reality.



## HEADINGS OF CHAPTERS.

### NUMBERS.

#### CHAPTER XII.

MIRIAM and Aaron speak against Moses, whose special place with Jehovah is declared : Miriam is stricken with leprosy, but restored on the intercession of Moses, after being shut out of the camp seven days.

#### CHAPTER XIII.

The men that are sent, one from each tribe, to spy out the land, bring back an evil report of it, save Caleb and Joshua.

#### CHAPTER XIV.

The people murmur in unbelief ; Joshua and Caleb taking the ground of faith, they are incensed against them. Jehovah proposes to disinherit them, and make good the promises to Moses, who intercedes for them on the ground

VOL. XXI.

D

## 66 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

of Jehovah's glory among the nations, and His revealed name. He spares; the earth should indeed be filled with His glory, but by the judgment of those who had despised the land; they should wander in the wilderness for forty years, till that generation, save Caleb and Joshua, were cut off: the spies who slandered the land died by the plague at once.

Now, contrary to the commandment of Jehovah, the people presume to go up to possess the land, and are smitten before the Amalekites and Canaanites.

## CHAPTER XV.

Ordinances, in view of their entering the land, of the meat and drink-offerings to accompany offerings made by fire of sweet-savour to Jehovah, for the stranger that sojourns among them as well as for those of the congregation; and of a heave-offering of the first dough. The sacrifices for the sin of ignorance that it may be forgiven, whether of the congregation or individual and the stranger among them:

## HEADINGS OF CHAPTERS. 67

the soul that sins presumptuously to be cut off; the sabbath-breaker is put to death. The riband of blue to be worn as a fringe upon their garments, the memorial of the obedience and separation from defilement that becomes them.

## CHAPTER XVI.

Korah not content with Levite-service assumes priestly functions; Dathan and Abiram of the tribe of Reuben, associated with him, revolt against the authority of Moses and Aaron: the congregation are warned to separate themselves from these wicked men: the earth opens and swallows up Dathan and Abiram standing at their tent doors, and all that belonged to them; fire came out from Jehovah, and consumed Korah and the two hundred and fifty that offered incense at the tabernacle door: their censers having been offered before Jehovah are hallowed and made into a covering for the altar. The next day the people murmuring are plagued;

## 68      A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

Aaron with incense stands between the living and the dead, and the plague is stayed.

## CHAPTER XVII.

The authority of Aaron is established by his rod, that being brought into the place of Jehovah's presence, alone of the rods of the other princes budded and bloomed and brought forth almonds. The people fear to draw near the tabernacle.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

The place of the priests, and of the Levites as given to them, defined ; the priests alone draw near to minister before the sanctuary, and they bear its iniquity ; because of the anointing, the most holy things of the offerings are given them to eat in the most holy place, also the heave-offering and first-fruits and every devoted thing are theirs, by a covenant of salt, for ever. The tithes of Israel are given to the Levites as their inheritance, a tenth part of which is offered by them as a

## HEADINGS OF CHAPTERS. 69

heave-offering to the Lord, to be the priest's.

### CHAPTER XIX.

The ordinance of the red heifer and water of separation for purification from defilement. The victim is slain in presence of the priest outside the camp, who sprinkles of the blood before the tabernacle seven times; the heifer is wholly burned, cedar wood, hyssop (see 1 Kings iv. 33), and scarlet being cast into the burning; its ashes are kept in a clean place without the camp. In case of defilement by contact with death, the ashes are put with running water in a vessel, and with it one that is clean sprinkles the unclean the third day and the seventh day, when he is clean: he that sprinkles the water is unclean until evening.

### CHAPTER XX.

Miriam dies at Kadesh. There was no water, and the people rise against Moses and Aaron. Moses is commanded to take the rod from before Jehovah



## 70 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

(see ver. 9, and chap. xvii. 10—Aaron's rod), and speak to the rock, that it may give forth water. Moses and Aaron address the people in anger, and Moses smote the rock twice with *his* rod, and the water came out abundantly ; but having failed to sanctify Jehovah before Israel, they are excluded from bringing the people into the land. Edom refuses Israel passage through their territory : they go the way of Mount Hor, where Aaron dies, and is succeeded by Eleazar in the priesthood.

## CHAPTER XXI.

The Canaanites of the south are delivered into the hand of Israel. Compassing Edom the people are discouraged because of the way, and speak against God and Moses : they despise the manna, and fiery serpents carry the sting of death among them ; on repentance and Moses' intercession, the brazen serpent set on a pole and the look of faith is the way of healing and life (John iii.) ; Jehovah gives them water, the princes dig, and the well

## SHORT NOTES ON LUKE. 71

springs up (John iv.), the people singing to it. The Amorite will not suffer Israel to pass through, and coming out against them is overcome, and his land possessed—that of Og similarly.

---

## SHORT NOTES ON LUKE.

THE first two chapters of this Gospel are detached from all the rest. We have in these two chapters a beautiful picture of the remnant in the midst of Israel : it is the inside of the house.

Chapter ii. The outward authority is in the hands of the Gentiles, and the effect of the decree was to bring Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem. Note that the census took place much later. Thus God's providence accomplishes the counsels of His grace ; the whole Roman world is set in motion in order to bring a carpenter of Nazareth to Bethlehem ! Here the Gentiles are in power. The last beast (the Roman Empire) is there ; this same power will reign in Palestine in the last days.

Chapter iii. Here we have God's

## 72 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

public testimony by John the Baptist. Note in verse 6 it is : "All flesh shall see the salvation of God ;" this is more general than in Matthew. Then the Lord's genealogy differs from the one in Matthew : in Luke it ascends towards the source, in Matthew it descends. In Luke we have the Son of man, true Son of Adam, born of a woman in this world, and for this reason, Mary's genealogy. Matthew gives us the Messiah, Immanuel, Son of David, whom Joseph represents (Joseph being legally the father of Jesus) ; thus in Matthew we have Joseph's genealogy. In Mark there is no genealogy, because Mark represents to us the Servant-Prophet.

There is a great difference between Matthew and Luke ; we find in the latter the same truth as in Paul's gospel ; that is, man in God's presence. We do not find the *moral* aspect of things in Matthew as in Luke. (In Matthew we have the kingdom, and three things that take the place of the absent Lord : the kingdom of the

## SHORT NOTES ON LUKE. 73

heavens in mystery, the church, and the kingdom in glory.) Note verse 21 of chapter iii.—“and praying.” How many times this is found in this Gospel! Do we pray?

Chapter iv. The order of the Lord's temptations is different from that in Matthew. Here we have the *moral* order. 1. Material things (the loaves). 2. Moral things (the world's glory). 3. Spiritual things (to take His place as Messiah before the time). The strong man (Satan) is bound by the Son of man, and the result is presented to us in grace in verses 18, 19. This is the principle of grace to the Gentiles; it is the subject in Luke, the good pleasure of God in man. We shall see that after chapter ix. there is no historical order, but grace developed in several ways. In chapter iv. 43 the Lord speaks of the kingdom of God. Matthew alone mentions the kingdom of the heavens—a dispensational term.

J. N. D.

(*To be continued.*)

D 2

## A LETTER ON TIMOTHY.

SHALL I give you my idea of a Timothy or a servant of this day?

The first impression I get of him is that he was peculiarly dear to the apostle, so that Paul would be filled with joy on seeing him. If you look at Acts xvi., you will see that Timothy was given to Paul when Barnabas swerved; a very remarkable instance of the way the Lord fills up the place of testimony which has been vacated by the neutral. I have often seen it. Timothy's presence filled the aged apostle with joy, because, as we read, "I have no man like-minded who will naturally care for your state," "as a son with a father he hath served with me in the gospel." Timothy delighted the heart of Paul because of his devotedness to the church, and because of his grasp of truth. This is the real servant for this day. Timothy was a man of unfeigned faith. The apostle reminds

## A LETTER ON TIMOTHY. 75

him to stir up the gift which was in him, and he must remember that God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind ; therefore he was not to be “ashamed of the testimony of the Lord nor of me his prisoner.”

The evidence that one is not “ashamed,” is that he boldly and openly “before kings” stands up for the testimony of the Lord. The more it is assailed, the more is he in the forefront of the battle. He does not retire into isolation, consoling himself that he enjoys the truth, but he enters the lists and fearlessly challenges—“who is on the Lord’s side” ? Thus this great servant Timothy was to “be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus ;” and the things which he had heard from Paul, he was to commit to faithful men. No disheartenment here, but on the contrary, a readiness to promote and propagate what he knew.

The garments of ease and social comforts were to be laid aside, and he was to “endure hardness as a good

## 76 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

soldier of Jesus Christ," like Phinehas of another day, sword in hand. This man of unfeigned faith, and gift, and power, and faithfulness, was now to be prominent as a soldier. The affairs of this life are not to impede him ; he is ready for active service anywhere on the earth.

Though a soldier every inch, he was to study to shew himself approved of God, "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, cutting in a straight line the word of truth." He would purge himself from vessels to dishonour ; he would follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace with them who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. He would do his utmost to recover those who had slipped away. This was Timothy, or the true servant, when the apostle was taken away.

But there were times coming subsequent to the apostle's day, in which a Timothy could stand and prosper. Like Moses in another day, he would baffle the magicians—those who would attempt to imitate the power of God,

## A LETTER ON TIMOTHY. 77

and thus neutralise it. Timothy was qualified for this critical time. How? First, "Thou hast been thoroughly acquainted with my teaching," &c. Secondly, that "from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures."

Hence Timothy is to come out in a new character, not only the soldier, and the witness, in ordinary times, but in the last days, in difficult times, he is to be urgent, in season, and out of season; to convict, rebuke, encourage, with all long-suffering and doctrine. "For the time will come [it had not come then] that they will not endure sound teaching;" therefore he is to be sober in all things, bear evils and do the work of an evangelist—to "fill up to the full measure thy ministry."

Thus marvellously the grace of God was to fit a Timothy or the servant for this day, when the apostle was taken away, in faith, and gift, and power, to be faithful, valiant, pure, as a Nazarite; devoted, zealous and unwearied in patience and grace. This is the Lord's



## 78 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

grace for the present hour. May you and all of us be more in this present grace for His name's sake.

---

## THE ANOINTED ONE AND THE GRAVE.

MARK XIV. 1-9.

WHATEVER may be said in favour of the scene that is around us, the only thing that this world had for the Lord Jesus was death and a grave. Here we see the implacable hatred of the human heart, for it was evinced to One perfect in goodness. But their hatred to what is good is here brought face to face with the simple and devoted love of one faithful heart. This woman purchases a box of ointment. To her it was costly, to all, valuable and sweet. It was all that love could do, all that was left for a love devoted to its object, to come and anoint that one just entering into the grave. This was, at such a moment, most grateful to His blessed heart.

## THE ANOINTED ONE, ETC. 79

Well He knew that it was all that she could do. He owned it. She could not stay their malice, but He says, "She hath done what she could." They were busily plotting His death. She says, "In that grave will lie all that is precious to me."

After that act of theirs, What was the world to her? From Him they had learnt it, now they were going to prove it, that foxes had holes, and the birds of the air nests, but the world had no place, no room for Him. What could it be to her without Him? Well it *had* one aspect to her, and it could only have one. It was *His grave*, and only this. What would that woman have written over the grave which, closing over all that was precious to her, closed also over all the world's *claims* upon her heart. She would have written, "Who loved me and gave himself for me."

Her heart was gone; and is ours? We are accustomed to tread softly on a grave, and such is the world to us. Oh! to tread softly here to-day, with

## 80 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

that world in all its mirth around me—the world which judged Him to be only worthy of death and the grave. The mirth and gaiety of the grave (*His* grave) are around me, what is there in them to attract the devoted heart? What a contradiction! *The mirth of the grave!*

It is in vain to deny it. It does *not* attract the devoted heart. There *was* something to attract in the grave where Jesus lay, when HE was there. Jesus is not in it. Jesus is not there, and my heart seeks Him where He is. My affections cannot be in this scene. Can I forget that I am moving through the place which was His grave—amidst the very same people that gave Him this reward, for the world is the same world to-day? Has it in it any preciousness for me, anything to attract me since He is gone? (Ps. xxiii. 4.)

Happy the heart that has estimated the world at its true value, because grace has taught it to value Him! He says, “She has come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying.” Her

## THE ANOINTED ONE, ETC. 81

estimate of Him was that He is worthy of *all*; the world's estimate, not worth "three hundred pence," but "worthy of death." And he whose lips chronicled the *waste* of another in devoting three hundred pence to purchase a box of ointment to pour it upon the Lord, recorded presently his own estimation of Him, as he received from the world of which he was himself a part, its "thirty pieces of silver," the price of one of its *slaves*.

But so it must ever be, for the two can never amalgamate. The heart that values the Lord, values Him for what He is in Himself alone. (Cant. v. 9, 10.) For it must be at the bottom, actuating me, either *her* estimation of Him or the *world's* estimation of Him. And then for us all it is the "world," or it is "Christ." The "world" to me may be very small. It may be, as it was to Judas, only "thirty pieces of silver." But in receiving them He gave Christ up! This was the awful alternative for him. He could not hold both. Is it anything less for us? He exhorts

## 82 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

us to count the cost, and tells us what is worldly and likely to ensnare us in Luke xiv. 26-30. Not the *bad* things, as men speak.

If I have Christ, I have Christ alone for Himself, and all around is a desert. I am called to pass through this world, this moral scene which adjudged Him to be worthy only of death and the grave. But how? As she did, and as Paul did, "Yea doubtless," said the apostle, "and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ." If this is not *my* language, I yet may be a Christian, God knows all about that, but alas, do *I* know anything of the devotion of that faithful heart which is detailed in all its simplicity in Mark xiv. 1-9?

H. C. A.

---

## THE LORD'S PRESENCE.

### No. 2.

#### THE COMPANY.

ONCE we have any true idea of the nature and effect of the Lord being present in the midst of the saints, the next subject of interest is the character and description of the company in the midst of whom He is. We must turn to His first appearance in the midst of His own in order to ascertain the sort of company He visits. We get it doctrinally stated in Matthew xviii. 20, that it is to those gathered to His name. This is unequivocal and authoritative as to the company who induce Him to come, to whom, as it were, He could not refuse to come. We know that many may find their way to the meeting, which is on the ground of two or three gathered to His name, who are not like, or of the character of those gathered to Him at the first. It is a great thing for us to see the constitution of the first assembly, whether we look at

## 84 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

it in John xx. 19, or in Luke xxiv. If we do not understand the sort of company gathered to Him at the first, we must be unable even to try to correspond to it. If I do not understand the assembly in its beginning, and the component parts of it at first, how could I try to keep it to a standard that I had never apprehended, or clear it of anything inconsistent with it? It is of all importance that I understand what I may call the constitution of the company or assembly. The Lord's own words, My assembly, indicate to us that it is His own building that forms His assembly, and that the first assembly in its very infancy was composed of living stones, a holy priesthood; no other companions would suit our blessed Lord.

All the types conspire to corroborate this. In Numbers v. we see, as also from other places, the watchful care imposed on the children of Israel, to exclude from the camp, where God dwelt, every kind of defilement, from the notorious sinner, to the one defiled

## THE LORD'S PRESENCE. 85

by casual association. So searching and exacting was this exclusion, that there follows, or is connected with it, the trial of jealousy, where God, and not man, deals with the soul as He pleases, but all in order to maintain a company suited to the Lord. In a measure we see this in 1 Corinthians xi where we read, "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep."

Aaron and his sons only were consecrated. Surely we are now a holy priesthood; no one else can accompany our Lord into the holiest, for which we are fitted by Him. Nothing can be plainer than that there is a typical import in the select character of those who accompanied the high priest into the holy place, where they ate of the peace-offering and ministered before the Lord.

I know how ready the heart is, on one side, to fear to be of a company so select, while on another, there is nothing so attractive to it as the strictness of the separation which fits one



## 86 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

for His presence. "She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework." We are His companions ; we enjoy His presence as our true centre and source of everything. It is only in His presence that we could acquire any real idea of the fitness necessary for His presence. It is nearness to Him that educates us, like Rebekah when she saw Isaac ; she put herself in the right form for his presence.

I feel assured that when the scriptures which I have adduced are carefully weighed, each conscience will own that the company gathered to Christ's name must be strictly separate from everything not of Christ. It is plain that those gathered to His name, to whom His presence is vouchsafed, must be fit for His company, and at the beginning all were so. None can command His presence but those gathered to His name. His presence could not be elsewhere, though there might be many with little sense of being gathered to His name in the meeting where He is

## THE LORD'S PRESENCE. 87

present. I repeat, it is of all importance that we should apprehend the character of the two or three, those who are favoured with His presence—those to whom He is present as a consequence because gathered to His name.

Surely no higher standard or character could be required or enjoyed than to be gathered to His name. This involves and embraces a manner of life suited to it, a separation from everything that is not of His name, and a maintenance of everything of His name. It is the *positive* that we are gathered to His name. His name embraces all that has been revealed. No type nor fact can prescribe a higher character for any one or any company, than that which is expressed in these words, “gathered to my name.” Any association, however remotely, with teachers or teaching dishonouring to Him, wilfully—that is, in spite of the light made known ; or ignorantly—that is, insensible to what is due to Him, could not be ranged under this category.

## 88 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

A Christian might be like Apollos, knowing only the baptism of John, but where the heart is true, like him, there is ever a readiness to learn, and he that is truly zealous with very little light, will gladly receive more light, that he might be more faithful. If we have not a true idea of the two or three, or the company who will be favoured with the Lord's presence, we cannot be intelligently of that company, nor do we know what is required, and that is just the state of many Christians. Again, if we do not know the kind of company to whom He vouchsafes His presence, how could we attempt to preserve the company to its proper state? We must know the proper state first.

Well, assuming that we do know the proper state for the company, let us seek to be instructed as to the mode of preserving it according to the true standard. It is very evident that if an assembly had holy, vigilant care each for the other—"Look not every man on his own things, but every man also

## THE LORD'S PRESENCE. 89

on the things of others"—if this were sedulously and faithfully carried out, if each member were simply under the obligation to wash his brother's feet, the unceasing endeavour to preserve all suitable to Christ would be very apparent, and the labour would be remarkably blessed. The assembly is enjoined not only "to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you," but to "warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all, see that none render evil for evil unto any."

It is a great thing when an assembly apprehend their responsibility to preserve themselves fit for the Lord's presence. As we have seen, it was not the priests nor the Levites, but the children of Israel who were charged with the solemn duty of preserving the camp free from all defilement, because of God dwelling in their midst.

We can easily conceive how an assembly in its infancy might be so faithful to the Lord, and considerate

## 90 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

for what is due to His presence, that there would be vigour and zeal to check and suppress every expression of evil. Doubtless it was so at the beginning. Ananias and Sapphira were immediately cut off by Peter. It may be alleged that this was apostolic power and prescience. That I fully admit, but I adduce it to shew that evil, though *concealed*, was immediately dealt with; and if unseen evil was so summarily dealt with, no open evil would be tolerated. Simon Magus for a lesser evil was openly and unsparingly rebuked. Every one in the assembly is responsible for the propriety of all according to his ability. But if one is privy to the failure of another, which he has not grace to suppress and remove, he is bound to seek help from another in whose grace he has confidence, in order that the erring one may be restored in that stage of evil which is typified by the "rising," &c. in Leviticus xiii. When it is a leprosy, excision is unavoidable. I think we should take it to heart how

## THE LORD'S PRESENCE. 91

many a one might have been preserved from leprosy, or open scandal, if there had been self-denying faithfulness in arousing him to the snare that was evidently spread for his feet. So long as the conscience is acting, and there is real self-judgment and contrition, and thus a real casting of oneself on the Lord, one is not unfit for the Lord's presence. One may be fed in the assembly, though not enjoying the Lord's presence. (See Lev. xxi. 22.) I consider a wicked person one over whom Satan has full control. An overt act is not committed except under the influence of Satan. Inclination to do wrong is ready enough to every natural mind, but the commission of it, contrary to all one's conscientious prepossession is Satanic, and the tool of Satan is a wicked person; there is no alternative now but excision, and if there had been a true sense of what was due to the Lord in their midst, the Corinthians could not have tolerated the wicked man referred to in 1 Corinthians v. We are to purge

## 92 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

out the old leaven, that we may be a new lump according as we are unleavened. I suppose no passage more stringently sets forth in a combined form the purity of the company to whom the Lord comes ; and the responsibility of that company to keep themselves fit for Him.

When it is simply before the heart of each one to preserve the company suited to the Lord, the effort will be to remove the leaven, and if this cannot be done without removing the person, then that person must be put away. I may just add here that, when the evil of any one is known to another, the responsibility rests on that one to remove it. If he cannot remove it, if it be too far gone, he should tell it to one with a pastoral care for souls. If it appear to him to be an aggravated case, then the case should be taken into consideration by the brothers in charge. I do not see in scripture any ground for calling all the brothers together. In Israel the one blast of the trumpets summoned the chief men or princes,

## THE LORD'S PRESENCE. 93

and I believe this illustrates the course to be adopted in the assembly. "The apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter." The case should be examined into and determined on its merits before being presented to the assembly, who are then called upon to ratify a sentence according to the word of God. It was the responsibility of the priests to convene the assembly; this fact shews that it is a very solemn act, and that the responsibility of doing so rests on the spiritual. Thus we see that the assembly are responsible to preserve themselves fit for the Lord's presence.

Lastly, we must ascertain the right course when we find ourselves swamped by independency, because we had not grace to preserve the company fit for the Lord, as it evidently had become in 2 Timothy, when profane and vain babblings were tolerated in the assembly. There is no course open to the faithful finding themselves in such circumstances but to purge themselves from the vessels to dishonour. It is



## 94 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

well to apprehend how the assembly once gathered to the name of the Lord, could be degraded to such a lawless and godless state. We must ever remember that though there be a right beginning because of faith, there is naturally unbelief in the one in whom the truest faith is, and that unless each one is kept by the Lord, fresh in the faith which has secured His presence, unbelief will creep in, and as sure as it does, a correct form of meeting will only the more fully disclose the absence of divine power. Thus it was with Israel: they retained their right form while "their hearts are far from me." The right form can be retained long after faith and a good conscience have vanished. If there had been faith in the assembly, and two or three had walked in that faith, the Lord would have enabled them to check and stifle the reckless speaking in the assembly; but if there be no check in real power, the best thing—the assembly, is degraded into a pestilence, and teaching is admitted that "overthrows the faith of some"

## THE LORD'S PRESENCE. 95

—faith there meaning Christianity itself.

We are never to submit to a state of things derogatory to the name of the Lord. How ever we have failed, He abides faithful. When the assembly has failed to preserve itself suitably to the Lord, every faithful one has to purge himself from the vessels to dishonour, and he is not to put up with any company lower, as to purity, than what the assembly was at first. To us this state is Philadelphia, the reviving of the church historically, supported by Him who is holy and true, and who has the key of David; and the assembly, how ever it may have fallen, as in Thyatira or Sardis, is assured of the Lord's support to arrive at it, because, "thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name."

The Lord give each of His own to see the nature of the company necessary for His presence, and the responsibility of the assembly to preserve itself fit for Him, and the imperative obligation

96 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

on every faithful one to purge himself  
from the company which has lost all  
sense of its responsibility to keep itself  
fit for Him.

---

THE ALMOND ROD.

NUMBERS XVII.

THE Ruler in Jeshurun  
Had seen the camp rebel,  
No power of threat, or judgment  
Could e'er their murmuring quell ;  
Nor the dread trump, loud sounding  
Jehovah's awful name,  
Nor rolling clouds of Sina,  
Torn by the lightning's flame.  
Take the green rod of Aaron,  
Near the Shekinah kept,  
That blossom'd in the night time  
While selfish Israel slept ;  
The flowers and fruit in clusters  
Miraculously grew —  
O branch of grace and mercy  
To lead the people through.  
The fountain of His mercy  
Ever and ever flows,  
The service in the highest  
No interruption knows ;  
The Great High Priest, untiring,  
Presents us to His God ;  
For ever bright and vernal  
Waves the fair almond rod. E. L. B.

## HEADINGS OF CHAPTERS. NUMBERS.

### CHAPTER XXII.

THE king of Moab attempts to bring the people under a curse by Satanic power in Balaam ; God declares them blessed. On the second message with the offer of increased reward Balaam goes : the angel of Jehovah stops the way ; the ass's mouth is opened to forbid the madness of the prophet. Balaam is permitted to go forward, but only to speak the word God puts into his mouth. From the high places of Baal he sees the people encamped in the plains below.

### CHAPTER XXIII.

Jehovah met Balaam and put the word in his mouth that declared first, the *separation* of the people from among the nations ; secondly, their *justification* —God for the people.

### CHAPTER XXIV.

Thirdly, not seeking enchantments

VOL. XXI.

E

## 98 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

any more, Balaam, as one whose eyes are open, looking towards the wilderness, beholds Israel abiding in their tents, and declares the beauty, power and blessedness of their place before God : and fourthly, the coming of the star out of Jacob, and sceptre, of Him who, in the latter days, would have dominion out of Jacob, and judge the nations.

## CHAPTER XXV.

In Shittim, by the counsel of Balaam (chap. xxxi. 16), through the fleshly wiles of the Midianites, the people join themselves to Baal-peor, and come under the anger of Jehovah. Phinehas, the son of Eleazar the high priest, zealous for Jehovah, slays Zimri, with a Midianitish woman, brought openly into his tent ; the plague is stayed, and he obtains the covenant of an everlasting priesthood in his seed.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

After the plague, Moses is commanded to take the number of the

## HEADINGS OF CHAPTERS. 99

people, the males of each tribe according to their fathers' houses, of twenty years and upward, to whom the land is to be divided: it is found to be 601,730—exclusive of Levi, of whom from a month old and upwards there were 23,000. Of the first numbering at the beginning of the journey, there was not found left a man, save Caleb and Joshua.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

The daughters of Zelophehad of the tribe of Manasseh, who died without a son, plead for a possession, and are appointed the inheritance of their father: the law of succession. Moses, being warned that having seen the land from the mountains of Abarim, he must die, because of his failure at Meribah, seeks a leader for the people, and Joshua is appointed—Eleazar the priest to ask counsel for him by the judgment of the Urim before Jehovah.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

The offerings for the worship of the

## 100 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

people—specially those of sweet-savour: for the continual burnt-offering (to which any other offerings appointed are additional), a lamb morning and evening, with the meat and drink-offerings always accompanying according to the number and victim so offered (see chap. xv. 3-12); for the sabbath, two lambs beside; on the new moons the burnt-offering is two bullocks, one ram, seven lambs, and for a sin-offering one he-goat; at the feast of unleavened bread similarly, each of the seven days thereof; the same, the day of the first-fruits.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

The same for the feast of trumpets, besides the burnt-offering for the first of the month on which it falls; on the day of atonement, one bullock—the rest the same—besides the sin-offering of atonement; on the days of the feast of tabernacles, the burnt-offering, beginning with thirteen bullocks, two rams and fourteen lambs, with the goat for the sin-offering, decreases by

## HEADINGS OF CHAPTERS. 101

one bullock each day till the seventh, when there are seven bullocks, and on the eighth day there are one bullock, one ram, and seven lambs, with the usual sin-offering.

## CHAPTER XXX.

Vows are binding, save those of a daughter, heard and disallowed by her father, or, in the case of a married woman, disallowed by her husband: but if not thus disallowed at the time, and the husband makes them void in any way, he bears her iniquity.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

Judgment is executed upon Midian at the word of Jehovah; Balaam is slain, and an immense spoil taken, of persons and goods—only the virgin women may be spared. The purification of the spoil by fire, or the water of separation: the spoil to be divided between those who went out to war and the rest of the congregation; of the portion of the former a tribute of one in five hundred is taken as a heave-



## 102 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

offering to be the priests': of the people's half, one in fifty to be the Levites'. The offering of the officers of the host.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

The two tribes, Reuben and Gad, with whom is associated half the tribe of Manasseh, having cattle, seek their inheritance in the pastoral territory already conquered east of Jordan: Moses fearing the effect of discouraging the rest of the nation from going over to possess the land of promise, warns and rebukes them; but on their undertaking to go over and share the conflicts of their brethren till they are settled in their possessions, he grants their request.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

The record of the various stages of the journey from Egypt to the land. The command to dispossess the inhabitants of Canaan and dwell therein, with warning of the result of letting any of them remain.

HEADINGS OF CHAPTERS. 103

CHAPTER XXXIV.

The boundaries of the land of Canaan and the names of those who should divide it to the tribes of Israel, given by Jehovah's command.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Forty-eight cities with their suburbs to be given to the Levites, six of which were to be for cities of refuge, for him who kills another unawares, without malice or intent: he was to remain in the city of his refuge till the death of the high priest. The murderer is to be put to death.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Daughters, to whom an inheritance passes in default of male heirs, are only permitted to marry within their own tribe, that the inheritance of each tribe may be preserved to it.



## SHORT NOTES ON LUKE.

(Continued from page 73.)

CHAPTER V. The formal call of His own. Verse 12, &c., the willingness of the Lord to do good to man, "I will." Verse 17, the fulfilment of Psalm ciii.—at the end of chapter (vers. 27–39) new things cannot be put into old shapes. There must be new bottles for new wine, and (ver. 39) *new tastes*: people are not accustomed to grace all at once: old Judaistic forms are held to, &c.

Chapter vi. Remark here the *Sabbath*, the sign of the old covenant, and the Son of man who is Lord of the sabbath. Here there are two things in connection with liberty: (1) verse 3, Christ rejected can do as David, and (2) the Son of man is Lord of the Sabbath. Another example in verses 6–11, grace which works actively in healing. Verse 12, we find the Lord praying all night before choosing His disciples, and in

## SHORT NOTES ON LUKE. 105

His discourse (vers. 20-49) He distinguishes the remnant from the rest of the nation, "Blessed *ye* poor." It is a little different in Matthew.

Chapter vii. Always the *Son of man* in Luke: thus (ver. 13) we find "He had compassion," truly man. Poor John the Baptist lacks faith, and (ver. 27) "Before THY face," Jehovah was there. Verse 35, "Wisdom is justified of all her children:" beautiful exemplification of this principle in verses 36 and following. Christ was the truly wise: He had noticed everything in Simon's house, without saying anything. This was the manifestation of true wisdom, the proof to Simon that He was a prophet: the poor woman is saved: it is not governmental forgiveness, but grace.

Chapter viii. 1-3. The ministry of women who know how to keep their place. Verses 4-18, the kingdom of God (ver. 10) in mystery: not Matthew's side. Verses 19-21, His brethren are those who listen to, and put in practice the word. Verses 22-25,

E 2

## 106 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

the unbelief of the disciples for the crossing of the lake. Verses 26–39, a legion of demons : man, when he sees God so near, prefers the devil. Remark that a tranquil devil is more dangerous than a violent devil. Verse 39, a picture of the remnant sent back to the house to shew the things that God had done. Verses 40–56, History of Israel's daughter dying, (Israel) *dies* : meanwhile, some take advantage of grace.

Chapter ix. We have the miracle of the five thousand (vers. 10, &c.) The Lord satisfies the poor in Sion with bread, according to the Psalms. Transfiguration. Verse 28, the Lord takes the way to Jerusalem, to go and suffer, and we see His beautiful moral character throughout the road. Here the chronological order of events ends, and we have a quantity of unfoldings of grace up to chapter xviii. 35, where history begins again (the blind man at Jericho). What selfishness of the human heart, in contrast with Christ, to the end of chapter ix.

Now we find very important prin-

## SHORT NOTES ON LUKE. 107

ciples in the Lord's discourses. (Chaps. x.-xvi.)

Chapter x. *Dependence*, the word, *grace in the good Samaritan*, and *Mary* who listens to, and profits from the word.

Chapter xi. Prayer, in the first 13 verses. Verses 21-28, the state of Israel which attributes the power of Christ to Satan; the link broken with the Jewish nation. Verses 29-36, the single eye (by the bye, have we a single eye; that is to say, pure hearts for God?) Verses 37-54, moral characteristics of scribes and Pharisees.

Chapter xii. 1-53. The place of a heavenly company, whose treasure is in heaven: a change of *bank*: our bank is no longer either at Pau, or in London, but (ver. 34) in heaven. *Two things* for us, (1) *watching*, (2) *faithful service*. (Ver. 42.) Verse 54 takes up again the ways of God with Israel, in this state of transition from earth to heaven; and

Chapter xiii. continues this last subject, the state of the Jewish nation, until Christ comes back in glory to

## 108 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

bless them, after the judgment. (Compare Ps. cxviii.)

Chapter xiv. continues the unfolding of grace. Remark, in the parable (vers. 15, &c.) three classes of people invited : (1) *Jews*, (2) *poor of the flock* (ver. 21), and *Gentiles*. (Ver. 23.) We are brought into the presence of God to participate in the *great supper*, then (Vers. 25–35) we find two aspects of testimony : (1) *the tower* (ver. 28) for resistance, (2) *the army* (ver. 31) for attack.

Chapter xv. The magnificent grace of God : the *Shepherd* and the *woman seek* that which was lost : the *Father receives* the son in a way worthy of Himself, and of which He only could have thought.

Chapter xvi. Effect of grace on conduct. Use of the goods of this world, according to the principles of grace :—and the rich man in hell. Here the curtain of the invisible world is drawn aside, and we see that it is not the rich of this world who are really blest, according to Christianity.

## SHORT NOTES ON LUKE. 109

Chapter xvi. ; Verses 1-4, offences. Verses 5-10, faith. Verses 11-19, the ten lepers, of whom the tenth knows Christ as the object of his soul, and can be independent of Judaism. Verses 20-37, the moral character of the kingdom of God, and the *coming of the Son of man*.

Chapter xviii. Different characters of prayer : at verse 35, begin the last events of the gospel, interrupted since chapter ix. The healing of the blind man at Jericho, begins this account.

Chapter xix. Zacchæus ; then (ver. 11), the parable of the talents. Notice that this parable answers to that in Matthew xxiv., only that here we have the general responsibility of the servants : *not different sums* to each, as in Matthew ; also the words, “ enter thou into the joy of thy Lord,” are not found here. Verses 23-44, we have the last entry into Jerusalem. Remark verse 38, “ *peace in heaven* ” (not “ *on the earth.* ” Peace must be established in heaven, before the earth can be blest. (Compare Rev. xii.)



## 110 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

Chapter xx. All the different classes of Jews come to judge the Lord, and each class is judged by Him. All is passed in review. The Lord's question at the end (ver. 41) on Psalm cx., manifests their state. They understand nothing of the rejection and exaltation of Christ.

Chapter xxi. Details of the last days differing from Matthew xxiv. Here it has to do with the first taking of Jerusalem, under Titus. Verse 8, the *time draweth near*. Verse 20, things present. The signal for flight was the coming of Vespasian. Verse 24, state of Jerusalem now. (In Matthew, the signal is different, and it concerns Antichrist.) Verses 29-36, the second coming of Christ.

Chapter xxii. In Luke, it is a question of the perfect Man, and we find many more details here on *Gethsemane* than in the other Gospels. Satan comes against Christ with all the terrors of death, and we always see the dependent Man, who receives all from the Father's hand. His patience and

## SHORT NOTES ON LUKE. 111

grace and true human character (vers. 15–28) are infinitely precious to our souls, in contrast to the selfishness of the disciples, &c. He is calm and dependent amidst all His agony and suffering, whilst all others fail. Peter represents natural zeal, in contrast with the Lord.

Chapter xxiii. We do not find here, as in Matthew, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” They are the sufferings of the perfect Man. (Compare Lev. ii.) Notice verse 31, where Christ is the “green tree,” and apostate Israel the “dry tree.” All bear witness to the *perfect Man*—Pilate, Herod, the thief, the centurion, and all.

Chapter xxiv. The risen Man; the same Person known to us throughout the Gospel, but now in a new place, in resurrection.

J. N. D.



HIS LOVE THAT "PASSETH  
KNOWLEDGE;" IN THE PAST  
"BEARING OUR SINS," AND IN  
THE PRESENT BEARING "US."

EPHESIANS III. 19.

"HE hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows." "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." (Is. liii.) This passage refers to the cross. It is the *past* aspect of His love to me.

"He layeth it on his shoulders rejoicing." (Luke xv.) This is the *present* burden He is bearing. It is the *present* aspect of His love to me.

He, the eternal Son, the holy One, had *almighty* power, and thus He was fitted to bear "our griefs," and carry "our sorrows," and accept the load of our "iniquity." (1 Peter ii. 24.) One adequate in strength to take all my griefs, sorrows, and iniquities. Then I have none to bear. He has risen out of the grave without them all, and I am free.

## HIS LOVE, ETC. 113

But having borne the burden of Isaiah liii.—having sunk down to death and the grave under its oppression— (“He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth”) it is all ended. He has passed out of it into the unclouded favour of God who (when bearing it) hid His face from Him. (Ps. ii. 7, 8.) Into that scene of cloudless rest He has thus purchased the right to carry *me*. “Behold I and the children that God hath given me.” “Thine they were, and thou gavest them me.” “He layeth it on his shoulders *rejoicing*.”

And there I am, nor I only, but every child of God. And if, having borne all my griefs and carried all my sorrows, He has (in all the *affection* of His heart) placed me there on the day that He rescued me, it is His *joy* to have me there always, so that I am *now* there. I do not know anything more cheering to me than to know this. Christians know their relationships and responsibilities as to the world, as they pass into them every

## 114 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

morning. But I say, Do you know where about you are with regard to Christ to-day? I am "on his shoulder" this day, and it is the joy of His heart to have me there. What a change! The Lord Jesus has so thoroughly borne all "our griefs," carried all "our sorrows," and our "iniquities," that *none are left*. He has instead of them, on those shoulders of strength, the poor wandering sheep for whom He bore them. Never more will He bear the burden of Isaiah liii., but I am where the burden was, and where is He bearing *me*?

And if this is for me to know in the wilderness, for me also it is to know He bears me on His shoulders of strength in the very presence of God. I am poor and feeble in myself. On His "shoulder" and on His "heart" (Ex. xxviii.) (*strength and affection*), He bears inscribed the names of His people. Our great High Priest is within the sanctuary for us. Our names are there. "Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an

“JUDGE RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT.” 115

high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.”

If I think of the wilderness it is as on His shoulder who is carrying me “home.” I can only rightly think of the wilderness from there. If I think of what He is now in heaven, it is “*for us*” He has entered there, and to that rest He is bringing *us* all, “that where I am, there ye may be also.”

H. C. A.

---

“JUDGE RIGHTEOUS  
JUDGMENT.”

JOHN VII.

THE possibility of this (denied by some) is herein admitted by the Lord, and is it not always a solemn and seasonable exhortation to us? Judgments hastily formed are generally wrong. There are so many contingencies, so many collateral matters to be considered, all of which affect, more or less, the matter in question, that to have haste and a true judgment combined, almost amounts to a matter of im-

## 116 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

possibility. Satan can have but one desire as to all our judgments, and that is to becloud them. This he often effects by leading us to act in haste.

In any matter, the judgment reached is all the more solemn, all the more weighty, that it comes at last as the one testimony of a "multitude of counsellors." God *speaks* in His word, and in various ways, and through various instruments, as to the matter in question, and my judgment can only be a true and righteous one as I *hear*. I am feeble, but who knows *all* the contingencies, all the collateral issues? God does. God *speaks* to me about it. This is His prerogative. Mine is to *hear* what He says. He speaks about everything, and in every detail of life. "As I hear I judge, and my judgment is just." These were the Lord's words as a perfect man on earth. And what did he hear? \* Not the babel of human opinion and the voices of this

\* Read in connection Isaiah I. 4, where read "learner" instead of "learned." The Lord Jesus as a man was the taught one.

## THE LORD'S PRESENCE. 117

world, but the voice of the Father, the "still small voice," which is not heard save as we are in the quiet of communion with Him.

Can you say, "There is no voice of the Father and the Shepherd to me as to *this* matter?" Never. It is another character of relationship, but the same principle, for the Shepherd's eye is never off the sheep. "They follow him, for they know his voice." "He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous." (John x. ; Job xxxvi.) We have to learn to be "swift to hear, slow to speak," for the speech is the giving out of the judgment. A judgment that is worth the least, is generally the one most easily obtained. (Eccles. v. 3.) H. C. A.

---

 THE LORD'S PRESENCE.

## No. 3.

## THE EFFECT ON ONE'S PRIVATE LIFE.

THE more fully I know the suitability necessary for being one of the company



## 118 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

who enjoy the Lord's presence, that is, as I know the newness of the life in which I am set—how morally elevated I am, the less could I return to anything inconsistent with that great position. It is important to bear in mind the newness of my position as a Christian. It is definitely stated in our Lord's words, "*Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.*" (Luke xiv. 33.) The idea has obtained too much that Christianity is only a great reformation of the man, and it is not distinctly maintained, that it effects a complete transformation—that the Christian leaves behind him all his former prepossession, and that he, as a disciple, has forsaken everything, even his own life, in order to be here wholly and absolutely for Christ his Lord. In Christendom, a religiousness in appearance and ways is required for those in the "church" (as the phrase goes), which is not required of the layman or the one in private life. Hence, there are, as it were, two classes of

## THE LORD'S PRESENCE. 119

Christians—one the man in the church, the other the man in secular life. Now, the idea of two classes could not have been accepted for a moment, if it had been known that a Christian was an entirely new being here, and that, as Christ's, he was bound not to undertake anything but according to His pleasure. A Christian is Christ's bondsman: "Ye are not your own. For ye are bought with a price." But besides this, there is no association with Christ, when we are defiled. "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." Surely, any Christian who has enjoyed intimacy with Him, without reserve, must endeavour to continue it, and still more, when one enjoys the Lord's presence in the midst of His own, there will be—it could not be otherwise—a shrinking from every engagement or association in this world which would deprive him of his greatest privilege and joy in his pilgrimage here; and hence he could not admit that there are two classes.

I am not denying that a saint has very different engagements in God's

## 120 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

house and in his own house. All I contend for is that my state in the house of God requires a corresponding one in my own house ; and that the better I enter into the greatness and holiness in the highest, the more shall I shrink from everything inconsistent with it in every detail of my private life. My secular occupations are very different from those in the assembly ; but the latter are the greatest, holiest, and most interesting, where I am in the reality and enjoyment of my new and proper being, where I am so invigorated in grace and holiness, that in a good conscience I must maintain these divine essentials in my private circle here. In Israel (see Num. viii. 14-19) the Levite carried into private life the sanctity and exclusiveness of the servant of the tabernacle. Thus it is that a clergyman (so called) is distinguished from his fellows, and he can plead his profession as exempting him from the toil and trials of secular business. The principle which I advocate is admitted with regard to a

## THE LORD'S PRESENCE. 121

clergyman, or one especially called to the ministry. Even in Christendom, every one in the ministry is regarded as typified by the priests, the sons of Aaron—nay, it is from that type that the exclusive nature of the minister or clergyman is borrowed. The deduction is correct, but it is not correct to limit it to the clergy or the professional minister, for it is plain from scripture that every believer now is the antitype of a son of Aaron. Each living stone is also a priest. We are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood. It is easy to see that as the minister was appointed to the most holy place, he must be in private, in moral correspondence to that dignity ; while the others, or laymen, not appointed nor called to such a holy service, were not obliged to depart from the ordinary professions of worldly men, though they were bound or expected to be honest and upright there.

It is a great point gained when we see that every believer is a priest, and every believer a Levite ; for if every

## 122 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

believer in his relation to the Lord in the assembly is a priest, he is thus bound to be ever fit for the holy duties of that relation. This proves that there is a very marked effect on the private life from being a priest, though that relation has so peculiarly to do with the Lord inside the veil. Now as the highest relation to the Lord inside, involves and requires a course of great separation and sanctity in private life, so must every other relation support it. Hence a Levite was not to engage in anything unworthy of a priest ; he is properly the servant character derived from the priest. No one could be a companion of our Lord Jesus Christ if he were not both ; and without question devotedness and abnegation of the world characterise the true priest. No saint entering into the holy and exalted position which he holds with the Lord, and which he enjoys in His presence, could accept the title of a clergyman, or any exclusive position of ministry ; seeing that by God's will he has the highest position

## THE LORD'S PRESENCE. 123

in common with each one of the children of God. In the same way the soldier lays aside his sword, for he cannot as the servant of Christ in the holiest, ministering before the Lord, come out to be in the world an instrument in supporting the world by whom the Lord has been rejected. Thus the holy dignity known in the presence of the Lord influences and affects me in the smallest detail of daily life.

This principle is very practical. A leaf of a tree indicates the state of the root. A gardener at once judges of the state of a plant from a defect in the leaf: so, surely, when there is a lack or defect in the common and most ordinary duties, that lack or defect springs from a lack or defect in my sense of my position with the Lord. The outer, or rather the outermost, reveals the innermost. This is remarkably exemplified in Jacob. When he settles in Shalem, his altar is El-elohe-Israel; and with this relation to God he is mixed up with Shechem; but when he is enlightened, and is moving

## 124 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

on to Bethel, he says unto his household, and to all that were with him, "Put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments: and let us arise and go up to Bethel; and I will make there an altar unto God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went." (Gen. xxxv. 2, 3.) Everything in his private life is affected by the knowledge of his nearness to God.

Now as we have seen that our priestly and Levitical position with the Lord, indicates and requires a manner of life in every detail corresponding with this dignity, this of itself would be enough to convince the godly that the knowledge of the Lord's presence in our midst must in a very marked way affect us in private life. But besides this, there is no true testimony; there is no letting your light so shine before men, if you have an imperfect or feeble sense of the moral consequences of the Lord's presence. We see in Corinthians that

## THE LORD'S PRESENCE. 125

the saints there in private betrayed and disclosed their little sense of the character of the company enjoying the Lord's presence. They went to law one with another before the ungodly. The departure from the first estate now so easily detected in the professing church, crops out almost imperceptibly in Corinth. They were highly gifted of God, but they walked in little or no separation. They easily tolerated known evil in some of the company avowedly gathered to the name of the Lord. Thus there was no real testimony to the Lord there ; and to add to this, they were by their loose ways injurious to their weaker brethren. Thus, if the Lord's presence is not known, your proper suitability to Him is lost. You not only deny your great calling, but you bring a reproach upon the gospel ; you damage your weaker brethren ; and finally, deprive yourself of the daily manifestation of God's fatherly care. See 2 Corinthians vi. 17, 18. "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the



## 126 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." Thus if I do not carry into private life the great dignity of my position within the veil in God's presence, I dishonour the Lord. I am no light in the darkness. I damage my weaker brethren, and I forfeit here in the scene of my failure, the daily tender care of the Lord Almighty.

In the epistles (see first Rom. xii.) there is a very interesting corroboration of how the measure of my nearness to the Lord is disclosed in practical details. In verse 4 the individual duty in connection with membership of the body is enjoined. The principle I have been advocating from the highest to the lowest is confirmed. Every good and perfect gift cometh down. As you know the greatest, and the moral consequences flowing from it, you are empowered to reach unto the least. In Romans you have changed masters.

## THE LORD'S PRESENCE. 127

(See end of chap. vi.) Christ is now Master, and not the will of the flesh ; and from that height you come out into this world, first, as a member of the body, and then as man here walking in divine righteousness, not avenging yourself, not going to law for your rights, and not in any place of power or authority in the world, but in every way a good subject. You do not reach down to your family in Romans ; you do in Colossians, there you have learned that heaven is your place, and that you are fully suited to Christ in that place. Nothing of the old is suffered there ; all new. Christ everything, and in all ; and hence the height being so great, the power to touch the least comes out ; your behaviour in your own circle down to the slaves is insisted on and defined.

In Ephesians, this principle is still more largely demonstrated. In that epistle we are set in our highest position ; and here we are enjoined as having the ability to act in private life superior to any practice ever before inculcated.

## 128 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

It is a solemn fact, and may we take it to heart, that the external, or the practical life indicates or expresses the measure or character of our nearness to the Lord—how His presence has had weight or influence with us. We can have no power downwards but as we have power upwards. The lack or imperfection of the former is an index of the lack and imperfection in the latter. If the body is not a light in full glare, it is because there is still some dark part within. If I am truly with the Lord inside the veil, I am correspondingly truly for Him without the camp. The course in private life thus really marks the reality of our priestly and Levitical relation to the Lord in our midst.

---

 FRAGMENT.

THERE is not a joy in heaven that we have not got *now*, except the glorified body. Christianity works by what it brings, not by what it finds.

J. N. D.

## WHAT IT IS TO BE HEAVENLY.

THE first thing is the absorbing sense that Christ is in heaven. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth." The heart cannot fixedly turn to Christ in heaven until there is an assured knowledge of the efficacy of His work for us on earth. We must be in the restful effect of His work here for us, even that where all our sins were committed, and our alienation and enmity to God existed, *there* they have been absolutely removed by Christ to His glory, before we could venture to turn our eyes to heaven, or expect or desire association with Him in God's dwelling-place. Cleared of every charge here, and separated from the man under judgment, in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, I stand upon the earth in an

## 130 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

entirely new way. I am now a son of God, welcomed home to the Father's house above, though once I was a prodigal in sin and distance from God. I am reconciled and made meet here to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light. Here, the work of the cross has removed everything contrary to God, and I am set up afresh in the life and Spirit of Him who cleared me. If this be not a settled and confirmed enjoyment, I cannot look up: I am not at rest as to myself. Like one in bad health I cannot enjoy anything outside of myself.

Now, this confidence and intimacy being established, there follows the way of preserving this intimacy. Unless my feet are washed, unless the intimacy be preserved without a reserve, I cannot enjoy Him where He is. I have no part with Him. This will be easily admitted; but there is still another necessity or preparation for enjoying the Lord in heaven, and that is, the effect of His unfailing sympathy and support here. When I am baffled

## WHAT IT IS TO BE HEAVENLY. 131

or thwarted by anything here, unless I am borne up by His priestly service, I am unable to set my mind on things above. When risen with Christ, I am as He is outside of all that He died to, and if this is not positive, I could not seek the things above. But besides this, I am hindered when my feet are soiled, and whenever I am unsupported by Him in the grace in which He walked here. Whenever I miss the priestly service I fail, and then I am not restored until I know His advocacy. It is very evident that it is only the soul at liberty—"where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty"—who can seek or enjoy the Lord where He is; there is no gazing on the Lord's glory otherwise, and unless there is, there is no sense of fitness for the scene where He is. It is beholding the Lord's glory that we are transformed into the same image; and it is as we are, that we are really at home in that place. We cannot be heavenly until we are in that association with Christ in heaven. We enter through

## 132 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

the rent veil in the assured sense of fitness through His blood ; but we are not conformed to its order until we are there, or according as we are occupied with the Lord's glory, or the status in which our Saviour is there ; and it is then that we eat of the corn of the land. As far as I understand, the corn of the land leads us into testimony to Christ in glory, and this might be in the smallest details : strengthened with all power by the might of His glory unto all endurance and long-suffering with joy. This, I apprehend, is a practical expression of the exalted Christ, the heavenly Man. When I do anything here in the power of Christ at the right hand of God—that is, in the Spirit—for Him, I am so far heavenly. When I act for Christ here according to His pleasure, I am in heavenly power. I seek and require manna for my daily need. I cannot live here at all but by Christ. When my circumstances are before my mind, the circumstances of the wilderness, the manna is my support. The manna

## WHAT IT IS TO BE HEAVENLY. 133

continued until after Gilgal, until after Colossians iii., the mortifying of the members *on the earth* : and I do not see that the corn of the land is reached in that chapter ; we are on the verge of it when we come to " Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body." Manna is the grace of Christ with relation to our own circumstances ; the corn of the land, when in those very circumstances, I am standing for Christ. I think we may see the difference between the grace in Colossians iii. as to our home duties, and in Ephesians v. In the latter we are in such heavenly power that we glorify Christ in every detail. Without the manna I could not live at all here as a Christian ; but in the power of the corn of the land I have the ribbon of blue on the fringes. That is, the smallest matter in relation to myself becomes an opportunity for expressing the greatness and grace of the exalted Man. So that the distinction between manna and corn of the land is realised in my own use



## 134 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL

of Christ, or, if I might so say, by my application to Him. If I seek Him for my own need, and as in the wilderness, it is manna ; but if I seek Him for His own interest, I obtain the corn of the land, and surely the manna is included in the corn of the land, though the corn of the land is not included in the manna. Every movement of my life is affected by the object before my heart—my need or His interests. It must be one or the other ; and the only way to ensure the second is by association with Himself, and there can be no association with Him but in glory, and then glory rules me and I am conformed to it, and as I am, I am an expositor of it. Thus it is a very distinct mark of a heavenly man to make Christ's interests and not one's own paramount.

Now many are well inclined, and have a true desire to make Christ's interests paramount, but no one can do so unless he is in association with Him in glory ; hence the first step towards a ratification of such a desire is to

## WHAT IT IS TO BE HEAVENLY. 135

“seek the things that are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God.” There was manna and no corn of the land, let us remember, until after Gilgal, or antitypically Colossians iii. This is a great help to the longing soul and loving heart simply to find the Lord first where He is, and then He will lead me into the line of His interests where He is not. The Holy Spirit’s great work here is to testify of the exalted Christ, and any one in the Spirit is in this testimony. The Spirit comes from Christ glorified, and His leading must ever be with reference to this.

Now when I find that I am individually here to testify of Christ, not only am I awakened to my responsibility, but I receive light, as I am a vessel for the Holy Spirit’s testimony, to see, that if I have to refer to Christ individually as the Head in heaven, all saints have the same calling; and thus I am enlightened as to the one body, as being baptised by one Spirit into one body. It is the

## 136 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

natural sequence. The successive steps are well defined. Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty to rise to Christ where He is, and as I am in the Spirit here, I testify of Christ *here*, and the more earnestly and truly I do so, the more must I feel the necessity of the one body. I am sensible, as I am true, of my insufficiency to do so. I am glad of every co-helper. The weakest member I feel is necessary. Thus a heavenly man must be occupied with the church. The assembly is the vessel here to reflect the glory of Christ—to bear His name. There is reference to this company in every epistle, whether in John as the “us;” or in Jude as “you, beloved;” or in Peter as the spiritual house; or in Paul as the body. And for this simple reason; because the more I know of Christ in association with Himself, and the more I am in the Spirit, the more I seek out and connect myself with everything belonging to Him, and hence it is a very distinct mark of a heavenly man.

## WHAT IT IS TO BE HEAVENLY. 137

When my tastes and interests are formed from association with Christ in heaven, it is plain, that when on earth I look for whatever will suit my predominant taste. Nothing but the heavenly thing interests me if I am heavenly ; that is, if I have been transformed into the same image of the Lord's glory. I am so pre-possessed with things so unspeakably superior to all earthly things, that as sheep would look for clover amid barren rocks, so do I look for every touch of heaven in this dry and barren land. You can at once discover and recognise a heavenly man by the way he is caught and interested by anything heavenly, like the way a foreigner, knowing little but his own language, is arrested and delighted when he hears any one speak in his own tongue.

In fine, a heavenly man is, in his general service, occupied with the church, Christ's interests here, and in his life and conversation heavenly things attract and command him.

F 2

## SCATTERING.

ONE effect of the death of our Lord Jesus Christ was "that he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad." (John xi. 52.) He was lifted up out of the earth that He might draw *all men* (not Jews merely) unto Himself, and so become the new and divine centre. Scattering, when we first read of it at Babel, was the direct judgment of God on that which sought to form a unity in independence of Him; or again, on Israel scattered among the Gentiles because they walked contrary to the Lord. (Lev. xxvi. 33. Compare also Gen. xlix. 7, for the sin of blood-guiltiness.) But further, it is Satan's work, the result of grievous wolves, when those who should protect the flock care not for them as belonging to the Good Shepherd. He kept them in the Father's name while He was with them, and He asked the Holy Father

## SCATTERING.

139

to keep them in that name, that they might be one. While thus lifting up His eyes to heaven, and treasuring up His own in the Father's keeping, yet on earth the moment had come when they would be scattered from Him. It was man's hour and the power of darkness ; an hour when men, all men, were swept along by the full current of Satan's power. It was too the moment of the complete break between the true Shepherd of Israel and the false shepherds who pitied not the flock. (Zech. xi.) He had, as it were, broken the two staves, beauty and bands—the instruments of His office, whether for the gathering of the peoples, or the uniting of Judah and Israel in one brotherhood. All this is now in abeyance, and He who had fed the poor of the flock was priced at thirty pieces of silver, and enters upon that pathway of suffering and death which resulted in His becoming the new and heavenly centre outside of the earth. But till that death was accomplished, the sheep, deprived on

## 140 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

earth of the Shepherd's care, were scattered.

The Lord in His last conversation with His disciples, twice alludes to this scattering. In Matthew xxvi. He quotes the passage (Zech. xiii. 7) thus, "I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad." There is also an evident allusion to the same prophetic statement in John xvi. 32. Two reasons are discovered in the disciples themselves for this scattering by the power of the enemy, which it may be profitable for those who are in spirit of the poor of the flock to consider.

There can be no question but that the eleven loved the Lord, and had real faith in Him (John vi. 68, 69), but the awful power of darkness rising up to its full height against the One they loved, served to bring out these two elements of weakness in the presence of evil, when the guardian care of the Shepherd was absent from them during the time of His suffering and death. He was *then* the smitten One. He is

## SCATTERING

141

*now* in the place of intercession, and there is ever succour *for us*. He had anticipated this place in praying for Peter, but now, He *ever liveth* to make intercession for us. Still in ourselves there may be these same elements of weakness.

They may be briefly stated thus—First, the disciples did not realise what the heart of man is, and is capable of. Hence Peter trusted his own heart. Secondly, they had not learnt the Person of the Son as sent from the Father and returning to the Father, and so connecting them in anticipation with the source of eternal love and blessing which He had told out in words and works upon earth, and into which He was personally returning.

The hearts of the disciples were capable of being offended in Jesus. His love had just been tasted by them in the supper in a peculiar way, and He and they had sung a hymn together. (Matt. xxvi. 30.) Then He had to say to them, “All ye shall be offended because of me this night.” Could it



## 142 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

be so ? Had they sat with Him at supper, and sung a hymn together, and then would they be scattered from Him in the moment of His distress ? Yes ! His Spirit had spoken before in Psalm cxvi., “I said in my haste [rather, distress], *all men* are liars” (that is, not to be trusted). Peter, full of ardent feeling, cannot believe that his heart is not to be trusted. Nor was he alone in his protestation (in reply to the Lord telling him how deeply he would fall, “Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee”), for, “Likewise also said all the disciples.” Poor heart of man ! how self-confident, and yet how easily offended and scattered from Jesus. We speak of the end of the first man, and we know well the statement, that “the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked ;” but do we each admit that *my* heart is there described, and hence the necessity for the sentence of death upon *my* flesh in the cross of Christ. Surely the lesson of “no confidence in the flesh” is more

deeply learnt as we ponder the short space of time between Peter singing a hymn with his Master and then thrice denying Him. But nothing of this could alter what was in His heart towards them, and therefore He adds immediately, "After I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee;" there to renew His relationship with them as the poor of the flock.

If we now turn to John xvi., the Lord there speaks of His communications to them being in proverbs, and contrasts this manner of speaking with the moment when He would announce or declare to them openly and plainly of the Father. In the message which He sent to them by Mary Magdalene, He does make this announcement: "Go to my brethren and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father;" but in order that they might fully enter into it, it was necessary that the Comforter should come, as we read in verse 15 (chap. xvi.), "All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that *he* shall

## 144 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

take of mine and shall announce it unto you." When the Lord was with them, they could not bear the communications which He had yet to make to them, but notwithstanding this, He who well knew the weakness of the flesh and their feeble apprehension, connects them with the affections of the *Father's heart* (ver. 27) because their affections had been drawn out to Him, though they only believed that He came out from *God*. This does not rise to the height of the truth He was then making known to them, though as yet in proverbs, therefore He adds, "I came forth *from the Father*, and am come into the world: again I leave the world, and go to the Father." This declaration was indeed plain, but the disciples were unable to grasp its import, though they say, "Lo! now speakest thou openly and speakest no proverb . . . by this we believe that thou camest forth *from God*." Though Jesus had fully owned their love and affection to Him, yet He knew that at present the hearts that loved Him

## SCATTERING.

145

were still ignorant that He was in His own Person, as the Son down here, the vessel of the deep overflowings of the *Father's* love, and that He was leaving the world to return to the Father, therefore He replied, "Do ye now believe? Behold the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered every man to his own, and shall leave me alone, and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me." Here the Lord connects the scattering with the failure of their apprehension as to the fulness of the truth which He had been speaking in proverbs. Had they been able to receive it, their affections to Him would have been as in another sphere altogether. Instead of being scattered each to *his own things* down here, they would have been held in the blessed circle of the affections of the Father and the Son. They left Him indeed alone, and yet not alone, for the Father was with Him. Nor was it always to be so, for if in Matthew He renews His relationships with them in Galilee after His resurrection, here,

## 146 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

as the true Nazarite, He gives up all the earthly associations *for their sakes*, (what deep and precious grace and affection !) that they might be sanctified in the full power of the truth that then they could not understand.

The Holy Ghost has come, and the saints are now in possession of a power which the disciples had not when they were scattered from Jesus. Even the babes in Christ have an unction from the holy One, and know all things ; they know the truth, and Jesus is the Truth. In that light how fully and entirely do we pass from all association with the first man, utterly bad and judged in His cross, into the new and blessed relationships with Him who is with the Father. If we walk not in that light, then the constant witness of the Holy Ghost to the desperate wickedness of the heart—my heart—is not really accepted, and self-confidence is present instead of dependence, which finds that no place can suit one that is hopelessly bad, and whose badness can be so easily

## SCATTERING.

147

drawn out, but being close to Christ; everything of self is mistrusted, and He is leant upon and clung to, not as at first for salvation, but as "our way, our truth, our life." Thus scattering from our having confidence in self would be prevented.

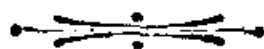
We could not walk, moreover, in nearness to Christ without the same Holy Spirit announcing His things to us. Paul had to say, "All seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's." The witness of the Spirit was thus unheeded, and he had further to say, "All they which are in Asia be turned away from me," even as his Master had said, "Ye shall be scattered, each to his own." Let but the first man and his associations be refused, should we not know the comfort and joy of the Holy Ghost, in taking of the things of the Father and the Son to shew to us, and would not the surpassingness of those things unfolded to us in the new sphere hold us from being scattered, and turning again to our own things?

## 148 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

Two things characterised the mighty men that are written as belonging to David when by the Holy Ghost his last words were uttered. (2 Sam. xxiii.) They stood uncompromisingly in every circumstance against the Philistine—that power of the enemy allowed to assail the people of God internally, because the circumcision of Gilgal was forgotten. Neither numbers, nor circumstance affected them as they stood against the foe, and in defence of the inalienable possession of Israel; but secondly, they stood in full devotedness and personal attachment to David. No wavering was there in fidelity to him, as there had been no faltering in the presence of the foe.

May the sense of our own nothingness, and yet of His love, keep us each one near to Himself.

T. H. R.



## THE LORD'S PRESENCE.

No. 4.

### THE LORD'S CHIEF INTEREST IS OUR CHIEF INTEREST.

It is self-evident that we could not be near the Lord, or even in a small degree intimate with Him in the midst of His own, without obtaining some clue and direction respecting His chief interest. In every dispensation there was a very distinct course of action in the mind of God, and according to a servant's faithfulness, that course occupied him. It was not that every servant could say that the course which he pursued was God's object, but he adhered to it, because he felt it to be his duty. Surely the line of the counsel and the will of God must be the line and course of every one in the mind of God. His countenance and support are there. If it be seen that God always had some defined purpose before Him,



## 150 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

it must be conceded that every one adopting and pursuing that line would enjoy His favour and thus grow in His mind. This being admitted, it only remains for us to ascertain what is the Lord's chief interest in this period.

We are now in the end of the ages, and we may be assured that everything which has gone before finds a fuller answer or manifestation; and that in every previous dispensation there were types or figures of the completeness now presented. The body and substance of all is now fulfilled, so that as God had a chief interest in every previous dispensation it must be more distinctly expressed now than ever; nay, more, seeing that in the present period the divine interest would be most fully expressed, we are sure to find in the preceding ones some reference to the character and order of His chief interest. God always had a chief interest, but all which went before were but limited in comparison with the present and last.

In every dispensation, typical of the

## THE LORD'S PRESENCE. 151

future, there is always a sketch of the bride, the Lamb's wife. We see it in Eve, in Rebekah, in Asenath, in Zipporah, in David's time, and so on.

Now when our Lord comes, John says of Him, "He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled." The great purpose of God has come. We do not see it as yet consummated, but it is of the utmost importance to us that we accept and maintain God's chief interest at this present time. As we think of the earth and all the previous types, the bride may be the prominent thought; but as we think of the Lord Himself, His body is to the faithful paramount. We do not yet see the bride coming down from God out of heaven, but the Spirit and the bride say, "Come," to the Lord—that is, the saints characteristically—the bride in conjunction with the Holy Spirit says, "Come." This of itself proves that the bride is here

## 152 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

characteristically ; that however sad the failure or departure from the first estate, this actual being is here, and that the power to sustain her is here in unaltered purpose and vigour.

I refer to this merely to corroborate what I have already advanced, that the Lord's chief interest is here, characteristically at any rate, and is here supported by the same power and resources as at the first. "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me." (John xv. 26.) But while it might be admitted that at the coming of the Lord there would be the saints in character answering to the bride, and supported, and in fellowship of the Holy Ghost inviting Him to come, it may not be as readily admitted and maintained that His body is here.

If we admit that Christ was rejected here, we must come to the conclusion, either that there is no testimony to

## THE LORD'S PRESENCE. 153

His rights here or that there is. If the latter be admitted, which is the truth, then it is evident that the testimony to Him must be here in all the power of God. Hence the Holy Ghost was sent by Him from the Father to testify on the earth of Him now in glory. There can be no question as to the presence of the Holy Ghost, and yet practically it is from unbelief as to His presence to *testify*, that all our weakness and vacillation arise. Let it be admitted that the greatest power to testify is here, and then let us own that our blessed Lord, when He was rejected, announced to Peter, Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my assembly. I will have a company here of my own choosing. This company would be the habitation of God through the Spirit; this company would be His chief interest here. This company, every living stone, would be not only of a visible fortress for His name and service here, but also a member of His body; He being now seated in heaven and apart from this scene. That is,

## 154 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

that not only were the saints this impregnable fortress on the earth, but they were in the closest relationship and union with Him, the Head in heaven. If this be true, and it cannot be gainsaid, surely it is a true mark of knowing His presence, and what such nearness would impart, to declare that this, His chief interest, is our chief interest.

I know that there have been many attempts to overthrow this plain conclusion. There is nothing to which Satan is more opposed than the church, whether as that company on the earth that the gates of hell cannot prevail against, or as the great mystery that Christ's body is on the earth from which He was rejected.

The more the assembly is insisted on as it is in the mind of God, the more must every one believing in it take a place outside this world; he could not be otherwise in the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, who reproves the world. Now the more he finds that he is not of it, the more is Christ glorified before

## THE LORD'S PRESENCE. 155

him, and the things of the Father are made known to him ; for heavenly things are the sure portion of the one in the testimony. The exalted Man is by the Spirit expressed here in each member according to his faithfulness to Christ. But the contention is, that the church is broken up and divided and that there is no organisation now, of that universal character, which belonged to the church at first. I do not deny the moral dilapidation of the assembly—"the fortress," as I have called it—but I still maintain that it is of Christ's building, impregnable, even though outwardly in ruins ; and that though in the house aspect the carved work is broken down by axes and hammers, yet I maintain that the body of Christ is here, though I do not say that it is compacted together by that which every joint supplieth. But while I do admit the ruin, the sad dilapidation of the house, I, on the other hand, with all the weight of scripture supporting me, maintain that the Holy Ghost, the

## 156 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

power to make good and establish the testimony according to the heart of God, remains here as ready and as vigorous to help as ever He was.

If we would be faithful, if we really are near the Lord, and have learned in His presence, let us, while sorrowfully owning all the failure, admit and insist that the power is here ; and the more the consequences of unfaithfulness afflict us on every side, the more let us seek to be in fellowship with the Spirit, and be led by Him into real testimony. Assured I am that if any one would walk in company with the Spirit of God, as simply led by Him, he would soon unhesitatingly maintain that Christ's chief interest here was the same as ever, and, though spoiled by the hand of man, yet that the power to be faithful remains. When we accept in faith that the Holy Ghost is here to testify of Christ, we are in a position of power beyond the servants of God in any previous dispensation ; because, though the servant was then aided by the Spirit of God, yet the Holy Ghost

## THE LORD'S PRESENCE. 157

was not then resident here as He is now. I do not believe that one can estimate the greatness of this grace. He remains here in unabated force and purpose for God, however faithless the servants are, or however dismantled or dilapidated the vessel of testimony may become; so much so, that when there is any revival the Spirit is bound to be as powerful as ever, and at the close He is found side by side with the bride in characteristic faithfulness awaiting the coming of the Lord.

But in addition to this, the descent of the Holy Ghost not only confers on the assembly the greater support and strength, but, because each believer is by Him baptised into one body, there is a power vested in each one to promote the well-being of all. If one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Hence the servant, when the apostle was taken away, as we see in 2 Timothy, is not to be discouraged—God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and of love, and of a sound mind—therefore “be



## 158 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

not ashamed of the testimony of our Lord nor of me his prisoner."

If in every previous dispensation the servant was in power and prosperity as he adhered to the chief interest in the mind of God at the time, and the failure and reverse of any one can be traced to a departure from God's chief interest, how much more so when His greatest interest is on the earth. Even in the kingdom of heaven, where all the antagonism of the enemy is encountered and where the world's evil is intensified by accepting christian doctrine—"an ornament of gold in a swine's snout"—the Lord tells us His treasure is hid. It is vain for anyone to assert or assume that he has been near the Lord in the midst of His own, and has never acquired any sense of His chief interest on the earth, which He has taken every care that there should be unfailing power here to maintain.

Each one drawn in heart into His heart—for heart or love can only understand love—His love must be

## CORRESPONDENCE.

159

known, or rather I must have His love in me, or I can never understand His love ; and as I do, I must maintain against all comers, that His chief interest is my chief interest, for "He loved the church and gave himself for it ;" and as I do, I am daily more and more invigorated to stand for Him here, "and having done all, to stand." If the greatest breakdown occurred with Aaron's sons, yet Aaron and his house remained. Thus may we be faithful, for "He abideth faithful ; he cannot deny himself."

---

## CORRESPONDENCE.

*Q.* What is the meaning of Leviticus v. 16 : "He shall make amends for the harm that he hath done in the holy thing, and shall add the fifth part thereto" ? I do not quite see what is the application of this to us now.

*A.* The answer is very simple. When we slight the Lord in any way, we are not only to repent, but we are

## 160 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

to add a fifth part : that is, two tithes, two tenths—double the ordinary gift. Morally, that we are not only repentant of our inadvertence, but we honour the Lord in a very distinct way more than ever in that very particular. They say that where a bone is broken and knits again, that place is the strongest part of the bone. I believe that in the thing wherein we have failed, there is not only restoration, but where the repentance is true, there is less fear of failing in that thing again. By failure one is positionally lower, but on repentance morally higher. If this be so with respect to inadvertence, or failure unknown at the time, how much more in glaring and wilful failures, such as Peter denying the Lord ! No doubt the reality of his repentance was assured by his increased fidelity to the Lord, or by his adding the fifth part to the trespass-offering.



## HEADINGS OF CHAPTERS.

### DEUTERONOMY.

#### CHAPTERS I.—IV.

MOSES' address to the people in the plains of Moab, at the close of the forty years of their wandering since leaving Horeb (a journey of eleven days): he recalls their history; the command to go in and possess the land and appointment of judges; the sending of the spies in connection with the unbelief of the people, and the evil effect of their report in their refusal to go up; Jehovah's sentence upon that generation; their going up presumptuously and consequent defeat by the Amorite. CHAPTER II. Their being sent back to the wilderness towards the Red Sea, and return northwards after compassing Seir till that generation had been wasted out from amongst them; the reservation of Seir for Esau's descendants, and the land of Moab and Ammon for Lot's; the

## 162 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

land of the Amorite given into their hands with its two kings Sihon, and [CHAPTER III.] the giant Og of Bashan, and assigned to the two tribes and a half: Moses' prayer to go over Jordan, but permission only to see the land from Pisgah—closing [CHAPTER IV.] with their obligation of obedience to Jehovah the only God, whose voice they had heard at Sinai, but of whom they had seen no similitude and must make none, and who had taken them by a mighty deliverance out of Egypt, to be His inheritance, and to dispossess the nations before them to give them their land—a God of mercy to whom they could turn when tribulation had come upon them in the latter days, as the result of their unfaithfulness. Three cities of refuge for the manslayer are marked out on that side Jordan.

## CHAPTER V.

All Israel is called to hear the law, the ground of their present (ver. 3) relationship with Jehovah.

## HEADINGS OF CHAPTERS. 163

## CHAPTER VI.

Obedience the condition of enjoyment of the land of their possession—to love the one Jehovah their God absolutely, keeping His words in their hearts and teaching them to their children ; and if asked the meaning of His ordinances, they were to tell them of how He had brought them out of the house of bondage to bring them into the land of promise--their righteousness if they observed them.

## CHAPTER VII.

They were to have no connection with the seven Canaanite nations, but to destroy them and every trace of their idolatry, as a holy people, a people of possession unto Jehovah, chosen in sovereign grace and faithfulness to His promises. They are reminded of the covenant and mercy (the revelation of the Name on Moses' second ascent) — the terms of the government of God established over them, under which, as to them, all depended on their faithfulness,

## 164 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

## CHAPTER VIII.

The ways of God, in His gracious care of them and government, in the wilderness, and the object of them, that they might know themselves and know Him—not to be forgotten; lest when in satisfied possession of the land their hearts should be lifted up in pride and independency, and disobedient to His voice, they should perish, as the nations before them.

## CHAPTER IX.

Their constant perversity and rebellion in the wilderness is recalled, that they might not think it was for their righteousness they were given to possess the land, but for the wickedness of the nations that God would drive out before them, and to fulfil His promise to their fathers.

## CHAPTER X.

The circumstances of the second covenant and renovating of the law on the intercession of Moses are recalled, and the pure grace that had chosen the

## HEADINGS OF CHAPTERS. 165

people, and so blessed and multiplied them in spite of their stiff-neckedness ; and they are exhorted to circumcise their hearts, care for the stranger, and serve Him who was their praise and their God.

## CHAPTER XI.

Lastly, the people viewed as over Jordan, are exhorted to obedience, by their experience of the judgment of God on Egypt and the Egyptians, and on rebellion in their own history : the land was not as Egypt, to be made fruitful by man's labour, but by God's constant care, conditional on their faithfulness, then also they should possess it in its full extent : blessing on obedience (Gerizim) or the curse (Ebal) on disobedience awaited them there.

## CHAPTER XII.

Chapter xii. to the end of chapter xxviii., give the covenant added to that of Sinai (see chap. xxix. 1)—the statutes and ordinances to be observed in the land. There would be a place



## 166 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

where Jehovah would put His name, to which they must bring their sacrifices, &c, and eat and rejoice with their households before Him, the Levite not being forgotten: they might eat flesh within their gates, only without the blood, but all consecrated things only in the place that Jehovah should choose. They were not even to inquire after the idolatrous customs of the nations destroyed before them.

## CHAPTER XIII.

False prophets, even with signs that came to pass, and any, however near of kin, that would seduce them to idolatry, to be put to death, and any city seduced to be utterly destroyed.

## CHAPTER XIV.

As the children of Jehovah, they were not to disfigure themselves, nor to defile themselves in eating of what was unclean, or that which dieth of itself, for they were a holy people to Him. The tithes and firstlings were

## HEADINGS OF CHAPTERS. 167

to be eaten with joy where He should place His name, save the tithe of every third year—to be given to the Levite, and eaten with the stranger, fatherless, and widow within their gates.

## CHAPTER XV.

The seventh year of release is to be observed, but must be no hindrance to lending or giving to the poor; the poor who sold themselves, when released must not be sent away empty; and the blessing of Jehovah should rest upon them in thus acting liberally.

## CHAPTER XVI.

Three times in the year all the men were to appear before Jehovah, each giving as he was able, in the place He should choose, to keep (1) the pass-over seven days, with unleavened bread, the bread of affliction, as the memorial of their deliverance; (2) the feast of weeks, seven weeks from putting in the sickle, with a free-will offering according as Jehovah had blessed them, to be celebrated

## 168 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

with joy, and including the household, the Levite and stranger, fatherless and widow, remembering their condition as bondmen in Egypt, and obedience ; (3) the feast of tabernacles, after the harvest and vintage, seven days, during which they should rejoice with their households, &c., in their feast, because Jehovah had blessed them in all the works of their hands.

Judges were to be appointed to judge justly. No symbol of idolatry to be connected with the altar of Jehovah, or tolerated : nor

## CHAPTER XVII.

sacrifice to Jehovah of what was blemished. Any one who transgressed the covenant by idolatry was to be stoned, at the mouth of two or three witnesses. Any matter of difficult judgment was to be determined by the priests or judges where Jehovah had put His name, and he who would not abide by it to be put to death. In anticipation of the desire for a king ; he was only to be such as Jehovah

## SATAN'S TEMPTATIONS. 169

should choose, not a stranger ; he was not to multiply horses from Egypt (and thus connect the people in any way with it), nor wives to estrange his heart, or riches, but to write out the law and be subject to it, that he might not be lifted up, but prolong his days in his kingdom.

---

## THE ORDER AND INTENT OF SATAN'S TEMPTATIONS.

OUR blessed Lord having spent thirty years in private life, and having taken His place with the godly remnant outside of the growing apostasy, was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. A man here for God, He is subjected to the power of Satan. He encountered everything against man. Adam had fallen under the power of the devil when surrounded by everything necessary for his comfort and happiness, but when the man of God's purpose comes He is assailed by Satan ; all his art is exerted to turn

## 170 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

aside and overcome the Holy One of God, where He had no natural advantage, where He was destitute of everything necessary for life and comfort ; in the wilderness for forty days tempted of the devil, and where instead of a garden of Eden, He was with the wild beasts. Nothing can give us a deeper sense of the malice of Satan, and the inability of evil to even conceive good, than the fact that Satan should have attempted to influence our Lord Jesus Christ. Evil judges of every one by itself ; where there is no good, no good can be imagined. Satan is allowed to tempt our Lord, and we see in the wicked skill which he adopts, how easily he can succeed when there is any susceptibility on which he can act. It was when Jesus was hungered that Satan proposes to Him to use His own power or means to relieve a natural claim every way proper to the nature. The Lord had been forty days enduring according to God's pleasure in the desert, and now when that service was over, and He was hungry, was it not

## SATAN'S TEMPTATIONS. 171

right and proper that He should use His own power to save Himself from a pressing want? To be hungry was right and proper, and now after the forty days why should He hesitate to use His own power or means to satisfy a just claim? It seemed every way commendable, but it would have been departure from simple and unwavering dependence on God; and therefore this claim of nature, right and proper in itself, He waived, in order that He might be a man fully dependent on God. He would start in the wilderness in the full virtue of the experience that forty years there would teach one—even “that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live.” In this temptation the attempt of Satan was to divert our Lord from simple dependence on God, by using His own means; and this is the first temptation to which we are subjected. The general idea of living by faith is that I am to turn to God for help or means

## 172 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

when I have none of my own. The very opposite is here, that when I have abundance of means I do not use them apart from God and His pleasure ; and hence there is often a greater exercise of faith when one has means, how and when to use them aright, than when one has none of one's own. In the latter case one waits to receive from the Lord. It requires more dependence to deny oneself when one has the power to gratify oneself than when one has not the power. It is singularly blessed to be so dependent on God that everything, however necessary and proper, is only appropriated as He may at the time direct. Thus, practically, "Neither said any of them that aught of the things which he possessed was his own." If this were truly our manner of life here, how wondrously we should be upheld in it, and how abundantly should we verify that "the just shall live by faith," because of the constant and tender manifestation of His love and care. We all know how little we start in the wilderness in this order of

## SATAN'S TEMPTATIONS. 173

faith. How little we like our surroundings to be a mere desert with wild beasts, the moral condition to which man's sin has reduced everything once so lovely. We like to see that there is a full supply for every need within our reach, as if we had never been driven from the garden of Eden. And moreover, it is not a fixed principle with us that seeing we are led by grace into quite a new path, we are privileged to be cast on God in faith for everything. Often the excuse for continuing in a wrong position is, "I must do something for my living." Evidently any one thus influenced has not faith for a true walk here. Independence marked and ruined the first man; dependence marked and honoured the last Adam—the Lord Jesus Christ. In a world alienated from God, it is not to be wondered at that His children are often baffled and straitened, but as exemplified by our Lord Jesus Christ, we are not to turn to man and to our own expedients at such a juncture, but to wait upon God who has brought us



## 174 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL

to Himself. If we are preserved from the first temptation, we may count on God to be preserved from the second.

In the second, Satan offers our Lord the world if He would do homage to him. The Lord meets this temptation with great indignation: "Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." The distinction and glory of this world are now in the hands of the god of this world, and any one not practically walking in daily dependence on God, superior in every detail to the first temptation, seeks and values the power and honour of this world, and though he does not in form or in words do homage to Satan, he, unknown to himself, is ensnared. When a snare is seen it is no snare. His heart first admires and longs after the world, and then all his powers of mind and body are enslaved to acquire it; and thus in his adulation of the world he is doing homage to the present possessor of it, and Satan rewards him

## SATAN'S TEMPTATIONS. 175

according to the measure of his homage to him. Fearful position for the child of God ! It is not merely a lucrative business. Paul flourished in his business at Ephesus, and he could promise to the Philippians, "My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus;" but it is in the desire to possess that the evil is. "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition;" and yet in the same chapter (1 Tim. vi.), verse 17, he instructs rich men how to act. In the desire to possess they "have erred from the faith." They are seeking to obtain a position under the god of this world, and very often they use their acquisition to gratify the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye and the pride of life. A man might be very worldly who ministered only to the pleasure of his eye. But beside all this, there generally follows when the world is thus admired, great pleasure in receiving

## 176 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

worldly honours ; gladly accepting rule and distinction in a scene of which Satan is the god. It is sad to see the many Christians thus beguiled by Satan. First, their means are greatly increased, and then they are not only worldly in their ways and tastes, but this often culminates in their seeking and accepting posts of honour and distinction in the world, so incongruous for the followers of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The third temptation was the attempt of Satan to induce our Lord to do an act which would test and establish that He was the object of God's care and interest. The Lord did not want any proof or confirmation of His Father's care ; and hence He replies, "It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Now as a rule, when a Christian has fallen under the two preceding temptations, as he has conscience he falls into this. He likes and seeks to be signalised by God in some open manner. I have no doubt that it is from this arises generally the

## SATAN'S TEMPTATIONS. 177

desire to see "results," and there is often a way of speaking of results which indicates that they are evidences of God's favour and recognition of the instrument, and consequently great disheartenment when they do not occur. It is plain that if there were a true and close walking with the Lord, in concert with His mind, it is His approval which would be the stay and cheer of the heart and not anything visible to man, for of course the rejoicing would not be the less at a great tide of blessing, because one had been in a greater and fuller way already gladdened by the Lord. There are various ways in which the worldly Christian seeks to assure his conscience that he is in the favour of God, not only with regard to earthly prosperity, but in the most damaging way of all, to be signalised as a religious man while in the full swing of the world. Hence "Faith-healing" as well as other things are resorted to in order to obtain religious distinction, some distinct intimation that God is on their

## 178 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

side. It is a well-known remark that hardly one survives a religious reputation. The true heart feels that there could be no greater mark or evidence of His favour and support, than the light of His countenance and the support of His hand, and wants no other.

The Lord keep us near Himself, and daily preserved from the temptations of the devil.

---

 THE LORD'S PRESENCE.

No. 5.

## THE REMNANT.

THE more steadily we adhere to the truth that the Lord's chief interest is here, the better we understand it as it is in His mind and purpose, the more must we own and be humbled at the present condition of the assembly. There is a great difference between losing our interest in the church when all the outward marks of strength and ability have disappeared; and, on the

## THE LORD'S PRESENCE. 179

other hand, investing a few who, though feeble, have faith in God with no distinction beyond that of a mere remnant, thankful that at best they are only convalescent, through mercy recovering from the general and widespread declension ; always bearing in mind that the more their honesty as to their true position, the more effectual they are in helping on their fellows. They make no attempt to appear as if they had not been patients afflicted similarly to them, but as they recovered through grace, they are the more qualified to care for and help those of their brethren who as yet have not recovered. This is the true spirit and power of the recovered or revived ones in this day. There are three snares : one, to assume that the church is flourishing and advancing in prosperity ; second, to ignore the church altogether as beyond remedy, because there is no ground for expecting that it will ever be in order again ; third, the attempt to affect a restoration or a reformed church, assuming to be something con-

## 180 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

spicuous or imposing, as if a part of the church could ever present the moral aspect belonging to the whole when in order and united. It is not true sensibility, even in a family, when some of them have recovered from a common loss or affliction, that they should try to appear as if they had no connection with the others still unreleased from the family affliction. Surely it becomes those who have recovered, to be marked, on the one hand, by a humble and deep consideration for their fellows still in captivity, and, on the other hand, by an unwavering faithfulness and zeal to recover the privileges, and fulfil the responsibilities which attach to them in common.

When thus honest we guard against the course which has entailed so much sorrow and disgrace on the church, for we feel we are still under the common reproach. "If one member suffer, all the members suffer with it," and we also seek the more to strengthen the things that remain, and thus in

## THE LORD'S PRESENCE. 181

degree repair our loss. No one can amend his position if he does not realise it. If I cannot see that I have fallen from a great height, how can I really seek to rise to it, or rightly estimate the measure of my fall ?

Hence every one true to the Lord in the time of declension, is led to apprehend the standard to which he is called, and at the same time to be sensibly afflicted at the departure from it, into which he, in common with his brethren, has fallen.

We have dwelt in a previous paper on the unchangeable nature of the divine purpose, and how every faithful one clings to it. Now concurrently with this, we should bear in mind that we are chargeable with the declension of the assembly as a whole, and that, in seeking to strengthen the things that remain, we admit that we belong to it, and therefore the more we seek to recover, the more we carry ourselves like men who feel that they are under a just reproach of which they would be conscientiously clear. Like members



## 182 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

of a family under reproach for a long course of folly, every one of the family bears the reproach while even personally clear of it.

I mean that there is no attempt to escape from the reproach of declension which attaches to the assembly, while in every way labouring to be extricated from the snares in which as a whole it has been taken. There is not an assumption of anything new, but an endeavour through grace to emerge from the common degradation — a practical witness of the possibility of escape. The reproach resting on the assembly could never be removed while the mass are practically deserving it, and no one belonging to it can free himself of the aspersion on the whole, though he may not personally deserve it. There must ever be in those who have escaped, the sense of being a poor and afflicted people, even though greatly helped by the Lord to hold fast His word and not deny His name. I think a widow with an only son is a very good illustration of the true remnant,

## THE LORD'S PRESENCE. 183

ever bearing on her heart the loss she has sustained, and at the same time looking for increasing cheer and support from her son. Thus, I believe, every one true to the Lord now has ever the sense of an irreparable loss, but at the same time is sustained with the assurance that His power is with us for support and cheer.

It is helpful to look at the remnant character in scripture.

It is said that a man of great age resembles what he was in infancy. The sunset is as beautiful as the sunrise. There is a return to the simple beauty of the beginning. This is true of the remnant. The undeveloped and unadulterated traits of the beginning come out, and are reverted to at the close. It must be of the beginning or it is not a remnant. The outer in one sense perishes while the inner is renewed. Thus it was with Jacob when dying, truly the remnant of the Abrahamic period: he had little bodily strength, weak indeed in the eyes of man, no hope of ever resuming his

## 184 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

former appearance in man's eyes, yet he was not without divine strength—he had a little. He worshipped God. God was his resource. He blessed Joseph's sons ; he was alive to God's interests on the earth ; but he was, as to himself, absolutely disconnected from everything here. Rachel had died and was buried at Bethlehem. His faith in God was distinct and positive, and he was fully a pilgrim and a stranger on the earth.

Samuel is the remnant of the period of Israel's history in the land, which is typical of the church period ; because during that time they were under the government of God without any form of human government. We know how utterly they had failed. The ark of God had been taken, and Ichabod described their state politically. Samuel is fully sensible of their humiliation ; he fully accepts it ; but while openly exposing their apostate condition, he declares that the Lord abideth faithful, and that if they would put away false gods, and serve the Lord only, He

## THE LORD'S PRESENCE. 185

would deliver them out of the hands of the Philistines. Israel were greatly humiliated ; they were in the land, on the true ground for every blessing, but the enemy so overpowered them that they enjoyed nothing ; they were but slaves in their own houses. Samuel does not propose to Israel to do anything but to be separate from evil, and that he would pray for them. There is no appearance of strength, there is nothing conspicuous, there is nothing to behold ; but the Lord hears, and there is complete deliverance. Samuel, while fully sensible that Ichabod describes them as a nation, and while he bows under this reproach, reckons on God to replace them in the blessings which He had given them. They are restored to the quiet possession of the land as at the first, but the reproach on them as a nation was not removed. They are restored to the quiet enjoyment of the land similar to the days of Joshua, but there is no return to the ostensible position as a nation which they occupied in his day. The great blessing of that day is

## 186 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

restored ; and this is the characteristic feature of the remnant ; a return through grace to the blessings to which they are called of God, but no return to the outward glory which at first distinguished them.

Thus with the remnant from Babylon. They reached the land, they built the temple and the walls of the city. A remnant forfeits its chief blessing if by any means it overlooks God's chief interest at the time with which it is immediately identified. The returned captives were right when they held a feast of tabernacles on their return to the land, but because they, when obstructed after a good beginning, had allowed the house of God—His chief interest at the time—to lie waste, the Lord says to them : “Ye looked for much, and, lo, it came to little ; and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it. Why ? saith the Lord of hosts. Because of mine house that is waste, and ye run every man unto his own house.” This is very instructive, and shews that it is not enough to

## THE LORD'S PRESENCE. 187

regain the right ground, and to celebrate the fulness of God's grace there ; but we must devote ourselves sedulously to God's chief interest, in spite of all opposition, and if we do not, we shall forfeit the very blessings of our position.

Simeon and Anna were the remnant who greeted our Lord in the temple. They fully expressed the characteristics of a true remnant, while to a human eye they could hardly command any attention. Simeon, on the one hand, waiting for the consolation of Israel, counted on God, in spite of the disorder and apostasy all round ; and Anna, on the other hand, departed not from the temple—God's chief interest at the time—but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. The remnant ever maintains that God abideth faithful, that He is as good as ever, whatever or however great has been man's departure, and that His interest is to be their one interest, however weak or few the number to uphold it.

## 188 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

It remains for us now to ascertain how the faithful in this time would be characterised, in keeping with the principles which are essentially connected with the faithful few in any day of declension or apostasy.

This is the assembly period, and the body of Christ is on the earth. Because it is His body it cannot be here as a remnant or as a fractional part. That it is greatly disorganised, and that the unity of the Spirit is not maintained, cannot, alas! be denied; but while this is true of the body, there is also the house aspect of the assembly, and this, in the eyes of man, is a ruin, and it is here that the remnant characteristics are fully exemplified.

The first thing, then, that marks the remnant of this day, is the sense of their smallness and feebleness; but with this twofold assurance: that God abideth faithful, that the Holy Ghost dwells with us and in us, and in all the power and resources that He was in the brightest day. There is no lack in any power for testimony, the only lack

## THE LORD'S PRESENCE. 189

is in the hands and hearts to make His power available ; for God has not given us the spirit of fear but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Secondly, the Lord's chief interest, the assembly, the treasure hid in the field, is as much His interest this day as ever it was, and every one's blessing is commensurate with the degree in which Christ's interest is his interest. So while there is nothing to command the attention of man, when the assembly has outwardly fallen into ruins, and when we cannot expect it to be reconstructed, yet then we enjoy the undiminished resources of God, and we are as sedulously set for Christ's interest in the church which is His body, as in the brightest day ; so that up to the close it will be true, that the Spirit and the bride are found here in company, looking out for and hailing the return of our Lord. Paul, in 2 Timothy iv. 16, 17, " At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me : I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. Notwithstanding the Lord stood with



## 190 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

me, and strengthened me ; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear : and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion," is a sample of the true remnant, faithful to the Lord's interest, though reduced to an unit, and made distinctly sensible of the Lord's power to sustain him. While in our Lord's words respecting John, in John xxi. 22, there is an intimation that a John would be here to receive Him.

May each of us seek to have more of the grace of a Paul or of a John, that we may be in the true remnant character here until He come.

---

 F R A G M E N T S .

LUKE XXII. 24-27.

THE Lord, ever full of gentleness and meekness, forgets Himself in His care for His disciples, and says to them, "He that is greatest among you let him be as the younger," &c. He knows how to teach them by His own example

what the love of God is ; and at the same time He shews them the grace that is in Him, and all the faithfulness for which they are indebted to Him. It is as though He had said, *Ye need not raise yourselves, My Father will raise you.* Instead of being irritated by the abominable conduct of His disciples, He shews them that if there is no grace in men there is grace in *one Man*—that is in Himself. This grace is perfect in Jesus. The moment Peter felt the eye of Jesus was turned upon him, he went out and it was all over—he had learnt what he was. The sin was committed and could not be undone. We often commit faults which are irreparable, from confidence in the flesh. When the flesh is too strong God often permits us to fall, because we are not in that precious state of dependence which would preserve us. Perfect as was the pardon of Peter, he could never forget his sin. If a Christian does not walk under a constant sense of his infirmity, God leaves him in the presence of Satan

## 192 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

that he may there be taught it. Jacob halted all his life. Why was this? It was because he had halted morally during one and twenty years of his life. If the Lord leave us in difficulty it is because there is something in us to be broken down. If in the midst of painful circumstances you cannot understand the teaching, God knows what it is, and He leaves you there to be sifted, in order to bring you by this means to a deeper knowledge of Him and of yourself.

---

THANK God, notwithstanding all our weakness, there is One who knows what He Himself has set at the bottom of our hearts, and if He searches us, and makes us know ourselves, and the root of evil in us, He recognises still lower down, that which He has created there, and He fills with grace that which His grace has put there, and confides in this grace in us, maintained by the constant stream of His grace when once we have been humbled enough.

J. N. D.

## HEADINGS OF CHAPTERS.

### DEUTERONOMY.

#### CHAPTER XVIII.

THE portion of the priests the Levites, as of the whole tribe, in the sacrifices and the firstfruits offered to Jehovah. They are forbidden to do after the abominations of the nations—driven out before them on account of those abominations. A prophet like Moses would be raised up to them to whom they should hearken; the non-fulfilment of what was spoken, the test of a false one.

#### CHAPTER XIX.

The distinction between him who killed another without hatred and the murderer is maintained by the cities of refuge to be appointed in the land for the former; the murderer must die by the avenger of blood. The landmark was not to be removed. The law of testimony, and in case of false witness.

## 194 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

## CHAPTER XX.

Directions in case of war : the priest should encourage the people on the ground of Jehovah's presence with them ; any one who had not enjoyed possession of house or vineyard or betrothed wife, or who was fearful was to return to his house ; if the war were with a city outside those of the Canaanites (who were to be utterly destroyed, that they might not learn their abominations) they might come to terms with it, and make the inhabitants tributaries to serve them ; if it would not make peace, they were to kill the men and take the rest as spoil.

## CHAPTER XXI.

In the case of a man found slain, the elders of the nearest city must declare their innocence of it, and expiate it by the blood of a heifer that had not known the yoke : in the case of two wives, one beloved and the other hated, the son of the hated wife, if the firstborn, is not to be displaced by the

## HEADINGS OF CHAPTERS. 195

son of the beloved wife : the rebellious son is to be brought out before the elders of the city, and put to death—that all evil may be put away from them. The body of a criminal who had been hung was not to be left hanging on the tree all night, as accursed, that the land be not defiled.

## CHAPTER XXII.

Ordinances of humanity and mercy ; against mixture of divers seeds, &c. : in case of an unfounded charge against a woman taken to wife : the punishment of death in adultery, and of various forms of impurity.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

Of what excludes from the congregation of Jehovah--the bastard, Ammonite and Moabite and their descendants, even to the tenth generation (the descendants of an Egyptian may enter in the third generation): of purity in the camp in time of war as suited to Jehovah's presence in it : against

## 196 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

moral corruption ; taking interest of an Israelite ; as to the performance of vows : and what was permitted and forbidden in passing through a neighbour's vineyard or cornfield.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

A divorced woman become another man's wife must not be taken back by him who divorced her : consideration for the poor in the matter of pledges and wages, and the gleanings of the harvest and vineyard.

## CHAPTER XXV.

In judicial proceedings, stripes to him who is worthy of them may not exceed forty, lest one of their brethren should become vile in their eyes : the duty of a husband's brother to raise up seed unto him in case of dying childless, that his name be not put out of Israel : the punishment of immodesty : of just weights and measures. The remembrance of Amalek to be blotted out for ever.

## FORGIVENESS OF SINS.

THE Lord is presented to us in John i. 29, 33, as the Lamb of God, the taker away of the sin of the world, and also as the baptiser with the Holy Ghost. These are the two great parts of His work, the clearing away of sin and its effects so that finally it shall no more be found in the universe of God, and the bringing in of eternal blessing in the power of the Holy Ghost. Though the full effects of both these parts will not be known until every enemy is subjected, and God shall be all in all, yet on the cross the first part was so far accomplished, that every question about sin, whether glorifying God as to it, or setting man free in his conscience before God and cleansing him from guilt, was there settled. "Once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." (Heb. ix. 26.)



## 198 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

Then, as the consequence of this work of expiation and cleansing—the Lord Jesus having taken His place on high as the risen and glorified man, He has sent down the Holy Ghost to dwell with, and be in, those so cleansed.

It is purposed in this paper to suggest a few thoughts in connection with that aspect of the death of Christ which relates to forgiveness of sins and moral cleansing, as introducing into the second part of the work of the Lord Jesus—the baptising with the Holy Ghost.

The expression “forgiveness (or remission) of sins,” when used in an abstract manner in scripture, would seem to contain more in it than the mere fact of a man’s sins being forgiven. In order to forgiveness of sins being preached “through this man” (Acts xiii. 38), it must have been necessary to the announcement of such a truth that everything that was offensive to the holy nature of God should be removed from His sight, so that not merely could it be said to a sinner,

## FORGIVENESS OF SINS. 199

“Thy sins are forgiven thee,” but, that by means of death and bloodshedding God had been so glorified as to sins, that He could commission forgiveness of sins *to be preached*. In Ephesians i. 7 it is said, “In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of offences,” thus our entrance into the blessing of the full cleansing from sins is connected with redemption, so also in Colossians i. 14. The connection of this word redemption with the forgiveness of sins tells us that the washing away of our whole past history, as a history of offences and sins committed, is also the opening out of a new history in the liberty of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. Not that this is the subject of Ephesians, but it is so mentioned to bring out the riches of grace. This cleansing is really the washing of death, and hence is connected with baptism as a figure of death. Thus Peter says (Acts ii. 38), “Repent and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive

## 200 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

the gift of the Holy Ghost." So also Ananias to Paul (Acts xxii. 16), "Arise and be baptised, and wash away thy sins." His whole past history, whether as an exemplary Jew or as a hater and persecutor of Jesus, was washed away in the figure of death, and when he opens his eyes it is to begin a new history as filled with the Holy Ghost.

It will thus be seen that as justification—that is, God's judicial estimate of and dealing with a person—embraces not only the clearing away of guilt in virtue of death and bloodshedding, and according to divine righteousness from one who believes, but also through the resurrection of Christ the setting of that one righteously in life—the life of Christ risen; so the "forgiveness of sins" carries with it the opening out of an entirely new history, in connection with Christ risen, by the power of the Holy Ghost of a man who knows the washing away of sins by the death of Christ. The sins indeed are gone from *the eye of God*, and it can also be said, that "far as the east is

## FORGIVENESS OF SINS. 201

from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions *from us.*" (Ps. ciii. 12.) The past history of man in the flesh is gone in death, and the new history is characterised by the life and power of the Spirit of God.

The circumstances of the cleansing of the leper may help us in the understanding of what has been said.

Two birds alive and clean are taken. One is killed in an earthen vessel over running water ; so Christ offered Himself through the eternal Spirit without spot to God ; but more, the whole of that which represents the growth and glory of man in the flesh—the cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop—are dipped in the blood of the dead bird. These with the living bird also dipped in the blood are used to sprinkle the leper, and he is pronounced clean. As to the past life of sins, that is ended and he is clean *from* it, but the living bird is now let loose into the open field, and liberty of life in Christ risen is thus known. Now comes the question where this new life is to find its place

H 2

## 202 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

and home. The application to the leper of the death and resurrection of Christ sets him as cleansed and in liberty of life—free from the law of sin and death according to the declaration of God's priest, but he must so know what cleansing is, that he can enter into the company of saints and find his place in the worship of the sanctuary of God. He is meet for the inheritance of the saints in light (Col. i. 12), but he must correspond to it on earth. His clothes are washed, habits and ways of the old man are washed away. The hair is all shaved, the strength and beauty of nature are laid aside, and the man washed himself takes his place first in the camp, and then as fit to be presented at the door of the tabernacle, a double testimony to his cleansing. At the door of the tabernacle he learns more of the value of that which has taken away his guilt. The word used for trespass-offering is the same word as for guiltiness. (Sec chap. v. 2, 3.) The blood of that which met his guilt, which severed him

# FORGIVENESS OF SINS. 203

from the past life of sins and trespasses, is the blood which consecrates him to the obedience of action and walk which suit the place into which he is brought, into the fellowship of saints and the presence of God in His sanctuary—but he is brought where the full energy and power of the Spirit of God are in action, figured by the sprinkling of the oil seven times *before the Lord*, and he is sanctified by the Holy Ghost to obedience in action and walk—the whole man being under the anointing of the Spirit of God. In what other power could the new history be carried out?

The rejection of Christ by man and His being glorified in heavenly glory, have brought out further that the new history, which is begun in the life of Christ risen, has now its proper sphere in the place where Christ is, and not in the place where He is not. It has been proved by the cross of Christ that man is in determined opposition to God and utterly lost. The sending down of the Holy Ghost by a rejected

## 204 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

and glorified Christ, is the demonstration that it is so. Thus the washing away of sins sets us free to belong to that which is outside the scene of His rejection : "He gave himself for our sins that he might deliver us from this present evil world." A religion even which would connect us with the world would falsify the cleansing which we have in His death.

One more thought presents itself in relation to this subject. When the blood was carried into the holiest to make propitiation, and so to glorify God in respect of sins, the Victim was burnt without the camp. This part of the work of Christ laid the foundation for all blessing. Having accomplished it, He could bless the saints associated with Himself—those in whose midst He could utter His own deep joy—in His own blessing in the heavens ; He could praise in the great congregation of Israel, and blessing could be extended to the ends of the world, in that they will turn to the Lord. The work of propitiation *Godward* enabled our Lord

# FORGIVENESS OF SINS. 205

Jesus Christ to proclaim *what God was* as revealed in His name to His brethren and to own them as such ; but when the victim's blood was shed to meet the guiltiness of the *offerer*, then the priest ate the sin or trespass-offering in the holy place. (Lev. vi. 26.) Here is disclosed to us that deep, holy love which could enter into the joy of having cleansed us from all the guilt which lay upon us, and which excluded us from God in holiness and love—"Who *his own self* bare *our* sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead [the departed] from sins might live unto righteousness." (1 Peter ii. 24.) He has confessed *my* sins as His own and suffered for them, that He might have the joy of bringing *me* as cleansed where the holy love of God could delight in me. This is a joy peculiarly His own, one which Aaron was unable to enter into (Lev. x. 16, 20), Christ alone will have this amongst all His joys, that of having so taken up the personal history of each as to cleanse each one from all the past. In each



## 206 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

one then there will be that holy delight of love known to that individual believer as between himself and Christ, besides the common joys of the saints. Well may it be said, "It is most holy."

"With Thee in garments white,  
Lord Jesus, we shall walk,  
And *spotless* in that heavenly light,  
Of all Thy sufferings talk."

T. H. R.

---

## "THE MORNING AND EVENING LAMB."

### NUMBERS XXVIII.

It is wonderful that in Old Testament types (as now plainly in New Testament fact), God should condescend to tell me *His* estimation of the work of the cross. The first of the offerings mentioned in Leviticus is the burnt-offering. It brings before us the Lord Jesus offering up Himself to God. But it is for atonement, and as that, all goes up to God as "a sweet savour." God thus expresses His satisfaction in

## THE MORNING AND EVENING LAMB. 207

the work of Christ, and therefore His satisfaction respecting us for whom He undertook the work, for we read of the offences, "And it shall be accepted for him to make atonement." (Lev. i.) All went up to God as a "sweet-smelling savour." (Num. xxviii. 6, 8, 13, 27, &c.)

It is this blessed fact—what, when tested fully, the Lord Jesus was and is to the heart of God, which is presented to us in this Numbers xxviii., in the burnt-offering of the morning and the evening lamb. It is presented for a "sweet savour" to God. We learn from this chapter and the next, that Christ is set forth as God's continual delight. God begins all the "*times*" of His people with Christ, "the sweet savour" to Himself, and He ends them, as each evening closes over the camp, with Christ. It is a wonderful rest to my heart to see it. It was the record of each day. In extra delight (if we may speak of such a thing respecting Him, all of whose ways are excellent), for there was more offered, He begins all their sabbaths with Christ (ver. 9),

## 208 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

and also every fresh month we find the same. (Ver. 11.) So also in all their feasts (vers. 19, 27, &c.), that which we first find presented is Christ as a "sweet savour" to God. In the daily sacrifice the lamb was to be offered in the morning and the lamb in the evening. Christ, in His offering of Himself, is the changeless rest, delight, and satisfaction to the heart of God. God alone can fully estimate what the Lord Jesus was in all His excellences as thus devoting Himself to death, but what He wishes me to know is that in all that "sweet savour" which expresses it, and which God delights in, I am accepted. (Lev. i. 3, 4.)

God has thus placed Christ in the hands of His people to be continually presented to Him, and by it He desires to associate *us* in the delight of His own heart. Read verses 2, 3, "*Thy offering. . . . This is the offering made by fire which ye shall offer unto the Lord.*" The Israelites drew nigh to God in the consciousness that they were bringing to Him, in the burnt-

## THE MORNING AND EVENING LAMB. 209

offering, that which completely satisfied Him. It was a "sweet savour." A Christian knows that it is only Christ as the burnt-offering—Christ in His own perfect work, that meets with full satisfaction the heart of God, but God desires he *should* know it. I am accepted in the offering that I bring.

How do we begin our days? God always begins with Christ. How do we end the day? God ends it with Christ. Must we not each of us admit, as each day closes, how poorly *we* have gone through the day? When we remember all the provision that grace has made for us to carry us safely through, yet how many a failure and breakdown has He seen in each of us, if only one day's journey in the wilderness be contemplated! Perhaps the day was not begun either with God's burnt-offering, the morning Lamb.

What then is the resource? Is it not what there is for us in the heart of God? It is Christ. The day is over, and many a stumble, many an exercise of my will has He seen, which no other

## 210 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

eye save His has noted, but while my only true place is confession there ascends up to Him as each evening closes around the camp of His beloved, failing people, the smoke of that precious burnt-offering, the Lamb—the “sweet savour” which God delights in (His own), and in *that*, each one of His people individually and all of them collectively, stand accepted before Him.

Oh, the grace of His heart that would have you *always* at rest with Him! Oh the *tenderness* of that grace which (never wrong) tells us afresh every morning, and afresh every evening, of God’s own delight in His beloved Son in whom *we* are accepted!

Many of us begin the day with prayer and end it with prayer. Who will say anything against it? But your prayers will be woefully defective, yes, will be only hopeless wailings, if you have not learnt how personally you stand accepted before God *always*, through the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is what we are instructed in by the morning and evening offering

## THE MORNING AND EVENING LAMB. 211

in this chapter. If I have not the knowledge of my own personal acceptance ere I ask anything in prayer, what is my Christianity worth? This state of things in the soul will account for the almost hopeless expressions that are uttered, as though it were very doubtful if God would answer *anything* that we ask. The one who prays has *himself* and his own worthiness before God, and not Christ's. I am worthy of nothing, but what is He worthy of, and what will God withhold that may be for the glory of the Son who on earth glorified Him? If also we do not get answers immediate, to what is asked in His name, yet the heart has received a very great lift out of its own immediate wants by seeing Him in whom God delights as a "sweet savour," and who is *always* thus His delight. Prayer may thus result in praise and thanksgiving according to Philippians iv. 6, 7.

Now if God desires us to begin and to end all our "times" thus with Christ, it surely is that He also desires

## 212 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

to have our hearts always and perfectly at rest before Him. "My times are in thy hand." (Ps. xxxi.) He wishes us to offer His offerings (Heb. xiii. 15) to Him "in their season." (See end of verse 2.) By so doing shall we learn somewhat the meaning of that word, "Thou makest the outgoings of the morning and the evening to rejoice" (to sing with joy\*). (Psalm lxv. 8.) It is the true ground of joy to have Christ thus before the soul.

We may connect what we have looked at in the Old Testament with one passage in the New. "Christ also hath loved us and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour." (Eph. v. 2.) This savour never ceases to ascend to Him, and He wishes us to know it. Why?

H. C. A.

\* J. N. D.'s French Bible.



## THE LORD'S PRESENCE.

No. 6.

### THE TRUTH IS THERE.

THE assembly in its true character is the pillar and base of the truth. It could not be otherwise ; where Christ is the centre and source of all light there the truth must be, not in a partial way, but as a whole. This cannot be too much insisted on. It is a mark of His presence so important and peculiar that, as a rule, every section of the church shelters itself under the conviction that it has more truth than others ; while they could not venture to assert that they only had “the truth.” It could not be possible that only parts of the truth would be in the assembly where the Lord vouchsafed His presence. The great effect of His presence is to establish the truth, for He is “the truth ;” and hence, when the Holy



## 214 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

Ghost came to testify of Him, He is called "the Spirit of truth." The great effort of the enemy is ever in different ways to withstand the truth : "As Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth." The attempt of the enemy now is the same as with the magicians in another day. It is the truth that is opposed. Timothy was qualified to overcome the magicians of this day. Firstly, he had thoroughly known Paul's doctrine and all the marks connected with it. He was to continue in the things he had learned, and had been assured of, knowing of whom he had learned them ; and in addition to this, and most important, that from a child he had known the holy scriptures which were able to make him wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. Furthermore, the time would come when those who had accepted the truth would turn away their ear from it, and be turned after fables.

We thus see that the maintenance of the truth was the great proof of

## THE LORD'S PRESENCE. 215

spiritual power—the doctrine of the Christ in reality, while any departure from it was an evidence of positive departure from Christ. The highest characteristic of the faithful in the closing day would be “Thou hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.” What would the assembly be without Christ? and where He is, the truth is. Hence in a day like this, when several companies, each opposed to the other, assume to have the Lord in their midst, it is of all importance to ascertain the special privileges which are inseparable from His presence. Surely when He vouchsafes His presence there must be a sense of the truth, a love of it, and a growing acquaintance with it. Where He is in the midst there must be, not only an enjoyment of certain parts of the truth, but surely as He is known, however dark and ignorant each one would be at first, there would be a readiness for it and a continued advance in it.

The Lord's presence with His own is

## 216 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

more definite now than the ark of the covenant in another day ; and as it is plain that the ark of the covenant could not be with more than one company of Israel, and that it could not be with any number of Israelites who did not repair to the place where He was pleased to record His name, neither could the Lord's presence be with the greatest number of saints, if they were in any way gathered contrary to, or not in communion with, those already gathered to His name. If there be one company in a place to which He vouchsafes His presence, no other company in opposition to that company can obtain His presence.

It is evident, then, that where He is, there the truth will be not only more fully accepted and taught, but there will be a marked advance in it as to apprehension and practical power. The fulness of the truth in a company is a great proof of the Lord being there ; while the surrender of it, or indifference about it, is clear evidence that His presence is not known there.

## THE LORD'S PRESENCE. 217

We should ascertain first what the truth is, and then see whether we uphold it, or where it is upheld.

We learn from Colossians i. 23-25 that there are two ministries: the ministry of the gospel and the ministry of the church. "If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister. Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church: whereof I am a minister." Now any company, no matter how great their pretensions, who do not accept or uphold these two ministries in their distinctness and scope, could not command the confidence of their fellow-Christians. I do not say that every individual forming that company would be intelligent in the two ministries. What I maintain is that they are avowedly

## 218 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

accepted there. Surely any company to whom the Lord vouchsafes His presence, that company as a whole (I do not speak of any fraction of it) would be led by Him to know definitely what He had done to place us in unclouded nearness to Himself as He is now ; and secondly, the simple fact of our relationship to Him. The one is the gospel, the other the church. There is necessarily a great difference in the measure of individual faith as to these ministries, but I only insist that the assembly accepts them for their faith.

I have pressed, in a former paper, that unless I know the efficacy of Christ's work for me, I could not enjoy His presence in glory. If I cannot enter into the effect of His accomplished work I do not understand the gospel, and I am not enjoying His presence, even though deriving blessing from being in the place where He is. And if I do not understand my relationship to Him, surely I cannot act in concert with Him as a mem-

## THE LORD'S PRESENCE. 219

ber of the body of which He is the head.

The first great test is whether those who assume to have the Lord's presence in their midst know the gospel so fully that they enjoy His presence—sensibly fit for it as if they were in heaven, and thus that they are really gathered to His name. No one could be gathered to His name in reality who had not in faith renounced every other name—had not accepted that through the grace of God; not only are all his sins forgiven, but that his state as a child of Adam has been judicially terminated in the cross of Christ, so that he now enjoys Christ's presence as having put off the body of the flesh which has been cut off in the cross. Thus the apostle insists in Galatians “that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.” It is plain that unless I know the gospel which places me, fit for Christ's presence, in glory—of a like order with Himself as Man, “all of one”—I could not be gathered to His name, and I

## 220 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

could not enjoy His presence. Unless a man forsake all that he hath, he cannot be His disciple; hence no one can glory in His presence, but apart from all that he is in the flesh, for no flesh can glory there, and Christ's own flesh was rent in order to make a way for the believer into the holiest where He is, so that "as he is, so are we in this world." If this portion of the truth is not maintained by any company, surely the Lord's presence, however much they might desire it, could not be known there. I do not mean to aver that every one forming the company must be up to this measure, but I say, that if this measure is not accepted and taught there, they could not be gathered to His name and He would not be there.

Next, surely those who are gathered to His name and enjoy His presence cannot be there for any time without apprehending in measure and joy of heart the relationship which subsists between Himself and the members of His body. Thus the two ministries

## THE LORD'S PRESENCE. 221

must be known and accepted—the truth in its scope—by those gathered to His name.

Now in the scope of the truth there are four great essential parts. The first, that Christ has been on this earth and that He died for us and rose again. The two next are present: namely, that Christ is in heaven, and that the Holy Spirit is dwelling here, in the believer and in the house of God. The fourth is future: namely, the return of our Lord.

Now while there might be a formal or verbal acceptance of the truth as embraced in the two ministries, it must affect one's walk in every detail to own and be influenced by the four great parts I have named. I need not refer to the first, every believer owns and rejoices in it; but the two which are present, namely, that Christ is in heaven, and that the Holy Ghost is dwelling here, are the tests as to our measure and enjoyment of the truth. It is plain that the mystery could not be known if these parts were not



## 222 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

known, and yet it is the practical maintenance of these parts which proves that the other is held. How could any one truly own that Christ was in heaven, and at the same time seek or desire to make himself at home or improve his position here ; or how could he venture to do so, were he led by the Holy Ghost dwelling in him, especially as he accepts that he is a member of His body ? The saint who in heart believes and owns that Christ the Head—his Head—is in heaven, cannot but seek the things which are above where Christ sitteth, and his only power and joy here are through the Holy Ghost, as He leads him individually and in the house of God. There is no surer mark of decline or the inclination to decline than the surrender of or disinclination for heavenly things. There can be no real apprehension of the church as the mystery of God, unless Christ be seen in heaven, and unless the Holy Spirit be here dwelling in the believer. It is not as a rule that the scope of doctrine

## THE LORD'S PRESENCE. 223

is rejected, but the heart, having turned to earth and being detained there by one interest or another, becomes unwilling to be diverted from it, and thus the heavenly character and interest of the saint is not only weakened, but at length refused. Thus all in Asia turned away from Paul.

No matter how clearly a man may hold truth, there is necessarily a fatal defect somewhere if he is not characterised by the two great present fundamental facts, or truths; even by the *first* (the gospel), the believer is connected with heaven. Paul insists on this to the Colossians, in order that he might lead them on to the mystery. Can anything be more self-evident than if Christ is in heaven, and I am holding the Head, that my citizenship is in heaven, and that according to my reality, I set my mind on things above, and not on things on the earth? If a man in faith hold the two ministries, then he must be heavenly-minded, and his power and support here is the Holy Ghost dwell-

## 224 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

ing in himself and in the house of God. I have dwelt long on this point, because not only is it here that the defect is betrayed, but here a sure evidence of holding the truth is given.

Now the one whose heart is in heaven and who is led here by the Holy Ghost dwelling in him, is not only a true light in the darkness, but he knows how to behave himself in the house of God; he understands the kingdom of heaven in the absence of the King. And the closing fact is ever his prospect; he purifies himself even as He is pure, he looks out for the return of the Lord, as one of the bride in company with the Spirit inviting Him to come, and, until He come, attending to every circle of His interest here on earth, in anticipation and preparation for His coming.

---

WE cannot get the ways of strangers if we have not the hearts of strangers. Everything works from within, if God has worked within. W. T. T.

## HEADINGS OF CHAPTERS.

### DEUTERONOMY.

#### CHAPTER XXVI.

THE individual offering of the first-fruits of the land and worship accompanying it, based on the full enjoyment in the land of the effect of the promises, and the confession of it, recalling the condition in which they had been found, their oppression in Egypt and cry, and Jehovah's answer by the display of His power in their redemption out of it, and bringing into the land of promise : the firstfruits are presented, and then the offerer is to rejoice in the good given, and in the spirit of grace take in the Levite and the stranger. In the third year, the year of tithing, in connection with that which was set apart for the Levite and needy, they were to declare their obedience and uprightness in not misappropriating it in any forbidden or

## 226 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

profane way, and upon this ground look for Jehovah's blessing on His people and the land. In view of obedience to all that had been thus set before them, they avouched Jehovah that day to be their God, and He them to be His people.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

On passing over Jordan, the law, as the principle of their relationship with Jehovah, was to be written on great stones set up on Ebal, and an altar reared there upon which to offer burnt-offerings and peace-offerings. The people were to be divided into two—the one to stand upon Gerizim to bless, the other upon Ebal to curse: the curses only are then announced—the consequence of the violation of the law in anything. (See Gal. iii. 10.)

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

The principles of God's government, in the immediate consequences in blessings for obedience or the curse for disobedience, with prophetic warn-

## HEADINGS OF CHAPTERS. 227

ing of the latter to be accomplished in their history.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

The second covenant thus completed, Moses seeks to reach the conscience of the people by the memory of God's ways with them, that they may be faithful to it, lest there should be among them a root of bitterness in individual turning from Jehovah, bringing in result His judgment upon the whole land and people rooted out of it. The revealed ground upon which they stood was thus before them: there were secret things of His purposes.

## CHAPTER XXX.

These begin to unfold: when the consequences of disobedience are come, from the utmost part of heaven whither they had been driven, when in heart obedience they should return to Jehovah, He would bring them back to their land, put the curse upon their enemies, and rejoice over them for good: the word was nigh unto them,

## 228 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

that they might act upon it. Good and evil, life and death, have now been set before them : they must choose which it was to be.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

Moses introduces Joshua to lead the people into the land : he writes the law and delivers it to the priests, to be read every seventh year at the feast of tabernacles. Jehovah appears in the tabernacle to Moses and Joshua, and inspires Moses to write a song, as a testimony against the people who when in enjoyment of the land will turn to idolatry, to be placed in the ark.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

Moses' song : Jehovah the Rock of His people is perfect ; they have corrupted themselves : in the division of the nations. He had set them in their different localities, with Israel as His object, for Israel was His inheritance. His ways of grace towards them are recalled, but they forsook their Rock, and moved Him to jealousy with what

## HEADINGS OF CHAPTERS. 229

is not a god ; consequently God moves them to jealousy with what is not a people, while devastating judgment falls upon them, only checked by the insolence of the nations used as instruments of it : but Jehovah remembers them in their distress and helplessness, and finally takes vengeance on their enemies. In that day of atonement for His land and for His people, the Gentiles should rejoice with them. Moses exhorts them to set their hearts to what was thus set before them, that they might prolong their days in the land : he must go up mount Nebo himself to die, as the consequence of his trespass at the waters of Meribah.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

Before his death, Moses blesses the children of Israel according to their tribes (Simeon omitted, Ephraim and Manasseh counted to Joseph, make up the twelve), on the basis of Jehovah's revelation of Himself from Sinai and the law given through Moses who is king in Jeshurun,



## 230 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

Reuben is preserved though diminished.

Judah is to be heard of Jehovah and brought unto his people.

Levi having been tested and proved faithful, shall teach the law and put sacrifices of sweet savour on the altar.

Benjamin shall dwell safely near Jehovah.

The fulness of earthly blessing and the goodwill of Him that dwelt in the bush is Joseph's in the myriads of Ephraim and Manasseh.

Zebulun and Issachar call the peoples to the mountain, to the sacrifices of righteousness.

Gad is enlarged, where was reserved the portion of the law-giver (Moses' burial-place).

Dan is a lion's whelp.

Naphtali is satisfied with favour.

Asher is blessed with sons, dips his foot in oil and rests securely.

None like unto the God of Jeshurun, the help and refuge and source of blessing of His people : no people like Israel so delivered and so defended.

## GUILTY AND LOST. 231

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

*Jehovah causes Moses to see the land from the heights of Pisgah, and dying there, is buried by Him—no one knowing of the place. Joshua succeeds him.*

---

## GUILTY AND LOST.

GUILTY applies to our sins and lost to our state. "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." The eating is the guilt or transgression, but death is the lost estate. The Lord in the garden of Eden, first challenges Adam as to the latter in the words, "Where art thou?" and secondly as to his transgression in the words, "Hast thou eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?"

Adam may have had the sense of being saved from the ultimate consequences of his transgression, in that

## 232 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

he was clothed by God, but the fallen man remained, and thus he was driven from the garden.

Now with Cain and Abel, they had perhaps the sense of death pressing upon them, and at the same time no sense of the favour of God, which Adam evidently had. Cain takes the lead, and seeks by offering of the fruits of the earth, to obtain favour with God. He fails. Abel has faith; he apprehends God in His nature, and he sees that he cannot obtain favour but through the death of a victim not chargeable with man's offence, bearing the judgment on man, and at the same time having a personal excellency. Abel offered of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof; "he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts." Now I apprehend Abel's sense was that he was free, and was sheltered from judgment before God, but it does not appear that he had any idea of being reinstated to man's original or first position with God, which had

been lost, or of being elevated to a better one.

Now when we come to Enoch, the seventh from Adam, there is a very remarkable exemplification of the way that man is to be restored to God. He walked with God here, or as it is translated in Hebrews, after the Septuagint, "he pleased God, and was translated that he should not see death." Before the man fallen had completed seven generations, before the ruin was established perfectly, as the number seven indicated, a man walks with God here a year for every day—365 years. "And he was not ; for God took him," or as in Hebrews, he "was translated that he should not see death ; and was not found because God had translated him : for before his translation he had this testimony that he pleased God." Thus he was not only a sample of one whose guilt had been atoned for, but he does not see death.

Now with Noah and the ark, the great thing evidently is safety from the impending judgment. True it is

## 234 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

said that Noah found favour in the eyes of the Lord; still safety from judgment was the great object of the ark; hence it is said that Noah, "moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house: by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." There was full safety from judgment in the ark, type of the atonement; but until we come to the offering of the burnt offering in Genesis viii. 20-22 we do not find that Noah's position was improved. If my position be greatly advanced, I of course require a state corresponding to it. In consequence of the burnt offering a great change takes place. The earth is no more to be cursed, and the seasons are to be maintained unhinderedly. In a word, the earth is to be a place of blessing for man, with continued and unchanging marks of God's favour. There is nothing as yet to indicate that death is abolished, and that life and incorruptibility have come to light.

When we come to Abraham we find

that he believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness: but though he looked for a city that hath foundation, whose builder and maker is God, and was called the friend of God, I do not find that he was in the newness of life.

Now when we come to Israel brought out of Egypt, we find that when God has redeemed them, He announces that He will dwell in their midst. Now, for the first time God dwells with man, but connected with this favour, there is the law, which exposes their guilt, but there is a shadow of approach into His presence by sacrifices. We have God's dwelling among His redeemed people under the law, which exposed their guilt, and at the same time a way by sacrifices typically into His presence. Nay, more, as the great day of atonement set forth, there were two companies: one blessed within, in connection and conjunction with the high priest—Aaron and his house; the other, the earthly people—the congregation blessed

## 236 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

outside. We have now for the first time, that God in His glory connects Himself with man, "I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God;" and that there are two companies distinct the one from the other, whom He blesses according to the virtue of the blood on the mercy seat; one company inside, within the veil, assuredly typical of Christ and the church in heavenly glory, and the other, Israel on the earth. The great thing that we have reached now in type, is that apart from guilt, and free of the charge of it, there is a new position with God on the ground of the sacrifices; not only all the sins confessed and borne away, but the blood of the sin-offering carried into the Holiest. Also, that He glorified God where man had dishonoured Him, He was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him, and as Christ has been glorified, every believer in Him enters into His position of nearness to God, and is of a new order corresponding to this new position.

## GUILTY AND LOST. 237

Now in the Psalms, though there are many and beautiful expressions of the greatness and goodness of God's presence, I do not remember any which refers to anything like the tie of relationship or fellowship with Him that a son would have.

In the Canticles I get personal affection, reciprocated between the soul and the Lord, but I could adduce examples of this during our Lord's lifetime on earth. The woman in Luke vii., Mary of Bethany, Peter and John, and Mary Magdalene; but even their intimacy and affection do not intimate that man has risen from his fallen position, and that he has received an entirely new one. It is quite true that he is in company with the Holy One of God, but as yet there is nothing to indicate that he enjoys Him beyond a man on the earth. There is nothing said that I know of to indicate that the loved one has been elevated.

Now in the New Testament, when Christ has come, it is of the deepest interest to gather up comprehensively,



## 238 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

the way in which He accomplished the work He came to do. Man was guilty and lost, and He undertakes to do the will of God. Man is not only to be absolutely and righteously cleared of everything against him, by faith in Christ, but he is set within the veil in unclouded nearness to God—of the same order as Christ who has accomplished the work. “Both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one : for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren.” A new place, the highest—the holiest, has been obtained for the once guilty and lost man. But I desire to direct attention to the way the blessed Lord has accomplished this.

If I look at Luke’s Gospel, I see Him first addressing Himself to the removal or subjugation of every power which oppressed man. I get in Luke v. how Peter is made sensible of his sinfulness, when he was doing everything right, and when he was, at the moment, the recipient of a great earthly favour. I find the Lord’s words, “Fear not,” were so effectual with Peter that he and the

## GUILTY AND LOST.

239

others brought their ships to land, forsook all and followed Him. I find that in chapter vii. He raises the dead, and consequently in the same place forgives sins : "Thy sins are forgiven." This was a great inroad on the enemy's power, and unspeakable gain to man, as still more effectively displayed when the demoniac is not only relieved, but so changed, that he desires to be with Him : the woman who had spent all upon physicians, not only cured, but brought into happy acquaintance with Himself : while Jairus' daughter is raised up. These are properly a group ; they unfold together the progress that had been made. All these three plainly refer to man's fall ; he is powerless in each instance to recover himself : under Satan, under incurable weakness, and under death. The next great advance is set forth in the grace shewn to the man who fell among thieves. (Chap. x.) The man is there cured, set in a new power, and cared for for ever by Him who cured him : grace infinitely surpasses law. Next, and we reach

## 240 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

the climax, the prodigal son is not only reconciled, but he is conducted in a new suitable order into the Father's house, to share His joys, and know His love. Thus the guilty and lost one is not only cleared, but elevated to the home and portion of the One who saved him. This is absolutely accomplished when our Lord said to the thief, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."

I need hardly turn to John's gospel, but there we find the sinner, first assured of the new self, or order, before the question of sin was touched: "who-soever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water springing up into eternal life." The nature and greatness of the new self necessitates the perfect removal of guilt of every kind; though as a matter of experience, the sense of forgiveness necessarily precedes the entrance into, and enjoyment of the new life. This we get very fully detailed in history, in

## GUILTY AND LOST. 241

Romans: the guilty is first viewed as justified, then as dead with Christ, as to the old man, and in the justification of life which is the *excess*; or "where sin abounded grace did *much more* abound." Thus also in 2 Corinthians iii., the righteousness being ministered from glory, I am placed by Christ's work suited to the glory of God; the new self is that beholding the Lord's glory; we are changed into the same image;—a man after an entirely new order. It is interesting to note that continually the at-homedness we have in heaven is presented to us,—the new order, not only as to one's own feelings, in the sense that as He is in heaven, so are we in this world. For if I am heré on earth, where all my ruin and misery occurred, as He is above, how easy and restful it must be for me to be where He is, and where there is nothing to recall my former self.

In John xiv. the Lord, in connection with the supper, anticipating His death, comforts us by the assurance that He

## 242 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

goes to prepare a place for us ; that place is the Father's house ; we are made fit for it being washed, but He will keep us fit for it, washing our feet ; it is our place, or our domesticity in the Father's house which indicates, and sets forth the measure and greatness of the new order in which we are. How immensely elevated, from the lost one, to fellowship with the Father and the Son !

I must not close without referring to Colossians and Ephesians, where heaven is looked at not only as our right, but our home and present enjoyment ; while in the Revelation, when the door is opened in heaven, it is to disclose the wondrous fact, that the chief occupants there, those nearest the throne, are the redeemed ones ; and finally that the bride comes down from God, out of heaven ;—a wonderful contrast from the man turned out of Eden,—the lost man, now elevated through grace into companionship with the Father and the Son in heaven itself.

## THE LORD'S PRESENCE.

No. 7.

### S E R V I C E.

THE first great thing before the mind for true service is that I am a servant, a bondsman of the Lord Jesus Christ. "The freeman being called is Christ's bondsman." When I walk uprightly I adhere to this, I look for instructions from Him with respect to everything, and circumstances do not guide me. The bondsman is not only personally his Master's property, but all that he possesses, even to his children, belong to Him. It is not easy for any one to tell to another his or her service ; each is a member of the body, and the one who shews mercy with cheerfulness is as much in true service as the prophet in his prophesying. The fact is that the true servant soon finds out his great relationship to Christ, and then

## 244 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

he serves, not only as a righteous bondsman, but as a "virtuous woman."

Unless there be a right beginning, there cannot be a right course. If I do not begin with the deliberate sense that I am the Lord's property, that my body is a living sacrifice, and that His heart trusts in me, I am sure to wander into human ideas of service. It is ever an exercise with us to separate between the divine and the natural. There is nothing proposed to the believer that there is not an attempt to carry out in a natural way, and as the natural way suits the natural mind, it is ever more readily adopted than the spiritual. Hence we require to have our senses exercised to discern good and evil. No amount of reading or information from the scriptures, can direct us as to service. Nothing can truly direct us but the Lord Himself, and it is in His presence that we are rightly impressed with His pleasure. I do not mean, here, simply communion with Him, I mean that no one can acquire a true idea of the service he is

## THE LORD'S PRESENCE. 245

to render, who has not enjoyed the presence of the Lord in the midst of His own. There is a sense acquired there of His right and pleasure, and how He fits and calls one into service, which could not be acquired elsewhere. But this sense is of great importance, because it does not arise merely from the consciousness of being commissioned by the Lord, but that His interest is to be my interest. It is not the fact that I am called to serve in some special way, but that I am to serve His own. Thus all the gifts were for the perfecting of the saints. As I am affected by His presence, I am in correspondence to His pleasure, and my duty as called by Him to serve. I begin from Him : as we see in Romans, a living sacrifice finds that the first line of service is as a member of the body : in Colossians iii., it is Christ everything and in all : and in Ephesians iv., the practice in keeping with the vocation begins with endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. We see the principle of this in John xx. 19-21,



## 246 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

“Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord. Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you : as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.” As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you ; it was when He was in their midst He said this. I might venture to say that it is there one gets an assurance that he is gifted and called to serve. Conversion is not gift. I believe there is more acquired in the presence of the Lord than we have any idea of. We get a practical instance of this in Acts xiii., when, in the assembly, Saul and Barnabas are separated for special service.

We have now arrived at two things which are indispensable for true service;

## THE LORD'S PRESENCE. 247

first, that we are Christ's property in a twofold way ; second, that it is His own presence in the midst which gives us a true sense of the nature of our service—the Levite reflects the priest ; here the service unto which one is appointed derives its proper character. A man may be called, but he might be for years, like Moses, unable to effect the service, though he had tried to carry it out after a human fashion ; or, like Isaiah, very true and devoted, but neither Moses nor Isaiah was able to render the service they were called to until they were in the Lord's presence. Many a true servant in the present day resembles Moses attempting in real devotedness to effect a service by his own might, which can only be effected by the power of God, and in His way also.

It must be evident to every spiritual soul that there is more gift in the church than is brought into useful exercise. There must be the living sacrifice before any one, however gifted, could answer to His gift. If a ship is

## 248 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

stranded, it must be set afloat before it can render any service ; and here there are many in this day, gifted really for service, but held back by some tie to the earth, and therefore practically of no use, and generally very unhappy in themselves. There is therefore, the putting the hand to the plough prior even to a clear apprehension as to the line of service. The former is common and necessary for all, the latter as it hath pleased Him. I do not think that it is possible to say when a believer receives a gift for special service, but I believe that many gifted men would be wonderfully effectual in their service, if they, like Aaron's sons, had learned the service to which they were appointed, within the veil. The Levite did the external work, but he was given to the priest ; the latter properly directed the former ; nay, the Levite had no right to act but under and deriving from the priest. This leads to another stage, even that service should be in communion ; that is, that as the Levite had no right to

## THE LORD'S PRESENCE. 249

act independently of the priest, so a servant now should not act, but as coming fresh from the Lord, in communion with Him. This is necessary for every act of service. First then, the servant is a living sacrifice ; second, gifted for special service ; third, acting in communion or according to his Lord's pleasure at the time. This latter applies to every servant, even to shewing mercy with cheerfulness.

There is the greatest exercise connected with service, as to how can I tell when to act, or how to act. It is only as I am near the Lord that I can understand His pleasure, and when I am determined not to act apart from His known pleasure, I wait for it, and the more dependent I am on Him, the sooner am I assured of His will at the time. If I allow circumstances to govern me, I am like a ship afloat, but controlled by the most prevailing force, wind or tide, and this always ends in being cumbered about much serving. The devoted servant is often much hindered in this way ; he is

## 250 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

trying to catch and use the opportunity. Here Martha failed. If we bear in mind all we have arrived at, we shall easily see how Mary had chosen the good part, namely, listening to the Lord in order to ascertain His pleasure. This is the only way to obtain right direction about any service, and it is not only obvious, but encouraging, the way one is enlightened as to the proper thing to do, by association with the Lord. When one comes like Moses from the presence of the Lord, it is the Lord who is uppermost in your mind, and that is the great thing, the greatest, in every service. Be it in visiting, or making a remark, "Let your speech be always with grace seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man ;" "good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace to the hearers."

Very different indeed is the service rendered from communion, from that rendered because suggested by the occasion, though doubtless there is a right act of service for each occasion,

## THE LORD'S PRESENCE. 251

but the thing is to do as He would do, and not as human feeling would dictate. We can well understand that the Mary spirit only could ensure this constant direction from Himself, and not only would positive guidance as to the act of service, be assured from communion with Him, but the effect of sitting at His feet, would impart to us a manner of life—a body of light. The vessel itself, the body, would be so under His control, that there would be light from it—an essential in every servant to be himself an example for others to follow. That is, that the manner of life would in every way corroborate the doctrine, so that not only the word of God was expressed, but the light which we are in the Lord would be manifested by the manner of life. There would be a living proof and demonstration of its virtue, so that even when the word was refused by the unbelieving husband, he could be won without the word, by his wife's chaste manner of life, coupled with fear. We are not sufficiently alive to the importance of this in our

## 252 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

service, as we see in Luke xii., when there is no fear of them that kill the body there is boldness and faithfulness of confession ; and when there is no care, but a simple resting on the care of God, the mind is free and unhindered to care for the things of the Lord. Then we seek the kingdom of God, and the loins are girded for service ; the lights burning, and we like men that wait for the Lord. We ought to be able to say, " Those things which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do." What can be more beautiful than to be a living expression of the truth of God among men ? Thus it is that charity which is the nature of Christ, is above every gift ; and where it is lacking, there is a great detriment and hindrance to every gift. The pliancy of divine love to serve and please God, makes the servant like a well-trained horse, that answers to the slightest touch of the rein.

May we all increase in the more excellent way.

## THE LORD'S PRESENCE. 253

One point more remains to be considered, and that is the manner and bearing of the servant towards those whom he is called to serve. This is much dwelt on in scripture. We get in John xiii., the most perfect example as to this: "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. . . . If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." The Apostle tells of his own behaviour at Ephesus; "Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying-in-wait of the Jews: and how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, testifying both to the Jews and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." (Acts xx. 18-21.) Again, how he commends



## 254 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

Timothy, "For I have no man like-minded, who will naturally care for your state." (Phil. ii. 20.) And He tells him in 1 Timothy iv. 12, "Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity." I need not multiply proofs of the importance of the servant's manner, and I merely add, 1 Thessalonians ii. 3-8, "For our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile: but as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts. For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloke of covetousness; God is witness: nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children, so being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own

## FRAGMENTS.

255

souls, because ye were dear unto us." And 2 Thessalonians iii. 7, "For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you." The purpose of the true servant is embodied in 2 Corinthians xii. 15, "I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved." May every servant thus address himself to his service, not as a means by which one is to gain anything, but a readiness to lose in order to confer a gain, for the Lord's sake.

---

## FRAGMENTS.

WE must look at truth in two ways—as to man's responsibility, and then the first thing is repentance; and as to God's sovereignty, and then the first thing is being born again. The three first Gospels treat of the former; John of the latter. Therefore you get in John's Gospel what you find nowhere else. Ephesians takes the same line—

## 256 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

God's sovereignty, and therefore it is new creation.

The state of the first man has been judged in the death of Christ. Baptism is the acceptance of this.

F. E. R.

---

IF we are conscious of Christ on that throne up there looking at us, does it not make us look up to Him? We cannot help it. Wonderful the power there is in His Person—power over all our thoughts and feelings. We know it as we get closer to that Person. If this be so, it will effect our walk outside. Do not think of the outside till you begin inside.

W. T.

---

## ERRATA.

IN page 207, line 4 July Number. For offences *read* offerer.

In page 210, line 14. For wrong *read* weary.

## FALSE DOCTRINE OR GANGRENE.

### I.

#### WHAT IT IS AND ITS EFFECTS.

THE aim of unsound teaching wilfully persisted in is to divert the soul from the true faith. It misrepresents God and His word, and no form of leaven has the same pernicious effect. The false is presented and maintained in order to subvert the truth. This is Satan's object, and when it is systematised error, his object is gained. No other evil can be so injurious as a perversion of the truth. It does not merely circumscribe the truth, but it, as it is received, diverts the soul from the true way, and the blessing of God in that way. It may not openly assume to turn away from the faith as a false prophet, who is denounced in Deuteronomy xiii. because "he hath spoken to turn you away from the Lord your God." "Thou shalt not consent unto him, nor hearken unto him ; neither

VOL. XXI.

K

## 258 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

shall thine eye pity, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him : but thou shalt surely kill him ; thine hand shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all the people." (Vers. 8, 9.)

It may be asserted that this Scripture could not be applied to a believer in this day. I admit that no believer would avowedly weaken or pervert the Word of God, but when a Christian is led away by the enemy he does subvert the truth, though he may not think that he does ; but as he succeeds in instilling and propagating his unsoundness, he destroys the faith, and surely then he is in the same category as the false prophet in Deuteronomy xiii.

Any teaching which undermines Christianity is gangrene. And gangrene does not shew itself in a general paralysis of all vital energy as leaven does. A soul suffering from gangrene is limited and diminutive in every divine quality, never advancing in the truth ; though he be humanly respectable, and thus better able to propagate

## FALSE DOCTRINE OR GANGRENE. 259

his views. The beautiful traits of Christ's life on earth, in contradistinction to the Pharisee, or man in the righteousness of the law, are never seen ; he has a suppressed life, with a peculiar energy to inculcate his evil doctrine.

It is erroneous to assert that any degree of bad conduct can be as detrimental to the assembly as any one maintaining false doctrine, because false doctrine not only produces bad practice, but it has a pestilential and blighting effect over all ; there is a check to all growth. "If one member suffers, all the members suffer with it." And when it is gangrene there must be a greater suffering and injury than when it is from leaven. Leaven defiles, and makes the saint a reproach in the details of practical life. Gangrene is much worse, because while the abettor of it might be very commendable in man's eye, he resists the truth, and by misrepresenting God and His word, makes a party against Him. The progressive advance of evil doctrine is like that of the doctrine of Balaam, it

## 260 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

is first held and then taught ; a distinct party is formed against the truth. Thus there can be no question as to the exceeding gravity of false doctrine or gangrene over and above any other leaven.

## II.

## TO CERTIFY IT.

THE next thing is so to expose the false doctrine that every conscience may be able to see what is at stake. I do not say to convince every conscience, because when any one is in a declining state, he is invariably susceptible of error. It preys on his enervated condition. It is only positive vigour which preserves in a malarious atmosphere.

It must be clear and undeniable that a certain doctrine is maintained. This is evident enough when the doctrine has been carefully described in print by the author of it. When it is thus fully stated in black and white it only remains to ascertain what is really meant. When this has been arrived at there is no difficulty for any

## FALSE DOCTRINE OR GANGRENE. 261

one with a simple unprejudiced conscience to apprehend the danger and avoid it. Once the error has been exposed and must be admitted, there is no more that can be done as far as any one's conscience is concerned. Yet every true servant of Christ must withstand the evil doctrine, even though consciences do not see it. Poison is injurious to a child, though he knows nothing about it. For the honour of the Lord and the soul's prosperity, every one must decide against it. There is a great difference between ignorance and error. A man may state a truth wrongly from ignorance, but if it be simple ignorance, when corrected by the Word of God, he would renounce it. Whereas if it be a wilful error, he only adheres to his point the more he is pressed to renounce it, and thus he proves that he is infected by it. Every conscience alive to the evil would labour to save every Christian from it.

Again, I make a great difference between a person denying a truth, and



## 262 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

not acting up to it, or even acting contrary to it. The wearing of gold and costly array is plainly contrary to Scripture, but I could not say that this was tantamount to denying it. The light of it may not have reached the conscience, or the conscience may be dull, but this does not amount to a wilful misinterpretation of the word of God.

It is plain from Scripture that there must be patient expostulation with the propounder of false doctrine. There must be a first and a second admonition, and it is evident that they cannot be given together. There is to be space given to repent.

## III.

## DISCIPLINE WITH REGARD TO IT.

WHEN it has been clearly proved that any one persists in holding bad doctrine, and that after due expostulation, and all priestly care have proved ineffectual the leprosy is there, there is no other course to adopt but absolute excision from the assembly. For as

## FALSE DOCTRINE OR GANGRENE. 263

we have seen, it is more pernicious to the assembly than any other form of evil.

It might be alleged that it would not be competent for a local assembly to arrive at such a grave decision without the co-operation and concurrence of other brethren qualified to judge in such a matter. No assembly is competent to cut off any one unless he is a wicked person, one acting in will against the Lord. But if he be, however small or weak the local assembly, they are competent to put away from among themselves that wicked person. While, on the other hand, it is not wise nor brotherly to determine on such a solemn course, without being reassured and corroborated by brothers generally of spiritual weight, as to the guilt and perverse condition of the advocate or advocates of the doctrine in question. There is a great difference between seeking and accepting counsel from several brethren in other places, as to the nature and degree of the false teaching in order to be fully assured that it is gangrene,

## 264 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

and therefore that any one persisting in it is a wicked person ; this is one thing, while it is quite another, the absolute responsibility incumbent on the local assembly to act for the Lord in putting away the wicked person. The local assembly are bound to seek countenance and corroboration from their brethren in so grave a matter, but they are also bound to act with the Lord in their midst, for Him, and for this they require no co-operation. It is their simple duty ; for it is the Lord with them, and not any number of brothers, which entitles them and empowers them to put the wicked person away. “So shalt thou put the evil away from the midst of thee.”

## IV.

## HOW EACH ONE IS CLEAR OF IT.

IF in the case of leaven there was so much exercise of heart as is described in 2 Corinthians vii. 11, “For behold this self-same thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of

## FALSE DOCTRINE OR GANGRENE. 265

yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge ! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter," how much more in gangrene which is much more pernicious ! The removal of leaven from the assembly must be followed up with the distinct refusal to be on social terms with the source of it ; " With such an one, no, not to eat (as prohibitive of all social intimacy) ; but in the case of gangrene it must be carried much farther, " If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither salute him : for he that salutes him is partaker of his evil deeds." (2 John 11, 12.) The Spirit of God is so sensitive of any inroad on the doctrine of Christ that He cannot allow the saint in whom He dwells even to salute the heretic. Hence in 2 Timothy ii. 21, " If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, prepared unto every good

K 2

## 266 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

work." It is even more than abstaining from an ordinary recognition; it is the strictest and most absolute separation. "If a man therefore purge himself from these." "Purge" is used only twice in scripture; once in 1 Cor. v. 7, where the leaven is to be purged out, and here when the man of God is to purge himself from the vessels to dishonour. It was the profane and vain babbling of Hymenæus and Philetus which led the Apostle to point out that these were vessels to dishonour in the house of God. And the only way for the man to be clear of the gangrene and really a vessel unto honour, fit for the Master's use, prepared unto every good work, was to be as distinctly separated from the vessels to dishonour as it was possible to be. Thank God, that there is such a bright path open to us in the day of confusion and evil!

---

### SURRENDER AND ITS GAIN.

THE fall of man began with grasping a fruit which was distinctly forbidden,

## SURRENDER AND ITS GAIN. 267

because of expected advantage. The nature of man now is to grasp. It is simply contrary to his nature to surrender, and it is only as led of God, that any one can surrender. We may safely aver that Enoch in walking with God, sought Him, and not what he could grasp here, and surely he had great gain for his surrender. "He was not, for God took him," and he was "translated that he should not see death." Can any one estimate the great gain which Enoch enjoyed for his surrender, and yet surely every one now who walks in his steps, enjoys the same gain. If I am walking with God, I am not seeking the things here, but I am entering into the greatness and reality of eternal life. Oh, if we could but be persuaded that surrender has such a present gain—a manifold more in this present time, surely we would be ready to surrender instead of being eager to grasp and retain.

Noah gave up everything on the earth when he entered the ark, and how wonderful was his gain—set on a

## 268 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

renewed earth ; compensated for his surrender in a manifold way indeed. But when he sought his own gratification how lamentably he failed, and Ham and his offspring are to this day a spectacle and a warning of the consequences of self-seeking.

Abraham surrendered largely, and he was remarkably blessed of God, but he pitied himself when he saw the famine, and turned to Egypt, for which he deeply suffered, as do all his posterity to this day.

Lot thought he gained by choosing the green fields near Sodom, but eventually they were the cause of the deepest sorrow and loss to him.

Isaac surrendered Gerar, and surely he received manifold more. "The Lord appeared unto him that same night" after he had left it, and king Abimelech followed him, asking him to make a covenant with him, alleging, "We saw certainly that the Lord was with thee."

Joseph surrenders, and to what eminence as a saviour of his people was he raised ! First sold by his

## SURRENDER AND ITS GAIN. 269

brethren into Egypt, then tempted, then falsely accused, then imprisoned, then forgotten. "The king sent and delivered him, the prince of the people let him go free"; he becomes the saviour of his people.

It is interesting to note that the manifold more is in keeping with the surrender. Noah surrendered the earth as under judgment, and he receives the earth again in a new and a more perfect way. Joseph was proof to the seductions of this world, and he becomes the most honoured, and the most blessed of men; the world bows down to him. Moses "refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt." Immense indeed was the manifold more which he received; he was the most complete type of our Lord Jesus Christ. If he gave up the place of power, no man ever had more of the power of God



## 270 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

at his disposal. If he surrendered treasures, no one before the coming of our Lord was better acquainted with the glories of heaven itself; and yet this Moses forfeited the land, because in a moment of indignation with the people he thought of himself instead of the Lord in smiting the rock twice.

David began his course by encountering Goliath; he counted not his life dear unto himself. As long as he surrendered, and would not grasp an advantage over king Saul, he prospered; he never failed, never had a reverse except when he swerved from surrender, and then he grasped a momentary gratification, to his great harm and loss.

Now when our blessed Lord came, all previous surrender was thrown into the shade by the magnitude of His. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus: who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found

## SURRENDER AND ITS GAIN. 271

in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name ; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth ; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father." (Phil. ii. 5-11.) Here then we learn the necessity and value of surrender. The Son of God emptied Himself, taking a bondsman's form, and taking his place in the likeness of man. He had surrendered the highest glory to become a man ; but not this only, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient to death, even the death of the cross. Here the surrender is complete, and it is here that we learn the necessity of it as well as the virtue of it. The first man grasped a position positively refused to him by God. The Second man surrenders his equality with God, and descends to

## 272 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

be a man—and then instead of claiming anything for Himself, even in this reduced state, He humbles Himself unto death, the death of the curse, for “cursed is every one who hangeth on a tree.” The man who had grasped contrary to God for his own advantage could not be reinstated with God until he had been surrendered in judgment, to which he was condemned ; and this could only have been effected in our Lord Jesus Christ ; and thus in Him we have His life, and shall have bodies like His own glorious body. Hence it is now, “If a man forsake not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.” We have simply to derive from Christ in everything, we surrender all the old man seeks after, as alienated from God, and we are Christ’s bondmen here in everything. The life we now live in the flesh we live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us and gave Himself for us.

Let us now endeavour to illustrate practically how every one’s position at this moment is advanced divinely by

## SURRENDER AND ITS GAIN. 273

his surrender, or compromised by his grasping. The history of every devoted saint will supply illustrations of both. In general the devoted saint begins with a great surrender ; his position in the world is renounced, or the prospect of it, which is still more difficult to surrender. A person is then like one wrecked or cast on a desert island, and all depends now on whether he will use his means, acquired or possessed, to make himself comfortable in his new position. Here we must remember that he has received manifold more from the Lord. He does not regret his surrender, but he feels that it has put him in new circumstances, and while he would not retrace, he endeavours to retrieve his loss, not by the enjoyment of the divine things into which he has been introduced, but by acquiring some alleviation in earthly things. I mean like Jacob at El-elohe Israel ; he does not retrace his steps to Syria, he remains true, at least in name, to the land, and the blessing, which he had received there, but the place

## 274 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

and the blessing do not compensate him or satisfy him, and he buys a parcel of a field, he seeks for things outside his calling to solace him in his calling. The real lack in such a case is that surrender has had a limit instead of being a daily ever recurring responsibility, the only true mode of advancing. "Laying aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and run with endurance the race that is set before us." Many of the most advanced are like Israel in the land; the highest place is reached, but like Israel, they constantly decline from their high position; they do not enjoy it, because they are influenced and subverted one way or another by the old inhabitant of Canaan. We have only to read the first chapter of Judges to see the cause of the failure. They did not exterminate the old inhabitant. There was a rest from war; there was a compromise, and always when we compromise, we are overcome. The cause and the origin of all failure in the most devoted, is that they think they

## SURRENDER AND ITS GAIN. 275

have surrendered enough, instead of a steady persistence in surrender until all is gone, a forgetting of the things behind, and a pressing on to the things before. We must be "always bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus." There is always something more to be surrendered, and always, as a rule, when you cease surrendering, you are grasping; that is, seizing something earthly to make you more at home, something to minister to you naturally in some way. I think many things which did not hinder, or rather were not felt to be a hindrance, are felt to be so when one advances. Take for instance useful reading, that was not at first felt to be a hindrance, yet if there be spiritual advance, the thing that ministers to the natural man is refused. The current history of the world in the newspapers may become a snare to one. The simple rule is—there is to be no coveting; "Be content with such things as ye have;" and on the other hand, there is no limit to surrender, so that the more you advance, the greater the

## 276 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

surrender. Things sanctioned last year may not be allowed this year, and so on.

Let us suppose a case. A young believer seeks to follow the Lord fully ; he breaks from every worldly tie, and essays to give himself wholly to the Lord. In a year or two he is married, possibly God's ordering for him ; now a great many things claim his attention, which were in abeyance when he was single. The real question is, Does he now care for the things of the world that he may please his wife ? If he does, he is seeking instead of surrendering ; and in reality everything is different with him. He might have to return to many things which he had surrendered. He had abandoned them because they were not necessary to him, and all is well now if he adhere to what is simply necessary. Now his expenses are increased, and as his family increases he has probably to work to meet them, and this leads into a larger connection with the world, and a larger residence, and all the concomitants connected with a large

## SURRENDER AND ITS GAIN. 277

business and a large family. Then the education of his children, and starting them in employments of some kind, entail and foster a link with earthly things. The purpose to surrender is checked and opposed at every turn, because there are, as I might say, a hundred to one more attractions or desires for the things here, than there were with him as a single man. But it is of God that he should be a married man, and in being so he has exposed himself to assaults, very useful for discipline, if he has grace to accept only what is necessary, and refuse the rest, not grasping, but really ever seeking to surrender; and as there is more to surrender, there is manifold more to the married man if he does surrender.

Suppose another case. A man of wealth and position is called of the Lord, and he surrenders place and position in the world. The better he understands his new relation with the Lord, the more he enjoys his isolation from the world. There is no desire to return to it, but on the other



## 278 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

hand, as he has abundance of means, he can retain or obtain anything, and everything which can minister to his ease and comfort on the earth. There may thus be a limit to surrender, and often the conscience satisfies itself with the first great surrender. It is evident that there can be no progress in the mind of Christ in service without surrender. When Abraham served he had to surrender all his comforts, and with his life in his hand go out by night to rescue his brother Lot.

If surrender is not increasing, then there is not preparation for present exigencies. There is not the fresh and present knowledge of the Lord's company, the manifold more for the surrender—the Melchisedec who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings. I mean that if there be not increasing surrender for the Lord, then there cannot be a new and increased knowledge of His immediate countenance and support, in the moment of difficulty or distraction. The surrender obtains the present

## “LIFE” OR “CHRISTIANITY,” ETC. 279

reward of His own counsel and help. Paul can surrender. Barnabas cannot. The Lord was Paul's reward. Barnabas grasped the natural, and went astray. I need hardly add more. Where one has most natural vitality, there the surrender must be greatest, as it has been said—the proudest man in the world is the humblest man in the church. At all events, it is according as he advances to this that he prospers.

The Lord grant that surrender may increase more and more amongst us, and that our hearts may rejoice in the manifold more—the closer and fuller knowledge of the Lord Himself, and thus be more in His mind here, for His name's sake.

---

## “LIFE” OR “CHRISTIANITY,” AND CHRIST AS ITS BEGINNING.

1 JOHN I. 1-3.

To feel a measure of delicacy in attempting to say a word on this subject is, I think, right, and yet the great importance of the subject is manifest.

## 280 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

If scripture did not tell us, there would be but assumption in any one seeking to find an answer to the question, What is Christianity? But the word of God does speak, and with no doubtful voice. Christianity in its origin was nothing less than the revelation of Christ as a man in this world—"The eternal life," active in a scene of death. Thus there can be no development or addition to that which was displayed. It was here in its perfection, and you can have no improvement of "perfection." *What* it was that was displayed we may well ask to-day, since that life was communicated to men, or rather, they were brought into it, as the apostle says. (1 John v. 11, 12.)

Hence it is becoming to ask *what* it was that was displayed, because it is what a Christian is expected to manifest to-day. Christianity is now as it was then, a positive thing, the display of life—life active in a scene of death.

The apostle writes to Christians, not because they had not life, but because they had. But Christianity, as it came

## “LIFE” OR “CHRISTIANITY,” ETC. 281

from God in the beginning, was assailed, and those were springing up who (while professing it) taught other than that which had been taught at the beginning, for it is the beginning of Christianity here. I do not doubt a distinct object of the Spirit in causing this Epistle to be written both then and for us now. It is plain from the book itself that Christianity had long been a known profession in the world, for the apostle addresses some of them as “fathers.” John was the suited vessel for the Holy Spirit to employ to correct that which had already marred the original beauty of Christianity on the earth. It had become a question what was christian *life*, and along with this, what was christian *knowledge*, and along with these, a further question was what was now taught, an *addition* of the Holy Spirit not known before, or a *seduction* of the enemy by a false spirit? (Chap. ii. 19, 27; iv. 1, 4, 5.)

All this we find the apostle goes into, exposes, and answers. But if these questions had their importance

## 282 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

and need to be answered and even exposed in their origin to the saints *then*, how much more is it important that we should be also instructed about them now ?

The life, besides which there was and is none, as the apostle says, was Christ Himself. This is an important fact, for this is what is new and the beginning of Christianity. "That eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested unto us." And Christians have this life, they have not any other, for "God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." "He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."

But besides being the communication to us of what is divine—a deposit in us of life from God, we are introduced into an entirely new sphere by the Holy Ghost, which I may call the sphere of life. This is indicated in the Gospel (chap. v.), where it is not merely a deposit in us, but an actual condition or state into which we enter

## “LIFE” OR “CHRISTIANITY,” ETC. 283

—“Is passed from death unto life.” This sphere is the sphere now of all knowledge. No man can know anything aright as to himself, as to the world, or as to God, who is not in it; we have an unction from the Holy One. Life and knowledge (for in it alone knowledge can be found) go together. “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.” (John xvii.) To what “we know,” the apostle now desires to recall the hearts of those whom he addresses, God having revealed Himself.

To *christian* knowledge, then, the knowledge connected with the “*life*” we have, the apostle now directs our attention, to meet those who professed to know something new, or at least fresh as to it. First, the life which we live in the flesh is but the expression of the “life” that has come down, which was perfectly displayed in Him who was it, so that all can be measured by that one unswerving standard. But living thus, the question is, What do

## 284 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

we *know*? And this the apostle goes into fully.

“We know *him* if we keep his commandments.” (Chap. ii. 3.)

“We know that it is the last hour.” (ii. 18.)

We “know it [the truth] and that no lie is of the truth.” (ii. 21.)

We “know that he is righteous, and that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him.” (ii. 20.)

“We know that when he shall appear we shall be like him.” (iii. 2.)

“We know that he was manifested to take away our sins.” (iii. 5.)

“We know that we have passed from death unto life.” (iii. 14.)

“We know that we are of the truth.” (iii. 19.)

“We know that he abideth in us by the Spirit which he hath given us.” (iii. 24.)

Hereby “know we the Spirit of truth and the Spirit of error.” (iv. 6.)

“We know that we dwell in him and he in us, because he hath given to us of his Spirit.” (iv. 13.)

“ LIFE ” OR “ CHRISTIANITY,” ETC. 285

“ We know that we love the children of God.” (v. 2.)

“ We may know that we have eternal life.” (v. 13.)

“ We know that he heareth us, if we ask anything according to his will.” (v. 14, 15.)

“ We know that whosoever is born of God doth not sin.” (v. 18.)

“ We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.” (v. 19.)

“ We know that the Son of God is come.” (v. 20.)

What a solid comfort have the children of God in all this unfolding by the apostle of that knowledge which accompanies life. In the midst of the changing doctrines of men, we have, from one who had been conversant with all from the beginning, and who spoke from “fellowship with the Father and the Son,” what christian life and knowledge are.

These things (life and knowledge) abide in the pages of truth, and they constitute what Christianity is and



## 286 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

has always been, wherever it has been or is displayed upon this earth. By this word I am thus brought into association with "THAT which was from the beginning"—even Christ Himself; while I have to remember that all this manifests itself as life and knowledge in the midst of a scene of death and alienation from the "life of God," Christ being for me the perfect standard of their display. H. C. A.

---

### THE TWO CALLINGS, HEAVENLY AND EARTHLY.

WHAT is the heavenly calling as distinguished from the earthly, and what is our responsibility as connected with the former?

The distinction between the heavenly calling and the earthly calling is very marked.

In the heavenly calling everything is divine. In the earthly calling all the saint's blessings are on the earth given of God, suiting the man on the earth.

## THE TWO CALLINGS, ETC. 287

In the heavenly calling our home is the Father's house, to which we are journeying.

In the earthly calling everything conduces to man's happiness in a human way under the rule of God. The man in Luke xiv. 15, who said, "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God," had his eye on the earthly calling. This led our Lord to tell of "the great supper," which is in the house—the Father's house—and not in the land, or the earth. Hence the things which are right and good in the earthly calling, tend to divert the heart from the heavenly feast.

When we have seen the distinction between the two callings, it is easy to see the nature of our responsibility with regard to the heavenly. Our responsibility is plainly to run the race set before us, setting our affections on things above, and not on things on the *earth*. Doubtless our Father, who delights to share with us the best things in His house, takes care that we should have

## 288 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

every comfort necessary for our journey homeward. Every expense incurred in "the Inn" is defrayed by our Lord. (See Luke x. 34, 35.) "He who spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things."

The *summum bonum* of the heavenly calling is the present unfolding and communication by the Holy Ghost of the joys of heaven, as the "fatted calf" in figure sets forth ; and as the words, "Shall never thirst ;" "Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water ;" "He shall take of mine and shew it unto you ;" set forth. Our portion here is "joy unspeakable and full of glory." The responsibility of the heavenly calling is twofold : one, that I am heavenly in enjoyment and purpose, "though sorrowful, always rejoicing ;" the other, that I testify according to my measure of the Lord Jesus Christ exalted to God's right hand, on the earth where He has been rejected.

---

## HEADINGS OF CHAPTERS.

### JOSHUA.

#### CHAPTER I.

JOSHUA is commanded to lead the people over Jordan to the land given them: every place that the sole of their feet trod upon should be theirs in possession, from the western sea to the Euphrates. As to Joshua personally, no man should be able to stand before him; Jehovah would not fail or forsake him: only he must be bold to obey the law given by Moses, to be his constant study, encouraged by the fact that Jehovah had commanded and would be with him. The order to cross Jordan in three days is given, the two tribes and a half being reminded of the condition on which their territory outside Jordan had been given them.

#### CHAPTER II.

Rahab the harlot receives the spies

VOL. XXI.

L

## 290 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

whom Joshua sent to visit Jericho; her faith recognises that Jehovah had given them the land, and she obtains the token of the scarlet line out of the window, that in the hour of victory she and all hers who had taken refuge in her house might be saved. The spies bring back the testimony of the fear of the inhabitants as the proof of the land being delivered into their hands.

## CHAPTER III.

The ark of Jehovah as Lord of all the earth passes on two thousand cubits before the people, to lead them in a hitherto untrodden way: the moment the priests' feet that bore it touch the brim of Jordan, then at its height, the waters separate, leaving a wide space, and the priests with the ark stand on dry ground in the midst till all were passed over.

## CHAPTER IV.

By Jehovah's command, twelve men (one of each tribe) take up twelve stones from the place where the priests

## HEADINGS OF CHAPTERS. 291

bearing the ark stood in the bed of Jordan, to be set up in Gilgal, where they encamped, as a perpetual memorial to Israel of the drying up of Jordan. Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of the river where the ark had been. Jehovah magnified him that day in the sight of Israel. At His word the priests that bare the ark came up out of Jordan, and the river returned to its course.

## CHAPTER V.

The Canaanites tremble at the tidings of the drying up of Jordan. Joshua is commanded to circumcise the people at Gilgal; for those born in the wilderness, now forming the nation, had not been circumcised: thus the reproach of Egypt was rolled off them. They keep the passover in the plains of Jericho, and ate the old corn of the land the next day: the day after the manna ceased. Jehovah is made known to Joshua, as taking the place of captain of His host: the place was holy whereon Joshua stood.

## NEARNESS AND CONFIDENCE.

It is of all moment that we should first clearly understand the things which are distinctively characteristic of Christianity, and then see how they affect us in our pathway through the world. It is in this pathway that the faith of saints is practically tested. Many of us would like to find some unvarying rule by which, in the midst of church difficulties, to steer our way ; while, as to circumstances, we should be well pleased to see, as another has said, a full supply for every need within our reach. Neither the one nor the other is at all likely to be the experience of saints if going on with God, since there would in either case be but little call for the exercise of *faith*, or of moral perception. The question then arises, are we to be dismayed by the anticipation of troubles in the assembly, or of pressure in our individual path ? or what is the antidote ? The answer is

## NEARNESS AND CONFIDENCE. 293

confidence—and confidence is the effect of nearness, having its source in the knowledge of God: “I know whom I have believed.” Nearness may be spoken of as the peculiar characteristic blessing of Christianity. Now that redemption has been accomplished, and Christ is exalted as man to God’s right hand, God has begun to effectuate the purposes of His will, and in this the heavenly takes precedence of the earthly.

The two great parts of God’s will are constantly before us in the Hebrews, in the distinction between the sanctuary and the covenant. As being for the moment God’s people on the earth, Christians come incidentally into the blessings of the new covenant; but the calling is as priests to serve a living God in the sanctuary. Every part of the New Testament coincides in shewing nearness to be the peculiar portion of Christians. The beginning of the Gospel of Luke is that God has approached man where he is, in such wise as that the pious Simeon could



## 294 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

take the infant Saviour in his arms. The Son of God had come down into man's place and circumstances. The end is that the risen Lord takes the repentant thief to be with Him in His place. He first visits man here in grace, and then, in virtue of His work, takes man to be a resident with Him in paradise.

In John we find not only the manifestation on earth of the eternal life which was with the Father, but also the work of the Father who was seeking worshippers in spirit and in truth, and was drawing to the Son, that the Son might introduce those drawn to Him into the blessing and privilege of eternal life ; and this not deferred, but present, though the communion of His death was essential to it. He that ate His flesh and drank His blood had eternal life. As He lived because of the Father, so he that ate Him would live because of Him. The place suitable to this was the Father's house, to which He would bring His own ; but meantime the

## NEARNESS AND CONFIDENCE. 295

Comforter would come, and in that day they would know that Jesus was in the Father, and they in Him, and He in them.

When we come to Paul we find more definitely the new place for man in Christ, and the truth of new creation. The expression "made nigh in Christ Jesus," in Ephesians ii. 13, may mean dispensationally, in contrast with the previous place of Gentiles; but the climax of the teaching is that God has made Jew and Gentile to sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the coming ages He may display in them the exceeding riches of His grace. But already we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of Jesus.

Now no expression is more remarkable than this—to have boldness with God, and liberty with confidence. It is a condition of things which could exist only where the Spirit is, and certainly conveys the idea, that we have to do with a God who has pleasure in being approached, and who

## 296 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

sets Himself to encourage those who have the privilege of approaching.

In the Hebrews we are on somewhat different ground, and it is important to remember that no shadow in the law contained the very image of christian privilege. There we find that though believers have, as being incidentally a people of God on earth, a throne of grace, the calling is that they are sons, whom Christ is not ashamed to call brethren ; and that, as a priestly company, they already have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, to serve the living God. We not only receive, as Israel will, the effect of Christ's death in forgiveness here, but we go through that death into the marvellous light of God's presence, into which flesh has no entrance.

Now here are privileges which properly belong to heaven, and to those who have the Spirit of God's Son. They are the proper inalienable portion of saints now ; and our life down here being, as it were, an incident in the ways of God, is subordinate to our

## NEARNESS AND CONFIDENCE. 297

heavenly privileges. We miss the mark if we attempt to reverse the order. More than this, it may be doubted if any saint who has tasted the blessing of nearness, and the peculiar delight of boldness with God, would care to attach much importance to life and circumstances here, save as they give him opportunity of doing God's will in patience, and having part in the ministry of grace. And the touchstone of things now is not how they compromise our character in the eyes of men, but how they affect and hinder our sense of boldness and liberty with God.

Now where we fail to walk in the enjoyment of our privileges, the spirit of distrust soon finds place in the heart. On the other hand, there is a warmth in nearness which nourishes confidence, and if we ask anything according to His will, we know that He heareth us. It is thus that we are enabled to go fearlessly through the world.

In the presence of difficulties in the

L 2

## 298 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

assembly, saints are often puzzled and overwhelmed by a cloud of writing and talk ; what we need is to be so in the enjoyment of liberty with God, that we maintain confidence ; the result is, that we instinctively gain a sense of what is according to God, and a moral judgment often of spirits as well as of words. The Lord had, as one may say, His intuitions from above (John v. 30), and we have to try the spirits whether they are of God, because everything is not now to be trusted. The same spirit of confidence applies to difficulties in the individual path of saints. The secret of ability to endure is confidence in a living God, who is the Saviour of all men, and especially of them that believe—a confidence that leaves all with God, in the sense that from the outset He has laid out all our pathway down here, having in view an end that is worthy of His goodness. There is no other secret of health and comfort in the soul of the saint, and it is in the liberty of nearness to God, that this secret is learned.

“I ABHOR MYSELF.” 299

May the Lord awaken saints to the sense of their privileges, that the Father's house may be the fitting climax to their experience here.

F. E. R.

---

“I ABHOR MYSELF.”

WHO is it that utters such an expression? According to natural thoughts, we should reply that it was one steeped in guilt. It is not so, it is a man of whom the Lord said: “My servant Job . . . there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil.” (Job i. 8.) But note, he does not say, I abhor what I have done, or what I have been tempted or betrayed into; but, I abhor *myself*. It has often been remarked that when it is a question of what I have done, an excuse for it is readily found, any palliation is sought to avoid saying that it is myself and to hide from self my true moral condition.

The blessed Lord laid bare the inner

## 300 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

springs of wicked self in His reply to the Pharisees (Mark vii. 21), "*from within* out of the heart of men proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness, all these evil things come from within." The whole moral condition of fallen man is ruined, and he is conscious that it is so. This consciousness was disclosed when the Lord said to Adam, "Who told thee that thou wast naked?" and this was what he sought to hide. We do not like to admit our condition, and hence the attempt at concealment, not only from God, but from ourselves. It was close dealing with God as to himself that Job wished to avoid. Among men he had not his fellow, but his lips own the impossibility of man being just with God, and he writhes in the sense that the hand of the Lord was dealing with him, and that "the arrows of the Almighty were within him." He inquires, "How long wilt thou not

“I ABHOR MYSELF.” 301

depart from me [compare Luke v. 8], nor let me alone till I swallow down my spittle ?” and yet he would take the very integrity and uprightness which the fear of God had produced in him as a garment of self-complacency to wrap round himself, “When the ear heard me then it blessed *me*, and when the eye saw me it gave witness to *me*.” (Chap. xxix. 11.) Such is flesh. It is a solemn thing to have it detected in the presence of God, to stand there stripped and naked, for the garments, either of self-righteousness or of self-complacency with what grace may have produced in us, do not avail there. Before God we may each say with Job, “If I wash myself with snow water and make my hands never so clean ; yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch and *mine own* clothes shall abhor me.” At last he is brought to own that the man (himself) who would condemn God that he might be righteous was indeed vile. (Chap. xl. 8.)

Do we realise what the heart of man is capable of ?—the result of having a



## 302 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

nature that is hostile to God, and ready to listen to Satan? "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, who can know it? I the Lord." And His eye has watched every movement of the heart of man, from the moment it moved his hand to take an apple until it moved him to murder the Son of God. Well might John Bunyan be frightened at a saying of one, Francis Spira: "Man knows the beginning of sin, but who bounds the issues thereof?" Judas was once a prattler on his mother's knee, an innocent babe as we speak, perhaps as a boy he was selfish among his companions. He lived to have it said of him, "it were good for that man if he had not been born." He shared with the other disciples in all the graciousness and care of his Lord, and yet could dip with Him in the dish and then turn his back upon Him, and go out from the light of the presence of Jesus into night—for him, the blackness of darkness for ever. He betrayed his Lord for thirty pieces of silver, and

“I ABHOR MYSELF.” 303

found hell for himself, as George Herbert says, about the lips of Jesus.

Oh, what is the heart of man capable of ! How lost, how utterly lost, is he proved to be ; and yet such a sentence as this has been written : “I am not responsible for what *I am*, but only for what I have done ;” and this upon the ground that I could not help being born in sin. Can we then separate between the evil done and the man who did it ?

Let us note where John’s Gospel begins. It does not take up the question of man in responsibility, and guilty. In this Gospel he is perishing or lost (to perish is the same word in the original as to be lost). The truth disclosed here is not so much what will meet the claims of God on guilty man, but how God meets a perishing sinner. Unless he gets eternal life through faith in the Son of God given, and the Son of man lifted up, he will be lost for ever. He must be born again, for by nature he is a child of wrath, as stated elsewhere. The blood of the

## 304 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

paschal lamb was the shelter for Israel when God was dealing in judgment, but the brazen serpent (the Son of man lifted up) is the remedy for man's corrupted state—the result of the serpent's poisonous bite. These are two aspects of the one death of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the one we see the guilty sinner sheltered from judgment; in the other, how a lost sinner should not perish but have eternal life.

The sense of what it is to be a man, a being responsible to his Maker, but proved by that very responsibility to have a nature that resents it and is in undeviating opposition to God, may well wring from the lips of an exercised heart the expression, "Oh wretched man that I am." And what can relieve the wretchedness but the sense that sin in the flesh has been condemned, not abstractedly, but in a Person—the One made sin for us. My state by nature was one of sin, not merely that I could be led astray from Him a little way, but into the farthest lengths of opposition and hatred, but for His sustaining

## THE COURSE ANSWERS TO THE GOAL. 305

mercy. Where could such a state be met, and deliverance therefrom wrought, but in the depths of Calvary, when He who knew no sin was made sin for us, and, abandoned by God in that solemn hour, cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" There is the answer to my soul for what I am. There do I get the sense that I am justified from sin, and am free in the life of Him who was made sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

T. H. R.

---

## THE COURSE ANSWERS TO THE GOAL.

A TRUE aim only can ensure a true course. The very first step is affected by the end in view, for every beginning refers to an end of some kind. The great cause of the practical weakness and failure of the saints is, that though they have started, they have not the right end in view, and no amount of

## 306 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

diligence in good works, can make up or compensate for an incorrect aim. There is often a great endeavour to improve one's walk, while the real defect is in the aim, or the end before the mind. No amount of works, however great and good, can reach a heavenly character, if you have an earthly aim. Abraham can say, "Oh, that Ishmael might live before thee!" His hopes rest for the time on Ishmael, and his course is not according to God, until, Ishmael being cast out, Isaac is the aim and object of his heart. It matters little how far any one has advanced in intelligence, if the aim or end before him be defective. This is the chief point in running the race—"I press toward the mark." It is the mark which actually determines my course. If I have a wrong mark, I am not striving lawfully. It is plain then that the first great thing to insist on with every saint is, that there can be no real vigour, or prosperity, unless the true aim is before the soul. Lot was in the land; Isaac and Jacob were

## THE COURSE ANSWERS TO THE GOAL. 307

in the land ; but each, although in the right place, failed when he had not the right end before his heart.

There has been always since Abraham a divine calling, and every one's growth or prosperity is according as he keeps up to the calling to which he is called of God. I am not now referring to conversion, though I have no doubt that there is an effect on the convert, when the evangelist is set for the end. The Spirit of God honours the purpose of the evangelist's heart in the convert—the fruit of his labours. My inquiry now is deeply interesting—By what truth, in the present distracted state of the church, could saints be helped to prosperity ? The answer in my judgment, I believe on the authority of Scripture, is, that they should be awakened to their full calling, and that no right practice can be attained unless the true aim is before the heart.

There are many believers to whom possibly it has never occurred that they are called of God to be heavenly now, in view of their goal, though still

## 308 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

on this earth. Abraham was first called out, as we familiarly say, "the call of Abraham;" and from that day to this, there has been a calling, as it has pleased God to prescribe. No careful student of Scripture will deny that there is a calling characteristic of each dispensation or period. Thus it is evident that the saint's prosperity, in any given dispensation, was in proportion as he walked worthy of the calling. The calling is of God; His countenance and support cannot be obtained elsewhere. The attempt is always to divert the saint from the calling, for he never can be overcome while he simply and faithfully follows on, in faith in God, in view of the end to which he is called. Naturally anything is preferred to a life of faith, and therefore to the calling, which is the path of faith, and as a rule, the more intelligently any one has seemed to apprehend it, if he departs from it, the less hope, alas! there is of his ever returning to it. Rarely we find in Scripture that any who have abandoned

## THE COURSE ANSWERS TO THE GOAL. 309

the calling, like the two and a half tribes, have ever returned to it. The calling is of God, and no one can continue in it but as he has faith in God.

Possibly nothing is more indicative of the low state of the church than the fact, that there is so little said or written to arouse the saints to their true calling. They are exhorted generally to good works, but seldom is the calling propounded, and insisted on.

The call of Abraham was definite, the end was the main thing set before him. It was not merely what he had to leave, but the end he was to arrive at. "Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee : and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great ; and thou shalt be a blessing : and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee : and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."



## 310 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

(Gen. xii. 1–3.) If he has faith for the first step he can say, The power which led me so far will lead me to that consummation, when in me shall be blessed all the nations of the earth. He has as much title to the last as to the first.

It is very fine and worthy of God, that a course is proposed to me, not only with a good start from a scene of confusion, but it directs me to the highest honour, in inconceivable blessing. The course proposed is not from one good stage to another, as you would teach a child ; but the highest point—the crown, is presented to the heart, before a single step is taken.

Thus to Israel in another day, “ And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey ; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.” (Ex. iii. 8.) The Lord

## THE COURSE ANSWERS TO THE GOAL. 311

presents the great end before one step is taken. They are not only to leave Egypt and to reach Canaan—a good land, and a large land, a land flowing with milk and honey, but they are to possess the place of the former inhabitants.

Now if we study the history of Abraham, or the history of Israel, we shall see how they were continually diverted from the goal; and that every failure was caused by their indifference to it. Alas! as it was then, so is it now. It is not the start that discloses the weakness of faith, but that there is not patience. The great evidence of faith is patience—enduring to the end, pressing toward the mark. Moses endured seeing Him that is invisible. It is painfully verified in the history of souls—"Ye began well, who did hinder you?" Let us remember that we have need of patience, that having done the will of God we may inherit the promise. How sad the reproach on Israel—"they despised the pleasant land;" in their

## 312 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

hearts they turned back into Egypt ;  
 “My people would not hearken unto my voice ; and Israel would none of me.”  
 How great their loss ! “I should soon have subdued their enemies and turned my hand against their adversaries.”  
 This was the provocation, the day of temptation in the wilderness, and the penalty is, “I swore in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.”  
 The one great evidence that we are in divine power, is, that we shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end. After Abraham had patiently endured he obtained the promise. Where the end, or the calling of God, is lost sight of, or neglected, there is always a loss of divine support and joy of heart. These two blessings are always in company, as the heart, true to the calling of God, knows. (See Psalm lxxxi. 14–16.)

Now when we come to the Christian era, we shall find that this principle is the leading one. I might say that the great characteristic of every revelation or communication, is not so much the

## THE COURSE ANSWERS TO THE GOAL. 313

beginning it proposes, but the consummation or goal. Thus our Lord tells Nathanael, that he shall see greater things than these. "And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." (John i. 51.) The eye of faith is to be fixed on the highest point. If the Lord speaks to a poor sinner of Samaria, He presents the highest state first. (John iv. 14.) In every case the goal or crown is the thing presented. Thus in the parable of the prodigal son, and practically to the thief on the cross, the home in heaven is the goal. Each, in every instance, rises to a common height—the end or finish of the calling. It is not the question whether one takes much or little time to reach it. He proposes nothing short of it, with one common terminus for all; as all the tribes go up to Jerusalem. There is but one common centre or end, as there is but one common source. But if it be so in preaching

## 314 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

the gospel, as in Acts viii. 5, "Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them ;" or in Paul saying to an ignorant Gentile, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ ;" that, the very top and source of all, is the object presented to the one in the darkest depth, as indeed Paul had learned for himself when he heard the voice of the glorified Saviour, and saw the light above the brightness of the sun—the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, from the highest point, had reached down to him in the lowest and darkest—if, I repeat, this principle is adhered to, in the ministry of the gospel, how much more in the vocation of the assembly !

But if this principle is little known, and not attended to, in preaching the gospel, it is in a way even more neglected, or overlooked, in ministering to the saints. If the epistles be carefully studied, surely we shall find that the calling or goal is ever insisted on, in order to ensure the christian course. Each writer, no matter what the nature

## THE COURSE ANSWERS TO THE GOAL. 315

of the subject, defines it by the goal. If it be Romans, where the gospel of God is expounded, surely it rises to the top—to the life and Spirit of Christ, and is rooted and grounded in the love of God, and thus morally connected with the mystery. See chapter xvi. 25, “Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began.” I mean that the gospel rises to the very level of the mystery ; at least, this is the end the apostle has in view. I need hardly refer to Colossians and Ephesians to substantiate that the end or calling is the one great thing persistently kept before the souls of the saints. While in Hebrews, if it be the course here, the goal is the ever present object, while access in the beauty of holiness to heaven—the highest place, is known along the road, as the simple right of every believer ; and by it his course is shaped. Or be it Peter, it is the hope

## 316 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

laid up in heaven, kept for us, and we kept for it. Or be it John, it is the eternal life which sets us in the sphere where all is perfect. This, in every instance is the leading of the Spirit ; and the work of the servant to promote the progress of souls in this present time, is by keeping the heart steadily fixed on the purpose of God, or the goal of the calling. Once a principle is established in Scripture, abundant corroboration of it will occur and increase to every thoughtful reader.

Again, we find all through Scripture, that the only true way of restoring the people of God, when they had failed, or turned away, was by recalling them to God's purpose, and their brightest hour. It was the holy decision of Moses, when he came down from the mount—the highest point—to act for God, when all Israel were turned to idolatry, which eventually rallied them.

Thus it was with the Judges ; as each one in faith in God, sought to restore Israel to real possession of the land, the true goal, he procured

## THE COURSE ANSWERS TO THE GOAL. 317

their prosperity. Samuel can assure all Israel that if they unitedly separate from Baalim and Ashtaroath, and serve the Lord only—"And Samuel spake unto all the house of Israel, saying, If ye do return unto the Lord with all your hearts, then put away the strange gods and Ashtaroath from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve him only : and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines " (1 Sam. vii. 3), they shall have full unhindered possession of the land ; as the stone Ebenezer testified.

The same we see in Elijah in a very remarkable way when he destroyed the prophets of Baal, and awakened all Israel to the power and reality of Jehovah, as at the first.

Thus also Ezra and Nehemiah would promote the prosperity of the remnant by occupying them with the highest divine interest to which they were called. The temple with one, the city with the other. That which seemed the farthest off to the natural eye, that



## 318 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

which appeared to be most unattainable, impossible one might say, was the chief thing each of them proposed as the true rallying-point for all the people. This great principle is here. The place or the interest paramount with God, to which we are called, is the one best calculated to revive the hearts of His people. The Lord give us to practise this with more simplicity and faithfulness.

The great burden of all the prophets is of two parts ; one, to awaken Israel to their departure from their calling in its highest order ; the other, that their only way of escaping from loss and shame, is by returning to it ; and that in the end the mercy of God will effect this for them. Thus we see that it is not by lowering the standard, but by insisting on what is chief in the mind of the Lord for His people, that they can be awakened and induced to progress. It is very evident that whatever is God's chief purpose or calling for His people at any time, must be the line of His power and

## THE COURSE ANSWERS TO THE GOAL. 319

the succour of His people—the centre, the pinnacle, to which every divine sentiment of the heart must answer. It is the same in all ordinary things. Be it a journey, or a pursuit, the goal of it or the point to be reached or accomplished, is the great object before the mind, and there is a preparation at the start, in keeping with the end proposed. As I have said, every beginning has a relation to an end, and the end or aim gives a colour or a character to every advance towards it.

. Thus our Lord in John xvii. allows us to hear His fullest desires for His own, which was written for the comfort of the saints when there was a general departure from their first love ; and we know that this prayer will be yet fully answered, as is set forth in Revelation xxi., when the bride comes down from God out of heaven. And this is the moral height on which the saints invite the Lord to come. See Revelation xxii. 17, “The Spirit and the bride say, Come.”

Thus Paul assures Timothy that

## 320 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

he would be able to overcome the difficulties in the last days, because Timothy had fully known his doctrine ; he is to be the contrast of them that are in Asia, who had turned away from Paul.

Thus Peter, writing to the Jews (2 Peter iii. 12, 13), even passes over the millennium, and occupies them with the eternal state.

The word to the faithful up to the last is, "Behold, I come quickly : hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." There is no growth, no power, no testimony, but as the goal is before the heart. The man who in the power of the Spirit enjoys the goal, like Stephen, is sure to be the one in the grace and faithfulness of Christ here, however great the antagonism.

The Lord grant that His own may be more alive to the great end He has proposed to them, and thus be preserved from the uncertain, unwise and unprofitable course that many are found in.

## THE NATURAL MIND AND CHRIST'S MIND.

WE are told that we have the mind of Christ, and, alas, we know that we have a natural mind which understandeth not the things of the Spirit of God. It is a great point gained when we know that we have the mind of Christ, and that the natural mind is altogether inferior to it, so that an exercise is necessary as to whether I am judging of things by the mind of Christ or by the natural mind. In the Old Testament times we see the continual working of the natural mind even when there is a right end in view. Eve, judging after the natural mind, calls her firstborn Cain, as if he were the promised seed. When the natural mind entertains or interprets the word of God, it never rises beyond man; that is, it is not able to grasp the glory of God, or God in His nature. It does not occur to Eve that if man in innocence failed, the fallen man could

## 322 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

not restore him. Thus her application of the promised seed to her firstborn, discloses how the natural mind reduces the thoughts of God in their largest purpose, to the measure of itself. The things of a man are known to the spirit of a man, and therefore his mind cannot rise up to the things of the Spirit of God. Thus in every instance, even when the word of God is accepted as the truth, it is sure to be limited to man's need or gain, and the range and measure which would embrace God, and therefore man, with reference to Him, is not seen. The mind of man could not rise above man. The mind of Christ begins with God, and embraces man and all that appertains to him according to God.

Cain was right in his desire to propitiate God, but he attempts it according to his own mind. God's mind is unknown and unheeded by him. Faith lays hold of God, and thus Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. If God is not before my heart, myself is ; hence faith is the

## THE NATURAL MIND, ETC. 323

evidence that God is before me, and I can endure as seeing Him who is invisible. Lot can be in the land, in the right place, the true calling of God, and yet led by the natural mind, he dwells in Sodom, and eventually suffers grievously.

Rebekah is a remarkable instance of the way in which man's mind would effectuate the word of God. It is possible to be enlightened, and to desire a promised blessing, and yet to have no faith in God as to its fulfilment, and then, like Rebekah, we are filled with our own devices.

It has been said that the only recorded instance of Joseph's failure is when he essayed to correct his father for laying his right hand on Ephraim's head. He was then judging after the natural mind, and as it never can rise to the mind of God, it attempts to thwart it.

Moses in faith refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, and

## 324 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

yet he failed, when, led by his natural mind, he essayed to deliver Israel by his own arm. Thus it is not only in wrong things that the natural mind is contrary and obstructive, but in the best things; when it essays to direct, it grievously damages.

Could any act more fully expose the poverty and incapacity of the natural mind than Moses' plaint: "I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me." Surely he was then seeing as man sees and not as God sees. In the shortsightedness of the natural mind he is deprived of the highest honour God could confer on him. If anything could awaken in us a dread of the interference of the natural mind this example would. And yet in connection with this event we get a remarkable instance of the great difference of judgment respecting the same act, by two such men as Moses and Joshua. When Joshua hears that two of the servants prophesy in the camp, he said to Moses, "My lord, forbid them." He was thinking only

## THE NATURAL MIND, ETC. 325

of Moses ; but Moses retorts, "Enviest thou for my sake ? would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his Spirit upon them !" (Num. xi. 28, 29.)

My desire in multiplying examples is that we may see the endless variety of the subtle and specious ways in which the natural mind runs counter to the spiritual without any intention of the kind.

Michal, Saul's daughter, who in the greatness of her affection for David, imperilled her own life to save him from king Saul, despised him in her heart and upbraided him, when he, David, danced before the ark of God. Her very affection for him could not brook his undignified position.

The old prophet at Bethel was actually the cause of the terrible judgment which fell on his brother prophet, simply because he could not comprehend the mind of God ; and in his natural amiability, in order to secure a temporary comfort for his brother, he led him to believe a lie, and thus



## 326 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

brought about his miserable end. I am assured that if any one would meditate on these examples, he must be convinced of the constant danger in which he stands of being influenced by the natural mind.

In Psalm lxxiii., we find the Psalmist almost bewildered, while he surveys and judges of things around him according to the light of his own intellect. But when he goes into the sanctuary, his own judgments are all reversed, and he sees things according to God's mind. The ever unvarying defect in man's judgment of anything is the exclusiveness with which he confines his view to man's circle and interests; he never can begin in the altitude of the divine mind and in it embrace his own.

Now in the New Testament we shall find the intrusion of the natural mind even more marked and more injurious. The closer we are to the Lord's mind, the more estranged does man's mind appear. Perfection always exposes imperfection. The very familiar way the

## THE NATURAL MIND, ETC. 327

Lord is with the disciples affords an opportunity for the expression of their judgments, which in a very distinct way defines the difference, and the character of it, between Him and them. I do not speak of the way the unbelieving Jew misunderstood and misjudged Him, but Mary could so chide Him for His absence, that He retorted, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" The natural mind cannot rise above its own feelings and affections. A woman in the crowd can say, "Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked." In true piety and admiration of the Lord she cannot rise beyond man's relation to Him. The Lord answers her, "Blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it." Peter, by a revelation from the Father, declares that Christ is the Son of God, but immediately afterwards he is severely censured by the Lord, because he, in his natural feelings, could not bear to hear of the Lord's death; and this tells us the great distance between

## 328 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

the divine mind and the mind of man, in his greatest amiability and concern for the Lord. It becomes us to take to heart our Lord's censure of Peter, for surely if an expression of tender care for the Lord evoked so great a reproof, what would be His condemnation of the sentimentality which is so often obtruded upon His people, as if it were true spirituality, and too often well received, and highly commended by the hearers.

A Martha can receive the Lord into her house, and busy herself much in caring for Him, and all the time acting according to her natural feelings, be not as Mary, who hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her. If we were more distrustful of our own feelings, even with regard to the Lord, we should seek to be so close to Him, that the natural would give way to the spiritual. We have little idea at times of the way the natural undertakes to serve the Lord. No doubt one is rightly under conviction of His claim, but the natural

## THE NATURAL MIND, ETC. 329

mind can never lead ; though as we say in singing, it ought to be an accompaniment to the Spirit of God, who only can lead. It is a great thing to have attained to, that the natural mind understandeth not the things of the Spirit of God.

When infants were brought to our Lord that He might touch them, when His disciples saw it they rebuked them. In company with Him for years, they did not understand the tenderness of His nature, that would say, "Suffer the little children to come unto me."

When our blessed Lord exclaimed, "Who touched my clothes?" the disciples had no idea of the difference between the touch of faith, and what it could obtain, and any other touch ; and they answered, "Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?"

On the holy mount Peter can say, "Let us make three tabernacles . . . . not knowing what he said ;" so little had he, by long and most intimate acquaintance naturally, comprehended

M 2

## 330 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

the Son of God, and His infinite superiority to any man. I need not add more.

We have seen in Old Testament times how the mind of man when most sincere, embarrassed or thwarted the gleams of divine light in the soul. And in the gospels we have seen how those most attached to the Lord, long and intimately connected with Him, never acquired any correct idea of His words or nature. Familiar as they were with both, they could not reach up to anything beyond man. If the company of Christ in its most constant and endearing ways, cannot raise the mind of man to a range which embraces God, surely nothing else can. If it proves a hindrance, and not a help, when it is best disposed, as the disciples were to the Lord, what must it be when uncontrolled, but enmity against God?

Let us now turn to the present period, which we may call the dispensation of the Holy Ghost: hence it is of special and unequalled interest, to see how the natural mind will shew itself

## THE NATURAL MIND, ETC. 331

in the man whose body is the temple of the Holy Ghost. Man was never before so favoured. Before Christ came, the Holy Ghost enlightened a man, and the natural mind was, as it were, unfettered, to carry out its convictions, even right ones, in its own way. When Christ was here He swayed those attached to Him, into His mind and ways ; but now when the Spirit of God dwells in the believer, we might expect to see the natural mind kept in abeyance, and simply a servant under the rule of Christ.

In the Acts we get some instances of the way in which the natural mind slights and evades the Spirit of God. I omit gross cases like Ananias and Sapphira ; but Peter walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel ; and Barnabas was carried away, chose Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus ; and Mark returned from Pamphylia. I adduce this in order to shew that the natural mind never judges according to the Spirit of God.

If I turn to the Corinthians, Galatians

## 332 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

and Colossians, I find that in each, in a different way, the saints are damaged and hindered by the intrusion and leading of the natural mind ; at least in two of them, while in the third they are in danger.

The Corinthians were highly gifted of God, but instead of walking in the practical crucifixion of the flesh, they, on the contrary, essayed to exalt themselves as men, because of the gifts of the Spirit. The position and power which were obtained for them by the cross of Christ, they used to exalt the man for whom Christ died ; they overlooked the cross by which this gain was procured for them. Hence their indifference at the Lord's supper, and hence the doctrine that there was no resurrection of the body.

The Galatians, on the other hand, would satisfy the natural mind by adding the works of the law to grace—reducing grace to the level of man's mind. The Corinthians would exalt themselves by the effects of the cross, while the Galatians would make it of

## THE NATURAL MIND, ETC. 333

no effect by the works of the law. How necessary for us to remember, if we are led by the Spirit we are the sons of God !

I must add a little about the Colossians, because in that epistle the subtilty of the natural mind is more exposed than anywhere else. The Colossians had received the gospel in great power and fulness, but they were in danger of being beguiled by enticing words, "through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." Their danger was, lest after being in the assured hope of heaven through the work of Christ, they should now be led by the natural mind, to seek or accept help and support, from the man who was really cut off in the cross—"the putting off of the body of the flesh in the circumcision of Christ ;" and the truth which could only preserve them was the knowledge of the mystery ; and for this the apostle had much conflict, because he foresaw, that if the natural



## 334 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

mind should get a place when the gospel was fully accepted, there would be endless loss to the saints, and the whole church. Now this assuredly is the evil which culminates in Laodicea.

The decadence of the church is complete when false doctrine is openly sanctioned, as in Thyatira. Sardis is the Reformation. Philadelphia the revival of the truth. Laodicea, the full-blown development of the Colossian snare, consequent on a widespread testimony to full salvation through the blood of Christ. The believers, I might say, *en masse*, disregarded the church, and did not guard against the danger which the apostle dreaded for the Colossians, and from which he sought to preserve them. Nay, the gospel without the church, has been the practical teaching of the day, and now we are being confronted with man's boastfulness of his acquisitions, in connection with the christian religion, while Christ is outside, and there is neither the true testimony nor the true Man to effect it. The

## ON PRAYER, ETC.

335

Amen, the only true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God, could only be here for God, according to the mind of God.

May we awake, and take to heart how our Lord is again, as I might say, smitten in the house of His friends. Alas, that the deepest dishonour done to Christ, should be done by those who really care for Him, like Peter, in another day. The word then to each is, Awake, awake.

---

## ON PRAYER—GOD'S TWOFOLD ANSWER TO IT.

No doubt that when God *manifestly* answers a prayer, the prayer was dictated by the Spirit. (Rom. viii. 26, 27.) But the answer to a prayer in the Spirit is not always manifested to others, and yet there may be a very distinct answer. One looking on may not see that the matter prayed for has been granted, when the soul itself is conscious of its answer having come, and is, by it, at present peace and rest

## 336 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

about the question. There are these two ways in which God is pleased to meet our prayers: the one we may call the *public* answer, the other the *private* one. Of these two the latter is by far the greatest display of His favour that I can know. It is the answer of Philippians iv. 6, 7. Many persons (may we not say the majority of Christians?) seem to understand that an answer from God must necessarily be a *public* one or it is *not* an answer. When they speak of having had a "direct answer to prayer," they mean only *that*, and this is the only kind of answer they seek for—a public one. But the public answer to prayer is not such a manifestation of His mercy and grace to me as the private one. If God should move the world and shake it to its very foundations on my behalf, *that* could not be so great an event as it is for me to possess the "peace of God"—*God's own peace*, about my little matter which I have brought before Him.

The apostle James brings before us

## ON PRAYER, ETC.

337

Elias as an example of a man of prayer. The case illustrates what I have said. Seven times he sent his servant, persuaded that the rain which the land thirsted for was coming. The prophet had received the private answer to his prayer long before the public one came. He was at rest in his own soul about it long before the *appearance* (which the natural eye could see) of the "little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand." *Faith* here gets the private answer, *nature* the public one. I think God would have us to be more exercised as to the difference between these two.

Again, the apostle Paul prayed three times about something which greatly distressed him personally. (2 Cor. xii. 8.) No one saw a public answer to that prayer, for as to the apostle's desire to have the thing "depart from" him, it was unanswered. And yet the supplication did receive a most direct *private* answer from the Lord. That answer was for the ear of the apostle alone, but so distinctly was it to him an answer to his prayer, that it caused

## 338 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

him to glory in the very thing which, as a bitter trial to himself, he had brought to God in his prayer to Him to remove it! He will now rather keep it than have it removed. If we are instructed by what many say to-day—if we may regard as right the way in which they act as to prayer—only regarding as answers to them those events which run exactly in the lines they have marked out, and which shall be visible to all; then the prayer of the apostle remained unanswered. Yet we cannot fail to see that every anxiety as to his difficulty had been calmed, met, and eternally set at rest.

Is there not too much anxiety for public answers to our prayers, and too little understanding of this private way in which (according to Philippians iv. 7) God delights to meet and satisfy them? as, for example, many going out as evangelists seem to be wholly occupied with the first, the public accrediting of the man and his labours, and if you talk to them of the calmness that springs from the second, with no

## ON PRAYER, ETC.

339

public or little public encouragement, it is scarcely known. I believe that results are little sought for by the man that knows the "*power of Christ*" tabernacling over him. Is it a little thing to have the heart kept as a garrison by the "peace of God"? Was there any man who ever plodded on so perseveringly, or any man whose heart went out more after sinners than that of the apostle Paul? Has there been any evangelist equal to him since? Not that any one would set aside the way in which God is pleased at times publicly to answer our prayers; but we see how the man was carried on, the inner life of the soul is before us, and what sustained it in freshness and in active service down here up to the end. (2 Tim. iv. 6-10.) Nor was it otherwise with the Lord Himself. We want to know more of this, and less of that restlessness which is for ever looking for and talking of results, and which is never satisfied without them. This last characterises the day in which we live. I would,

## 340 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

then, pray for myself and for my brethren that we may know more of the difference between the *public* and *private* answer of God as to every matter that we commend to Him.

H. C. A.

---

## THE DEPRAVITY OF MAN.

THE working of a will in Eve, and subsequently in Adam, contrary to God's expressed will, not only perpetrated the fall of man, but, because of the penalty attached to it, made that fall irrevocable. No lesser penalty could be attached to a departure of such moral gravity. The greater the creature the greater the fall when that creature acts diametrically contrary to God's will inexcusably, when no pressure or want forced him to it, but simply and solely the rivalry of ambition to advance himself to a greater position—one equal with God ; not content with an order of things fully adequate to secure him every happiness and benefit.

If the nature of the fall, and the

## THE DEPRAVITY OF MAN. 341

moral distance from God to which it had reduced man, were apprehended with any measure of precision, there would be no difficulty, nor surprise, in detecting or owning the depravity of man. If man has a will contrary to God's, when the greatest penalty cannot restrain him from doing his own will, he is not only alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in him, but his mind is enmity against God. Once man, the highest order of creature on earth, surrendered himself to a wilfulness which entailed death, his history in that order must come to an end. God could not have affixed a lesser penalty to sin. A will contrary to God is sin, and if the creature made in the image and likeness of God was to be permitted to live in the state of utter demoralisation to which he had sunk, surely it would be only a disannulling of God's own purpose in creating man. The greatest being had fallen into the deepest depravity, and thereupon the only penalty proper for the holy God to inflict was death ; that



## 342 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

is, that man should not exist in the order of being in which he was blessed, and from which he had fallen by wilful transgression.

We have a very meagre idea of the holiness of God, if we could suppose that a creature of the highest order, made in His own likeness and image, the one most qualified to testify of Him if absolutely right, but the one most capable of misrepresenting and dishonouring Him if he were alienated from Him, could, when thus alienated, be allowed to live. We may speak of the immortality of the soul, but this only makes the lost sensible of their condemnation and perpetual suffering. If a lion or an elephant follows its own bent, nothing better is expected from it; it eventually dies, and is no more. But man, the chief of all the creation on earth, when he acted in his own will disparaged the whole of God's work, and no lesser penalty could be attached to his sin than death. The man that sins must die. The body of the believer is redeemed, so that it will be raised up

## THE DEPRAVITY OF MAN. 343

in a greater and better life ; but the life in which man sinned must expire, and all that attaches to it. It is vain to reason that the evil principle could by any means be eliminated from fallen man. Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean ? The natural mind is enmity against God ; there is no possibility of altering it to a different one. There is *through grace* the power to supplant it by another, and if this be accepted, as the only true way of dealing with the old, or fallen man, then it is plain enough that the other must disappear. If all the faculties and sensorial activities are opposed to God, there is no sense of holiness in any one seeking or wishing to retain them, especially when it is plainly revealed that the believer is given another mind—"the mind of Christ." What is the use, or how could it be necessary to give the believer a new mind—a mind of the highest order—if it were possible to reform the one he had, into perfect concert with God. If it were an eye or any particular faculty

## 344 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

which was adverse to God, there could by the removal of it be a saving of the rest ; but when it is the will, the mind, the whole man is corrupted, and in order to be clear he must die. “ He that is dead is justified from sin,” and this is just what grace effects. “ Our old man is crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be destroyed ;” and “ the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.” The body is to be redeemed, but there would be no gain to the new man were it morally possible to revive to him the mind of the old, with which all his perverseness was connected. In the newness of life, everything springing from or connected with it, remains for ever. No one with a true sense of holiness could wish that there should be any link with the mind that was enmity against God, and at the best could not comprehend in its natural order the things of God.

But it is not only from a sense of the holiness of God that I can see that the old man—the fallen man—the man

## THE DEPRAVITY OF MAN. 345

we have inherited from Adam, must pass away ; for even if our Lord came before we pass through death, we should be changed : " This mortal must put on immortality." We who believe have died with Christ, therefore to us death is abolished, but it would be a fiction to say that we have died with Him on the cross, and at the same time to aver that the man who had died with Him would revive, and be reinstated in the same mind and faculties, as when Adam fell. Through grace we are given infinitely better, but the condemned man has been judicially brought to an end in the cross of Christ. There is no sense of God's holiness in the one who contends for aught else.

But besides this, how could I have any true sense of what holiness is, if I could harbour for a minute the idea that my mind could be so improved or so expurgated that it need not pass away. Could I bear to have revived to me, when in a perfect and a holy state, the mind that in all its sentiments and feelings never understood the things of

## 346 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

God, and when left to itself never rose above man and his exaltation? God is never uppermost, and in its principles and purpose it is enmity against Him. No one who understands the human mind, or has analysed it, but will admit that however beautiful its conceptions it never rises above man—man is the standard and the standpoint of everything. Here the psalmist failed in Psalm lxxiii. Without the control of the Spirit of God

“No infant’s changing pleasure  
Is like my wandering mind.”

True, the Spirit of God uses it to convey divine words to the natural understanding, so that the conscience may be arrested, and to this end all types are within the compass of the natural mind; but when we come to divine things, even the most necessary for suffering man, namely, “The peace of God,” it “passeth all understanding;” and “the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.” On the ground, then, of the limited and

## THE DEPRAVITY OF MAN. 347

alien character of man's mind, no saint would like to retain it, and if on this ground we are thankful that the mind is renewed, that is, that it is entirely new, how much more when we know that the will is so adverse to God, that "when I would do good [as a quickened soul] evil is present with me;" so that "in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." What saint could like to retain that order of being which is described as being "in the flesh"? "If ye live after the flesh ye shall die, but if ye through the Spirit, do mortify [not improve] the deeds of the body, ye shall live." Thus it is not only that man's mind is limited to man, and cannot rise to God, but in its will, and workings, in its conceptions and interests, it is evil. "In me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing." Could any one, partaker of the divine nature, and at all sensible of its holy feelings, desire or approve of the continuance of the man in the flesh, or the old order—what is of the old man? There is no saint who does not know

## 348 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

something of the torment of thoughts unbidden and unapproved of, and various are the expedients to which godly men have turned, in order to be preserved from this painful intrusion ; and there never is progress until this great question is divinely settled. The course of many a one has been hindered and marred, because he has not settled this question according to God. He has not accepted that there is no relief from the tormentor—the natural man—but in death. There is no justification for sin but in the death of the man in whom the sin is. This is the only way to be really relieved ; but, as I could not bear my own judgment, I am not dead in myself, but I have died with Christ ; and in His life I am free, and nowhere else. “They that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.” As I am in Christ’s life I have the justification which belongs to that life, and I am free from that sink of iniquity that is in me, that is in my flesh.

We get abundant examples in the

## THE DEPRAVITY OF MAN. 349

scriptures of the deceitfulness of sin. I need not speak of Cain, Adam's firstborn, killing his own brother, because his own works were evil and his brother's righteous. This is the nature that is in us, this is the flesh from which there is no deliverance but in death. We ought to rejoice that it is gone judicially in Christ's death, and that His life is our life.

Again, see what Judas can do. Admit that he did not intend to imperil Christ's life, that he believed He could save Himself; then we must conclude that he, in his desire for money, sold One with the power of God; that for gain he would do all he could to imperil One who he believed had the power of God. Could anything betray more the wickedness in man's heart and that there was no fear of God before his eyes"? The tortuousness of the human mind is its greatest atrocity. It is "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked." See it in godly people. Rebekah's plan to acquire the blessing



## 350 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

for Jacob, when a good thing was the object ; while in David, the combination of selfishness and cruelty with the lowest scheming to escape detection, and the sacrifice of every right feeling, is almost too terrible to contemplate, were not the very same nature in each of us ; as some one has said, " Give me the command of a man's circumstances and you give me the command of the man." And scripture tells us to be considerate to those who fall, " considering thyself lest thou also be tempted." Who would answer for any one if he were brought face to face with a temptation ? And this is the life of the flesh, its nature ; and as long as it exists, this depravity remains, for " if we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves." We have to reckon ourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

In conclusion I must add, though it be painful to condemn, that no one has a true sense of the depravity of man, who has not a true sense of the

## THE DEPRAVITY OF MAN. 351

holiness of God. It is only as holiness is known, that its contrast is known and felt. And this is the reason why many really converted souls, because of their low standard of holiness, have a corresponding low estimate of sin. Some do not allow that anything is sin but a breach of the law, open and recognisable to man. Surely there is no self-judgment there, or there would be the sense that the law exposes "all manner of concupiscence." Surely lust is sin; the desire to possess anything not your own is sin. There can be, thank God, a ceasing from it, but I cannot cease from a thing which does not exist. "He that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin."

But it is not my own conscience only that I have to answer to or keep without reproach, I have to be a fit companion for the holy One of God; my place is in the holiest of all; and surely I do not understand either, if I can suffer that the sin may remain in me, provided it be not in open activity, with no actual deliverance from it in the life

## 352     A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

of Him who freed me from it. If I am not free from it, I could not venture into the holiest of all ; I could not be in the company of Him who is now "separated from sinners," who is minister of the holy places and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord has pitched, and not man." In this state of soul there may be energetic preaching to save souls from hell, but there is no communion with Christ, no knowledge of His present interests, and no advance in the knowledge of God. I know I write strongly, but I believe what I state, and any one can judge for himself. I have the authority of the word of God, and the daily corroboration of it in practical life, that we are "born in sin and shapen in iniquity," and that there is no way by which we can be justified from sin but by death ; and as it could not be by our own, it is through divine grace by Christ's death. We are dead with Him, and in His life we are free, and can enjoy His company, and be at home, and without reserve in the holiest of all.

## HEADINGS OF CHAPTERS.

### JOSHUA.

#### CHAPTER VI.

THE siege of Jericho ; Jehovah orders the manner of taking it : once a day the men of war march round the city, the ark following them, preceded by seven priests blowing trumpets of ram's horn, until the seventh day, when they did so seven times : on the last circuit, at the blast of the trumpets the people shout and the wall fell down, and the people went in, every man straight before him ; all that was in the city was put to the sword, save Rahab and her kindred that were with her in the house. The warning of Joshua against taking of the accursed thing, and curse upon him who should attempt to rebuild Jericho.

#### CHAPTER VII.

Israel, unfaithful in the accursed thing, incur the anger of Jehovah : the

VOL. XXI.

N

## 354 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

three thousand judged sufficient to go up against the little city of Ai, are put to flight : Joshua, on his face before the ark, is warned of Israel's sin as the source of their weakness : Jehovah brings it to light in Achan's act : his confession and judgment by all in the valley of Achor.

## CHAPTER VIII.

Jehovah now encourages Joshua to go against Ai with all the men of war, directing an ambush behind the city : feigning flight, the men of Ai are drawn out in pursuit ; on the lifting up of Joshua's spear, the ambush falls on the city ; the men of Ai (attacked from before and behind) are put to the sword, and Joshua drew not back his hand till Ai was destroyed, taking the spoil for a prey. The king taken alive was hung, but taken down at sundown, not to defile the land of their possession.

An altar Joshua erects upon Ebal, and offers sacrifices : he writes the law upon the stones as Moses commanded, and reads the blessings and

## HEADINGS OF CHAPTERS. 355

cursings before all Israel, divided in two companies over against Gerizim and Ebal.

## CHAPTER IX.

Joshua and the princes of Israel are deceived by the wiles of the Hivites of Gibeon, feigning themselves from a distance, and without asking counsel of Jehovah, make a league with them : on the third day their cities are reached, and the congregation murmur against the princes, but on account of the oath, smite them not : they are made bondmen, hewers of wood and drawers of water for the house of God.

## CHAPTER X.

The Amorite confederacy against Gibeon is defeated by Joshua with a great slaughter, Jehovah raining hail-stones upon them, and causing the sun and moon to stand still at the word of Joshua : the five kings are taken in the cave of Makkedah, and hanged till evening. Seven other cities of the south with their kings are taken at the

## 356 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL

same time, all that breathed being destroyed : victorious Israel returns to the camp at Gilgal.

### CHAPTER XI.

The associated hosts of the northern kings with chariots and horses, are entirely routed at the waters of Merom, and Hazor the head of those kingdoms was, alone of the cities that stood in their strength, burned with fire. Save with Gibeon, peace was made with none, Jehovah ordering it that they should be utterly destroyed as He commanded Moses. So Joshua took the land, and it had rest from war.

### CHAPTER XII.

The summary of their conquests—thirty-one kings and their territories acquired on either side Jordan.

### CHAPTER XIII.

Joshua is old, and much land remained to be possessed : Jehovah exhorts him to divide the land by lot to the tribes that had not already received their

**“THAT I MAY KNOW HIM.” 357**

inheritance on the other side of Jordan, promising to drive out the inhabitants before them.

**CHAPTER XIV.**

Caleb of Judah claims the land whereon his feet had trodden, when as one of the spies he wholly followed Jehovah, according to the word of Moses forty-five years before, and is given Hebron.

**CHAPTER XV.**

The boundaries of the territory allotted to Judah: Caleb dispossesses the giant sons of Anak: the cities of Judah: the Jebusites not driven out of Jerusalem.

---

**“THAT I MAY KNOW HIM.”**

EVERY believer knows something of the work of Christ, of His death and resurrection, also as he walks in faith, he learns to walk even as He walked, obtaining grace from Him for each step in the wilderness journey. These



## 358 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

are the beginning and the groundwork of all blessing. Without question, in order to be established in grace, I require to know Christ in His work for me ; and for walk, His life on earth. Without the first, I could not have peace ; and without the second, the manna, I could not walk as a Christian. Now it is very evident that though the believer may know these two—necessarily the first—yet he has still more to learn ; and that is, Christ as He now is.

The apostle's desire is, "that I may know him and the power of his resurrection." The more I know the blessing and grace which His work and life on earth secure to me, surely the more must I desire to know Him as He is this present moment. Though it is the beginning of all blessing, and absolutely indispensable that I should know the work which He wrought for me in His death and resurrection, as also His life on earth ; yet the more I do, the more must I seek to know Him as He is this present moment. Surely the

## “THAT I MAY KNOW HIM.” 359

more I feel indebted to Him for my salvation, and for His support all along the road, the more the heart longs to be in present communion with Him. It is not possible to be deeply sensible of the eternal blessing which Christ has secured for me on the cross ; and how in priestly consideration He supports me in the wilderness journey with the same grace in which He walked here, without an earnest longing to know Him as He is. Thus we see in the apostle in Philippians iii. that he counts all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ (the Christ in glory) for whom he has suffered the loss of all things that Christ might be his gain.

It must be plain to any spiritual mind that the knowledge of Christ as He is now in glory, is different and additional to the knowledge of His work and life here ; though if the latter were not known, it would be impossible to know Him as He is now in glory. Knowing Him in glory does not derogate from the previous knowledge, but

## 360 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

on the contrary it corroborates and deepens it; because nothing can more enhance the great services of any one than to have present intimacy with him. Thus we understand the desire of the apostle when he says all that was gain to me I counted loss for Christ: yea, I count all things but rubbish that I may have Him as my gain.

Let any one for a moment conceive the ineffable delight of being in present acquaintance with our Lord as He is at present. The greater the services which He has rendered in times past, and the more I am sensible of the great benefit He has rendered me, the more must I delight to know Him as He is this moment. It is inconceivable the disclosure which the knowledge of Him as He is in glory confers on us. The One who in death, and in a life of humiliation, has so inexpressibly and eternally blessed me, is now in the highest glory, and there He desires that I should be in the same intimacy with Him, as He is with the Father.

“THAT I MAY KNOW HIM.” 361

(John x. 14, 15.) To know Him in glory who served me beyond all praise, is, in the most perfect way, a consummation and confirmation of all that He has done.

The superiority of Christ to everything that would exalt man is now manifest. To enjoy the MAN in glory there, is at once the sense that there is no place for the man in the flesh, however good or commendable. The MAN in glory who died for the man in the flesh, must not only eclipse the man for whom Christ suffered, but His superiority must lead the heart to renounce and abrogate all of the man for whom He died. The One is the untiring object of attraction—the other is correspondingly renounced and distanced.

It is important and interesting to trace the stages by which we reach to this experience, namely, “That I may know him.” Until we know that our sins are forgiven, and that consequent thereon we are brought to God to share in the joys of His house,

N 2

## 362 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

we are occupied with our salvation. When we are in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, the next stage is our walk through this world, or the wilderness. As we learn Christ in His priestly service, we are made sensible that we are fit to bear Him company in the holy places—that we are the consecrated priesthood. Once there, we begin to know Him, though we have not as yet reached the stage when the desire to know Him is quite absolute. When I am enjoying companionship with the Lord in the sanctuary, the sense of union will exist, though it may not be known as a fact. Hence consequent on companionship, in an entirely new sphere in the holy places, I am prepared for the fact that I am a member of His body—the church, and in order to apprehend this truth, I learn that I am risen with Him ; and I seek Him where He is ; and this leads me to discover that having died with Him I have to mortify the members which are on the earth : in a word, that I am at Gilgal, and have in

## “THAT I MAY KNOW HIM.” 363

His circumcision been severed from all of the old man ; and as I accept it, I find Christ everything and in all. This is quite a new stage. Now I, as in the type (Jos. v. 10, 11), enter on a new day. I eat of the old corn of the land, for I know I am raised up in co-partnership with all saints, and made to sit down in the heavenlies in Christ.

Now it is from this that I can appropriate the words, “That I may know him.” This is the desire of one who knows the blessedness of his position in Christ. And hence, here in the wilderness, he has but the one desire and purpose—to count all things but loss, that Christ may be his gain. And from knowing Him in the power of His resurrection, he can have fellowship of His sufferings, “being made conformable to His death.” The man in the flesh in his best state and circumstances is refused for Christ in the most suffering circumstances. This is accompanied as to one’s prospect, with “This one thing I do, forgetting those

## 364 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus ;” ending with our having a body like unto His own glorious body. “ Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.” It is not only that I have preferred Christ to the best man in the flesh, but I have turned from everything here for the goal where He is ; and finally, His coming is my hope, when I am to have a glorious body like His own glorious body.

It is evident that there are three great marks of a Christian who knows the Lord as He is. First, that the best man in the flesh is counted but rubbish for Christ ; second, *everything* here is abandoned for the prize ; third, the Lord’s coming is the consummation of every blessing for the heavenly citizen.

## “THAT I MAY KNOW HIM.” 365

We have seen the practical experience of one who knows Christ as He is, let us now ascertain some of the delight and gain acquired by knowing Him. The first and greatest is embraced in our Lord's words—I call you not servants but friends ; the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth. There can be no greater favour than to be in the Lord's confidence ; that is, that He makes known to me His pleasure at the moment. It is in present acquaintance I am assured of His love to me. I need not repeat that I cannot enjoy anything if I am not in the assured benefit of His past services ; but in order to be His friend I require to be near Him, and there to know His pleasure each day and hour. The wise woman (Pro. xxxi.) illustrates the true place of one in intimacy with Christ at the time, as to His interests, and therefore ready for His appearing. Such an one waits upon Him—the Head of His body, understanding the scope of that administration. It is there he learns



## 366 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

the wisdom of the greater than Solomon in all His great personal concerns. There he can review and connect the great past with the great future, contemplating Christ's future kingdom and glory. It is there he begins to comprehend the vastness of the Father's delight in Christ as a Man; and thus to enter into, in part, his own acceptance in the Beloved, sharing in the fellowship of the Father and the Son.

It is there that he is so entranced with all the blessedness of Christ in heaven, the joys and greatness of the Father's house, and the unfolding of all His perfection by the eternal Son, that there is but one result—the three marks I have already referred to. The one perpetual, unchanging experience as we walk on to glory is—that we may know Him now in glory.

May the Lord use these suggestions to lead our hearts to apprehend more the great gain from knowing Him as He is.



## THE VARIOUS INTRUSIONS OF THE FLESH ; HOW EACH IS CHECKED OR FOILED.

THE flesh has its own way as much as it can before conversion. Then an entirely new experience occurs. As the gospel has been received by faith, the conscience is at peace before God, as to the fear of future judgment. The relief to the conscience is the first and great experience of the quickened soul. Now when such an one is sealed by the Holy Ghost, there is a divine confirmation of this relief, and the Spirit witnesseth with our spirit that we are children of God. This is all new, and there would be unbroken happiness if there were no flesh in us. The flesh has a will of its own, and would please itself. This is its one characteristic. It resists all restraint, and ever seeks to indulge itself. To be armed with the same mind—namely, Christ's death—is the only true course

## 368 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

in the wilderness. Hence Marah is preceded by the blood on the lintel, or the passover, and the Red Sea. You are free and delivered from the judgment on the flesh first, before you are called to drink death, which Marah represents. As I am clear of the judgment of God, on account of the works of the flesh, I am now called to cease from sin ; and “he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin.”

The first intrusion of the flesh, as we see with the Corinthians, is to please ourselves ; in a word, to let the flesh enjoy itself without falling into open depravity. Now in a remarkable way we find that at Corinth they drifted into every form of pleasure, even to corruption ; and they were a reproach in every circle, from the house of God to the home circle. Be it at the Lord’s table, or in the idol’s temple, to please oneself was the rule. The flesh was indulged. It was not asserted that we might sin, but the rein having been given to indulgence, it is not to be wondered at that gross sin was the con-

## INTRUSIONS OF THE FLESH, ETC. 369

sequence. The Corinthian way is to be refused, and not merely its disgraceful results. The truth which would repress and foil this intrusion was not apprehended; and that truth is the simple fact that Christ was crucified. Now we must bear in mind that it is not the efficacy of the work on the cross that is insisted on in 1 Corinthians ii., but "Jesus Christ, and him crucified." The Corinthians were clear as to the efficacy of the cross. They had accepted the benefit of Christ's work, but they wanted to spare the man for whose sins Christ had died. They accepted the death of Christ; they were saved from judgment, but they essayed now to continue pleasing the man who had sinned. They thought only of their exemption from judgment by the cross of Christ; and they did not take to heart the way, or the cost, by which it was obtained. The illustration often used, of a substitute being found for one pressed for the army contains this idea; even that because a substitute has been

## 370 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

found, I am scot free, and I may now enjoy myself as much as I can.

When I see that Christ was crucified in order to effect my salvation, I am bound to disown and deny that man for whom Christ suffered. Not only am I free from the judgment on me because of my sins, but as this has been procured for me by the crucifixion of the holy One of God, I cannot now enjoy or indulge the man for whom He died—that no flesh should glory in His presence. It is a very specious snare, and one in which the saints in general have been taken. They regard Christ so as their substitute, that they are free, not only from judgment, but to indulge and gratify the man who had been under judgment. Our sins are atoned for, and this is properly substitution; but the sin in us is not atoned for; if it were, the sinful man would be retained. “God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh . . . . condemned sin in the flesh,” and thus there is no place for the sinful man. Jesus Christ is the only Man now

## INTRUSIONS OF THE FLESH, ETC. 371

before the eye of God for man's blessing, "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

Now when I see that Jesus Christ who is in heaven, was here crucified, I necessarily connect myself, as a man, with Him crucified, and with Him alive and in glory. He is my life and my new standing. Hence the contrast (2 Cor. ii. 11) between the spirit of man and the Spirit of God. The Lord's supper is introduced in 1 Corinthians x. in order to set forth that we there identify ourselves with His death. As it was by His death that our blessing was obtained, so we are now identified with His death; we are in the communion of His blood and His body. If we had not been relieved by Him in His death, we could not have communion with Him in His death. As we have gained so unspeakably by His death, we could not exalt or indulge the man for whom Christ died; but as we are sensible of the blessing obtained for

## 372 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

us, we are glad to be identified with His death, which has secured untold blessings for us ; and therefore practically we are apart from all for which Christ died, and it is as we bear about in our body the dying of Jesus, that the life of Jesus is made manifest in our body.

Thus we see that the Corinthians would appropriate the benefits of Christ's work, but they overlooked the way and the cost by which these were obtained. They confined the work of Christ merely to its efficacy, and the deliverance from the judgment of God, which was effected for them, but they ignored the way it was obtained. They were more like Israel in Egypt when they were sheltered by blood, and where now they would live and enjoy themselves. Israel thought not of the *suffering of the lamb for them*. Thus it was with the Corinthians. They had appropriated the virtue of the blood of Christ ; so far so good ; but they had not entered into the truth, that the only way by which this immense

## INTRUSIONS OF THE FLESH, ETC. 373

blessing could be obtained for them, was by the death of the cross—the judicial death of our Lord Jesus Christ. If He had to be crucified—a death of shame and reproach, to save us, how could we indulge or exalt that for which He died. Thus we see that the intrusion of the flesh at Corinth, is the one common among Christians, and inevitable, when Jesus Christ is not the Man before the heart, and Him crucified on my account. As I accept and rejoice in the one, I accept and insist on the other.

Now in Galatians, the intrusion of the flesh is different. There it is with those who, having begun in the Spirit, seek to be made perfect in the flesh. They desired to check the flesh; and in order to do so, they turned to the law. When I would make the flesh religious, the law must be my standard. It is the measure of God's claims on man. The defect is in acknowledging the flesh at all. If to the Corinthians it was Jesus Christ and Him crucified, because they assumed to please them-



## 374 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

selves ; here, where the desire is to be made perfect in the flesh, the truth to correct this error is that I am crucified with Christ. Galatians ii. 20, "I am crucified with Christ : nevertheless I live ; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me ; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." The great point in Galatians is that there is a new Person to consult and to direct me. It is in principle the same as—"when it pleased God to reveal his Son in me, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood." I do not turn to my old self ; "I am crucified with Christ : nevertheless I live ; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." It is Christ who is to direct me ; and the life that I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. No amount of care or training can make the flesh, to which the law was addressed, cordial to Christ ; as is in type set forth when Ishmael mocked at the reception given

## INTRUSIONS OF THE FLESH, ETC. 375

to Isaac. Though Ishmael was fourteen years in Abraham's house, he could not conceal his animosity to the true heir. "He that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now." It is Christ then formed in us who gives us liberty from the flesh ; and the Holy Ghost in us always resists the flesh, and gives us the mastery ; so that if we walk in the Spirit, we shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.

It is not there, as in Romans vii., that the flesh is incompetent to keep the law, and that it is a relief to be free of it ; but further, that the flesh, however educated and cultured, lusts against the Spirit—even persecutes Christ : so that the believer, who enjoys Christ as his life, rejoices that the old self is cast out, and has no part or lot with—

"The Sovereign of my heart,  
My dear Redeemer's throne,  
Where Christ is only heard to speak,  
Where Jesus reigns alone."

Thus we have glanced at the intrusion

## 376 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

of the flesh at Corinth, and in Galatia. Now we come to the Colossian.

## THE COLOSSIAN INTRUSION.

Here the saints are commended for their faith in Christ Jesus, and love to all the saints. Evidently they were in a prosperous state ; according to the commendation they were but very little behind the Ephesians. The apostle's prayer for them is for the hope of the gospel ; that is, that heaven should be before their hearts. Now these prosperous saints were in danger of being carried away by another intrusion of the flesh. We have to understand their state before we can fully apprehend the danger to which they were exposed. They were continuing in the faith, and were not moved from the hope of the gospel. They had received truly and faithfully the ministry of the gospel. They were thus free from the Corinthian and Galatian snare ; but now being free from the intrusion of the flesh, which related to their own state, they were exposed to a new intrusion,

## INTRUSIONS OF THE FLESH, ETC. 377

namely, turning to and accepting from the flesh, help and assistance in divine things. Hence the word is, "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." There is an immense difference between cultivating the flesh to confirm one's salvation, like the Galatians ; or sanctioning its existence for self-pleasing, as the Corinthians ; and utilising it as a coadjutor for the Lord's service. It is plain that both the mind and body of every believer are the Lord's, and He has the right to use them as He likes. But the design to which the Colossian was exposed, was, that the flesh, or the natural man, both by mind and body, could add to, and be a helper in divine things. The mind or body as Christ's servant is right and proper ; then each one does as He directs, and not otherwise. If I preach, I preach as He would have me, lucidly and clearly, but not as adding man's support to it—nothing histrionic

## 378 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

or sensational. I may weep if I am led to feel the solemnity of my subject ; but I do not weep to make others weep. That would be the intrusion of which we are warned here. I am devotional, and I bow my knees as the Lord would lead me, not as a habit or form, and not to produce an effect. In fact, every movement of the flesh, with the intent of helping on the truth, or commending the gospel, is the Colossian intrusion. Affectionateness of the highest order is the genuine outflow of a heart in which Christ reigns ; but every attempt of the flesh to commend the Christian, is of the Colossian intrusion ; because it would make out that Christ was not sufficient. The desire and attempt to use learning and language to help in divine things, is of the same nature, and springs from the flesh. The Colossian intrusion is the attempt of the flesh to be a contributor both in mind and body in divine things ; not satisfied with being only Christ's instrument, or vessel, as He may please. The mind and body are in their right

## INTRUSIONS OF THE FLESH, ETC. 379

place when they are simply servants of the Lord, like an accompaniment to His voice, or as a telescope ; but in no wise attempting or assuming to add to or to contribute.

Now it is impossible to check or prevent this intrusion unless the mystery is fully known. The flesh, as it would intrude both in Corinthians and Galatians, has been checked and foiled ; but these Colossians who are spoken of as over Jordan, dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, were liable to be drawn away by the flesh offering its support and aid, unless it were absolutely superseded. As a rule, not only Christendom, but men of God, have used human influence and ability to propagate the things of God ; and there is always a temptation to do so. All fall into it except those who have entered into the truth of the mystery ; where the mystery is truly known, there is no place for man's mind or body as a contributor, for Christ is everything and in all. No one can be preserved otherwise. Being

## 380 A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

“complete in him,” they do not seek or accept help or aid elsewhere ; they do not want it. To preserve from this intrusion, the knowledge of the mystery is essential. Hence when the truth of the mystery was lost to the church, even as it is to many saints in the present day, every kind of human expedient — sentiment, ability, anything that mind or body can supply, are employed in Christ’s service ; and thus more credit is obtained for the man, the instrument, than for the Lord, who is the owner of the instrument ; and this leads eventually to the Laodicean state, when things professedly Christian, can be boastingly carried on without Christ—all human work.



---

London; G. MORRISH, 20, Paternoster Square, E.C.